A Comparative Analysis of Intra-party Democracy within the Major Political Parties of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
History *Revised format: May 2019* *Available Online: June 2019* **Keywords** *Political Party, Internal Democracy, Candidate Nomination, Intra-party Elections* **JEL Classification:** D72, E65	In the democratic form of government, political parties play a determinative and creative role. Striving for public offices is their fundamental objective which distinguishes them from other social organizations; hence, parties utilize all channels to secure maximum parliamentary slots. In a representative and inclusive democracy, political parties perform a set of different jobs ranging from nomination of electoral candidates, managing their campaigns, transforming public sentiments and demands into public policy, citizens' integration as well as fabricating government and civil society. Giving much importance to the political parties for the development of representative democracy, concerns have been raised about the ways in which they discharge their functions. If democracy deems not to flourish without political parties, then it is also important to assess how political parties are internally democratic in their determination and decision-making, influence and significance, proceeding and practices and distribution and dissemination of authority. In developing states, majority of political parties are operating as family-enterprises lacking true internal democratic culture. Self- centric, dynastic and interrupted politics have plagued the democratic norms and values. By focusing upon the ways and means which the parties adopt to elect their office-bearers as well as the mechanism which they prefer to nominate electoral candidates, the instant study will investigate whether or not the mainstream political parties in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are democratic in their functioning?

1. Introduction

It is a predisposition of human beings to live in groups and form such associations which cover social, cultural, economic and political aspects of their life. A political party is an organized body of people assembled to achieve

some goals within the political setup of a country. The term was emerged in the nineteenth century with the growth of representative institutions and the expansion of suffrage in Europe and United States. It was then a structured organization aimed to capture public office in electoral competition with other parties; subsequently, the term was extended to political organizations with non-electoral motives, revolutionary organizations seeking to abolish competitive elections and the governing groups in totalitarian states (Schlesinger, 1984).

Political parties provide a link between people and institutions through their elected representatives. Bryce observes that political organizations are the mouthpiece of the people which represent them in corridors of the government. They communicate demands of the people to those who formulate and implement policies. Strong and well-organized political parties are important for open, competitive and representative political setup in the contemporary democracies (Bryce, 1921). Marquez believes that political parties play an important role to influence the political life at the grass-root level. They create awareness among the masses and mobilize them on national and international issues (Marquez, 2005). Azhar and Muhammad believe that modern democracy is inconceivable without political parties which articulate and integrate different interests, visions, approaches and opinions to a workable and effective political philosophy (Azhar & Muhammad, 2015). Schattschneider holds that these are nuclei of the modern political system (Schattschneider, 1942) whereas Stokes believes that political parties are an unavoidable part of democracy (Stokes, 1999).

A political party is an alliance of like-minded people with the foremost function to contest elections and nominate their candidates in all or some constituencies to attract maximum electoral support. Secondly, all the political and electoral activities of the political parties aim to win the elections and gain public offices to materialize their manifestos. On the other hand, the primary function of parties in opposition is to pressurize the government to initiate and implement policies friendly for the state and citizens (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011). Political parties play an important role in transforming public sentiments and demands into public policy. For that purpose, they carefully formulate the manifestos, allocate tickets to the candidates capable of securing electoral triumph, conduct vigorous campaigns to get maximum public support in elections and finally form the government or opposition. While in government, parties articulate public interests and bridge the regional and national interests. In a heterogeneous society, if political organizations play their defined role and provide equal space to all segments of society in their ranks, then, they leave no option for the centrifugal forces to operate which, otherwise, would be active robustly and hit the national integration.

Since the political parties has gained centrality to modern political system, hence, it is important that they should internally be ruled democratically by providing equal opportunities for all to become part of political and electoral process (Toerell, 2010). Moreover, the democratic ideals require openness and inclusiveness in selection of electoral candidates as well as a shared decision-making mechanism among party leaders and its ranks. The instant study intends to assess the internal democratic level of major political parties of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. For that purpose, it formulated the following research questions:

2. Research Questions
- Whether or not the mainstream political parties in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are democratic in electing their office-bearers?
- Which mechanism these parties prefer to nominate electoral candidates?

3. Research Methodology
To answer the above-mentioned questions, top two political parties each from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are selected on the basis of electoral results of the last two elections (excluding 2018 election of Pakistan); these are Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) & Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) from Pakistan, Indian National Congress (INC) and Bhartia Janta Party (BJP) from India and Bangladesh National Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL) from Bangladesh. The study is explanatory in nature and secondary sources of data is collected, arranged and analyzed to explain the research questions. The constitutions of these parties as well as existing literature including books, articles, legislation related to political parties and election management bodies, research reports along with electronic and print media commentaries are consulted to make the findings more meaningful.

4. Intra-party Elections
An important yardstick to gauge the sanctity of intra-party democracy is the mechanism which the political parties adopt to appoint their office-bearers. A free, fair and transparent electoral process within the party not only

promotes the democratic norms and culture but also develops a mechanism to maintain dynamism. Such democratic activities facilitate the recruitment of young and energetic political workers; provide equal chances to all party-workers to contest intra-party elections and elevate their ranks in the organizational structure. Moreover, these activities strike the role of dynasties in party ranks and challenge the party stalwarts to keep their positions intact. It also decreases the probability of fragmentation and factionalism within the party, develops a reliable conflict management system and minimizes the opportunistic and arbitrary use of the delegated authority. Nevertheless, it all depends upon the degree of practical inclusiveness within the political party as well as the existence of a centralized power and authority therein (Chousalkar, 1997). The following segment details the practices about intra-party elections within major parties of target countries.

4.1   The Case of Pakistan

Acknowledging the importance of intra-party elections, the Political Parties Act (2002) of Pakistan enshrines two mandatory conditions for contesting general elections i.e. submission of 'statement of accounts or assets' of the party and detail of the intra-party polls. In that perspective, the constitution of PML-N requires that there should be intra-party elections periodically after a time-span of four years from the date of previous elections. The constitution incorporates;

"if the office of the party president falls vacant due to death or resignation or any other reasons before the expiry of the term, it is mandatory for the General Secretary to convene the meeting of Central Working Committee to elect an acting president and arrange to convene the meeting of the council of PMLN to elect the president not late than 45 days" ("Constitution Pakistan Muslim league (N)," 1996).

However, in practice, uneven intra-party elections have become the afflicted feature of the party. In 2011, PML-N conducted intra-party election after a gap of a decade. The election was conducted to fulfill the requirement of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). Mr. Nawaz Sharif was elected as the party chief and all other important slots went to his loyalists (Khan, 2011). Constitutionally, the next intra-party election was due in July 2015 but conducted in October 2016 i.e. after a delay of about fifteen months. In the said election, the party once again did not follow the democratic norms and values within its ranks and its Election Commission even did not release the final list of the contesting candidates. The election results were only the replica of the previous one wherein Nawaz Sharif, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, elected unopposed and almost all other slots were recaptured by the party stalwarts ("PMLN's intra party elections on Oct 18," 2016; Wasim, 2016a, 2016b).

The apex court of Pakistan disqualified Nawaz Sharif in Panamagate case in July 2017; subsequently, PML-N's office of the president became vacant; nevertheless, after making an amendment in Elections Act 2017, Nawaz Sharif recaptured the office of the president of PML-N. On February 22, 2017, the Supreme Court of Pakistan struck down the said amendment and Nawaz Sharif was de-seated as party president. To fill the vacancy, meetings of the Central Working Committee and the General Council of the party were held in Islamabad. The said "powerless" councils elected Mr. Shahbaz Sharif (the younger brother of Nawaz Shrif) unopposed as party president. The election was nothing but the endorsement of a "pre-decided" decision (Malik & Sheikh, 2018; "PML-N elects Shahbaz Sharif its permanent president," 2018; "Shehbaz Sharif formally elected as PML-N's president," 2018). Ironically, one "Sharif" trusted the other "Sharif" (dynastyism) to fill the vacant slot of party president whereas party stalwarts and workers remained indifferent from the whole exercise. It appears that the claim of PML-N to be the democratic in its structure and functioning is only a slogan.

On the other hand, the constitution of PPP provides that elections to the offices other than the "Patron-in-Chief" and the "Patron" would be held after every three years. However, in case of resignation, death, incapacity and removal of office-bearers and upon a consequent endorsement by the Central Executive Committee (CEC), such vacant slots would also be filled through election ("Pakistan Peoples Party: Constitution," n.d.; "Pakistan Peoples Party- – Oldest Democratic Political Party," n.d.). Nevertheless, after the execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (the founder of the party) in 1979, his wife Begum Nusrat Bhutto became the party head. Her daughter Benazir Bhutto succeeded her and became the party head in 1988 after becoming the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Benazir remained party chief until her assassination in December 2007. Her son, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, became the party head with Asif Ali Zardari (her spouse) became co-chairman of the party through her "will"; the said nominations were also endorsed by the party's CEC. Surprisingly, the party did not conduct its intra-party election during the whole period and all the office-bearers were appointed through nominations (Ullah, 2018).

Besides, a set of new rules and regulations was introduced in 2002 by the Musharraf-led government for the political parties which made it mandatory to conduct the intra-party elections. Failing which, the ECP was empowered to cancel the registration of party. To contest the forthcoming general elections, the PPP registered itself with the ECP bearing a new name i.e. Pakistan Peoples Party-Parliamentarian (PPP-P); Makhdoom Amin Faheem and Raja Pervaiz Ashraf became its unopposed president and secretary-general respectively. Benazir Bhutto retained the slot of party head of PPP ("PPPP elects Amin Fahim as president, Ashraf as GS," 2013).

In case of PPP-P, the intra-party elections would have to be held after every two years or as determined by the "Federal Organization" of the party. However, the last three elections for PPP-P were conducted in 2007, 2013 and 2017 with uneven periodical gaps. Moreover, these were conducted secretly and the party only shared electoral results to the media. It seems that the said elections were conducted only to fulfill the requirements of ECP wherein a truly democratic letter and spirit was missing. Majority of the office-bearers recaptured their slots unopposed. Interestingly, in the recent elections, even Bilawal Bhutto, Nayyar Bukhari and Saleem Mandviwalla were not present at the occasion but re-elected ("Zardari elected PPPP president, Bilawal elected PPP chairman," 2017).

4.2   The Case of India

The doors of the Indian democracy are not open for all and almost all the political parties are highly centralized or even remotely controlled. There, not only the central leadership but also parliamentary and assembly constituencies are in the clutches of certain political leaders who used money-muscle power to retain their political grip (Khan, 2016). After partition of the subcontinent, the INC, which is highly centric to the Ghandi family, took forty-six years to conduct the first election of the party president. The party is further criticized because of the centralizing impulses of Mrs. Indra Ghandi which removed the internal democracy from the party (Chousalkar, 1997). It conducts the intra-party elections periodically but these are only symbolic in nature since Ghandi family is still ruling the party; Mr. Rahul Gandhi is the current president of the party who was elected unopposed replacing his mother Sonia Gandhi in 2017("Missing intra-party democracy in India," 2018).

In the case of BJP, the election for the party president had never been conducted since its foundation. All of its presidents had been elevated through selection or nomination process. Elections have taken place only at the state level, but this practice too has been jettisoned in recent years in favor of elections by consensus (Hasan, 2017). Although the nomination or selection of the party head in BJP does not require any dynastic succession but it is highly guided and controlled by Rashtriya Swayamsevek Sangh (RSS) which is a right-wing Hindu nationalist organization widely recognized as the parent organization of the BJP. It appears that because of the non-prevalence of the dynastic succession, the BJP would have a better image of intra-party democracy than INC but the difference between two major parties in this regard is not significant; like INC, BJP is also a highly centralized party. Its internal structure ranging from the allotment of party tickets and nomination of office-bearers is highly centralized and party workers are not allowed to play any role in all these activities (Balwani & Chibber, 2016). Family rule has become a striking feature both in INC and BJP. The electoral results 2014 reveal that 14.89% of BJP's elected MPs belonged to various dynasties. In the general election of 2004 and 2009, the proportion in this regard stood 14.49% and 19.13% respectively (Singh, 2015). In short, both the mainstream political parties of India are subservient to their superemos who can drive the party on their will. Even an electoral defeat cannot adversely affect their control over the party.

4.3   The Case of Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, Representation of the People Order (RPO), 1972, provides that there should be intra-party elections at regular intervals to elect the party heads and office-bearers. It also provides that these electoral proceedings would be communicated to the election management body of the state (Amundsen, 2016; Shamrat, 2017). The constitutions of both the major political parties (AL &BNP) provide that the party councils will conduct their meetings at regular intervals of three years. These are the highest tier of the parties (a form of party caucus) in which representatives from the lower branch or district levels meet at national level. As per constitutions, these representatives/delegates are elected by party members at local level. However, these elections are only a mockery to the democratic process. These forums are empowered to elect party president and other organizational hierarchy (Shamrat, 2017). In most of the cases, the representatives are handpicked by the party operatives based on their level of loyalty not to the party but to the party elites. This "election-selection" process revolves around personality cults, sycophancy and patronage which adversely affect the essence of a true intra-party democracy. The influential and powerful party leadership hijacks the whole process. As a natural consequence, these handpicked delegates do in the party council what their pickers want from them to do.

Both of the major political parties i.e. AL &BNP are highly centralized and their decisions are made in authoritative manner. The party chiefs enjoy absolute and arbitrary powers in party affairs ranging from nomination of the office-bearers to allocation of the party-tickets in the parliamentary elections. No one dare to oppose the decisions of the party president. Resultantly, party councils have become only public show to endorse the party decisions.

Both these parties have actually become dynastic since there is no change or competition for party presidency for last 30 years. Hasina Wajid, the leader of the AL, succeeded to continue as party head for the last 37 years i.e. from 1981. She set an unprecedented record of longest ever serving chief of any political party (Liton & Molla, 2018). The slot of the secretary of the said party is also filled through nomination by the party chief instead of election. Sharmat observes that "position of the party chair is almost fixed, and he/she makes the final selection of party secretary privately before holding councils" (Shamrat, 2017).

BNP also practices in the similar manner. Its chairperson has absolute and unchallenged authority to convene the party's national executive committee meeting. In its fifth national council, the party further empowered the chairperson to fill the empty slots of national executive and standing committees through nomination. The chairperson can also dissolve these committees without taking anyone on the board (Kelly & Ashiagbor, 2011).

Party councils not only elect the party chief in flimsy manner but also empower the chief to make the policies to operate the party accordingly. The meetings of these councils are quite irregular and infrequent. However, to some extent, AL is more regular in convening its council meetings; since its inception, it had organized only 20 such meetings i.e. one in every three years. BNP, in this regard, is far behind than AL; it conducted only six council meetings since its birth i.e. one in every six years. Interestingly, the gap between 4th and 5th council's meeting of BNP was more than 16 years. Similar trends have also been observed at sub-national level (Power, 2013). Elections for the committees at lower level are conducted irregularly and the real spirit of democracy seems missing in these elections. Most of the committees are either ad hoc based or their tenure has been expired. In most of the cases, central leadership exercises their discretionary powers and makes nominations at national and sub-national levels. It is believed that level of internal democracy in AL is more better than that of BNP in organizing committee meetings and electing leaders at sub-national levels (Amundsen, 2013; "Politics of Dynasty knows no boundaries," n.d.).

5. Candidate Selection

Candidate selection/ticket allocation for contesting election is an important channel for the political parties to transform a centralized political system into an inclusive one hence it is important to know how parties allocate tickets to various applicants. In developed democracies, internal structure of political parties is well organized and established. They take all the stake-holders on board and conduct primaries for the candidate selection and allocating party tickets. In contrast, the political parties in developing democracies are internally less organized. Here, instead of committed workers, parties need "influentials", "electables", "feudals" and "money- muscles owners" to win elections. Such candidates can easily manage to win favors of the party high-ups to secure their electoral tickets. Moreover, probability to win the election is another significant factor during the allotment of party tickets rather than merit. Although the process which the political parties adopt seems to be non-egalitarian but the calculation for electoral triumph is more important for the party. Caste, religion, socialization and influence of the candidate over other social groups are some of the other factors which parties consider while nominating candidates. In some cases, there is corruption in ticket distribution (Singh, 2015) whereas in some other cases, the general rule of the thumb is that party incumbents succeeded to get the nomination for tickets unless they are perceived to be no longer likely to win (Farooqui & Sridharan, 2014).

5.1   The Case of Pakistan

To allocate the party tickets, the constitution of PML-N provides for a central parliamentary board comprising twenty members which is constituted and empowered by the Central Working Committee. The President of the party along with leader of the parliamentary party as well as the provincial presidents of the party is the ex-officio members of the board which scrutinizes the applications and allocates party tickets. Nevertheless the constitution of the party is silent about the criterion which the board has to follow to finalize the party nominees. The party head enjoys discretionary powers in allocation of party tickets. In most cases, the incumbents succeed to win the favors of the board.

During the general election of 2008, the party allocated tickets in sizeable numbers to those who jumped the party's sinking ship after the military coup of 1999 and contested the election of 2002 either in independent capacity or under the banner of the military patron political party i.e. Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid-e-Azam (PML-Q). Despite the commitment of Mr. Nawaz Sharif of "not to entertain anyone who had left the party when it was in the hot soup", above 145 PML-Q loyalists secured tickets from PML-N ("146 get PML-N tickets, though they quit party after coup," 2013). Quite interestingly, the party preferred the political "octopuses" at the expense of its diehard supporters. In the election of 2013, the party constituted national and provincial parliamentary boards comprising "selected" people. This time the criterion for allocating tickets included topography of the constituency, voting patterns and the candidates' performance; nevertheless the "influentials", "electables" and "loved ones" succeeded to secure their tickets. The party once again axed those who were committed to it and never shook their alignment (Manan, 2013). Party's local chapters, office-bearers, and other members were not consulted during the course of candidate selection (Socio-Economic Background of Political Parties Candidates for General Election 2008, 2008).

In the case of PPP, the constitution of party is silent over the process of ticket allocation; however, it is mentioned that active and diehard members of the party with an active record of promoting the aims of the party and in good standing are eligible to contest. Their eligibility is subject to their credibility as a candidate that can win an election, their public record and their undertaking to remain loyal members of the party. Hence the role of local party organizations in deciding the contestants for national and provincial assemblies during last election was unclear (Internal Democracy of Major Political Parties, 2016). During the headship of Benazir Bhutto i.e. until 2007, the party constituted district boards where the applicants submitted their applications for party tickets. The board scrutinized the applications and sent to the concerned provincial board with their recommendation. However, in election of 2013, Faryal Talpur, the sister of Mr. Asif Ali Zardari who is the co-chairman of PPP, played key role to allocate the tickets. She conducted interviews of the applicants along with the provincial presidents and finalized the candidate's lists with the consultation of the CEC (Monitor Political Parties' Internal Democracy, 2016; "The ACE Encyclopedia: Parties and Candidates," 2013). It can safely be concluded that like PML-N, PPP is also highly centralized in the process of ticket allocation. Here, too, the committed party workers and local chapters are neglected during the electoral process and the preference is given to "landlords" and "electables" for contesting the election.

5.2　　The Case of India

The INC sends observers in all the constituencies of Lok Sabha who prepare reports about the potential party candidates. These reports are forwarded to the District Congress Committee (DCC) and Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) which in turn forward them to the concerned State Election Committee (SEC). Each SEC then prepares the panel of candidates for each constituency with their recommendations and sends it to the All India Congress Committee (AICC). The AICC constitutes a screening committee for each state comprising a senior member of the Congress Working Committee, two senior party members not from that state, the state's PCC chief along with the State's Congress Legislature Party Leader. The screening committees prepare a docket, listing the pros and cons of each potential candidate and forward it to the Central Election Committee (CEC), which allocate party tickets to suitable candidates (Gowda & Sridharan, 2010; Singh, 2015).

In 2014, Rahul Gandhi, the then Vice President of the INC, decided to conduct primaries in sixteen constituencies to elect the potential electoral candidates. The party, in this way, attempted to involve the lowest ranks of the party to vote for the candidates of their choice. It claimed that the process was successful hence to be implemented across the board in the forthcoming elections (Polanki, 2014).

On the other hand, the constitution of BJP does not prescribe any method to nominate electoral candidates. However, the mechanism which the party follows for the said purpose includes two committees for screening and recommendation of the candidates. The State Election Committee (SEC) is mandated only for the municipal and local elections for each state whereas the Central Election Committee (CEC) of the party plays no role in this regard. However, in state and parliamentary level elections, SEC plays only a recommendatory role for the potential candidates in each constituency and CEC finally allocates the tickets (Singh, 2015). In elections of 2009, a more centralized mechanism was adopted. The SECs were not allowed to play their recommendatory role but could only forward the applicant's name to the CEC which could make the final decision. A core group comprising senior leaders of the party was constituted for each state; it could decide the allocation of tickets hence was more powerful and influential while the CEC was reduced only to a rubber-stamp (Farooqui & Sridharan, 2014).

The reality is that the process of allocating the electoral tickets of BJP is highly centralized; the party president along with some key leaders actually finalize the lists of the contestants and the lower ranks have nothing to do with this process (Dhru & Monterio, 2010).

In actual allocating the party tickets, the major factors which the both mainstream Indian political parties (INC &BJP) consider include caste, religion, money and muscle power of the candidate since the last two of the aforementioned elements contribute most towards the electability of any candidate. The parties do not feel any shy to allocate tickets to such "winnables". Over-centralization within the parties leads towards the uneven ticket allocation and those who possess high assets value and criminal records succeed to win the favor of party leaders. The following table shows how the candidates with criminal records succeeded to capture the party tickets and parliamentary slots.

Table 1: Indian MPs with Criminal Cases: A Comparison between Lok Sabha of 2009 and 2014

	Lok Sabha 2009				Lok Sabha 2014			
Party	Number of Candidates	Number of MPs	Number of MPs with pending criminal cases	MPs with pending criminal	Number of Candidates	Number of MPs	Number of MPs with pending	MPs with pending criminal
INC	438	206	44	21	462	44	8	18
BJP	428	116	44	38	426	281	98	35
SP	192	23	9	39	195	0	0	0
BSP	493	21	6	29	501	0	0	0
JD(U)	53	20	8	40	93	2	1	50
AITC	33	19	4	21	131	34	7	21
DMK	21	18	4	22	35	0	0	0
CPM	81	16	3	19	93	9	5	56
BJD	18	14	4	29	21	20	3	15
SHS	46	11	9	82	58	18	15	83
NCP	68	9	4	44	35	6	5	83
ADMK	21	9	4	44	40	37	6	16

Source:(Collaborative conjunction between crime and politics, 2018; Singh, 2015)

The data reveals that the candidates having criminal charges have more probability to win the elections as compared to the clean candidates. The comparison shows that the Lok Sabhas of 2009 and 2014 had an average of 23% of such members who had criminal record whereas the average of such members who had a clean record was only 12% (Dahiya, 2017; Sastry, 2013; Vaishnav, 2014).

5.3   The Case of Bangladesh
There is no specific provision in the constitution of Bangladesh about selection of candidates for elections of parliament. However, in 2008, the government amended the RPO to assure that the lower ranks of the party must involve in the process of candidate nomination; the order now requires that the lower tiers of the party would prepare the list of potential candidates and forward the same to the central committee or parliamentary board.
The constitution of AL provides for a parliamentary board which would scrutinize the applications for party tickets and decide about the final allotments. The board comprises eleven members including party president, general secretary and the deputy leader of the AL's parliamentary party; other members are elected from the AL council members ("Declaration and Constitution," 2016). Similarly, the constitution of BNP also provides for a parliamentary board to finalize the electoral candidates; the board works under the headship of the party chairperson whereas members of the party's standing committee, three vice-presidents, general secretary of the party and the president of the district committee are the other members of the board. The party convened district-wise meetings of the parliamentary board where the respective district president of the party also joins as a member. However, the board can include any person beyond the said list.

Like India and Pakistan, there is no radical difference in the practices of both the major parties of Bangladesh while finalizing the allotment procedure; here, too, the party chiefs enjoy the real deciding power. Furthermore, winnability of the candidate is the most important factor which the political parties in Bangladesh consider during the allocation of tickets; candidate's image in the constituency, his/her socialization and the ability to bear the

election expenses, contribution to the party and relationship with party high-ups are other important factors in "seat politics" (Amundsen, 2013, 2016). In some cases, although the applicants are interviewed and evaluated by the parliamentary board but the decision of allocation the party ticket solely depends how the applicant manages the party high-ups. A sizeable proportion of non-career politicians also succeed to get the party tickets by applying their financial resources as well as their relationship with the civil and military bureaucracy (Mahiuddin, 2010).

6. Conclusion

The aforementioned detail reveals that almost all of the major political parties in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are truly accused of having non-democratic intra-party setups. The dynastic rule prevails in all these parties and these ruling families assign the key-slots to their favorites as well as to the influential political figures at will whereas the grass-root workers are usually ignored during the process; whenever these parties conduct intra-party elections for electing their office-bearers, these elections are only symbolic in nature and everyone know who would be occupying what. A similar practice of favoring the "electables" as well as the personal likes is also found during the course of ticket-allocation to the electoral contestants. Such non-democratic practices consequently hinder the nourishment of democratic culture and cause the failure of grooming the alternate leadership within the party ranks since the genuine workers cannot get the opportunity to work at important party slots.

The study also concludes that except the INC, all the selected political parties did nothing to make their ticket-allocation process truly democratic. All the decisions in this regard are made behind the closed doors. The committed party workers fail to win the favors of central party leadership for the party tickets. The practice generates apathy and aloofness among the party workers which further discourages the induction of new blood. All these bottlenecks adversely affect the political culture and weaken the democratic institutions. By practicing in an excessively centralized and authoritative manner, political parties fail to assess the pulse of the public and remain distant from electorates. Parties' structure remains weak and fragile and the gap between party leaders and workers remains un-bridged. Such parties also face frequent deviations while implementing their decisions within the party or their members disintegrate while facing any political upheaval or turmoil.

Strong and inclusive political parties provide concrete foundations for establishing a democratic political culture in a developing state like Pakistan, India or Bangladesh. However, to reach at that level, parties need to internalize intra-party democratic norms and values in true letter and spirit. They should conduct free and fair intra-party elections at proper intervals, and the culture of centralized nominations and appointments should be discouraged. Parties should provide career-paths to their workers and, in turn, seek loyalty from them. In allocation of the election tickets, parties should adopt transparent mechanism to scrutinize the applicants and, if possible, should conduct primaries to check the pulse of their workers. Moreover, legal compulsions should be reinvigorated to make the functioning of parties more democratic and election commission be made more powerful to execute and implement the electoral as well as the party laws.

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