

I Introduction

In the 1960s, Pakistan was considered one of the fastest growing countries of South Asia. Though it inherited a weak economic base and stringent resources to thrive on, Pakistan steadily grew from a nascent state to a state with moderate industrial base and economic growth. Its economic growth and development was primarily guided by its 5 year plans which decided the future course of developmental activities. Pakistan had to undergo for it to boost its economy. To better understand the planning mechanism, one would have to dive into the five year plans and their successes and failures.

II Overview of Pakistan's five year plans

a) First five-year Plan (1955-60)

Pakistan was a newly independent state at that time. It had a weak ^{economic} industrial base and poor agricultural productivity. Therefore, the first plan focused on improving agriculture, transport and communication sectors of Pakistan. However, due to inadequate administration capacity and limited financial resources, this plan failed. Agricultural productivity remained low and industries couldn't progress as expected.

b) Second five year Plan (1960-65)

Under Ayub Khan presidency, the second plan proposed immense industrialization and 'The Green Revolution'. This plan materialized into a hallmark of economic success and this period was referred to as the decade of development.

Countries like South Korea studied this economic plan for inspiration. Pakistan's GDP grew by 6.8% and Korangi Industrial area was successfully developed in Karachi.

c) Third five year Plan (1965-70)

This period was marked by political turmoil caused by Pakistan-India war of 1965. The plan proposed continued effort for industrialization however there was moderate growth and industrial expansion couldn't be materialized.

d) Fourth five year Plan (1970-75)

Under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, fourth plan was produced. This period is marked by political instability due to the war of Bangladesh of 1971. Fourth year plan focused on socialism, introduced a policy of nationalism. However, nationalism led to corruption and inefficiency. The industrial sector suffered due to poor management ^{of} public ownership.

e) ~~Sixth~~ ^{Fifth} five year Plan (1978-83)

Under Zia ul Haq regime, this plan focused on policies towards privatization and liberalization. There was emphasis on encouraging investment and regaining confidence of the private sector. This period showed moderate growth but long term issues like poverty and unemployment persisted.

f) Sixth five year Plan (1983-1988)

This plan focused on economic stabilization but due to external debt and inflationary pressures, no notable progress was observed.

7- Subsequent five year Plans (1988-2000)

This period was marked by transient political regimes and rapid policy shifts. There was inflationary pressure and Pakistan relied heavily on external debt. These plans failed to focus on the underlying structural issues of Pakistan.

8- Post 2000 Era and abandonment of five year plans

Post 2000, Pakistan adopted short term development frameworks and medium-term development frameworks. Country adopted adhoc economic policies in response to crisis.

Loopholes in Planning Mechanism of Pakistan

1- Political Instability

There were inconsistent political leaderships ^{which} led to discontinuity in policy implementation. For instance, in 1973 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto emphasized on socialism whereas the following regime of Zia ul Haq emphasized on privatization. This shift in political regimes caused disjointed and incomplete plans.

2- Lack of institutional capacity

There are bureaucratic hurdles and lack of trained professionals due to which the execution of these plans has been slow. The inadequacy of the planning commission and institutions at provincial level like the Urban Unit in Punjab account for poor execution of these plans.

3- Over-Centralization

The execution of plans is centrally controlled and there is little input from the provinces. Using this top-down approach, the government can't effectively implement these plans like Clara Greed in "Introduction to town planning" says: "Central Cities have the potential to provide something for everybody, only because and only when they are created by everybody."

4- Over reliance on foreign aid

Several five year plans relied on foreign aid and loans which became unsustainable over time. This also meant greater intervention of IMF and fiscal instability.

5- Failure to address structural issues

Most of the plans focused on short term growth and long term goals like eradicating poverty and employment were neglected. This also contributed to the inability of the five year plans to address the structural issues.

Conclusion

There have been structural loopholes in the execution ^{on} ~~of~~ these plans and lagging in the planning to address long term persistent issues due to which the plans have not shown mixed success.

Pakistan was regarded as one of the fastest growing nation of the world in mid 60s and its 5 years plans were used by some nation to boast their economic development. Explain the planning mechanism of Pakistan in historic perspective and identify loopholes in the existing mechanism. (