

18th Amendment and the Federation of Pakistan: Factors behind the Ethnic Conflicts and its Implications

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Abstract

The federation having a weak democratic, economic and socio-political structure always struggles to keep the national integrity intact which is a very complicated process especially in the heterogeneous societies having multiple ethnic groups. Pakistan having a complex federal structure, facing the same challenges by creating integrity within its units. This paper investigates the factors behind the ethnic conflicts in Pakistan and its implications for national integration. According to the study design qualitative methodology is adopted in order to understand the conflicts in society as social and political phenomenon. The research mostly relied on secondary data sources for data collection incorporating the evidence from the analysis of secondary data. While the primary sources including the interviews from expert also included. This study highlights the impacts of ethnic conflicts on national integrity of Pakistan and the role of 18th Amendment through which federation of Pakistan goes through the key transformation which decentralized the centralized federal setup of Pakistan by granting autonomy to the provinces. But the amendment also brought unintended challenges and provoked the various ethnic groups who started movements for the creation of a new province in order to preserve their ethnic identity.

Keywords: Federation, ethnic conflicts, national integration, 18th Amendment.

Introduction

Federalism is meant for the management of different divergent groups in the society in order to ensure stability and harmony among them. It is a mutual agreement by federating units having multi ethnic affiliations that wish to organize the system of governance under one central government (Bhukhari & Kamran, 2013). It supports the notion of unity in diversity. It is also considered one of the effective systems through which the process of nation building is possible in ethnically heterogeneous society where all get united through a social contract in the form of Constitution which guaranteed them their rights in return of their

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obligation, in order to ensure the integrity of state. The structural arrangement of the federation is more suitable to multi ethnic states (Adeney, 2007). In the other words federation is a kind of political organization or covenant chooses by the federating units for the integration of distinct identities in a single political structure (Bhukhari & Kamran, 2013).

Ethnicity or ethnic identity means a person's association towards a specific culture and language of a region which is different from others. Ethnicity is a key feature of human identity that reflects the distinctions in their societies. It is the reflection of diversity in society upon which the internal harmony, peace and balance depend on the settlement of ethnically diverse cultures and their differences (Hashimi, 2013). The federal system is considered the most feasible option for them to adopt in order to keep harmony and balance among these groups.

Many factors caused ethnic mobilization including economic disparity, deprivation, weak democratic culture, authoritarian rule, mistrust between the center and provinces and the most important factor is the actions of political parties and its leadership in the mobilization of ethnic groups and its consequences for society. Mostly we see that the major cause of conflicts in developing and multi ethnic societies is the pattern of division of power between center and units, if the expectation does not get fulfilled the demands for autonomy turned violent posing threat to state security and its integrity.

National integration is a centrifugal or fictitious social force which develops a sense of unity between the different individuals of society. It causes the promotion of social stability and harmony which reinforces national union, development, creates common identification and guides towards right direction, guards against the sentiments of regionalism, provincialism, ethnicism and racism (Bangwar, 2022). Countries having diverse ethnic and cultural and ethnic groups always needed inclusive policy approach due to high level of centrifugal political tendencies among these ethnic groups threatening the integrity of state.

In case of Pakistan what is jeopardy in national cohesion is inequitable distribution of resources, worse governance system, ethnic and extreme religious & political tendencies, institutional friction, suspicions in the center provincial relations and the resentment of smaller provinces against the unequal distribution of resources, absence of responsible leadership and the divisive strategies are some permanent features behind the fragile and improper integration of Pakistan (Bangwar, 2022). Moreover, power centralization is main concern for federating units according to Aziz Khan (personnel communication, August 1, 2023),

termed power centralization a dangerous trend for multi-ethnic federations and suggested that through de-centralization of power and distribution of resources can reduce ethnic tensions. Pakistan has diverse cultural groups. That's why Pakistan is facing the same situation having same challenges of ethnic conflicts and maintenance of national integrity.

The 18th Constitutional Amendment is remarkable because it took place on the principle of autonomy to the federating units in order to restore the real image of a federation. The 18th Amendment tilted the power dynamics towards decentralization. Strengthen the Parliament and granted the autonomy to the provinces. It makes the arrangements for the excessive decentralized reforms in the country in which most of the subjects are transferred to the provinces with the abolition of concurrent. It empowered the Council of Common Interests, meant for the coordination between the center and provincial governments. It also restricted the authority of President and governors regarding dissolution of Assemblies. The 18th Amendment almost changed more than hundreds of articles of 1973 Constitution of Pakistan such as:

- It abolished the concurrent list, and transfer the residuary power to the provinces,
- It restored the Parliamentary supremacy and repealed Article 58 (2) (B),
- Make the CCI more power and functional body,
- Restricting the space for issuing presidential ordinances,
- Renaming NWFP as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,
- Establishment of a judicial commission.

Amendment tried to introduce the cooperative federalism but it also triggered the problems of ethnic conflicts in Pakistan such as the revival of Hazara Movement by renaming N.W.F.P as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Conflicts between these regional ethnic groups results in regionalism and pay the way for regional politics. These sentiments of regionalism created obstacles in the national integrity of Pakistan and the federation became the subject of controversy.

Theoretical Framework

Federalism is not only a governance system for institutional arrangements which bind together the different factions of society by representing its masses with their distinct aspects and attributes but a political theory which is a broader term in political science. It is a system where the units or states agree to form a union of their federating units along with its distinctiveness and by keeping their individual identity. It

helps in creation of political and administrative unification involving various units having different ethnic aspirations by binding them in single political unit with a mutually agreed governance system and Constitution through power sharing mechanism under a legal structure which ensure the association of these federating units. “According to this federation is a system of sovereignty rule and shared rule, where the diversity can be peacefully adjusted through judicial guidelines and constitutional mechanism. Which helps to promote a political unification” (Tariq K. &., 2018). Federalism as a theoretical and practical framework is discussed by the scholars of political science from different angles which helps to understand how it emerges and how does it operate. (Sarita, 2009). The theory had two main categories classical and modern approach:

The Classical /Traditional Approach

According to the classical and traditional theory of federalism the federation is comprise of a central authority emerges with the merger or unification of different units within one political entity in the form of independent state where the powers are distributed between the two sets of government, a written constitution which cannot be amended through simple majority and an independent judiciary (Tariq K. &., 2018). The theory is normative in nature which deals with how it should be rather than what federation is. Some of the scholars which developed the idea of classical federalism are A.V Dicey, John W. Burges, James Bryce and K. C. Were etc.

The idea of classical federalism developed by Dicey in 1885 is purely based on his observation of American federation and its features. According to him “federation means the distribution of authority among the other coordinated bodies controlled by the constitutions” (Sharma, 1955). But K. C. Wheare had more comprehensive analysis based on the observation of various federal constitutional structures like U.S, Canada, Australia and Switzerland. For Wheare the two main principles of federation are coordination and interdependence. The first principle focuses on the cooperation between the different federating units. The second one believes on the autonomy of these units without the interference of the central authority over the subjects fall under its domain.

The classical theory gained the momentum and success by leaving mark on many Constitutions of the world by making a way forward by providing them clear guidelines for their federal structure. The contributions of Dicey and Wheare are very crucial, providing a legal guideline for their classical federal structures by providing a clear jurisdiction between federation and its units. “This type of federal structure

is much adjustable to meet the special local conditions of states like India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Central Africa” (Tariq K. , 2018).

Research Methodology

According to the study design qualitative approach is adopted. The main objective of the study is to identify the factors which aggravate the ethnic conflicts and its implications for national integrity and how it changed the ethnic political scenario in heterogeneous society of Pakistan. This research is based on qualitative and analytical approach in which the analysis of the available literature related to the study area is conducted. For such purpose mostly the secondary data sources are utilized for data collection from published sources included research articles, reports and journals by scholars and universities, books, thesis and newspapers. The online sources included the websites, online research journals, articles and others published materials relevant for the study. Primary data sources include the valeyable opinion of the experts through interviews.

Ethnic Conflict and its Types

Ethnicity is the state of being ethnic or belonging to a certain ethnic group (Kellas, 1998). Ethnic conflicts are simply the conflicts between the two ethnic groups having social political psychological economic or religious reasons. In some cases, the ethnicities often engage in conflicts with state authority due to dissatisfaction of policies or having the grievances regarding unequal treatment. There are so many types of ethnic conflicts including:

(i) Non-Violent Ethnic Conflicts

In the non-violent ethnic conflicts, there is absence of violence but not the absence of conflict. This included the cultural or political conflicts in which the groups mainly aim to achieve favors for their ethnicity. They basically avoid physically violent activities and did not engage in an armed conflict with the state or other ethnic groups.

(ii) Violent Ethnic Conflicts

These types of ethnic conflicts are hostile conflicts where the groups engage in violent activities against the state. They are motivated by the feeling of hatred having feelings of deprivation due to social, political or economical injustice. They often engaged in a direct violent conflict with

the state initiating arm attack. It is the dangerous conflict having possible chance of casualties and damage.

(i) Religious Ethnic Conflicts

The ethnic conflicts having religious basis are mostly violent in nature due to the strict religious beliefs of the people about the religion. These groups are highly organized and never compromise on securing their beliefs.

(ii) Cultural Ethnic Conflicts

It may be violent or non violent in terms of their procedure. When a cultural ethnic group starts feeling that another ethnic group is dominating them and reducing their prominence in society the confrontation occurs. They basically fight for the survival or in many cases for the dominance of their cultural ethnic identity on mainstream.

(iii) Economic Conflicts

It mostly happens when the ethnic groups face the economic discrimination in society such as unequal distribution of economic resources. When they consider that others are receiving more share in resources it creates hatred and deprivation among them.

(iv) Political Conflicts

In ethno-political conflicts the ethnic groups engaged in a conflict with the state either through political platform through their policies campaigns using the regional sentiments of these groups. In some cases, it turns violent by staging violent protests and demonstrations. These types of conflicts are basically staged by politically excluded groups. But it has two sub categories:

- Groups that experience discrimination by the state central authorities and
- The groups having no political power that are not discriminated but their purpose is to gain power for themselves.

In first case the discriminated groups are prone to conflicts due to the experience of discrimination therefore but those who are not discriminated but excluded want their inclusion in order to have some power. In these cases, the presence of opportunist elites in these groups can bring on the chances of conflict (Alcorta, Swedlund & Smith, 2020). The groups in the second category are ambitious in nature.

(v) Geographical or Territorial Ethnic Conflicts

Geographical ethnic conflicts are territorial based conflicts. In which the groups demand a territorial space or region where they can form their own state or just to ensure the regional autonomy. It varies in nature. It may be interstate or intrastate conflicts. The consequences of the conflict can be in form of secession or at least some degree of separation of the group concerned (Boal, 2015). It has two sub types:

(i) Autonomy

Such type of conflicts occurs mostly in a federation where authority is centralized and various ethnic groups demand autonomy for their respective regions to manage their affairs. In such case groups want to access the power and authority. When denied the movement turns violent.

(i) Separatist

When various ethnic groups occupy a part of the state means they are the inhabitants of that area it is natural for them to claim concessions to live there on their own terms which in fact is the claim of autonomy but when they are denied their right of autonomy for a long time the movements resort towards separatist tendencies demanding secession from the existing state. These conflicts are hostile and violent in nature. The state uses every mean to stop them even crush them by force while the groups are adamant to free themselves from the state. These conflicts are dangerous for the territorial and national integrity of a state. It causes the dismemberment of the state.

Factors Leading Towards Ethnic Conflicts

Various factors can mobilize the ethnic groups to challenge the national integrity of state such as:

- It may be the political factor that is political participation, legitimacy, integration, weak state or a centralized authority.
- Or the economic strand which causes the ethnic disputes in state which included the relative deprivation in the regions, inequality and improper development.
- Or the social elements that causes the disturbance among the ethnic groups to rebel against the injustice, inequality and for their basic needs.
- Lingual and religious differences are also the components which may cause threats to national security (Fawzi, 2022).

- Geographical factors may also contribute in this respect such as creating desires for secession. Especially when state faces the scarcity of resources or the ethnicities has concentration on a specific geographical region.

Factors behind Ethnic Conflicts in Pakistan

Specifically, there are several factors which threaten the integrity of Pakistan:

(i) Religious Factor

The over dependence on religion makes the leadership to overlook the crucial arrangements for the integration of state and also causes religious extremism which enhanced the polarization in society rather than uniting it.

(ii) Weak Economy and Meager Resources

In the modern world economy is taking precedent over the other institutions. Weak economy is the main cause of disturbance in Pakistan and a hurdle in cooperation between the central and provincial governments. Provinces had the grievances of unfair distribution of wealth. Due to economic disparities, there is dissatisfaction among the people of underdeveloped areas. They resort toward the nationalist movements to get their claims accepted. Pakistan lacks a proper policy planning but according to Hassan Askar Rizvi lack of participation in the state power management and poor socio-economic justice are also among the crucial causes of conflict (H.A. Rizvi, personnel communication, August 19, 2023).

(iii) Dominancy of one Ethnic Group

Many refer the diversity in a federation as strength when various factions get united and formed an entity. But if it caused isolation and internal group conflicts then it is not serving the national cause. Things become problematic with the hegemony of one ethnicity over the others. Pakistan is comprised of multiple sub-nations having diverse cultures which can easily turn upon each other in case of dispute in order to gain power. In this power struggle any one left behind get disillusioned about the national cause (Rashid, 2016). In Pakistan the smaller Provinces have the grievances of Punjab dominancy over the state administrative set-up.

(iv) Ethnic Polarization and Partially Motivated Political Culture

From the time of independence Pakistan began to face the challenges of ethnic integration. Religion as a prime source of unity began striking with the ethnic identity politics. Things began problematic for those factions who wanted the state should be governed by the identity of religion to maintain its unity, rather than governed by the identity of ethnicity language or the place of origin and get divided. With that the regional politics also damaged the course of nation building. And people use to prefer ethnic identity over the national identity.

(v) Narrow Concept of Nationalism

The irony is Pakistani as a nation get united only in the time national disaster or having an external threat. Once the situation gets under control and the issue is dealt the internal rifts and contradictions starts again. Such a narrow concept of nationalism produced intolerance in the society. Sensing from the very beginning the founder of Pakistan Quaide-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said that we must prefer themselves as Pakistanis, not Balochis, Pathans, Bengalis, Punjabis. And now we should feel proud of being a Pakistani and should act as one nation (Ahmer, n.d.).

(vi) Role of Political Parties and Leadership

The role of political parties and its leadership become crucial as they effectively mobilize the ethnicities. When they adopt the aggressive policy statement and use the sentiments to serve its own agenda creates a horrible scenario for state security and national integrity. Ethnicities having suspicions about the state authority or the other groups can be easily manipulated by the leaders. Due to strong ethnic ties and the political mobilization by regional political parties to serve their own agenda the sociopolitical process developed negatively. That's why federal phenomenon is critical in Pakistan.

(vii) Controversial Policies of the Federal Government

In Pakistan the central ruling elite always wanted to gain the hold over all power while on the other hand the federating units always objects this strategy because they are frustrated and concerned for their rights. Every time when the concerned groups tried to put forward their grievances the government handled it in worst manner. Here we have to take a look to government way of handling of such conflicts that how they tried to cope with the challenges to handle such demands through Constitutional way and why still the problem prevails.

In Pakistan policy making process always became awkward and creates ungainly situation due to reservations of various groups apprehensions related to the policy. Starting from 1956 Constitution, the implementation of the Constitution became problematic for the government due to the tensions between the various groups especially between East and West Pakistan. After so many challenges and experiences the 1956 constitution was enforced only to get abrogated within two years.

The idea of one unit was a disaster because it was the ethnic assimilation of West Pakistan in order to gain numerical gain over East Pakistan. They mixed the ethnic groups of West wings by crushing their identity. From such move the government further disturbed the situation. “This created two provinces one linguistically homogeneous and other linguistically heterogeneous (Adeney, 2009).

In order to control the situation a highly centralized setup was introduced on the command of Ayub Khan, the 1962 Constitution that slowly sparked the ethnic debate by exposing the centralized tendencies of the central powerful elite. Zia policy of Islamization was also a part of this policy chain only to control the opposition.

Such policy experiments showed that the main focus was just to ensure the hold on power and not to solve the real issues but to conceal the problems for a specific period of time. These experiments give the expression of non-seriousness on the part of leadership. That’s why the ethnic conflicts still prevailed and the feelings of alienation deepen in the smaller provinces of Pakistan.

(viii) Power Centralization

In a multi ethnic federation the mechanism of power distribution is a complicated and sensitive process. Power centralization in such federation is a dangerous trend. In case of Pakistan, the political elite groups always tried to hold power and to keep the rest of the units under the control of central authority. The centralized system of governance suited the dictators. But the same approach was also evident even during the civilian regimes. The external security challenges and the political instability on domestic front put the army in the central position in policy making process and in country’s politics which further promoted the centralized tendencies in Pakistan’s political structure and it resulted the ethnic conflicts and majority minority groups tussles in Pakistan.

(ix) Process of Decentralization in Pakistan

The process of decentralization is mostly required in heterogeneous societies through which the public governance is managed. It is pursued in many forms in various countries according to their requirements. Pakistan is a federal republic having a centralized governance structure although various attempt was made from time to time to either centralize or decentralized the power structure through various policy arrangements. Constitution which is considered the most important instrument for the demarcation of power sharing between center and provincial governments is always an instrument of political elite in Pakistan through which every group just tried to gain its own power and to keep the rest of the units under the control of central authority. Pakistan has a rich history in introduction of new Constitutions for centralization or decentralization. The 1962 Constitution of Pakistan, the military designed Constitution were in favor of highly centralized federal authority. The third one is the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan introduced by a civilian government having more decentralized features as compared to the previous constitutions. It balanced the relation through center and units with the introduction of a bicameral legislature (establishment of Senate) and with the introduction of Council of Common Interest (CCI). But it gradually got centralized due to controversial amendments made by autocratic rulers.

Amendments are the major source of change in a constitution which is properly utilized by the government elites in full manner. It deeply affected the shipment of power balance towards centralization and decentralization in Pakistan. The 8th Amendment by Zia-ul-Haq and the 17th Amendment by General Pervaiz Musharraf in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan established the trend of centralization in Pakistan curtailing the powers of Parliament and autonomy of the provinces empowering the President and Governors to dismiss the Assemblies.

Implications

Integration is a notion close to the concept of unity and can be achieve in a society through cooperation. Multi ethnic federation often struggles with integration and in to convince these groups for cooperation become a difficult task. Things get problematic when the groups start feeling insecure in society and feel that they are not treated equally like others, or not fully accepted in the system. Such feelings of alienation offend them and they become rebellious and reject the state authority which they consider, is purely based on the representation of dominated group in order to exploit them.

- In a multi ethnic federation like Pakistan, national integration for the central government means to keep the whole power under their control and those who complaint faces harsh treatment. For them integrity depends upon the centralization of power in order to keep the territory intact if not the people. In Pakistan the policy makers seem to ignore the real factors behind the separation of Bangladesh when they try to deal with the current disputes” (Khory, 1995). While for the people the concept of integration lies in autonomy as in a centralized system where they consider only one dominated class has the whole power to control them is not justified. As a result, the concerned ethnic groups had clashes with the state or either with another ethnic group.
- Due to the Challenges from the beginning Pakistan’s pursuit for its survival has been compelling but uncertain. Despite having Muslim majority population which observes the common religion Pakistan has been engaged in a continuous struggle to carve out a national identity and evolve an inclusive political system for its diverse cultural society. In case of Pakistan, the main problem faced by the leadership from early stages was whether to act according to the belief of those groups who were in the support of strong center or to grant autonomy to the units? The early crisis and security challenges provided the base for those factions who hold the idea that a strong center is the need of time to hold the unity of the state which gave rise to the centralized tendencies and as a result controversies started. The dismemberment of Pakistan happened in 1971 was the result of regional and ethnic politics triggered by power centralization.
- An uncountable series of economic crisis adds more in its misery moreover the scarce economic resources and its distribution in an equitable manner remained a challenge for the central government. The problem attached directly to the limited economic resources is the fair distribution. A state with limited economic resources faces the challenge of unequal level of developmental process. Negligence from the state in terms of sharing the developmental projects among the units promote inequality and disturbed the economic equilibrium in society thus giving way to feeling of injustice and relative deprivation which causes the ethnic mobilization in society. Those groups respond more violently towards the state policies which are economically and politically underprivileged. The uneven distribution of economic resources or feelings of exploitation produce

psychological frustration among these groups. Punjab is the most developed and most populace province in Pakistan as compared to the others that's why it dominates all the institutions of state. Due to its dominancy the other provinces redefine themselves as distinct ethnic groups. The un-privileged group starts competition with the privileged one and demands fair share for themselves. But the fact is even with its much potential Punjab is not totally immune from ethnic issues although these are not the conflicts like the others. The demand for the Southern Punjab province seems like the division for administrative purpose but it had attached the strings of Saraiki ethnicity who are the residents of South Punjab which is the reflection of ethnic conflicts in Punjab. The interesting fact is the concerns are based on the distribution of resources as most of the funds are allocated to Northern Punjab. The horrific incident of East Pakistan inception caused on the basis of unequal distribution of resources. The same factors are strengthening the regional sentiments. Balochistan is rich in natural resources but weak and backward in socio-economic terms they often engage in conflicts with the state due to uneven economic development.

- The party politics is also equally responsible in narrowing the national tendencies and promotion of regional politics. From the beginning the role of two main parties was regretful. Muslim League considered itself the only victorious party therefore claimed full monopoly over the system. Their treatment with the political rivals was harsh. On the other side Awami League taking the advantage of people sentiments and imperfect attitude of Muslim League was unfortunate. Despite reducing the gap between the two wings their improper response further complicated the relations. The atmosphere of political confrontation was promoted by the party politics. If the central government policies and strategies were strong and effective such tricks would have a little appeal on people's minds. The ethnic disputes break out of the fear for survival (Fawzi, 2022). The role of political parties and its leadership become crucial as they effectively mobilize the ethnicities. If they adopt the aggressive policy statement and use the sentiments to serve its own agenda especially spreading ideas through media will create a horrible scenario for state security and national integrity.
- Due to strong ethnic ties the sociopolitical process negatively get developed instead of positive one that's why federal phenomenon

is critical in Pakistan as compare to US because the states with strong structure are more likely to face protest but weaker states face actual violence (D ‘anieri, 2007). The federal setup, established in post-colonial era had the problems of ethnic cohesion having weak democratic system and no institutional evolution the centralized tendencies emerged. As a result, the sentiments of provincialism arise with the linguistic movements in Pakistan. From 1948-71 in East Pakistan, in 1964 till in Sindh, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 1947 and in 2010, in Punjab and Bahawalpur in 1970-present the Hazara movement after 2010 and Baluchistan from 1970 till present (Bukhari & Kamran, 2013). All these issues were dealt poorly due to structural weakness through which the society becomes more divided.

The 18th Constitutional Amendment

The main purpose of 18th Amendment was to restore the original democratic form of the Constitution of Pakistan and to deliver autonomy to provinces in order to ensure stability of the system and to strengthen the national integrity. The 18th Amendment was the major turning point in the power distribution mechanism which came in 2010 where all the political actors agreed on a setup which would decentralize the federation, owing to the changing majority-minority relations in the provincial perspectives and shift the power dynamics from center to the province (Faiz, 2021). Yet 18th amendment changed the spirit of federation and transformed it from authoritarian to democratic one. The amendment did its best to restore the confidence of smaller federating units but unintentionally brought up the issue of new provinces in Pakistan in forefront such as movement for a separate province in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the Hazara province” (Mirza & Fatima, 2021).

No doubt the amendment introduced wide scale reforms leading to enormous increase in the powers of the provinces but caused the ethnic disturbance in the politics of Pakistan by causing the uneasy sentiments among the ethnic minorities within the provinces” (Faiz, 2021). Now the minority groups in the provinces became conscious about their identity and rights that they may be suppressed by the majority in the province. That’s why the resentment of provincial minorities such as Muhajir in Sindh Pashtuns in Balochistan, the Hazara community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Saraikis and Bahawalpuri ethnicities in Punjab came forward with the demands of creation of separate provinces for them (Faiz, 2021). But if deeply observed the real motives behind such demands are of ethnic nature along with administrative one. To change the name of the

NWFP was a long-standing demand of Pakhtuns the name which is the expression of the ethnic identity of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was accepted. However, it did alert the ethnic minorities even some incidents of violence occurred in the Hazara region holding about the 20% of the whole provincial population (Khan, Khan, Shahzad & Khan,2016).

Moreover, the social and economic deprivation further disturbed the situation in a society which lacked the common sense of acceptance. During the election campaigns where every mainstream political party makes the demand of new provinces their main agenda without thinking about its pros and cons but after the election no considerable action is seen but their false promises in campaigns mobilize these ethnic minorities and leave them frustrated. Through 18th amendment autonomy is granted. With the devolution of authority, the chances of disputes did get decreased but due to the bad governance improper arrangement by provincial governments majority-minority tussle still exist in the provinces. The 18th Amendment brought a proper package with offers and favors but at the same time it did create challenges for the provincial government to show the capability of proper delivery of services and act responsible of keeping integrity of the state intact along with the autonomy (Khalid, 2013).

Recommendations

- Power centralization is a dangerous trend in a multi ethnic federation. The 18th Amendment was introduced in order to reverse such trend in federation of Pakistan but still much more sincere efforts is needed for its proper implementation.
- To control the sentiments of regionalism or ethnic conflicts the use of force by the government must be avoided. These aspirations must be controlled by flexible approach at very first stage, not by use of force. In order to create a sense of nationalism the government must adopt inclusive policies. According to the pattern set by the 18th amendment.
- Weak economy and economic challenges such as un-equal distribution of wealth and resources is the constant and most certain factor behind the ethnic conflicts in Pakistan. In this area Pakistan must need to improve its economic situation and to counter related challenges as it has no other options.
- Political parties are the effective tools through which the narrative of nationalism can be promoted. There is a great link between the national unity and the role of political parties they can also play the role of inclusion of these ethnic groups in national and social

fiber by spreading the awareness in society so they can adopt the positive approach with the aim of nation building. During their election campaigns they must avoid the exploitation of regionalist sentiments of ethnic groups.

- Constitutional misadventures and controversial policies by the central government create a sense of discrimination in ethnic groups and fear for survival. The policies must be inclusive in nature and the reforms must be appealing to the people.
- The concept of power centralization is reversed through 18th Amendment. The Amendment introduced an effective plan for power devolution but on the other hand the ethnic conflicts arise demanding the creation of new provinces on the basis of ethnicity. But there are still some areas which need to be addressed such as an effective local government structure should be implemented for the purpose of reducing the tussles between the regional ethnic groups, both the central and provincial authorities must prefer to work together and coordinate to bring up a solution and balanced strategy for the solution of problems. All it needed to change the status of diversity from weakness to strength as no state cannot eliminate its diverse ethnic groups but needed to homogenize it in the social fiber of the state.
- The issues related to the creation of new provinces in Pakistan, needs a proper national debate with all stake holders on board for the settlements. The problem related to these demands would be considered because creation of the new provinces is not harmful but it is a legitimate demand as it will make the administrative management easier but must be considered on administrative lines not an ethnic one with its pros and cons. Moreover, it should be discussed through legal forums like legislature etc not on the streets with the exploitation of ethnic sentiments of ethnic minorities. According to Rt. Major General Inam-ul-Haque (personal communication, August 24, 2023) the renaming of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was readily accepted by all stakeholders in the Parliament if any community had the objections why their leaders didn't oppose it on the floor of the Parliament. In fact, all of them gave their approval for the Amendment.

Conclusion

Federal system is considered the most suitable option for the successful management of ethno-linguistic groups. It helps to keep the federating unit unified. This system is most effective in democratic and

economically developed societies but the countries having weak democracies and weak economies are struggling, having so many internal and external challenge. The serious issues included the mistrust between the center and federating units and ethnic conflicts between the various ethnically marginalized groups, religious extremism, Politicization of the regional issues by the political leadership and the deteriorated economic situation. Which not only cause the mistrust between the center and provinces but also caused disturbance in the regional ethnic groups posing a danger to the national integration. Considering the group demands as a threat the federal government hesitate to provide the autonomy and tries to strengthen the grip over state power. While these groups are so adamant to achieve it as it is their legal right. This creates mistrust and the space got filled by the opportunists' groups tries to mobilize the regional ethnic groups for their own purpose. The 18th amendment tried to resolve the issues of governance and to create a balanced and smooth relationship between the center and federating units and in fact it did achieve most of the targets successfully but on regional front it did create some unintended consequences. When NWFP was renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa it provoked the ethnic groups especially the Hazara ethnic community started protest and demanded the creation of a new Hazara province to recognize their ethnic identity as they did for Pakhtuns in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Pakistan had a very complex and heterogeneous federal structure. Due to economic, political and social problems and politicization of ethnic issues and exploitation by the opportunist factions it faced hardship to create harmony in society. Pakistan needs internal strength and unity to face the internal and external challenges. It requires the unity and support of the public to ensure the national integrity of Pakistan. By addressing the main factors behind the conflicts, it can create an atmosphere for national and social integration. According to Hassan Askar Rizvi (personnel communication, August 19, 2023), provincial autonomy has increased after the implementation of 18th amendment. But for success provincial autonomy and the accommodation of diversity in a practical system have four aspects:

THEORETICAL- You need a legal and constitutional framework to address these issues.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE- What happens on the ground is critical. How the principles and promises are being enforced.

LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES- How other countries have dealt with internal disharmony and conflict. Why

some countries succeeded (East Asian countries), why other countries, including Pakistan, ran into difficulties.

GRADUAL PROCESS- National harmony and integration are gradual processes. You cannot achieve them overnight; nor through exchanging charges and countercharges. There is no ideal solution except in text books. At the operational level, it involves political experience of representative governance, political continuity and the policies of inclusion of diversity and economic justice.

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