

Democracy is a instrument to promote the cause of national integration.

Outline

1. Introduction:

Democracy plays an important role in enhancing the cause of national integration because of representation of diverse groups; inclusive decision-making, and protection of minority rights, but it faces challenges to promote national integration. Thus, it is incumbent upon the state to implement preventive measures in order to promote the cause of national integration.

2. Contextualizing the terms like democracy and national integration

3. How democracy promotes the cause of national integration

3.1) Representation of diverse groups

Example: In Pakistan, political parties from various regions.

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3.2) Inclusive decision making

Point in view: all provinces have a say in
policy making.

3.3) Protection of minority rights

Point: constitution of Pakistan gives rights to
minority

3.4) Building National identity

Example: Corrida.

4. Challenges in using democracy to promote national integration

4.1) Ethnic and sectarian divisions

4.2) Political instability

4.3) Corruption and poor governance

4.4) Weak institutions

5. Way forwards to clamp down the challenges

5.1) Anti-corruption measures

5.2) Political stability

5.3) Promoting national dialogue

6. Conclusion

" We are now all Pakistani - not Balochis, Sindhis, Bengalis, Punjabis, and soon - and as Pakistanis we must feel, behave, and act, and we should be proud to be known as Pakistanis and nothing else."

In aforementioned statement, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said in a reply to civic address presented by Quetta Municipality on June 15, 1948 that national integration is an important factor for any country's economy. He strongly advocated the national integration in the country because he was conscious of the benefits of diverse communities. Similarly, democracy is a tool through which one can promote the cause of national integration by giving them equal opportunities in every sphere of the country irrespective of their caste, religion, language, and culture. Is democracy not giving the representation of diverse groups? Can we say that democracy gives them right to say in policy making? Is democracy not protecting

minority rights? Can we say that democracy allows diverse groups to build national identity?

Democracy plays an important role in enhancing the cause of national integration because of representation of diverse groups, inclusive decision making, and protection of minority rights, but it faces challenges to promote national integration. Thus, it is incumbent upon the state to implement preventive measures in order to promote the cause of national integration.

In order to understand how democracy promotes the cause of national integration, it is necessary to understand the terms like democracy and national integration. Democracy is a powerful element through which one can transform the society because it is a system of government in which power nestles in the hands of people through election. In a democratic process, people not only elect their representative, but they have also authority to make their leader to be accountable. Moreover, it promotes accountability,

enhances meritocracy, ensures rule of law, generates sense of unity and gives freedom of speech. On the flip side, national integration is a process of uniting a nation's diverse communities. This process ensures that all groups feel included and become part of the larger political, social, and economic framework. In addition to this, it emphasizes unity, harmony, and collective identity despite differences in ethnicity, language, religion, and culture.

One of the most important ways democracy promotes national integration is through the representation of diverse groups. In democracy, all citizens, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or region, have the right to participate in elections. This will ensure that every community has a voice in governance. For example, in Pakistan, various political parties represent their ethnic and regional groups, such as Sindhi, Pashtun, Punjabi, and Balochi. This representation increases inclusion and gives marginalized

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groups a sense of belonging which eventually contribute national integration. Thus it is safe to assume that democracy promotes national integration.

Like representation of diverse groups, democracy also enhances inclusive decision making. In a democratic country, all communities have authority to send their representative in decision making process.

By including all groups, they will have say for their rights. For instance, in Pakistan, all provinces, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, language, and culture, have a say in policy making in the national Assembly. This will not only give them equal opportunity for their rights, but it also promotes sense of unity which ultimately leads to national integration.

Apart from this, protection of minority rights is another element of democracy which enhances national integration. In a democratic country, there is a equal opportunity for everyone, be it in majority or

in minority because democracy protects minority rights irrespective of their religion, culture, and language. For instance, The Constitution of Pakistan gives equal rights to minority and protects these rights if they are being violated. By doing this, the minority community will also indulge in the country completely and work for the well-being of the society. So, it is a clear indication that democracy promotes national integration.

Furthermore, building national identity is also important factor because democracy allows them to live their life lives freely and independently. By doing this, they will build national identity by promoting the national integration is instead of calling themselves through their culture, language, religion, and region. For example, the people of Canada. In Canada, various diverse groups live together like Indians, but they consider themselves as Canadian. This promotes national identity because

...selves as a separate region. For instance,

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they consider themselves equal, regardless of their own identity. Therefore, it is not wrong to say that democracy is an instrument that promotes the cause of national integration.

Despite its potential, democracy faces several challenges in promoting national integration. One major issue is ethnic and sectarian divisions. It is one of the major issues in which people are often divided on the basis of ethnic tensions and sectarian divisions. For example, ethnic tensions between Sindhis and Muhajirs and sectarian divisions between Sunni and Shia, particularly in Sindh and Khabar Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). These tensions not only create unrest in the country, but also promote disintegration. As a result, national integration is often compromised.

In addition to this, political instability is another issue that constrains national integration. Frequent changes in governments create unrest in the country in which

diverse communities are being ignored. Not only this, but there is also no permanent policy which gives favor to minorities and marginalized groups because of political instability. This not only enhances political division among various factions, but it also impacts the economy of government due to lack of participation of different communities. Hence, it is logically safe to assume that political instability downsizes the participation of diverse communities.

Not only this, but corruption and poor governance also creates hurdle in promoting national integration. Undeniably, democracy ensures equal opportunities, but due to lack of good governance and corruption the rights of marginalized groups and communities are being mismanaged. Corruption has become the evil of our society in which certain groups or factions fill their pockets. Not only this, but there is no one who makes them accountable owing to poor governance. As a result, the affected communities consider themselves as a separate region. For instance,

The people of Balochistan consider themselves as separate due to lack of good governance and corruption because their resources are being ignored. Thus, it does not allow democracy to function properly in enhancing national integration.

Lastly, weak institutions are also playing an important role in containing democracy to promote national integration. These are various institutions which do not perform well, like Judiciary. In a democratic process, Judiciary plays an important role to maintain checks and balances so that all institutions work properly, but Judiciary often faces problems, such as political interventions and military interference. These forces do not allow Judiciary to work on the basis of transparency. As a result, the rights of marginalized groups are often ignored and denied owing to lack of accountability. This not only affects the Judiciary, but it also creates sense of disintegration.

In order to deal with these issues, there is a dire need to opt adopt some preventive measures to rule out these challenges. One of the most important solution is to enhance

anti-corruption measures. It is not possible to promote national integration unless there is a element of corruption. By implementing such measures which make the official accountable, like check and balance, digital calculations, and enhancing awareness regarding the corruption, the country can downsize the corruption. Therefore, it will promote sense of equality and equity among various factions.

Apart from this, political stability is another solution. This will enhance national integration by making long-term policies. If there is a political stability in the country, the government will mull over other issues like national integration, equal rights, transparency and meritocracy. **Ishrat Hussain writes in his book 'Governing the Ungovernable' that political stability plays vital role in promoting national integration.**

Therefore, it is necessary for the government to implement some policies which promotes political stability for the sake of national integration.

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Additionally, promoting national dialogue is also essential. It is necessary for the government to call in all parties together and promote national dialogue in which they all agree to promote national integration, regardless of their culture, language, religion, and regionalism. Nelson Mandela also emphasized that national dialogue is essential so that all marginalized groups can participate. Hence, it is necessary to promote national dialogue so that the country moves smoothly on the path of democracy where all groups and communities are equal.

In a nutshell, democracy is a powerful tool through which people get equal opportunities. It not only promotes equal opportunities, but it also enhances the cause of national integration by giving representation to all communities, allowing them in decision making process, and protecting minority rights. But it also faces various challenges, such as political instability, corruption and bad governance, and ethnic and sectarian divisions. Thus, there is a dire need to clamp down these challenges by adopting some measures.