

# Managing Ethnic Diversity and Federalism in Pakistan

**Muhammad Mushtaq**

*Department of Political Science & International Relations*

*B. Z. University Multan, Pakistan*

E-mail: [shaikh\\_m\\_mushtaq@yahoo.com](mailto:shaikh_m_mushtaq@yahoo.com)

## Abstract

Federations may vary at the level of centralization, and in the forms of governance. On the basis of distinctive features, these can be categorized as centralized or decentralized, and consociational or majoritarian federations. Some federations may adopt multi-level system of authority and governance; and others may incline towards centralized governance.

It is believed that Federation's capacity to manage ethnic diversity varies across its functions and distinct features. It is argued that 'more a formal federal system operates in practice as a unitary system, the less is system's capacity to accommodate ethnic and territorial cleavages' (Kohli, 2004). Based on this proposition, this paper attempts to investigate relationship between centralization of political power and ethnic mobilization in Pakistan.

Management of ethnic diversity has remained problematic in Pakistan. In 1971, it became the first post colonial state that suffered a successful secessionist movement that resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. The Post-1971 Pakistan has witnessed Bloch insurgencies (1973-77, 2002-to date); Pashtun separatism (1970s); Sindhi regionalism (1980s); and Mohajir's mobilization along ethnic lines (1990s).

The evidence suggests that the exclusive design of power structure and relatively centralized governance has marginalized and alienated certain communities in Pakistan. This sense of marginality and lack of power-sharing has mobilized these communities along ethnic lines to seek power. The paper argues that relatively decentralised and inclusive governance is more likely to enable Pakistani federation to accommodate ethnic identities.

**Keywords:** Federalism, Managing ethnic diversity, Centralised governance, Pakistan

## I. Introduction

Ethnic mobilisation and conflicts are not new phenomenon but their contemporary globe manifestation in frequency and intensity is a new development, which needs careful reflection and detailed examination. Since more than 90 percent of the nations states are heterogeneous and this heterogeneity is likely to increase as a result of global migration patterns; ethnic conflicts and the resultant political tensions are likely to become even more pervasive in the coming years. This global manifestation of ethnicity has attracted significant attention from social scientists.

Since developed as well as developing countries are experiencing ethnic tensions, the problem of political instability caused by ethnic conflicts seems to be more acute in the developing world.

Empirical studies of developing states suggest some connections between political institutions and the proliferation of ethnic mobilisation. Policy recommendations to manage ethnic diversity in these multiethnic states suggest a variety of federal and power-sharing arrangements.

Lijphart (1996) maintains that democracy is possible in deeply divided societies but only if their type of democracy is consociational. Certain European countries have managed diversity through consociationalism but overall performance of such arrangements remains mixed. McGarry (2006) argues that 'Federalism is usually not enough: consociational practices, particularly at the level of the federal government, are highly important to the success of multi-national federalism'. Adeney (2007) also, suggests some 'degree of consociationalism and representation in decision-making institutions' in federal polities. She points out that although federation provides autonomy, yet it does not provide security at the national level within decision-making institutions.

Bermeo (2002, 2004) concludes that 'federalist arrangements facilitate successful accommodation' in multiethnic states. However, as federations may vary at the level of centralisation and in the forms of governance, the capacity of a federation to manage ethnic diversity may vary across its functions and distant features.

Pakistani federation has been remained unable to manage ethnic difference and it became the first post-colonial state that experienced a successful secessionist movement in 1971. Still Pakistan is one of the world's most ethnically and linguistically complex states' (Cohn, 2005). Various ethno-linguistic groups have challenged writ of the state at various junctures of Pakistan's history.

Since, political violence and mobilisation along ethnic lines has resulted into political instability. A number of alternatives to federation have been proposed to manage diversity in Pakistan. The proposed solutions include confederation (Bhutto, M.A. 1986), consociationalism (McGarry, 2006), power-sharing (Amin, 1988, Cohen, 1987), and re-organisation of provincial boundaries (Adeney, 2007). Some (Alqama 1997 Samad 2007) have argued incorporation of excluded and marginalized groups into political structure of Pakistan. Still, there is argument (Kennedy 1993) for 'bold policies to reorganise Pakistan's federal structure' to manage ethnic difference. To manage diversity, Kennedy has argued to "redesign territorial boundaries of the constituent units to make them accord more closely with the ethnic landscape of the state". He also approved more devolution of authority for the proposed homogenous constituent units.

This paper argues that ethnic mobilisation and political instability in Pakistan is the result of discrepancy in the theory and practise of federal arrangements. Though the Pakistani federation fulfils minimum criteria of federalism but it operates more likely as a unitary system.

It is argued that 'the more a formal federal system operates in practice as a unitary system, the less is system's capacity to accommodate ethnic and territorial cleavages' (Kohli, 2004). So, it seems to suggest that the inability and incapacity of the Pakistani federation to manage ethnic diversity lies in the vagueness of operational dimension.

The next section presents an overview of the ethno-linguistic composition of Pakistan. The subsequent sections, in turn, would discuss the ethno-linguistic mobilisation, and the role of centralised federalism in the rise and fall of ethno-national movements in Pakistan. The final section is reserved for some concluding comments.

## II. Ethnic composition of Pakistan

Pakistan is a multiethnic state. Each of its provinces is associated with a certain linguistic group; Punjab with Punjabis; Sindh with Sindhis; Balochistan with Balochs; and North Western Frontier Province (NWFP after here) with Pashtuns. However, there are ethnic and linguistic divisions within every federating unit. Sindh is the most ethnically diverse province of Pakistan. Mohajirs form the majority in urban Sindh. Sindhis - sons of the soil - dominate the rural Sindh. Still, Pashtuns, Punjabis and Baloch also live in Sindh. Balochistan is the home province of Balochs and Pashtuns. There is also a considerable number of Siraikis and Sindhis in Balochistan as well. Punjab and NWFP are also no

more homogenous provinces. A considerable number of Siraikis are residing in southern part of the Punjab and NWFP hosts Hindko speaking and Siraiki populations as well. (Mushtaq and Alqama 2009)

#### **Pakistan by mother language (1998)**

<b>Linguistic group</b>	<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>Punjab</b>	<b>Sindh</b>	<b>NWFP</b>	<b>Balochistan</b>
Urdu	7.8	4.5	21.1	0.8	1.6
Punjabi	45.4	75.2	7.0	1.0	2.9
Pashto	13.0	1.2	4.2	73.9	23.0
Sindhi	14.6	0.1	59.7	0	6.8
Balochi	3.5	0.7	2.1	0	58.5
Siraiki	10.9	17.4	1.0	3.9	2.6
Others	4.8	0.9	4.9	20.4	5.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Population in Million	127.5	73.6	30.4	17.7	5.7

**Source:** Obtained by Coakley, J. p. 147

### **III. Ethnic Mobilisation in Pakistan**

Pakistan has been experiencing ethno-national movements since its inception in 1947. The Bengali nationalism, the Pashtun separatism, the Sindhi regionalism, and the Baloch nationalism have challenged the federal character of the state at various junctures of Pakistani history. Since 1980s, the Mohajirs (Urdu speaking community who migrated from India in 1947 and primarily settled in urban centres of Sindh) have been mobilising along ethnic lines to protect their interests. A low profile non-violent assertion is also seen in the southern Punjab. Therefore, Excluding Punjabis, the dominant group, all sub-national groups felt certain sense of marginality and have been asserting against the centralisation of political power.

Punjab is the most populous and relatively developed and prosperous region of the country. Its predominance in 'armed forces and to a lesser extent in the civil bureaucracy' has been perceived by smaller units as 'Punjabisation' of Pakistan (Talbot, 2000:215). Military ruled for the longer period (1958-69, 1969-71, 1977-88, and 1999-07) and this rule have been argued 'synonymous with Punjabi domination' in Pakistan (Samad, 2007). Therefore, 'at the core of ethno-regional sentiments' in Pakistan is the perception that 'Punjabi community dominates the politics and society of the state' (Kennedy, 1993). It is also argued that Punjab dominates and as a result has 'never seen the need to press for greater autonomy' (Jones, 2002).

**Some Instances of Substantial protest (1947-2006)**

Time	Group	Location	Description
1947-48	Baloch	Kalat and surroundings	First Baloch insurgency of Abdul Karim Khan against forcible annexation of Balochistan into Pakistan
1947-48	Pashtun	NWFP	Reaction to dismissal of Dr. Khan's nationalist government
1958-63	Baloch	Baloch countryside	Resistance against one-unit scheme, distant identity
1950s	Pashtun	NWFP	Resistance against one-unit scheme, afghan irredentist movement. But at the same time Dr. Khan accepted the offer of central government and became Chief minister of West Pakistan
1973-77	Baloch	Baloch tribal areas of Marri-Mengal	Baloch insurgency against central government on the dismissal of nationalist regime. This war involved more than 80,000 Pakistani troops and some 55,000 Baloch guerrillas (Harrison, 1981). The insurgency ended after the overthrow of Bhutto by Zia-ul-Haq.
1973-74	Pashtun	NWFP	Resignation of elected government as a protest against central government's interference in provincial matters of Balochistan and NWFP
1980s	Sindhis	Rural Sindh	Movement for the Restoration of Democracy
1980s	Mohajirs	Urban Sindh	Killings in Karachi
2002-?	Baloch	Baloch countryside	Baloch resistance movement: a response to marginalisation, demands for distributive justice

**1. Bengalis Separation**

The Muslims of Bengal decided to join Pakistan in 1947, at the moment of decolonisation and division of the India. The non-muslim members of the Bengal assembly voted for the division of Bengal. Therefore, the west Bengal – Hindu majority area joined India and the East Bengal – Muslim majority area – joined Pakistan. Despite its division, Bengal remained the most populous province of Pakistan: it had more population than the total population of all federating units and princely states of western wing.

Pakistan inherited the All India Act 1935 with some amendments, as an interim constitution. The constitutional assembly was assigned the role to formulate the constitution of Pakistan. Debates in the constitutional assembly over the constitutional formulas resulted into distrust between the members from Bengal and the western wing. Bengalis had concerns regarding certain issues – such as lingua franca and representation in national legislature – during the constitution making process. Contrary to their counterpart in Punjab, they demanded for autonomy and decentralisation of political power. On the whole, their demands were not entertained.

The Politicisation of the Bengalis grievances and the 'inability or unwillingness of the central government to devolve authority', led to the separatist and autonomous demands and eventually the separation of East Pakistan (the contemporary state of Bangladesh) (Kennedy, 1993).

Samad (2007: 94) summarizes the grievances and argue that, "the exclusion of Bengalis from the centre, the tightening grip of Karachi, the country's political and commercial capital, over East Pakistan, the insensitive handling of the language issue and a growing sense of economic exploitation pushed the eastern wing along the road of separatism". Alqama (1997) has also observed that it was exclusive design of power-structure that resulted in the marginalisation of Bengali elites. Consequently, this sense of marginality led to the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign state in 1971.

**2. The Pashtun Separatism**

The Pashtuns of North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) had a strong sense of distinctiveness. The '*Khudai Khidmatgar*' (servants of Gods) movement of Pashtun nationalists had a popular rural base in predominantly Pashtuns districts of the NWFP. It won both the provincial elections of 1937 and 1946 and formed the provincial governments. The Pashtun nationalists were not impressed by the Two-nation theory of All India Muslim League and resisted against their inclusion in Pakistan. They

demanding an autonomous Pashtun (Pashtun) state in 1947. Their demand was not entertained and they boycotted the referendum. [The Pashtuns perused Lord Mountbatten, the then governor general of India, to include a third option in the referendum: a right to opt for Pashtunistan, a state for their own, next to the options to join either Pakistan or India.] Nevertheless, Muslim League successfully mobilised the masses in favour of Pakistan and ‘managed to get 99% of the polled votes’ (Talbot, 1988).

Pashtunistan (Pashtunistan) means ‘different things to different people, ranging from the demand for the formation of a new state incorporating *Pathan* areas on both sides of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border to mere change of nomenclature for the NWFP’ (Kennedy 1993).

Soon after the creation of Pakistan, the Pashtuns stressed that by ‘Pashtunistan’ they meant regional autonomy of NWFP (Amin, 1988). Afterwards, the temporal (April 1972- February 1973) sharing of power with Pashtuns under the tripartite accord pursued Pashtun nationalist to left the Pashtunistan issue. (In the general elections of 1970 the Pakistan Peoples Party of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto got victory in the Punjab and Sindh. Jamiat-ul-ulmai Islam (JUI) and National Awami Party (NAP) – the representative of Pashtun and Baloch nationalists – were the leading parties in NWFP and Balochistan. The three leading parties entered into the tripartite accord and decided to respect the mandate of each party in its respective jurisdiction.). Abdul Ghaffar Khan – who previously demanded a separate homeland for Pashtuns – declared, ‘Our demand for Pashtunistan has been fulfilled’ (Amin, 1988).

The politics of accommodation – the resultant of tripartite accord – were broken down soon. The central government intervened into the minority provinces. Islamabad dismissed the NAP (National Awami Party) government in Balochistan. The coalition government of NWFP resigned as a protest against the dismissal of Balochistan government. The central government banned the NAP alleging that it had been working against the integrity of the country. The Baloch waged a war against the dissolution of provincial government and Pashtuns pursued ban on NAP by challenging the decision in Supreme Court. Accordingly, the Pashtun nationalist feelings resurfaced once again. On a question whether he was, ‘a Muslim, a Pakistani or a Pashtun first’, Wali Khan claimed that he was, “a six thousands years old Pashtun, a thousand years old Muslim and 27 years old Pakistani” (Supreme Court judgment on dissolution of NAP, government of Pakistan, 1975: 27).

Meanwhile, the gradual migration of Pashtuns into Karachi and urban centres of Punjab resulted in their ‘dominance in privately owned transport sector’ and larger share in employment. They acquired the share in the Pakistani power-structure and the ‘primary source of incorporation remained the army’ (Noman, 1988). The majority of Pashtun soldiers and officials whom got jobs belong to the areas that had traditionally been ‘stronghold of the pashtunistan movement’ (Jaffrelot, 2002). This incorporation and accommodation of the Pashtuns in the power-structure resulted in the decline of the pashtunistan movement. This decline led to the argument that ‘Pashtun Movement had died down’ (Amin, 1988). Conversely, evidence suggests that all the way through Pashtun Nationalist Party (ANP) has been remained successful to attain a considerable electoral support in Pashtun areas (Mushtaq, 2008).

In the Post 9/11 Era, war against terror has changed the chemistry of the region. “*Talbanization*” has resulted into violence and terrorist activities. Despite all this, ANP (a relatively secular Pashtun nationalist party) has emerged as a single largest party in the wounded constituency. The verity that Pashtuns, on both sides of the border, had been questioning the legality of the Durand line makes the case more interesting.

### 3. Sindhi Regionalism

The Sindh province restored its provincial status in 1936 when it was separated from Bombay. Though Sindh was a Muslim majority province, the Muslim League did not find any candidate to contest in the 1937 elections. G. M. Sayeed and Sheikh Abdul Majeed, then the members of Sindh assembly, joined the party in 1938 and managed to pass the resolution for a separate homeland for the Muslims of sub-

continent in the same year. The Muslim league succeeded to govern Sindh in 1942 and Sindh Assembly passed a resolution on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1943 favouring the Lahore Resolution 1940. Finally, Sindh Assembly decided to join Pakistan by 33 votes to 20 (Chandio, 2007).

Though the pre-partition Sindh was not an 'ethnically pure region', there was no substantial antagonism by the Sindhis against the Baloch and Punjabi settlers. These people adopted Sindhi language and were 'assimilated into the Sindh culture' (Cohen, 2005). On the contrary, the Sindhis were worried in 1947 about the influx of 'millions of well-educated, mobile and resourceful *Muhajireens* (refugees: Mohajirs)'. The Sindh government resisted against the policy of central government and as a result, Ayub Khuhro, Chief Minister of Sindh was dismissed by the Governor on the recommendations of central government. Resultantly, the huge influx of Mohajirs continued in Sindh and it changed the 'demographic, political and economic contours of Pakistani Sindh' in Mohajirs favors (Malik, 1997).

The Sindhi grievances are not limited to the influx of Muhajireens; it also includes the imposition of one-unit scheme [under this scheme, all administrative units of the western wing of Pakistan were amalgamated into one-unit, namely the west Pakistan.], allotment of newly irrigated land to non-Sindhis, alleged violation of pre-independence agreement of water between Punjab and Sindh by Punjab, and the under-representation in civil and military bureaucracy (Cohen, 2005).

During one-unit period (1955-69), the Sindhis were further marginalised (Aziz, 1988). The Sindhi language was suppressed and many Sindhi medium schools were closed (Rehman, 1999). 'Sindhi writers were discouraged and Sindhi newspapers were denied to advertisements. Sindhi publications were suppressed and widely censored'. This policy 'created resentment among the people of Sindh'. Bhutto, shrewdly, used the 'slogans chanted by Sindhi nationalists' in the election campaign of 1970 and got landslide victory in Sindh (Chandio, 2007).

Bhutto won the election in West Pakistan and acquired power after the separation of East Pakistan in 1971. Bhutto's 'access to power made the national integration of Sindhis easier in the 1970s' (Jaffrelot, 2002). Bhutto's PPP (Pakistan Peoples Party) managed to install its government at center and in the provinces of Sindh and Punjab. Bhutto took up many Sindhis grievances and his policies favored Sindhis substantially. [For example the introduction of quota system to distribute government jobs and placement in educational institutions in urban-rural (40%-60%) areas of Sindh proved advantageous for the rural Sindhis] Nevertheless, the Sindhis benefited from this scheme at the expense of the Mohajirs.

The Removal of Bhutto government in 1977 and finally his execution through a judicial trial by Punjabi dominated Supreme Court bench in 1979 produced nationalist feelings in the rural Sindh once again. These nationalistic feelings gained momentum during the MRD's (Movement for Restoration of Democracy) national campaign against the military dictatorship of Zia-ul-Haq (then president and chief marshal law administrator) in 1983. The unrest spread at wider scale and ferocity in the interior Sindh. Soon, 'radical students and groups of peasants and workers' joined the movement and it 'took the army four months to quell' (Noman, 1988). This struggle in Sindh has been seen for the 'the participation in government and more equitable share in the economic progress of the province. The removal of the first government favourable to Sindhis, and its replacement by Punjabi-Pashtun dominated army, fuelled ethnic antagonism in the province (Noman, 1988:184). The articulation of regional aspirations was formulated in the demand for a confederation, outlined by the ex-governor of Sindh, Mumtaz Bhutto. (Noman, 1988:184).<sup>7</sup>

In the Post-Zia democratic Era, Pakistan Peoples Party resumed its political character again and the 'Daughter of Pakistan' (Benazir Bhutto) managed to defuse the nationalist feelings in the wounded Sindhi community. While PPP dominated rural Sindh, Sindh's nationalist parties remained unable to challenge its (PPP) support. These parties 'never attracted the support of more than 5 or 6 percent of the electorate nor have they ever won any directly elected National Assembly seats' (Jones, 2002). Nevertheless, 'the PPP always espoused the cause of Sindhi nationalism at the provincial level, (Waseem, 2006) and 'many PPP candidates in Sindh are just as nationalistic as their counterparts in the parties devoted to Sindhi issues' (Jones, 2002). Despite of their weak organisation, Sindhi nationalists

have not given up their struggle and they continued to express simmering resentment about Punjab's role in their affairs (Jones 2002). The Sindhis have resented once again at the murder of Mrs Bhutto during election campaign of 2008 at Rawalpindi, a Punjabi town near Islamabad. But, Asif Ali Zardari (husband of Mrs Bhutto) and Nawaz Sharif (ex-prime minister and most popular leader of Punjab) have managed the issue successfully.

#### 4. Mohajir Identity Politics

The Punjabis and Mohajirs dominated the politics in the early years of Pakistan. While Punjabis remained over-represented in the army and administration, Mohajirs dominated the civil bureaucracy and political decision making centres (Jaffrelot 2002). This relative privileged position of the Mohajirs led them to identify themselves with the Pakistani state and Islamic ideology, and to hostile towards regional ethnic movements (Alavi 1989). Conversely, in Post-Liaquat Era (1951) 'Mohajirs gradually lost grounds to Punjabis'. In addition, the Military coup of Ayub Khan in 1958 'initiated a new Pathan-Punjabi axis' and hence 'those (Mohajirs) who regarded themselves as makers of the Pakistan had begun to recede to the background' (Jaffrelot 2002).

The Mohajirs disconcerted against the discriminatory policies in Sindh during Bhutto Era. Contrary to the other provincial assemblies, Sindh assembly passed a Language Bill in 1972. Under the law, learning of Sindhi language was mandatory for the provincial officials. The Mohajirs saw this discriminatory move as a denial of their right to employment and Karachi witnessed massive demonstrations. Introduction of quota system to distribute government jobs and placement in educational institutions in urban-rural (40%-60%) areas was also limited to Sindh. It is quite evident that the Sindhis benefited from this scheme at the expense of the Mohajirs.

During the period of 1973-86, the Mohajir's representation declined from 33.5% to 18.3% in senior and from 30.1% to 18.2% in overall official positions (Kennedy, 1993). Still, the 'ethnic composition of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy' gradually shifted even further in favour of Punjabis and Pashtuns at the expenses of Mohajirs. This development 'exacerbated age-old dissatisfaction' and consequently the 'sense of relative deprivation' set the stage for Mohajir identity politics (Samad 2002).

The rise of MQM (Mohajir Qaumi Movement or Mohajir National Movement) in 1984, on the national scene was quite sudden and dramatic (Alavi 1989). It is 'an urban, youthful and organisationally well-knit party'. Its leadership and most of its activists represent the lower middle class who have experienced unemployment (Malik 1997). Since late 1980s, MQM remained dominant in the urban Sindh. It has been achieved remarkable electoral support in Karachi and Hyderabad (the major urban centres of Sindh).

MQM entered into and left alliances with governments of Ms Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif at federal and provincial level in Sindh in the interlude (1988-99) between Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharraf military dictatorships. During this period Karachi and Hyderabad witnessed bitter ethnic conflicts that led to the military operations in injured constituency. According to one study, political violence in Karachi (during 1985-98) has left nearly 9,000 deaths (Zaffar Abbas cited in, Samad, 2002).

Although MQM (Mohajir Qaumi Movement or Mohajir National Movement) has been renamed MQM (Muttahida Qaumi Movement or Joint National Movement) and its leadership have 'adopted a more inclusive outlook away from *Mohajirism*' yet the voting pattern in Sindh suggests that 'it relied essentially on the Mohajir vote' (Waseem 2006).

#### 5. Baloch Nationalism

The Colonial period Balochistan, includes British Balochistan (Pashtun majority areas and the Bugti-Marri tribal areas), Kalat state and states of Khairpur, Makran and Lasbela. The ruler of Kalat state, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, declared independence, on August 15, 1947, a day after Pakistan was formally established. Both houses of the Kalat Assembly had endorsed this decision and rejected accession with

Pakistan. But, ultimately Khan had to signed accession papers to join Pakistan. The Baloch nationalists resisted against the decision, and Prince Abdul Karim started an armed movement in the Jhalawan area (Breseeg 2004).

Subsequently, under the one-unit scheme, the Government of Pakistan amalgamated Punjab, Sindh, NWFP, and Balochistan into one province. The second Baloch insurgency started against this centralising policy of the government. Mir Noroz Khan Zahri led the resistance this time. He fought vigorously but finally agreed to surrender on an offer of safe conduct by the army. However, he was arrested with his colleagues and died in jail. (Harrison, 1981)

Balochistan had wait for a long time to get the provincial status. On the dissolution of one-unit scheme in 1970, Balochistan was assigned the provincial status. The Baloch and Pashtun Nationalist contested in the first general elections of the Pakistani history in 1970 under the banner of NAP (National Awami Party). The Baloch nationalists performed well and managed to install their government in Balochistan. However, Attaullah Mengal's government was dismissed in February 1973 on the grounds of lawlessness and failure to comply with central government directives. This dismal sparked a sharper confrontation with the centre and led to an insurgency that remained at its peak from 1973 to 1977 (Rajshree Jetly, 2006). According to Harrison (1981: 36), 'There were around 55,000 Baloch fighters, including 11,500 organized combatants, fighting against the over 80,000-strong military force that was called out to quell the resistance'.

Zia-ul-Haq adopted relatively a softer approach by relaxing the detained Baloch leaders. He extended positive gestures towards nationalists by announcing a general amnesty for the guerrillas. However, he did not fulfil the demands of withdrawal of troops from Balochistan and the compensation for the victims of military action in Balochistan (Shah, M.A. 1997).

Despite the sense of marginality and suppression, the nationalist feelings in Balochistan seem subsided because of the representative democracy in the 1990s. However, since military coup of 1999, a low-level insurgency again challenges central control over the province. Due to another military rule (Musharraf), deprived of representative participatory institutions and with their natural resources exploited by Islamabad, Bloch alienation is at an all-time high. Although regional parties and leaders are still struggling to obtain political, economic and social rights within a democratic, federal, parliamentary framework, militants have picked up the gun. (International Crisis Group, Asia Report, 2006)

Military action and conciliatory efforts remained simultaneously intact in Balochistan. Due to military involvement in the case, parliamentary committee remained unable to implement its recommendations. Bugti's (Baloch leader who previously remained governor and then chief minister of Balochistan) personal resistance provided fuel to the flames of the conflict.

## 6. Siraiki Movement

Within Punjab, three well-known groups/regions may be recognized on the linguistic and geographical basis – the Punjabi speaking, central Punjab; the Pothowhari speaking, northern Punjab; and the Siraiki speaking, southern Punjab. The 'civil-military officers, administrators and businessmen from the central and the northern Punjab, together make 'the Punjabi ruling group' (Shackle 1977). And the Siraikis of the southern Punjab – a relatively poorer and marginalized region – popularly term the central and northern Punjab "jointly" as the 'Upper Punjab'. The term, perhaps, denotes the deprivation and marginality of southern Punjab vis-à-vis upper Punjab. Samad (2007, 116) has rightly observed that 'the Siraiki-speaking areas have made a conscious and explicit attempt to distance themselves from the dominant groups in Punjab'.

Siraiki identity is 'still very new' phenomenon, and the people who are 'deemed to be Siraiki-speaking' had different history. The people of Bahawalpur belonged to a princely state that became a part of Punjab in 1970. 'Riyasti' remained the language of majority in this region. Multan remained a part of Sindh earlier and 'Multani' was the language of the area. The people of Dera Ghazi Khan and the surroundings had a distinct language – 'Derewal' and have historically 'tended towards Baloch identity' (Feroz Ahmed, 1998).



Siraiki identity evolved, more or less, parallel in its twin centres of Bahawalpur and Multan. A variety of literary and cultural organizations surfaced in 1960s and early 1970s and the movement, largely, remained cultural in character. The movement remained apart from the cohesive political mobilization. Yet, some individual voices rose in favour of a separate Siraiki Suba (Siraiki province) at the extinction of the One-unit scheme (shackle 1977).

Siraiki political parties had no appeal for the majority of Siraiki speaking people. Despite their efforts to build up support for Siraiki movement by stressing the marginalization of Siraiki speaking community, they lacked electoral support and performed badly in various general and local elections.

The local aristocracy had prominent position in the mainstream parties, and is well incorporated into Punjabi ruling class. This incorporation has led Feroz Ahmed (1998) to suggest that Siraikis will become more and more amenable to resolving their problems in multi-ethnic contexts (Feroz, 1998, 276).

This survey of ethno-nationalist movements suggests that it was the policy of centralisation that created a sense of Punjabi domination and marginality in smaller units of the federation. The Punjabi dominated federal authorities intervened and dismissed various provincial governments ignoring their right of self-governance.

The 1973 constitution of Pakistan qualifies minimum level of legislative decentralisation, and evidence suggests that Pakistan is gradually moving towards fiscal decentralisation. But it lacks political decentralisation. The next section is reserved for this debate.

#### **IV. Federalism in Pakistan**

British administration introduced various self-government formulas in British India during the earlier twentieth century. This development started a debate on constitutional design in India. There was no consensus between Indian National Congress and All India Muslim League on constitutional issues.

During the debate, Muhammad Ali Jinnah demanded a loose federation with considerable autonomy to safeguard Muslim interests. Hence, Muslim league passed historical resolution in 1940 at Lahore in its annual session and maintained that 'the federating units of Pakistan would be autonomous and sovereign'. That is why, throughout the history of independent Pakistan this aspect of the resolution has nearly always been quoted by the advocates of autonomy of federating units (the Bengalis, the Sindhis, the Pashtuns and the Baloch) and almost never by the custodians of power: the Punjabis. The policy makers in Pakistan preferred relatively centralised governance to strengthen the nascent state. This centralisation/ decentralisation may be divided into three broad categories:

- i. Legislative decentralisation
- ii. Fiscal decentralisation
- iii. Political decentralisation

##### **1. Legislative Decentralisation**

The Government of India Act of 1935 was amended to strengthen the control over federating units in 1947. These amendments made the central government 'one of the most powerful governments in the world' <sup>1</sup> (Sayeed, 1954).

The constituent assembly of Pakistan passed the 'objective resolution' in which basic principals for the constitution were laid down. The resolution recommended 'Federal system' of government for Pakistan. Nevertheless, The Basic Principles Committee suggested a strong centre. <sup>2</sup> In the 1956 constitution, the distribution of legislative powers between federation and the federating units were enumerated in three lists. The federal list included thirty items, provincial list ninety-four items, and

<sup>1</sup> Under the act, the federal legislative list consisted 59 subjects including defence, external affairs, banking and currency, income tax and foreign trade etc. the provincial list consisted of 54 subjects including the maintenance of law and order, public health, education, agriculture, land revenue, relief of poor and unemployment, etc. In addition to these lists, the concurrent legislative list included 36 subjects.

<sup>2</sup> Even, if the recommendations of this report were adopted, the central government would have been emerged constitutionally more powerful than the one, which was envisaged in the government of India act of 1935

concurrent list nineteen items. Further, residuary powers were given to provincial legislature. (Khan, H. 2005). The division of legislative powers suggest that this constitution was relatively decentralised than the Government of India Act, 1935. This constitution was abolished by the Marshall Law administration in 1958. Ayub regime (1958-69) introduced the second constitution of Pakistan in 1962.

The 1962 constitution provided a single list of federal subjects. The list was consisting of forty-nine items including defence, external affairs, inter-provincial trade and commerce, national economic planning, currency, foreign exchange etc. (Khan, H. 2005).

Legal Framework Order of Yahya regime (1969-70) suggested a relatively decentralised federalism. It stated that All powers, including legislative, administrative and financial, would be so distributed between the federal government and provinces that the provinces would have maximum autonomy, with maximum legislative, administrative and financial powers; but the federal government would also have adequate powers, including legislative, administrative and financial powers, to discharge its responsibilities in relation to external and internal affairs and to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of the country<sup>3</sup>.

In the 1973 constitution<sup>4</sup>, the distributions of legislative powers were enumerated in two lists. The federal list was divided into two sections. The first section had fifty-nine, and the second section eight items. The concurrent list comprised fort-seven items. (Khan, H. 2005)

The authors of the 1973 Constitution had promised cancellation of the Concurrent List after ten years. However, this promise has not been fulfilled even after 35 years. The Concurrent List is a very powerful instrument for negating the state's federal character. In a large number of matters, over which the federation and a province both have right to make laws, a federal law prevails over a provincial legislation on the same subject. (I. A. Rahman, The News International)

The concurrent list consists of 47 items including matters, which had traditionally belonged in the provincial domain. 'The framers may have wanted to establish uniformity of practice in these matters throughout the country, but that is simply another name for centralisation. It does not really matter that the Constitution places the residuary powers and functions with the provinces, for there is hardly anything that the afore-mentioned lists have left out' (Syed, A. 2006,).

However, despite this there is argument that 'A clear distribution of powers between the national and provincial governments was provided and the principle of decentralisation was accepted' (Khan, H. 2005:281) in the constitution of 1973. To sum up, the constitutional provisions suggest that Pakistan fulfilled the minimum requirements of legislative decentralisation.

## 2. Fiscal Decentralisation in Pakistan (1971- 2006)

The ratio of provincial/ sub-national revenues and expenditures to the national revenues and expenditures respectively are the best indicators for the level of fiscal decentralization. Generally, 'Expenditures focus on the amount of government activity that governments undertake, and revenues focus on the quantity of resources that pass through them' (Schneider, A. 2003).

The following comparative analysis of fiscal decentralisation in some states suggests that Pakistan lies almost in middle of the eighteen compared states. Although it is fiscally less decentralised than Canada, USA, Germany and India but its score is higher than Malaysia, South Africa, Spain, and Belgium. So it seems to suggest that Pakistan fulfils the minimum requirement to be considered as fiscally decentralised state.

<sup>3</sup> Legal Framework Order, 1970, President's Order No.2 of 1970, PLD 1970 Central Statues 229, Cited in (Khan, Hamid, 2005,p.213)

<sup>4</sup> The 1973 constitution was adopted with the consensus of all the political parties in the National Assembly. (Khan, Hamid, 2005,p.275)

**Fiscal decentralisation in Few States**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
Yugoslavia	61.23	23.62041643	1
Canada	57.43	1.134515477	2
Switzerland	51.89	3.373014812	3
United states	44.62	2.169083757	4
India	45.47	1.222372939	5
Germany	42.09	2.06086669	6
Australia	41.19	1.198108768	7
Russia	38.10	0.787495561	8
Argentina	37.97	7.251788205	9
Brazil	34.23	4.008681597	10
Austria	30.82	0.791481419	11
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>29.17</b>	<b>2.197003923</b>	<b>12</b>
South Africa	26.73	6.410396136	13
Mexico	21.5	5.713584616	14
Spain	19.99	8.807836225	15
Malaysia	19.06	1.679062903	16
Belgium	11.82	1.043478544	17
Venezuela	3.11	0.572646032	18
Ethiopia	2.28	1.095850472	19

Calculated by the author (data is available at World Bank website)

The recent trend towards the fiscal decentralisation in Pakistan is visible in the next table.

**Fiscal Decentralisation in Pakistan (1971-2006)**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Ratio of Provincial. Revenue. to central</b>	<b>Ratio of Provincial. Expenditures. To central</b>
1971-72	0.29	0.29
1972-73	0.29	0.32
1973-74	0.28	0.28
1974-75	0.33	0.37
1975-76	0.31	0.21
1976-77	0.31	0.22
1977-78	0.32	0.22
1978-79	0.33	0.21
1979-80	0.31	0.22
1980-81	0.34	0.22
1981-82	0.32	0.23
1982-83	0.31	0.23
1983-84	0.31	0.24
1984-85	0.34	0.24
1985-86	0.39	0.28
1986-87	0.41	0.3
1987-88	0.48	0.29
1988-89	0.41	0.27
1989-90	0.33	0.27
1990-91	0.37	0.28
1991-92	0.37	0.27
1992-93	0.39	0.28
1993-94	0.41	0.3
1994-95	0.42	0.3
1995-96	0.43	0.28
1996-97	0.44	0.29
1997-98	0.38	0.28
1998-99	0.37	0.28
1999-2000	0.41	0.31
2000-01	0.39	0.33
2001-02	0.43	0.31
2002-03	0.42	0.28
2003-04	0.4	0.34
2004-05	0.4	0.35
2005-06	0.45	0.44

Source: State bank of Pakistan

**3. Political decentralisation**

Some scholars have measured political decentralisation by ‘tracking regional and local elections over time’ (Rodden, J. 2004). But this indicator does not seem to fit in the Pakistani case due to its unique political culture (the author suggest that to gauge political decentralisation in Pakistan, intervention of central government in provincial matters is better indicator than provincial or local elections in particular region). So in this study, political decentralisation will essentially discuss the matters regarding the working relationship between the federal government and the provincial government.

In Pakistan, ‘the central government very frequently dismissed and reformed the ministries in the provinces’. Congress ministry in NWFP had ‘the support of 33 members out of 50’. But Despite the assurance of cooperation, it was replaced by a Muslim League ministry (Hussain F.A.: 1989). The Sindh assembly opposed the decision of central government to take Karachi out of the control of Sindh and passed a resolution unanimously. The Chief Minister of Sindh had to pay for this resolution and he was dismissed soon.

During Ayub regime (1962-69), there was no federation in Pakistan. All powers were vested in the president. In provinces, governors were appointed by the president without any approval or consultation by any other organ of the government. So they worked as an agent of the president and

served during his pleasures. In practise, federation operated as a unitary system in his period (Hussain, F.A. 1989).

This centralisation alienated the Bengalis. Eventually, they broke away from federation in 1971. The constitution of 1973 was introduced on August 14, 1973 in the new Pakistan.

Bhutto (1973-77), dismissed Balochistan's provincial government and provincial government of NWFP resigned as protest. Still, Bhutto managed to capture all political power in the remaining provinces i.e. Punjab and Sindh. He had overwhelming majority in these provinces and did not assign any responsibility to local leadership at provincial level. He replaced favourable ministries in Punjab. So under his rule, the Sindh and the Punjab province were also denied their autonomy just like NWFP and Balochistan. (Hussain, F.A. 1989).

Zia removed Bhutto government in 1977. During his regime (1977-88), various constitutional amendments changed the nature of the constitution. The amendments resulted into a substantial departure from the parliamentary and federal principles laid down in the 1973 constitution. To sum up, presidential unitary form of government operated instead of the parliamentary federal form of government during this era. (Hussain, F.A. 1989).

In post-Zia era (1988-99), central interventions in provincial matters remained intact. Various provinces experienced governor rule and replacement of ministries by central authorities. The following table shows some detail in this regard.

#### Central Governments intervention to federating units

Year	Description
1947	Congress ministry in NWFP had 'the support of 33 members out of 50'. But it was replaced by a Muslim League ministry.
1947	Sindh assembly opposed the decision of central government to take Karachi out of the control of Sindh and passed a resolution unanimously. The Chief Minister of Sindh had to pay for this resolution and he was dismissed soon.
1948	Inclusion of Kalat state into Pakistan
1955	One-unit Scheme (amalgamation of provinces and states into the province of West Pakistan.)
1962-69	Ayub's Presidential period (Federal system operated like British Vice regal system of 1930s.)
1970-71	Military action in East Pakistan and its separation
1972-73	End of tripartite accord and dissolution of Balochistan government. NWFP government resigned as protest.
1977-88	Constitutional amendments by Military Regime undermined the parliamentary and Federal nature of the constitution
1988-93	Dissolution of provincial assemblies ( 1988, 90, 93)
1994	Governor Rule in NWFP and installation of favourable government
1995	Governor rule in Punjab and installation of new government
1999	Removal of Nawaz Sharif government along provincial government
2002	17 <sup>th</sup> Amendment has undermined the federal character of the state

Musharraf took over the power in a bloodless coup d'état in October 1999. Centralising policies of the regime resulted into unrest and Balochistan experienced another insurgency.

## V. Conclusion

The analysis of constitutional and political history of Pakistan suggests that although Pakistan is a formal federal system and fulfil minimum requirements of the federalism, the system relatively operate as a unitary system. During the Ayub era, 'presidential' system enabled the president to rule the provinces through governors. Bhutto got the control of Punjab and Sindh through centralisation in his political party (Pakistan People Party) and intervened in smaller units i.e. NWFP and Balochistan and managed to install friendly ministries. Zia used the slogan of Islam for his efforts towards assimilation and integration. During Zia era, formal parliamentary system operated more likely a presidential unitary system. The intervention remained intact in the coming years. Interventions were justified by

the Article 149 of the constitution that authorises the federal government to intervene in a province to protect it from internal disturbance and to ensure that its government is carried on in accordance with the Constitution. (Syed, A. 2006).

The study suggests that it is political centralisation rather than legislative or fiscal that matter in the case of Pakistan. This political centralisation caused a sense of marginalisation and alienation in smaller units. Under-representation of the politically marginalised communities in national institutions set the stage for political violence and mobilisation along ethnic lines. This mobilisation is the major cause for the political instability in Pakistan.

The paper suggests that management of diversity in Pakistan requires a process of political negotiation and has to go hand in hand with the strengthening and deepening of the democratic process (Samad 2007). Political incorporation and accommodation of ethnic identities along distributive justice can facilitate the process of democratization as well. Some consociational devices may ensure power-sharing within the framework of 1973 constitution.

## References

- [1] Aaron S. 2003. Decentralization: Conceptualization and Measurement, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 38(3) 32-56.
- [2] Abdullah A. 2003. Pakistan since Independence: An Historical Analysis, *The Muslim World* 93.
- [3] Adeney, K. 2007. Federalism and Ethnic Conflict Regulation in India and Pakistan. Palgrave Macmillan: New York.
- [4] Ahmad, A.U. 1988. *Kia hum kathi reh saktay hein* (Urdu) (Can we live together?), Lahore: Maktab-e-Fakhar VA Danish.
- [5] Alavi, H. 1989. Politics of Ethnicity in India and Pakistan, in *Sociology of "Developing Societies" South Asia*, ed. Alavi H. and J. Harris, London: Macmillan Education Ltd.
- [6] Ali, M. 1996. *Politics of federalism in Pakistan*. Royal Book Company, Karachi.
- [7] Alqama K. 1997. *Federalism: Failure and Success*, the Bi-Annual Research Journal of Pakistan Study Centre, University of Balochistan, Quetta.
- [8] Alqama, K. 1997. Bengali Elite Perception of Pakistan, the Road to Disillusionment: Uneven Development or Ethnicity, Karachi: Royal Book Company.
- [9] Alvi, H. 1992. *Politics of Ethnicity in Pakistan*, In *Regional Imbalances and the National Question in Pakistan*, ed. Zaidi, S. A. Karachi: Vanguard.
- [10] Amin, T. 1988. *Ethno-national Movements in Pakistan: Domestic and International Factors*, Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies.
- [11] Amoretti, U. M. and N. Bermeo 2004. *Federalism and Territorial Cleavages*, John Hopkins University Press.
- [12] Banuazizi, A. and M. Weiner 1987. *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan*. Karachi: Vanguard.
- [13] Binder, L. 1987. Islam, Ethnicity, and the State in Pakistan: An overview, In *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan*, ed. Banuazizi, A. and M. Weiner. Karachi: Vanguard.
- [14] Chandio, A.A. (2007). *Politics of Sindh under Zia Government: An analysis of Nationalists vs. Federalists orientations*, un-published PhD Thesis, Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Pakistan.
- [15] Cohen, S. P. 1987. State Building in Pakistan, In *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan*, ed. Banuazizi, A. and M. Weiner, Vanguard: Karachi.
- [16] Cohen, S.P. 2005. *The Idea of Pakistan*, New Delhi: oxford university press.
- [17] Conor O'D. and D. Ziblatt, 2006. Does Decentralization Make Government More Efficient and Effective? *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 44(3) 326-343.
- [18] Dawn, September 21, 2005, dawn Internet edition.

- [19] Eghosa E. O. 1990. A Reassessment of Federalism as a Degree of Decentralization, *Publius*, 20(1) 83-98.
- [20] Escobar-Lemmon, M. 2001. Fiscal Decentralization and Federalism in Latin America. *Publius*, 31(4) 23-41.
- [21] Harrison S. S. 1992. Ethnicity and the Political Stalemate In Pakistan. In, *Regional Imbalances and the National Question in Pakistan*, ed. Zaidi, S. A. Karachi: Vangaurd.
- [22] Harrison, S. S. 1987. Ethnicity and the Political Stalemate in Pakistan, In *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan*, ed. Banuazizi, A. and M. Weiner, Karachi: Vanguard.
- [23] Hussain, F.A. 1989. The Problem of Federalism and Regional Autonomy in Pakistan, Unpublished Thesis submitted for the degree of M. Phil at LSE, University of London, London.
- [24] Hussain, M. S. 1994. *Federalism in Pakistan*. NIPS, Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad.
- [25] Ian O' F. and D. Russell 2005. *Power-sharing: New Challenges for Divided Societies*: Pluto press, London.
- [26] Jaffrelot, C. 2002. Nationalism without a Nation: Pakistan Searching for its Identity, In *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?* ed. Jaffrelot, C. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- [27] Jones, B. O. 2002. *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, Yale University Press: New Haven and London.
- [28] Kennedy, C. H. 1993. 'Managing ethnic conflict: the case of Pakistan', *Regional and Federal Studies*, 3:1,123-143
- [29] Kennedy, C. H. 2003. *Pakistan: Ethnic Diversity and Colonial Legacy in edited*, John Coakley, the Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict, London: Frank Cass.
- [30] Khan, H. 2005. *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.
- [31] Kohli, A. 2004. India: Federalism and Accommodation of Ethnic Nationalism, in edited,
- [32] Malik, H. 1974. *The Emergence of the Federal Pattern in Pakistan*, in edited, J. Henry Korson, *Contemporary problems of Pakistan*, The Netherlands: E.F. Brill, Leiden.
- [33] Malik, I. H. 1996. The State and Civil Society in Pakistan: From Crisis to Crisis *Asian Survey*, 36(7) 673-690.
- [34] Malik, I. H. 1997. *State and Civil Society in Pakistan: Politics of Authority, Ideology and Ethnicity*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- [35] Mansuri A. A. 2005. *State of federalism raises more heat than hopes* September 21, 2005, dawn Internet edition.
- [36] Mill, J. S. 1958, [1861]. *Considerations on Representative Government*. New York: Liberal Arts Press.
- [37] Noman, O.1988. *The Political Economy of Pakistan 1947-85*, London: KPI Ltd. Phadnis, U. 1984. *Ethnic Movements in Pakistan*, in edited, Pandav Nayak, *Pakistan: Society and Politics*, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- [38] Rahman, A. 1982. Pakistan: Unity or further divisions?, in the States of South Asia: Problems of national integration, ed. Willson, A. J. and D. Dalton. London: C.Hurst & Company.
- [39] Rajagopalan, S. 2001. *State and Nation in South Asia*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- [40] Rodden, J. 2004. Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement *Comparative Politics*, 36(4) 481-500.
- [41] Samad Y. 2007. Pakistan: from minority rights to majoritarian, In *Fault lines of Nationhood*: ed. Gyanendra, P. and Y. Samad Roli Books Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.
- [42] Samad, Y. 2002. In and Out of Power but not Down and Out: Mohajir Identity Politics, In *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?* ed. Jaffrelot, C. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- [43] Sayeed, K.B. 1954. *Far Eastern Surveys*, 23(9): 139-143.
- [44] Schneider, A. Decentralization: Conceptualization and Measurement. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Fall 2003, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 32-56

- [45] Singh, P. Political economy of the cycles of conflict emergence and resolution in Federal polities: a study with special focus on the dimension of competing nationalisms in South Asia. Unpublished paper (forthcoming)
- [46] Singhal, D. P. 1962. The New Constitution of Pakistan, *Asian Survey*, 2(6)15-33.
- [47] Supreme Court Judgement on Dissolution of NAP, 1975, Directorate of Research, Reference & Publications, Government of Pakistan.
- [48] Syed A. 2006. The role of the CCI, DAWN, the Internet edition, [http// DAWN. Com](http://DAWN.Com), September 03.
- [49] Talbot, I. 2002. The Punjabisation of *Pakistan: Myth or Reality?*, In *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?* Ed. Jaffrelot, C. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- [50] Waseem, M. 1997. Affirmative Action Policies in Pakistan, *Ethnic Studies Report*, XV (2).
- [51] Watts, R. L. 1999. *comparing Federal Systems* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), McGill University press, Montreal, Canada.
- [52] Zaidi, S. A. 1992. Regional Imbalances and the National Question in Pakistan, Karachi: Vanguard.