

# Political Polarization; Governance and Society.

## Outline:

### Introduction:

- \* The world is experiencing extreme polarization in actions, opinions and ideologies.
- \* The political polarization is inflicting negative impacts on good governance, progress and stability of society.

### What is Political Polarization?

2.1 It is the extreme divide of political opinions and ideologies among different groups and political parties.

### Impacts of Political Polarization

on governance: -

3.1 Destabilizes the democratic rule in the country

- 3.2 Hinders the legislative and constitutional procedures
- 3.3 Centre and provinces working in silos <sup>due</sup> to political divide.
- 3.4 Instability in policy making
- 3.5 Involvement of external powers in state affairs

#### 4. Impacts of Political Polarization on Society:

- 4.1 Political and civil unrest leading to riots and protests
- 4.2 Spread of misinformation leading to distrust and bias
- 4.3 Increased intolerance and bigotry towards fellow citizens with opposing views.
- 4.4 Reduced participation in democratic processes.
- 4.5 Fragmentation of society along ideological lines, creating echo chambers.

## Causes of Political Polarization :-

- 5.1 Identity Politics, making polarization personal and emotional
- 5.2 Media biases and digital polarization
- 5.3 Economic and social inequalities fuel political divide
- 5.4 Lack of mutual respect and trust
- 5.5 Bickering and name-calling.

## Recommendations :-

- 6.1 Bilateral dialogue between different political groups and parties
- 6.2 Finding middle ground and win-win solutions for progress of the country
- 6.3 Practising respect, tolerance and open mindedness toward opposing opinions
- 6.4 Promoting media literacy to combat misinformation.

## 7. Conclusion:

→ Political polarization is a growing challenge for good governance, progress and stability of a society.

\* Essential to take recommended steps and implement strong policies to curb the growing threat.

The world today is interconnected, yet divided at the same time. The world is experiencing extreme polarization in actions, opinions and ideologies. Political polarization is one of the pressing issues of today that has created extreme divide in the society. It is defined as extreme divide among political opinions among different groups. It is inflicting negative impacts on good governance, progress and stability of a society. Healthy discussions and discourse are the basis of a strong democracy, but if paired with intolerance and hate towards opposing views, it destroys the social fabric and fuels social fragmentation. Political polarization has become

a great challenge for governance and social harmony. From destabilizing democratic rule and constitutional procedures to disrupting the decision making processes, from civil unrest and mistrust among the society to bigotry and creation of echo chambers, political polarization is threatening for the status quo. Steps are needed to mitigate the adverse effects on society. Dialogue and bipartisan collaboration can help in this to curb this situation.

Political Polarization is defined as the extreme political divide of opinions and ideologies among individuals, groups and political parties. It is the rigidity and intolerance towards opposing views.

A growing division of political realities to ideological extremes

where individuals and groups become more entrenched in their beliefs and less willing to engage or compromise with opposing perspectives.

The first and foremost impact of Political polarization on the governance of a country is <sup>on</sup> the democracy. It destabilizes the democratic rule in the country. Democracy prevails in the presence of discussions, mutual respect, collaboration and collective decision making. Due to the extreme polarity in the society, the democratic processes are badly impacting. The political parties with their far rightist or far leftist agendas do not agree to a <sup>mutual</sup> political solution (of the continuous instability) which leads to further staggering of the

democracy within a country. It gets really challenging to govern a country with severe political attitudes with no openness to political discourse or compromise. Thus political polarization destabilizes the democratic system of a country.

Similarly, political polarization also hinders the legislative processes and constitutional procedures of the country. All the legislative policies and constitutional amendments <sup>etc</sup> require great simple majority or two-third majority to pass. This process is supported by healthy discussions in favour and against of the policies / bills to be passed. With the extreme intolerance and opposition to the opposing views, if the elected members

do not agree to one solution  
hence staggering the process further.  
The important and critical  
matters of the state are  
left unfinished and unaddressed  
due to the negative political  
attitudes of the members of  
the parliament or political  
parties. Thus political polarization  
impacts the legislative and  
constitutional procedures of the  
country.

Moving forward, it is observed  
that the extreme divide  
in ideologies and political  
philosophies forces different  
parties, authorities and government  
to work in silos and without  
any collaboration. The centre  
and the provinces <sup>do</sup> ~~are~~ not  
working together as the extreme  
political polarization comes in

The way of bipartisan collaboration  
The progress of the country  
gets hampered as different  
authorities and stakeholders are  
not working together. Thus  
political polarization leads to  
a political divide among  
the center and provinces that  
becomes a hurdle in the  
path of good and effective government.

Furthermore, the extreme political  
and ideological divide is  
impacting the policy making  
in the country. As the authorities  
are unable to come at a  
mutual point, no policy is  
effective and is not implemented.  
For a policy to be successfully  
implemented, all the stakeholders  
need to come to a common  
ground. (with this) As the

policies are not backed by majority people, the situation becomes volatile. Policies tend to shift dramatically with changes in power. This makes the long-term planning difficult and reduces stability. Thus political polarization leads to volatile policy making with no solid backing from majority members. This affects the governance and management of a society poorly.

Moreover, political polarization and lack of mutual decision making allows external forces and authorities to come in play. When the major political parties and the elected members of the society are unable to devise plans and policy that are mutually

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accepted and respected by all.

This pushes the administration and the legislative executive to take the field and make authoritarian decisions.

As the leading parties are unable to govern due to their extreme intolerance and bigotry towards opposing ideas and views, authoritarian governance arises with decisions, policies and regulations that ~~are~~ become binding for everyone to follow.

This political polarization of the democratic system hampers and destabilizes the overall governance structure of a state.

Moving forward, it is essential to state the direct impact of political polarization on the society along <sup>side</sup> with

the governance of a society. Political polarization creates a political and civil unrest that leads to riots and protests. The extreme division of ideologies and views among political parties lead to violent protests and strikes against the opposition parties. As the political parties can not sit together and agree on mutual grounds, the party leaders and the members follow the same attitudes. It leads to extreme unrest ~~in~~ within the citizens of a society as no one is ready to hear and respect the other person's views and ideologies. The two groups come in direct clash with each other either physically or virtually. This

further promotes anger and violence in the society. This political polarization can lead to such devastating impacts on a society.

Similarly, political polarization also leads to spread of misinformation in society causing distrust and biases. Both groups spread false information about the other group with different ideological perspectives. Media biases also play their role, promoting one group and defaming the other. Such a situation creates fuels social harmony and leads to further social fragmentation of the society. Thus, members of one group lose complete respect for the members of the other group. This worsens the overall

Situation of the society. Thus political polarization can lead to such destruction of social fabric of a society.

Furthermore, the political polarization fuels disrespect, anger, intolerance and hate among

the members of different groups. As the political politicians do not show respect to their fellow politicians with varied ideological beliefs, their followers act in similar way.

This creating bigotry towards opposing views and ideas.

Mutual respect of each other,

and their belongings and ideas

is the basis of a stable society.

When all of these are endangered,

the society is at the verge

of destruction. Lack of

respect and tolerance towards

fellow citizens completely destroys a society from within. This political polarization has such a negative impact on the society.

Moving onwards, the political polarization also causes reduced participation in democratic processes.

The election turnout becomes reduced due to distrust and intolerance. As citizens do not trust the volatile policy making, minimum compromise and a lack of healthy respectable discussion, it leads to lack of trust in the fairness of the elections and the overall democratic process. This leading to reduced participation of citizens in such countries. The democratic system destabilizes as it is run by the people and

in such critical situations, the people give up on the system and the society Political Polarization can lead to such alarming situations for a society.

Least but not the least, the political polarization leads to fragmentation of a society along ideological lines that create echo chambers. This

creates an environment of stagnation as no one group is ready to ~~accept~~ hear and accept the opposing views.

Both the groups consider themselves to be right and continue living and working like this.

Due to the creation of echo chambers, no opposing view reaches them, thus creating a comfortable environment for the members of a society.

This further leads to the rigidity and permanence of sharp conflicting political ideologies of different groups. This political polarization can lead to such instability of a society.

Moving forward, if looking at the causes of political polarization, there are a number of reasons that can be addressed one at a time. First and foremost political polarization and the rise of it in the recent times is due to the practice of identity politics. It means associating oneself with an ethnicity, nationality, sect or religion. To gain more attention and followership, many political parties and individuals have adopted it.

Identities like Punjabi, Pakhtun,  
Shia, Suni, Muslims, and many  
such ~~more~~ racial and regional  
identities are used to bring  
out the emotional association  
among the masses. This  
makes the polarization emotional  
and personal further enhancing  
it even more. This identity  
politics is one case of  
political polarization.

Similarly, media biases  
and digital polarization are  
other cases of political  
polarization among societies.

The media outlets and  
companies promote news and  
content that favour a certain  
group, thus promoting their  
views and ideologies. Similarly,  
digital platforms also allow  
access to such websites and

information that promote a certain type of agenda. This creates a greater divide among the people having access to those without it. Social media and digital platforms are playing huge role in promoting the political polarisation for their own benefits.

Moreover, the economic and social inequalities also fuel political divide. The groups of society with access to stable livelihood and means of production think very differently to those deprived of it. Both the groups favour such policies and ideologies that benefit them and promotes their interest thus creating more divide among the society.

The political polarization is caused by economic and social inequalities and can be increased fueled by it even more.

last but not the least, political polarization is increased by the immoral and bad behaviours of political leaders. Bickering and name calling opposition leaders damages the status quo and disrupts the social harmony. Lack of respect towards each other by major political party leaders have a trickle down effect. The party members and the followers adopt such attitudes and opinions and treat others in similar fashion. Thus political polarization is increased by

the direct disrespectful attitudes of the political leaders towards other party leaders.

The situation created by political polarization is deteriorating and reaching extreme levels.

Essential steps are needed to curb the situation. For example, dialogue and bipartisan collaboration among different political parties and authorities can abate the situation. Bilateral dialogue and communication can lead to a middle ground. Finding solutions that prove a win-win situation for all is ~~is~~ mandatory for the progress of a country. Similarly, Simultaneously, practicing respect, tolerance, open mindedness towards opposing

views can help attenuate the alarming polarization of the society.

It is also beneficial to combat the misinformation being spread by promoting media literacy.

By decreasing false information and rumours, the anger and intolerance <sup>among citizens</sup> can be reduced.

aiding in this can help in overcoming the growing political polarization among the society.

In conclusion, political polarization is a growing and alarming challenge for good governance, progress and stability of a society. By taking the recommended steps and implementing strong policies, this growing threat can be averted.