

Strong provincial units support the federation

Outline

I. Introduction

Strong provincial governments are essential figures to help federation in terms of economic development, political stability, and social cohesion.

II. How do strong provincial units support the federations?

(a) Enhancing political stability by representing diverse population

Case in point: 18th amendment in Pakistan

(b) Strengthening national economy by collective contribution of provinces

Case in point: 21.5% states contribution to national GDP as per The German Federal Statistical office report

(c) Preventing cultural homogenization while

promoting unity

Case in point: celebration of national events

(d) Improving governance by providing service delivery to the lowest tiers

Case in point: Article 140(A) of 1973 constitution of Pakistan

(e) Fostering innovation by formalizing policies to support federation

Case in point: California's climate policies about carbon trading

(f) Promoting democratic principles by encouraging citizen's participation in decision-making

Case in point: Switzerland's direct democracy practices on local issues

(g) Capitalizing regional cultures and attractions to support tourism

Case in point: Tourist spots in Northern areas of Pakistan

(h) Facilitating cross-border collaboration and trade partnerships to help the centre

Case in point: Regional government collaboration across borders within EU framework

III. What are the challenges that hinder provincial units to support the federation?

(a) Conflicts among provinces over resource allocation

Case in point: Gas loyalty issue of Balochistan and Kalabagh Dam dispute

(b) Weak administrative structures hindering effective governance

Case in point: Balochistan's poor governance machinery

(c) Overlap of provincial identities with ethnic and linguistic division

Case in point: Tension between Sindhi-speaking population and Urdu speaking Muhajirs

(d) Dependency on federal funding due to weak revenue generation capabilities

Case in point: Economic Survey of Pakistan
2022-23 reports provincial tax and non-tax
revenue grew only by 12.4%.

(e) Uneven development across provinces
creating regional disparities

Case in point: CPEC unfair benefits

(f) Poor inter-provincial coordination leading
to inefficiencies in managing national issues

Case in point: provincial governments implemented
varying policies to tackle COVID-19

IV- What should be the strategies to
strengthen provincial units while maintaining
federal integrity?

(a) Ensuring equitable resource distribution
mechanisms to avoid conflicts

Case in point: Canada's Equalization Program

(b) Strengthening inter-provincial conflicts to
avoid resolve disputes

Case in point: Promoting the role of
Council of Common Interests (CCI)

(c) Investing in capacity building for provincial governments to enhance governance

Case in point: Civil service reforms and e-governance initiatives by KP government

(d) Addressing provincial grievances through political inclusion

Case in point: Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan

(e) Promoting inter-provincial projects for shared growth

Case in point: CPEC's multilateral projects

(f) Encouraging national integration through education and media

Case in point: Single National Curriculum to promote unity

V- Conclusion

Federation is the essence of successful nations where provinces work collaboratively to assure the sense of robust centre-province relationship. It is upon the strength and stability of federating units that the integrity of federation depends. When provinces are empowered in terms of politics and governance, economic sector, and decision-making role, federation experiences resilience and support. Political stability by including diverse population, collective contribution of local economy to the national economy, and promoting unity in diversity are some points that reveal the strength of federation via the support of provinces. Similarly, at the time of provincial autonomy ensures the participation of citizens in decision-making, leading to the stability of the centre while promoting democratic principles. However, there are some challenges that hinder the real essence of center-province collaboration. It includes the conflict among provinces over resource allocation. Moreover, weak administrative structures of provinces impacts governance model, affecting the solidity of federation. Therefore, some robust

measures should be acted upon by the stakeholders to ensure the strength of provincial units while maintaining federal integrity. Ensuring equitable resource distribution and addressing provincial grievances through political inclusion are some strategies to promote provincial autonomy while balancing federation.