

India and Pakistan: The Role of Regimes, Consensus and Stability

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How do the governments of a dictatorial regime (Pakistan) and a democratic regime (India) differ? Statistics suggest India has economically overtaken Pakistan on most indicators. However, this was not a foregone conclusion, as India's income per capita in 1990 (using 2011 constant prices), the per capita income (using 2011 constant prices) in India was 1,773 PPP US dollars, just 58% of Pakistan's. Yet after two decades, India caught up and now surpasses Pakistan by 20%. This first observation brings the question of the divergent political and economic paths these two countries took to explain such differences in development. After the enactment of their independence from the British Empire, both countries had to build a political framework. On the one hand, Pakistan's constitution was embedded in conflict, elections were regularly postponed and military coups undermined institutions. On the other hand, India drafted the world's longest constitution, successfully held free and fair elections and took the democratic route. These provide insights into the topic of instability due to the regime type of the two countries. Pakistan being an autocracy, was an extremely unstable country with a weak government whereas India being a democracy, had flourished into the fastest developing nation in the world with a stable and fair government elected by the people. This study aims to analyse the impact of varying political structures, institutional frameworks, and power distribution mechanisms in both countries on the establishment and sustenance of political consensus crucial for upholding democratic principles. First, it provides a base on which the research paper rests and discusses the turbulent history of Pakistan alongside the developing, advancing history of India. The governments and political systems of both are explained and the conflicts between the two countries are unveiled. After having established this, we look at why and how the regime type of Pakistan can be regarded as unstable and, in comparison why and how these same variables allow us to regard India as a stable country. The political structures, institutions, and mechanisms are debated and we particularly look at the importance of political consensus to create and maintain stability. Ultimately, the paper discusses and answers the questions of how the organisational structures of political regimes in India and Pakistan contribute to or hinder the attainment of political stability, the role political consensus plays in fostering democratic values in the two countries and what are distinct patterns in regime changes and their effects of political

stability and democratic values in India and Pakistan. Discussing the effects of political consensus is indeed crucial in answering the question of whether political consensus is necessary for maintaining democracy. A political consensus is achieved when a significant proportion of the population is in agreement about the allocation of values. This study aims to analyse the impact of varying political structures, institutional frameworks, and power distribution mechanisms in India and Pakistan offers to do so by looking at the establishment and sustenance of political consensus crucial for upholding democratic principles. It goes in-depth to analyse the two countries of Pakistan and India, their governments, regime type and how it impacts them differently. It also studies political instability and how it could be a major concern for countries. This study tries to answer questions such as how the organisational structures of political regimes in India and Pakistan contributes to or hinders the attainment of political stability the role political consensus plays in fostering foundational democratic values in the two countries or whether there are distinct patterns in regime changes and what their effects are on political stability and democratic values in India and Pakistan. Political consensus is achieved when a large chunk of society can agree on the allocation of values. Whether it is about the outcomes or the procedures. Consensus can reduce conflict by fostering a sense of mutual restraint. On the other hand, it can even bring too much constraint in trying to satisfy everyone. For a democracy to thrive, there needs to be a general and active consensus on crucial decisions in running a country such as agreement about institutions, laws and shared identity (Citrin). Without agreement on subjects such as the governance of the country, the whole system crumbles as there are different points of view in every matter and a clash between authorities can result in instability. Opponents of passive consensus argue that it could be a form of manipulation. Scholars such as Vasilev, believe passive consensus is legitimate only if it meets the two criteria of honesty and respect towards others while acknowledging interests. Pakistan consists of 3 main centres of power- feudal lords, military and clergy holding all the power in place of the people contrary to democratic principles. These three centres assert their power through different tactics and control everything, giving an insight into the workings of Pakistan. Secularism is undermined which is important for democratic rule. The reason for the turmoil in Pakistan may be its weak institutions, restrictions on media, dependent judiciary etc. Without any system of checks and balances, power is available when military dictators launch a coup and take over which is extremely harmful and against democracy. The restrictions on media and an independent judiciary are harmful as well. Some positive changes are movements against authoritarian regimes, the courage to take a stand, and the military gaining some responsibility. All this is a result of education (Bora). This gives an outline of the system of Pakistan and why it is a struggling democracy. The Indian political system follows the prime minister as head of the executive, a parliament with two houses and a judiciary led by the supreme court. There are general elections every five years to elect the members of parliament in the Lok Sabha. Rajya

Sabha members are elected by the state for a term of 6 years. India's constitution outlines its federal powers, and the political structure and grants rights such as equality before the law and freedom to speech etc. Its constitution was amended to declare India as a secular state during the Emergency in 1915 (Price). After gaining an insight into the system of India, we explore the effects of the 1947 partition between these two countries which can help identify the diverging points of the two starkly differentiated countries today. The partition led to extreme communal violence/massacres and mass migration, it impacted the national identities leading to stereotypes against each other and hatred. These two countries have had a rivalry fuelled by the messy partition ever since then leading to wars and unresolved disputes. Pakistan as a result prioritised its military and their capacity to defend itself from India which led to a large share of the budget devoted to defence (Talbot). This gives an insight into the cause and effect of the violent separation of the two countries and shows the reason for their extreme competitiveness whether in sports or any other field. Turning to the parliamentary democracy and coalition government system of India to explore the differences in governance and systems of the two countries. Coalitions are explained and different examples of the parties are given such as the Indian National Congress and the fall in its dominance. Coalitions are fragile, alongside broader political consensus, to the number of participants to be satisfied which can be tied with the argument of consensus. Coalitions are more democratic as they have a wider range of views. On the other hand, this can also lead to fragmented decisions wherever consensus is not present. The author also talks about identity politics and its impact on politics (Srinivasrao). Studying Pakistan's history gives us knowledge of what led to their state today. The military is a powerful force in Pakistani politics and can cause instability in governments as will later be discussed in detail. There is a disparity in Pakistani society and development hasn't benefited all parts leading to discontent feelings. Pakistan has an unsuccessful democracy due to regional conflicts, poverty and a powerful military. It needs a balance between economic growth and social political reforms for its democracy to survive (Monshipouri and Samuel). In the meantime, India's political landscape is rapidly changing. The Bharatiya Janata The party is the dominant party after Congress. There is a weak opposition and increased representation where rural and disadvantaged castes are also being brought into politics. Some argue that the fall in the opposition's power and centralisation of parties has weakened the core democratic functions (Verma). Through a mixed methodologies approach, secondary data analysis was used to collect information for research purposes. One major limitation of the research paper is that some of the sources are not published recently. Some of the information collected is considerable and analysis could require timely updates. There is a little information which is to a certain extent, recent. The statistics show Pakistan's per capita income used to be more than India's but has recently taken a dip. Both recent and past statistics are shown here- A decade ago Pakistan's per capita income was still much higher than India's despite its growth. Amid Pakistan's period of

instability, there were a total of 7 different prime ministers in the first 11 years of its existence alone. The political confusion of the 80s and 90s also led to an economic slowdown and while Pakistan's economy grew by an average of 7% during the 80s, it was down to below 4% in the 90s. Meanwhile, India's economy was successful and overtook Pakistan. In 2011 the per capita income using 2011 constant prices in India was 1,773 PPP US dollars, just 58% of Pakistan's. It took India 2 decades to catch up and now has a lead of 20%. The methodology used in this paper provides guidelines to identify and explore objectives and questions. Two countries, Pakistan and India are compared in this analysis. Pakistan is a politically unstable country which has gone through many military coups and has an unreliable government. It has no political consensus and is a developing nation. India is a democratic nation. It is a politically stable country which has political consensus and has had many successful governments in its past. These two neighbouring countries have been rival nations since their messy partition in 1947 after gaining their independence from colonial Britain. Pakistan is a Muslim- dominated country and is not secular whereas India while having a Hindu majority is a secular country. This study aims to analyse the impact of varying political structures, institutional frameworks, and power distribution mechanisms in both countries on the establishment and sustenance of political consensus crucial for upholding democratic principles. This analysis studies the conclusions reached aided by many sources on the different regime types of the two countries, why it is so and where the significant differences occur in their history. A result of the research is that Pakistan came to the dictatorial regime due to a series of military coups causing instability. The absence of a proper system of checks and balances unlike in India led to Pakistan's demise. The role of the President which is a ceremonial one was made powerful under Pervez Musharraf, a military dictator (Bora). Furthermore, The United States instigated military command and annulled the first general elections. US imposed martial law allowing General Ayub Khan to become the first military dictator. Musharraf at a time when he was going strong, had to suddenly shed his uniform due to a democratic upsurge. After Zardari imposed a ban on media and stifled the freedom of speech and expression, Sherry Rehman quit his office along with many other party members speaking against the head. The army also behaved responsibly (Bora). The Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the Pakistani intelligence agency never worked in the interest of democracy and served the dictators, famously being the conspiracy with Zia to topple ZA Bhutto's government. (Monshipouri and Samuel) There have been quite a few long-term administrations as well excluding Yahya Khan's period in which there were free and competitive elections and gave rise to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and the first effective civilian government. Field Marshal Ayub Khan gained power through a military coup when the national assembly was dissolved and martial law was imposed. Z A Bhutto came to power after a war in 1971 and implemented reforms curtailing the powers of the elite classes. He used military power to punish his enemies even though he was the only democratically elected Prime Minister of

Pakistan. General Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq, chief of the army staff also came to power through a military coup. His regime was repressive and stopped any uprising against them, political parties were also banned. Under General Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq living standards improved but there was no freedom of the press. Benazir Bhutto's first time of 20 months government was a failure. They lacked support but the press was free and the number of women in the political arena increased. Her government avoided oppressive measures but Bhutto's poor performance gave rise to Nawaz Sharif as Prime Minister. His was a repressive regime whereas Bhutto's power led to a decrease in human rights violations. Some regimes strengthened dictatorships like Zia's whereas others were neutral as Sharif's. During Ayub's rule, economic growth was good but social growth was poor. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto gave strength to the majority but did not lead to economic progress. Zia was a "social nightmare" but economic growth was better than Bhutto's. Benazir Bhutto did create a liberal environment but economic growth was slower in her first term. Sharif also increased economic growth but his social policies were forceful as The Sharia Bill created tension and the process of Islamisation along with political repression led to social unrest and opposition (Monshipouri and Samuel). Bhutto's second term saw improved social growth but also saw an increase in political violence with the Mohair Quami Movement (MQM) in Karachi with greater violence. There was political turmoil and uncertainty due to Pakistan's nuclear program, the murder of US officials, crop failures (Monshipouri and Samuel). All these examples show Pakistan's unstable environment and give an insight into democracy's decline. Another result is that the partition was a major turn point which conclusively divided India's democracy from Pakistan's autocracy. Ultimately, the post-partition's environment and aftermath lead to two different paths, which helps us understand the two different nations. This study uses a qualitative methodology through discourse analysis and aimed to analyse the impact of varying political structures, institutional frameworks, and power distribution mechanisms in both countries on the establishment and sustenance of political consensus crucial for upholding democratic principles. Questions such as how do the organisational structures of political regimes in India and Pakistan contribute to or hinder the attainment of political stability or what role political consensus plays in fostering foundational democratic values in the two countries. It asks whether there are distinct patterns in regime changes and delves into their effects on political stability and democratic values in India and Pakistan. Key takeaways after analysis of different sources are that Pakistan has an unstable dictatorial regime type with many military coups weakening the political and economic situation of the government and that any government which would be democratically elected would also crumble lacking proper consensus. India has prospered as a nation and is developing at a fast pace. It has working institutions and is a good democracy because it has a written constitution which is not static and is a stable representative democracy with free and fair elections and universal adult franchise. There is consensus in the government and the Indian parliament regarding various issues. The

findings stated above are significant as they help differentiate the different regime types, define their workings, and effects on the two nations in question and reveal the impact on the political structures, and sustenance of the countries as well as their economies. Studies on India and Pakistan come to related conclusions. Studies such as ‘Pakistan a struggling democracy’, ‘Legacies of the partition for India and Pakistan’, ‘Development and democracy in Pakistan’, ‘India and Pakistan: A Tale of two economies’ and ‘How India institutionalised democracy and Pakistan promoted autocracy’. These studies also go over the impact of the partition on the two countries, how they were affected differently and the instability in Pakistan due to different movements. Certain similarities are visible in the studies listed above. There can be alternative explanations for the research problem. A few examples can be the political unrest in April 2022 due to the dismissal of former Prime Minister Imran Khan through a no-confidence motion leading to many economic hardships. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has also caused prices to increase. Another reason could be Pakistan’s doubling national debt. The research study has certain limitations as well. There is a lack of previous research studies on the specific topic. The credibility of sources used to draw conclusions can also present problems. As well as older sources. Even after going into detail about the research problem and question, there can be some questions which remain unanswered but this study will pave the road for further research as it goes in-depth regarding the differences of the regime types between India and Pakistan and discusses the reasons after partition for this stark difference in the two countries which have stemmed from the same source. In conclusion, this study differentiates between India and Pakistan’s regime types and finds the source of the stark changes after the partition between the two by studying instability and political consensus. In the end, we are able to establish that Pakistan sustains a high level of political and economic instability due to challenges faced such as coups, weak governments and dictators. India is a democratic republic which has a stable system and shows the example of a country which developed greatly after the same partition which caused problems in both countries leading to the downfall of Pakistan.

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