



The Politics of Religious Extremism in Pakistan: An Analysis

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
<p>History Revised format: May 2019 Available Online: June 2019</p>	<p>In this study, the connection between Islamic values and country policies has been carefully connected to the foundations that create political legitimating and the basic nature of a country. Islam performs a crucial part in the social fabric of Pakistan and has been integrated as the guiding concept for the constitutional procedure and governmental systems of the country but at the same time produced implicit stress for their future improvements. Various government authorities have used religious beliefs for their quest for governmental authenticity and power. This has consequently brought about politicization of spiritual explanation in Pakistan demonstrated in the form of sectarian disputes, persecution of spiritual unprivileged or disempowerment of certain spiritual organizations and management. Whereas controversy about interpreting religious identity continues pervading the Pakistani community, it is observed that large parts of the Pakistani inhabitants follow pluralistic types of Islam based on heterogeneous spiritual and devotional methods. Islamic political parties should cooperate on federal or provincial levels with national and local political parties to eliminate the religious extremism in Pakistan.</p>
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1. Introduction

Religious political parties play an important role of Pakistan's politics. Their number has spread since earlier years of freedom. Apart from the Jamaat-e-Islami, Islamic parties and groups usually recognize with a particular religious denominational or sectarian group; there can be more than one party with the same religious sectarian identity. In addition to their common competitors, these political parties are packed from each side. On the one side, the national and ethnic/ethnic political parties develop assistance that reduces across religious-sectarian, social and local identity. Many of people choose these political parties rather than Islamic parties. On the other side, Islamic parties are under stress from fundamentalist groups that espouse assault, if required, to engage in their religious and governmental plans (Abbas, 2015).

Those with powerful religious orientations usually trim towards these. Some activists shuttle between Islamic parties' jihadi and radical groups. All Islamic parties suggest an Islamic socio-political and financial order for

Pakistan. They talk about of an Islamic order in wide conditions to show their ambitions, or talk about its features at a level of abstraction. However, they diverge when it comes to converting the subjective principle or their statements and pronouncements into a codified constitutional and judicial system, institutional preparations and procedures of a religious system required for running country in the 21st Century. They have not been able to generate a distributed lawful and constitutional document as a substitute for the current constitutional and judicial system.

Islamic parties have poor electoral status. No Islamic parties have ever been able to protect more than a few parliamentary seats in the national and provincial elections of legislative assemblies. Their efficiency is better when they develop a regional and national political alliance or when they enjoy the benefits of an army regime. If they make a political coalition of their own, their electoral efficiency enhances. Several reasons describe their hopeless electoral efficiency. Islamic parties cannot make a reputable claim that they are the only protectors of religion (Ullah, 2013). The significant parties do not disown Islam. The Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and its various groups, along with the Pakistan People Party (PPP), the Mutihda Qumi Moment (MQM) and others, do not decline the recognition of the Pakistani country with Islam. Their perspective of an Islam-oriented political order diverges from that of Islamic parties. The prospect of a secular system in the Marxian sense has never been popular in Pakistan. Most regional and national parties talk about of social and religious tolerance and socio-economic rights and the prospect of equal rights.

2. Extremism in Pakistan: A Brief History

Pakistan is the Muslim majority state and also officially recognized as the Islamic republic of Pakistan. Therefore, the constitution of Pakistan gives the constitutional safeguard for all religious activities and also secures the religious rights of the minorities. The government of Pakistan cannot pass any law which violates the teachings of Islam.

Pakistan has trialed (to different degrees) with the incorporation of Islamic legal constitution in to the important of the nation-state, but in neither, country has traditional Islam applied specified impact state governance. In present environment progressively reducing world, spiritual customs are modified and dependent power politics and financial change, new electronic media, and changing social objectives. Primary spiritual beliefs and practice the religious principles will continue to modify even in the upcoming, as all living societies do. Despite being an Islamic Republic constitutionally, there was a clear distance between state policies and religious values, as well as difference between public and private Islam, at least in the powerful decades after the formation of Pakistan (Misra, 2003).

On 11th August 1947 the founding father of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah said in his first speech with to the Pakistan legislative assembly clearly mentioned that religious values were a personal matter of the people and defined the equal rights of religion. However, the power of spiritual groups, who put all their initiatives into announcing Pakistan an Islamic country, had been overlooked or perhaps the objectives of the federal government who would take on the reins of Pakistan, were not that apparent because in less than two decades after it, the legislative assembly shifted the objective resolution on 7th March 1949, promising a draft an Islamic Constitution. With the secession of Eastern Pakistan, the religious-political parties desired to improve the ideological foundation for Pakistan and integrated Islamic injunctions into the 1973 Constitution.

The origins of these problems of Islamic identification go back to the pre-partition era. The problem of social pureness appeared after the decrease of Islamic power, when Shah Wali Ullah and other Islamic revivalists in the sub-continent tried to protect the unique identification of the Islamic society through strict adherence to genuine Islam. The potentiality of an political alliance between 'ulama' and fundamentalist management was confirmed in 1953 when serious rioting split out in Lahore over the problem of whether the individuals the Ahmadi sect should formally be considered a non-Islamic religion (Abbas, 2015).

The problem was of particular significance because of the existence of Ahmadis in sensitive government positions. Later, in the nineteen fifties, the Pakistani government most structured, spiritual urban group, the Jamaat-e-Islami, and other like-minded parties started to use Islam to promote exclusionary state policies and start public group riots by politicizing the identification query, that is, "Who is a Muslim?" The Jamaat-e-Islami led an effective activity to have the small Ahmadiyya sect (which is doctrinally anathematic to the Jamaat) announced non-Muslim by situations.

The Islamic parties' whole heartedly reinforced Zia in this venture of "moral purification" of community, which would, in their viewpoint, lead to a political group based on Islamic concepts. The Jamat-e-Islami was of crucial significance to Zia. It was the only party with a dedicated cadre of loyalists that was standing in preparedness to reverse and dull any anti-Zia frustration released by any political power (Afzal, 2018). Remarkably, the military expanded their role was also an important aspect in the Islamization procedure. They were no longer merely the defenders of the boundaries, but also defenders of Pakistan's "ideological frontiers". Religious knowledge and dedication became the factors for the selection of the army personnel.

3. Challenges of "Old and New Islamists"

The natural threat presented by the religious groups is that there has been an important move in their policy. Basically, there is now a difference between what can be known as "old" and "new" Islamists in Pakistan. New Islamists (Pakistani Taliban, Jihadi groups, Islamists), who were originally motivated by Maududi's Islamic liberation theology and later designed their own understanding, are usually protagonists of governmental Islam, that is, they search for to improve country policies through Islamic ideas and Islamic ideas through country policies. They are compared with the old Islamists (traditional Islamic madaris /ulemas /Pirs /Sufis and mainly Bralevi religious parties) who were covered by the secular elites, and thus, prevented governmental conflict. Islamist organizations are centered mainly in the financially marginalized and culturally conventional regions of Pakistan (Cheema, 2008).

The new Islamists were not eager to work out such a choice. The governmental technique followed by the new Islamists in Pakistan was to try to catch civil community organizations with a perspective to gradually capture the state. The country policies of Islam experienced an important change as an outcome of Zia's regime in 1980 to include Pakistan definitely in Afghanistan 'Anti-Soviet jihad. As this participation became deeper, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Director took over complete control over applying country policies on this side. Initially, the ISI obtained the help Jamat-e-Islami to channel CIA-procured hands and money to Afghan warlords or as they were famously known as the Mujahideen (holy warriors). This describes the governmental power and the development and participation of the "New Islamists" in the politics of Pakistan.

Attack on religion in country politics is also due to a deficiency of the religious custom of "Ijtihad" whereby spiritual clerics provide a private presentation of the Quran with a view to apply Quranic rules to modifying conditions. In present scenarios Pakistan has several of these so-called "ulema" and Islamic elite, but the governmental power of this management does not allow the 'real' Islamic researchers to communicate a specified explanation of the sacred written text. Moreover, researchers who challenge to brand the eliminating of simple citizens in the name of religion as non-Muslim, face threats and severe critique from Islamic parties whose most-favored organ for public mobilization is often a call for jihad against the "infidels". It is also to be observed that the phrase 'jihad' is being absolutely abused by Pakistani Islamic elite. It is exciting to observe that one does not find in the Qur'an the phrase 'jihad' in the feeling in which it is being famously used, that is, 'holy war'(Day & Degenhardt, 1984). The term in the Qur'an for war is 'qital' and not jihad. The word 'jihad' is used in its actual feeling, which is to endeavor, claim or create initiatives. Thus, jihad in the Qur'anic language means to say you or to create initiatives to enhance what is right and to ban what is wicked. A simple and overzealous effort to present the rules of a various social development into the socio-political material of a post-colonial, urbanizing, pluralistic community with a growing breakdown to main group connections, can neither actually sustain serenity nor fulfill the finishes of rights. On the other hand, it breeds assault and disregard for the rule of law and current judicial system.

4. Politico-Religious Mobilization

Pakistan did not notice an unexpected "opening up" after the failure of the USSR. It was already going through an "Islamic globalization" in the type of a brotherhood with Muslim states, particularly Saudi Arabia on one side and Iran on the other, with the United States performing as a facilitator, at least between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Compared with the globe, Pakistan got experience of spiritual extremism not long after its independence (Abbas, 2015). Though Pakistan had yet to observe its aggressive manifestation, the introduction of Islamic regime into the objective resolution of 1949, provided an advantage to the Mullahs in the legislative assembly. Later, in the 1970s, with a moderate liberal like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto succumbing to the requirements of Islamic parties to announce Ahmadi's non-Muslim, the ground for spiritual extremism had been set. The Jihad against communism and Zia's accommodation of the spiritual right, changed the community from a tolerant Islamic community to one hi-jacked by the Wahabi/ Deobandi attitude, commanded by the Taliban.

The politico-religious nationalisms have been significantly pushed by “extremist” versions. Compared with their forbearers, these versions have several identifying features in the Pakistani perspective. First, they believe the spiritual identity of most as not merely one critical facet of the state identity, but as main and overriding, and hence the monopoly of the Deobandi/Sunni declaring a very doubtful majority, obtained through coercion and worry (Smock, 2006). Second, they consider cultural or spiritual identity to be different from those of most, presumptively unfamiliar and cheating, which led to the formation of a tiered perception of citizenship. Third, extremist spiritual movements are often spread by motions that believe that public and even extremist assault are “normal” and genuine way of promoting their perspective and of maintaining spiritual and cultural unprivileged in their (subordinate) place.

The governmental viewpoint of the Sipah-e-Sahaba in the 1990s, and currently, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM) is dependent on the regime of the “survival of the fittest”, with the ‘fittest’ being the supporters of their own group. Lastly, and perhaps most alarmingly, spiritual extremism encourages extreme rivalries with other countries that do not part their spiritual identity. The army dictators, after all, were not spiritual lovers (with the exemption of Zia). Actually Ayub opposed the impact of the traditional ‘ulema’ and presented many contemporary rules. Yahya Khan too refrained from invoking spiritual orthodoxy for legitimizing his regime. Beginning from Bhutto until Musharraf and Zardari government however, have been more accommodative of Islamic orthodoxy (Cheema, 2008). The Taliban trend was an all-natural result of the policies of previous regimes. And the madrasas then set up in the North Waziristan Region are rolling out a lot of ‘Taliban’ every season. Though they do not become ‘ready-to-kill’ lovers instantly, they have no contact with the opposition portion of Islam either. Thus, the focus is more on growing a jihadist attitude than offering truly spiritual alignment (Murphy, 2013).

Most of these madrasas have promote the interest of religious parties as they are under the supervision and guidance of Islamic parties; very few of them are separate, and get finical aids from various resources, such as some Muslim countries, most significantly Saudi Arabia.

5. To Promote Specific Political Goals

The main causes of identity mobilization are associated with the actual features of state politics in an inadequate country and its vulnerability to the attack of external powers into its body politic. Sectarianism in Pakistan shows that the imperatives of state politics in such countries merge with the interest of worldwide powers to entrench identity cleavages in the governmental procedure. Pakistan’s struggling because of spiritual extremism is no key. In Pakistan, the problem is not simply antagonism towards other spiritual places, for example, assault against the Ahmadis or Christian believers, but even cleavages within the Islamic group. Solidified spiritual Islamic groups vary with each other on explanation which changes according to various variations and often brings to serious types of sectarian assault. Religious beliefs is politicized and used for starting violence activities by two religious sects in Pakistan, which even though somewhat inter-related, display certain variations based to their goals, areas of function, and target of assault (Abbas, 2015).

First, there are sectarian group from the Sunni and Shia variations of Islam that have been effective in militant actions which are mostly, but not specifically instructed against individuals from the other sect. This public schism on sectarian division was the immediate results the procedure of Islamization legislation in Pakistan, created by Chief executive Zia ul-Haq in 1977–88; sectarian assault was unusual before this regime. The Shias, sensation motivated after the 1979 Iranian revolution and embittered by Zia’s Islamization system, designed an organization known as the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqah-e-Jaffria (Movement for the Imposition of Shia Law) and protested against the president’s legislation. They were effective in obtaining evade clauses in the new Islamized rules for themselves and in having the Shias, normally, excused from certain elements of those rules. Not only did Chief executive Zia develop frightened about Shia power in Pakistan, but the Sunnis were also protest at the time.

They terrifying that individuals might search for transformation from Sunni sect to Shiism in order to search for exception to this rule from zakat (the yearly tax of 2.5 % on the benefits of Muslims to be allocated among the poor) or from other, more firm Sunni family rules. The vigilante Sunnis therefore, designed Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (Army of the Partners of the Prophet). The other set of spiritual extremists believe in a ‘grand’ plan, and the activity or system of the remains of the Afghan war. This actions describes Ted Gurr’s regime of comparative privation despite being people of an Islamic country, these groups are still not pleased and happy with the level of

Islamization of group. They evaluate their country with the “ideal” Islamic country where Sharia or Islamic rules are completely applied (Afzal, 2018).

6. Politics of Religious Extremism

Haqqani considers that progressively the political determination for an ideological countries progressed into a strategic determination for the jihadist belief, both, for local impact and for domestic reasons. For example, the Pakistani army used Islamist idioms and took the help of religious groups to keep out of power the chosen secular political leadership, reinforced by the majority Bengali-speaking population. The revolt of Bengali people and brutal violence of the Bengalis by the army followed. The role of religion in the politics of Pakistan and its militant expression increased several times over after the anti-Soviet Afghan War. The way Kashmir battle became more of an Islamic battle than territorial/apolitical argument, says a lot about the effect of religious extremism. Of crucial significance for knowing the effect of Pakistani religious extremism on the state’s condition policies is to understand the relationship between religious extremism and assault dedicated by non-state actors. In particular, religious extremism tends to motivate religious assault and terrorism and also, because of its determination and virulence, brings about “reactive” religious assault, terrorism, and even militant movements (Murphy, 2013).

Most of the literary works typically concentrates on religious extremism as a trend outside the central government, (practical execution of the religious belief, most of the things the followers of trust in country policies talk about cannot be applied in contemporary country, religious political parties lack proper skills or attitude that assures good government in contemporary nation state system, hence they use either emotional slogans, motto religious affiliation or power to make individuals accept their global view point and manage to get seats in general elections) what happens when the ideological philosophy becomes a reality and experienced power, religious extremist parties when they come to power, use assault as a semi-official tool of government and governmental self-preservation the MMA used the emotional term ‘Islam in danger’ during the general elections of 2002 in the history of the United States attack on Afghanistan in 2002 and approved the activities taken by militants and the Taliban in the Tribal areas of Pakistan against the “infidels”(Misra, 2003).

This shows that it is important to look at the effect of religious extremism on democracy. We have experienced how religious extremism has marketed majoritarian and illiberal ideas of democracy that damage the civil and political rights of religious unprivileged. In other words, it is important to understand the important government aspect that religious beliefs and its extremist version perform in Pakistan, particularly in democratic politics, how these entice government support and apply government impact beyond primary followers and be successful in forming nationwide country policies. One can claim that religious extremism undermines democracy. Surprisingly, it has been seen that at least in one example in Pakistan, democracy assisted religious extremism in the form of MMA’s regime in the NWFP and Baluchistan through a genuine electoral process in 2002. It is another issue however, of how the members of the MMA carried out their election strategy asking the voters whether they wanted to choose the Quran or America.

When the Nizam-e-Adl control in Swat in the NWFP region was passed by the parliament despite modern, moderate political regime governing the federation (People’s Party) and the region (Awami National Party), is yet another example that democracy is not a remedy to all problems, even though many problems can be linked to authoritarian regime. It is true that subsequent army government authorities relied on religious parties for authenticity in Pakistan. In the initial period after freedom, Islamic parties could not perform any significant democratic role and the country tended very most secular when it had been most elitist and unprivileged (Ullah, 2013). Later, however, extended times of authoritarian rule, assisted these spread Islamist groups to claim governmental power under the supervision of the army dictatorship. Therefore, what has specifically been a traditional group of Islamic fundamentalists joined the world of mass-based political activities (for example the 1985 party-less elections) as a consequence of democratic opportunities, even if short-term and politically poor. Unfortunately, the conversion to democracy in Pakistan after extended times of army rule, brought into power, Islamic parties with a confrontational plan against the West. Finally, there is a number of far attaining government repercussions of the attack of trust in the politics of Pakistan. For example, religious extremism encourages religiously-defined ideas of national identity that politically unite and muster individuals and serve as a standard of government authenticity.

Religious extremism by its very nature is believed to operate at the edges of community rather than at the center-stage of national political life, but this leads to apolitically important and growing alliance between religious

extremism and government nationalism. Except for the comparative solitude of some tribal areas in KPK and Baluchistan, Pakistani community is confronted with the social impacts of an international urban commercial society (Abbas, 2015). According to the Khyber Pakhtoon government, the recently finalized Swat contract with the Taliban was to control the law and purchase situation. On the other hand, if the Taliban resort to assault and go beyond what is approved, Chief executive Zardari would have to reevaluate the agreement? Sufism which fascinates a lot of South Asian people to accept Islam does not believe any type of extremism in religion. Pakistani Muslims are seriously looking for magic that can help them break the pattern of foreign-funded, highly-politicized Islam that is still “foreign” to the 170 million individuals this place in the globe. The implementation of sharia was never a ritual in any portion of the country until Gen. Zia-ul-Haq enforced his questionable Hudood ordinance because of its anachronisms.

The orthodoxy of the religious political elite in Pakistan, particularly the Wahabi-Deobandi Islam, does not have its origins in the ground. This brand of Islam is doctrinaire, virulently illiberal of diversity, misogynist and passionate with jihad in contrast to the religion and religious techniques of common individuals of Pakistan which is syncretism, resistant, and devotional and combined in the mystical religion of the Indus valley and its ‘languages’. Music and dancing are very much a portion of this folk religious custom. It is therefore, important to engage in collaboration rather than conflict, especially on negligence the policy-makers, to ensure the possibility of a happy future in which “essential elements of democracy will be communicated in the veins of new religious states.” It is important to know the difference between the religious orthodoxy that need to battle and the better ethical principles of Islam that prospered in the religious land of the Indus valley that need to be merged.

To be able to maintain the ideal of moderate and modern country, and to deal with the country policies of ancient religiosity in a post-colonial religious majority country like Pakistan a purposeful public technological innovation effort is needed (Cheema, 2008). Despite severe restrictions in understanding, examining and interpreting modernity and progressiveness, there is a huge amount of average, urban citizens within Pakistan’s civil community, who have the intelligent quality, administrative ability and experience of public activism and are the only visible public power that can battle the religious orthodoxy and perform an effective aspect in developing country.

7. Conclusion

All political parties identify the constitution of Pakistan as the basic law of Pakistan which provides theoretical as well as institutional preparations for deep relationships between the Pakistani state system and Islam. Most Islamic political parties have a religious-sectarian identity that reduces the political parties to the individuals with a strong religious-sectarian alignment. Others, who do not share the religious orientations of the parties, stay away from it. Islamic parties contest with one another on the basis of spiritual perspective, sectarian identity and character of the political leaders. Even within each sect, there is more than one political party, making electoral competition more narrowly targeted. Islamic parties have a public image problem. Not lots of individuals particularly the educated youth believe in Islamic leadership as having enough political expertise and an understanding of the characteristics of domestic and international state policies. They have a tendency to participate in the national or regional parties in a very large number. With some exclusions, many Islamic parties either sympathies with militant groups or sustain an uncertain character towards these groups. The power of Islamic political parties relies upon on having street strength faithful activists and madrasa students.

The religious parties that have connection with mosques and madrassas seem to develop more political power. Few political parties are making inroads into Government College and universities to hire adolescents to their flip. The power of Islamic political parties improved during the army regime of General Zia-ul-Haq, when he merged with the US and Middle Eastern states to build Afghan-Islamic resistance to deal with soviet soldiers in Afghanistan. It was during this period that the Jamaat-e-Islami and some other Islamic political parties that were involved in the first Afghan ‘jihad’ or experienced the benediction of the army regime, increased their position as money and weaponry ran to chosen Islamic and radical groups. Some of these political parties ongoing to keep interaction with militant groups even after the end of the first Afghan ‘jihad’ and prolonged assistance to al Qaeda and Taliban activists when they joined up with Pakistan from Afghanistan, after the US committed its air attack on Afghanistan in October 2001.

The recent use of assault by some Islamic parties with Barelvi customs has created a variety of improved demonstration and assault. However, the success of their demonstration relies upon on their ability to collect

assistance from other religious parties. Their active role in the anti-Ayub and anti-Bhutto political movements created governmental impact because they were working together with national parties. In the same way, some Islamic political parties have use power at the federal or provincial levels, in cooperation with national and local political parties, or by either becoming a member of hands with army government or experiencing their benediction. Islamic political parties can make thing tricky for any federal government because of their cadres but none can, on their own, come to the rule through democratic elections.

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