

Task
Critically evaluate recurring constitutional crisis
and institutional imbalance since 1947.

Analyze impact of patronage-politics and
institutional capture on democratic process
Suggest roadmap for genuine constitutional
supremacy.

INTRODUCTION

The partition of Indian subcontinent bestowed Pakistan with weak institutional and constitutional apparatus. The death of Quaid-e Azam produced a leadership vacuum, thereby a power-struggle resulted in client-patronage politics. Furthermore, Feudal lords rarely knew the affairs of framing constitution, thus weakening the basis of democratic and inclusive governance. The narrow-decision-making circle identity crises besides power centralization and marginalization. Subsequently, the feudal system transformed into institutional overreach, which further increased constitutional crisis and institutional imbalance. The return of democracy was a ray of hope for expansion of decision-making circle; however, preyed to client-patronage politics. Since then, the fragmented political will and unity created constitutional crisis. Thus, it is important to address these challenges by adopting inclusive political participation through e-voting and decentralization to empower the local tier of the society.

Historical Overview

The birth of Pakistan resulted in weak economic basis, thus shifting the burden to feudal elites by making the system dependent on

them will while compromising the supremacy of law.

Constitutional Crisis and Institutional Imbalance

Client - Patronage Politics:

The collusion of politicians with feudal lords created a system of client-patronage politics. Maleeha Lodhi in her Pakistan's Search for Stability interprets this system as main hurdle in way of democratic process, where the limited people had access to decision-making circle.

Lack of constitutional Framework

The main reason that client-politics prevailed in the country since inception is lack of constitutional patronage. Nadeem Qasir in his An investigation into Political economy of Pakistan notes that power struggle among elites diverted their attention towards powerful positions instead of constitution framing.

Institutional Imbalance

Nadeem Qasir notes that the early unskilled politicians provided an administrative vacuum, which was filled by most dominant institution while the rest remained subordinate to it.

Constitutional Crisis

[1] — Client-Patronage Politics

[2] → Reliance on Feudals

[3] → Lack of Constitution

[4] → Unprofessional Politician
and struggle for power

IMPACTS OF Patronage Politics.

And Institutional Capture

① Narrow decision circle Promoted
Marginalization

As a result of power concentration,
social inequality prevailed and mostly
non-party basis election weaker and
discourage people's participation in
democratic process.

Power
Concentration



Non-Party
Based election



Discouraged democratic
process

Dynastic Politics

As a result of constitutional crisis and absence of democratic governance, a class of few people held the top-position, denying others equal access, thus, weakening democratic process.

Provincial Autonomy and Identity Crisis

During constitutional experimentation, and the one-unit system, the provincial autonomy reduced the spirit of federation. As a result, many realized that their identity is suppressed by dominant class, which resulted political instability.

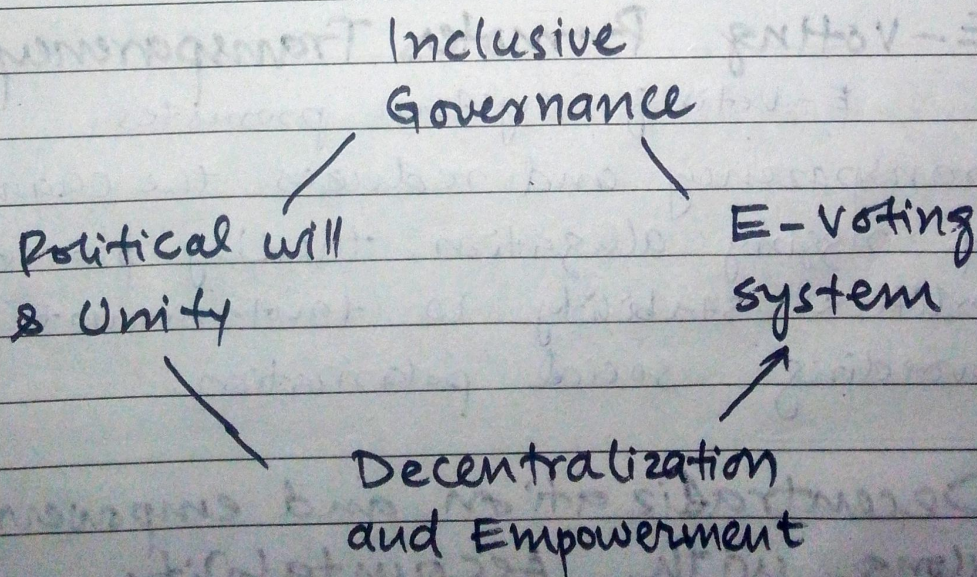
Institutional overreach and Abrogation of Constitution

Hamid Khan interprets constitutional abrogation as systematic practice of laboratory in Pakistan. This practice was done through coups d'etat and abrogation of constitution and persistent power vacuum.

Impacts of Patronage Politics and Institutional Capture

- ① → Power Concentration & Marginalization
- ② → Dynastic politics
- ③ → Provincial Autonomy & Identity crisis
- ④ → Institutional overreach

ROADMAP FOR GENUINE CONSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY



Inclusive Governance

Inclusive institutions and governance earns the confidence of people and gives the sense of ownership. As a result, people support policies of the government because they've equal voice in decision-making.

Political Will and Unity

Political will is the most important factor in implementation of democratic norms. The early history of US depicts the struggle for dissemination of democratic norms while Pakistan's history shows struggle for favourable position.

E-voting Promotes Transparency

E-voting system promotes transparency and reduces the chances of rigging allegation, thereby promoting political stability is tantamount to avoiding social polarization.

Decentralization and empowerment along with Accountability

Decentralization and empowerment translate paper policies into visible actions, thus promoting proactive and efficient use of resource. Similarly,

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people can make accountable their leaders easily because of easy access.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that Pakistan early history is filled with struggle for power and constitutional crisis, which furthered political instability and constitutional crisis. Lack of political awareness resulted in marginalization and identity crisis. To address these challenges patronage-politics was introduced yet, it lacks legitimacy. Hence, a transparent and inclusive governance, accountable for their actions can promote democratic norms.