

# Personalized Politics: the issues and challenges of Democracy in Pakistan.

## Outlines:

### 1) Introduction

Personalized politics is what, that destroys the root cause of democracy and ironically Pakistan has been facing this dilemma for seven decades. It is the reason of lack of proper and stable development in the country. To cope with the issues efficiently, Pakistan needs to work on those factors that help in strengthening democracy.

### 2) Importance of stable and able politics in a democracy.

### 3) Personalized politics is the root cause of failure of democracy in Pakistan.

3.1) Self centered agendas and low chances of development and political awareness.

3.2) All focus on holding power

3.3) Short sighted and short-term policies.

3.4) Unethical help from non-democratic institutions.

3.5) Rise of revenge politics.

a) target arrest of opposition party's workers.

b) Based on popular political parties.

3.6) Wretched freedom of expression ~~and~~ ~~and~~ ~~and~~

3.7) Favouritism, nepotism and culture emerged very fast.

3.8) Lack of transparency and accountability.

4) Strategies to tackle personalized politics to attain bright future of democracy. Way forward.

4.1) Politically aware public is the key to ensure and protect quality.

a) Quality education and effective participation.

4.2) Well implemented local self government system to



- to disperse the cloud of power concentration.

4.3) Culture of respect of people's mandate to avoid anarchy.

4.4) Effective separation of powers among top-tier institutions to avoid unethical intervention.

4.5) Independent judiciary for the protection of democratic values.

4.6) Media freedom to show real side of government policies and hidden agendas.

## 5) Conclusion

In the intricate tapestry of Pakistani politics, the prominence of personalized politics stand as a defining feature, weaving its threads through the fabric of democratic governance. In Pakistan's landscaped many charismatic leaders whose personas transcend party lines and institutional framework. From the populist appeals of

Bhutto to the military backed ascendancy of Musharraf, individual leaders have wielded significant influence. Personalized politics is the root cause of failure of democracy in Pakistan because it only focuses on holding powers rather than making long term and long sighted policies. Its agendas are self centered and it wretched the freedom of expression. In this type of political culture nepotism and favouritism is very common. But Pakistan is a democratic country so it is necessary to make strategies to tackle personalized politics by implementation of local self government system, culture of respect of people's mandate strengthen the judiciary and aware the public for their basic right. These are the ways which are essential for the development of democratic Pakistan.



Moreover, stable and capable politics are indispensable for the health and vitality of any democracy. Stability ensures a conducive environment for economic growth, social cohesion and the rule of law. According to study IM 2020, political stability positively correlate with higher levels of investment and economic development. Additionally capable political leadership is essential for addressing complex challenges such as poverty, inequalities, favouritism and nepotism etc. Research by the World-bank highlights the importance of competent governance in implementing effective policies and delivering public services. Without good leaders democracies may struggle to respond to crises and meet the needs of their citizens leading to dissatisfaction and instability.

Furthermore, the issue of

personalized politics indeed plagues democracies like Pakistan. It hinders the development and fosters self-centered agendas over collective progress. In Pakistan dominance of dynastic politics is also the part of personalized politics. In which political powers are concentrated in within the specific families rather than distributed based on merit or public service. Pakistan has been facing personalized politics since bhutto era. This personalized politics erode the public rights and this cycle perpetuates a lack of development and accountability, undermining the democratic ideals of representation and public welfare.

Moreover, Democracy is fail in Pakistan because every leader is struggling only for holding power rather than they invest themselves for the betterment of public. These leaders have enough



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Capacity to undermine the institutions weakened the rule of law and stifled pluralism. The World Bank's report on governance in Pakistan highlights how personalized politics has contributed to governance challenges including corruption and limited service capacity, thereby undermining the effectiveness of democratic governance.

However, many of the leaders in Pakistan that focus on short-sighted and short-term policies. These leaders were often characterized by personalized decision making, prioritizing short-term gains over long-term stability and progress. These leaders focus on mega infrastructure projects often neglected crucial sectors like health care and education etc. This pattern reflects a broader trend in Pakistan, where leaders prioritize personal power and immediate power gains over the long term policies, that are imported for wellbeing of the population.

Furthermore, these leaders have very strong back support from non-democratic institutions. The era from 1999 to 2008 experienced personalized politics that suppressed the democratic institutions. In this era constitution was suspended and declared emergency rule and led to the dismissal of judges. This case underscores the detrimental impact of personalized politics and external interference of democratic institutions and fostering a culture of authoritarianism.

Undoubtedly, personalized politics also fostered the culture of revenge. In this culture personal grudges take precedence over national interests. A notable study is the ongoing power struggle between three parties in Pakistan rather than focusing on policy making their leaders are busy in making cases over opponents. This culture of personalized politics



undermined - the domestic norms of institutions, perpetuating a cycle of instability and governance challenges.

Furthermore, the issue of personalized politics and the subsequent failure of democracy in Pakistan is indeed deeply rooted. In Pakistan leaders are very powerful many of non-democratic institutes are under these leaders. Due to their strong hegemony they censor the voices of journalist that is very undemocratic. If any of the channel or journalist try to lead the voices against personalized politics, then these leaders suppress the voices of these channels through force. Additionally, the freedom of liberty and freedom of expression is fundamental right of the individual in democratic country but unfortunately due to personalized politics democracy erode.

Moreover, in personalized politics leaders prioritize their personal

interest over national welfare, public have no right to questioned about public policies. In personalized politics, culture of nepotism and favouritism is very common recruitments are based on nepotism over merit. Culture of corruption is very common in personalized politics, for instance, in 2016 panama case and in 2022 tosha khana case are the most prominent cases of corruption that is the main reason of failure of democracy in Pakistan.

Besides these issues, it is necessary to adopt some strategies to tackle personalized politics for attaining bright future of democracy.

The first strategy is to awared the public with their basic rights. Aware people known how to protect the basic right i.e right of education, right of



of liberty etc. This literate nation blocked the way of personalized politics in future. This is the way to strengthen the democracy.

Furthermore, to ~~to~~ eradicate personalized politics can be eradicated by implementing local self government disperse the concentration of powers and curb personalized politics. Alex de Tocqueville praised the "New England Town Meetings" for their role in fostering democratic principles. He observed that these meetings cultivated a sense of civil duty and collective responsibility among citizens, and help to demolished personalized politics in Pakistan. While local self government demonstrate how decentralization could disperse the concentration of power and promote more inclusive governance.

Moreover, Personalized politics can be demolished

through increased the culture of respect the people's mandate by ensuring that leaders are accountable to the electorate rather than to their personal ambitions or Charisma. A historical case study from the United States illustrate. This is the watergate scandal of the early 1970s. The scandal involved a break in at the democratic national subsequent cover-up by Nixon's administration. As investigations progressed it became evident that Nixon had undermined the democratic process and violated the public trust. By reinforcing culture of respecting ~~edit~~ the people mandate the United States managed to strengthen its democratic institution and deminish the influence of personalized politics, setting precedent for future governance.

Moreover, the principle of



Separation of powers is pivotal in dismantling personalized politics and fortifying democracy. This doctrine ensure that the powers of the government are divided among three distinct branches, -the executive, the legislative and the judiciary. A notable historical example illustrating the effectiveness of separation of powers in combating personalized politics and strengthening democracy can be found in the post world war II, reconstruction of Germany. After the fall of the third Reich, the Allies sought to establish a democratic system that would prevent the rise of another authoritarian regime. The basic law for the Federal Republic of Germany, enacted in 1949, instituted, a separation of powers to achieve this goal. In short, the German experience offers notable lessons for countries like Pakistan, where personalized politics pose a significant challenges to democratic governance.



Moreover, Free media plays a pivotal role in dismantling personalized politics and strengthening democracy by promoting transparency, accountability and informed public discourse. One notable case study illustrating this dynamic is the role of American media during the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s. The Watergate scandal involving a break-in at the Democratic National committee head-quarters and subsequent cover-up by the Nixon's administration was brought to light largely due to the persistent investigative journalism of reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein from the Washington post. Their reporting based on anonymous sources and through investigation, revealed the extent of the administration's involvement in illegal activities and abuse of powers. In short this Watergate scandal exemplifies,



how free media can effectively challenge personalized politics by exposing misconduct, fostering a culture of accountability and empowering the public with information.

In a nutshell, the issues and the challenges of Democracy in Pakistan encapsulates the multifaceted dilemmas faced by Pakistan's democratic framework. The predominance of personalized politics, where individual leaders and their charisma overshadow institutional integrity and policy based governance, undermines democratic processes and institutions. This phenomenon exacerbates issues such as political instability, corruption, and a lack of accountability, thereby impeding genuine democratic progress. Addressing these challenges necessitates a concerted effort to strengthen

democratic institutions, promote political education and cultivated a culture of transparency and accountability. Only through such comprehensive reforms can Pakistan hope to overcome the detrimental impacts of personalized politics and realize the true potential of its democracy.