

The Politics of Accountability in Pakistan: Governance Challenges and the Civil-Military Power Nexus

Kiramat Ullah	Visiting Lecturer Department of Pakistan Studies Kohat University of Science and Technology. kiramatullah@kust.edu.pk
Dr. Zarif Shad	Ph.D. in Pak Studies, Principal, GHSS Sarai Bala Dir lower (Elementary and Secondary Education Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)
Dr. Abdul waheed	Assistant Prof. Department of Pakistan Studies Hazara University
(Correspondence author)	Mnasehra Waheed756@gmail.com

Abstract: *This research article provides an analysis of the complex relationship of accountability and the political system in Pakistan, highlighting the difficulties and restrictions that are inherent in the country's governance frameworks. The study looks into how the historical, social, and institutional factors have determined the mechanisms of political accountability, which include the democratic institutions, the judiciary, and political parties. It is pointed out that the continuous weaknesses in the implementation of transparency and the holding of public officials accountable for their actions have been the main contributors to corruption, inefficiency, and public mistrust in the political process. The article maintains that despite the fact that Pakistan has built up formal democratic frameworks, the power of such institutions is greatly reduced by both the inherent flaws in the system and the absence of political will that would permit real accountability. Research journals and published content has been concerned to acquire knowledge about several legislative structures, laws and acts and their use by several political leaders during different times against different opponents, is a part of confirmed history deposited in several reports of Pakistan politics. The significance of this study lies in the variety of eras represented by several political elites who rose up to power and then vanished in the dust of time. Political power is not held by any person of institute, but it shifts with time. So, the main objective here is to study the pattern of power shift between two major players of Pakistan's political process i.e., democratic parties and military dictators.*

Keywords: Accountability, Pakistan, Government, Dictators

Introduction

Accountability is highly acknowledged as an essential element of good governance and a prerequisite for the political system's stability and legitimacy. In Pakistan, though, accountability has been often viewed as an unrealistic dream, limited by structural problems, historical inheritance, and socio-political dynamics. The political system in Pakistan from the very outset has been confronted with a number of challenges which included but were not limited to military interferences, political patronage, corruption, and lack of institutional strength, and these challenges together have prevented the establishment of transparent and accountable governance systems. Democratic institutions were set up officially, yet their role in political accountability has been so far quite inconsistent and mostly overshadowed by the power of the elites and the existing power structures. Hence, to properly evaluate the country's governance, period of political stability, and sustainable development, the intersection of accountability and the political system should be understood. The study is going to identify the issues related to the structural and institutional factors inhibiting accountability in Pakistan, try to find out the position of the political actors and institutions in this matter, and suggest the changes that are needed for the improvement of governance and the building of trust between the public and the government.

Political Culture in Pakistan

A set of mindset, behaviors, values, and approach toward political objects in a specific political system is referred to as political culture. Political parties, various sorts of elites, independent organizations, social classes, and political institutions are all examples of political objects. Of course, the interplay between political culture and these political objects is complicated. For our purposes, however, it will be enough to say that political culture relates to a group's shared experiences and beliefs in connection to the political system. These values, attitudes, and ideas gain broader acceptability in the community as a result of historical experience and serve as a basic framework within which political feelings and activity are created, articulated, and translated into action. Political culture does, in fact, transmit a strong feeling of historical continuity and recognizes consistency in political action and personal style. It also allows for dissent, i.e., encouraging variations in political beliefs and views without disturbing the overall framework. (Shafqat, 1990).

A country's political culture changes throughout time. However, this isn't always in a good way. As elsewhere in the globe, politics in Pakistan has always had ugly aspects. Political leaders have frequently engaged in a zero-sum game of politics, showing little respect for their opponents (Lodhi, 2021). Pakistan's democratic shortcomings can be explained in a variety of ways. Constitutional and electoral rules, according to some analysts, are among the institutional elements that have harmed accountable and responsive governance. Others argue that Pakistan has been let down by morally bankrupt political figures driven by raw ambition and financial profit for most of the country's history. Economic considerations are often used to explain why nations like Pakistan struggle to establish and maintain democratic institutions. Many critics also wonder whether Islamic beliefs are compatible with more liberal democratic ideals (Weinbaum, 1996).

Pakistan's history reveals a lack of effective political leadership. All of the nonsense we're hearing in the name of politics is nothing more than a bunch of blunderers, liars, and scumbags. Immature and visionless political elite and power-seeking strata have been nourished by Pakistan's political origins. Despite the fact that they could not linger with their politics due to the dominance of feudal, capitalist, and so-called political, religious leadership, the genuine politicians can only be discovered in history. Some foreign-trained politicians with feudal backgrounds, including some of the biggest names in Pakistan politics such as Feroz Khan Noon and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto as well as Malik Ameer Muhammad Khan (Nawab of Kalabagh), Mustafa Jatoi and Akbar Bugti have negotiated their honor and reputation in favor of mature politics, despite their foreign-trained backgrounds. There are numerous Bugtis, Lagharis, Mazaris, Raisanis, Jamalis, Khorous, Somrous, Nawabs and Sardars among the feudalistic political elite today. As a result, these corrupt figures are crowned by an ignorant populace (Jamil, 2018).

A vote is the right to express one's preference or viewpoint, usually by marking a piece of paper or rising one's hand. Voting behavior refers to a collection of attitudes and ideas about elections at both the national and local levels. Pakistani voters are affected by the culture of the state. A set of attitudes, ideas, and feelings that offer structure and purpose to a political procedure, along with the fundamental conventions and norms that regulate conduct in a political system, is referred to as culture. It covers a polity's political values in addition to its functioning standards (Ahmed, 2008). To protect their vested interests, several dominant political parties in Pakistan employed the Baradari and kinship system as a control mechanism. Some rays of hope can be seen in urban places, but rural communities are particularly hard hit by this heinous custom (Shah and Bakht, 2019). Since Pakistan's founding, the caste and Baradari systems have played a significant role in the country's elections, particularly in Punjab and AJK. The growth and modernization of Pakistan's election system, as well as the introduction of democratic institutions, never entirely transformed the Punjabi society's traditional value system, which is mainly based on caste and the Baradari system (Haider et al, 2020). Major Baradaris and castes in Pakistan includes Malik, Sardars, Gujjars, Awans etc., therefore during election season

Malakanism, Sardarism and tribalism etc. are witnessed while casting votes. People either vote on the tracks of their ancestors or under the pressure of their caste leader, so true sense of democracy is absent in such cases.

Political behavior is an integral component of any political game. Politics is a field of study that deals with the political system. It is not just a component of political life, but it is also a part of social life. Elections are unfamiliar territory for the Pakistani people. Pakistan held its first general elections in 1970, twenty-three years after gaining independence. Since independence, the electoral system has been continuously evolving. As a result, Pakistan's political system is still in its infancy. Government creates policies in response to requests or support from the general population through political institutions and networks of connections (Heywood, 1997).

A nation's or country's political culture is shaped by its history, economics, religion, folkways, and political evolution, among other factors. Political growth is a reasonably objective process of political advancement that leads to greater political understanding in civilizations (Alexander, 1978). Pakistan has struggled to develop a coherent and transparent political party structure, as well as a real parliamentary form of administration, since independence. Despite the fact that the Independence Act of 1947, which was legislated to give powers to the legislative assemblies of both India and Pakistan to construct their respective legal systems and to develop a democratic political culture, the ruling and opposition parties in Pakistan were unable to reach an agreement due to problems relating to their interdependence (Zain, 2010). Thus, political parties in Pakistan lack internal democracy and self-accountability which are the basic components of democratic setting.

FEDERAL-PARLIAMENTARY STRUCTURE OF PAKISTAN

After the creation of Pakistan, the state of practice has been federal-parliamentary system. The structure was British heritage and the post-independent setup changes were adopted. Taking this into account, too, we formulated the Concrete Resolution. It was subsequently crystallized clandestinely by the Pakistan's Constitution in 1956. The sole exemption was Ayyub Khan's presidential decree, but the moment he left power it was catapulted by the absence of a political indoctrination of the presidential framework. Under the 1973 Constitution, the federal/parliamentary system was strengthened. But the significant modifications in the eighth and seventeenth amendments altered the original Constitution's existence. He was intended to be a nominal Head of country and the Head of Government was to exert both powers (Nadeem & Sajida, 2015).

The Prime Minister shall invite to form a cabinet by the President, a majority party leader. He is the true leader who executes all state functions, He's a firm maker. As long as the parliament enjoys trust, he will continue in his office. On the other side of Majlis-e-Shura is the National Assembly and the Senate. Sadly, the pre-condition for the union is the two-constitution, but in the two preceding constitutions this provision did not apply. Under the 1973 Constitution, the Senate was created. There are now 342 National Assembly members and 104 in the Senate. Lower House consists of general public voting directly where the Senate is chosen on a proportional basis (The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973).

Provincial governments were responsible for remaining powers. The 18th Amendment suppressed the new list, but criminal codes, criminal proceedings and evidence were still the subjects of the legislation, both for the parliament and for the provincial legislatures. There are currently 77 federal subjects, of which 59 are in Part I and 18 are in Part II. Federalism has always been regarded as Pakistan's strongest system in its unique situations, but despite clear constitutional requirements even military language has been introduced to satisfy the units and Pakistan functions most of them as a unitary state (Goraya, 2014). The judicial system is the foundation of the selection, by Legislative Commission, of the Supreme Court, of its judges. Judicial Commission shall propose the names of the magistrates to the Parliamentary Committee. The Supreme Court shall listen to an appeal by the high tribunals, interpret

the Constitution, resolve disputes between provincial or provincial governments and the federation, serve as guardian of constitutional rights, etc.

LEGALITY OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH LITTLE SUCCESSIONS

The citizens of Pakistan have remained without general elections since the founding of Pakistan. On the basis of public will, the first general election ever took place in 1970. The electorate was first granted the freedom to vote on the franchise for adults. In mass mobilization, political parties played an important role. However, after Zia overthrew Bhutto's administration, he squatted and went to non-party elections in 1985. Frequent changes in the administration have jolted the electoral process. Democratic influence could not be strengthened by most political regimes. Either the military elites expelled them, or the chairman applied Article 58-2 (B) to dismiss them (Ziring, 1997). While obviously an extra-constitutional development, the idea of the troika (shared power between the president, the Prime Minister and the military command) has become a problem in Pakistan after the death of Zia-ul-Haq. The entire state system was later practically militarized by Musharraf. The influence was strongly influenced by the political system (khan, 2001).

GROWTH OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN PAKISTAN

The positive, cogent and constructive position of political parties is a manifestation of representative democracy. The Democratic Party is the way to raise consciousness among the people. They continue to play an important role in mobilizing public opinion on various national and foreign issues. Political leadership efficiency and the manner in which the political parties fulfill their roles form the essence of the political system in a long way. The powerful position of political parties must be shown practically in politics. Parties are often guilty of fostering seeds of political dissonance at the same time. The influence of the political parties is growing every day in Pakistan. There were 162 registered political parties in the last general election in 2013 (Election Commission of Pakistan). Today, 282 political parties are involved in the political process.

When you look at the position of political parties, one might argue that political parties in Pakistan seemed incapable of delivering democracy. In the early years of its existence, the Muslim League was the strong party while there were many smaller parties in and outside the legislature. It then became a multi-party system with the resulting system issues (Mahmood, 2000). Political parties in Pakistan have botched to create a cohesive political ideology. In their collective, interactive behavior, the climate of political peace, mutual harmony and collaboration was very important. Most of the times, the political parties in charge saw no action to resolve key citizen complaints. Hamid Khan felt it was not feasible to establish political parties alongside structural lines. Parliamentary practice had never taken hold, and the assembly refused to fulfill its primary obligation to make law, restricting itself to the pawns of the political control council (Khan, 2001). Political parties have sadly been reluctant to foster a stable political atmosphere.

The negative role of political parties had adverse repercussions on democratic progress. In addition, after the elections were lost, the problem was that most political parties returned to agitate tactics and were working to destabilize the political government. Furthermore, it helped opposition parties to start an anti-government campaign aiming to disrupt the political business of the State by taking a majority of seats in parliament with a minority voting caste (Waseem, 2006). Political groups have forged alliances against both civil and militarized states. The cardinal theory of the struggle was surprisingly the language of democracy.

The United Front against the Muslim League was formed in the decade of 1950. It was united in 1970 to question the strength of Ayyub Khan by the Combined Opposition Parties. It has become Pakistan's Democratic Front since the 1965 presidential election that acted vigorously against Ayyub Khan. During Zulfikar, Pakistan National Alliance was founded by Ali Bhutto's opposition political parties to challenge the autocratic tendencies in the PPP administration. The PNA of the opposition charged with

rigging and boycotting provincial elections which were due to take place in a matter of days after the national elections when the results of the elections were declared in March 1997. Like Indira Gandhi, Bhutto believed that the disparate opposition could not unite into a unique party, which could challenge him and his PPP seriously (Baxter, 1991).

The Movement for the Restoration of Democracy against the military dictator was founded in the 1980s. The MRD's main aims were to reconstruct the Constitution of 1973, conduct free and equal elections and hand control over to citizens, but military officials used oppressive, deadly and confrontational methods. Islamia Jamhoria Etihad was created to undermine the popularity of PPP opposition parties (IJI). Later, the PDF was set up to disrupt PML (N). The PPP and the PML (N) signed a political charter in 2006 during the period of General Pervaiz Musharraf. The paper marked an agreement between two powerful Pakistani political parties to restore constitutional, democratic order. Thus, Pakistan's politics have been rotating over coalition agitational policies from 1947 to 2014 and will continue as long as more political parties remain on this country's political soil (Nadeem & Sajida, 2015).

MILITARY-BUREAUCRATIC DOMINANCE

In western democracy, citizens and states are considered guardians of democratic rights to be given any opportunity for change. In Pakistan, during the time of political instability, military and bureaucracy exerted tremendous powers. The military has become, beyond any doubt, Pakistan's greatest and independent institution, able to influence the process and course of political reform (Rizvi, 2011). The military interference in 1958 improved further the ties between military and bureaucracy. During the Ayyub Khan era, bureaucracy quickly changed into an autocracy partner. The bureaucracy proved useful by sluggish penetration if the military advanced with a front-end assault (Yousuf, 1999). The path of the country was transformed by his martial law. A modern imperial brand has been imposed with bureaucratic connivance. The position of bureaucracy in the governance process had been relegated during Yahya Khan. The disengagement of 303 civil servants was also disjointed and dispersed.

The truth remains that once the military interfered with the democratic establishment, the political elites were never sympathized but instead accused of unleashing the political-economic turmoil in the state. Democratic elites have also been declared inept, docile, and dishonest. Security forces had to align with bureaucracy in order to consolidate power. As civil disturbances crashed and political institutions struggled to manage this situation, the military entered the political sphere and, through extra constitutional means, replaced political governments (Nadeem & Sajida, 2015). The military-bureaucratic coalition, on the other hand, led fantastically to economic growth but relegated the state politically. S. Akbar Zaidi addressed, while Pakistan's military played a key role in the democratic process through support for individuals and forming political parties and alliances and working for economic prosperity, the structural decay, political and economic stability have emerged with the absence of military rule (Zaidi, 2005).

Political leaders have been reduced to military hands, banned or intimidated. The politics of vote, location of politics, democratic divisions and constitutional engineering have helped military elite's man oeuvre their own political structure according to their own caprices and desires. Over the course of Pakistan's existence, bureaucracy remained subject to military rulers' needs. In the past it enabled the acquisition of authority through engineered referendums by Ayyub Khan, Zia-ul-Haq and Musharraf. Besides that, it helped to create a form of grassroots democracy (Waseem, 2006). The experience has shown that in contrast with bureaucracy the military has emerged better partners. There was sadly no jurisdiction to keep them responsible for abuse of influence, mismanagement or misconduct, and to carry out their tasks. There is no shadow of doubt to say that these institutions' harmonious ties have

left indelible marks on Pakistan's political structure (Nadeem & Sajida, 2015).

LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The argument that political system can be maintained only if the control and balancing system is established on a sound basis is widely recognized. Parliament in Great Britain is authorized by mutual responsibility to control the abuse of authority. The control and balance scheme has in the United States been structured to minimize all-powerfulness in the political structure functional process. No system of mutual responsibility or controls and balances was practiced in third world countries such as Pakistan. Watchfulness, memory and referenda became the valuable method to keep government and bureaucratic leaders to account before the masses, but the political unconsciousness these techniques never extended in the chronic illiteracy setting. In the management of state machinery, the idea of transparency has always been farcical. Pakistan is now facing a crisis in government without any distortion. Corrupt and inept Pakistani leaders have shattered fundamental elements of good governance, which cover the rule of law, responsibility and openness (Nadeem & Sajida, 2015).

The result of this forgetfulness is the least shocking of all in Pakistan to pervasive corruption, poor levels of human growth and higher poverty. In the absence of solid, institutionalized internal controls and oversight, government agencies become densely corrupt. In general, government office holders face an ethical dilemma, take bribes quickly and mix taxpayer money up. Lack of public procurement oversight encourages the tradition of kickbacks and commissions. Increased graft adding fuel to the fire is disastrous for the future of democracy. For Pakistan and the political establishment, corruption remains a major barrier.

The PPP's first administration was dismissed in 1988 for accusations of wrongdoing, similarly in 1997 elections accused of such accusations and the latest NGO-corruption agreement posed some national concerns about the legitimacy of the political establishment. The threat of corruption lurks the foundations of poor democracy now. The lack of duty often allowed the army and administration the ability to use force abusively. Sadly, the Pakistani political, civil and military elite accountability system was never properly established. As a means of victimizing the opposing parties, the ruling party deciphered responsibility. In general opposition groups were aggressive, militant and blame the abuse of authority by the regime. The reputation of all agencies built to ensure responsibility has been severely undermined by this behavior. An election is the ideal accountability ground for politicians or political parties, but Pakistani leaders have been unable to grasp the functioning of the political process of accountability in a democratic society.

HISTORICAL PREVIEW OF PAKISTAN POLITICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Liaquat Ali Khan and PRODA ACT

Following Pakistan's independence, Khan was named as the country's first Prime Minister (PM) by the country's founding father. Liaquat Ali Khan administered the oath to Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Muslim League was held accountable for the degradation of politics and society following independence, as well as for failing to meet public's high expectations. There was an increase in dissent and frustration, as well as an increase in the application of oppressive legislation inherited from the British or adopted by Pa, including as preventative detention and restrictions forbidding gatherings of more than five people (Blood, 1994). The Public Representative Offices Disqualification Act (PRODA) was enacted by the first PM, Liaquat Ali Khan, on August 14, 1947. According to research, on January 14, 1949, then-Premier Liaquat Ali Khan issued the PRODA to combat bribery and abuse of power. The Act was approved in 1949, but it went into force on August 14, 1947, and lawmakers may be barred from running for office for up to ten years (Shah, 2016).

Any elected official involved in corruption or misuse of power, may be disqualified for ten years under the PRODA. Nawab Iftikhar Mamdot, the then-Chief Minister of Punjab, and his lawyer, Hussain

Shaheed Suhrawardy, were among the victims. Suhrawardy subsequently became PM, and the PRODA is best known as a draconian (Black Law) anti-opposition rule. Another big PRODA prey was Sindh's chief minister in 1948, who was suspended for six years on corruption allegations (Bukhari, 2021).

Ali Khan's relationship with General Sir Douglas Gracey worsened, causing General Gracey to resign shortly after the war. In January 1951, Ali Khan accepted the nomination of General Ayyub Khan to replace Gracey as the Pakistan Army's first national army Leader. On October 16, 1951, Khan was shot two times in the chest when addressing a crowd of thousands of people at Company Bagh (Company Gardens) in Rawalpindi (Dawn, 2007). Liaquat Ali Khan's PRODA was abolished in 1954 after being condemned as inconsistent with democratic politics, but not before it cost a few renowned victims (Shah, 2016). The PRODA of 1949 empowered the government to disqualify anyone found guilty of "misconduct," a word that came to have a extensive connotation. The Security of Pakistan Act of 1952 increased the government's powers in the sake of public order (Blood, 1994). These laws were intended to rid the public sector of dishonesty. However, they were misused and eventually used to victimize political opponents (Schultz, 2007).

2. Parliament in Chaos 1951-1958

Several waves of conflicts and confrontations between governors general and prime ministers ensued in the years that followed, eventually revealing the relative dominance of the former over the latter (Dawn, 2017). Several prime ministers have been dismissed as a result of the constitution's drafting and the definition of the functions of different agencies of government. Military Dictator Iskandar Mirza, who played a crucial role in the dismissal of Governor-General Sir Malik Ghulam, is appointed in as Pakistan's first president and passes the country's first constitution (Trt World, 2018). The military also, presented a challenge to Liaquat's administration, which was less antagonistic toward India than some commanders would have liked. Major General Mohammad Akbar Khan, chief of the general staff, was imprisoned in March 1951, accompanied by fourteen additional officers, on allegations of planning a coup. The perpetrators of the Rawalpindi Conspiracy were prosecuted in secret, convicted, and condemned to jail. All of them were afterwards released (Blood, 1994).

On April 17, 1953, Governor General Ghulam Muhammad dispatched the second Prime Minister, Khawaja Nazim-ud-din. Justice Munir had to concoct the doctrine of necessity to validate Ghulam Muhammad's unlawful act after Nazim-ud-din knocked on the Supreme Court's gate. Governor General Ghulam Muhammad expelled East Pakistan's Chief Minister Abul Kasim Fazlul Haqq in May 1954 (Shah, 2016). Then there was Muhammad Ali Bogra, who was also dismissed by Ghulam Muhammad in 1954 but later re-appointed as PM. However, he did not have a majority in the Constituent Assembly, and his government was sacked by Governor General Iskandar Mirza in 1955. Muhammad Ali was elected PM in 1955, but resigned on September 12, 1956, due to a feud with Iskandar Mirza, who had been elected President as a result of the 1956 constitution. Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, the Awami League's chairman, led the party to victory in the 1954 Constituent Assembly elections. In 1956, he became the first Prime Minister from a political party other than the Muslim League. Due to differences with Iskandar Mirza, he was deposed in 1957. Following Suhrawardy's resignation, Iskandar Mirza called Ibrahim Ismail Chundrigar. He held the role of PM for nearly 2 months. In December 1957, Chundrigar resigned from his position. Then Mirza named Feroz Khan Noon as Pakistan's 7th PM (Manzoor, 2017).

3. General Ayub Khan and the process of accountability

In January 1951, Ayub Khan succeeded General Sir Douglas Gracey as commander-in-chief of the Pakistan Army, making him the first Pakistani to hold that role. Ayyub Khan's military run was not especially remarkable, and he had never had a combat command, but he was elevated over numerous senior officers with illustrious backgrounds (Blood, 1994). On October 27, 1958, General Ayub Khan became Pakistan's second President (National Assembly of Pakistan, 2019). The PRODA, according to

Ayub Khan, was a "black law" (Bukhari, 2021). Martial law was imposed in 1958 to combat "antisocial" behaviors such as kidnapping women and children, black marketeering, trafficking, and stockpiling. Many members of Pakistan's Civil Service and Police Service have been investigated and punished for corruption, misbehavior, incompetence, or subversive actions. The message from Ayub Khan was clear: he, not the public employees, was in charge (Blood, 1994).

As a result, a new Act was enacted: the Public Offices Disqualification Order (PODO). The PODO was renamed the Elective Bodies Disqualification Order not long after (EBDO). The politicians were subjected to harsher sanctions. Those found guilty of corruption face a fifteen-year ban from public service under the PRODA. The EBDO established special courts to trial former lawmakers for "misconduct," a vaguely defined offence. Prosecution may be averted if the defendants promised not to run for any elective office for the next seven years. Approximately 7,000 people were "EBDO." Some people, together with the arrested Suhrawardy, disputed the charges (Blood, 1994).

About 75 of Gen Ayub Khan's political rivals, including Suhrawardy and Qayyum Khan, were charged with corruption and banned from running for office until 1966. They were, however, never found guilty. Ayub Khan's purge has cost the lives of 3,000 civil servants, who were fired after being found guilty of corruption in special tribunals presided over by retired judges. Hundreds and other civil servants avoided conviction by a hair's breadth (Bukhari, 2021). During Ayub Khan's reign, the civil bureaucracy was in charge of administering the governmental system. Ayub's primary aim was to push politicians and political parties to the margins (Z. Hussain, Interview, 26.04. 2018). He not only outlawed political parties, but also barred numerous politicians from running for office via the EBDO. The EBDO was employed selectively against anti-regime figures (Jones, 2003).

General Yahya Khan and Holders of Representative Offices Act

Following the protests led by politician Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Ayub cedes authority to Army Chief General Yahya Khan, who declares martial law for the second time and breaks down all assemblies in 1969 (Trt World, 2018). General Yahya Khan acted with similar zeal, dismissing over 300 state officials. The HPOA and the Parliament and Provincial Assemblies (Disqualification for Membership) Act were enacted in 1976 by then PM Z. A Bhutto. Unlike previous transparency legislation, these Acts did not result in the registration of a single prosecution (Bukhari, 2021).

Pakistan's First General Elections 1970

Ayyub retired in 1968, and General Yahya Khan took over for the transitional time and elections. 1970 elections were by far Pakistan's fairest poll. East Pakistan was won by Mujeeb's Awami League, while West Pakistan was won by Pakistan's People's Party. However, during the course of the battle, Indian-backed Mukti Bahni (Freedom fighters) launched their assault, and Indian forces interfered (Asim, 2017). The East Pakistani chief of the Awami League won the country's first general elections, rising tensions with the state's West part ultimately resulting in the separation of East Pakistan (Trt World, 2018).

Bhutto's Emergence as a Prime Minister

Bhutto received a law degree from Berkley. He earned his diploma from Oxford. He was a shining star in Pakistan's newly created government. He was first appointed as foreign minister in the Iskandar Mirza Cabinet in 1957. Then he was appointed Foreign Minister by the Ayub government. His vocal stances on a number of subjects made him both popular and disturbing. Ayyub's ministers were alarmed by his flamboyance. Bhutto displayed this hostility during the Tashkent dialogues, which irritated Ayyub, who was under intense pressure from the Soviets, who wanted to resolve the confrontation as soon as possible. Bhutto resigned from the cabinet in 1966 to negotiate the Tashkent agreement, which explicitly placed Pakistan under pressure. Bhutto used the arrangement to illustrate his political zeal and transparency (Asim, 2017).

Bhutto was elected President of Pakistan and the first civil Chief Martial Law Administrator on December 20, 1971 (National Assembly of Pakistan, 2019). Under PM Z. A Bhutto's administration in 1976, two transparency laws were passed: the Holders of Representative Offices (Prevention of Misconduct) Act and the Parliament and Regional Assemblies (Disqualification from Membership) Act (Mehboob, 2020).

General Zia-ul-Haq Coup and Accountability

In 1977 Bhutto was overthrown by then-army leader General Zia-ul-Haq and arrested on suspicion of ordering the assassination of a political rival. Zia implemented martial law in Pakistan (Trt World, 2018). General Zia, the Chief Of Army Staff (COAS), declared martial law and began the longest stretch of power by a single leader in Pakistan's history. In stating his seizure of the government, Zia said that he was merely acting to conduct new elections for national and provincial assemblies within 90 days. Political parties were not prohibited, and nominations for seats were accepted. The state anticipated a fresh "free and fair" election to be held. It didn't work. The elections were called off by Zia (Blood, 1994).

Since the Bhutto regime was deposed by Zia Martial Law, two punitive Accountability Laws were enacted in 1977: the Holders of Representative Offices (Punishment for Misconduct) Order and the Parliament and Provincial Assemblies (Disqualification for Membership) Order. General Zia decade-long military dictatorship had swept out entirely elected legislatures and states with the aid of Martial Law Directives, and there was no necessity for new Transparency Rules (Mehboob, 2020). After a contested tribunal on charges of graft and extrajudicial executions, Bhutto was hanged in Rawalpindi, in 1979. In 1985 General elections were conducted without regard for political parties. Zia was elected president, and Muhammad Khan Junejo was appointed prime minister. Zia's acts during the last eight years had been ratified by the new national assembly (Trt World, 2018).

Zia was killed in a plane crash on August 17, 1988. After watching a US M1 Abrams tank exhibition in Bahawalpur, Zia took a C-130B Hercules aircraft out of the small village in Punjab province. The plane took off from Bahawalpur Airport and was scheduled to land at Islamabad International Airport (Harro Ranter, 1988).

General Elections in 1988

On November 16, 1988, general elections were held to elect members of the National Assembly and Senate. The PPP, led by Z. A Bhutto's daughter, Benazir, saw a revival in the elections. Supporters of Zia-ul-Haq, who died in plane crash, reorganized into the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, a nine-party coalition with the backing of intelligence services (Dawn, 2012). Without forming a coalition, the PPP gained 94 seats in the National Assembly in the 1988 elections. The PPP demonstrated a strong mandate with the cooperation of 8 M.Q.M. members and 13 members of the Federally Administered Tribal Area (Story of Pakistan, 2003).

Benazir Bhutto, the First Woman Leader in Islamic World

Benazir Bhutto, Z. A Bhutto's daughter, was elected as PM; becoming the first woman to lead an Islamic country. The Restoration of the Constitutional Order changed the Constitution, enabling the President to designate any representative of the National Assembly as PM at his choice. Ghulam Ishaq Khan named Benazir Bhutto as Pakistan's PM on the premise that she supports him entirely in the upcoming presidential elections (Story of Pakistan, 2003). PPP supported for Ghulam Ishaq Khan in accordance with the agreement reached between Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Benazir Bhutto. Ghulam Ishaq Khan was also the Islami Jamuhri Etihad's consensus nominee. Four candidates ran in the polls, with Ghulam Ishaq Khan leading with the most votes (608) (Story of Pakistan, 2003).

Benazir Dismissal over Corruption Charges

On August 6, 1990, the president abolished the National Assembly, and Benazir stepped down as prime minister after just 20 months in power. Accusations against her included making the National Assembly ineffective, avoiding obligations to federating units, anarchy in Karachi, mocking the judiciary, and corruption (Rehman, 2019). Ghulam Ishaq Khan also charged Bhutto and her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, with 20 counts of corruption (Bukhari, 2021).

Nawaz Sharif Emergence and Dismissals

Under Sharif's leadership, the conservatives first came to power in a secular Pakistan. On November 1, 1990, Nawaz Sharif took over as Pakistan's 12th PM, replacing Benazir Bhutto. He also took over as head of IJI. Sharif gained majority in the assembly and governed with confidence, amid differences with three consecutive army chiefs (John, 2009). Sharif had significant authority problems with radical President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, who had promoted Sharif to power during the Zia dictatorship. Khan utilized his constitutional authority (58-2b) to disband the National Assembly on April 18, 1993, for corruption charges, ahead of the 1993 Parliamentary election (Dutt, 2009).

Political Seesaw 1993-1999

Pakistan witnessed power shift between PML (N) and PPP from 1988 to 1999, particularly when leaders of both political parties were dismissed over corruption cases and re-elected once again (1993 PPP, 1996 PML (N)) to hold PM Office which was a question mark over Pakistan accountability laws. Sharif's current government has overwhelmingly revised the constitution to limit the president's authority to abolish governments (Omar, 2002). Through the passage of the 14th amendment, Sharif became the country's most influential elected PM (Akbar, 1998). 14th amendment created troubles for the accountability process in Pakistan.

The Last Coup

In addition to the economic instability, the parallel disturbances in the Kargil War with India and Afghanistan turned popular sentiment against Sharif's policies. On 12 October 1999, Sharif was replacing General Zia-ud-din Butt with Musharraf for military fails. The intention of Sharif was to first dismiss Joint chiefs of chairman and chief army staff, and then lay off other chiefs of the army who had ruined its trustworthiness. Musharraf, who was on a passenger PIA flight in Sri Lanka. The 1999 military coup in Pakistan (Abbasi, 1999) was a bloodless coup d'état launched by military personnel in the Joint Staff HQ and chairs by Pervez Musharraf, General Joint Staff Committee Chief, took control of Nawaz Sharif's civilian administration on 12 October 1999.

Musharraf focused on other issues on his agenda with the economy out of urgent concern. Accountability, as in former military regimes, became a motto for the new military dictatorship. He promises to get "looted gold" back, like the chant that we hear at this time. Just one month after the coup, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was set up by Musharraf to investigate and enforce corruption officials (Hussain, 2019). NAB was meant to be an independent entity under its charter. But it was mainly used by military officers serving and retiring. The NAB heads were serving generals under Musharraf. This was supported by the paramilitary rangers, the military and the FIA. His integrity and sovereignty are uncertain in this case. However, the so-called anti-corruption campaign soon became obvious as a means to easily manipulate politicians through the military (Hussain, 2019).

Looking back at Pakistan's political history, each party in power has created its own accountability programmed. Ayub Khan utilized EBDO to rid the political environment of corrupt politicians. Bhutto implemented his accountability ideology by eliminating bureaucrats and army personnel. Under the guise of Ehtesab, Zia-ul-Haq persecuted political opponents (Accountability). During Nawaz Sharif's second term, a selective weapon for victimizing opposition was also introduced. An Act named Ehtesab Act (1997) was passed, and an Ehtesab Cell was established under Senator Saif-ur-Rehman.

Unfortunately, the accountability campaign was limited to opponents. Such procedures were waived for Nawaz Sharif and his associates. Later, in 2002, it was renamed NAB (Ahmed, 2015). The Ehtesab Bureau singled out the PPP from 1997 to 1999. The governing clan's anti-corruption campaign was mostly directed at their political opponents. This Bureau targeted a number of political opponents with spurious or muddled facts that were presented in front of a trial court of hand-picked judges unable at dealing with the nuances of white-collar crime. However, in rare situations, they were able to expose certain corrupt politicians and public officials. Because no members of the governing class were probed, this biased procedure lost credibility. Politics looked to be the only domain of the corrupt politicians (Sharaf, 2015).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

For the first time in Pakistan in 1959, Gen Ayub Khan introduced the local government elections. The electoral college for the presidential elections and Members of the National Assembly was made up of 'Basic Democrats,' who were chosen at the local government level. As a result, they formed Ayub Khan's political backbone (Dawn, 2011).

In 1959, Ayub developed the concept of "Basic Democracies." It was made up of a web of local self-governing entities that assisted as a channel between the government and the individuals. To run local affairs, basic governing units were recognized, with members chosen by districts of 800–1,000 persons. Ayub was confirmed as president by a nationwide referendum of altogether those elected. He was re-elected in 1965 using this system, despite a strong contest from an opposition led by Fatima Jinnah (Britannica, 1998).

Local government was divided into four distinct layers by Gen Ayub Khan: union, taluka, district, and divisional councils. The "Basic Democrats" in this system were elected union councilors (80,000), who were to elect the president, members of the National Assembly, and members of the provincial assemblies (East and West wings). The rest of the state lacked the right to vote directly. Ayub Khan made certain that none of his opponents were elected as fundamental democrats. The EBDO disqualified a number of politicians under its jurisdiction (Chandio, 2015).

After him General Zia, who took power in 1977, also recognized elected local bodies through the 1979 law. By avoiding regional authority, he created a power foundation for his rule. After Gen Zia's death in 1988, his local government structure fell away (Dawn, 2011). The local bodies structure remained dormant until 1979, when General Zia resurrected it in a bid for legitimacy. Traditional political families who had shifted sides and sworn support for the dictatorship were emboldened by local bodies elections staged by his administration. The Zia regime, like Gen Ayub before him, rejected any candidates suspected of being loyalists or sympathizers of the opposition. To accomplish this, Gen Zia established the Local Government Election Authority (LGEA), a separate election authority for holding local bodies elections. This organization, which was led by pro-regime judges and managed by obedient bureaucrats, took the place of Pakistan's Election Commission (Chandio, 2015).

Then again Gen Pervez Musharraf introduced the Local Government Plan shortly after gaining office in 1999 as component of his reform and rebuilding programmed. This plan is commonly referred to as the "Devolution of Power Plan"; it is the system that is now being changed at the provincial level (Dawn, 2011). Pervez Musharraf presented a seven-point programmed to 'fix' the state shortly after taking power. Devolution of authority to the local level was a crucial component of his plan, but by doing so, the General circumvented the federating entities, who are the de jure architects of the federation (Chandio, 2015).

In contrary, PM Z. A Bhutto, who served from 1973 to 1977, chose to appoint local bureaucrats (civil employees) to handle local issues rather than resurrecting local governments. Similarly, due to severe political polarization between 1988 and 1999, during the two periods of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, local matters were handled and governed by administrators rather than locally elected legislators

(Dawn, 2011). Military regimes developed faulty and self-serving local body structure. They not only caused political conflicts, but they also slowed the natural expansion of this crucial government layer. The main flaw of the military regimes of Gen Ayub Khan, Gen Zia, and Gen Pervez Musharraf was that authority never flowed down to the people as the military governments desired a national unified form of administration (Chandio, 2015).

Conclusion

The analysis of Pakistan's political system has shown that accountability is still the most important and the biggest challenge to governance in the country that has not been solved. The formal democratic institutions that were set up have not been able to overcome the effects of military interventions, patronage networks, and the control of the elite. The deficiencies in legal enforcement, the lack of openness, and the little involvement of the public have all contributed to the state's weakness in holding political actors accountable for their actions. The research indicates that accountability in Pakistan is not simply a matter of procedure or law but is inextricably linked to socio-political issues such as power imbalances, corruption, and institutional weaknesses. The Fortification of accountability thus necessitates a comprehensive approach which not only reforms the law but also includes political education, civil society empowerment, and the creation of a political culture in which integrity and responsibility are valued. Pakistan's politics can benefit from effective and responsive system through the support of institutional checks and balances, the opening up of the whole process, and the involvement of citizens actively. In the end, the quest for accountability is not only to cut down on corruption and inefficiency but also to gain public trust, political stability, and sustainable development. A dysfunctional governance system would mean the democratic system in Pakistan remaining in the trap of limited potential.

References

- Abbasi, A. (1999). No martial law in country. *Dawn*.
<https://asianstudies.github.io/area-studies/SouthAsia/SASerials/Dawn/1999/16oct99.html#noma>
- Akbar, M. (1998). *Pakistan under Nawaz Sharif: Pakistan today*. Mittal Publications.
- Alexander, H. (1978). *Political culture*. Public Affairs Press.
- Askari Rizvi, H. (2000). *The military & politics in Pakistan, 1947–1997*. Sang-e-Meel Publications.
- Blood, P. R. (1995). *Pakistan: A country study* (6th ed.). Claitors Publishing Division.
- Britannica. (1998). Mohammad Ayub Khan president of Pakistan.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mohammad-Ayub-Khan>
- Bukhari, M. (2021). A tradition of exclusion. *The News*.
<https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/771183-a-tradition-of-exclusion>
- Burki, S. J., Baxter, C., LaPorte, R., & Azfar, K. (1991). Restructuring the Pakistan political system. In *Pakistan under the military: Eleven years of Zia ul-Haq* (pp. 29–).
- Chandio, M. (2015). Power and empowerment. *Dawn*.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1189382>
- Dawn. (2007). Liaquat Bagh adds to its gory history.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/281990>
- Dawn. (2011). Democracy at the local level.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/610768>
- Dawn. (2012). Hamid Gul accepts responsibility for creating IJI.

- Dawn. (2017). Special report: Parliament in chaos 1951–1958.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1353861>
- Dutt, S. (2000). *1993 elections: Inside Pakistan*. Aph Publishing.
- Easterly, W. (2003). The political economy of growth without development: A case study of Pakistan. In D. Rodrik (Ed.), *In search of prosperity* (pp. 439–472). Princeton University Press.
- Elahi Jamil, B. (2018). Contemporary political culture. *Daily Times*.
<https://dailytimes.com.pk/228462/contemporary-political-culture/>
- Farooq Zain, O. (2010). Paradox of our political parties. *South Asian Studies*, 25(1), 89–97.
- Goraya, A. K. (2010). Concurrent list: 1973 constitution and recent political developments. German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Haider, K., & Ali, M. A. (2020). Caste and baradri system and voting behavior in Pakistan (Elections 2018): A case study of Hafizabad District. *Pakistan Vision*, 21(1), 104–119.
- Heywood, A. (1997). *Politics*. Macmillan Press.
- Hussain, Z. (2019). The last coup. *Dawn*.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1510606>
- Jones, P. E. (2003). *The Pakistan People's Party: Rise to power*. Oxford University Press.
- Khan, H. (2005). *Constitutional and political history of Pakistan* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Lodhi, M. (2021). Pakistan's angry political culture. *Dawn*.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1599609>
- Mahmood, S. (2000). *Pakistan political roots and development, 1947–1999*. Oxford University Press.
- Mashkoor, A. (2017). The modern thesis of Pakistan politics. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*, 1–2.
- Mateen, M. (2016). Political culture in Pakistan. FATA Research Centre.
- Mehboob, B. A. (2020). Pakistan's obsession with elusive accountability. *Dawn*.
<https://www.arabnews.pk/node/1774806>
- Omar, I. (2002). *Emergency powers and the courts in India and Pakistan* (1st ed.). Brill.
- Quah, J. S. T. (2011). *Curbing corruption in Asian countries*. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Ranter, H. (1988). ASN aircraft accident Lockheed C-130B Hercules 23494 Bahawalpur Airport (BHV). *Aviation Safety Network*.
<https://aviation-safety.net>
- Schultz, J. (2007). Anti-corruption policy making in practice: Pakistan—A country case study. *Corruption Resource Centre*, 153.
- Shafqat, S. (1990). Political culture of Pakistan: A case of disharmony between democratic creed and autocratic reality. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 42.
- Shah, N. H., Bakht, & Naudir. (2019). Impact of caste and biradari system on voting behavior: Comparative study of rural and urban Southern Punjab (District Bahawalpur). *Journal of Pakistan Vision*, 20(2).
- Shah, S. (2016). Steps against corruption remained futile in Pakistan's history. *The News*.
<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/114035-Steps-against-corruption-remained-futile-in-Pakistans-history>

- Story of Pakistan. (2003). Ghulam Ishaq Khan becomes president.
<https://storyofpakistan.com/ghulam-ishaq-khan-becomes-president/>
- Transparency International. (2017). *Corruption perceptions index 2017*.
<https://www.transparency.org/en/news/corruption-perceptions-index-2017>
- TRT World. (2018). Timeline of major political events in Pakistan.
<https://www.trtworld.com/asia/timeline-of-major-political-events-in-pakistan-19015>
- Weinbaum, M. (1996). Civic culture and democracy in Pakistan. *Asian Survey*, 36(7), 639–654.
- Wilson, J. (2009). *Pakistan: The struggle within*. Pearson Education India.
- Zaidi, S. A. (2015). *Issues in Pakistan's economy*. Oxford University Press.