Policy Research Journal
ISSN (E): 3006-7030 ISSN (P) : 3006-7022 Volume 4, Issue 3, 2026

DEMOCRACY IN SOUTH ASIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PAKISTAN AND INDIA

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18933957

Keywords
Democracy, Pakistan, India, South Asia, Governance, Election, Civil-Military Relations

Article History
Received: 10 January 2026
Accepted: 23 February 2026
Published: 10 March 2026

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Abstract
This research aims to compare the democratic systems of India and Pakistan, with an emphasis on democratic stability, political institutions, and governance mechanisms. It identifies key variables that affect the functioning of democracy in both states. Despite having a similar colonial past, Pakistan and India have had distinct democratic paths since gaining their independence. Pakistan has endured several political upheavals and military interventions, whereas India has seen a rather stable democracy. Using secondary data from books, reports, and academic publications, the study takes a qualitative comparative approach. Important democratic metrics, such as the rule of law, civil-military relations, and electoral procedures, are examined. The findings show that civilian supremacy and institutional strength have aided in India's democratic consolidation. On the other hand, Pakistan's democratic progress has been impeded by weak institutions and political instability. Pakistan's democratic stability depends on bolstering democratic institutions and guaranteeing constitutional primacy. To strengthen democracy, both states should support inclusive government, judicial independence, and political accountability.

INTRODUCTION

From a variety of perspectives, South Asia is a significant part of the world. The most significant factor is that, of the few nuclear powers in the world, there are two in this region. Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan are the eight nations that make up South Asia. Because of its enormous and constantly growing population, it's considered a very populated area. With a population of more than one billion, making it the second most populous nation after China. The political framework of the region has been strengthened by the British heritage because all South Asians have lived under British rule. Nowadays, democracy is thought to be the ideal form of government. Civil society actively engages in politics under a democratic system of governance. Every state purport to be a democratic nation; however, in practice, democratic government is quite weak, as the rule of law, equality, and civil society are not adequately maintained. Democracy may succeed if the people are educated and aware of their privileges and obligations. The root cause is that democratic procedures are so successful in certain developed countries, such as Switzerland, even though the people there are not sufficiently educated to know their rights and obligations. Politicians exploit the lack of formal education among the majority of people in these countries by only visiting them on

election days in an attempt to gain their support. Two of the biggest countries in South Asia are Pakistan and India. (Ali et al, 2015). They are regarded as two major global powers in this region since they are bitter enemies, and both have nuclear weapons. This research highlights and analyses the comparative democratic systems of India and Pakistan, emphasising the institutional, historical, and socio-political factors that have shaped their respective democratic trajectories. This study looks at important topics like the evolution of the constitution, election procedures, civil-military ties, and the function of civil society in order to pinpoint the fundamental causes of India's democracy's tenacity and Pakistan's democratic challenges.

Literature Review

South Asian nations such as India and Pakistan gained independence in 1947, maintaining a British-style democratic system. Despite military incursions in Pakistan, they practice Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. Political commentators warn of potential shifts towards authoritarianism or autocracy, with India's political actors primarily responsible. (Baqai, 2005). This study examines that there are significant shortcomings, such as a combative political culture, stifling the opposition, destroying constitutional institutions, silencing the media and civil society, politicising bureaucracy, and the military's domineering role.

Despite strong civil-military relations, the military has often seized control of civilian administrations in democratic societies. Pakistan's lack of democratic principles has allowed military dictators to overthrow democratic institutions, raising doubts about its ability to establish a stable political system. (Yaseen et al, 2017). The paper examines how the military continues to rule Pakistan despite its democratic system. The deeper structural and cultural variables impeding the consolidation of civilian government are frequently overlooked in existing studies.

With firmly established military rulers in Bangladesh and Pakistan, hereditary kings in Nepal and Bhutan, and the tenacity of Sri Lanka's democratic traditions, South Asia's chances for democracy seemed bleak in 1988. Violence and civil unrest, however, decreased public involvement. India's 'ungovernability' resulted from irreparable harm to its democratic institutions. Authoritarian governments have been overturned in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan in the last five years, but India and Sri Lanka have shown incredible resilience. (Rizvi, 1994). A thorough examination of the factors supporting democratic resilience in India and Sri Lanka in comparison to the reversal of authoritarianism in neighbouring states is still lacking. While existing study emphasises regime transitions, it frequently ignores the socio-political dynamics that shaped these shifts and the role of public engagement.

The connection between Southeast Asia's economic growth and regime type are conflicting. There is no one regime type that is obviously better for economic growth. Within regime types, more robust conclusions can be made about the role of technocrats, state-business ties, and the incentives of leaders to foster growth. Southeast Asia has scant evidence that democracy follows economic expansion. Authoritarian governments have responded to calls for change without democratising, and the middle classes have backed both democracy and authoritarianism. (Bertrand, 1998). The goal of the study is to understand the complex interactions among socio-political issues, economic growth, and regime type in Southeast Asia. A thorough examination of the ways in which middle-class dynamics and ethnicity affect regime stability and democratic transformation processes is lacking in current research.

India has established itself as a major and resilient democracy, often regarded as the world's largest. With governments alternating between the federal and state levels, India's democracy has remained free and fair despite its diverse population and high electoral participation. However, democracy can face difficulties and transform. (Rudolph & Rudolph, 2002). This study highlights that democracy in India during the 1990s faced a variety of challenges

The condition and development of South Asian democracy, with an emphasis on India and Pakistan. It makes the case that relying only on election dates as a sign of a successful

democratic transition is deceptive since it fails to clearly define basic liberties and rights, the characteristics of good administration, or the utmost respect for the decision of the people. (Wolf, 2017). The study examines the holding of a successful democratic transition.

Research Methodology

A qualitative comparative research design is used in this study to investigate democracy practices in India and Pakistan. Document analysis of the constitutions, election laws, policy papers, and statements from international agencies is used to gather data. To understand historical and political contexts, secondary sources, including scholarly journals, newspapers, and reliable media analyses, are used. To find parallels and discrepancies between democratic institutions and procedures, a thematic analysis method is used. The comparison sheds light on how both nations' political systems and methods of governing influence democracy.

Results and discussions

Aspect	India	Pakistan
System of politics	Parliamentary democracy at federal level	Parliamentary democracy at the federal level
Stability in Democracy	comparatively stable under civilian rule	Regular disruptions because of military involvement
Election	Consistent, competitive, and mostly unbroken	Frequent but frequently impacted by political instability
Military's role	Controlled by civilians	Significant political influence

Democracy is more readily understood by considering what it does not represent, since democratic systems vary widely across the world. It is neither an autocratic nor a totalitarian government headed by a single person nor an oligarchy, in which a small number of people hold all the authority. Furthermore, if the majority totally ignores the rights and interests of minority groups, democracy cannot be described as the "rule of the people." (Chadda, 2000)

Democracy is, in theory, a type of government that aims to represent the will of all its constituents. South Asia is known for its sizable population, rising rates of poverty, shoddy democratic institutions and administration, and rising levels of militarisation and sectarianism. Before independence, the majority of the region's nations were colonised. Rather than pursuing security for their inhabitants through their creative potential, South Asian governments have employed destructive military apparatuses to achieve national security. Approximately USD 15 billion is currently spent on the military in South Asia each year, thereby reducing the available budget. (Varshney,1998) If the system's structural logic is subordinated to political leaders' ideological preferences or personal ambitions, democracy cannot function. Leaders' decision-making is subject to institutional restraints. This entails recognising the sovereignty of parliament, operating within the bounds of one's party's constitution, contesting unfavourable court decisions only through the appropriate constitutional channels, and, in a federal system, respecting the level of autonomy granted to state governments.

Democracy in Pakistan

Before partition, the ideology of Pakistan was founded on the idea that Muslims would live according to the precepts of Islam and that sovereignty belonged solely to ALLAH Almighty, who is known(in Arabic as "Allah.") Islamic values are based on the Quran (Holy Book) and Sunnah (authentic practices of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) which explain the application of Quran). In 1947, Pakistan gained

independence by "divine interventions," against the opposition and displeasure of important Hindu and British leaders in India. The world's only nation to achieve religious autonomy is Pakistan. (Mirza, 2022) Aside from a few seats in the assembly, Muslim political parties have never won any significant elections to form a government in Pakistan since the country's independence, suggesting that while the majority of Muslims do believe in an afterlife, this belief may not be very strong. Their political methods, however, have not been well received by the general public, which has prevented them from drawing in Pakistan's educated populace.

Civil and Military Rules in Pakistan

A summary of Pakistan's civilian and military administrative systems is as follows. Pakistan's political institutions are unstable, and the military intervenes in the political system.

Civilian's political government

- Liaquat Ali Khan (1947-1951)
- Khawaja Nazimuddin (October 17, 1951-April 17, 1953)
- Muhammad Ali Bogra (April 17, 1953-August 11, 1955)
- Chaudhary Muhammad Ali (August 11, 1955-September 12, 1956)
- Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy (Sep 12, 1956- Oct 17, 1857)
- Ibrahim Ismail Chandigarh (October 17,1957-Dec 16-1957)
- Feroz khan Noon (Dec 16,1957 – Oct 7,1958)
- Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (August 14,1973 – July 5 1977)
- Muhammad khan Junejo (March 24,1985-May 29,1988)
- Benazir Bhutto (Dec 2,1988 – August 6,1990)
- Nawaz Sharif (Nov 6,1990-July 18,1993
- Benazir Bhutto (Oct 19,1993 – Nov 5,1996)
- Nawaz Sharif (Feb 17, 1997-Oct 12,1999)
- yousaf Raza Gelani (March 25 2008-June 19,2012)
- Raja Pervaz Ashraf (June 22, 2012-March 25, 2013)
- Nawaz Shirf (June7, 2013-July 28,2017)
- Imran Khan (August 18, 2018 – April 10, 2022)
- Shahbaz Sharif (Feb 8,2023-present)

Pakistan has had 21 civilian prime ministers since gaining independence in 1947, reflecting the country's turbulent path toward stable democracy. Political unpredictability, economic difficulties, and frequent military coups have characterised these sometimes-brief periods. The continued use of elections and constitutional amendments, such as the 18th Amendment, has reinforced civilian rule in recent years despite these obstacles. The experience of 21 prime ministers demonstrates the resilience of Pakistani democracy. Still, it also emphasises the importance of stronger institutions, political maturity, and the rule of law to guarantee a stable and inclusive democratic future.

Military Rules

- General Ayyub Khan (Oct 1958 – March 1969)
- General Yahiya Khan (March 1969-Dec 1971)
- General Zia- ul- Haq (July 1977-August 1988)
- General Pervaiz Musharraf (Oct 1999-August 2008)

In 1958, Field Marshal Ayub Khan imposed martial law for the first time in Pakistan; it persisted until general elections were held while he was in power. General Yahya Khan then implemented a second martial law, which was in effect from 1969 until 1971. Due to serious political and administrative issues that ultimately led to East Pakistan's secession and the establishment of Bangladesh, this era was among the most crucial in Pakistani history. General Zia-ul-Haq later imposed a third martial law in 1977, which persisted until 1985. Zia founded the PML(N) and the MQM to curb the PPP's growth and establish new political organizations. Last but not least, General Pervez Musharraf detained the main lawmakers and declared an emergency in 1999. On his target list was the PML (N). Musharraf's emergency continued until 2008 after initially being until 2002. (Latif et al, 2015)

Civil-Military Relations

Many nations have had military participation in their political systems since the beginning. Few have transitioned to civilian governance, while others have endured ongoing military involvement. Pakistan is among the nations in which the military's influence on political affairs has been steadily increasing. The Pakistani military has directly or indirectly controlled the government for the first sixty-two years since the country's independence. It has had a profound effect on the directions Pakistan has adopted. Mishandled civil-military ties are the real cause of Pakistan's continued instability. A strong civil-military relationship enables civilians to improve their institutions while the military may stand in the background. Generally speaking, civilian governments in developing nations face challenging security situations. This is also true in Pakistan, where the post-independence turbulence between Pakistan and India gave the military establishment an advantage, which is now being exacerbated by terrorism. To address these issues, civilian governments have refrained from expanding their military institutions, primarily to account for the numerous complex factors that affect the country's existence. A substantial number of resources allocated to Pakistan's military has increased its political and economic influence in state affairs. (Yaseen, Cheema & Hussain, 2018) Significant military and humanitarian actions have been needed in Pakistan in recent years due to a series of natural disasters and complicated events. Over 20 million people were impacted by three major disasters: the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, the 2008–2009 displacement crisis in the North-west Frontier
Province (NWFP, which after 2010 changed its name to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, or KP), and the monsoon floods of 2010, which were scattered with other smaller ones. In many areas where natural disasters have occurred, there has also been armed conflict or instability, with the national military serving as both a belligerent in the conflict and the primary disaster-response agency. Coordination between the military and relief organisations in these situations has become especially challenging due to this dual responsibility. (Greenwood & Balachandran, 2022) Within a year after gaining independence, Pakistan was overrun by a leadership that lacked political acumen and vision, leading to numerous problems and significant disruptions to the state's internal and external policy. Following Muhammad Ali Jinnah's death, the leadership became vulnerable to disarray and uncertainty. The instability of the political structure prompted the military and intelligence services to emerge and claim to be the nation's true guardians. Jawaharlal Nehru strengthened India's political infrastructure during his tenure and successfully created a robust political system. (Taj et al., 2016)

Electoral Accountability

Accountability has emerged as a key component of contemporary political ideas, including democracy, elections, and good administration. Accountability was a democratic concept in a larger sense, accountability refers to the positive reciprocity that exists everywhere, whether in the public or private sphere, between the accountability. Indicated that there are two subcategories of accountability: vertical and horizontal. When the three branches of government interact within a system of checks and balances, it is referred to as horizontal accountability. Vertical democratic accountability, on the other hand, entails an uneven connection between principals and agents and the delegation of political authority through a type of political contract where the people are ultimately the source of power. Maintaining the rule of law and preventing the misuse of power are the fundamental functions of accountability mechanisms. In essence, one of the primary democratic mechanisms for holding those in power accountable is the election. Interestingly, each of these systems provides a formalized foundation for ensuring democratic accountability runs smoothly. It is clear from the foregoing discussion that, to attain a particular level of democratic legitimacy, democratic accountability depends on institutional and political norms. According to the democratic ideal of accountability, public servants and elected officials have an obligation to provide the public with accurate information. The knowledge and expertise that agents possess confer power on them. Political institutions may produce misleading

information about themselves to win support and create a sense of legitimacy. An institutional approach to democratic accountability highlights the practical functioning, capabilities, and standard operating procedures of a democracy and looks at the possibility of separating rhetoric from practice. In fact, these requirements may occasionally be unrealistic and unattainable.

Islam and Democracy

General Zia-ul-Haq employed the idea of Islam in administration, and most Pakistanis are in favor of a connection between Islam and the system of government. The main reason Muslims oppose democratization in Pakistan is that we wish to implement Islamic political principles in our community. The question of whether democracy and Islam can coexist was raised when General Zia-ul-Haq embraced the idea of Islam in governance to express Pakistan's national identity. Approximately half of the world's nations are not democratic today. This pattern has several explanations, all of which are debatable. There is a broad consensus that Islam has a detrimental impact on democracy. We contest this viewpoint in this work. According to our empirical investigation, there is only a negative correlation between Islam and democracy when comparing countries. The negative relationship disappears once country fixed factors are taken into account. The percentage of Muslims is inversely correlated with democratic metrics in cross-national comparisons. Nevertheless, the negative relationship disappears in within-country regressions. We offer a wealth of evidence demonstrating the pattern's resilience. For instance, we discover that endogeneity is not the driving force behind the relationship. This is a crucial issue since it makes it clear that our estimates do, in fact, demonstrate the causal relationship between Islam and democracy. The fact that the majority of nations in the globe have a small Muslim population and that Islam has little bearing on democracy does not contribute to this influence either. In light of this, it is important to emphasize the significance of several of our estimates. However, they are constructive. (Khodaverdian,2022).The creation of two of the most popular democratic policies. Higher values of the measures, which are normalized between 0 and 1, signify a higher degree of democracy. It is evident that when the proportion of Muslims in the overall population rises, the democracy score falls in all of the countries. Nearly every year between 1950 and 2015 (the study period) has a negative cross-country connection. But when democracy's evolution over time is taken into account, the outcome shifts. From this angle, it is evident that democracy starts at varying levels but grows in a very similar way in every nation, regardless of the proportion of Muslims.

Corruption

Corruption affects political and social aspects both directly and indirectly through the nation's institutional architecture. It hurts public officials' performance, distorts public policies, and ultimately results in resource misallocation. By impairing the application of law and order and consequently undermining justice in numerous nations, it has hampered the process of global progress. It resulted in a violation of fundamental human rights and denied victims a trial that is impartial and fair. It has impeded the rate of economic development in addition to weakening the communities' capacity to combat terrorism and international crime. Consequently, it is the biggest obstacle to socioeconomic growth. The economic development of the nation and, consequently, the avoidance of social corruption are significantly influenced by the functioning of state institutions. "Discretionary power arises in special positions held by administrators, government officials, lawmakers, and politicians." The national socioeconomic structure may suffer long-term negative consequences from abuse of this authority, and in particular circumstances, the government may even be forced to resign. (Taj et al., 2016)

Causes of Declining Democracy in Pakistan

These are the several causes of Pakistan's democracy (Waseem, 2005)

- Military intervention and weak civilian institutions
- Lack of political stability
- Corruption and poor stability
- Influence of religious extremism

- Weak Rule of Law
- Socioeconomic challenges
- Civil-Military Imbalance
- External influence
- Lack of democratic culture
- Media and civil society constraints

Democracy in India

The most stable country in South Asia is India. India's economy is rising quickly, and this is reflected in its participation in the G20. In 1947, both India and Pakistan acquired independence from the British, but India made greater progress than Pakistan. The largest democracy of world is India. India's immense ethnic diversity and disparities notwithstanding, the country's stability under a single central government is made feasible by this diversity. A thorough analysis of Indian democracy, however, reveals a specific mismatch between theory and practice.

Political stability is the most important factor impacting India's transition to democracy. In India, the military stays out of politics. India declared a temporary state of emergency, but the problem was quickly fixed. India's democracy can be seen either favorably or unfavorably.

Twelve general elections and numerous legislative presidential elections have been held over the past fifty years; the judiciary continues to preserve its constitutional autonomy despite sporadic pressure emanating from the federal executive; the party in power in the capital of Delhi has lost position in nearly half of the states since 1967; the majority governments have been voted out multiple times since 1977; and there suffer from been seven effortless and peaceful handovers of power between opposing parties at the national level.(Visvanathan, 1998).

Turnout for elections continues to increase and is now higher than in many developed Western democracies. Turnout frequently surpasses 60 percent, having begun at 45.7 percent in the first general elections (conducted in 1952). Since the 1960s, there have been constant forecasts that India's democracy would soon fall apart. It appeared like India was finally beginning down the route that the majority of the world's weaker democracies had already taken when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi proclaimed a state of emergency and suspended democracy in June 1975. However, after eighteen months, democracy returned, and emergency rule turned out to be a conjunctural aberration rather than a new structural tendency. (Varshney, 1998)

Positive Side of Indian Democracy

If you look at Indian democracy from a positive perspective, you would see that the country is expanding. The fact that India's literacy rate is higher than Pakistan's makes it even more impressive. Pakistan has a literacy rate of almost 52%, compared to 74% in India. India has better educational facilities than we have, and their educational system is more advanced and task-oriented. While Pakistan's government spends 2% of GDP on education, which is less than India's educational budget, India spends more on the sector. The biggest democracy in the modern world. The Indian people have decided to uphold a democratic style of government for the past 72 years since their country's independence, despite skepticism expressed by Western academics on the viability of democracy in a nation like India. However, not much has changed in India, just as concerns have been raised about the state of democracy in several nations across the world. One can comprehend some of the obstacles to implementing a truly democratic system in a nation like India, where dynastic politics has so far led the way for more aggressive administration, by examining the development of Indian democracy in light of cultural norms. (Varkey, 2019).

By examining the dynamic interaction of the formal, effective, and substantive aspects of democracy, this article addresses the issue of democratization using the example of India. The political, social, and economic marginalization of India's common classes has not decreased despite 53 years of nearly unbroken democratic governance. Kerala is a unique state in India. In addition to successfully resolving social strife, democratic institutions have assisted in securing significant advancements for lower socioeconomic classes. Kerala's divergence from the national trend may be traced back to past social mobilization patterns that united around lower-class interests and resulted in forms of state-society

engagement that were favorable to the strengthening of democracy. (Heller,2000).

Negative Side of Indian Democracy

The percentage of people living in poverty is close to 22%, and the backward regions of India lack access to health and education facilities. India is made up of nearly 30 states, each of which has a diverse population based on social, political, religious, and cultural factors.

The government disregards minority areas in all facets of life. They are denied access to all of life's essentials. Minorities in various Indian states, such as Kashmir, Orissa, Bihar, and the Seven Sisters, face clear security risks. (Nussbaum, 2007).

Challenges to Indian Democracy

India faces several challenges in their democracy (Dalal, 2013)

- The criminalization of politics
- Lack of literacy
- Violence in politics
- Corruption
- Inequality in society
- The disparity in income
- Regionalism
- Deprivation
- The caste system
- Discrimination based on gender
- Fundamentalism in Religion
- A sense of community

Practicing Good Democracy

Rule of Law

The supremacy of law, which includes not only the creation of rules and regulations but also their equitable and fair execution within the state without discriminating based on gender, color, or ethnicity, is the first fundamental tenet of democracy.

Discusses the application of laws that:

(i) Completed and authorized in compliance with established protocols

(ii) Rather than being applied retroactively, they are transparent, universal, consistent, and organized in a clear hierarchical framework.

(iii) are applied to particular cases by universally accessible, politically impartial courts, whose decisions follow procedural rules and establish guilt using conventional techniques. India's administration is more progressive than Pakistan's, and the rule of law is also more applicable there, despite the two countries' near-identical characteristics. For example, Salman's trial in India requires him to appear in court. In Pakistan, however, things are quite different. (kaul ,2020)

Political participation and political competition

The essential tenet of democracy is political participation. Without political participation, nothing can be achieved, and no country can have a robust democracy. It gives men and women the ability to create, revitalize, or strengthen group identities as individuals or as a group, or to try to force the hiring decisions and practices of governmental officials.

It is the participation of multiple political actors in the political process's decision-making. It is a crucial democratic framework that shapes political and democratic culture. Democracy is not fully formed in the absence of political competition. Society's educated citizens are necessary for political engagement. Because they are not better knowledgeable about political issues, educated citizens are more involved in politics than illiterate ones. This is the primary cause of Indians' greater political participation compared to Pakistanis. Feudal politicians who forbid the general populace from taking part in political affairs essentially make up Pakistani politics. People from Punjab participate more than those from other regions since they are more aware and educated. However, the people of Sindh's interior find it impossible to even consider speaking in front of their feudal lord politicians. (Smith, 2022) The political, social, and genetic characteristics of both nations are identical. Religion is the only thing that separates the people of India and Pakistan. A small number of families have dominated the populace in both nations for many decades, and they continue to do so today. The Gandhi family exerts significant political influence in India, whereas the Bhutto and Sharif dynasties dominate Pakistani politics.

Independent Judiciary

Based on the idea that a functional democracy depends on the rule of law and that an

independent judiciary is crucial to this framework, judicial independence is a crucial component of democratization. This viewpoint thoroughly examines the restrictions on judicial autonomy and investigates the measures that have been put into place or are now underway to stop different types of meddling that can jeopardize unbiased court rulings. It is possible to reconcile judicial independence and accountability even when they seem to be at odds, especially in light of the growing authoritarian inclinations in developing democracies in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Africa. (Smith, 2022)

The free and sovereign judiciary, which is a strong advocate for the rule of law, is another instrument for good governance and preventing unfair military interventions. Strong legal systems are crucial for ensuring that a nation's laws are consistently and fairly enforced. Every pillar of the administration must be honest with the Pakistani people in particular, as well as with one another. Adhering to the law guarantees the success of company endeavours and provides a solid basis for the market, both of which promote financial advancement. At every stage of the legislative process, the people's will and that of their chosen representatives should be sought.

Solidarity and Equality

Democracy is losing ground in a world where populism and authoritarianism are becoming more prevalent. The situation of democracies worldwide is a result of the disregard for key components and sources of democracy, particularly solidarity and trust. Three separate but connected sources of democracy are layered upon one another in lexical order: First, it is predicated on political rights, which is a fundamentally liberal element. Secondly, it necessitates trust between individuals and citizens, which can only be attained through a common identity. Third, solidarity creates powerful types of equality that form its foundation. (Kaul, 2020) Solidarity, in which people come together despite differences to support common values and group decision-making, is essential to democracy. This connection encourages people to stand behind one another in the fight for justice and advancement, transcending personal concerns. For example, solidarity across many organizations drove historic reforms like the Voting Rights Act of 1965 during the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, demonstrating that democratic values are amplified through collective action. The cornerstone of democracy is equality, which guarantees that all voices, regardless of origin, wealth, or status, have equal weight in elections and governance. In order to avoid the tyranny of the majority, it requires equal access to voting, representation, and opportunities. Constitutional equality helped to heal significant divisions in post-apartheid countries like South Africa, creating a "rainbow nation" where former enemies now co-govern through inclusive institutions. (Weale,1990).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the best form of government is democracy for the subcontinent, second only to colonial rule. However, the political cultures of the two countries differ, and as a result, they address different problems. Pakistan's inadequate democracy is mostly caused by the civil-military interaction. Higher levels of this association are found in India, which helps explain its superior democracy. India's political competitiveness, political engagement, and election process are all in good shape when compared to Pakistan. It is believed that corruption and bureaucracy play a significant role in determining the quality of democracy and government.

The majority of the country's intelligentsia choose dictatorship over democracy because both of these characteristics were held during the military regime. This has hindered Pakistan's move toward democracy. Ultimately, it may be said that, in contrast to Pakistan, democracy in India is firmly based. Compared to Pakistan, India has better relations with its political institutions and other stakeholders, particularly with the civil-military. For this reason, Pakistani democracy has always been in danger and frequently performs poorly. Although there are many reasons, it still needs to be addressed because people and intellectuals support democracy. After all, it serves the interests of the people.

Recommendations

- **Peaceful change of power**

Instead of demanding intervention on the grounds of purported election tampering, political parties are embracing the results of the election. The strength of democracy is demonstrated by the peaceful transition of power, which enables leaders to take office through free and fair elections without any violence or unrest. This process fosters public trust, as citizens observe that no one is above the law or entitled to permanent rule. In the United States, the 1800 election saw John Adams concede to Thomas Jefferson, setting a global precedent for voluntary handovers that has survived for nearly two centuries.

- **Political consciousness**

Address a lack of political consciousness by offering courses in colleges and universities to educate people about democracy. The awareness people gain about political systems, power structures, and their own place within them, which allows them to engage in civic life with knowledge, is known as political consciousness. It encourages active participation in democratic processes like voting and campaigning by enabling citizens to critically assess how policies impact equality and solidarity. By encouraging community responsibility and holding leaders accountable, increased political consciousness in developed democracies guarantees peaceful changes of power.

- **Local Government System**

Give the people more authority. It will support the aforementioned tool, which is teaching the public about democracy. The grassroots level of democracy is made up of local government systems, which facilitate responsive community governance and bring decision-making closer to the people. They usually include elected councils, mayors or managers, and administrative divisions that deal with day-to-day services including trash management, public safety, and urban planning. By directly involving residents, they promote political consciousness. These systems, such as union councils and district governments, promote equality and solidarity in places like Pakistan, where you are headquartered, by distributing power, guaranteeing peaceful transitions through local elections, and attending to local concerns without going too far.

- **Minority rights protection**

By guaranteeing representation and involvement at the local level and bridging the gap between federal policy and local realities, local government systems are essential in defending minority rights. These institutions prevent marginalization in different communities by promoting equality and unity through reserved seats, minority councils, and inclusive decision-making on matters like education and cultural preservation. Joint electorates and provincial autonomy under the 18th Amendment empower minorities in local bodies in Pakistan, promoting peaceful power transitions and political consciousness while protecting against discrimination.

- **Institutional inequalities**

Institutional inequalities in local government systems undermine democracy by concentrating power and resources among dominant groups, perpetuating disparities in representation and service delivery. In Pakistan, these manifest through financial dependence on provinces, political interference, and inconsistent devolution, leaving rural and minority areas underserved while urban elites benefit disproportionately. Addressing them requires constitutional safeguards for local autonomy, equitable funding, and capacity-building to align with solidarity, equality, and minority protections discussed earlier.

- **Dismantling racism**

Local governments must actively enact anti-discrimination legislation, support inclusive policies, and establish organizations that shield minorities from prejudice based on race, religion, or sect in order to eradicate racism. Strategies in Pakistan include a minimum 5% hiring quota for minorities, reserved seats in local authorities under devolution plans, and specialized ministries or commissions to keep an eye out for abuses and uphold rights in accordance with ICERD pledges. Local systems can prevent racism from undermining peaceful democratic transitions by fostering political consciousness, solidarity, and equality through addressing institutional inequities through

education, debate, and equitable resource distribution.

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