

**RESEARCH PAPER****Nation-building in Postcolonial States: Examining the Effects of Successive Nation-Building Policies in Pakistan****¹Muhammad Mushtaq* ²Zahra Shakil Mirza**

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ABSTRACT

The primary goal of this research is to ascertain which nation-building approach is suitable for dealing with diversity in Pakistan. Historically, the State has adopted various policies such as assimilation, coercion, and accommodation. This study employs the historical-analytical method to investigate the effects of these policies in the case of Pakistan. The findings suggest that the State's assimilative and coercive policies continued to be unsuccessful in merging the weaker peripheral identities into the dominant core national identity. Therefore, autonomy movements continued to flourish over the course of time in many regions. However, despite being a federation, for most of the period, the accommodative policy has been ignored to address the persistent identity challenges in Pakistan. The evidence shows that the post-18th amendment period has witnessed some inclusive governance and politics of accommodation that have effectively contributed to the nation-building process. Hence, this paper argues that this approach is more appropriate to deal with diversity.

KEYWORDS Accommodation, Assimilation, Coercion, Nation-building, Pakistan, Postcolonial States

Introduction

The concept of nation-building is a normative one and has remained contested especially in ethnically diverse countries where the construction of a single unified identity remains a controversial phenomenon. Yet, nation-building is a desirable phenomenon in weak states. The objective of nation-building "is to unify the people living within a certain state in such a way that the state is politically stable, economically viable, and socially sustainable." The State can adopt a variety of strategies to manage the peripheral identities of people within its territory. Such strategies attempt to "create an overarching supra-national identity that should replace or subsume sub-national identities and cultures" (Godefroidt et al., 2016). Creating such nationalistic aspirations has also become an important part of the State's strategy to create legitimate order and secure the loyalties of the citizens.

Strategies for nation-building range from assimilation and coercion to accommodation. While assimilation and coercion seek to merge disparate identities into a single identity, multiculturalism and accommodation value distinct identities and believe in unity in diversity. The power-sharing arrangements such as federalism and consociationalism inevitably lead to the politics of accommodation. The power-sharing model seeks to "secure the rights, identities, freedoms, and opportunities of the partner ethnic communities, and to create political and other social institutions that enable them to enjoy the benefits of equality without forced assimilation, and with only limited integration—common formal citizenship" (O'Leary 2001, p. 42). Accommodation is more likely to produce long-term stability than coercion and control systems because the former resolve horizontal imbalances, but the latter expands socioeconomic gaps across ethnic

groups, which is more likely to frustrate a disgruntled subordinate group, increasing the likelihood of conflict (Commercio, 2008: 88).

Since its inception in 1947, Pakistan has faced nation-building challenges as well as ethnopolitical violence in various regions. To address the nation-building crises, Similar to other postcolonial states, Pakistan has long experienced assimilationist and coercive policies. The state's policies, however, have recently shifted. Since the enactment of the 18th constitutional amendment in 2010, the Pakistani federation appears now more accommodative and inclusive. In this context, this paper aims to investigate various nation-building policies adopted by the Pakistani state to assess the impact of these policies in the case. The paper is comprised of four sections. The next section presents an overview of the nation-building process in postcolonial states. The third section introduces the case to the reader and briefly summarises the nation-building process in Pakistan. The fourth section scrutinizes the various nation-building strategies adopted by the state and how these strategies contributed to the process of nation-building in Pakistan. Finally, the paper is concluded.

Nation-building in Postcolonial States: Review of Literature

The process of nation-building has evidently remained a grave challenge for most of today's nation-states and particularly in the postcolonial states that have a complex past of exploitation. Realistically, most of the developing countries in the post-independence phase are constantly challenged by the issues of ethnic and cultural diversity. The existence of such groups requires constructing a new nationhood in the citizens by establishing a new national identity. The postcolonial nations inherited ethnic, religious, and cultural differences because of which constructing coherent and integrated nations have remained a daunting task.

The process of nation-building in postcolonial states is a unique phenomenon as in such states the process was not the outcome of internal social processes but was determined by the formation and disintegration of the European colonies. The colonial rule resulted in the occupying of large territories, often replacing the old political structures with the new governmental apparatus. Often there remained the differences between the pre-colonial political arrangements and new structures imposed by the colonial powers. Hence, in postcolonial states, the process of nation-building has remained a challenge, especially in such territories where colonial powers tried to exploit the resources by extracting economic benefits.

In most of the multi-ethnic states in Asia and Africa, the colonial powers also tried to instigate animosity between the different groups through the policy of divide and rule. In the struggle for decolonization, "the independence movements in the 1940s and 1950s transformed into dominant political parties that claimed to represent the entire population in its struggle against an illegitimate colonial power" (Hoeft & Veenendaal, 2019). After the independence from colonial rule, the dominant political parties became the sole representatives of the people and employed such nation-building tactics that were frequently detrimental to the interests of the political opposition. Therefore, in such states, nation-building was imposed by the state structures from above without taking into consideration the varied identities and the need for cultural accommodation. Hence, there was a necessity of creating a national identity within the territory to strengthen the newly independent states.

However, the main challenge in postcolonial states remained to build a cohesive and integrated identity while at the same time accommodating diverse identities. Unfortunately, "while trying to create a feeling of togetherness and belonging, a shared identity, there is always the possibility that certain groups within society prefer to take the secession route and aim to break away to form their own nation-state" (Grotenhuis, 2016). This danger of disintegration is a reality particularly in fragile states that suffer from a lack of cohesion and

the elements favoring the succession are stronger than those groups advocating togetherness. Although secessionist tendencies are motivated by the aspirations of the national government to create a homogenous nation-state that mirrors the shared identity, ethnic and cultural diversity remains a reality in today's world.

Nation-building process in Pakistan

Pakistan presents a unique case of identity construction based on Islam as an instrumental variable. During British colonial rule, Muslim nationalism emerged as an explanation for an independent homeland for Muslims. Hence, Islam served as a basis of shared political identity in a newly formed State and the creation of a singular national identity. Before the independence of India, Muslim identity triumphed over regional and linguistic loyalties in Muslim-majority regions. However, with the partition of the sub-continent, Islam's unifying role weakened, and peripheral identities emerged, challenging the creation of a shared identity in Pakistan. The rise of ethnic nationalism hindered the efforts of the government to create a singular religion-based national identity that could rise above local loyalties.

As is the case in the majority of the postcolonial states, the State of Pakistan preceded the creation of a nation as well. The independence from colonial rule was mainly a break from the exploitative past because there existed no concrete notion regarding how the newly formed State would proceed as a nation. The misconception developed that nation-building was a self-directed process that would flourish itself after independence. However, the later experiences proved that nation-building was a complex challenge that managed to shake the foundations of the State. "Pakistan faced the challenges of separatism, mainly based on its distinct ethnic identities (Mushtaq & Zahra Mirza, 2022)". Pakistan ultimately "became the first postcolonial state that experienced a secessionist movement resulting in the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 (Mushtaq, 2009)". The tragedy of East Pakistan served as a distressing instance of the breakdown of the Two-Nation Theory "when a large part of the population prioritized ethnic identity over religious identity" (Qaiser, 2015).

People in the multi-ethnic nation of Pakistan speak various languages and exhibit unique cultural characteristics. The emphasis placed by the state elite on Urdu as the only official language created mistrust in Bengal and had a devastating impact on the process of nation-building. Although the Constitution of 1956 and 1962 declared both Urdu and Bengali as the national languages of Pakistan, the seeds of grievances regarding the status of the Bengali language had already been sowed in form of Bengali nationalism. From the very start, the differences over the constitutional framework led to suspicion and distrust among the people of certain regions, especially Bengalis. West Pakistan also witnessed political mobilization along ethnic lines and centrifugal forces received attention over time. Some Sindhi and Pashtun nationalists launched the so-called movements of Sindhudesh and Pashtunistan respectively, but they failed to gain widespread support, and the movements subsumed gradually. On the other hand, the state successfully suppressed the sporadic autonomy movements that arose in Balochistan from time to time. Contrary to this relative success in West Pakistan, Bengali nationalism culminated in East Pakistan, resulting in the establishment of Bengal in 1971.

Contemporary Pakistan comprises four provinces. All provinces of Pakistan are associated with a distinct ethnolinguistic group i.e., Punjab with Punjabis, Sindh with Sindhis, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Pashtuns, and Balochistan with Balochs. However, each province has a significant proactive minority having a territorial base and demanding a separate administrative unit for the group. Traditionally, Punjab, the most populous and prosperous province, has remained centralist in its approach. But the minority provinces are essentially autonomists. The smaller provinces have dissimilar perspectives on the federal design, distribution of resources, and matters pertaining to public and foreign policy. Although separatist sentiments have deteriorated in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, some Pashtuns and Sindhis have repeatedly shown nationalist sentiments and a considerable

attachment to their traditions, culture, and language. Similarly, the Balochs have a strong sense of distinctiveness regarding their identity. They have resisted the assimilative policies that were designed to mitigate their identity. In comparison to the other ethnic groups, they have mobilized more frequently for autonomy in post-1971 Pakistan. The relative marginalization of Balochs in the power structure of Pakistan and the underdevelopment of Balochistan province are particularly important in understanding the dynamics of their autonomy agenda. Likewise, the Saraikis and Hazarewals are demanding for “creation of new provinces in their respective regional bases. The majority groups of the respective provinces seem reluctant to endorse such demands” (Mushtaq, 2016). It is quite possible that this situation could become another challenge for the turbulent Federation in the coming years. Briefly, this situation seems to suggest that Pakistan is confronted with the challenge of nation-building.

The process of nation-building has been accompanied by many attempts by the State to rectify the situation by adopting various policies. However, any such policies are desirable but at the same time difficult to achieve in a culturally and ethnically diverse society. This article examines the predicament of Pakistan in creating a sustainable national identity out of various regional identities. It provides an insight into the effects of assimilative, coercive, and accommodative policies adopted by the State. It also aims to highlight that the response of the State towards countering ethnic demands has been inclined towards coercive measures instead of adopting a dignified accommodation of peripheral identities. Consequently, instead of achieving any coherent integration, the centralization of powers has alienated provinces.

Nation-building policies in Pakistan

There is a range of strategies and approaches that have been applied to the nation-building process in multi-ethnic states. Scholars have categorized these states’ policies into various categories. De Beer (2001) classifies policies into three broad categories: assimilation, coercion, and consociationalism. Mylonas (2013) divides policies into three broad categories: assimilation, accommodation, and exclusion. Similarly, Hashmi (2014) identified three broad state policies that are usually implemented by states as part of the nation-building process. These are assimilation, exclusion, and pluralism or multiculturalism policies. Building on these taxonomies, this paper attempts to categorize Pakistan’s State’s approaches to nation-building in three categories: (a) Assimilative approach that refers to the policies that were aimed to assimilate the non-core groups or the politically weaker identities into a dominant core culture; (b) Coercive approach that refers to the policies that involved coercive measures to suppress the centrifugal forces in order to bring about national unity or integration; (c) and the politics of accommodation that put emphasis on power-sharing and the recognition of diversity.

The process of nation-building has been expounded by the problems of representational issues in framing the constitution, lack of representation in federal institutions, the one-unit scheme that ignored the distinctive territorial identities of the various provinces, and the disintegration of the State in 1971. Somehow, the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan was intended to be inclusive and unlike its predecessors, the demands of the various groups were accommodated. However, even in post-1971 Pakistan, the process of nation-building has further been obscured by the tense relations between the Centre and the provinces. Punjab has been viewed by other provinces as the Centre’s favourite monopolizing the ownership of resources. The Baloch, Sindhis, and Pathans observe themselves as stuck in a political system controlled by the Punjabi majority that dominates the key institutions of the country. The policies adopted by Pakistan for nation-building have been discussed below.

a) The Policies of Assimilation and Coercion

Assimilation is the process by which individuals or groups of different ethnic backgrounds are assimilated into a society's dominant culture. In this process, "formerly distinct and separate groups come to share a common culture and are merged together socially" (Healey & Stepnick, 2019). As a nation-building strategy, assimilation "refers to the educational, cultural, occupational, matrimonial, demographic, political, and other state policies aimed at the adaptation of the core group culture and way of life by the targeted non-core group" (Mylonas et al., 2010). But, the coercive strategy of nation-building involves the application of force and even violence to bring about national unity or integration of the constituent groups in a country. In most of the developing states, autocratic regimes use military force to suppress centrifugal forces.

It has been argued that the nationwide assimilation policies demand national integration through the promotion of national language, national dress, and other traits of national culture. The goal of the assimilative policy is national integration, which is pursued through governmental policy, that can be either violent or non-violent in nature. The conventional strategy under the assimilative approach is the refusal to provide public education in minority languages. The supporters of the assimilative approach assert that such actions promote nation-building, social solidarity, and stability.

To promote the homogeneity of the population, it is often recommended that the focus should be on the promotion and use of national language as a mechanism to promote national identity. In the same way, the assimilative approach adopted by Pakistan remained unable to address the challenges of diversity in Pakistan. After the creation of Pakistan, it was decided by the state elites that Urdu would be the lingua franca of Pakistan. The leadership of the Muslim League in West Pakistan projected Urdu as a symbol of national integration. However, the assertion to adopt Urdu as a lingua franca triggered nationalist sentiments in Bengal. This declaration caused resentment in the Bengalis which eventually resulted in mass protests in East Pakistan. The Bengalis demanded that both Urdu and Bengali should be the state languages. For instance, in 1952, Dhaka witnessed widespread protests when Khawaja Nazimuddin, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan announced that Urdu will be the national language of Pakistan.

Apart from Bengalis, the Sindhis have remained more concerned about the State's language policy. Rahman (1997) has pointed out that "Sindhi speakers strongly resent the ruling elite's policy of favoring Urdu". After partition, the influx of Urdu-speaking Mohajirs from India defied the social position of Sindhis and challenged the privileged position of the Sindhi language. The mode of life, language, traditions, and literature were markedly different from those of the indigenous population. The Sindhi language became an integral aspect of the identity of Sindhis in the presence of Mohajirs. Sindhi has always been considered a crucial component of cultural heritage by Sindhi ethno-nationalists. The Sindh came to be divided into Sindhis and Mohajirs. Eventually, as an outcome of language policies adopted by the State, the Sindhi language started to lose its status receiving an insignificant value, especially from people in areas of urban Sindh. "The tension between the two communities, Sindhis and Mohajirs on linguistic and cultural grounds so tightened that it led to language riots twice: one in January 1971 and the other in July 1972" (Pathan et al., 2018).

During the era of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Sindh Assembly moved a bill declaring Sindhi as the official language of Sindh. Consequently, "Mohajirs demonstrated against the bill in Karachi and Hyderabad and serious riots erupted between Sindhi and Urdu speaking ethnic groups with government through issuing an ordinance in favour of Urdu diffused tension between two groups" (Majeed, 2010:58). Hence, the language policy of the State for nation-building process in Pakistan had proved to be counterproductive as well. This validates the point that developing a national language cannot promote national identity in all cases. It has been argued that "the deliberate use of the language for purposes of national identity may, at least in a multi-ethnic state have more disruptive than unifying consequences" (Kelman, 1971).

The second assimilative policy of the State that proved unproductive was the creation of the One-Unit scheme in October 1955. This scheme was “designed to integrate all of the provinces of West Pakistan into one cultural and administrative unit” (Baxter, 1974). This scheme strengthened the nationalist sentiments in the regional identities that resulted in ethnic strife and political violence in the peripheries. The implementation of the One-Unit program deprived the various provinces in West Pakistan of their autonomy. The provinces that were amalgamated together were not simple “administrative units but were historical homelands of communities possessing distinctive ethnocultural identities” (Khan et al., 2020). Thus, it was not only the loss of political autonomy for the provinces but also the damage to their identity.

Similarly, the local population of Sindh also considered the One-Unit program as a potent threat to their distinctive identity as the unification ended Sindh’s standing as an autonomous province. The implementation of the One-Unit scheme gave preference to Urdu as a medium of instruction and as an administrative language that incited Sindhi writers to rise against the marginalization of their language. The Sindhis also had apprehensions of “Punjabis’ dominance and marginalization of people from smaller provinces because of Punjabis numerical strength and better level of modernization as compared to peripheral regions of West Pakistan” (Khan et al., 2020: 155).

Likewise, the unification of Balochistan into One-Unit was also strongly disapproved of by Baloch nationalist leaders. Hence, contrary to the notion that the One-Unit scheme would resolve the constitutional crisis, the scheme was severely criticized and resented in Balochistan as well. The administrative unification was believed to build up effective administration and achieve national integration. However, “the coercive measures employed by the central government for the approval of the One-Unit plan became a source of displeasure among smaller provinces” (Khan et al., 2020: 154). Consequently, a sense of marginalization develops among the smaller units as they do not have a substantial share in the decision-making.

The third notable assimilative program was adopted by General Zia-ul-Haq during his regime. The Islamization program of General Zia-ul-Haq has been regarded as an assimilative policy employed by the State. However, this policy also remained unsuccessful in integrating the distinct regional identities into the dominant core identity. Zia had maintained that Pakistan is an ideological State as it was founded based on the Two-Nation theory that anticipated a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims to practice Islam. He opined that “it would only be through a total and all-embracing Islamization program that Pakistan would be able to proceed successfully with the task of national integration” (Rakisits, 1988: 80). General Zia was convinced that “Islam must be the primary focus of one’s affective loyalty; and all other effective values, especially the ethnic identification, must become secondary” (Rakisits, 1988: 80). However, it has been argued that the Islamization program of General Zia-ul-Haq was unable to address the problem of separatism in the smaller provinces. With reference to coercive policies, various civilian, as well as military regimes in Pakistan, have used force for the vested interests of their respective regimes. It has been argued that the use of force has remained a central part of the policy of the State to manage ethnic diversity in Pakistan (Siddiqi, 2012). But, overall the assimilative and coercive policies have proved unproductive in Pakistan.

b) The Policies of Political Accommodation and Power-Sharing

This approach puts emphasis on power-sharing and the ‘politics of accommodation’. Accommodation “refers to situations where the differences of a non-core group are more or less respected and institutions that regulate and perpetuate these differences are put in place” (Mylonas, 2013: 22). This approach suggests a more dynamic role of the State in acknowledging the desires, cultures, and the individualities of the various ethnicities. In most ethnically diverse States, federalism seems a viable solution to accommodate territorially based ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences in multi-ethnic societies.

Contrary to the concentration of power in the Centre, federalism enables the delegation of power among various levels of government. Therefore, federalism “involves substantive political rearrangement that results in limiting central autonomy in policy design, implementation, and enforcement” (Shahid, 2015). The policy of federalism can recognize the plural character of society and can empower minority groups by giving them authority to govern their own affairs.

It was envisioned at the time of independence that Pakistan would be a Federal State. Even prior to the independence, the founding party, All India Muslim League articulated its demands for provincial autonomy and pursued the British government through its constitutional proposals for the adaptation of the federal system of government in India. The Fourteen Points of Jinnah’s likewise stressed the formation of a federation with the provision of self-rule at the provincial level along with effective representation and role of provinces in the federal policy-making process. It was imperative for the newly formed state to adopt the federal system to accommodate the distinct peripheral identities. It was critical for the new administration to focus on tackling the heterogeneity of various groups to guarantee the stability of a new State.

However, following its independence in 1947, Pakistan adopted a different model of federation that essentially displayed the centralization of political power and disapproval of the recognition of diversity. “The Pakistani elite in the pursuit of national unity stifled aspirations for regional autonomy from the diverse ethnic groups resulting in failure to accommodate these nascent sub-national identities in the state structure on the basis of ethnicity” (Kukreja, 2020: 29). The federal authorities intervened in the provincial matters and managed to dislodge the undesired provincial governments. The first constitution in 1956 declared Pakistan a federal state, however, the constitutional set-up under the constitution seemed counterproductive to the idea of federalism. The regional identities of the Western wing were deprived of their territorial autonomy and were amalgamated into the province of West Pakistan through One-Unit Scheme. Equally, Bengalis’ majority was transformed into parity representation in the unicameral legislature of the federation. The constitutional provisions suggested substantial federal control on legislative and financial matters. The federal experience could not accommodate the diversity and address the grievances and resentment of the Bengalis and the minorities in the Western wing. Resultantly, the centrifugal forces got momentum and autonomy demands were transformed into separatist movements. The Sindhis, Pashtuns, and Balochs had to wait for several years for the restoration of annulled provinces of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan after the dissolution of the One-Unit Scheme in 1970.

The regional minorities of West Pakistan and the Bengalis had meager representation in the civil-military bureaucracy of Pakistan. So, it was only the parliamentary democracy that was hoped to provide a forum for participation in the federal policy-making process. Unfortunately, owing to the political crisis that ensued in the early years, the Constitution of 1956 was abrogated, and martial law was imposed in 1958. As a result, the exercise and control of government came into the hands of military authorities that mainly belonged to Punjab. Under the rule of General Ayub Khan, the Constitution of 1962 was enacted to provide a civilian face to the military regime. The centralization of political power and indifference towards the regional identities remained the central ingredient of the State’s policy. The replacement of the parliamentary democracy with the bureaucratic oligarchy in the guise of a presidential system of government diminished the prospects of inclusive governance and accommodation of diversity. Though the constitution of 1962 was designed on certain federal principles, it functioned more like a unitary system. This situation strengthened nationalist sentiments in Bengal, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan. Both the constitutions of 1956 and 1962 “failed to devise the institutional arrangements of power-sharing and accommodation of diversity at the different levels of polity” (Kukreja, 2020: 30).

The downfall of General Ayub Khan occurred in 1969 consequent upon the popular protest against his unpopular regime. Just as, the constitution was abrogated, Pakistan witnessed another martial law under General Yahya Khan. The new military government presented a Legal Framework Order that accepted the numerous demands of the opposition such as the revival of the parliamentary system, indirect elections based on adult franchises, and the dissolution of the One-Unit Scheme. The first parliamentary General Elections in Pakistan took place in 1970. The Awami League of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman won elections in East Pakistan. The radical demands of Mujib for provincial autonomy were not acceptable to the central authorities. Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto won the election in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh. National Awami Party (NAP) and Jamiat-ul-Ulmai Islam (JUI) emerged as the leading parties in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Unfortunately, the political leadership could not tackle the deadlock over the power-sharing arrangements between Awami League and Pakistan's Peoples Party. Eventually, the country disintegrated.

Bhutto assumed the power as civilian martial law administrator, and subsequently as president under the interim constitution of 1972. The new constitution was adopted in 1973 and Bhutto became the prime minister of Pakistan. The democratic rule of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto lasted until 1977 when it was overthrown by General Zia-ul-Haq. One of the major moves during the period of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was the ratification of the new Constitution in 1973. The 1973 Constitution paved the way for accommodation, but the regional groups and smaller units continued demands for autonomy and power-sharing.

The 18th Amendment has been a substantial step towards accommodating distinct identities, but it cannot be considered a cure-all for the problems of governance. The proper implementation of the amendment would be imperative for ensuring stable relations between the Centre and the Federating units. The government established an implementation commission in 2010 to implement the provisions of the amendment. Although deliberate attempts were made to transfer the powers to the federating units, the problems remain in certain domains. Though the powers have been delegated to the provincial governments, there remains a need for increased cooperation between the federal and provincial governments to ensure the proper implementation of the amendment. The 7th NFC Award transferred economic decentralization from the Centre to the provinces. Now, "the total share of the provinces and the center from the divisible pool is balanced at 57.5:42.5 percent" (Bukhari & Faisal, 2013). It has also been decided that subsequent NFC awards will declare more shares for the provinces than the shares mentioned in previous awards. With the 18th Amendment, the center must consult the respective provincial government before constructing any hydroelectric power station in any province. The governor would be a resident of the respective province and would be registered as a voter in the same province. The consent of the provincial assembly on the imposition of the emergency in a province has also restricted the dominance of the center and has enhanced the power of the provinces. The regional political forces have been appeased with the correction of the names of Balochistan and Sindh and the renaming of NWFP as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This marks a step towards recognizing the ethnic identities of different ethnic groups residing in the respective provinces.

However, the 18th Amendment does exhibit potential with regard to creating national cohesion. In addition, "it has reduced the scope for arbitrary unwarranted federal intervention in provincial subjects, thus reducing the center-provincial frictions" (Shahid & Gerster, 2019: 393). The reinvigoration of the Council of Common Interests has created an inter-governmental deliberative platform that can be used for redressal of the grievances. The institutional changes in CCI and NEC have placed the provinces at the center of policy formulation. The Prime Minister "on urgent matters of conflict or row among the province would be able to convene a meeting of CCI on the request of a Province" (Hussain & Kokab, 2012: 83). Similarly, "the National Economic Council (NEC) has been assigned with another function of ensuring balanced development and regional equity" (Shahid, 2015:134).

Undoubtedly, federalism in Pakistan had taken a substantive leap with the 18th Amendment. The focus has shifted to nurturing greater inter-provincial harmony to ensure the stability of the State and foster the national cohesion that Pakistan has desired since its independence.

Conclusion

Pakistan suffered from a lack of unity as the citizens did not share a common language, culture, or identity. The leadership of Pakistan could not foster a sense of national identity in the citizens. The discrepancies in the developmental indicators, unequal level of industrialization, differences in per capita income, life expectancy ratio, and disproportionate literacy rates among various provinces exacerbated the situation. Such gaps were widely politicized by various political parties in Pakistan which resulted in the dismemberment of the State in 1971.

To analyze the nation-building process in Pakistan, one needs to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the bonds that hold the community together. The State of Pakistan has tried to employ different strategies to deal with the issues involving the nation-building process. However, at the same time, like most of the newly emerged states, Pakistan needed a strong centralized government to deal with the issues of political instability and economic underdevelopment. This seemed to rule out the possibility of strong provincial governments. Unfortunately, the process of nation-building in Pakistan ensued in the construction of dominant peripheral identities.

Traditionally, ethnic diversity in Pakistan has been defined in terms of the presence of four distinct ethnic identities i.e., Punjabis, Sindhis, Pashtoons, Balochs, and various other smaller ethnolinguistic groups. Neither of these ethnic groups has an identical class formation nor do they have equal proportional representation in the various structures of the State. Hence, there exists a disproportionate representation that has instigated the grievances of certain smaller groups against the dominant group. Although achieving national integration has remained a desirable goal for the State, the tactics employed to achieve this integration have resulted in adopting coercive and assimilative policies against ethnic diversity. However, it is pertinent to look at the other side of the coin that if the primary emphasis is placed on promoting accommodative policies, then nation-building, integration, and cooperation would be the reasonable outcomes.

The experience of Pakistan suggests that the shift from assimilative and coercive policies to accommodating minorities can play a key role in the nation-building process. The case of Pakistan indicates that assimilationist and coercive policies have proved to be unproductive. In a country like Pakistan, where there exists ethnic diversity, the accommodative approach remains the most feasible option. It has already been discussed that assimilative and coercive policies have created mistrust between the Centre and the Federating units. Therefore, the accommodative approach seems helpful in solving the crisis of nation building process. The 18th Amendment has been regarded as a breakthrough in the constitutional history of Pakistan. It can be inferred that the 18th Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan fulfils the requirements of federalism and provides the arena for the self-rule and shared rule that are the basic elements of federalism and panacea for nation-building in Pakistan.

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