

**AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF DEMOCRACY AND  
PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM OF PAKISTAN DURING 2008-2018**



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANP	Awami National Party
BC	Before Christ
BCE	Before common Era
COD	Charter of Democracy
CCI	Council of Common Interest
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
COP	Combined Opposition Parties
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
ECP	Election Commission of Pakistan
EU	European Union
FAFEN	Free and Fair Election Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
JUI	Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam
JI	Jumati Islami
LFO	Legal Framework Order
MRD	Movement for Restoration of Democracy
NEC	National Economic Council
NFC	National Finance Commission
NAB	National Accountability Bureau
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NA	Natioanl Assembly
NPW	National Party Wahdat
PNA	Pakistan National Alliance
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party
PMLN	Pakistan Muslim league Nawaz
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek Insaf
PILDAT	Pakistan Institute of legislative Development
PMAP	Pukhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party

PIPS	Pakistan institute for Parliamentary Services
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
QWP	Qaumi Watan Party
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
UNGA	United Nation General Assembly
UN	United Nations
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UK	United Kingdom
US	United State
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WFD	Westminster foundation for Democracy

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## ABSTRACT

This study provides a thorough analysis of Pakistan's democratic and parliamentary development between 2008 and 2018, a pivotal decade characterized by institutional difficulties, legislative landmarks, and political shifts. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) led a coalition government that made significant achievements during the first half of the 2008–2013 period, including the 18th Constitutional Amendment and a peaceful democratic transition. But it was also tainted by institutional discord, poor legal execution, and corruption. Under the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the second half (2013–2018) showed improvements in infrastructure, but these were overshadowed by political unrest, judiciary interventions, and civil-military tensions, which ultimately led to the disqualification of an elected prime minister.

The study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews conducted with a wide range of stakeholders, including academicians, journalists, politicians, and civil society specialists to gain in-depth insights into the functioning and challenges of Pakistan's democratic and parliamentary system. A thematic analysis of these interviews was conducted in order to extract expert opinions on important aspects of democracy, including political party behavior, legislative productivity, electoral legitimacy, the role of the military and judiciary, the operation of accountability institutions, and the state of federal constitutional bodies like the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), National Finance Commission (NFC), and Council of Common Interests (CCI). Triangulating the interview data with secondary sources allows for a well-founded evaluation of Pakistan's democratic development in a mixed political system.

A paradoxical pattern emerges from the research findings: Pakistani democracy was weakened by dynastic politics, weak political institutions, limited decentralization, and selective accountability, even though it was sustained through successive elections and constitutional transfers of power. Political parties, despite being essential to democratic functioning, frequently lacked internal democracy, openness, and ideological clarity, which undermined wider democratic involvement, according to the research. The media and Judiciary further complicated the formation of democracy by acting as both politicized actors and watchdogs. The military continued to have informal control over

domestic security, foreign policy, and crisis management, hence limiting legislative authority. Civil-military ties also remained unbalanced.

This thesis makes a substantial contribution by integrating classical and modern political theories, especially those of Michael Hudson (institutional inclusivity and legitimacy), Arend Lijphart (consociational democracy), Robert Dahl (polyarchy and institutional guarantees), and Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell (typology of political systems). With characteristics similar to Lijphart's consociational paradigm, Pakistan's democracy is examined as a fractured or centrifugal system in which elite agreements like the Charter of Democracy (COD), inter-party alliances, and all-party conferences sought to reduce intergroup tensions. However, the development of long-lasting democratic norms was thwarted by the absence of regular elite cooperation and inclusive political behavior.

The study concludes, that although Pakistan achieved a certain level of democratic maturity, especially through successive elections and peaceful handovers of power, the decade also revealed long-standing structural flaws. These include inadequate devolution to local governments, ineffective accountability systems, judicial and military in transparency, and individualized party politics.

The research ends with specific recommendations to fortify Pakistan's parliamentary system, improve political accountability, and institutionalize democratic norms. Pakistan could move from a centrifugal to a centripetal democracy if present civic awareness, judicial activity, and youth engagement are combined with real reform. In addition to adding to the body of knowledge regarding hybrid democracies and parliamentary systems in South Asia, this thesis provides politicians, reformers, and democratic organizations working to ensure stability and inclusivity in Pakistan's democratic future with useful insights.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Democratic government originated in the ancient Greek city-states, with direct democracy becoming obsolete as large states developed. Representative democracy based on elections became crucial, allowing citizens to hold government accountable and prevent power abuse (Hague, 2004). The UNGA resolution emphasizes human rights, fundamental freedoms, participation in public affairs, free and fair elections, political parties, separation of powers, judicial independence, and rule of law, transparency and accountability as vital elements of a democratic system (Ghulam, 2020). Democratic governments are of two types: parliamentary and presidential. The major difference between both types' governments lies in their relationship. The responsibility of the executive to legislature, fusion of power, confidence of the majority legislators are the hallmarks of parliamentary government. Therefore, parliamentary system is a closed nut system and hailed in many nations (Cheibub & Rasch, 2022).

Great Britain is the mother of parliamentary democracy. She first discovered how to manage a large state on democratic values. She established different institutions and provided to them a constitutional cover. Her political institutions have inherited by most countries, and many countries are influence by her institutional, democratic and political ideals (Cheibub & Rasch, 2022). Great Britain, being colonizer, is also responsible for the growth of democratic institutions in various countries like Canada, India and Pakistan, South Africa and New Zealand.

Parliamentary democracy emerged in twentieth century and many nations adopted by 1918. During the European revolutions in 1848, some attempts were made to establish democratic system, but it was not established. Parliamentary system, constitution and periodic elections sustain democracy and bestow eternal resilience to the political system. In many nations, with a constitutional monarchy, including Britain, Scandinavia, and the Benelux, democracy is propping up by parliamentary type of government. Contrarily, in some authoritarian monarchies, like France, Germany, and

Bismarck, elections were sustained and a responsible government were installed without establishing parliamentary setup. A handful number of nations including: France, Finland, and Sweden attuned parliamentarization and democratization. When dictators plunged the nations in the Second World War, and world witnessed the failures of dictators; then, democracy was synchronized with parliamentarization. Currently, UK, Canada, and Australia are effectively practicing parliamentary system (Beyme, 2015).

In South Asia, democracy is fragile except India. The region has been witnessing dictatorial, monarchial, theocratic, and centralized autocratic political systems. These systems lack visions and directives for the development of parliamentary democracy, minorities' rights and development of the marginalized ethnic groups. Notwithstanding, the SAARC countries ratified the international agreements for strengthening democratic regimes and the rule of law. The region, undergo democratic failures, corruption, human rights' abuses, violence and economic issues. These issues resulted in lawlessness, poor governance, sociopolitical and socioeconomic disparities, civil liberties curtailment, and security challenges (Nepali, 2009).

Pakistan was established on democratic ideals. Quid-E-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in 1943, articulated: "democracy is in our blood, it is in our marrow" (Khalid, 1968) . He imagined that the future constitution of Pakistan would be orchestrated on democratic ideals, Islamic values, parliamentary supremacy and federalism. He said that institutional resilience, independent decision-making, rule of law, protection of life, liberty, property, minority rights, and well-being of the people shall be constitutionally guaranteed. Elimination of corruption and other social evils should be stopped with rigid hands; respect, equality, cooperation and unity should be forged. He knew that in prevailing conditions sovereign political institutions should ensure a real democratic setup in Pakistan (Khalid, 1968).

After the demise of founding father, Pakistan plunged into institutional imbalance and political crisis. Western interests in the region further deteriorated these issues. These phenomenon i.e. institutional imbalance, political crisis, and western interests paved way for the military and bureaucracy to entrench in the political arena of Pakistan. Therefore, military, and bureaucratic executives often intervene in the affairs of legislatures since 1953. Judiciary too legitimized the military direct interventions in

1958, 1969, 1977, and 1999 by taking the support of obsolete laws. The experimentations like dictatorship, presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary type of governments undermined the foundation of democracy and institutional autonomy. The judiciary does not properly protect and interpret the constitution that resulted democratic derailment and institutional imbalance. Additionally, no general election held by 1970. However, Yahya Khan first time announced general election, in 1970, under LFO. The election manifested very lethal for the country's survival, and finally resulted in debacle (Mahmood, 2003).

After the experimentations of different political systems, Pakistan returned to parliamentary government under 1973 constitution. Nevertheless, the 1973 constitution was suspended and amendment by military dictators according to their wishes. The decade of 1990s witnessed the frequent dissolution of elected parliaments that undermined democratic edifice and mitigated the confidence of the citizens on democracy (Jaffrelot, 2016).

However, major parties i.e. PPP and PMLN signed a charter, in London, for the enhancing and continuation of parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. The charter is known as Charter of Democracy. The COD was followed by 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> amendments that reinforced resilience to the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. The 2008, 2013 and 2018 general election further strengthens parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. These political developments, up to some extent, halted direct military interventions in the political landscape (Akram & Azhar, 2023).

The present study is a continuation to assess and analyze the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan in a specific period from 2008 to 2018. The selected decade is crucial for research because of COD, transition from military government to democratic government, consociation politics that contributed to the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> amendments. Moreover, in this decade through constitutional means investiture the institutional jurisdictions and thwarted direct military intervention.

## 1.2 Literature review

The following literature review sort out that a plenty of research work related to parliamentary democracy from 2008-18 is existed; however, the research works are scattered and lacks assessment and analyses. Additionally, the literature reviewed lack the strengths and weakness of parliamentary democracy in the prism of the of the following indicators: political parties, elections, legislations, oppositions' role, constitutional bodies like CCI, NEC, NFC, ECP, (strength) and smooth transfer of power to successive governments, local government and media. Military interventions, judiciary role, dynastic politics, NAB role, foreign interventions, corruption and bad governance (weakness). Therefore, an analytical and comprehensive study is required on the topic to be carried to address the relevant questions.

Akram and Azhar (2023) analyzed the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> parliaments including legislative measures, national assembly sessions, joint sessions, private bills and public bills. These parliaments through elections strengthen parliamentary democracy. They assessed representativeness, transparency, accessibility, accountability and effectiveness in parliament. The government institutions should work within the horizon of constitution. The principle of freedom of press, political liberty and transparent elections, awareness among citizens and cooperation among political leaders consolidated parliamentary democracy. However, military and judiciary intervenes in government's affair (Akram & Azhar, 2023) .

Malik (2022) underscored different theories like Propagandists theory, conspiracy theorists, instrumentalists theory, Elite Bargain theorists, structure-lists and post-colonial theorists. He argues that Pakistan inherited strong and well-organized military and bureaucracy as compare to the political parties. The weakness on part of political elites and democratic institutions not thrive parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. Charter of Democracy, 18<sup>th</sup> amendment, consecutive elections, and consociation among parties proved beneficial for parliamentary democracy. The religious sentiments, foreign interventions and international financial institutions curb the sovereignty and autonomy of parliament (Malik, 2022) .

Javid, Mustafa and Arsalan (2021) provide a comparison between Pakistan and Bangladesh. They identified the common variables like undemocratic attitude of

politicians, injustice, corruption, terrorism, favoritism, nepotism, poverty, illiteracy, dynastic political parties, dictatorship and political instability, economic problems and rule of law are common that stunted parliamentary democracy. Both countries are now practicing parliamentary democracy (Javed, Mustafa, & Arsalan, 2021) .

Sajjad (2021) in his thesis examines the history of Pakistan, focusing on the repeated dissolution of assemblies, constitution breakdowns, military takeovers, disintegration, media and bad governance. The roles of leadership in the heads of government and opposition, especially Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari, and General Pervaiz Musharruf as presidents were assessed. Sectarianism, illiteracy, inflation and Poverty were obstacles in the way of democracy. The weak political leadership and trained civil military bureaucracy caused damage to democracy. The period witnessed four general elections in 1988, 1990, 1993, and 1997; political alliances, political rift putted Parliamentary democracy's legitimacy at stake (Afzal, 2021).

Bashir (2019) described the working relationship between elected and non-elected institutions in a specific period. The elected institutions are the parliament, provincial legislature and local governments, and the non-elected institutions include military, judiciary, bureaucracy and media. The article analyses the role of these institution in the development and weakening of parliamentary democracy. The political parties especially PPP and PMLN also played role in the degradation of parliamentary democracy in 1990s because of not acceptance one another political mandate, not caring about the decorum, rules and businesses of the parliament, and looked for the support of establishment against one another. These pernicious practices resulted in ad governance, selected accountability; controlled media, no local government election except Punjab, no rule of law that resulted in institutional imbalance, power politics and political instability in the country (Bashir, 2019) .

Zikria, Ahmad and Qasam (2019) evaluated the political development in the period from 2008-2013. The paper analyzed political development, legislative developments and highlighted the issues that stunted the democracy and institutional growth. The article highlighted 4 political developments including 2008 general election, PPP government, positive performance of institutions and political developments, 2013 general election, and the lake of democratic approaches on the part of the leaders. Consensus base caretaker government, the establishment of different parliamentary

committees and transparent election played major role in enhancing parliamentary democracy. The authors hailed the role of judiciary and media in the period (Zikria, Ahmad, & Qasim, 2019).

Hussain (2019) in his book explained the parliament as an institution. He argues that Z.A Bhutto strengthen parliament in his early years. The parliament was sovereign and empowered from 1971-1973 because the 1973 constitution was unanimously passed, Simla agreement was discussed, debated and ratified by parliament. Bhutto gradually adopted authoritarian status and by 1976 backed army. He also controlled his party arbitrarily. In addition, parliament became fragile. He personalized the relationship with army. He intervened in the military, judiciary, and media's affairs (Hussain, 2019).

Hashmi (2018) associated the strength of parliamentary democracy with the establishment of separate jurisdiction of various states' institutions. The institutions of Pakistan, especially, Military and Judiciary have exceeded its jurisdiction that caused institutional imbalance and wreaked damage to parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. The institutions in Pakistan, in the prism of history, have continued to meddle in the affairs of each other to enhance its own influence that caused institutional clashes and political deadlocks. After the passage of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> amendments, the judiciary frequently intervened in the political affairs (Hashmi, 2018).

Nawaz (2012) in his article, Army and Politics describes that the geographic location, the Indian factor, provincialism, dynastic politics, war between modernism and radical Islam caused damage to democracy in Pakistan. Military, bureaucracy and judiciary in Pakistan are more potent as compared to the political parties and democratic institutions. Besides, ethnic and regional strife, sectarian violence, and intervention of foreign powers into the region created an uneven political and economic development. The article is revolving around the military, its structure, hierarchy, budget's share, its enterprises, and role against war on terror. The author suggests the army is supposed to help create a stable national polity and make itself under the system (Nawaz, 2012).

Waseem (2011) posit that 33 years how military ruled Pakistan; dissolved the elected legislatures four times and took control of the entire machinery of state. The author denounced the approach of army rulers towards the elected parliament. First, Ayub Khan toppled parliament by snatching its power of legislation. General Zia made the

parliament just an advisory council. The military rulers also made amendments to the constitution according to their will and granting more power to the president and made the elected legislature void. He beautifully comprehended the political and constitutional development in Pakistan. The author not only shed lights on the parliamentary sovereignty but also highlighted the major issues and conflicts confronting Pakistan since its independence like institutional imbalances, talibanization, and foreign policy (Waseem, 2011).

Maluka (2005) equated Mushraf as a usurper and his regime-wreaked damage to democracy. Moreover, the constitution was amended and changed the political pattern according to his aspirations. Mushraf not only headed the National Security Council but also vested the authority to dissolve the elected parliament. In democratic countries, the parliaments are sovereign, in term of legislation and major decision-making, revered in the eyes of public. In nutshell, military and bureaucracy downed the sovereignty of parliament (Maluka, 2005) .

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Pakistan was established that it would practice democracy and take care of the welfare of the citizens. However, the civil-military bureaucracy has persistently thwarted democracy since the establishment of Pakistan. The history of Pakistan reveals that the prolonged martial law regimes do not allow the democratic institution to be nourished. Different political systems have been experienced and then eliminated in one reason or the other. The elected institutions could not allow to take independent decisions for the welfare of the citizens, for strengthening democracy, and to establish an independent and sovereign parliament. However, since 2008, parliamentary democracy has been practiced that up to some extent enhance the scope of elected institutions. The current study shall analyze the indicators that strengthen or weaken of parliamentary democracy from 2008 to 2018. Moreover, the study shall analyze the role of parliament and political parties in strengthening and weakening parliamentary democracy in Pakistan from 2008-2018.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The research objectives and questions are as under:

1. To explore the indicators that strengthen or weaken the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan from 2008 to 2018
2. To investigate the role of parliament in enhancing democracy in Pakistan from 2008 to 2018
3. To examine the role of the political parties in strengthening parliamentary democracy within their own manifestoes

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What were the indicators that strengthening or weakening the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan from 2008 to 2018?
2. What role did parliament play in enhancing democracy in Pakistan from 2008 to 2018?
3. What role did play by political parties, according to their manifestos, in strengthening parliamentary democracy 2008-2018?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Parliamentary democracy has been practiced in different countries across the world. Parliamentary system is a popular political system holds the executive accountable to the legislature. Pakistan exercised different political systems since its establishment. However, from 2008, Pakistan exercised parliamentary democracy, and the system is still in vogue. The current study is assessing parliamentary democracy from 2008 to 2018. The research study will explore the different dynamics that enhance| marred the parliamentary democracy in the specific period. An assessment of the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan: 2008-18 is a worth study to be added in the existing literature. Moreover, the study will provide knowledge to different institutions and organization that work for substantiating democracy across the world. The study also yields information to the organizations that work for parliamentary democracy specifically. The study should also be beneficial for politicians, academia, scholars, general masses and students of Pakistan Studies, political science, international relations and history.

## **1.7 Aim of the Study**

The researcher will review democracy and the parliamentary system of Pakistan during 2008-2018. Additionally, this research work will be premised on the analysis of the role of parliament and political parties in enhancing the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan in the selected time-period. Moreover, the research will identify the negative and positive indicators that strengthen or weaken the parliamentary democracy from 2008-18. After reviewing the literature thoroughly, it is found that there is dearth of a comprehensive work on the role of parliament, political parties and indicators that strengthen the parliamentary democracy or weaken. Therefore, the current study will cover this gap.

## **1.8 Theoretical Framework of the Study**

Gabriel A. Almond has divided the political systems in three folds typology: Anglo-American, continental European and Scandinavian and Low Countries. The continental European democracies are characterized by a “fragmentation of political culture” with separate “political subcultures, so this model of democracies are unstable and marks by political immobilism and vulnerable to authoritarian breakthrough. (Gabriel A. Almond and G Bingham Powell, 1966) Pakistan lies in the Continental European Model.

Arend Lijphart’s describes that fragmented but stable democracies are “Consociational Democracy”. (Lijphart, 1969) The political stability of system is based on three variables: political culture, role structure and behavior of political elites.

In the consociational arrangement, there is coalition amongst political elites ranging from establishing an inclusive government to advisory councils, committees and further extended to electoral level for the purpose to deter competition and forge cooperation. In Pakistani context, the consociational devices like CCI, NEC, NFC award and other constitutional committees. In addition, informal all party conferences and alliances that addressed social and political issues. These apparatuses, up to some extent, strengthen democracy in Pakistan. The political parties including PPP and PMLN inked COD in London; they accepted each other electoral mandates in 2008 and 2013 general elections that restored democracy and forged cooperation rather than competition.

In consociational democracy, inter-elite cooperation becomes habitual and consociational norms become more firmly established. It plays important role in political socialization. In Pakistan, political norms, like elections, legislations, institutional autonomy and the rules and business in parliament are establishing political socialization since 2008. (Dahl, 1966)

The consociational democracies have clearer boundaries among the sub-cultures. Such distinct lines of cleavages seem conducive to consociational democracy and political stability. In the Pakistani scenario, a clearer delimitation among the major cultures is again conducive for consociational democracy.

If there is no proper representation of the subculture in the consociational democracy either they maybe linguistic or geographical, there would be no proper administrative and political existence neither their demands would be negotiated. (Hudson, 1967) In the parliament of Pakistan, the members from Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other minorities are lesser comparatively and their problems have not properly been addressed. That caused mayhem to parliamentary democracy in Pakistan.

The homogeneous and stable democracies is referred as centripetal democracies, and to the fragmented and unstable ones as centrifugal democracies. True leadership can turn a centrifugal democracy to consociational democracy if the political parties are constructively pragmatic and non-ideological. A shift from centrifugal to centripetal democracy may come on three reasons: Traumatic experience of totalitarianism, war, defeat and corruption; Conscious manipulative change of fundamental political attitudes; Consociational solution may increase political cohesion; they also have a definite tendency to lead to a certain degree of immobilism. (Lijphart, 1969) .

The democracy of Pakistan is centrifugal because its major political parties are weak and dynastic. These weaknesses on the part of political parties incited corruption, immobilism and other social ills. The incessant traumatic experience of martial laws changed the behavior of political elites from competition to cooperation; ceased allegations against each other's, and pledged in COD to bring Pakistan on democratic principles. Therefore, this research-work will be operationalized on the above-mentioned theories and assumptions.

## **1.9 Justification of the Study**

This research work shall be an in-depth assessment of the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan from 2008 to 2018. The existing study will examine the strength and weakness of parliamentary democracy in Pakistan in the stipulated time. Additionally, the time period witnessed the COD, transfer of power from military to civilian government, massive constitutional amendments including: 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup>, restoration of parliamentary democracy after a semi-presidential system, election and smooth transfer of power from one elected government to another elected government. There should be many work carried out on the parliamentary democracy in Pakistan in different periods. However, there is paucity of literature which highlight the factors that enhance| marred parliamentary democracy in Pakistan, and what role-played by parliament itself in strengthening of democracy. Therefore, an extensive critical study is needed in academic corpus about parliamentary democracy in Pakistan.

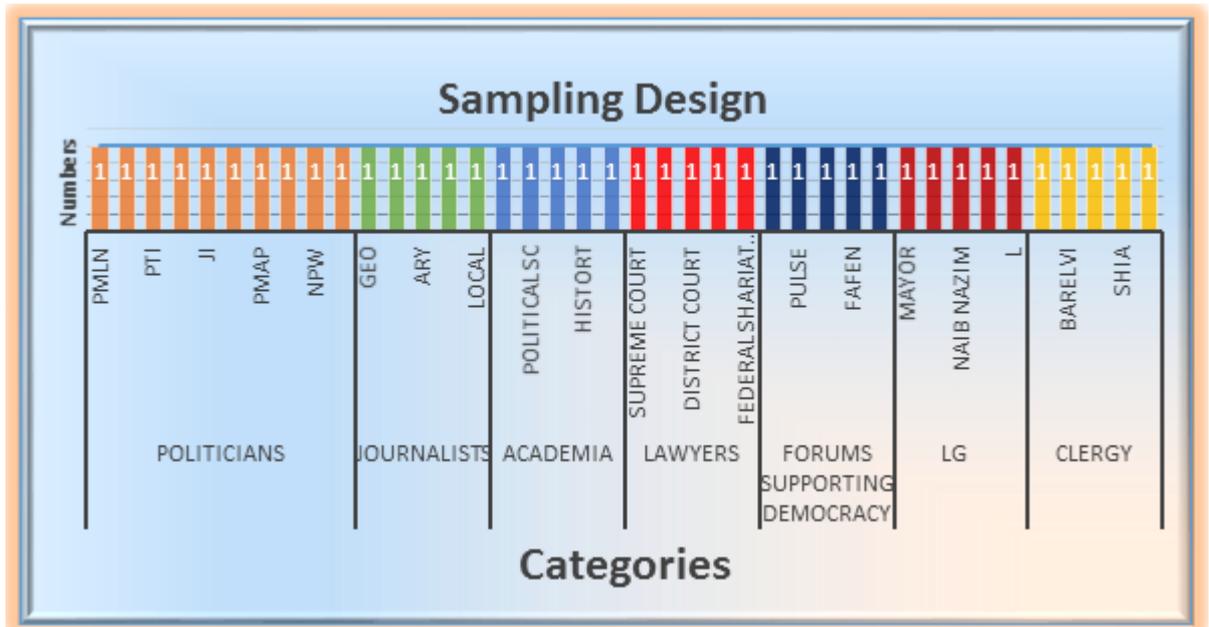
## **1.10 Research Methodology**

The methodology used in this research work was qualitative in nature dependent upon the constructionist and explorative approaches to deal with the research questions. Through semi-structured interviews, primary data was collected. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with various key informants. The key informants were:

Include from different categories such as politicians, journalists, academia, lawyers, and forums supporting democracy, local governments' representatives, and religious scholars. The interviewee were selected through non-probability sampling i.e. purposive sampling. (Kumar, 2011) Those respondents were interviewed who were relevant to this research work. There were total 40 interviews with the respondent until data saturation point. Data saturation point was arrived when the researcher did not find new concepts, ideas or themes. (Singh, 2006) The summary of the informants is as below:

**Table 1.**

Categories	Number of Categories										Total
	PMLN	PPP	PTI	JUI	JI	ANP	PMAP	MKP	NPW	QWP	
Politicians	PMLN	PPP	PTI	JUI	JI	ANP	PMAP	MKP	NPW	QWP	10
Journalists	GEO	SAMA	ARY	Khyber News	Local					5	
Academia	Pakistan Studies	Political Sc	IR	History	Public Ad					5	
Lawyers	Supreme court	High court	District court	Session court	Federal Shariat court					5	
Agencies and institutions work for democracy	PILDAT	WFD	PIPS	FAFEN	NDI					5	
LG	Mayor	VC Nazim	Youth-representative	Peasant representative	Women representative					5	
Clergy	Deoband	Barelvi	Ahle Hadith	Shia	Panjpir					5	
<b>Total</b>											<b>40</b>



**Graph 1. Sampling Design**

### 1.11 Data Analysis

With the help of thematic analysis, the qualitative data was analyzed (Braun, 2006). The thematic analysis involved six key steps, which were carried out as follows:

**Familiarized with the data:** The collected data was thoroughly read to identify strengths, weaknesses, and new ideas. Interviews, initially in verbal form, were transcribed into written form. The original audio recordings were checked against the transcriptions to ensure accuracy and to better grasp the underlying ideas.

**Generated initial codes:** After becoming familiar with the data, initial codes were developed. These codes helped identify specific aspects of the data that appeared meaningful and interesting. A large number of preliminary codes were created during this phase.

**Searched for themes:** The initial codes were organized and grouped to form comprehensive themes and ideas. A catalog of sub-themes and main themes was created. Each initial code was placed under a relevant sub-theme or main theme. Codes that were not relevant were removed at this stage, resulting in an internally coherent structure of themes.

**Reviewed themes:** The identified themes were thoroughly examined and refined. Each initial code was reviewed to ensure proper alignment with the corresponding theme. The entire data set was checked to validate the placement and relevance of the themes, ensuring they accurately reflected the data.

**Defined and named themes:** At this stage, themes were further refined and distinctly named. Each theme was analyzed in light of the research questions to establish its individual contribution and its relation to the overarching theme. The naming of the themes was done operationally based on the content of the data.

**Furnished the final report:** Finally, the analysis was compiled into a clear and comprehensive report, guided by the research questions. The themes and their interpretations were validated through practical examples and evidence from the data (Braun, 2006).

In addition to the primary data, secondary data was collected from books, assembly proceedings, research papers, reports from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and other organizations working on parliamentary democracy, as well as journals, newspapers, and magazines. Various libraries were visited for this purpose. YouTube channels and digital libraries were also accessed to gather relevant material.

### 1.12 Work's Plan

Research Steps	Months								
	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024
Review of Literature									
Establishing Research Tools									
Data Collection									
Data Analysis									
Compilation of thesis									
First draft submission									
Incorporation the Suggestions									
Final Draft submission									

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **DEMOCRACY AND PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN: A THEORETICAL DEBATE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The present research work is emphasized upon an in-depth review of the democracy and parliamentary system of Pakistan during 2008 to 2018. To understand an in-depth review of the democracy and parliamentary system of Pakistan, it is necessary to undertake the studies under proper methodology and operationalized specific theories through the project. The important point of the first chapter is to provide theoretical and methodological bases to the research work.

#### **2.2 Understanding democracy**

Democracy is a form of government in which the people themselves hold the power. The word comes from two Greek words: Kratos (rule) and Demos (people). Democracy, then, is a form of government in which the people govern themselves. It is the opposite of dictatorship, aristocracy, and monarchy. Democracy is a political society characterized by a certain level of political equality among its citizens (Nwogu, 2015).

By holding free and fair elections, democracy guarantees that the people have a voice in the government. This system encourages accountability while defending individual rights. The fundamental characteristics of democracy are justice, equality, and freedom. A knowledgeable and involved populace is necessary for an effective democracy. It is regarded as the most successful type of government.

#### **2.3 Origin of democracy**

Greece is where democracy first emerged. The Athenians used direct democracy, in which people met to decide issues. This experiment inspired contemporary democratic thought and lasted for more than a century. Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle later developed the idea of democracy. The Enlightenment is when the concept of representative democracy first appeared. Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Locke were

among the intellectuals who influenced contemporary democratic theory. Democracy has since taken on different forms (Editors, 2018).

Athens experienced significant political unrest in the sixth century BC. Aristocrats and oligarchs held a disproportionate amount of the state's power. Nonetheless, a number of progressive leaders worked to strengthen democracy. In this regard, the following leaders changed Athens' aristocratic political structure to a democratic one:

The first leader of the Enlightenment, Solon implemented social and economic reforms to promote citizenship, reduce inequality, and defend individual rights. These changes set the stage for a society that is fair and inclusive. Furthermore, the establishment of democracy was made possible by these reforms. Cleisthenes brought about the next important turning point in the establishment of democracy. He was a statesman from Athens. By distributing authority among the populace and promoting democracy, he restructured the city's political system.

He popularized the idea of local districts, or "demes." The fundamental unit of government was these simple districts. The populace was divided into demes, which then chose representatives for the Athens councils. These efforts cleared the path for the establishment of democracy and good governance. Pericles was the ruler of Athens from 495 to 429. He also contributed to Athens' democratic transition. He reduced the power of the aristocracy, instituted accountability, and introduced various policies to increase citizen participation. Every citizen of Athens assembled on the Pnyx Hill for the Ekklesia assembly, where laws were discussed and decided. It was a direct democracy of sorts. Additionally, citizens established a lottery system to select representatives and choose officials for positions in governance. There was also a system in which citizens expel the harmful leader from the hierarchy of governance (Cammack, 2013).

## **2.4 Evolution of democracy**

Cultures and historical events have influenced how democracy has developed. Modern democracy was significantly shaped by the American and French Revolutions. One important development is the extension of democracy to marginalized groups. Equal participation has been made possible by the civil rights and women's suffrage

movements. Democracy has expanded throughout the world as a result of decolonization and democratization movements. Issues such as populism and authoritarianism confront contemporary democracies. Debates about democratic innovations and reforms are ongoing (House, 2006).

Over thousands of years, democracy has undergone a protracted and intricate evolution. Modern democratic systems have their roots in ancient civilizations. Direct democracy began in ancient Athens approximately 500 BCE when people got together to debate and vote on laws. Despite its flaws, the Athenian system brought important inventions like ostracism and the lottery system. Western political philosophy was influenced by the Roman Republic, which was founded in 509 BCE and created representative democracy and checks and balances (Awasthi, 2022).

Citizens gathered to make decisions in the Athenians' direct democracy. For more than a century, this experiment served as an inspiration for contemporary democratic ideas. Later, thinkers like Plato and Aristotle improved the idea of democracy. During the Enlightenment, the concept of representative democracy was developed. Modern democratic ideology was influenced by thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Locke. Since then, democracy has taken many different shapes. They promoted ideas like as individual rights, the separation of powers, and popular sovereignty. With a constitutional federal government, the American Revolution (1775–1783) created the first modern democracy. The Declaration of the Rights of Man, which was made public during the French Revolution (1789–1799), further cemented democratic principles.

Magna Carta (1215), which established the basis for constitutionalism during the Middle Ages, safeguarded individual liberties and curtailed the monarch's authority. Europe saw the emergence of medieval parliaments that served the interests of aristocrats and clergy. Despite their limitations, these early democratic initiatives helped to provide the foundation for contemporary democratic advancements (Kiser, 1991).

During the 19th and 20th centuries, democracy spread throughout the world. Women, minorities, and the working class were all given the ability to vote as the franchise was expanded. Among other countries, Germany, Japan, and India developed constitutional democracies. New democracies were established in Asia and Africa as a result of

decolonization. But problems remained, such as inequality, corruption, and dictatorship.

Globalization and international institutions such as the United Nations and the European Union have pushed democratic values over the world in recent years. E-governance and online engagement have been made possible by digital democracy. Deliberative democracy and public participation have been highlighted by participatory democracy. Notwithstanding these developments, populism, technological upheavals, and growing authoritarianism are some of the modern threats to democracy (Hanberger, 2001).

## **2.5 Types of democracy**

Democracy comes in many forms, such as constitutional democracy, liberal democracy, representative democracy, and direct democracy. Representative democracies rely on elected leaders, whereas direct democracies let voters vote on laws. Individual liberties are given priority in liberal democracies, while constitutional democracies function within the parameters of a constitution. Social welfare and economic equality are central to social democracy. Understanding democracy's varied manifestations and intricate past enables us to better handle its issues and fortify its pillars as it develops. Social democracy and radical democracy are examples of other types of democracy.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each variety. Historical, social, and cultural factors influence the choice of democratic system. To be an effective democracy, local needs must be taken into account (Kaiser, 1997).

Individual liberties and rights are emphasized in liberal democracies. It supports market economies and places a high priority on defending individual liberty. Social democracy places a strong emphasis on equality and social justice. Redistribution of resources and wealth is given priority. Direct democracy and citizen participation are key components of radical democracy. It places a high priority on empowering underrepresented populations. Electoral democracy and deliberative democracy are examples of other types of democracy. Different objectives and ideals are reflected in each category (Levine, 1987).

## **2.6 Principles of democracy**

The journey of democracy has been marked by progress and setbacks, but its core principles remain unchanged: citizen participation, equality, and accountability. As we navigate the complexities of modern democracy, we must draw lessons from history, adapt to changing circumstances, and uphold the democratic ideals that have shaped our world.

Some of the core principles of democracy are:

### **Respect for human rights**

Respect for human rights is a fundamental tenet of democracy. These rights include freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, and freedom from oppression and discrimination. Democratic administrations make sure that everyone is treated with respect and dignity and that their rights are upheld.

### **Free and Fair Elections**

A fundamental component of democratic governance is free and fair elections. Regular, competitive elections are the means by which citizens elect their representatives and leaders. Democratic elections provide a peaceful transition of power and give people a say in how their nation develops.

### **Rule of law**

A democratic system of government cannot exist without the rule of law. It guarantees that justice is administered equitably and that all citizens, including public servants, are subject to the law. Independent judiciaries are set up by democratic governments to interpret the law and defend the rights of their constituents.

### **Separation of Powers**

One of the core tenets of democracy is the separation of powers. It guarantees that no one branch of government has an excessive amount of authority. In order to prevent misuse, democratic regimes have checks and balances between the legislative, executive, and judicial departments of government.

## **Accountability and Transparency**

Citizens hold democratic governments responsible. They guarantee decision-making transparency and give people ways to hold public servants responsible. Accountability is encouraged and corruption is avoided through public participation, independent media, and anti-corruption organizations.

## **Protection of Minorities Rights**

Minority groups' rights are upheld in democracies, which guarantee that their opinions are heard and that their interests are reflected. Democratic governments protect the rights of marginalized groups while fostering diversity and inclusivity.

## **Citizen Participation**

For democratic governance to function, citizen participation is essential. Voters cast votes in elections, participate in public discourse, and influence decisions. Democratic governments promote civic engagement and offer avenues for citizen participation.

## **Independence of the Media**

For democratic governance to function, the media must be free and independent. The media encourages transparency, informs the public, and holds public servants responsible. Democratic governments guarantee that citizens have access to a variety of information sources and defend press freedom.

## **Check and balances**

A system of checks and balances makes sure that no one branch of government has too much power. Judicial review, independent auditing, and parliamentary supervision are some of the safeguards put in place by democratic governments to stop the misuse of power.

## **Protection of individuals Freedom**

Democratic governments defend the rights of individuals, such as the freedom of expression, conscience, and opinion. People are allowed to follow their dreams and ambitions without excessive government intervention.

A democratic system of government guarantees political, social, and economic equality. All members of society are granted equal rights. In legal terms, all people are equal. All citizens are granted the right to vote, regardless of their gender, race, language, or religion. Despite taking into account the principle of majority rule, minorities' significance is not overlooked, and laws are implemented in a transparent and predictable manner (M.Grigg).

## **2.7 Some famous quotations about democracy**

According to David Beetham, democracy should be viewed as one end of a spectrum, with a system where people have absolutely no control over how decisions are made constituting the other end. Some famous quotations about democracy are below (Walzer, 2002).

1. The best form of government is democracy tempered with socialism. Aristotle
2. Democracy is when the indigent, and not the men of property, are the rulers.  
Aristotle
3. The secret of happiness is freedom, and the secret of freedom, courage.  
Thucydides
4. Democracy is the only system that persists in believing that it is expendable.  
Thomas Jefferson
5. Democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not. Thomas Jefferson
6. We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately. Benjamin Franklin
7. Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people.  
Abraham Lincoln
8. The greatest glory in living lies not in ever falling, but in rising every time we fall. Democracy is like that. Nelson Mandela
9. Democracy is not merely a form of government; it is a way of life. Jawaharlal Nehru

10. Democracy is a system where the people are supposed to be the drivers, but in reality, they are the passengers. Noam Chomsky
11. The price of democracy is eternal vigilance. Thomas Jefferson
12. Democracy is not a spectator sport. Ralph Nader
13. Democracy is the only viable option for a peaceful and prosperous society. Kofi Annan
14. The spread of democracy is the most effective way to guarantee peace and stability. Tony Blair
15. Democracy is a universal value that should be cherished and protected. Angela Merkel
16. Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. Ronald Reagan
17. The future of Democracy is in our hands. Malala Yousafzai
18. Democracy needs dissent. Howard Zinn

## **2.8 Democracy in International Law**

Even though the term "democracy" is not used in the UN Charter, its opening phrase, "We the Peoples," reflects the core democratic tenet that the legitimacy of sovereign states and, by extension, the UN as a whole, derives from the will of the people. By declaring that "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government," the 1948 General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which unambiguously reflected the idea of democracy. The rights necessary for effective political participation are outlined in the Declaration. Since its ratification, the Declaration has served as a model for constitution-making worldwide and has made a significant contribution to the universal recognition of democracy (Roth, 2001).

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) lays the legal basis for the principles of democracy under international law, particularly (Resolution, 1966).

- Freedom of expression (Article 19).
- The right of peaceful assembly (Article 21).
- The right to freedom of association with others (Article 22).

The right and opportunity to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives (Article 25).

The right to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors (Article 25)

States that have ratified the Covenant are bound by it. Approximately 80% of the United Nations membership, or 161 parties, were party to the Convention as of April 2008. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) are some of the organizations that carry out UN initiatives to promote democracy and governance. The UN's efforts to advance human rights, development, peace, and security are inextricably linked to these kinds of initiatives, which include:

Supporting parliaments and decentralized local governance institutions to strengthen the checks and balances that enable democracy to flourish;

Supporting women's political empowerment;

Ensuring freedom of expression and access to information by bolstering media and legislative capabilities;

Advancing human rights, the rule of law, and access to justice by aiding in the improvement of the impartiality and efficacy of national human rights machinery and judicial systems;

And providing electoral assistance and sustained support for electoral management bodies.

The United Nations is one of the biggest suppliers of technical cooperation for democracy and governance worldwide, with UNDP alone providing almost \$1.5 billion annually to support democratic processes worldwide.

Human rights initiatives support freedom of expression and association, participation, and the rule of law all essential elements of democracy while development agencies

work to strengthen national institutions such as parliaments, electoral commissions, and legal systems, which are the cornerstones of any democracy. The United Nations' political work necessitates that it supports democratic outcomes.

## **2.9 Democracy and the UN General Assembly**

Every year since 1988, the General Assembly has passed at least one resolution addressing a democratic issue. Since the 1990s, democracy has been a cross-cutting concern in the conclusions of the main UN summits and conferences, as well as in the globally accepted development goals they produced, such as the Millennium Development Goals, among others. "Democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their political, economic, social, and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives," member states reiterated during the September 2005 World Summit (C, 1981).

Along with emphasizing that "democracy, development, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing," the Summit Outcome Document also noted that "there is no single model of democracy, even though democracies share common features." In the Millennium Declaration five years' prior, world leaders vowed to do everything in their power to advance democracy, uphold the rule of law, and ensure that human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected. They decided to work toward the complete preservation and advancement of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights for everyone in every nation and to increase each nation's ability to apply democratic values and human rights norms (Assembly, 2005).

The UN General Assembly resolution states that the following constitute the fundamental components of democracy: respect for human rights; fundamental freedoms, such as the freedom of association, peaceful assembly, expression, and opinion; the right to directly or through elected representatives take part in the conduct of public affairs; and the right to vote in legitimate periodic free elections by universal and equal suffrage and by secret ballot, which ensures the free expression of the people's will. As essential components of a democracy, this resolution acknowledges the presence of political parties, the separation of powers, judicial independence, the rule of law, accountability and transparency, the free press, and human rights

(Lewis, 1940).

The two primary categories of democratic government are presidential and parliamentary systems. Nonetheless, the connection between the legislative and executive branches is where the two forms of government diverge most. The separation of powers is the foundation of the presidential system, whereas the parliamentary system is built on the sharing of authority and the accountability of the executive branch to the legislature. Furthermore, the legislature has the authority to introduce a resolution of no confidence against the prime minister or chief executive in a parliamentary system. In one form or another, parliamentary systems of government are used in many nations worldwide. The legislatures are chosen by the general public, and the executive is chosen by the legislatures in a parliamentary system. For the benefit of the populace, the executive branch runs the state. In addition, the legislatures closely monitor the executive's operations. As a result, many countries celebrate the parliamentary system as a closed-nut system (Simon, 1993).

## **2.10 Importance of democracy**

Accurately defining democracy is crucial when discussing its significance. According to Abraham Lincoln, democracy is "government of the people, by the people, for the people." It is popular sovereignty. Fundamental to it is the idea that frequent, free, and fair elections are how the people elect their government.

It is commonly believed in Europe and the English-speaking world that democracy inherently takes the form of liberal democracy, which is popular sovereignty constrained by a constitution that protects individual liberties (like the right to free expression) and rights (like the right to a fair trial). Importantly, there is no democratic vote on these fundamental liberties.

It turns out that democracy does not have to be liberal. In some countries today, voting is still allowed in illiberal democracies, but liberal features like a free press and an independent judiciary have been undermined.

Since removing liberal guarantees results in state pressure and intimidation, which undermines elections, proponents of liberal democracy contend that this actually renders these societies fundamentally undemocratic.

The goals of liberal democracy are to assure that no group of people is disproportionately dominated or exploited by another's race, geography, class, or corporate interests, and that all people fairly and universally agree with government policies.

Liberal democracy is arguably important for two reasons: no other form of governance ensures the freedom to express political preferences, and no other system fosters advancement by allowing diverse interests and viewpoints to compete peacefully (David Ryan & Brien, 2017).

This subject is being posed more frequently as many forces throughout the world endanger democracy. When it results in radical changes like Brexit and the election of demagogues who oppose liberal principles, some people doubt the importance of the public vote.

Even the American system, which has long been seen as the model for democratic liberties, appears to be so divided that it faces collapse, with its capacity to withstand changes in technology, population, and culture in question.

In the meantime, a more homogeneous, technocratic style of politics has emerged in the European Union (EU) over the past 30 to 50 years, where democracy is arguably less responsive to citizens and a sizable portion of the populace feels kept out of the political process.

Since they are better able to enforce certain behaviors from residents without regard for individual liberties or resistance from a free press, non-democratic, authoritarian nations like China have recently received accolades for surviving the COVID-19 pandemic better than democracies.

All of this could call into question the necessity of democracy. However, the majority of authoritarian systems are hindered by structural flaws: reliance on "strongmen" personalities makes the transfer of power potentially violent; vested interests are

shielded from popular demands for change; and sizable, marginalized minority groups create a sense of unfairness (Fukuyama).

### **2.11 Why democracy is the best form of government**

Liberal democracy, in theory at least, provides a mechanism for some form of rule by proportionate representation, with citizens empowered to bring about change through participation and persuade the powerful to act for the greater good.

The cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy. John Dewey

Democracy, however, is a process rather than a state. Until recently, nations like the US and the UK were not considered actual democracies. Women were granted the right to vote in Britain only in 1918 after the franchise was progressively expanded starting in 1830. The ability to vote was not guaranteed to African-Americans in the southern states of the United States until 1965.

Democracy has survived in part because it can adapt to change from below by extending the right to vote and bolstering civil liberties.

Authoritarianism, on the other hand, is inherently centralized and restricts the freedom of speech and ideas. It can bring about quick change, but only if it is decreed from above.

Perhaps the developments in democracies after 2016 point to the necessity of additional democratic system adaptation and reform. Because democracies are more prone to wither the more resistant they are to change (Ross, 1952).

### **2.12 The importance of democracy in the world**

In the history of civilization, democracy has been essential in transforming the globe from monarchical, imperial, and conquest-based power structures to ones based on popular rule, self-determination, and peaceful coexistence.

In the beginning, ancient Greece used a direct type of democracy, although there were a lot of slaves and very few citizens who could take part. After that, democracy disappeared until the late 18th century, when it reappeared as "representative

democracy." Since then, it has been widely accepted that there has been a trend toward more democracy throughout modern human history; some academics have even described this movement as occurring in three phases.

The American, French, and Haitian revolutions, the slow rise of democracy in Britain, the Bolivarian revolutions that brought democracy to South America, and the dissolution of the German, Ottoman, and Austro-Hungarian empires into democratic republics following World War I were all part of the first wave, which lasted from the late 18th century to 1918.

During the second wave, which lasted from 1945 to 1960, decolonization took place all across the world, resulting in autonomous and mostly democratic countries, while the vanquished axis powers Japan, Italy, and Germany were reorganized into powerful democracies.

During the third wave, which lasted from 1975 to 1991, dictatorships in Portugal, Spain, and Brazil came to an end, Taiwan and South Korea had democratic transitions, and the USSR finally fell, giving rise to free, democratic republics in Eastern Europe.

However, since 1991, former Warsaw Pact countries like Russia, Hungary, and others have reverted to authoritarianism, causing what Larry Diamond refers to as a "democratic recession."

### **Why is democracy crucial to progress?**

No significant famine has ever happened in an independent, democratic nation with a somewhat free press, according to thinkers like Amartya Sen, who contend that democratic values are necessary for successful growth. He uses India as an example, where British colonial rule prevailed during the previous famine in 1943.

Over the course of the previous century, as communism rose and fell and the global economic balance shifted from the West to the East, the idea that democracy and progress are linked has fluctuated. During the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, communism appeared to be able to raise millions out of poverty while delivering cutting-edge technology, winning wars, and creating enormous new industries. However, the Soviet

Union had stalled by the conclusion of the Cold War, and communism appeared destined to impede development and innovation.

The success of China's authoritarian capitalism, or the "Beijing consensus," which has created a means of achieving both military and economic superpower status while limiting individual liberties at home, has cast doubt on the notion that democracy and economic success go hand in hand.

The future of China's tale is still up in the air. The nation was on the verge of civil war during the Cultural Revolution just fifty years ago. The more crucial question is whether other countries' democracies will respond by becoming more or less strong (Sen, 2003).

### **2.13 Importance of democracy in a free and just society**

Many scholars have historically maintained that democracy can only be harmful to a free and just society, describing majority rule as fundamentally unstable, illogical, and a danger to private property. All taxes will be paid by the rich, and all laws will be made by the poor.

### **2.14 Lord Salisbury criticizing democracy in 1860**

Plato's Republic suggests the idea of "philosopher kings" ruling instead of democracy. Democracy could lead to "tyranny of the majority," according to Tocqueville and others.

A keenly aware of this perceived danger, the founding fathers of the United States of America crafted the constitution and Electoral College to limit the liberal liberties provided by the document to leaders chosen by popular vote.

Some critics have concluded that the system is broken as a result of recent events. However, we should be acutely aware that we live in cultures that allow us to criticize, and that this is a fundamental right in and of itself, when we challenge its virtues and look for its shortcomings. We ought to ask ourselves what our options might be.

Would we anticipate a more equitable trial in a state with an authoritarian or dictatorial system? To search the internet for more impartial information? To see greater protection for the rights of minorities? Would there have been a more equitable and free

peace if the fascist winners of World War two had imposed their settlement instead of democracies?

Most certainly, democracy has to be strengthened even more by reviving the rights and protections that are a part of liberal democracy and by making it more transparent and responsive in whatever way that we can. Considering the options, it is reasonable to say that citizens of democracies have no other choice (Carr, 2008).

### **2.15 Theoretical Debates on Democracy**

The intricacies of democratic government are emphasized in theoretical discussions about democracy. Values are prioritized differently by several methods. A balance between social justice and individual rights is necessary for an effective democracy. Participation from citizens is crucial to democratic governance. In summary, the intricacies of democratic government are brought to light by theoretical discussions about democracy.

Since democracy's founding, there have been continuous theoretical discussions about it, with a variety of academics and philosophers participating. For example, liberal democracies prioritize the protection of individual liberties and place a strong emphasis on individual rights and freedoms. John Locke, who maintained that people have inalienable rights that the state ought to uphold, is the inspiration behind this strategy. Social democracy, on the other hand, places a higher priority on wealth and resource transfer and stresses social justice and equality. Karl Marx, who maintained that economic disparity poses a serious threat to democracy, had an influence on this strategy (Saward, 2019).

In contrast, the radical democracy method prioritizes the empowerment of marginalized people and places a strong emphasis on direct democracy and citizen participation. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who maintained that democracy should be founded on the collective will of the people, had an influence on this strategy (Lummis, 1996). Another strategy is deliberative democracy, which prioritizes the caliber of public debate and stresses public discussion and deliberation. Jurgen Habermas, who maintained that democracy should be founded on logical discourse and deliberation, had an influence on this strategy (Fishkin, 2002). Another strategy is participatory democracy, which

prioritizes the inclusion of marginalized groups and stresses public engagement and participation (barber, 2018).

Notwithstanding these variations, democratic thinkers concur that democracy necessitates a number of core ideas, such as free and fair elections, individual rights protection, and public official accountability. Critics counter that democracy can have flaws that undermine individual liberties and result in tyranny of the majority. While some academics contend that democracy and economic disparity cannot coexist, others contend that democracy is necessary for economic growth. These discussions draw attention to the difficulties of democratic government and the necessity of constant critical assessment and improvement.

The idea of democracy has changed over time as a result of intellectual concepts, cultural norms, and historical occurrences. For example, in ancient Athens, residents convened to make decisions in a system known as direct democracy. On the other hand, representative democracy is the foundation of contemporary democracies, in which people choose representatives to act as their voice in decision-making. Modern democratic ideology, which emphasizes the value of individual rights and popular sovereignty, was greatly influenced by the American and French Revolutions.

One important feature in contemporary democratic history has been the extension of democracy to include marginalized groups, such as women and racial minorities. For example, the American civil rights movement emphasized the significance of equal rights and opportunity for all citizens. Equal involvement in democratic governance was also highlighted by the women's suffrage campaign. These advancements show how democratic ideas and practices are still evolving.

Even with these developments, democracy still confronts many obstacles, such as the emergence of economic disparity, corruption, and authoritarianism. Some nations have seen a democratic backsliding, and the dissemination of democratic institutions and values has been unequal. Social media and other digital platforms have a growing impact on public discourse and democratic decision-making, underscoring the importance of technology in democratic administration (Wolff, 2011).

The intricacies of democratic government are emphasized in theoretical discussions about democracy. Different strategies place varying priorities on values, and a balance between social justice and individual rights is necessary for an effective democracy. Democratic administration depends on citizen participation, and new issues require constant critical assessment and improvement.

## **2.16 Definition and Concept of the Parliament**

The term parliament has been defined differently by different scholars. Anders Johnson (2006) defined it “as the fundamental institution through which the drive of the people is applied, laws are passed and government is held answerable” (Beetham, 2006). Furthermore, Cheibub and Limongi (2002) is of the judgment that “the combination of powers characteristic of parliamentarians is supposed to build governments capable of governing because they would be maintained by a majority in parliament, composed of highly controlled parties prone to collaborate with one another, which together, would produce a decision-making process that is highly centralized”.

## **2.17 Role of Parliament**

An assembly can do everything but make a man a woman and a woman a man.” Lord Pembroke, 1648; Prominent academics in the discipline believe that representation, oversight, and legislation are the three main functions of parliament. Parliament consumes four important characters. First and foremost, they are representatives of the community, directly ordered to do so by a wide range of interest groups; second, they are legislators, tasked with creating and modifying national policies and laws. Thirdly, they serve as inspectors, providing supervision to ensure that the government (executive) is held responsible. Fourth, the growth of global broadcasting has been partially associated with transparency (Abbasi, 2018).

## **2.18 Functions of Parliament**

### **Legislation**

Enacting laws is the first significant duty of Parliament. Every nation has a separate parliament, with varying sizes, structures, and purposes. Notwithstanding these variations, these groups' primary responsibility is to draft national legislation. It is often

known that as a representative body, the legislature must not only express the views of the people but also use legislation to turn those desires into laws. Despite the theoretical significance of legislation, there are significant concerns over parliament's real performance.

Johnson (2005) believes that most parliaments are "rubber-stamp" legislatures rather than ones that improve capabilities, representation, transparency, and accountability. One of the key pillars of a democratic system of government is the legislative branch, which plays a crucial role in promoting democracy and sound governance. Eberlei and Henn (2003) demonstrate that African assemblies' involvement in PRSP procedures is not flawless. A careful examination of Pakistan's parliamentary democracy's past shows that the country has historically had an executive-dominated government, a tendency associated with the Muslim era. The Sultan (Monarch) served as the head of state, the only legislative, and the source of justice during the Muslim era. He was granted authority over the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, and he used decrees to govern the nation.

Additionally, Ahmad believes that the First Constituent Assembly's legislative role was ineffective and passive. The majority of its members are insensitive to the needs and desires of the general people, serve in management decisions, and hold ministerial positions. Based on their degree of sovereignty and control, assemblies can be described as rubber (elastic) stamps, arenas, transformative, and developing.

### **Rubber stamp legislatures**

When you "rubber stamp" an item, you are indicating that you quickly approve it without giving the subject any consideration. According to the article, the parliament would carry out any directive from the ruling party's leaders. The Parliament is simply referred to as the Rubber Stamp Parliament when it fails to preserve democracy.

### **Transformative legislatures**

Although they require funds and strategy, transformative legislatures are not individuals who represent a wide range of societal interests.

### **Emerging (Governments) legislatures**

Changing from one sort of emerging legislative to another. Many parliaments throughout the world are teaching better ways to influence government policies, and they may be secret as new legislatures (Kinyondo, 2012).

### **2.19 Democracy and Parliamentary System: A Theoretical Debate**

The debate surrounding democracy and the parliamentary system is ongoing among scholars, politicians, and citizens. This discussion examines the theoretical foundations, strengths, and weaknesses of democracy and parliamentary systems, focusing on Pakistan's context.

### **2.20 Parliamentary System Theories**

- 1. Westminster Model:** Originated in the UK, emphasizing parliamentary sovereignty.
- 2. Consensual Model:** Focuses on coalition building and power sharing.
- 3. Presidential System:** Separates executive and legislative powers.

### **2.20 Strengths of Parliamentary Democracy**

- 1. Representation:** Reflects diverse views and interests.
- 2. Accountability:** Ensures executive responsibility to legislature.
- 3. Stability:** Promotes coalition building and compromise.

### **2.21 Weaknesses of Parliamentary Democracy**

- 1. Inefficient Decision-Making:** Slow and cumbersome processes.
- 2. Lack of Direct Representation:** Citizens' voices may not be directly heard.
- 3. Corruption:** Potential for undue influence and corruption.

### **2.22 Pakistan's Parliamentary System**

- 1. Constitutional Framework:** Outlines principles and structures.

2. **Bicameral Legislature:** National Assembly and Senate.

3. **Executive-Legislative Relations:** Prime Minister and Cabinet accountable to the National Assembly (Lenhardt, 2020).

### **2.23 Theories of Parliament and about their role and function**

There are several theories about the role and functioning of parliament, including:

**1. Dicey's Theory:** A.V. Dicey believed that parliament is sovereign and has absolute authority to make laws.

**2. Jennings' Theory:** W.I. Jennings argued that parliament is not sovereign, but rather a representative body that exercises power on behalf of the people.

**3. Bagehot's Theory:** W.B. Bagehot believed that parliament has three functions: legislative, executive, and dignified.

**4. Laski's Theory:** H.J. Laski argued that parliament is a representative body that exercises power on behalf of the people, but also believed in the importance of judicial review.

**5. Marxist Theory:** Marxist scholars view parliament as a tool of the ruling class, used to maintain their power and interests.

**6. Pluralist Theory:** Pluralist scholars see parliament as a representative body that balances the interests of different groups and individuals.

**7. Rational Choice Theory:** This theory views parliament as a rational actor that makes decisions based on self-interest.

**8. Social Choice Theory:** This theory views parliament as a body that makes decisions based on the preferences of its members.

These theories offer different perspectives on the role and functioning of parliament, and each has its strengths and weaknesses (Thomas, 1979).

Dicey's theory of parliament, as outlined in his book "Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution", has three main aspects:

**1. Parliamentary Sovereignty:** Dicey argued that Parliament has the absolute power to make laws, and that no other body or institution can challenge or override its authority.

**2. Rule of Law:** Dicey believed that the rule of law is the ultimate principle governing the UK Constitution, and that all individuals, including MPs, are subject to the law.

**3. Separation of Powers:** Dicey advocated for a clear separation of powers between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, to prevent abuse of power and ensure accountability.

Dicey's theory emphasizes the supremacy of Parliament in the UK constitutional system, but also recognizes the importance of checks and balances to prevent tyranny and ensure the rule of law.

His theory has had a significant impact on the development of constitutional law in the UK and other Commonwealth countries.

#### **2.24 Ivan Jennings' theory of parliament is as follows:**

A legal principle known as "parliamentary supremacy" states that courts must follow laws passed by parliament.

Jennings contends that supremacy better captures parliament's legislative authority and refutes Dicey's argument.

Parliamentary supremacy, according to Jennings, is a legal theory that characterizes the interaction between the legislature and the judiciary.

He contends that laws passed by parliament will always be regarded as law by the courts. Additionally, he contends that legal sovereignty is just a term that denotes the legislature's current authority to enact laws of any type in accordance with the law.

**2.24 W.B. Bagehot's theory, as outlined in his book "The English Constitution",** divides the functions of Parliament into three categories:

1. **Dignified:** This includes ceremonial and symbolic duties, such as the monarch's role in opening Parliament.
2. **Execute:** This involves the exercise of executive power, such as the Prime Minister's role in leading the government.
3. **Legislative:** This includes the power to make laws, which is the primary function of Parliament.

According to Bagehot, the executive and legislative branches are necessary for the efficient administration of the nation, while the dignified functions are crucial for preserving the stability and legitimacy of the democratic system.

He also underlined the significance of the relationship between the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the king, as well as how these relationships influence how Parliament operates.

Understanding the purpose and operations of Parliament in the UK and other nations with comparable political structures is still influenced by Bagehot's thinking.

### **2.25 Harold Laski's theory of parliament includes the following points**

Laski argued in his book "Authority in the Modern State" that political pluralism is a better framework for governing a nation than a powerful, independent state. Later on, his opinions shifted, and in his work "Grammar of Politics," he endorsed the notion that the state serves as society's primary tool.

Later, Laski developed an interest in socialism and Marxism and grew to feel that capitalism would destroy democracy.

The best alternative to fascism, in his opinion, was socialism.

He maintained that democracy had flaws and that socialism was the best way to address Britain's economic woes during World War II.

The Marxist theory of parliament views parliament as a tool of the ruling class, used to maintain their power and interests. According to Marxists, parliament is a bourgeois institution that serves to:

1. **Legitimize capitalist rule:** Parliament provides a veneer of democracy and legitimacy to the capitalist system, masking the exploitation of the working class.
2. **Maintain class dominance:** Parliament ensures the continued dominance of the ruling class by creating laws that serve their interests and suppress the interests of the working class.
3. **Co-opt opposition:** Parliament absorbs and neutralizes opposition by incorporating representatives of the working class into the system, making them complicit in the maintenance of capitalist rule.
4. **Distract from true power:** Parliament diverts attention from the true centers of power, such as the capitalist class and the state apparatus, by creating a spectacle of political debate and decision-making.

Marxists argue that parliament is not a representative institution in the true sense, but rather an instrument of class rule, used to maintain the status quo and prevent fundamental change. They advocate for the abolition of parliament and the establishment of a socialist or communist system, where the working class holds direct power.

**2.27 The pluralist theory of parliament** views parliament as a representative body that reflects the diverse interests and groups within society. This theory assumes:

1. **Representation:** MPs represent various constituencies and interest groups.
2. **Pluralism:** Multiple groups and interests are present in parliament, leading to competition and negotiation.
3. **Decentralization:** Power is distributed among various groups and committees, preventing dominance by a single entity.

4. **Compromise:** Decision-making involves negotiation and compromise among different groups.

Pluralist theory sees parliament as a marketplace where different interests are represented, and decisions are made through bargaining and compromise. This leads to:

1. Representation of diverse interests
2. Protection of minority rights
3. Prevention of authoritarianism
4. Promotion of democratic legitimacy

Critics argue that pluralist theory overlooks issues like:

1. Inequality of representation
2. Dominance by powerful groups
3. Inefficient decision-making

Despite these limitations, pluralist theory remains a significant perspective on the functioning of parliament in democratic societies.

**2.28 Social choice theory**, applied to parliament, examines how individual preferences and interests aggregate to make collective decisions. This theory assumes:

1. Individual MPs have unique preferences and utility functions.
2. Parliament aggregates individual preferences to make collective decisions.
3. Voting rules and procedures affect outcome.

**2.29 Social choice theory highlights challenges in parliamentary decision-making, such as:**

1. Arrow's Impossibility Theorem: no voting rule can simultaneously meet certain desirable criteria (e.g., unanimity, non-dictatorship).

2. Cycling: preferences may lead to inconsistent or cyclical voting outcomes.
3. Agenda-setting: the order of votes can influence final decisions.

This theory helps explain parliamentary phenomena like:

1. Coalition formation and negotiations.
2. Cross-party alliances and compromises.
3. Strategic voting and agenda-setting.
4. Instability and cycling in parliamentary votes.

Social choice theory provides a framework for analyzing the complexities of parliamentary decision-making and the challenges of aggregating individual preferences.

**2.30 The rational choice theory of parliament views parliament as a rational actor that makes decisions based on self-interest. This theory assumes that:**

1. MPs act rationally to maximize their own utility or interests.
2. They make decisions based on complete and perfect information.
3. They have clear preferences and prioritize their own interests.
4. They are motivated by personal gain, re-election, or policy influence.

This theory predicts that parliamentarians will:

1. Support policies that benefit their constituents or themselves.
2. Form coalitions to advance their interests.
3. Engage in strategic voting and bargaining.
4. Prioritize short-term gains over long-term benefits.

Rational choice theory helps explain parliamentary behavior, such as:

1. Vote trading and logrolling.
2. Party discipline and loyalty.
3. Committee assignments and leadership positions.
4. Policy compromises and negotiations.

Critics argue that this theory oversimplifies parliamentary dynamics and neglects other factors like ideology, norms, and institutional constraints.

### **2.31 What is parliamentary democracy?**

A parliamentary democracy is one where the people elect their own representatives. The parliament selects the prime minister from among its members, and the parliament then holds the prime minister directly accountable to the people. The parliament makes important national choices, including legislation. In a parliamentary democracy, the prime minister is first elected as a member of the legislature and then chosen by the other members of the legislature. However, the Prime Minister remains an elected official. Since laws are established by the legislative branch, the prime minister actively participates in the legislative process. The Prime Minister closely collaborates with other members of the legislature to create and adopt these legislations (Law, 2010).

In parliamentary systems, the legislature also has the authority to remove the prime minister at any time if they feel that the individual is not carrying out the responsibilities of their job to the expected level. This is known as a "motion of no confidence," and the process isn't very lengthy.

Parliamentary democracy, which emerged in many countries only after 1918, was born in the twentieth century. There were several attempts to create such a system during the European revolutions of 1848, but none of them were successful. According to research on parliamentary systems, Huntington has referred to Parliamentarization as the first lengthy wave of democratization (1828–1926).

Parliamentary governance is characterized by an administration that is answerable to the majority in parliament. Parliamentary systems did not incorporate democracy until much later. The essential prerequisite for democracy is universal suffrage. Parliamentary rule gave way to democracy in most constitutional monarchy countries, such as Britain, Scandinavia, and the Benelux countries. Only a small number of extremely authoritarian kingdoms adopted democratic universal suffrage, or they did so without establishing a parliamentary system of accountable governance (France, 1851 in the Second Empire, Germany, 1871 in the Empire of Bismarck).

Only a few countries France, Finland, and Sweden saw both democratization and parliamentarization at the same time. The only country with a parliamentary system that was constantly democratic was France. It was not possible to call Britain, the birthplace of "parliamentary government," a "parliamentary democracy" during the eighteenth century. There were differences between democratization, which was usually pushed by radicals and socialists, and parliamentarization, which was primarily accomplished by liberal majority who were reluctant to add universal suffrage to the system.

At first, these groups demanded a democratic system more akin to Plebiscitarian governance than representational democracy and opposed the checks and balances of the liberal parliamentary system. The rules of the game, which were largely formulated in earlier constitutional monarchy, were only reluctantly accepted at that point.

The parliamentary system was dismantled when counter-regime forces took control of several countries, including Germany, Austria, Spain, and Italy. In the 1930s, the regimes in other established parliamentary systems (such as Belgium and France) were in danger of falling under the influence of right-wing extremism. Only after 1945 and the terrible experiences with authoritarian or even totalitarian tyranny were parliamentary government and democracy able to coexist together. But some countries (such as the Federal Republic of Germany) have already shown a tendency to place a higher priority on the legal state and legal state and representational parliamentary government over democratic involvement (Beyme, 2015).

### **2.32 What we can see from French parliamentary history**

In addition to attempting to comprehend the past, history also examines how we have changed over time and how we are now living. How we portray such historical evolution affects how we perceive the present and its course. Consequently, it is crucial to consider history.

Democracy is the highest ideal in the society in which we currently reside. How, though, was such a civilization established?

Laws are made in parliament, where people debate and agree on a range of social issues. It is a democratic pillar. Each nation in Europe has evolved its own parliamentary system based on national assemblies. Firstly, give a brief overview of French history in the modern era.

### **2.33 French Revolution**

1789 saw the start of the French Revolution and the creation of the republic. For the first time in history, universal male suffrage by direct election was implemented nationally in 1848. France invented democracy, which paved the way for the contemporary era. It is possible that the gathering of the Estates-General was one of the main causes of the French Revolution. Representatives from the clergy, nobles, and commoners made up this consensus-based decision making body. This quickly evolved into the National Constituent Assembly.

As implied by the name, it put the constitution into effect in 1791. The First Republic began in 1792 after the throne was overthrown.

However, the First Republic had to endure a great deal of bloodshed as the revolution became more radicalized. The revolution was ultimately put down by the renowned Napoleon Bonaparte. The First Republic ended and the First Empire began when he was crowned emperor in 1804.

Prioritizing territorial expansion, the Empire ultimately fell after losing to other nations, particularly the United Kingdom. 1814 and 1815 saw the restoration of the throne. The

two last French kingships, the July Monarchy and the Bourbon Restoration, persisted from that time until the Revolution of 1848.

The Second Republic was formed during the Revolution of 1848. But the Second Empire came into being in 1852 with the accession of Napoleon III.

The Franco-Prussian War's loss in 1870 caused this empire to fall. The Third Republic was subsequently established. "The golden age of Parliamentary democracy" was another name for it. But this too ended in 1940 with the Nazi conquest and the installation of the Vichy government, which collaborated with Germany.

Following the war, the Fourth Republic was established in 1946. However, the Fifth Republic was subsequently founded amid the chaos that began with the Algerian uprising and Charles de Gaulle's coup. The government, which is still in place today, increased the president's power.

As a result, regime changes are a common feature in French modern history. This can also be viewed as a history of investigating the ideal form of politics. Politics can be interpreted in a variety of ways and has no singular form. Furthermore, it can be both strong and fragile due to its inclusion of diverse viewpoints.

### **2.34 Establishment of universal suffrage = achievement of democracy?**

As was previously mentioned, France implemented the first universal male suffrage in history. Does this imply that a large number of individuals became interested in and involved in politics? It wasn't that easy.

According to one story, they had to pay thirty thousand francs in the currency of the day to run for parliamentary membership. This amounted to up to eighteen times the workers' yearly pay.

Furthermore, save from a brief stint during the Second Republic, they received no compensation prior to the Third Republic, even if they were elected to the legislature. Therefore, it was nearly impossible for the general public to aspire to serve in parliament.

Furthermore, many people lacked literacy and were unable to put the candidates' names on the ballot paper, even if they were elected.

Moreover, elections were unfamiliar to a large number of individuals. When they were granted the right to vote, they had no idea how to cast their ballots. In order to find out who they should vote for or how to spell a person's name, they occasionally went to local politicians or powerful people who were knowledgeable about politics. Those who were asked might, of course, urge people to cast their ballots for them. These individuals were in a position where they were either unable to truly express their own political views or were not yet aware of them.

The Revolution of 1848 brought universal male suffrage, according to world history textbooks and other sources. This gives us the sense of a happy ending, as though democracy had been attained. But history is more complicated than that. First and foremost, it is crucial to remember that women were excluded from the universal suffrage at that time. Furthermore, despite the introduction of universal male suffrage, there were few contenders for legislative members, and people would instead choose someone they knew or were instructed to vote for. We cannot assume that democracy has expanded in such a society

### **2.35 Holding multiple mandates is also a way of democracy**

In France, it is customary to hold several mandates at the same time, something that is uncommon in other countries. Politicians, for instance, have been permitted to serve as both a city assemblyman and a member of the national parliament simultaneously. Why is that?

In the first half of the 19th century, the July Monarchy was the first to gradually exhibit holding numerous mandates. One of the reasons for this is that when the industrialization waves hit France, railroads were installed. Stated differently, the ease of rail travel made it feasible to accept mandates in both Paris and the provinces.

Following that, numerous parliamentary members began to concurrently hold seats in the regional legislatures during the transition from the Second Empire to the Third Republic in the later half of the 19th century. During the Third Republic, between 60

and 70 percent of the members of parliament also held positions like mayor or regional assemblyman. A few members of parliament simultaneously served in up to four different capacities.

This just clarifies the physical feasibility of having more than one mandate, though. Some readers might believe that allowing one person to have multiple assembly seats could be anti-democratic. Indeed, since the 19th century, we have frequently encountered this kind of critique. However, with certain exceptions, it has never been illegal to possess dual mandates.

Aside from the belief that it is incompatible with democracy, some people in 19th-century France believed that democracy was the cause of it.

A procedure for filing candidacies was not in place for the elections at the time. That is to say, voters might theoretically write anyone's name. In fact, there were numerous instances of these votes being recorded.

At the time, there was a belief in France that democracy was based on the free selection of parliamentary representatives by the electorate. It would create constraints against the will of the voters if they set a limit to stop this holding of numerous mandates. With this perspective, having several requirements is an indication of democracy.

Voters at the time may cast their ballots for anybody they wanted, as was previously stated. For instance, a town's mayor received more votes since the people in the town are familiar with his name. Therefore, a person would receive votes from the local constituency and be elected as a member of the national parliamentary system just because they were a local politician in a region.

As a result, having several mandates became customary in France. It continued virtually unchecked until the law limiting it was put into effect in 1985. As we can see, France's history of holding several mandates is relevant to our consideration of democracy (Ryosei, 2023).

## **2.36 Glorious Revolution**

The term Glorious Revolution refers to the series of events in 1688-89 which culminated in the exile of King James II and the accession to the throne of William and Mary. It has also been seen as a watershed in the development of the constitution and especially of the role of Parliament.

### **Introduction**

The Glorious Revolution is a term used to describe the peaceful way in which Parliament asserted its rights over the monarchy in 1688.

## **2.37 Events of 1685 – 1689**

### **1685: succession of James II**

Charles II passed away on February 6th, and his brother, James II, a Catholic, replaced him. The succession happened without any problems, despite the general apprehensions about Catholicism and the earlier attempts to keep James II off the throne. In truth, James's Parliament was predominately composed of loyalists when it convened on May 19. The House gave James the same revenues that his brother had received for life. In fact, the Commons passed more grants with passionate pledges of allegiance following the Dukes of Argyle and Monmouth's repressed invasions. But this zeal was short-lived.

James requested additional funding from the Commons to maintain his standing army when the House was called back to order at the end of the summer. By requesting that the Test Acts be repealed, he further enraged them. These were the 1673 Acts that mandated that those in positions of authority declare themselves opposed to transubstantiation in order to demonstrate that they were not Catholic. Parliament rejected the Acts and the additional funding between November 12 and 19. Parliament urged the King to ease their "apprehensions and jealousies" by stating in their response to his address that the King's hiring of Catholic officers was "of the greatest concern to the rights of all your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects." ". James realized that Parliament would not agree to remove the penal laws against Catholics, so he prorogued it on November 20.

### **1686: Repeal of the Test Acts**

Judges in the collusive legal case *Godden v. Hales* in April decided that James II could waive the Test Acts in certain situations without Parliament's approval. The King started allowing Roman Catholics and some dissidents to serve in the military, academic institutions, and even Anglican Church positions. On July 15, the King's authority as Governor of the Church of England was transferred to an Ecclesiastical Commission. One of the first things this Commission did was suspend Henry Compton, the Bishop of London, for refusing to suspend a London clergyman who had preached against Roman Catholicism. This Commission had the authority to deny the clergy their duties. In Whitehall, a papal envoy was even honored.

When the Scottish Parliament failed to repeal the Test Acts, the Marquis of Queensberry was removed from his position as Royal Commissioner and replaced by a government that was predominantly Roman Catholic. Given these conditions, it was not unexpected that during 1686, the King's subjects began to believe that James was planning to force his own religious beliefs on the nation. In his journal, author John Evelyn wrote, "The Lord Jesus defend his little flock and preserve this threatened Church and nation." In the meantime, James launched an effort to select electors who shared his views in order to obtain a House of Commons that would back his programs. The question of whether they would back candidates who were willing to repeal the Test Acts and penal laws was posed to Deputy Lieutenants, Justices of the Peace, and members of municipal corporations who were eligible to vote. Many were turned away based on their responses, and dissenters and Roman Catholics took their place.

### **1687: Declaration of Indulgence**

The King issued a Declaration of Indulgence on April 5 that suspended all religious penal laws. It stated: "We humbly thank Almighty God that it is... our opinion that conscience ought not to be constrained nor people forced in matters of mere religion." "We cannot but heartily wish, as it will easily be believed, that all the people of our Dominions were members of the Catholic Church." Although these were admirable remarks, James's use of the Royal Prerogative without parliamentary consent and his harsh insensitivity to the concerns of the vast majority of his subjects were deeply

unsettling. Ferdinando d'Adda was appointed as the official papal nuncio to the Court of St. James by the King in July.

For the remainder of the year, the Lord Lieutenants were directed to gather notable locals and ask them if they would support the repeal of the penal laws and other questions aimed at the same goal if they were selected as members. Nine of the current Lord Lieutenants were fired by the King in August after the majority of them refused to answer these questions. Regardless, the remaining responses to the King's inquiries reveal nearly universal resistance from the well-known and powerful local men who had been surveyed.

### **1688: The Glorious Revolution**

When James reissued the Declaration of Indulgence on April 27, 1688, he made the grave mistake of ordering Anglican clergy to read it to their congregations from the pulpit on two Sundays in a row. By refusing to read it and filing a petition against the edict on May 18, the Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops became known as the Seven Bishops in Whig history. The petition asked the King to revoke the decree, arguing that his declaration of indulgence was unlawful because it was based on his suspending power, which Parliament had frequently denounced.

Two days later, with very bad timing, the Queen gave birth to a son, James Francis Edward, Prince of Wales, who was baptized in accordance with the Roman Catholic rite. The Seven Bishops were seized on June 8 and taken to the Tower to await trial. Unflattering rumors that the newborn was a fake prince who had been smuggled into the Queen's bed in a warming pan were sparked by the possibility of an endless Catholic dynasty governing without Parliament. Huge crowds of people celebrated in the streets, burning papal effigies and destroying Catholic businesses when the Seven Bishops were found not guilty by a jury a few days later on June 30.

Seven well-known politicians (from Shrewsbury, Devonshire, Danby, Lumley, the Bishop of London, Henry Sidney, and Edward Russell) signed a "letter of invitation" the same day. This prompted James' Protestant son-in-law, William of Orange, to step in and preserve the Church and the State. Actually, William had already decided to step

in, and on October 1 he released his manifesto from The Hague, which detailed all of the alleged wrongdoings during the previous three years:

Therefore, we have decided to travel to England and, with God's blessing, bring a force that will be able to protect us from the violence of those evil councilors. We have prepared this Declaration because we want our intention to be understood correctly. On November 5, William and roughly 15,000 (mostly Dutch) troops made the only successful large-scale landing in England since 1485 at Torbay in Devon. William's hand was bolstered by the enthusiastic reception he received and the defections from James's army, even though James still had his standing army. James II was permitted to flee for France a few days after he arrived in London on December 19.

### **1689: Bill of Rights**

A new Parliament met for the first time on January 22. This was called the Convention Parliament, but it wasn't really a parliament because William of Orange, not the King, called it. The Convention Parliament declared "certain ancient rights and liberties" and harshly denounced James II's activities in its Declaration of Rights (see Appendix), which was released on February 12. Princess Mary, James's older daughter and William's wife, arrived in London on the same day.

The following day, Lord Halifax, the head of the Lords, presented the crown to William and Mary after reading the Declaration to them. The statement was later enshrined in the Bill of Rights, which was enacted by Parliament in December 1689. It further stated that only Protestants may hold the kingdom and that Mary's heirs and her sister Anne's heirs would be the heirs in succession.

### **2.38 Historical Interpretations**

The History of England from the Accession of James the Second, 1849-61, by Thomas Babington Macaulay, reflects the typical Whig perspective on the Glorious Revolution. The uprising was for Macaulay "a vindication of our ancient rights" whereby it was "finally decided. whether the popular element, which had, ever since the age of Fitzwater and de Montfort, been found in English polity, should be destroyed by the monarchical element, or should be suffered to develop itself freely and to become

dominant." According to Macaulay, she had been spared a destroying revolution in the nineteenth century because England had experienced a saving revolution in the seventeenth century.

According to the writings of modern philosopher John Locke, James II was subject to the legitimate wrath of Parliament and the people because he had violated the "original contract" between the sovereign and the people. According to the Whig perspective, the Glorious Revolution was a reaffirmation of the English people's liberties and a victory for the integrity of constitutional law over a ridiculous attempt to pervert it. Nonetheless, there have been others who disagree with this understanding of the Glorious Revolution. Since it only involved the ruling elites and left the monarchy largely unchanged, it scarcely qualifies as a true revolution in the eyes of some twentieth-century historians (e.g. Lucile Pinkham, *William and the Respectable Revolution*, 1954).

For instance, according to constitutional historian Mark Thompson, the Bill of Rights (which included the provisions William and Mary had proposed for approval) accomplished "little more than set forth certain points of existing laws and simply secured to Englishmen the rights of which they were already legally possessed" aside from establishing succession. Others have been even more contemptuous: Viktor F. Semenov, a Russian historian, considered it a simple coup d'etat because of its legalism, conservatism, and lack of blood. The fact that, for instance, a detailed examination of the Bill of Rights reveals that it is, in reality, a quite conservative document in a number of ways lends some credence to this Marxist view.

It is a declaratory act that restores the monarchy and reasserts ancient privileges, however there are some constraints that may not be that different from the original ones. It is quite easy to view the events of 1688 as merely a codicil to the interregnum, with little significance on its own. But this is deceptive. One cannot consider the civil wars to have definitively resolved England's political future as a parliamentary monarchy. Of course, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 cannot either. Nonetheless, prior to 1688, England may be seen as starting to adopt French absolutism. The year 1688 marked the end of this. James II's foolishness and impatience were the clear cause of the Glorious Revolution. His attempts to restore Popery not only alarmed the Anglican Church and laypeople, but he also succeeded in bringing together a diverse range of interests to

oppose his foolish policies. But it's important to keep in mind that the prince who was called in to save the day didn't want the monarchy to be weaker, thus the 1688–1689 accords aren't particularly radical. However, it is crucial that they exist at all. Any attempt at absolutism or popery was halted. Additionally, the Declaration and Bill of Rights emphasized the rights of a free Parliament and limited the King's standing army and dispensing powers.

One outcome of the Glorious Revolution was William III's alteration of England's position in Europe and the ensuing conflicts, which resulted in the foundation of parliamentary supremacy and a significant loss of royal authority. "Constitutional government has endured because it became a habit in the eighteenth century, not because it was established by revolution (great or small) in the seventeenth century," the Triennial Act of 1694, for example, mandated that Parliaments be called every three years, preventing future monarchs from ruling without a parliament, a favorite practice of the Stuarts (office, 2010).

### **2.39 Parliamentary democracy in South Asia**

Politics is generally viewed as a masculine realm and as unclean in the South Asian region. Whether during the electoral process or when gaining positions in political parties, power dynamics intensify various forms of violence. Money, power, and weapons can be used to elevate a person to the appropriate position in society. The political regimes in the area have created democratic, socialist, military, and monarchical forms of government. Centralized autocratic political regimes, military rule, and monarchy are all acceptable within the parameters of the region's democracy. The systems do not, however, include goals or guidelines for the advancement of excluded groups and minorities.

Thus, despite numerous political experiments in administration, the plight of South Asian minority, the downtrodden in general, and women in particular is disregarded. Across the region, citizens' rights are being restricted, corruption has increased, and democracy has been weakened. Globalization and economic liberalization have led to greater income disparity, which has benefited more privileged groups.

The rule of law in South Asia is routinely disregarded and weakened in terms of economic rights and equality for all, even if SAARC member states have accepted international conventions. Lawlessness has a significant role in fostering bad governance in the majority of South Asian countries. Common people have consequently lost their security, civil liberties, and economical rights.

One of the special types of democracy is parliamentary democracy. It is successfully used in a number of nations worldwide. Canada uses it just as successfully as Australia does. Parliamentary democracy is practiced in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India.

#### **2.40 Parliamentary democracy in India**

The Prime Minister is the head of state in India's parliamentary form of government. Despite being the official head of state, the president of the country only has ceremonial power in this parliamentary democracy. The Prime Minister is elected to the parliament, while the President is not. The Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers are in charge of the federal (national) government, while the Chief Minister and his or her Council of Ministers are in charge of the state governments. India's president is elected by members of parliament (MPs), who are not ordinary citizens but are directly chosen by the country's people. Even though the President simply uses the Prime Minister and other members of the Council of Ministers to carry out his ceremonial duties, the President and other Council of Ministers members formally select the country's prime minister. Usually, when a party gains a landslide majority in the Lok Sabha, the president does not use his discretion.

However, neither a single party nor a coalition of parties can secure the required majority in the lower chamber, as has often been the case in recent years. In these situations, the president uses his or her discretion to invite the leader of the main party to form the government, sometimes with the accompanying parliamentary vote of confidence in the government to give the required show of support. In the event that this vote of confidence fails, the President may dissolve the government.

## **2.41 Parliamentary Democracy in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh became an independent nation in 1971. Under Sheik Mujibur Rahman's inspiring initiative, Bangladesh was intended to have a parliamentary system of governance. Mujibur's notion of the prime minister's office turned this administration into a legal rational model. This form of government was only able to last for four years. Suddenly, Prime Minister Mujibur Rahman turned a parliamentary administration into a dictatorial presidential one. He was losing favor. "The democracy paradox" was caused by the dictatorship that was the forerunner of parliamentary democracy. The military then assumed control of the government, and on August 15, 1975, the military killed the father of the country.

The Westminster model, which selects executive members from the body they report to, is used by the parliament of Bangladesh. The parliament of Bangladesh is an essential component of the country. The constitution of Bangladesh is the ultimate law of republics. It gives the parliament immunity, freedom to operate, the ability to convene, and asceticism all of which are recognized as essential to maintaining its dominant position within the political system. It grants the legislative branch of government the authority to control its own and its members' activities.

Consent from anyone outside of parliament is not necessary. The regularity of parliament is also guaranteed under the constitution of Bangladesh. A parliamentary session must be held within sixty days. Members and the parliament both profit from the constitutions. According to Article 81(3) of the Constitution, any bill pertaining to money must have a certificate stating that it is a money bill in the speaker's possession before it can be sent to the president for approval. It is impossible to contest this kind of certificate in any court.

## **2.42 Parliamentary democracy in Pakistan**

Pakistan was founded on democratic principles as the realization of the people's wish for a separate state. The founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, stated in 1943 that "democracy is in our blood, it is in our marrow." He envisioned the constitution of the future state as a perfect union of Islamic morality and democratic principles. A judicial system that may establish the rule of law, fairness, and morality

in the recently established state. In his inaugural speech to the Pakistani Constituent Assembly, Jinnah established the fundamental tenets of democracy by saying "I think we should keep that in mind as our ideal, and you will find that over time, Muslims will stop being Muslims and Hindus will stop being Hindus not in the religious sense, as that is each person's personal faith, but in the political sense as state citizens. "Jinnah sought to turn the Muslim community from a minority into a nation-state based on peace, faith, and order.

He was adamant on fortifying the political institutions on democratic principles, fully aware that, given the current circumstances, it would be necessary to go above and beyond to guarantee a truly democratic setup in Pakistan. It should be mentioned that parliamentary democracy had little impact in the areas that now comprise Pakistan because some of them did not join British India until the middle of the nineteenth century.

Furthermore, due to geopolitical considerations, these areas were partially exempted from the participatory politics that were applied in other parts of British India.

Over time, different types of democracy have been implemented in Pakistan. Under Ayub Khan's leadership, Pakistan experienced a presidential democracy from 1962 to 1968. He proposed the constitution in presidential form. Presidential democracy, in which the president is the most powerful individual in the country, is an essential type of government. Everything is entirely under the president's authority. The president selects the members of the national assembly. A direct popular vote is used to select the executive's leader. But the president and the legislature are two different things.

Following exposure to various political structures, Pakistan went back to using a parliamentary style of governance. The Islamic republic's constitution adopted the Federal parliamentary system in 1973. Throughout its 70-year history, Pakistan has had both presidential and parliamentary political systems. (Both parliamentary and presidential). But while no political system was flawed, there was an issue with its implications. The governing classes also abused their position of authority and power. Pakistan has a long history of autocratic leaders and sporadic, prolonged military rule, despite its commitment to democracy. Things were not always simple, even under

democratic rule; elected governments were occasionally toppled for a variety of reasons (Nepali, 2009)

### **2.43 Theoretical Debates on Parliamentary System**

There has been a great deal of theoretical discussion on the parliamentary system, with academics analyzing its advantages and disadvantages. The connection between the executive and legislative is a major topic of discussion; some contend that parliamentary systems encourage executive domination. Others contend that crucial checks and balances on executive power are provided by parliamentary systems.

The function of opposition in parliamentary systems is the subject of another discussion. While some academics contend that robust opposition is necessary for democratic accountability, others counter that opposition might compromise the efficacy of the administration. There has also been discussion on the idea of parliamentary sovereignty, with some contending that parliament ought to have unrestricted authority.

There has been discussion on the idea of parliamentary sovereignty, with some contending that parliament ought to have unrestricted authority. Others contend that in order to avoid parliamentary dictatorship, constitutional checks and judicial scrutiny are essential. There has also been discussion about the head of state's function in parliamentary systems.

While some academics contend that the head of state should have substantial authority, others maintain that the position should be ceremonial. Examined has also been the link between parliament and the bureaucracy, with some contending that accountability requires parliamentary scrutiny.

The intricacies of governance are brought to light by theoretical discussions on parliamentary systems. Effective administration necessitates striking a balance between conflicting interests, and different methods prioritize different ideals.

The Westminster form of parliamentary democracy, which emphasizes the value of accountable and powerful governance, has had a significant impact. Critics counter that this approach may weaken parliamentary oversight and result in executive domination.

In contrast, the consensual model of parliamentary democracy places a strong emphasis on the value of forming coalitions and reaching agreements. Representation and sensitivity to a range of interests are given top priority in this strategy.

Parliamentary systems can be compared to show how different their governance procedures and institutions are. Various systems place varying priorities on values, and local context adaptation is necessary for efficient governance.

Institutional design and policy decisions are influenced by theoretical discussions of parliamentary systems. Prioritizing democratic values and striking a balance between conflicting interests are necessary for effective governance.

The effect of legislative reforms on governance results has been studied by academics. Some contend that accountability and transparency ought to be given top priority in reforms. Others contend that representation and citizen responsiveness should be given top priority in improvements.

The connection between parliamentary systems and democratic outcomes has been the subject of empirical research. According to certain research, parliamentary systems encourage accountability and stability. Others discover that parliamentary systems have the potential to erode citizen responsiveness and representation (Hashmi, 2018).

#### **2.44 Role of Political Parties in Parliamentary Democracy**

Political parties play a crucial role in parliamentary democracy, shaping governance outcomes and representing citizen interests.

Some scholars argue that strong parties are essential for democratic accountability. Others argue that weak parties can lead to executive dominance. Theoretical debates on political parties inform policy decisions and institutional design (Muller, 2003).

#### **2.45 Theories of parliamentary democracy**

Frameworks for comprehending the operation and importance of parliamentary systems are offered by theories of parliamentary democracy. Over time, these beliefs have changed to accommodate shifting political environments and societal norms.

Separation of powers is important, according to early philosophers like Montesquieu and John Locke. The importance of representation and citizen engagement was emphasized by contemporary theorists such as Robert Dahl and Joseph Schumpeter. Parliamentary democracy theories emphasize the conflicts between participation and representation. In order for parliamentary democracy to function effectively, conflicting interests and values must be balanced. Theories shed light on the advantages and disadvantages of parliamentary systems (Mineur, 2020).

#### **2.46 Consociational theory of democracy**

Arend Lijphart's consociational theory of democracy provides a framework for navigating diversity in sharply divided societies. According to this theory, power-sharing agreements allow democratic institutions to accommodate a variety of parties. Elite leaders from all societal groups must work together, according to consociational democracy.

The grand coalition, in which representatives from all significant segments form a coalition government, is a fundamental tenet of consociational democracy. This promotes collaboration and guarantees that every group has a say in decision-making. Another important feature that enables each section to safeguard its interests is mutual veto power. Fair representation is ensured by designing decision-making procedures to be proportionate to segment size.

Segmental autonomy is given top priority in consociational democracies, giving each group substantial internal authority. This method aims to resolve any disputes while acknowledging the diversity within communities. In divided communities, consociational democracy fosters stability and collaboration by distributing power and defending the rights of minorities.

Consociational democracy has the benefits of fostering cooperation, advancing stability, and defending the rights of minorities. In nations like Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, this strategy has been effective. Consociational democracy, according to its detractors, can be difficult to set up and preserve, which could result in ineffective decision-making and deadlock.

Strong institutions and elite cooperation are necessary for an effective consociational democracy. Additionally, it calls for compromise and adaptable decision-making procedures. Despite its drawbacks, consociational democracy provides insightful guidance on how to manage difference and foster collaboration in sharply divided societies. Consociational democracy frequently entails difficult compromises and trade-offs in real life. Elite leaders have to prioritize collaboration and strike a balance between conflicting interests. This method acknowledges that democracy is about more than just majority rule; it's also about advancing inclusivity and defending the rights of minorities.

In contrast, majoritarian democracy, which prioritizes majority rule, is not the same as consociational democracy. Similar to deliberative democracy, consociational democracy places a strong emphasis on communication and collaboration. Scholars and politicians can more effectively handle the difficulties of managing diversity in democracies by comprehending consociational theory.

Consociational democracy faces difficulties in addressing socioeconomic disparities, preserving elite cooperation, and guaranteeing efficient decision-making. Consociational democracy is nevertheless an essential foundation for fostering stability and collaboration in divided communities in spite of these obstacles (Brown, 1977).

#### **2.47 Theory of Representative Democracy**

The role of elected representatives in making decisions on behalf of citizens is emphasized by representative democracy ideas. Edmund Burke's views, according to which representatives ought to use their own discretion, are the foundation of this strategy. The idea of representative democracy was expanded upon by theorists such as Henry Manheim and Hanna Pitkin. Theories of representative democracy emphasize the significance of responsiveness and accountability. Local and national interests must be balanced by elected officials. Strong ties between legislators and citizens are necessary for effective representation. The design of parliamentary institutions is informed by notions of representative democracy (engupta, 1974).

## **2.48 Theory of Participatory Democracy**

Direct citizen participation in decision-making is emphasized by participatory democracy philosophies. This method is based on the theories of John Stuart Mill and Rousseau. Theorists such as Benjamin Barber and Carole Pateman support greater public participation. The significance of civic education and deliberation is emphasized by participatory democracy ideologies. Participation by citizens increases democratic accountability and legitimacy. Institutional reforms like town hall meetings and citizen juries are necessary for participatory democracy. Equal access to resources and information is necessary for effective participation (Fuchs, 2007).

## **2.49 Theories of Deliberative Democracy**

Theories of deliberative democracy emphasize the value of public discussion and debate. The theories of Seyla Benhabib and Jurgen Habermas serve as the foundation for this strategy. The importance of logical communication in decision-making is emphasized by ideas of deliberative democracy. In order to make decisions as a group, citizens debate issues rationally. Institutional structures that support public deliberation are necessary for deliberative democracy. Respect for other viewpoints, equality, and inclusivity are essential for productive discourse. The architecture of public consultations and parliamentary committees is informed by notions of deliberative democracy (Gimmler, 2001).

## **2.50 Theory of Liberal Democracy**

Individual liberties and rights are emphasized in liberal democracy theories. The theories of Isaiah Berlin and John Locke serve as the foundation for this strategy. The significance of the rule of law and constitutional protections is emphasized by liberal democracy ideologies. Independent courts and checks on the executive branch protect individual rights. Private property rights and a market-based economy are essential to liberal democracy. The separation of powers and robust institutions are essential for a liberal democracy to function effectively. Human rights safeguards and parliamentary systems are designed with liberal democracy ideologies in mind (Munro, 2018).

### **2.51 Theory of Social Democracy**

Economic equality and social justice are given top priority in social democracy theories. This method is based on the theories of Eduard Bernstein and Karl Marx. Theories of social democracy place a strong emphasis on social welfare and redistribution. Market regulation and a mixed economy are necessary for social democracy. Strong labor unions and social movements are essential to an effective social democracy. Public policies and parliamentary systems are designed with social democracy theories in mind. In a social democracy, everyone's welfare comes first (Kastning, 2005).

### **2.52 Theory of Critical Democracy**

Theories of critical democracy advocate for radical change and contest established power systems. This method incorporates concepts from post structuralism, post colonialism, and critical theory. The significance of counter-hegemony and resistance is emphasized by critical democracy ideas. They draw attention to the necessity of democratic engagement outside of established institutions. Continuous criticism of prevailing discourses and power dynamics is necessary for critical democracy. Empowering disadvantaged voices is essential to a successful critical democracy. Social movements and activist tactics are informed by theories of critical democracy (Devenney, 2002).

### **2.53 Theory of Cosmopolitan Democracy**

A worldwide democratic community is the vision of cosmopolitan democracy ideas. This method is based on the theories of David Held and Immanuel Kant. The significance of human rights and global citizenship is emphasized by cosmopolitan democracy ideologies. They support democratic decision-making and international institutions. Global governance and international collaboration are essential to cosmopolitan democracy. Addressing global inequality is essential to a successful cosmopolitan democracy. Theories of cosmopolitan democracy influence global governance and international relations (Marchetti, 2010).

## **2.54 Theory of Radical Democracy**

Direct democracy and citizen participation are given top priority in radical democracy beliefs. John Dewey and Rousseau's theories are incorporated into this method. The significance of community control and decentralized authority is emphasized by radical democracy doctrines. They support different approaches to decision-making, like sortation and consensus. Continuous public participation and discussion are necessary for radical democracy. In order for radical democracy to be effective, prevailing power structures must be challenged. Community organizing and grassroots movements are informed by ideologies of radical democracy (Barker, 2001).

## **2.55 Theories of Digital Democracy**

Theories of digital democracy investigate how technology affects democratic engagement. This method is based on the concepts of online discourse and digital citizenship. The significance of e-participation, online engagement, and digital literacy is emphasized by ideas of digital democracy. They support digital rights, open data, and transparency. Addressing online inequality and cyber threats is essential to digital democracy. Integrating technology into democratic institutions is essential for an effective digital democracy. Online civic participation and digital governance are informed by theories of digital democracy (Dijk, 2000).

## **2.66 Theoretical Foundations of Parliamentary Democracy in Pakistan**

Since its establishment, Pakistan's parliamentary democracy has encountered many difficulties. The transfer of power, which entails responsibility, is the theoretical foundation of parliamentary democracy. But in Pakistan, the elite has frequently abused power, creating leadership gaps and institutional imbalance. Pakistan has worked to fortify its democratic institutions in spite of these obstacles. The 2006 signing of the Charter of Democracy was a crucial step in encouraging accommodation and reconciliation amongst the main political parties. Unconstitutional methods of overthrowing governments were less common because to this charter. An important part of its evolution was played by all national and provincial assemblies (Shafqat, 1998).

### **2.67 Factors Affecting Parliamentary Democracy in Pakistan**

Pakistan's parliamentary democracy has been affected by a number of causes. A cycle of violence has been created as a result of different political groups taking issues into their own hands due to the government's weakness. The chances for the development of robust democratic institutions are at risk due to this crisis of governability. Furthermore, Pakistan's democratic progress has been impeded by leadership gaps and institutional mismatch. Establishing democratic government is difficult since the nation's constitution has fallen short of popular expectations. The resolution of these fundamental problems is necessary for effective democratic governance. Through comprehension of these elements, Pakistan can endeavor to fortify its parliamentary democracy (Azhar, 2023).

### **2.68 Prospects for Democratic Consolidation in Pakistan**

Significant obstacles stand in the way of Pakistan's democratic consolidation. The prospects for democracy in Pakistan are called into question by the State of Democracy in Pakistan Report 2022. Pakistan has advanced democratic institutions in spite of these worries. Think tanks and civil society groups like PILDAT are essential in advancing democratic education and understanding. In addition, the Charter of Democracy has promoted a spirit of unity between political parties. Sustained efforts to resolve fundamental issues are necessary for effective democratic consolidation. Pakistan can fortify its parliamentary democracy by doing this (Lodhi, 2012).

### **2.69 Conclusion**

The theoretical exploration of democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan reveals a persistent gap between democratic ideals and political reality. While Pakistan's constitutional framework affirms its commitment to parliamentary democracy, its historical trajectory has been marked by intermittent democratic breakdowns, military interventions, and institutional imbalances. The core democratic principles such as separation of powers, representative governance, and rule of law have often been undermined by authoritarian tendencies, political elitism, and weak institutionalization.

Theoretically, parliamentary democracy is designed to ensure collective decision-making, accountability of the executive to the legislature, and active public participation through elected representatives. However, in the Pakistani context, the parliamentary system has frequently operated under constrained autonomy due to external pressures from unelected institutions, intra-party autocracy, and limited legislative independence. Political instability, low levels of democratic political culture, and inadequate public engagement further restrict the development of a vibrant parliamentary democracy.

This debate also highlights the need for a deeper understanding and internalization of democratic norms within political parties, state institutions, and society at large. Without addressing systemic flaws such as dynastic politics, lack of intra-party democracy, and insufficient separation between state powers the promise of parliamentary democracy cannot be fully realized. The success of any democratic system lies not only in its theoretical foundation but also in its practical implementation and institutional resilience.

In conclusion, while the theoretical model of parliamentary democracy offers a strong framework for inclusive and accountable governance, its success in Pakistan depends on structural reforms, institutional integrity, political maturity, and public awareness. Bridging the gap between theory and practice is essential for building a durable and representative democratic system in the country.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **DEMOCRACY AND THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN FROM 1947-2008: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Since its creation in 1947, democracy has been a contentious and dynamic concept in Pakistani politics. Pakistan was carved out of the subcontinent as a Muslim homeland and inherited the British parliamentary system, which has experienced numerous adaptations, disruptions, and difficulties over the years (Qazi, Akhtar, & Fan, 2024). Being a democratic model based on representative governance, the parliamentary system has repeatedly failed to establish a stable foundation in the face of socio-political upheavals, military interventions, religious influences, and economic instability (Qazi, Rasheed, & Rasheed, 2023).

This introduction explores the dynamics, achievements, and failures of Pakistan's parliamentary system as it charts the country's democratic history. The political legacies, historical occurrences, and institutional advancements that have molded Pakistan's parliamentary system must all be taken into account in order to comprehend the country's complicated democracy (Kamran, 2009). This story emphasizes the ongoing conflict between authoritarianism and democratic goals in the nation's political culture by exploring the relationship between democracy and parliamentary rule (Javaid & Latif, 2017).

#### **3.2 The Birth of Pakistan and Early Political Developments (1947-1958)**

Following decades of conflict under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan attained independence on August 14, 1947. The Pakistan Movement, which aimed to provide Muslims in the Indian subcontinent their own homeland, gave rise to the nation. Liaquat Ali Khan became Prime Minister of Pakistan, and Jinnah became the country's first Governor-General. Economic instability and refugee crises were just two of the many difficulties the new administration had to deal with (Ziring, 1981).

One of the biggest mass migrations in history resulted from the division of India and Pakistan. While Hindus and Sikhs flocked to India, millions of Muslims settled in

Pakistan. Widespread violence and fatalities resulted from this. The administration found it difficult to give the refugees access to necessities.

Early Pakistan was characterized by territorial conflicts with India. Divided between India and Pakistan, the Kashmir area continues to be a divisive topic. Kashmir has been the subject of several wars between the two nations (Harun, 1970).

Karachi was selected as the nation's first capital because of its advantageous location and pre-existing infrastructure. But the city found it difficult to handle the flood of government personnel and refugees. A leadership crisis resulted from Jinnah's passing in 1948. Although Liaquat Ali Khan took on more responsibilities, regional elites opposed him. Jinnah was followed as Governor-General by Khawaja Nazimuddin (shaukat & Ullah, 2023).

The government of Liaquat Ali Khan prioritized infrastructural development and institution establishment. When the nation's first budget was introduced in 1948, welfare and development initiatives were given top priority.

Pakistan became a member of international organizations including the Commonwealth and the United Nations. This promoted the nation's international recognition and made financial assistance easier (Nawaz, Nisa, & Malik, 2021).

The Indian Civil Service was replaced by the Pakistan Administrative Service, which was created by the government. The goal of this was to establish a professional bureaucracy. Regional politics and provincialism gained popularity in the 1950s. In East Pakistan, the Awami League, under the leadership of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, gained support. Regional parties posed a threat to the Muslim League in West Pakistan. The provincial administrations called for increased independence and funding (Mahmood, 2023).

The goal of the 1955 One-Unit Scheme was to unite the provinces of West Pakistan into a single entity. It was said that this action undermined provincial autonomy. Priority continued to be given to economic development. The Mangla Dam is one of the irrigation projects in which the government has invested. Establishing a federal parliamentary system was the goal of Pakistan's first constitutional draft, the 1956

Constitution. However, language and provincial conflicts made it difficult to implement (Khan, Shafiq, & Tasleem, 2021).

In response to East Pakistan's requests, the Constitution made Bengali and Urdu official languages. Some authorities in West Pakistan, however, took issue with this action. The National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies were formed by the Constitution. This was done in an effort to reflect different regions. The 1951 assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan severely weakened the government. After being named Army Chief in 1951, General Ayub Khan assumed power. He gained worldwide support for his modernization initiatives and close ties to the United States (Nisar, 2017).

### **3.3 Dissolution of first Constitution Assembly**

The dissolution of Pakistan's first Constituent Assembly in 1954 had significant consequences for the development of parliamentary democracy in the country. Here are the key impacts:

1. **Setback to Democratic Processes:** In order to create a parliamentary system and draft Pakistan's constitution, the Constituent Assembly was established in 1947. However, the democratic process was hampered by its dissolution in 1954 on the instructions of Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad. This was a significant blow to Pakistan's efforts to create democratic norms and practices. Its elimination damaged the legitimacy of parliamentary institutions, since the Assembly had not yet finished drafting the constitution.

2. **Rise of Executive Power:** The dissolution of the Constituent Assembly reflected the growing influence of the executive branch, particularly the role of the Governor-General and the military, in Pakistan's political system. Ghulam Mohammad's decision to dissolve the assembly revealed how fragile democratic institutions were, as it was done without significant legal or constitutional justification. This set a precedent for authoritarianism, as military and executive control over the political system became more dominant in the following years.

3. **Instability in Governance:** Following the Assembly's dissolution, Pakistan experienced protracted political unrest. Because it was unable to create a stable

government or a workable constitution, this undermined the political system's legitimacy. A robust, stable parliamentary democracy was not able to emerge because of the numerous crises caused by the power struggle between the legislature and the executive.

**4. Impact on Constitution Making:** Pakistan lacked a permanent constitution for a number of years after the first Constituent Assembly failed to establish one by 1954. In the absence of a fully developed democratic process, the nation was forced to rely on temporary legal frameworks such as the Governor-General's Order (1955) and the Constitution of 1956. The rule of law and democratic institutions were further undermined by this constitution-making delay.

**5. Military Influence:** The Constituent Assembly's dissolution contributed to the military's growing political clout in Pakistan. The military and bureaucratic elites frequently filled the power void in the absence of a robust parliamentary government. As a result, parliamentary democracy was further marginalized in 1958 when General Ayub Khan assumed power in the first military coup (Siddique, 2006).

Pakistan's transition to parliamentary democracy was seriously impeded by the dissolution of the first Constituent Assembly in 1954. It contributed to the nation's lengthy history of political instability and military involvement by establishing a precedent for presidential overreach, undermining political stability, and delaying the drafting of a constitution. General Ayub Khan overthrew the civilian government in a coup in 1958. The military took control of Pakistan at this point. Ayub Khan defended his policies by arguing that they were required to stabilize the nation and alleviate its economic problems. Civil society and political parties alike strongly denounced the coup.

Struggle, instability, and the eventual rise of military dictatorship characterized Pakistan's early years. The future of the nation was molded by these events, which had an impact on its politics, economy, and society. Comprehending this era is essential to appreciating Pakistan's intricacies and continuous difficulties (Mukherjee, 2016).

### **3.4 Martial Law and Political Setbacks (1958-1971)**

A crucial juncture in Pakistan's political history, the years 1958–1971 were distinguished by the declaration of martial law and serious political defeats. General Ayub Khan's military takeover of the civilian government in October 1958 marked the start of this era. The legislative system's alleged political instability and corruption were cited as justifications for the coup. Martial law established a pattern for subsequent military operations and marked the beginning of direct military engagement in politics (Nisa & Ahsan, 2022).

In order to centralize governance and consolidate power, Ayub Khan implemented reforms. In an effort to justify military authority inside a regulated democratic framework, his government supported the Basic Democracies system. His reign undermined democratic institutions, despite early acclaim for stabilizing the economy and administration. Political parties and civil society were marginalized as the political system became more autocratic (Gabol & Chandio, 2020).

The military was able to establish itself as the state's "savior" because of the disenchantment with civilian rule. The early parliamentary system in Pakistan lacked the institutional power to withstand authoritarianism, and the military coup exposed its weaknesses. Due to factionalism, political leaders found it difficult to come together, creating a void that the military quickly filled.

The political course of Pakistan was drastically changed by Ayub's coup. It strengthened the military's hold on power, undermined civilian authority, and upended the democratic process. In order to comprehend Pakistan's political difficulties and its recurring periods of martial law, this era is still crucial.

### **3.4 Ayub Khan's Rule and the Basic Democracies System**

General Ayub Khan implemented extensive reforms after taking office with the goal of strengthening his rule. He proclaimed himself the head of state, disbanded political parties, and revoked the 1956 Constitution. Ayub enacted a new constitution in 1962 that concentrated power in the executive branch and instituted a presidential government.

Ayub's governance model was based on the Basic Democracies framework. Bypassing established political parties, this concept sought to include local delegates in governance. Critics claimed it was a means to limit political involvement and justify military rule, despite Ayub's portrayal of it as a popular democratic project.

Parliamentary democracy was abandoned with the adoption of the 1962 Constitution, which established a centralized government with broad presidential authority. Ayub's tactics alienated numerous political factions, especially those in East Pakistan who felt excluded, despite his claims to restore stability.

Even if there were some economic development achievements, democratic principles were compromised by Ayub's hold on power. Civil rights were restricted and political dissent was repressed. This created the foundation for upcoming political unrest, particularly among opposition parties and the people of East Pakistan (Mukherjee, 2016).

### **3.5 Economic Development and its Political Consequences**

Significant economic growth under Ayub Khan's reign is frequently attributed to his policies, which promoted infrastructural development and industrialization. His administration ushered in the Green Revolution, which promoted economic growth and raised agricultural output.

These economic policies increased the gap between East and West Pakistan even if they benefited Pakistan's western side. Tensions were made worse by the unequal distribution of political power and resources, especially in East Pakistan, where calls for autonomy became more vocal.

The concentration of wealth in a small number of industrial families, known as the "22 families," caused the general populace to become increasingly resentful. Although the urban middle class was established by Ayyub's policies, the eastern populace and the impoverished in rural areas were mainly left out of the economic gains.

Opposition movements grew as a result of political unrest stoked by economic disparity. East Pakistan, under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League,

started to oppose Ayyub's government on the grounds of political marginalization and economic exploitation (Gabol & Chandio, 2020).

### **3.6 Political Opposition and Ayyub's Decline**

Pakistan's political landscape has historically been significantly shaped by the union or amalgamation of opposition parties. When opposition forces have banded together, it's usually to oppose authoritarian regimes or powerful ruling parties, especially during political crises. An examination of the ways in which Pakistan's parliamentary democracy and governance have been impacted by the coalition of opposition parties is provided below.

### **3.7 The Alliance Against Ayyub Khan (1960s)**

The creation of the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) in the 1960s under Ayub Khan's leadership is among the first instances of opposition unity.

The COP, which was made up of prominent political parties like the National Awami Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, and the Awami League, banded together to oppose Ayub Khan's indirect electoral system and dictatorial rule.

Although it ultimately failed to overthrow Ayub Khan in the 1965 elections, this alliance demonstrated the need of opposition unity in opposing authoritarian regimes and promoting democratic reforms. In the middle of the 1960s, the political resistance to Ayub Khan's government grew stronger. Widespread protests were sparked by dissatisfaction with economic inequality, authoritarian rule, and the repression of political rights. Fatima Jinnah and other opposition leaders were outspoken opponents of Ayyub's policies.

One of the pivotal moments in Ayub's reign was the 1965 presidential election. Under the framework of Basic Democracies, Ayub faced off against the opposition's Fatima Jinnah in a strictly regulated election. Despite Ayub's victory, the credibility of the rule was weakened by claims of electoral tampering.

Ayub's reputation was further damaged by the 1965 Indo-Pak War. Despite being hailed as a military triumph at first, the conflict increased political unrest and revealed

economic weaknesses. Many people saw the 1966 Tashkent Agreement as a betrayal, which further damaged Ayub's standing.

Nationwide demonstrations sprang out by the late 1960s. Ayub's resignation was demanded by political parties, labor unions, and students alike. The escalating turmoil brought to light his regime's inability to resolve political complaints and democratic ambitions (Hussain, 2018).

### **3.8 The Role of East Pakistan in Political Unrest**

The political turmoil under Ayub Khan was significantly influenced by East Pakistan. The majority of Pakistan's population lives in the eastern wing, which felt more and more excluded from Ayub's centralized government. In East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League became a powerful political force. In 1966, Mujib's Six-Point Plan advocated for the eastern wing to have more autonomy. The initiative had broad support, which was indicative of growing discontent with West Pakistan's hegemony.

East Pakistan became even more estranged from Ayub's government as a result of its harsh response to the mounting calls for autonomy. The region's political leaders and activists were routinely jailed, and their calls for federalism were written off as threats of secession. Under Ayub's leadership, the repression of political dissent in East Pakistan brought to light the structural injustices and concentration of power. This planted the seeds for later wars, which led to the catastrophic events of 1971 (Rizwan, 2014).

### **3.9 Transition from Ayub to Yahya Khan**

By 1969, Ayub Khan's government was no longer in control. Ayub announced his retirement and turned over authority to General Yahya Khan in the face of widespread protests and political instability, signaling yet another military intervention.

In order to restore democratic governance, Yahya Khan declared martial law, annulled Ayub's constitution, and pledged free and fair elections. Tensions between East and West Pakistan and ongoing political unrest, however, characterized his term.

Addressing East Pakistan's desires for autonomy while preserving national unity was Yahya's biggest obstacle. Administrative improvements were implemented by his government, but they did not resolve the fundamental issues of the eastern wing.

Yahya's reign was marked by political and social upheaval, which revealed Pakistan's growing problems. The disastrous events of 1971 would eventually result from the inability to heal the political rift between East and West Pakistan (Ziring, 1974).

### **3.10 Yahya Khan's Electoral Promises and the 1970 Elections**

General Yahya Khan promised to use democratic methods to resolve the political situation when he came to office in 1969. He raised expectations for a peaceful end to the escalating political instability by promising Pakistan's first general elections based on universal adult suffrage.

The elimination of the Basic Democracies system and the creation of a framework for regional autonomy were two of the measures implemented by Yahya's military regime with the goal of guaranteeing election fairness. Particularly in East Pakistan, these acts were perceived as an effort to appease political factions.

For the first time, Pakistanis were able to choose their representatives directly in the historic general elections held in December 1970. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League became the most powerful party in East Pakistan, taking 167 of the 169 seats allotted to the area. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), on the other hand, gained a majority in West Pakistan but failed to win any seats in the eastern region. A constitutional crisis was sparked by this glaring regional split, which brought to light the nation's profound political and social division (Rizwan, 2014).

### **3.11 Tensions Between the Awami League and Yahya Khan's Regime**

The Awami League had a majority in the National Assembly after the 1970 elections, which gave it a clear mandate to rule. However, the party's goals were severely hampered by West Pakistan's entrenched interests and centralized power structure. The main source of contention was Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Six-source Plan, which placed a strong emphasis on East Pakistan's autonomy. The initiative was seen as a

danger to national unity by West Pakistani elites, particularly the military and political figures like Bhutto.

At first, Yahya Khan held talks with the Awami League, but West Pakistani politicians pressed him to postpone the handover of power. The division was further widened by Bhutto's well-known statement, "Udhar tum, idhar hum" (You [rule] there, we [rule] here).

Tensions in East Pakistan increased as a result of the inability to come to a political agreement. The Awami League called for the National Assembly to meet immediately, sparking considerable public outcry and strikes. Yahya's administration further alienated the people in the east by using military force to quell protest (Mahmood, 2023).

### **3.12 Military Repression in East Pakistan**

Operation Searchlight, which was initiated by Yahya Khan's dictatorship on March 25, 1971, turned the political crisis into a full-fledged war. The Awami League and its sympathizers in East Pakistan were to be destroyed by this military campaign. Widespread violence was used in the crackdown, which targeted civilians, students, and political leaders. A center of political activism, Dhaka University was the target of military assault. A violent campaign that many referred to as genocide began with the operation.

The Mukti Bahini, a resistance movement calling for independence, was founded as a result of the military's actions inciting resentment in East Pakistan. Millions of residents fled to neighboring India as the situation swiftly descended into a civil war.

Yahya's government remained stubborn despite growing international condemnation of the military's conduct. Reconciliation became difficult as the crackdown deepened the rift between East and West Pakistan. By the middle of 1971, the eastern wing's top political demand was for an independent Bangladesh (Hussain, 2018).

### **3.13 Conclusion and Legacy of Martial Law (1958-1971)**

The 1958–1971 martial law era had a significant and long-lasting impact on Pakistan's political development. It strengthened democratic institutions and exacerbated regional inequality by solidifying the military's position in government.

Authoritarianism, economic disparity, and political repression replaced Ayub Khan's initial pledges of stability and progress. The legitimacy of the state's centralized government approach was weakened, and East Pakistan became estranged from his controlled democracy.

Despite its claims of electoral fairness, Yahya Khan's government ignored calls for equality and autonomy. East Pakistan's secession and the establishment of Bangladesh in December 1971 were the results of the political and military events of this era. This era's history serves as a warning about the perils of authoritarianism and the disregard for democratic values. In order to maintain stability and national unity, it emphasizes the value of federalism, inclusivity, and the necessity of bolstering democratic institutions.

### **3.14 Democratic Transition and Challenges (1972-1977)**

An important turning point in Pakistan's political history occurred from 1972 and 1977, when the nation moved from military to civilian authority after East Pakistan seceded in 1971. Under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the era was characterized by attempts to reconstruct the country within a democratic framework.

The country was severely divided and demoralized when Bhutto took over in December 1971. Restoring public confidence in the state was crucial since the political and military leadership of the nation was in disarray following the loss of East Pakistan. Bhutto made the most of his populist appeal by promising changes meant to resolve the political resentments and socioeconomic inequalities that had dogged the nation.

Pakistan made progress in restoring democratic institutions under Bhutto's direction. In this sense, the 1973 Constitution's drafting was a turning point that established the framework for a parliamentary system with checks and balances. But there were many

difficulties with this shift, such as growing authoritarian tendencies, economic instability, and political divisiveness.

There were both accomplishments and setbacks throughout that time. Although it signaled an end to military rule, it also highlighted Pakistan's democratic framework's flaws and the difficulties of leading a country torn apart by internal strife and outside influences (Larry Diamond, 1989).

### **3.15 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Leadership and Vision**

During this shift, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became a charismatic leader who mobilized support with his vision of an equitable and progressive Pakistan. His catchphrase, Roti, Kapra, Aur Makan (Food, Clothing, and Shelter), struck a chord with the general public, especially the working class and impoverished people in rural areas.

Bhutto's political philosophy was based on democratic socialism and prioritized labor rights, land reforms, and state-led economic growth. Through structural changes, he aimed to modernize Pakistan's economy while resolving long-standing disparities. The creation of the 1973 Constitution, which reinstated parliamentary democracy and defined citizens' fundamental rights, was one of Bhutto's major accomplishments. The foundation of Pakistan's political and legal system is still this Constitution.

Notwithstanding these successes, Bhutto's management style was criticized. Regional leaders and political rivals were turned off by his consolidation of power and repression of dissent. As unfulfilled expectations fueled resistance, the same populist passion that supported his ascent to office also contributed to growing discontent (Raza, 1977).

### **3.16 The 1973 Constitution and its Impact**

An important turning point in Pakistan's democratic transition was the adoption of the 1973 Constitution. It resolved many of the issues raised by previous constitutions and was the outcome of agreement between political parties.

Pakistan was constituted as a federal parliamentary republic with a significant emphasis on provincial autonomy under the 1973 Constitution. In keeping with the nation's religious and cultural identity, it also included Islamic regulations. The constitution

established fundamental rights like equality, freedom of speech, and the right to association.

The Constitution established a distinct division of powers between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches for the first time. This sought to guarantee accountability and avoid the consolidation of power.

However, there were several obstacles in the way of the Constitution's implementation. Regional complaints remained, especially in Baluchistan, where Bhutto's centralized policies ran counter to desires for autonomy. Furthermore, political meddling in the judiciary weakened the democratic system by undermining its independence (Ahmed, 2021).

### **3.17 Economic Reforms and Challenges**

Bhutto started a number of economic reforms to combat inequality and promote growth. In order to bring important enterprises under state control, his government nationalized banks, steel factories, and educational institutions.

The goal of the nationalization program was to guarantee fair resource allocation and lessen the power of industrial elites. It was criticized, nevertheless, for being ineffective, poorly managed, and deterring private investment.

In order to disperse agricultural land among landless farmers and tenants, Bhutto also instituted land reforms. Although some people profited from these reforms, their influence was restricted because of their poor execution and the feudal elite's opposition.

The economy nevertheless faced major obstacles in spite of Bhutto's efforts, such as growing unemployment, inflation, and external debt. These problems, along with worldwide economic shocks like the 1973 oil crisis, led to a great deal of discontent among the Population (Raza, 1977).

### **3.18 Political Opposition and Polarization**

Political polarization grew under Bhutto's rule as opposition parties banded together to oppose his policies and management style. Bhutto's PPP faced a serious challenge from the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), a grouping of nine opposition parties. Citing Bhutto's repression of dissent and use of state apparatus to intimidate opponents, the opposition charged him of authoritarianism. Tensions were further heightened by claims of electoral tampering during the national elections in 1977.

Restoring democracy, accountability, and Islamic principles were the main tenets of the PNA's platform. Some sections of the populace who were fed up with Bhutto's rule found resonance in their demands.

Due to combative politics by both the opposition and the government, this political polarization undermined the democratic advances of the early 1970s. Future instability was made possible by the inability to create a culture of communication and compromise, which undermined democratic institutions (Adeem, 2011).

### **3.19 Regional Tensions and the Baluchistan Crisis**

During Bhutto's presidency, regional tensions were a major problem, especially in Baluchistan, where calls for autonomy turned into an armed rebellion. The central government's alleged exploitation and neglect were the root of the province's complaints.

Bhutto accused the provincial government of conspiring against the state and sacked it in 1973. A military operation was launched in the area as a result of the massive protests and opposition this action provoked.

In Baluchistan, the use of force exacerbated calls for self-determination and alienated the indigenous populace. The crisis brought to light Bhutto's government's inability to use both political and economic measures to solve regional inequities.

The conflict in Baluchistan highlighted Pakistan's federalism's vulnerability and the difficulties in striking a balance between national power and local autonomy. It continues to be a crucial illustration of the conflicts that have shaped Pakistan's democratic development (Mahmood, 2023).

### **3.20 Authoritarian Tendencies and Civil Liberties**

Despite her support for democracy, Bhutto's administration was frequently characterized by authoritarian inclinations. He was criticized for consolidating control and stifling political opposition through coercive tactics.

In order to stay in power, Bhutto's administration regularly used martial law laws and emergency authorities. Journalists, activists, and political opponents were subjected to censorship, harassment, and incarceration.

During this time, the government tightened its control over the media, which is an essential component of democracy. State-run media were turned into a propaganda tool for the ruling party, and independent voices were muffled.

The democratic values that Bhutto aimed to build were weakened by these dictatorial actions. Additionally, they increased public discontent, which aided in the growth of organized opposition forces (Raza, 1977).

### **3.21 The Role of Religion in Politics**

In order to appease conservative segments of society, Bhutto instituted policies that sought to incorporate Islamic principles into governance, which were reflected in the 1973 Constitution's Islamic provisions, such as declaring Islam the state religion and requiring laws to be in line with Islamic principles. In an effort to win over religious groups, Bhutto's government also made Friday the weekly holiday and outlawed alcohol and gambling. However, these actions alienated secular factions and minorities, and the politicization of religion had a long-lasting effect on Pakistan's political landscape, setting the stage for future leaders to use religious rhetoric as a tool for legitimacy (Chengappa, 2001).

### **3.22 The 1977 Elections and Political Crisis**

An important turning point in Pakistan's democratic transition occurred with the general elections of 1977. The opposition claimed massive electoral tampering, while Bhutto's PPP declared a landslide victory.

A nationwide protest movement was started by the Pakistan National Alliance, which called for new elections and Bhutto's resignation. As the demonstrations swiftly got out of control, they paralyzed the nation and led to a political impasse.

At first, Bhutto made an effort to engage in dialogue with the opposition, making compromises like power-sharing plans and electoral reforms. But a conclusion was thwarted by mistrust between the parties and outside influences.

The political crisis intensified, preparing the path for yet another military intervention. This democratic experiment came to an end when General Zia-ul-Haq ousted Bhutto's administration in a coup on July 5, 1977 (Ali, 1977).

### **3.23 Conclusion and Legacy**

A complicated phase in Pakistan's political history, the years 1972–1977 were characterized by both advancements and losses. It revealed the weakness of Pakistan's political institutions while also showcasing the promise of democratic administration. Important landmarks were accomplished under Bhutto's administration, like as the 1973 Constitution and economic reforms. But his democratic credentials were weakened by his authoritarian inclinations, incapacity to resolve local issues, and incapacity to control political opposition.

The difficulties of moving from military rule to a stable democracy were brought to light by the political crisis of 1977. An atmosphere that was conducive to another coup was produced by the lack of confidence between political actors and the absence of robust institutions.

This period serves as a significant lesson in the need of inclusive governance, institutional strength, and the need for democratic principles

### **3.24 Zia's Regime and the Struggle for Democracy (1977-1988)**

On July 5, 1977, General Zia-ul-Haq overthrew Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's democratically elected government in a military coup. His autocratic control, repression of democratic forces, and Islamization of society made his regime one of the darkest periods in Pakistan's political history.

Zia used claims of electoral fraud in the 1977 elections and the resulting political unrest as justification for his coup. He cemented his power and postponed elections indefinitely, despite his promise to hold free elections within ninety days.

Zia's imposition of martial law, press censorship, and restrictions on civil freedoms during this time led to the destruction of democratic institutions. Bhutto and other political opponents were subjected to harsh persecution; she was ultimately put to death in 1979 under dubious circumstances.

Significant geopolitical events, such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, occurred under Zia's rule. As he established Pakistan as a crucial Cold War ally of the United States, these incidents influenced his policies and solidified his hold on power. Despite the strategic and economic benefits of Zia's administration, Pakistan's democratic development suffered greatly as a result. His rule caused significant rifts in the political system that still exist today (Zahid, 2011).

### **3.25 The Execution of Bhutto and Its Aftermath**

The killing of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979, after a trial that was widely criticized for its political objectives and lack of impartiality, was Zia's most contentious move. The nation was rocked by Bhutto's passing, which fueled anti-Zia sentiment.

It was believed that Zia was trying to destroy his most powerful political opponent and establish legitimacy for his government through the trial and death. Many world leaders expressed their displeasure over the political nature of the ruling, and the international community denounced the action.

Bhutto's supporters became even more resentful after the execution, especially those in the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Benazir Bhutto, his daughter, rose to prominence as an opposition leader, and Bhutto herself became a symbol of struggle against authoritarianism.

Additionally, Bhutto's removal deepened Pakistan's political rift. Many political activists were forced into exile or quiet as a result of Zia's persecution of the PPP and other opposition groups, which bred terror.

This episode, which represents the authoritarian excesses of Zia's dictatorship and the repression of democratic standards, is still one of the most controversial in Pakistani history (Haroon, 2023).

### **3.26 The Introduction of Martial Law**

Zia declared martial law after taking office, suspending the 1973 Constitution and disbanding elected assemblies. The military assumed complete control of the government, marginalizing civilian organizations and consolidating Zia's hold on power.

Zia strengthened the military's political influence by appointing military officers to important judicial and administrative posts. Political parties were prohibited from publicly operating, and civil liberties, such as the freedom of expression and assembly, were severely restricted.

Zia's authoritarian policies targeted the media, enforcing stringent censorship on radio, television, and publications. When journalists disobeyed these rules, they risked persecution, jail time, or worse.

Additionally, Zia set up special military courts to trial dissidents and political opponents. Those suspected of opposing the regime were given draconian penalties by these courts, which functioned without due process.

Pakistan's democratic institutions were systematically undermined during the martial law era. It weakened the nation's democratic foundations and fostered a culture of fear and repression that suppressed political opposition (Burki, 1988).

### **3.27 Islamization and Its Impact on Society**

The Islamization of Pakistan's political, social, and legal structures was one of Zia's main features. He enacted a number of laws designed to uphold Islamic values, frequently in an effort to justify his reign.

Zia enacted the Hudood Ordinances in 1979, which imposed severe penalties for crimes like stealing, adultery, and drinking. These rules were widely criticized because they disproportionately impacted underprivileged communities and women.

In order to guarantee that Pakistan's judicial system adhered to Islamic precepts, Zia also instituted Shariat courts. The rule of law was further undermined by these courts' frequent circumvention of the established judiciary.

With an emphasis on religious studies and the exaltation of jihad, the educational system was redesigned to highlight Islamic beliefs. These modifications created a more conservative and religiously focused society, which had a long-lasting effect on Pakistan's social structure.

Critics contended that Zia's actions were politically driven, with the goal of strengthening his hold on power and stifling dissent, despite his claims that they were meant to establish a more Islamic state (Shah, Waris, & Basit, 2016).

### **3.28 Geopolitical Context and the Afghan War**

For Zia's government, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was crucial because it made Pakistan a Cold War frontline state. Zia took advantage of this chance to win over other countries, especially Saudi Arabia and the United States.

Pakistan emerged as a crucial partner in the U.S. led campaign to aid Afghan mujahedeen militants opposing Soviet forces under Zia's leadership. Pakistan received billions of dollars in economic and military assistance, bolstering Zia's standing both at home and abroad.

Additionally, the conflict in Afghanistan contributed to the spread of weaponry and the emergence of militant organizations in Pakistan. The proliferation of radical ideas and the flood of Afghan migrants had a lasting impact on Pakistan's peace and security.

Zia's involvement in the Afghan War strengthened his government, but it also made society more militarized. The seeds of extremism that still pose a threat to Pakistan today were planted by the support given to terrorist organizations during this time.

Despite strong domestic resistance, Zia was able to maintain his autocratic rule for a longer period of time because of the Afghan war's geopolitical significance, which protected him from international censure (Burki, 1988).

### **3.29 Resistance and the Role of Political Parties**

Opposition to Zia's administration remained strong despite his totalitarian rule. The PPP in particular was instrumental in coordinating resistance and calling for a return to democracy.

In the fight for democracy, Benazir Bhutto became a pivotal figure who mobilized support both at home and abroad. The PPP was reinvigorated and a new generation of activists were motivated by her leadership.

In the early 1980s, a coalition of opposition parties called the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) began a series of strikes and rallies against Zia's government. Despite being violently suppressed, these initiatives helped to sustain the call for democracy.

The MRD demonstrations demonstrated Pakistan's political opposition's tenacity in the face of harsh persecution. Additionally, they revealed the public's mounting discontent with Zia's policies. Despite their failure to overthrow Zia's government, the opposition's actions prepared the way for the ultimate shift to civilian governance upon his passing in 1988 (Shafiq, Khan, Liaqat, & Shah, 2020).

### **3.30 The Judiciary and Legal Manipulation**

The judiciary's independence was seriously weakened by Zia's administration, which used it to justify its control and stifle dissent.

Under pressure from the authorities, the judiciary used the Doctrine of Necessity to justify Zia's coup. Future military interventions in Pakistani politics were modeled after this contentious doctrine.

Public confidence in the legal system was further damaged by Zia's use of military courts and special tribunals to handle political cases. These courts frequently handed down severe judgments against regime dissidents while operating without due process.

In order to bolster Zia's authority, the administration also made constitutional amendments. The parliamentary system was weakened when the Eighth Amendment was introduced in 1985, giving the president broad power to overthrow elected governments.

The difficulties of preserving judicial independence in an authoritarian state were brought to light by these legal machinations. They also emphasized how Zia's rule had a long-lasting effect on Pakistan's constitutional order (Kanwal, 2015).

### **3.31 The Economy Under Zia's Rule**

Zia's economic policy diverged from Bhutto's socialist stance by emphasizing privatization and liberalization. The goals of these policies were to promote expansion and draw in foreign capital.

Pakistan's economy was strengthened by the flood of American help during the Afghan War, especially in the fields of agriculture and defense. However, this assistance was frequently localized, which made economic disparities worse.

In order to match economic policies with his larger Islamization program, Zia also promoted the expansion of Islamic banking and finance. Although some people applauded these efforts, others criticized them for being ineffective and opaque.

While metropolitan centers experienced rising unemployment and inflation, the rural economy benefited from increased agricultural production. Zia's government further marginalized the working class by restricting labor rights.

Overall, Zia's economic policies produced a range of outcomes, with short-term successes being eclipsed by long-term issues including rising inequality and economic militarism (Zahid Ahmed, 2023).

### **3.32 The Downfall of Zia's Regime**

By the late 1980s, Zia's government was dealing with a number of problems, such as escalating public discontent, internal strife, and pressure from other countries for democratic reforms.

Uncertainty over Zia's regime was exacerbated by the unexplained 1988 plane accident death of General Akhtar Abdur Rahman, a close supporter.

Zia himself perished in an unexplained plane crash on August 17, 1988. An 11-year dictatorship came to an end with his passing, and civilian governance was reinstated. The ensuing change brought to light Pakistan's ongoing fight for democracy. Many people were relieved by Zia's passing, but it also left a legacy of extremism, authoritarianism, and undermined institutions.

Zia's overthrow demonstrated Pakistan's democratic forces' tenacity and the continued allure of civilian rule in spite of decades of military rule (Noman, 1989).

### **3.33 Conclusion and Legacy of Zia's Rule**

An important turning point in Pakistan's history, Zia's tenure was characterized by authoritarian governance, the Islamization of society, and important geopolitical advancements.

Zia's policies sacrificed democratic values, human rights, and institutional integrity in the name of short-term stability and economic expansion.

The political climate in Pakistan is still impacted by Zia's legacy. His militarization of society and emphasis on religion in politics led to issues that still exist today. The fight for democracy during Zia's leadership is still evidence of how strong Pakistan's civil society and political opposition have been. It also acts as a reminder of how crucial it is to protect democratic institutions and principles.

Even though Zia's reign was characterized by repression, it set the stage for subsequent democratic transitions and demonstrated the democracy's enduring appeal in Pakistan's political history.

### **3.34 The 1990s: Democratic Ebb and Flow**

Pakistan's democratic experience in the 1990s was tumultuous, with alternating civilian governments and ongoing turmoil. The late 1980s and early 1990s offered promise for democratic government following more than ten years of military dictatorship under General Zia-ul-Haq.

After Zia's death, civilian authority was reinstated in 1988 under Benazir Bhutto, marking the start of this era. However, the decade was characterized by institutional flaws, economic difficulties, and political strife that made sustained democratic rule difficult.

Much of the political landscape during this period was shaped by the struggle between the two main political parties, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), led by Nawaz Sharif, and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), led by Benazir Bhutto.

Throughout the decade, both leaders took turns in charge, but their incapacity to promote unity and accusations of corruption and poor governance resulted in the repeated overthrow of governments.

Pakistan's democratic path was further complicated during this time by rising non-democratic force interference, such as that of the military and judiciary (Diamond, 2013).

### **3.35 The First Bhutto Government (1988-1990)**

With Benazir Bhutto's victory in 1988, Pakistan entered a new period of hope for the consolidation of democracy and a return to civilian rule. She rose to international fame as the first female leader of a country with a majority of Muslims.

Social changes, such as programs for women's rights, healthcare, and education, were given top priority by her administration. Bhutto also aimed to raise Pakistan's stature internationally and lessen military influence in domestic matters.

Her term was brief, though, and was tainted by claims of corruption, internal political strife, and financial difficulties. The PML-N and other conservative forces posed a serious threat to the PPP.

Bhutto's relationship with Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the president, and the military grew more tense. The stability of her government was threatened by the power battle between these institutions.

Her government was overthrown by the president in 1990 on allegations of corruption and ineptitude, underscoring the brittleness of Pakistan's democratic institutions at the time (Khan, Khan, & Khan, 2019).

### **3.36 The First Nawaz Sharif Government (1990-1993)**

General Zia-ul-Haq's protégé Nawaz Sharif was appointed prime minister in 1990 following the PML-N's victory in the general elections. His administration prioritized privatization and economic liberalization.

Sharif placed a strong emphasis on promoting foreign investment, privatization state-owned businesses, and industrial expansion. Business leaders backed him because of these measures, but they were also criticized for increasing economic inequality.

His administration was accused of escalating regional tensions by giving preference to Punjab, his political heartland, over other provinces. Sharif was charged by the opposition PPP with destroying national unity for political purposes.

The tensions throughout Bhutto's term were reflected in the relationship between President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Nawaz Sharif. A constitutional crisis resulted from the conflict between these two centers of authority.

By 1993, both Sharif and Ishaq Khan resigned as a result of an indirect military intervention that mediated a deal. This incident made the ongoing fragility of civilian governments in the 1990s even more apparent (Bray, 1991).

### **3.37 Benazir Bhutto's Second Tenure (1993-1996)**

In 1993, Benazir Bhutto regained power after Nawaz Sharif resigned, giving democratic administration new life. Rebuilding Pakistan's democratic institutions and promoting social development were the main priorities of her administration.

Programs for healthcare, education, and poverty reduction were started under Bhutto's government. Additionally, she aimed to strengthen Pakistan's ties with its neighbors, especially India.

But many of the same issues that beset her first term also dogged her second. Public trust was damaged by corruption claims made against her and her husband, Asif Ali Zardari.

The PML-N and civil society began to criticize the PPP, accusing Bhutto's administration of being autocratic and lacking in managerial skills. Her reign became even more unstable due to political violence and instability.

President Farooq Leghari overthrew Bhutto's administration in 1996, bringing civilian rule to an early conclusion and further demoralizing the populace with democratic governance (Khan, 2018).

### **3.38 The Second Nawaz Sharif Government (1997-1999)**

After winning a resounding victory in the general elections, Nawaz Sharif took office as prime minister for a second time in 1997. Efforts to consolidate control and establish civilian authority characterized this era.

Sharif worked to enact economic changes, emphasizing the expansion of industry and infrastructure. In order to increase connectivity and economic activity, his government started projects like the Lahore-Islamabad Motorway. Nawaz's combative style of leadership, however, tarnished his term. Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah was compelled to resign as a result of his conflicts with the judiciary.

Additionally, Sharif's relationship with the military deteriorated, especially because of the way he handled the 1999 Kargil conflict with India. This incident undermined Sharif's political position and hurt Pakistan's reputation abroad.

By the end of the decade, Sharif's government was accused of authoritarianism and corruption, creating an environment of political instability and public dissatisfaction (Syed, 1998).

### **3.39 Economic Challenges and Policy Failures**

The PPP and PML-N both adopted neoliberal economic policies during the 1990s, which were characterized by economic instability as successive governments struggled to address growing fiscal deficits, inflation, and unemployment; privatization initiatives increased industrial growth but were frequently opaque and gave rise to accusations of cronyism; economic benefits were concentrated among elites, deepening inequality; Pakistan's reliance on foreign aid and loans increased during this time, creating a debt cycle that limited economic policymaking; and attempts to obtain IMF and World Bank support frequently resulted in unpopular austerity measures.

Rural poverty continued to be a problem, and agricultural productivity stagnated. Public dissatisfaction was fueled by increased unemployment and inflation in urban areas. The public's disenchantment with democracy grew as a result of successive administrations' incapacity to fulfill economic pledges, undermining their legitimacy (Nawaz, 2022).

### **3.40 Civil-Military Relations in the 1990s**

The 1990s were characterized by civil-military relations, in which the military continued to exert considerable influence even after civilian power was restored.

In order to maintain their positions, Bhutto and Sharif frequently compromised on democratic ideals in their efforts to establish civilian dominance over the military. Institutions of democracy were undermined by this dynamic.

The military's continued dominance in Pakistani politics was demonstrated by its participation in mediating political disagreements, such as the 1993 conflict between Sharif and Ishaq Khan.

During the Kargil conflict in 1999, tensions between Nawaz Sharif and the military reached a breaking point. Sharif accused the military of undermining his power, while the military criticized him for managing the matter poorly (Rizvi, 1998).

General Pervez Musharraf's October 1999 coup put an end to civilian governance and ushered in a new era of military domination after this power struggle.

### **3.41 Corruption and Governance Issues**

The PPP and PML-N were accused of financial impropriety and power abuse, making corruption one of the main concerns of the 1990s. Public confidence in civilian officials was eroded by corruption scandals, which fueled the idea that democracy was equated with poor government. The military took advantage of this story to defend their actions.

Instead of fostering transparency, attempts to combat corruption such as the creation of accountability bureaus were frequently politicized and employed as weapons against political opponents. Corruption thrived due to a lack of institutional accountability, which further eroded public trust in democratic processes and governance. This climate of inefficiency and corruption produced a vicious cycle in which the legitimacy of each succeeding government declined and criticism increased (Hussain & Hussain, 1993).

### **3.42 Judicial Interventions and Weak Institutions**

The court actively participated in the political unrest of the 1990s, frequently supporting the president or the military in toppling civilian administrations. One of the main causes of this period's instability was the president's use of the Eighth Amendment, which gave him the authority to overthrow elected governments. Eventually, during Nawaz Sharif's second term, this modification was removed. Courts were regularly under pressure from both civilian and military actors, undermining judicial independence. The public's faith in the rule of law was damaged by this judicial politicization.

The persistent inability to rectify electoral irregularities, impose accountability, or settle political conflicts amicably demonstrated Pakistan's democracy's inadequate institutional structure.

Because of these institutional flaws, the democratic system was unstable and power battles between the various institutions of government frequently took precedence over governance and policymaking (Azeem, 2017).

### **3.43 Conclusion and Legacy of the 1990s**

Pakistan lost out on several chances to solidify democracy during the 1990s. Even after civilian control was restored, advancement was hampered by political unpredictability, economic difficulties, and inadequate institutions.

The PPP and PML-N's rivalry dominated politics, with both parties putting their own partisanship and personal interests ahead of the advancement of the country. The instability of Pakistan's democracy during this time was brought to light by frequent overthrows of administrations, judiciary interference, and military control. The military takeover in 1999 was made possible by the public's disenchantment with civilian government.

The 1990s highlighted Pakistan's political system's tenacity even as they revealed the difficulties of democratic governance.

The nation's democratic journey is still shaped by the lessons learned throughout this volatile decade. This period serves as a reminder of how crucial robust institutions, political agreement, and public accountability are to the success of democratic transitions.

### **3.44 Musharraf's Era (1999-2008)**

On October 12, 1999, the democratically elected government of Nawaz Sharif was overthrown by a military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf. Musharraf highlighted the need for political stability, corruption, and poor governance as justifications for the coup.

Although he worked to modernize Pakistan, combat terrorism, and restore economic stability during his tenure, his authoritarian inclinations also hindered the advancement of democracy.

After taking over as Chief Executive, Musharraf went on to become President of Pakistan, strengthening his hold on power through legal wrangling and constitutional revisions.

Musharraf's domestic and diplomatic policies were significantly influenced by the worldwide War on Terror, which was initiated following the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and saw Pakistan emerge as a crucial partner of the United States.

Musharraf's administration was contested by democratic forces during his term, which was marked by a combination of political disputes and economic reforms. Musharraf promised stability, but his reign was marked by judicial activism, political upheaval, and an increasing call for democracy to return.

In Pakistan's history, the years 1999–2008 are noteworthy because they illustrated the ongoing conflict between authoritarianism and democratic goals (Behuria, 2009).

### **3.45 The 1999 Coup and Musharraf's Rise to Power**

Tensions between the military and the civilian administration were high at the time of the coup against Nawaz Sharif, especially because Sharif had tried to remove Musharraf from his position as Army Chief.

Musharraf dissolved elected legislatures, imposed military authority, proclaimed a state of emergency, and suspended the Constitution. He offered a "Seven-Point Agenda" to solve governance, economic stagnation, and corruption in order to defend his actions. Under the contentious Doctrine of Necessity, the judiciary upheld Musharraf's coup, enabling him to maintain power in the absence of an imminent election. This ruling demonstrated how susceptible the judiciary is to military control.

In an attempt to gain legitimacy, Musharraf called for a contentious referendum in 2002 that prolonged his rule but was widely criticized for being rigged and lacking democracy. In 2002, Musharraf established the Legal Framework Order (LFO), which gave him the authority to modify the Constitution and bolster his hold on power.

The LFO also assured Musharraf retained his dual job as President and Chief of Army Staff, an arrangement strongly criticized by opposition parties and civil society. Musharraf's first ten years in office were characterized by a mix of military supremacy and limited reforms, which established the framework for his tenure (Hussain I. , 2000).

### **3.46 Musharraf's Economic Reforms**

Significant economic reforms were implemented during Musharraf's rule in an effort to stabilize Pakistan's faltering economy and draw in foreign capital.

The government prioritized infrastructural development, banking sector reforms, and privatization, with technocrats like Shaukat Aziz holding important posts. The macroeconomic stability was enhanced by these actions.

During Musharraf's presidency, the GDP growth rate rose dramatically due to advancements in industries including manufacturing, banking, and telecommunications. There was a construction boom in urban areas.

However, not everyone benefited equally from economic expansion; low-income groups and rural areas saw very modest increases in living standards. Musharraf's economic policies, according to his detractors, put short-term profits ahead of long-term structural changes, making the economy more susceptible to outside shocks.

Pakistan's economy was mostly financed at this time by the flood of foreign aid, especially from the United States. Pakistan's involvement in the War on Terror was linked to a large portion of this aid.

Although some people praised Musharraf's economic changes, they failed to address underlying problems including unemployment, inequality, and poverty (Ahmad, 2001).

### **3.47 Pakistan's Role in the War on Terror**

Musharraf made Pakistan a frontline state in the international war against terrorism after the 9/11 attacks by allying the nation with the U.S.-led War on Terror. This choice strengthened Musharraf's government both at home and abroad by giving Pakistan billions of dollars in economic and military assistance.

The United States and its allies praised Pakistan for its crucial role in apprehending prominent Al-Qaeda members and dismantling terrorist networks.

But this alignment also brought about problems at home, as militant organizations upped their attacks on Pakistani territory in retaliation, focusing on government officials, military installations, and civilians.

Musharraf's controversial policies in the tribal areas, such as his military actions in Waziristan, inflamed popular discontent. The rise of the Pakistani Taliban was aided by these actions.

Musharraf was accused by critics of repressing civil freedoms and political opposition at home under the guise of the War on Terror. His credibility was damaged by this two-pronged strategy in the eyes of many Pakistanis.

Long-term security issues were brought about by Pakistan's participation in the War on Terror, as the nation developed into a hotbed of militancy and extremism both during and after Musharraf's reign (Behuria, 2009).

### **3.48 The 2002 Elections and Musharraf's Controlled Democracy**

Musharraf held general elections in 2002 in response to calls to reinstate civilian governance, although they were widely criticized for being severely skewed in favor of pro-military parties. Musharraf's preferred political party, the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), won the elections and formed a coalition government with several smaller parties.

Opposition parties, such as the PPP and PML-N, accused Musharraf of manipulating the elections and stifling their campaigns, despite the fact that they were praised as a step toward democracy.

Musharraf's Legal Framework Order, which gave him considerable control over civilian governance, placed restrictions on the new parliament's operations. Under Musharraf's leadership, the military's hegemony over policymaking and the existence of a hand-picked prime minister underscored the boundaries of democratic advancement.

Despite these limitations, the parliament helped pass important laws, such as constitutional modifications that made Musharraf's presidency official.

Musharraf's attempt to preserve military supremacy while putting on a front of civilian rule was mirrored in the managed democracy of 2002–2007 (Ahmed, Afridi, & Khan, 2014).

### **3.49 Judicial Activism and the Lawyers' Movement**

Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry headed the judiciary in one of the biggest challenges to Musharraf's regime.

With decisions that questioned government policy and bolstered public trust in the courts, the judiciary started to assert its independence in the middle of the 2000s. Citing claims of wrongdoing, Musharraf tried to fire Chief Justice Chaudhry in 2007. The Lawyers' Movement began as a result of this miscalculated action.

With the backing of political parties and civic society, the Lawyers' Movement emerged as a potent democratic force, calling for the return of judicial independence and Chaudhry's reinstatement.

Opposition elements were energized by widespread rallies and demonstrations that brought attention to the rising dissatisfaction with Musharraf's dictatorial leadership. As parts of the military and bureaucracy became uncomfortable with Musharraf's handling of the crisis, the movement also revealed weaknesses in his government. The Lawyers' Movement and the judiciary's opposition were crucial in forming the democratic transition that transpired after Musharraf's exit (Munir, 2009).

### **3.50 Musharraf's Declining Popularity**

Musharraf's dictatorial policies, economic inequality, and escalating political turmoil caused his popularity to drastically decrease by 2007. Many Pakistanis were offended by the military's actions in tribal areas and the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) incident in Islamabad because they were perceived as oppressive and overbearing.

Musharraf's reputation was severely damaged in November 2007 when he decided to declare an emergency. Many people denounced the emergency as an effort to stifle opposition and postpone elections.

The PPP and PML-N, among other opposition groups, stepped up their anti-Musharraf efforts, calling for free and fair elections and a return to civilian governance. Additionally, international pressure increased as Western allies pushed Musharraf to end emergency rule and reinstate democratic procedures.

The political landscape became even more unstable after Benazir Bhutto was assassinated in December 2007, which led to nationwide demonstrations and demands for Musharraf's resignation. These events signaled the beginning of the end for Musharraf's regime as political and public opposition to his rule peaked (Parveen & Hussain, 2024).

### **3.51 The 2008 Elections and Musharraf's Resignation**

Pakistan's political history underwent a sea change in 2008 when voters massively backed opposition parties and rejected Musharraf's supporters.

The PML-N and the PPP, which is currently governed by Asif Ali Zardari, were the two biggest parties. By forming a coalition government, they disregarded Musharraf's PML-Q.

Musharraf's power was swiftly contested by the new parliament, which passed resolutions to limit his authority and reinstate democratic administration. Musharraf's nine-year administration came to an end in August 2008 when he resigned as president due to growing political pressure and the possibility of impeachment. Years of popular unhappiness and the reaffirmation of Pakistan's democratic forces culminated in his resignation.

Although Musharraf took credit for reforming Pakistan and launching economic reforms, his legacy is still quite contentious. A major turning point in Pakistan's democratic history was reached with the 2008 elections and Musharraf's resignation, which saw the return of civilian administration following almost ten years of military domination (Goodson, 2008).

### **3.52 Legacy of Musharraf rule**

Musharraf's reign produced a mixed legacy, with notable defeats for democracy and civil liberties alongside successes in economic growth and counterterrorism initiatives. Even though he oversaw a time of rather stable economic conditions, democratic principles were compromised by his authoritarian policies and repression of political dissent.

Musharraf's foreign policy achievements, especially his support for the United States in the War on Terror, were overshadowed by rising security issues in Pakistan. His reign was characterized by political unrest and military domination, which highlighted the intricacies of civilian-military relations and the vulnerability of Pakistan's democratic institutions.

Pakistan's political problems were not instantly resolved by Musharraf's exit. Corruption, governance problems, and internal divisions characterized the ensuing restoration to democracy.

However, his time also showed how resilient Pakistan's democratic forces were, as the courts, civil society, and opposition parties all succeeded in calling for a return to constitutional government.

Pakistan's political environment is still being shaped by the long-term effects of his administration, which have an impact on the current fight for democratic consolidation (Khan & Asgharullah, 2020).

### **3.53 Conclusion**

Pakistan's democratic journey has been undeniably turbulent, characterized by alternating phases of hope and disillusionment, with moments of historic achievement interspersed with serious democratic setbacks. While the nation has made progress such as the peaceful transfer of power through elections and constitutional amendments enhancing federalism the path has not been linear. Interruptions by authoritarian regimes, weak democratic institutions, political polarization, and governance crises have frequently hindered the consolidation of democracy.

Yet, despite these challenges, the unwavering resilience, courage, and aspirations of the Pakistani people remain the most powerful testimony to the country's democratic potential. Across decades, citizens have mobilized against oppression, stood up for civil liberties, and demanded their democratic rights demonstrating a deep-rooted desire for inclusive and participatory governance. This popular commitment continues to be the driving force behind every democratic revival in the country.

Pakistan's historical experiences offer critical lessons for its democratic future. The repeated erosion of democratic norms has underscored the importance of strong institutions, transparent governance, and an empowered civil society. Political actors must rise above partisan interests to work collaboratively for national progress, respecting the Constitution and upholding the rule of law. Likewise, state institutions must remain within their constitutional boundaries, allowing Parliament to function as the supreme forum of representation and accountability.

Building a sustainable and meaningful democracy requires a united effort. Political leadership must be visionary and principled; civil society must remain vigilant and proactive; and the general public must be informed, engaged, and assertive in holding power accountable. Moreover, democratic education, media freedom, judicial independence, and electoral reforms are indispensable in ensuring that democracy is not only procedural but also substantive in delivering justice, equity, and development.

In conclusion, Pakistan's democratic future depends on its ability to learn from the past, reform its institutions, and foster a political culture grounded in tolerance, participation, and constitutionalism. Only through collective commitment and sustained effort can the country realize the vision of a truly representative, just, and democratic society, where every citizen enjoys dignity, rights, and a voice in national affairs.

## **CAPTER 04**

### **DEMOCRACY AND PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN FROM 2008-2018: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Following General Pervez Musharraf's resignation in 2008, Pakistan began a new democratic journey after years of military dictatorship, and the years 2008–2013 were a pivotal period for the country's parliamentary democracy. This chapter examines the state of democracy during this time, highlighting the political climate, significant events, and difficulties the country faced in establishing a more stable democratic governance system. Pakistan's democratic experiment has always been a bumpy ride, but this period marked an important shift.

The February 2008 general elections had a significant impact on Pakistan's political climate. Shortly after Asif Ali Zardari's wife, Benazir Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), was tragically assassinated, the elections were won by Zardari's party. This triumph signaled the end of military domination, at least politically, and the start of a new era in civilian politics. The return to democratic governance was viewed as a chance for political stability, and PPP formed coalition government.

The military had previously influenced the parliamentary system, which was now expected to operate independently. But the path ahead was fraught with challenges, ranging from economic instability to a continuous insurgency. This chapter will look at the main obstacles the PPP government had to overcome and how it did so, as well as to analyze the political climate of this era and the functioning of the Parliamentary democracy. Analyzing the political climate of this era allows us to understand the evolution of Pakistan's democracy (Khalid A. M., 2024).

#### **4.2 The 2008 General elections: A new Beginning**

In order to ensure Pakistan's democratic future, the 2008 general elections were essential. General Pervez Musharraf's military reign came to an end with these elections, giving the nation a chance to reestablish its democratic institutions. Many people interpreted the elections as a public endorsement of civilian governance and a

rejection of military tyranny. Although Benazir Bhutto's killing in December 2007 had a profound effect on the political climate, it also gave rise to Asif Ali Zardari, her widower, who guided the PPP to victory.

The transition from military rule to democracy was never smooth, and the PPP's victory was not without controversy. Zardari's leadership was questioned by many because of his relative inexperience in governance and the shadow of corruption allegations surrounding his family, but his role as Benazir Bhutto's widower earned him significant political capital. The PPP won a majority in the National Assembly in the 2008 elections, while the main opposition was the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), led by Nawaz Sharif.

Under difficult conditions, such as the unstable political climate and security concerns brought on by terrorist attacks, the elections were held. The election was comparatively peaceful in comparison to past elections, and the PPP's victory was viewed as a victory of democratic principles in spite of these difficulties. A broad political alignment was represented in the PPP's partnership with the PML-N and other smaller parties, despite the fact that this alliance was brittle and frequently lacked unity.

The 2008 elections demonstrated the judiciary's influence on the democratic process as well. The judicial activism that had emerged during Musharraf's tenure continued during the PPP era. The judiciary, led by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, became an important counterbalance to executive power, with the courts frequently challenging government policies and actions. This era marked a significant period of judicial assertiveness, which played a crucial role in shaping Pakistan's parliamentary democracy (Kumar, 2009).

**Table 2: Seats won by major Political Parties in 2008 General Elections**

<b>Political Party</b>	<b>Seats Won (General)</b>	<b>Seats Won (Total with Reserved)</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Pakistan People's Party (PPP)	97	121	Emerged as the largest party
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)	67	91	Major comeback after 1999 coup
Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q)	42	54	Lost popularity, former ruling party
Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)	19	25	Maintained stronghold in urban Sindh
Awami National Party (ANP)	10	13	Strong performance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA)	7	7	Lost ground compared to 2002 elections
Independents	18	N/A	Some later joined PPP or PML-N
Others (smaller parties)	12	Varies	Including JUI-F, BNP, PML-F, etc.
Total (General Seats)	272	—	General seats of National Assembly
Total (Including Reserved & Women Seats)	—	342	Total seats including reserved quotas

**Key insights:**

Total National Assembly seats: 342

General Seats: 272

Reserved for Women: 60

Reserved for Minorities: 10

PPP formed the government with a coalition, including ANP and MQM, after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto which had created a sympathy wave in their favor.

PML-Q, once the ruling party under Musharraf, was heavily defeated.

PML-N regained significant ground, especially in Punjab.

### **4.3 The PPP Government's Early Challenges**

As soon as it took power, the coalition government led by the PPP had immediate difficulties. Rising inflation, a widening fiscal imbalance, and a collapsing economy beset the nation. The 2008 global economic crisis made it more difficult for Pakistan to handle its debt and trade, which further aggravated its financial issues. A significant problem was inflation, especially in the price of food, and the government found it difficult to put in place sensible economic measures that would stabilize the economy and raise people's standard of living.

The domestic security situation in Pakistan was another major obstacle. With al-Qaeda, the Pakistani Taliban, and other terrorist organizations operating freely in some areas, the nation has turned into a battlefield for militancy. In addition to destabilizing the nation, the increased danger of terrorism put pressure on the PPP government to confront it and impede economic growth. Despite being governed by civilians, the military continued to participate in counterterrorism operations, and the civilian government found it difficult to organize a successful policy response.

Internal politics within the government were equally tumultuous. Despite its popularity in some areas, the PPP was criticized for its poor governance. Corruption was still a major problem, and people were generally unhappy with the government's inability to address important problems and enhance governance. The PPP-led coalition found it difficult to stay united inside the ruling alliance despite having a clear mandate, and a number of internal conflicts among coalition members impeded the implementation of important measures.

**Table 03 Early Challenges of the PPP Government (2008–2010) and National Responses**

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>PPP Government's Response</b>	<b>Outcome / Impact</b>
Terrorism and Militancy	Rise of TTP, Taliban in Swat, and suicide bombings in major cities	Launched military operations (Swat, South Waziristan) with political and public support	Swat was cleared in 2009; militants regrouped in tribal regions
Judicial Crisis	CJ Iftikhar Chaudhry and other judges were deposed under Musharraf's rule	Initially resisted, then restored judiciary after Lawyers' Long March (2009)	Judiciary became more assertive, later challenging the government in many areas
Economic Instability	High inflation, energy crisis, budget deficits, and global recession impact	Approached IMF for a bailout in 2008, initiated subsidy reforms	Temporary stabilization, but inflation and power outages remained a long-term problem
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	Millions displaced due to military operations in Swat and Waziristan	Set up camps and relief programs with help from NDMA and international donors	Humanitarian crisis was handled with moderate success; return to homes was gradual
Provincial Autonomy Demands	Longstanding demand for more provincial control, especially from smaller units	Introduced and passed the 18th Constitutional Amendment (2010)	Provinces gained autonomy; enhanced democratic federalism
Security of Political Leaders	Assassination of Benazir Bhutto created political uncertainty	Formed coalition government with ANP, MQM, PML-Q, and focused on reconciliation policy	Helped stabilize democracy but faced challenges in governance
Energy Crisis	Daily power outages caused public outrage and affected industries	Launched rental power projects, initiated work on Nandipur and Neelum–Jhelum projects	Rental projects failed; later led to SC investigations and corruption allegations

## **Summary:**

The PPP government entered power amidst serious political, economic, and security turmoil. Some bold decisions like judicial restoration and 18th Amendment succeeded, but economic mismanagement and persistent terrorism limited their early performance. Despite internal and external pressures, the PPP government ensured democratic continuity, which was rare in Pakistan's history.

### **4.4 The Return of Democracy and the impact of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment (2008-2010)**

Following the 2008 elections, the government of Pakistan turned its attention to strengthening democracy. The 2010 ratification of the 18th Amendment to the Pakistani Constitution was one of the most important turning points in this era. The goal of the amendment was to limit the president's authority and return the legislative system to its basic structure. Because it restored the strength of the prime minister's office and rebalanced the political power structure, it directly challenged the legacy of military rule by reducing the president's powers and making the role more ceremonial.

The 18th Amendment was praised as a significant step in bolstering Pakistan's parliamentary democracy. In an effort to enhance representation and governance, it also resulted in the transfer of authority to the provincial level. Nevertheless, the political environment remained unstable in spite of the encouraging developments. Among the many challenges facing the PPP-led government were accusations of corruption, poor leadership, and an unstable economy. Although the amendment's ratification was viewed as a win for parliamentary democracy, there were many difficulties in putting it into practice, especially because of the long-standing power structures in the military and administrative system.

Additionally, the amendment raised awareness of the ongoing problem of military influence in politics. The military continued to play a crucial role in Pakistan's national security policies, notably its relations with Afghanistan and India, even though it was no longer directly involved in government matters. The challenge of striking a balance between civilian administration and military power is highlighted by the fact that the amendment did not abolish the military's political influence. Although democracy was

solidified in the years after 2008, there was ongoing discussion about Pakistan's actual democratic development (Muhammad, Muhammad, & Rizwan, 2014).

### **Key Features of the 18th Amendment**

The 18th Amendment introduced over 100 changes to the Constitution. Some of the most important features include:

#### **1. Article 1 – The Republic and Its Territories**

NWFP was renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, recognizing the Pashtun ethnic identity.

The official name of the province was changed throughout the Constitution wherever NWFP was mentioned.

#### **2. Article 6 – High Treason**

Amended to include punishment not only for abrogating or subverting the Constitution but also for “suspending” or “holding in abeyance” the Constitution. This was a direct rebuke to past military takeovers.

#### **3. Article 19A – Right to Information**

Introduced as a new fundamental right, giving citizens the right to access public information.

Strengthened transparency and public accountability.

#### **4. Article 25A – Right to Education**

Made free and compulsory education a constitutional right for children aged 5 to 16 years.

Imposed obligations on the state to improve public education.

## **5. Article 58 – Dissolution of National Assembly**

Article 58(2)(b) was repealed, removing the President's power to dissolve the National Assembly at their discretion. This restored political stability and parliamentary sovereignty.

## **6. Article 70–75 – Legislative Procedures**

These articles were amended to strengthen the role of Parliament, especially in passing and reviewing laws. Greater checks were placed on the President's powers to return or reject bills.

## **7. Article 90 – 100: The Federal Government**

Amended to clearly define that executive authority belongs to the Prime Minister and the Federal Cabinet, not the President. The Prime Minister was reaffirmed as the chief executive.

## **8. Article 153–155 – Council of Common Interests (CCI)**

The CCI was made more active and accountable, required to meet at least once every 90 days.

Strengthened federal-provincial coordination on shared matters.

## **9. Article 160 – National Finance Commission (NFC)**

Guaranteed that provincial share in NFC Awards would not be reduced, safeguarding financial autonomy.

## **10. Article 175A – Judicial Appointments**

Established a Judicial Commission and Parliamentary Committee for appointing judges to the superior courts. Reduced unilateral presidential control over the judiciary.

### **11. Articles 142–143 – Legislative Competence**

With the abolition of the Concurrent Legislative List, these articles were amended to define exclusive federal and provincial powers. Many subjects like health, education, and local government devolved to provinces.

### **12. Article 243–245 – Command of the Armed Forces**

Reinforced that the Prime Minister is the supreme authority in military matters, not the President.

### **13. Fourth Schedule – Federal Legislative List**

Revised after removal of the Concurrent List, streamlining federal powers.

### **19th Constitutional Amendment (2011): The balance of Justice Act**

The judicial appointment procedure established by the 18th Amendment was largely improved by the 2011 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Pakistani Constitution. The Supreme Court's concerns with the ambiguities in Article 175-A, namely with regard to the duties of the Parliamentary Committee and the Judicial Commission in selecting judges for the higher courts, prompted this action. To improve the openness and effectiveness of judicial selections, the 19th Amendment changed a number of provisions. It reorganized the Parliamentary Committee's operations, including the need to give justification for any nominations it rejects, expanded the number of senior judges on the Judicial Commission, and made clear the legally enforceable nature of its recommendations.

This Amendment was significant because it preserved legislative scrutiny while strengthening judicial independence, demonstrating a delicate balancing act between institutional autonomy and democratic accountability. This amendment is a significant sign of democratic maturing and institutional negotiation, particularly in light of the changing dynamic between the legislative and the court under the PPP-led Government (Code, 2011).

## **20th Constitutional Amendment (2012): The Electoral Integrity and Transition Act**

The 2012 passage of the 20th Amendment, which strengthened the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and institutionalized the procedure for forming caretaker governments, had a significant effect on Pakistan's democratic framework. After the Supreme Court ruled that multiple by-elections were unlawful because there was no legally recognized ECP, this amendment was proposed. By introducing Articles 224A and 218(2)(b), it made sure that the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition would agree to create caretaker governments. If they couldn't, the ECP or a bipartisan parliamentary committee would decide.

By establishing precise guidelines for the selection of its members, the amendment also improved the ECP's independence and impartiality. This breakthrough established the foundation for the comparatively seamless conduct of the 2013 general elections and was essential to the electoral process' credibility. The 20th Amendment as a significant legislative turning point in Pakistan's progress toward election integrity and democratic consolidation (Nasir & Rehman, 2024).

### **4.5 The Growing Influence of the Judiciary (2007-2013)**

The increasing power of Pakistan's court was one of the biggest changes in the years after 2007. The 2007 lawyers' movement, which sought to reinstate Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry following his forcible dismissal by General Musharraf, marked a change in the political climate of the nation. The belief that an independent court is essential to democratic administration was reaffirmed in 2009 when the movement garnered widespread public support and ultimately resulted in the restoration of the Judiciary.

Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry and other judges took a more active role in monitoring the executive's activities after the judiciary was restored. Among these was judicial activism, in which the courts started to influence public policy more strongly. Although this was viewed as a step in the right direction for transparency and accountability, it also increased tensions between the judiciary and the executive. The judiciary's

assertiveness, especially in cases of corruption and mismanagement, at times undermined the authority of the parliament and the executive.

The expanding judicial authority in Pakistan highlighted important problems concerning the balance of power between the several institutions of government. While the court's role in enforcing accountability was recognized as important, the increasing conflict between the judiciary and the PPP-led government prompted concerns about the long-term durability of Pakistan's parliamentary democracy. The necessity for institutional changes that would enable a more equitable allocation of power and keep any one department of government from becoming overly dominant was also brought to light by the judiciary's increasing independence (Khan & Muhammad, 2016).

**Table 04: Judiciary’s Role and Key Decisions (2008–2013)**

<b>Judicial Action / Decision</b>	<b>Date / Period</b>	<b>Impact / Description</b>
Restoration of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry	March 2009	After the Lawyers' Movement and nationwide protests, the PPP government reinstated the deposed CJ.
NRO Nullification Case	December 2009	Supreme Court declared the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) unconstitutional; reopened graft cases.
Pleadings Against President Zardari (Swiss Cases)	2009–2012	The court demanded that PM Gillani write to Swiss authorities to reopen corruption cases against Zardari.
Disqualification of Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani	June 2012	Found guilty of contempt of court for not writing the Swiss letter; disqualified from office.
Memo Gate Scandal Hearing	2011–2012	Court took suo motu notice; involved Ambassador Haqqani and civil-military tensions.
Rental Power Case	2012–2013	The judiciary investigated and ruled against illegal payments and corruption in rental power projects.
Hajj Corruption Case	2010–2012	Suo motu action by Supreme Court; led to arrests and reforms in the Hajj Ministry.
Missing Persons & Balochistan Hearings	Ongoing during 2008–2013	Court regularly questioned intelligence agencies over enforced disappearances in Balochistan.
Karachi Law and Order Case	2011	Took suo motu notice of killings in Karachi; ordered Rangers and Police to take action.
Electoral Reforms & Fake Degree Cases	2010–2013	Court disqualified multiple legislators for holding fake academic degrees.

### **Summary of Judiciary's Role (2008–2013):**

**Assertive and proactive:** Judiciary under CJ Iftikhar Chaudhry became highly activist, often using suo motu powers.

**Check on executive:** The Supreme Court often clashed with the PPP-led government, especially over corruption and rule of law.

**Mixed reception:** While many hailed the judiciary for accountability, critics accused it of overstepping constitutional bounds and targeting political figure.

### **4.6 Challenges to Parliamentary Democracy: (2008-2018)**

In the years following 2008, Pakistan's parliamentary democracy was threatened by a number of serious issues, including the rise of extremist groups, especially in tribal areas, and the military's crucial role in fighting these terrorist elements, which further complicated the relationship between civilian and military leadership. The PPP government was forced to support military operations while attempting to assert civilian authority over national security.

During this time, Pakistan was dealing with a serious economic crisis in addition to terrorism. The nation's unemployment rate sharply increased, inflation skyrocketed, and GDP growth stalled. The country's economic problems were made worse by government corruption, rising fuel prices, and poor economic management. The economic situation worsened despite the PPP government's attempts to address these problems. Additionally, the nation experienced growing electricity shortages, which sparked demonstrations and further undermined the legitimacy of the government's provision of essential services.

Throughout this time, parliamentary democracy suffered from these difficulties. Taking advantage of the government's shortcomings, the opposition especially the PML-N called for reforms and questioned how the PPP handled the country's difficulties. But the government's political standing was damaged by its incapacity to handle the economy and terrorism. The military continued to have a significant impact on national decision-making, the court continued to impose itself as an autonomous institution, and the political scene remained split (Azhar, 2023).

#### **4.7 Political Crises and Parliamentary influence**

By 2010, the PPP government was embroiled in a number of political and governance issues that weakened its hold on power and its capacity to rule successfully. The government's relationship with the military remained a major concern even as it concentrated on internal problems including energy shortages and economic reforms. The military, which has traditionally been regarded as Pakistan's most potent institution, has maintained a strong hold over important diplomatic and security policy. Asif Ali Zardari's PPP leadership made an effort to establish civilian command over the armed forces, but this was a difficult balancing act, particularly given the continued military actions against rebels in the northwest.

Tensions between the PPP government and the military grew during 2010, particularly in connection to matters pertaining to counterterrorism operations and the strategic partnership with the United States. The military maintained considerable autonomy in areas like foreign policy, intelligence, and national security, even as civilian institutions gained sway. The dominance of the military placed more and more restrictions on the PPP administration, especially after the U.S. raid in Abbottabad in May 2011 that killed Osama bin Laden. The raid, which was carried out without informing Pakistani authorities beforehand, strained ties between the United States and Pakistan and revealed the growing inconsistencies in Pakistan's counterterrorism strategy.

As the PPP leadership struggled to balance its authority with the military's power, the military's role in national security and foreign policy decisions became a major source of tension that highlighted the difficulties faced by civilian governments in Pakistan, where the military's influence frequently overshadowed the democratic institutions that were supposed to be at the center of governance. At home, the PPP faced political instability, with opposition parties and media outlets regularly criticizing the government for its lack of effectiveness and leadership.

**Table 05: Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Efforts in Pakistan (2008–2013)**

<b>Terrorist Group</b>	<b>Major Attacks (2008–2013)</b>	<b>Affected Areas</b>	<b>Operations / Responses</b>
Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)	Marriott Hotel bombing (2008), GHQ attack (2009), attacks on police, army, schools	FATA, KP, Islamabad, Karachi	Operation Rah-e-Rast (2009), Rah-e-Nijat (2009)
Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ)	Attacks on Shia communities in Quetta (Alamdard Road 2013, Hazara Town)	Balochistan (Quetta)	Crackdowns by FC and police in Quetta
Al-Qaeda	Provided logistical & ideological support to TTP and foreign fighters	Tribal areas, urban hideouts	ISI and U.S. drone operations; Osama bin Laden killed in 2011
Baloch Separatist Groups (BRA, BLA)	Attacks on security forces, gas pipelines, teachers, and non-Baloch workers	Balochistan	Operations by FC, Army, and intelligence agencies
Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)	Sectarian attacks on Shias, especially in Punjab and Sindh	Punjab, Sindh	Intelligence-based arrests; limited legal action
Punjabi Taliban	Linked with TTP; involved in attacks on Ahmadi and Christian communities	Punjab, Interior Sindh	Monitored; many merged with TTP by 2013
Jundullah	Attacks on Iranian interests and minorities; small-scale bombings	Balochistan, Iran border areas	ISI action; Iran-Pakistan intelligence cooperation
<b>Major Counter-Terror Operations (2008–2013)</b>			
<b>Operation Name</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Objective</b>
Operation Rah-e-Haq	2007–2009	Swat Valley	Clear TTP and extremist elements
Operation Rah-e-Rast	2009	Swat Valley	Retake Swat from Taliban control
Operation Rah-e-Nijat	2009	South Waziristan	Eliminate TTP strongholds
Karachi Targeted Ops	2011–2013	Karachi	Address terrorism, sectarianism, political violence
Air and Drone Strikes	2008–2013	FATA & KP	Target TTP, Al-Qaeda leaders

## **Summary:**

TTP remained the most dangerous group, with a network extending across Pakistan. Sectarian violence rose sharply, especially in Quetta and Karachi. Military operations in Swat and Waziristan had short-term success, but terrorism persisted due to militant regrouping and lack of long-term policy. Drone strikes by the U.S. contributed to eliminating leaders but also created anti-American sentiment.

### **4.8 The Political decline of the PPP and the rise of Opposition**

The PPP government's political demise became apparent as it approached its latter years in office. Even while the PPP had made great progress in reestablishing democracy and civilian rule, its support base suffered as a result of its inability to address important problems, most notably economic instability, corruption, and security. Opposition parties, particularly the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), rose to prominence as a result of the PPP's failure to live up to public expectations and solve the nation's urgent problems.

By emphasizing governance, economic reform, and the rule of law, the PML-N, led by Nawaz Sharif, took advantage of the PPP's flaws. In Punjab, the most populated province in Pakistan, Sharif's party had made considerable gains, and many people found his pledges to combat corruption and restore economic stability to be compelling. The PML-N's impressive result in the 2013 elections demonstrated the PPP's waning support, particularly among middle-class voters who were fed up with the party's performance and in urban areas.

Imran Khan's PTI became a formidable force at the same time. The PTI's appeal to Pakistan's youth and urban populations, together with its anti-corruption rhetoric, propelled its ascent. Voters dissatisfied with the political system found great resonance in Khan's pledge to construct a "new Pakistan" free from political dynasties and corruption. Even though the PTI lost the 2013 elections, it wins in important districts, particularly in urban and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, signaled a change in Pakistani politics and the start of a new age of political rivalry.

#### **4.9 2013 elections and the Democratic transition**

Pakistan's parliamentary democracy saw a turning point with the 2013 general elections. For the first time in Pakistani history, a democratically elected government served out its whole five-year term and handily handed over power to another elected government, making these elections noteworthy. The PML-N and Nawaz Sharif were victorious in the elections, and Sharif was sworn in as prime minister for the third time.

An important turning point for Pakistan's parliamentary democracy was the orderly handover of power following the 2013 elections. It proved that Pakistan's political structure had developed to the extent that political changes could take place without the military's help. Although difficulties persisted, particularly in relation to military control and economic instability, this peaceful transition was interpreted as evidence that Pakistan was gradually but steadily heading toward a more stable democratic process.

Notwithstanding the allegations of electoral fraud and rigging, especially from opposition parties such as Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the 2013 elections were widely regarded as fair, and the establishment of a PML-N government was a significant step forward for parliamentary democracy. While Nawaz Sharif's government concentrated on infrastructure development and economic reforms, the period also saw ongoing issues with militancy, inflation, and governance (Gregory, 2016).

**Table: 06****Seats won by major Political Parties in 2013 General Elections**

<b>Political Party</b>	<b>Seats Won (General)</b>	<b>Total Seats (with Reserved)</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)	126	166	Emerged as the majority party; formed government
Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)	31	42	Major decline from 2008
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)	28	35	First major breakthrough
Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)	18	24	Maintained stronghold in Karachi and Hyderabad
Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F)	13	15	Stable presence in KP and Balochistan
Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F)	4	5	Regional influence in Sindh
Jamaat-e-Islami (JI)	3	4	Modest presence, regained NA seats
Awami National Party (ANP)	1	2	Sharp decline due to terrorism and poor performance
Independents	32	Varies	Many joined PML-N post-election
Others (minor parties & alliances)	16	Varies	Including BNP, NP, QWP, etc.
Total (General Seats)	272	—	General seats of National Assembly
Total (Including Reserved & Women Seats)	—	342	Complete NA seat count including reserved quotas

**Summary:**

Total National Assembly seats: 342

General Seats: 272

Women's Reserved Seats: 60

Minority Reserved Seats: 10

PML-N won a clear majority and formed the government without needing a coalition.

PTI emerged as a strong third force, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where it formed the provincial government. PPP retained influence in Sindh but was reduced nationally. ANP and MQM suffered due to violence and shifting political dynamics.

**4.10 The Role of the Military and National security**

In Pakistan's political and security environment, the military was crucial during the PPP government's 2008–2013 term. The military maintained a strong hold over important domains including foreign policy, defense, and national security even after civilian governance was reinstated. The PPP government's relationship with the military was marked by a careful balancing act; while it needed the military's assistance on crucial issues like the war on terror and relations with neighboring India and Afghanistan, it also sought to assert civilian control.

Navigating its relationship with the military in the context of Pakistan's continued involvement in the U.S.-led War on Terror was one of the PPP government's main challenges. Following the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan had emerged as a vital ally for the United States, offering intelligence and logistical support in the fight against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The military played a pivotal role in counterterrorism operations, but the PPP government found itself in a challenging position, particularly as public opinion in Pakistan shifted more and more against American involvement in the region. The situation was further complicated by the strained relations between Pakistan and the U.S., especially following the 2011 raid in Abbottabad that killed Osama bin Laden.

After this occurrence, the military which was traditionally seen as the guardian of national security came under heavy fire, with many Pakistanis wondering how Bin Laden could have resided so near to a military station for years.

Maintaining a stable relationship with the military was important for the PPP government, but it also had to deal with the military's increasing involvement in internal politics. The military's influence in Pakistan remained largely unchallenged despite these tensions, and its involvement in politics, while less direct than during the military regimes of General Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharraf, continued to be felt through its control of important institutions like the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and its role in shaped Pakistan's foreign policy.

**Table 07: Military Influence on Key National Decisions (2008–2018)**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Type of Decision Influenced</b>	<b>Description of Military's Role</b>
Foreign Policy	India, Afghanistan, US relations	Controlled security-related diplomacy, restricted civilian initiatives (e.g., Nawaz-Modi outreach)
Defense & Security	Military operations, defense budget	Launched operations like Zarb-e-Azb (2014); dictated defense spending with minimal parliamentary oversight
Counter-Terrorism Policy	National Action Plan, military courts	Led implementation of NAP; military courts established via 21st Amendment after APS tragedy
Judiciary Support & Pressure	Dismissals (PM Gillani), judicial activism	Supported or encouraged judicial decisions against civilian leaders (e.g., Panama, Memogate)
Electoral Process	Pre-poll environment, media access, candidate engineering	Allegations of pre-poll rigging and indirect support for PTI in 2018 general elections
Media & Narrative Control	Censorship, social media surveillance	Directed suppression of dissent, restricted independent media, promoted pro-military image
Internal Civil Control	Handling of Balochistan, Karachi law and order	Ran operations with limited civilian input; Rangers empowered in Karachi
Economic Influence (Indirect)	CPEC security, military-run enterprises	Oversaw CPEC route security; military-linked institutions expanded into economic management
Parliamentary Oversight	Budget and strategic autonomy	Parliament had no effective control over nuclear policy or intelligence agencies

## **Summary:**

Civilian government remained under pressure, key strategic decisions were shaped or overshadowed by the military, limiting genuine parliamentary democracy during 2008–2018.

### **4.11 The economic Legacy of the PPP Government**

The PPP government's 2008–2013 economic performance is still a controversial topic. When the PPP came to office in 2008, it took over a shaky economy that was beset by rising external debt, large budget deficits, and inflation. Internal inefficiency, corruption, and political instability hindered the PPP government's capacity to solve Pakistan's economic issues, even as the global financial crisis made matters worse. Notwithstanding these challenges, the administration attempted to stabilize the economy by implementing a number of policies, such as requesting funding from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), negotiating loans, and trying to enact changes in important areas like taxation and energy.

The persistent energy crisis was one of the main problems the PPP government had to deal with during its rule. Severe power outages plagued Pakistan, disrupting daily life and impeding economic productivity and industrial progress. The PPP government's efforts to address the energy problem through infrastructure investments and energy reforms mainly failed. Public discontent was caused by the ongoing power disruptions that affected both urban and rural communities. One of the main reasons for the government's waning support in the latter years of its tenure was its incapacity to address the energy problem.

Furthermore, corruption continued to be a major problem during the PPP's tenure. The PPP's credibility was harmed by accusations of corruption within the party, especially involving members of the governing class and government officials. The government's reputation was damaged by the opaqueness of public expenditure, the inefficiencies of state-owned businesses, and the expanding influence of political patronage networks. These concerns were crucial to the opposition's campaigns as the PPP got closer to the 2013 elections. Imran Khan's PTI and Nawaz Sharif's PML-N both used anti-corruption rhetoric to motivate supporters fed up with the status quo.

The PPP government did have some triumphs in spite of these economic challenges, such as the 2010 ratification of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, which greatly increased the provinces' powers and gave local governments more control. The amendment, which gave provinces more autonomy over issues of development and governance, was a historic accomplishment for Pakistan's federal system. However, the government's economic difficulties particularly in tackling poverty, unemployment, and inflation overshadowed these beneficial accomplishments.

#### **4.12 The end of the PPP era and reflection of its legacy**

An era in Pakistan's political history came to an end with the PPP's loss in the 2013 general elections. Although the PPP had been instrumental in bringing democracy back to Pakistan following years of military control, its failure to solve the nation's urgent problems played a part in its demise. The party lost support among voters, especially in urban and middle-class areas, as a result of its inability to fulfill its promises of social welfare, governance, and economic transformation. On the other hand, the public's desire for stability and efficient governance was perceived as the reason behind the PML-N's triumph.

But there were some positive aspects to the PPP's legacy. With the ratification of the 18th Amendment in 2010, which increased provincial autonomy and further decentralized authority, the party was instrumental in the restoration of democratic institutions in Pakistan. The amendment, which gave provinces more autonomy over their own affairs and diminished the authority of the federal government, was regarded as a significant milestone in Pakistan's democratic development.

Significant advancements in judicial independence, media freedom, and civil liberties were also made under the PPP's rule. But the party's legacy was marred by its incapacity to handle Pakistan's economic problems and its connection to pervasive corruption. The public's opinion of the PPP government was dominated by the energy crisis, growing inflation, and corruption scandals. Opposition parties like the PML-N and PTI rose to prominence as a result of these setbacks, taking advantage of the PPP's downfall to pledge a different course for Pakistan. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the PPP's political legacy includes significant contributions to Pakistan's democratic process and stabilization following years of military dictatorship.

#### **4.13 The 2013 General Elections and the Rise of PML-N**

The PPP's five-year rule came to an end with the 2013 general elections, which saw the return of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), led by Nawaz Sharif. With the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) playing a crucial role in maintaining transparency, the elections were essentially free and fair.

The people's yearning for stability, economic progress, and improved governance, as well as their mounting dissatisfaction with the PPP's rule, were reflected in Nawaz Sharif's victory. Having been prime minister in the 1990s, Sharif pledged to prioritize national security, economic reforms, and infrastructural development.

Additionally, the election was the first time in Pakistani history that a democratically elected administration ended its term and handily handed over power to a new one. Significant progress in Pakistan's development of democratic standards was shown by this smooth transfer.

Imran Khan, however, accused the government of election tampering, and the PTI also challenged the results of the 2013 elections. The elections were generally regarded as a major advancement for Pakistan's democracy in spite of these charges (Hananel, 2013).

#### **4.14 Nawaz Sharif's Third Term and Economic Reforms**

During his third time as prime minister, which lasted from 2013 to 2017, Nawaz Sharif prioritized economic reforms, especially in the energy and infrastructure sectors. Megaprojects like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which sought to improve economic growth and increase Pakistan's relationship with China, were given top priority by his administration.

Although power outages remained a major problem and load shedding continued to impact homes and businesses, Sharif's administration also prioritized upgrading the energy industry. Despite these obstacles, economic metrics like GDP growth and foreign investment showed discernible improvements.

Sharif's administration made some progress in tax reform and was able to lower the fiscal deficit, but structural problems including inefficiency and corruption still prevented long-term growth.

Sharif and his family were accused of corruption, which seriously damaged the credibility of his government, especially after the 2016 Panama Papers release. His disqualification from office in 2017, a pivotal period in Pakistan's political history, was ultimately caused by these accusations (Wolf, 2017).

#### **4.15 The Panama Papers and the Dismissal of Nawaz Sharif**

A national political crisis was triggered in 2016 after the Panama Papers leak disclosed that Nawaz Sharif's family held offshore businesses and assets. Citing corruption and the illegal buildup of riches, opposition parties, led by Imran Khan's PTI, called for Sharif's resignation.

A high-profile trial resulted from the Supreme Court of Pakistan's investigation into the case. Nawaz Sharif was barred from public office in July 2017 by the court due to allegations of tax evasion and family riches.

Being the longest-serving prime minister in Pakistani history, Sharif's disqualification dealt a serious damage to his political career. It also signaled the judiciary's increasing power to hold political leaders responsible.

Although the verdict had a major impact on his electoral fortunes, Sharif remained a prominent political figure and continued to lead his party, the PML-N, despite his disqualification (Khan, Shami, & Ashfaq, 2019).

#### **4.16 The Rise of Imran Khan and the PTI**

Taking advantage of the growing disenchantment with the conventional political parties, particularly the PPP and PML-N, Imran Khan and his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party became a significant political force in the 2010s.

A sizable portion of the populace, especially the younger generation, found resonance in Khan's populist rhetoric, emphasis on combating corruption, and promises of reform.

His party's demand for a "new Pakistan" became widely accepted, making PTI a formidable opponent of the established political establishment.

PTI formed a coalition government with smaller parties after winning the most seats in the National Assembly in the 2018 general elections. Since Khan's party's triumph was interpreted as a rejection of the political establishment, it signaled a change in Pakistan's political landscape. The desire for more political accountability and change within Pakistan's political system was brought to light by Khan's ascent to power, which was facilitated by his anti-corruption campaign and promises of economic reform (Corsi, 2018).

#### **4.17 Conclusion**

The decade from 2008 to 2018 stands as a pivotal era in Pakistan's democratic evolution, marked by both progress and persistent challenges. It was a period of significant political transformation, during which democratic institutions gradually gained strength, and civilian rule became more entrenched. For the first time in the country's history, a democratically elected government completed its term and transferred power to another through general elections in 2013, followed by another peaceful transition in 2018. These smooth handovers of power were historic and symbolized a maturing democratic process that had previously been interrupted by authoritarian rule and military takeovers.

A defining feature of this decade was the judiciary's increased assertiveness, particularly in the form of suo motu actions and high-profile judicial interventions, which influenced the political landscape and held public officials to account. While some praised this as judicial activism promoting accountability, others criticized it as overreach that sometimes disrupted the balance of power among democratic institutions. Nevertheless, the judiciary emerged as a more prominent player in national politics, reflecting a shift in the institutional power structure.

The political arena also witnessed significant shifts. The rise of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) as a major political force broke the traditional two-party dominance of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). PTI's emergence, fueled by an anti-corruption narrative and appeals to youth and middle-

class voters, reshaped the political discourse. At the same time, the enduring influence of established parties demonstrated the resilience of traditional political structures, including regional dynamics and dynastic politics.

Despite these democratic gains, deep-rooted challenges persisted throughout the decade. Issues such as political instability, inconsistent economic performance, governance failures, and entrenched corruption continued to hinder the full realization of democratic ideals. Frequent confrontations between institutions, lack of consensus on national priorities, and the enduring shadow of the military in policymaking exposed the vulnerabilities in Pakistan's parliamentary system.

Looking ahead, the lessons of this decade will play a crucial role in shaping future reforms and democratic consolidation. Strengthening democratic norms requires not only institutional development but also the promotion of political maturity, public accountability, electoral transparency, and inclusive governance. The evolving political landscape marked by citizen awareness, changing demographics, and a more engaged civil society offers opportunities for reform and renewal.

In conclusion, while the 2008–2018 period was far from perfect, it laid a critical foundation for the continued development of Pakistan's democratic framework. The experiences of this transformative decade will inform future political strategies and institutional reforms, ensuring that Pakistan's democratic journey though slow and complex moves steadily toward greater stability, representation, and resilience.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DEMOCRACY AND PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN FROM 2008–2018: DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The evolution of Pakistan's democracy and parliamentary system has always piqued interest both nationally and internationally. Between 2008 and 2018, after years of alternating between military and civilian governments, the nation's political procedures experienced significant changes. The objective of this chapter is to provide a thorough, comparative analysis of Pakistan's Parliamentary and democratic changes during the course of two pivotal political eras: 2008–2013 and 2013–2018. Each period is marked by significant events, policy decisions, political maneuverings, and challenges that shaped the nation's democratic trajectory.

Beginning with the return to civilian rule following General Pervez Musharraf's military-led government, the first section looks at the years 2008–2013. During this time, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) formed a coalition government and had to deal with issues like political instability, terrorism, civil-military conflicts, and judicial activism. Notwithstanding these obstacles, several democratic landmarks were accomplished, such as the 18th Amendment to the Constitution and the nation's first democratic handover of power.

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), led by Nawaz Sharif, ruled the 2013–2018 timeframe covered in the second section. Relative political continuity was a defining feature of this phase, but it was also marked by judicial interventions, civil-military tensions, and scandals like the Panama Papers, which finally resulted in Sharif's disqualification. Significant advancements in infrastructure, governance, and institutional reforms that have an impact on the democratic framework were also highlighted.

This chapter aims to critically assess how each era influenced the development or deterioration of democratic principles and parliamentary practices in Pakistan using interview-style questions and knowledgeable discussion. Is it contributed to the

strengthening or weakening of democratic norms and parliamentary practices in Pakistan. By juxtaposing the two timeframes, the study aims to highlight recurring patterns, institutional behaviors, and external influences that have defined Pakistan's democratic journey over a crucial decade.

This chapter explores the dynamics of democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan by examining both its historical context and present-day functioning through a qualitative lens. Pakistan's democratic experience has been shaped by a complex interplay of institutional evolution, civil-military relations, judicial activism, and political contestation. While the Constitution of Pakistan lays the foundation for a parliamentary democracy, the practical application of democratic norms has faced recurrent setbacks, ranging from military interventions to institutional imbalances and governance challenges.

To gain an in-depth understanding of these issues, this chapter is based on qualitative research methods, utilizing semi-structured interviews conducted with key respondents, including former members of the National Assembly, political analysts, legal experts, journalists, and civil society representatives. These respondents were carefully selected for their experience and insight into the parliamentary and democratic processes between 2008 and 2018 a period marked by the uninterrupted functioning of democratic governments, two general elections, and significant institutional developments.

The data collected through interviews was examined using thematic analysis, which enabled the identification of recurring patterns, narratives, and perspectives related to the performance, strengths, and weaknesses of Pakistan's parliamentary democracy. Themes such as the role of political parties, legislative effectiveness, opposition performance, judicial intervention, civil-military relations, corruption, and foreign influence emerged as critical to understanding the state of democracy in Pakistan during this decade.

By weaving together, the views of diverse respondents with historical and institutional analysis, this chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive, grounded, and evidence-based evaluation of Pakistan's parliamentary system. It aims not only to reflect on the country's democratic progress and shortcomings but also to inform ongoing debates about democratic reform and institutional accountability in Pakistan.

## **5.2 Political Parties and Their Role in Strengthening Democracy (2008–2013)**

Between 2008 and 2013, political parties played a crucial role in Pakistan's democracy. Major political parties had a key role in the government process after the 2008 elections, especially the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) (Mushtaq, Baig, & Mushtaq, 2018).

Humayon (2024) opines that "political parties provided a platform for democratic discourse, even though their ability to unite was limited. The PML-N, the principal opposition party, was instrumental in holding the ruling party responsible, while the PPP, led by President Asif Ali Zardari, constituted the government"

According to Tasbeeh ullah (2025), "political parties were key players in the democratic process, providing an essential check on the government's power."

But there was clear division within the parties. Bashir (2025) states "Pakistan's political parties remain dynastic and faction-ridden, making it difficult for them to focus on long-term policies, internal disagreements were frequently caused by this fragmentation, which decreased governance's efficacy. Due to these internal conflicts, the PPP faced numerous difficulties implementing its policies during its existence, even though it was dedicated to democratic procedures".

In this period, the political opposition played an equally significant role. "The opposition's role in shaping public policy and challenging the ruling government helped maintain a degree of accountability" Khan (2025) states. A key component of the parliamentary system at the time, this balance between the opposition and the ruling party helped to maintain democratic stability. The importance of political parties in preserving democracy cannot be emphasized, notwithstanding these conflicts. Despite facing internal difficulties, their efforts to uphold democratic values showed how resilient Pakistan's political system is. "The capacity of political parties to work within the framework of democracy, despite their flaws, reflects an evolving political culture" stated Naeem (2025).

The two main parties at the time, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), were criticized for lacking internal democracy and

having dynastic leadership. "The concentration of power within a few families undermines the potential for political parties to foster a vibrant, issue-based democratic process," Saleem (2025), argued.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, political parties supported democracy by offering guidance and a forum for public discussion. Rashid (2025), claimed that "the PML-N became a strong opposition voice, and the PPP, despite its flaws, provided a platform for the continuation of civilian rule."

The importance of political parties in upholding democratic processes was further proved by their role in the 2013 elections' effective conduct. Rahman (2025) opines "The 2013 elections marked a significant moment in Pakistan's history, where power was transferred peacefully between parties, showing that democratic processes could work even in a volatile political environment".

Political parties continued to be the mainstay of Pakistan's democratic process in spite of these obstacles, and their involvement in elections and parliamentary discussions guaranteed the political system's continued pluralism. Salman (2025) opines, "While political parties had their flaws, they provided the necessary platforms for debate and discussion, essential for any functioning democracy,"

Pakistan's democratic system is consistent with the Continental European model, which holds that institutional performance is weakened by fragmented political subcultures, according to Almond and Powell's typology. According to interviewees, political parties such as the PPP, PML-N, and PTI are frequently based more on dynasties and individuals than on ideological goals. Party unity and long-term policy continuity are threatened by this structural disintegration.

But using Lijphart's theory of consociational democracy, the Charter of Democracy (2006), which was mentioned by a number of respondents, demonstrates an attempt by the elite to reach a consensus that stabilized the democratic transition following military rule. In order to promote inclusivity and prevent an authoritarian resurgence, elites collaborated to build coalition governments after 2008.

### **5.3 The Role of Elections in Strengthening Democracy (2008–2013)**

From 2008 to 2013, elections played a crucial role in Pakistan's democratic progress. Because they signaled the end of military rule and the return of civilian authority, the 2008 elections were especially important (Qazi, Akhtar, & Fani, 2022). According to Nasir (2025) "The 2008 elections were a beacon of hope for many, offering a chance to restore civilian supremacy after years of military-led governance," Even though the elections were generally calm, there were serious questions about their fairness and openness. Shakir (2025) opines, "Even though the elections were generally regarded as free and fair, the issue of voter manipulation remained a serious concern. Several political parties and civil society organizations reported electoral fraud, particularly in rural areas, although the process as a whole did not call into question the validity of the elections".

During this time, the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) function was also closely examined. Shah (2025) stated, "The ECP was crucial in overseeing the elections, but its independence was often questioned. Strengthening democracy required the perception of an independent and strong electoral body, yet political influence on the ECP remained a persistent problem".

Notwithstanding these difficulties, a major factor in upholding democratic principles was the peaceful handover of power and the effective organization of the elections. Ahmad (2025) opines, "The successful transfer of power from one civilian government to another in 2013 was the real victory for democracy. The election cycle demonstrated that, despite outside obstacles, Pakistan's democracy was growing".

Any democracy must have elections, and Pakistan's 2008–2013 election cycle was characterized by elections that were crucial litmus tests for the nation's democratic procedures. After a period of military control, the 2008 general elections were viewed as a crucial step in reestablishing democracy (Akram & Azhar, 2023). According to Jan (2025), "the 2008 elections were a turning point for Pakistan because they marked the return of civilian rule and the end of military influence."

Although the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won the 2008 elections, questions about electoral fraud and the efficiency of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP)

clouded the process. Journalist and political analyst Hamid Mir claims that "while the PPP won, the credibility of the elections was questioned due to the widespread allegations of rigging and voter suppression."

The elections were a step toward the restoration of electoral democracy in spite of these reservations. According to Bangash (2025), "the fact that elections were held in 2008, despite a hostile political environment, was an achievement. The 2013 peaceful handover of power between civilian governments, which showed that elections could result in democratic transitions, served to further solidify this feeling of advancement".

Elections in 2013 were yet another important turning point. According to Israr (2025), "the 2013 elections were held under a caretaker government, and despite various challenges, they were seen as free and fair by the international community. The idea that Pakistan was heading toward a more stable democratic system with a more robust electoral process was further cemented by the elections' peaceful conduct. Although there were worries about how the political and military elites would sway votes, the smooth running of these elections was essential to bolstering Pakistan's democracy. They proved that electoral democracy could survive and even flourish in spite of obstacles".

Lijphart's framework emphasizes fair electoral systems as a basis for consociational democracy. Respondents largely agreed that the 2008 and 2013 elections marked a shift toward procedural regularity, even amid allegations of rigging. Hudson's critique applies when discussing regional underrepresentation many noted that Balochistan, FATA (now merged), and minorities continue to face electoral marginalization, violating the consociational principle of proportional representation of subcultures.

#### **5.4 Legislation and Its Role in Strengthening Democracy (2008–2013)**

Another essential component of a functional democracy is legislation, and Pakistan saw a great deal of legislative action between 2008 and 2013, which had a big influence on the nation's democratic procedures. The ratification of the 18th Amendment in 2010, which aimed to fortify Pakistan's parliamentary system by diminishing the presidential powers and augmenting the prime minister's position, was among the most noteworthy accomplishments during this time (Akram & Azhar, 2023).

Ihsan ullah (2025) said "The 18th Amendment was a historic step in restoring Pakistan's parliamentary democracy," said a politician. "The 18th Amendment restored the balance of power between the legislature and the executive branch by undoing the constitutional amendments enacted during General Musharraf's tenure. It was a long-overdue reform that helped restore the constitutional framework of parliamentary democracy,"

The Amendment increased the prime minister's authority and restored a parliamentary system, reversing many of the modifications implemented during military administration. But there were difficulties with the legislative procedure. Sayed (2025), claimed that "the parliament often struggled with gridlock, especially when key reforms were blocked by political factions."

Political division caused delays for additional important reforms, even though the 18th Amendment was a landmark. Irfan (2025) opines that "the system is less effective since many necessary laws, particularly those related to electoral reforms, were postponed. The development of more efficient democratic governance was hampered by the lack of agreement on important issues".

Khurshid (2025) opines that "The ratification of the 18th Amendment and other minor improvements demonstrated that legislative activity may nonetheless fortify democratic institutions in spite of these losses. While progress was slow, the 18th Amendment was a necessary step in Pakistan's democratic development,".

According to Mujeeb (2025) "The government enacted important laws to strengthen governance and safeguard human rights in addition to amending the constitution. The Right to Information Act and the Whistleblower Protection Act were important pieces of legislation that empowered citizens to hold the government accountable".

But in spite of these encouraging developments, the legislative process was hampered by lack of implementation, political squabbling, and delays. According to Zafar (2025) "While laws were passed, their implementation was often weak due to bureaucratic resistance and political interference. The potential for changes to genuinely develop Pakistan's democratic institutions was hampered by this reluctance to effectively execute the law".

Furthermore, during this time, the judiciary's function in examining and upholding laws grew in importance. According to Iqbal (2025) "The judiciary, through judicial activism, often took on the role of interpreting laws in a way that reflected its own vision of governance, which sometimes conflicted with the intentions of elected representatives,"

Hayat (2025) opines, "The legislative accomplishments of this era were a major effort to strengthen Pakistan's parliamentary system, notwithstanding implementation difficulties. The passage of progressive laws during this time laid the foundation for future reforms and showed a commitment to strengthening the democratic framework,"

According to Dahl's theory of political socialization, when institutions like parliaments operate consistently and openly, democratic norms solidify. In contrast to earlier administrations, interviewees recognized the National Assembly's heightened legislative activity after 2008 and its functional autonomy. In addition to restoring parliamentary sovereignty, experts pointed out that the 18th Amendment's ratification encouraged civic participation and improved democratic education for both the public and political players. Dahl's theory of establishing "institutional legitimacy through practice" is reflected in this development.

### **5.5 The Role of the Opposition in Strengthening Democracy (2008–2013)**

During the years 2008–2013, the opposition was instrumental in maintaining the accountability and openness of the governing administration. Political infighting frequently hindered the opposition's capacity to function efficiently, even if political parties like the PML-N presented a strong challenge to the PPP-led government (Staniland & Vaishnav, 1998). Gauhar (2025) said "The opposition kept the government on its toes, but their unity was often fragile,".

Opposition parties were able to draw attention to the corruption and inefficiencies of the government in spite of their internal conflicts. According to PML-N leader, the opposition's role in pushing for accountability is an essential element of democratic governance. Riaz (2025) opines, "The opposition was crucial in bringing important

concerns like corruption and bad governance to the public's attention during parliamentary debates”.

However, the opposition's own political goals and reluctance to work together for the larger good of democracy occasionally restricted its efficacy. Qaisar (2025) stated "Instead of working together to build the nation, opposition parties often pursued narrow political agendas, further fragmenting the political landscape”,

The opposition's tenacity and capacity to rally support were demonstrated by the 2013 elections, in which the PML-N became the largest party in the National Assembly. According to Ahmad (2025), "While the opposition often engaged in partisan politics, its role in pushing for democratic reforms cannot be ignored".

Nonetheless, some critics contend that the opposition's activities weren't always optimal for the development of democracy. According to Aftab (2025), "in certain cases, the opposition concentrated more on acquiring power than on bolstering democratic institutions. The opposition's frequent demands for midterm elections and its use of demonstrations in the streets demonstrated the public's loss of faith in democratic institutions and procedures”.

Notwithstanding these reservations, Pakistan's parliamentary system operated more transparently and responsibly thanks to the opposition's function in holding the administration responsible and offering a forum for democratic discussion.

### **5.6 Constitutional Bodies: Their Role in Strengthening Democracy (2008–2013)**

Pakistan's democracy depends on constitutional agencies including the Council of Common Interests (CCI), the National Finance Commission (NFC), and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). These organizations played a crucial role in upholding the rule of law and the integrity of democratic institutions between 2008 and 2013 (Akram & Azhar, 2023).

During 2008–2013, these constitutional bodies were crucial in bolstering democracy. Hizbullah (2025) highlights that "the functioning of these bodies ensured that democratic processes, including electoral transparency and fiscal federalism, were maintained.

In particular, the ECP had a key role in regulating the elections in 2008 and 2013. The ECP faced some autonomy challenges, but its role in ensuring free and fair elections was vital to reinforcing the democratic process. Despite claims of irregularities in certain places, the body's effectiveness in managing election affairs increased”.

Similarly, the NFC was crucial to preserving the fiscal equilibrium between the federal and provincial governments. According to Khan (2025) “The 7th NFC Award, which was passed during this period, gave greater financial autonomy to the provinces, reinforcing federal democracy”.

One significant accomplishment in fortifying Pakistan's federal democratic system was the transition to a more balanced financial framework.

The CCI's impact was less obvious, though. The body's limited jurisdiction frequently made it ineffectual, despite the fact that its purpose was to settle disputes between the provinces and the central. Shafiq (2025) opines "The CCI could have been more proactive in resolving inter-provincial issues, but political deadlocks weakened its potential impact”.

The constitutional bodies shown tenacity in the face of these difficulties. Pakistan's political stability during this time was greatly aided by their efforts to protect democratic processes, including federalism and elections.

Political meddling occasionally threatened the independence of these constitutional bodies, despite the fact that they significantly strengthened Pakistan's democracy. Aminee (2025) observes that "these bodies were subject to pressures from the ruling government at times, which affected their ability to function effectively." However, it is impossible to overestimate the contribution these constitutional organizations make to maintaining the democratic system. They were crucial in making sure that power was divided equitably among the many tiers of government and that democratic procedures were upheld.

### **5.7 Smooth Transfer of Power: A Milestone for Democracy (2008–2013)**

The peaceful and seamless transition of power between succeeding governments was one of Pakistan's democracy's greatest accomplishments from 2008 to 2013. In a nation

where military takeovers have frequently thwarted the democratic process, this was a momentous occasion. A former legislator, claims that the peaceful handover of power following the 2013 elections was a turning point in Pakistan's democratic development (Ullah, Khan, & Khan, 2021).

Democracy was seen to have succeeded when the political system permitted the election process to continue without military interference. According Rauf (2025), "for the first time, we witnessed the full term of a civilian government without the interruption of military rule. This change demonstrated that Pakistan's democracy had reached a mature stage and was resilient to political upheaval within the country".

Nevertheless, the democratic system had trouble solidifying even when the transition went smoothly. "While the power shift was historic, it was also a testament to the weakness of political institutions, as they were still heavily reliant on individual leadership rather than institutional strength" Asif (2025), explains. The transition of power was important, but it did not ensure long-term stability because political parties and institutions are brittle.

The military's background involvement also played a part. Tasbeeh ullah (2025) makes the statement, "The military had faded into the background, but its influence remained palpable, especially in matters of national security and foreign policy." Full democratic autonomy was nonetheless hampered by the military's indirect influence over civilian administrations.

Notwithstanding these subtleties, many saw the peaceful handover of power as a win for Pakistan's democracy, showing that civilian governance had strengthened and that the nation was heading toward a more secure democratic future.

### **5.8 Local Government and Media: Catalysts for Democratic Strengthening (2008–2013)**

Between 2008 and 2013, Pakistan's democratic landscape was significantly shaped by the media and local government. Despite their shortcomings and lack of funding, local administrations represented a step toward better governance and power decentralization. According to Naimat (2025), "the restoration of local governments in

2009, although not without its challenges, was an important step in empowering grassroots democracy."

However, the efficiency of local government institutions was limited by strong opposition from the federal and provincial governments. Naveed (2025) claimed "that political elites frequently viewed local governments as a challenge to their centralized authority, which is why they were restrained. Local governments could not foster democracy as intended if they had sufficient funding and political authority".

The involvement of the media, however, was more obvious. As the public's access to information increased and private news outlets proliferated, the media emerged as a crucial instrument for keeping the government responsible. Shakir (2025) opines "The media's role in Pakistan's democracy was transformative, particularly in challenging the government on issues such as corruption and governance".

From 2008 to 2013, Pakistan's media actively and frequently contributed to the nation's democratic processes. Media freedom in Pakistan significantly increased during this time, as evidenced by the rise in news channels and the representation of a wider variety of viewpoints.

Abdullah (2025), claimed that "the media was essential in exposing corruption, holding the government responsible, and fostering democratic discourse". Public opinion and political discourse were significantly shaped by television networks like Geo News, Dawn News, and others (Ghulam, 2020).

Nevertheless, there were challenges to the media's power. According to Qaisar (2025), "the media was criticized for sensationalism and political bias, even though it contributed to democratic discourse. Media outlets often became tools for political parties, using their platforms to promote specific agendas rather than objective reporting."

Another crucial element was the military's interaction with the media. Riaz (2025), adds, "The military frequently applied pressure to media outlets, restricting their capacity to fully engage in critical reporting." Freedom of expression was both a benefit and a drawback in this complicated environment generated by the conflict between the military and the media".

Despite its function as a watchdog, the media had to deal with censorship and political pressure. According to Bashir (2025) "The media's independence was frequently threatened by both the government and non-state actors, impacting its ability to function freely.". The media unquestionably contributed to democratic discourse and public awareness in spite of these obstacles.

Dahl contends that democratic pluralism and accountability depend on a vibrant civil society and media. Respondents emphasized how Pakistani media was active after 2008, covering political protests, corruption trials, and legislative discussions extensively. Lijphart asserts that by highlighting excesses and encouraging negotiated solutions, these watchdog organizations uphold elite consensus. Nonetheless, other analysts expressed worries about polarization and media manipulation, which could exacerbate subcultural divisions and further Almond's theory of fragile, fractured democracies.

### **5.9 Military Intervention: Weakened Democracy or Necessary Role? (2008–2013)**

Between 2008 and 2013, military involvement posed a persistent threat to Pakistan's democracy. The military continued to have a considerable indirect impact on governance even if it mostly avoided direct involvement (Behuria, 2009). Saddrul (2025), claimed "that the military's involvement in Pakistan has been both beneficial and detrimental. Even though it avoided politics, it had a significant impact on important matters like foreign policy and national security".

Many political elites continued to be cautious of the military's power even though the PPP-led administration overcame obstacles without using force. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, the former prime minister, claimed that although the military avoided direct political involvement, it was nevertheless very much present in aspects of government. The military's command of the nation's security apparatus and its sway over Pakistan's ties with its neighbors were examples of this indirect influence.

The role of the judiciary in this situation further complicated matters. The Supreme Court's well-known decision to remove Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani in 2012 highlighted the overlap between the military and the judiciary. According to Humayon

(2025), "the judiciary's activism in some instances, especially in the case of the military's role, often weakened democratic processes."

Tensions between civilian governments and military leadership were frequently caused by the military's involvement in important decisions, especially those pertaining to foreign policy and national security. Rahman (2025), claimed that "the civilian governments were often forced to align with military interests on issues like the War on Terror and relations with India." Despite this, it was thought that Pakistan's democracy benefited from the absence of direct military rule during this time.

However, the democratic system was still being weakened by military meddling in political affairs, such as endorsing particular political parties or influencing the formulation of public policies. According to Shafiq (2025) "The military's ability to play a behind-the-scenes role in shaping political events, such as influencing elections and internal governance, suggests that Pakistan's democracy remains fragile,"

Another major event was the general elections in 2013. The military's covert role in guaranteeing a seamless election process was interpreted as support for the democratic transition, even though it did not directly interfere. Shakoor (2025) observes that "a peaceful handover of power in 2013 was facilitated by the military, which was a sign of progress."

Notwithstanding these encouraging advancements, the military's continued dominance made it difficult for democracy to solidify. Because of the military's continuous role in Pakistani politics and its prolonged dominance in foreign and security affairs, civilian governments were able to exercise little authority over all facets of governance.

But, the fact that there was no overt military takeover during this time was interpreted as encouraging for Pakistan's democratic future. Khan (2025) opines that "The military's reluctance to intervene directly in politics allowed civilian governments to maintain their authority, though its influence was never far behind,"

According to Almond and Powell's hypothesis, the institutional fragility of democracies like Pakistan makes them susceptible to authoritarian breakthroughs. Almost every answer mentioned the military's historical interventionist role. A Dahlian interpretation,

however, reveals significant advancements: throughout the 2008–2013 term, civilian superiority over policymaking was noted in several areas (such as finance and law). Since politicians started claiming procedural legitimacy instead of extra-constitutional appeals, political socialization has somewhat improved, especially in the face of military dominance.

### **5.10 Judiciary and Its Impact on Democracy (2008–2013)**

From 2008 to 2013, the judiciary was a major and frequently contentious part of Pakistan's democratic environment. The judiciary demonstrated extraordinary activism under Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, especially in matters pertaining to government inefficiencies and corruption (Azeem, 2017). Ali (2025) said, "The judiciary's role in holding elected officials accountable was important, but it also raised questions about the separation of powers. Some claimed that the judiciary's interference weakened democracy, while others applauded it as a check on government power. Judicial activism, though well-intentioned, sometimes overstepped its boundaries and interfered with the executive's role. During this time, there was political impasse and instability as a result of prime ministers and other government leaders being suspended.

One of the main concerns was the judiciary's function under Article 62 of the Constitution, which resulted in Prime Minister Gillani and other elected officials being disqualified. Humayon (2025) said that, "The judiciary's use of Article 62 to disqualify elected leaders created political chaos. Concerns over the possibility of undemocratic actions within the judiciary itself were aroused by the use of judicial power to remove politicians".

Between 2008 and 2013, the court had a significant influence on Pakistan's democratic development. After it was restored under Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, the judiciary was first seen as a protector of democracy, but its involvement also raised questions about judicial overreach.

According to Qaisar (2025) "The judiciary adopted a more assertive role under Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, especially in matters pertaining to corruption, governance, and accountability,". The judiciary's involvement in political affairs, including

disqualifying elected officials, sparked discussions about how much power should be shared between the executive and the judiciary.

Yousaf Raza Gillani's disqualification in 2012 was one of the most notable instances of judicial activism during this time.

Fayyaz (2025) opines that "The disqualification of Gillani, based on contempt of court charges related to his refusal to pursue corruption cases against the then-president, exposed the tension between the judiciary and the executive". The decision raised questions about the judiciary's growing political power.

Furthermore, Article 62 of the Constitution, which mandates that elected officials be "sadiq" (truthful) and "amin" (trustworthy), was used by the judiciary to disqualify politicians, which turned into a tactic for political exclusion. Humayon (2025) explained that "While the disqualification of politicians under Article 62 was presented as a move to restore accountability, it often appeared politically motivated, undermining the democratic principle of free and fair elections,"

The judiciary's involvement in political affairs prompted concerns about the separation of powers, even while its activity helped bring corruption and governance issues to light. Ali (2025), claimed that "judicial overreach, especially in the case of political interference, created a delicate balance that threatened the independence of the executive branch."

Notwithstanding these objections, the judiciary's activities were frequently seen as a crucial component of Pakistan's fight for openness and accountability. The judiciary's involvement in public matters helped shape the political discourse, but it also created an imbalance in governance.

Dahl's focus on the judiciary as a cornerstone of democratic socialization is highly relevant in this context. A number of interviewees praised the judiciary's 2009 reinstatement and its following aggressiveness in limiting executive power. Despite their controversy, Supreme Court rulings show that the public is becoming more demanding of judicial accountability. The institutionalization of democracy is the cause of this expanding civic legal consciousness.

### **5.11 Dynastic Politics and Its Impact on Democracy (2008–2013)**

Pakistan has traditionally struggled with dynastic politics, and the years 2008–2013 were no exception. The political scene was dominated by political dynasties, especially the Sharif and Bhutto-Zardari families (Ahmad & Rehman, 2020). Riaz (2025) said, "Dynastic politics has often prevented the emergence of new leadership, even though it has provided political stability in some ways."

It has been said that the dominance of political families such as the PML-N and PPP restricts the democratic process. Bashir (2025) claimed that "these dynasties were so firmly established, the same group of political elites remained in charge, which limited the chances for new leadership and innovative ideas. Furthermore, these dynasties fostered a culture of political patronage in which party philosophy was frequently subordinated to familial devotion. The party system itself is weakened by the dynastic model, as it becomes more about the family name than about a robust democratic platform".

Nonetheless, some contend that dynasty politics contributed to stability as well. According to Khan (2025), "dynastic parties were able to provide a sense of continuity given Pakistan's turbulent political history. During a period of political unpredictability, the return of Nawaz Sharif's PML-N and Benazir Bhutto's PPP following the Musharraf era gave voters a sense of familiarity".

Pakistan's political landscape has historically been characterized by dynastic politics, and the years 2008–2013 were no different. The political climate of this time period was influenced by the supremacy of political families like the Bhuttos, Sharifs, and others. According to Ihsan (2025) "dynastic politics played a significant role in Pakistan's democracy during this period. The Bhutto family continued its dominance through Asif Ali Zardari, while the Sharif family maintained a strong grip on PML-N politics."

Dynastic politics contributed to a lack of political pluralism and democratic renewal, even though it frequently brought stability to particular parties. Naveed (2025) opines that "the emergence of new political voices was stifled by the concentration of political

power within a few elite families. It also limited the development of a true merit-based political system.

Because political power was transferred within family dynasties rather than via free and fair competition and popular support, dynastic politics frequently weakened democracy. This lack of political diversity prevented the political system from evolving and responding effectively to the needs of the people”.

Because family relationships and political patronage took precedence over democratically based policy, the prevalence of political dynasties also contributed to widespread corruption. Rahman (2025) adds, "Political families used their influence to secure government positions for relatives, leading to nepotism and a lack of transparency in governance."

Notwithstanding these divergent opinions, dynasty politics unquestionably contributed significantly to the development of Pakistan's democratic and parliamentary system during this time, posing both opportunities and problems for the political structure. According to Khan (2025) while dynastic politics did offer continuity, it often left democracy in Pakistan stagnated.

Hudson cautions that when particular identities or groups control representation, democracy suffers. Dynastic politics were criticized by many responders, who pointed out that it prevents fresh and marginalized voices from being included in politics. Hudson's idea of multiple democratic representation is squarely at odds with this concentration of political power in families. According to Lijphart's theory of elite-centered consociationalism, some contend that these dynasties have occasionally served as stabilizing forces.

### **5.12 National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Its Impact on Democracy (2008–2013)**

One of Pakistan's most powerful institutions, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has been tasked with combating corruption. From 2008 to 2013, the NAB actively investigated political figures, including leaders of the PPP and PML-N, but its actions were frequently controversial (Mazhar & Iftikhar, 2021). According to Shah

(2025) "NAB became a tool for political warfare rather than an independent institution fighting corruption".

Although the NAB was successful in bringing charges against a few dishonest officials, it was frequently said that the ruling party was using it as political leverage. Qaisar (2025) opines "The politicization of NAB undermines its credibility and effectiveness in curbing corruption. The neutrality of the NAB was further called into doubt by its involvement in the 2013 elections, as some said it was biased against the incumbent party".

However, some argues that NAB's efforts did help to increase governance's transparency. Bashir 920250 argued, "NAB's actions demonstrated that corruption was being addressed at the highest levels of government, despite its flaws. Significant governance shortcomings were exposed by NAB's investigations into land deals, government contracts, and other types of corruption.

However, the agency's capacity to successfully support democratic institutions was weakened by its frequent politicization and lack of autonomy. In many ways, NAB became a weapon for political parties to target each other, rather than a genuine anti-corruption body".

In charge of looking into and prosecuting corruption in Pakistan from 2008 to 2013, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was a crucial organization. However, since NAB was viewed as both a weapon for accountability and political victimization, its efficacy in bolstering democracy was frequently contested.

Salar (2025) claimed that "although the NAB was tasked with looking into corruption cases, accusations of political bias frequently tainted its work. The government accused NAB of targeting opposition leaders, while opposition parties claimed that NAB was used by the ruling party to discredit political rivals."

Opinions regarding the NAB's effect on democracy were divided as a result of its involvement in high-profile investigations, including those involving former Prime Ministers Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif. Hamid (2025) observed, "The NAB's

emphasis on corruption cases was significant, but its selective use of power raised concerns about its impartiality."

Because of its apparent political links and lack of operational transparency, the NAB's credibility eroded. Irfan (2025) opines, "In many cases, NAB's investigations seemed politically motivated, leading to skepticism about its role in strengthening democracy."

However, NAB's engagement in combating corruption was a crucial component of the larger democratic conflict. Political analyst adds, "NAB served as a reminder that corruption needed to be addressed for Pakistan to strengthen its democratic institutions, despite its flaws."

### **5.13 Foreign Intervention and Its Effects on Democracy (2008–2013)**

Between 2008 and 2013, Pakistan's democracy was significantly shaped by foreign involvement, which had both beneficial and detrimental effects. The United States was the most significant foreign influence, particularly when it came to issues pertaining to military assistance and the War on Terror. Aziz (2025) opines, "While foreign aid was essential in stabilizing the economy, it also placed immense pressure on Pakistan's political decisions."

The relationship between civilian governments and the military became complicated as a result of the United States' backing of Pakistan's military and its demands for action against extremist organizations. The civilian government had to navigate foreign policy under the shadow of military priorities, which often undermined its democratic authority. Foreign pressures, especially in the defense and counterterrorism sectors, increased the conflict between military authority and civilian leadership".

International financial organizations like the World Bank and IMF, as well as foreign donors like the United States, played a crucial role. Hizbullah (2025) remarks, "Pakistan's economic policies were frequently shaped by external pressures, which affected its sovereignty and democratic decision-making. Although foreign assistance was essential for maintaining economic stability, it occasionally resulted in domestically unpopular actions that damaged the government's credibility".

Pakistan received resources from foreign operations that were essential to its economic survival at the same time. Ahmad (2025), claimed that “foreign loans and aid contributed to Pakistan's political stability by supporting the government's financial position. However, Pakistan's independence in making decisions was weakened by this reliance, which also left it open to outside interference”.

Between 2008 and 2013, foreign interference continued to have a major role in determining Pakistan's democratic path. Foreign countries' influence especially that of the United States, affected Pakistan's democratic process in both positive and negative ways. According to Ali (2025) “While foreign aid and support for democratic institutions played a role in stabilizing Pakistan, the impact of foreign intervention was often problematic”.

The ongoing assistance for Pakistan's counterterrorism initiatives, which resulted in a tighter alliance with the United States during the War on Terror, was one of the most prominent foreign interventions. The military's place in the political hierarchy was frequently strengthened by this outside influence, marginalizing civilian institutions. Sarrer (2025) contends that "Pakistan's sovereignty and democratic governance were frequently compromised by the external pressure to align with Western policies on security."

Since Pakistan's economy was mostly dependent on foreign help to survive, foreign interference also had an impact on the economy. According to Khan (2025) “Foreign donors often had a say in Pakistan's economic policies, which were sometimes at odds with the priorities of democratic governance Pakistan’s capacity to make autonomous policy decisions was occasionally weakened by outside economic pressure, which further weakened the democratic process”.

International organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also played a part throughout the 2008–2013 period; their policies were frequently seen as undercutting local democratic processes. Ali (2025) opines that "the emphasis on austerity and economic reforms dictated by these foreign entities frequently led to policies that were not fully aligned with the needs of the people."

Notwithstanding these difficulties, foreign intervention in Pakistan's democratic stabilization was not wholly detrimental. "In certain cases, foreign support for Pakistan's democratic institutions, such as the strengthening of civil society organizations and media, played a role in promoting democratic values" concludes Khan (2025).

#### **5.14 Corruption and Governance: A Threat to Democratic Integrity (2008–2013)**

Between 2008 and 2013, corruption and bad governance continued to be major barriers to Pakistan's democratic consolidation. Widespread cronyism, nepotism, and bribery practices persisted in undermining public confidence in democratic institutions in spite of government efforts to combat corruption (Ahmad N. , 2012). According to Abdullah (2025), "corruption permeated all levels of government, from federal ministries to local governance.

Particularly, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government was accused of corruption due to high-profile incidents involving bureaucrats and ministers. The PPP was frequently criticized for not doing enough to curb corruption within its ranks. The political patronage system and a lack of accountability allowed unethical behaviors to thrive unchecked".

Despite its efforts to combat corruption, many people believed that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was an ineffectual organization. "While NAB investigated several corruption cases, its actions were often politically motivated, further eroding its credibility," claimed Khan (2025).

The inability to create a genuinely autonomous organization for anti-corruption initiatives was seen in the many political disputes between parties over the NAB's function.

Furthermore, governance suffered as a result of corruption. Salman (2025) opines that "poor public service delivery was caused by inefficient administration, lack of transparency, and misuse of resources. As a result, residents lost faith in their elected officials, which not only impacted how the public saw the government but also hindered the democratic process".

Therefore, corruption continued to be a major problem that hindered Pakistan's democratic growth by impairing the ability of institutions to operate efficiently and undermining the legitimacy of the government.

Among the main elements that undermined Pakistan's democracy and parliamentary system between 2008 and 2013 were issues with corruption and governance. According to Aziz (2025) "Corruption permeated all levels of government, from the executive to local bodies, and it became one of the biggest obstacles to democratic consolidation. Because corruption was so rampant, people's faith in democratic institutions was eroded, which led to significant voter disenchantment".

Despite its pledges to combat corruption, the PPP-led administration was accused of extensive corruption within its own ranks. According to Riaz (2025) "The lack of accountability within the government created a sense of frustration among the people, leading to a decline in democratic engagement. The public's trust in the government was severely damaged by its incapacity to combat corruption".

The democratic process was further tarnished by the frequent accusations made against political parties and their leaders for misusing public funds for private benefit. According to Khan (2025) A major setback for Pakistan's democracy was the widespread use of state institutions for political gain, He points out that this led to a system in which the main need for government jobs was political allegiance rather than skill or merit".

The judiciary has been criticized for selectively enforcing accountability, despite its strong pursuit of corruption charges. "The lack of consistent application of the rule of law allowed certain individuals to evade justice, further undermining the credibility of democratic institutions," argued Shafiq (2025).

Notwithstanding the difficulties caused by corruption, the media and civic society were instrumental in bringing corruption scandals to light and pressing for accountability. Media outlets like Dawn and Geo News acted as watchdogs, holding the government accountable and bringing corruption issues into public view.

### **5.15 Conclusion: Challenges and Achievements in Strengthening Democracy (2008–2013)**

In Pakistan's political history, the years 2008–2013 were a pivotal time that saw both progress and setbacks in the fortification of the democratic and parliamentary system. Even with the introduction of important changes like the 18th Amendment and initiatives to limit military power, Pakistan's democracy remained precarious because of enduring corruption, difficulties with governance, and institutional flaws. Even though they were frequently hampered by internal conflicts and dynastic leadership, political parties were crucial to preserving a democratic process. According to Ihsan (2025) "party rivalries and leadership struggles shaped the political landscape, but elections remained the central democratic event."

Although their efficacy and independence were regularly questioned, the judiciary, media, and civil society played a crucial role in holding the administration responsible. Also media scrutiny and judicial activity were crucial to the process of consolidating democracy, but they were also constrained in a contentious political climate.

Furthermore, the political discourse was still shaped by outside forces like military influence and foreign involvement, which occasionally threatened Pakistan's democratic institutions' independence. Ali (2025) contends that "the interplay between civilian and military powers, exacerbated by external pressures, limited the full potential of democratic governance."

Overall, there were both problems and reforms during the 2008–2013 period, and the end of the PPP government's term marked an important turning point in Pakistan's democratic growth. Despite the obstacles, the ability of the civilian government to complete its term without military intervention was an important step in the maturation of Pakistan's democracy. This chapter clarifies the intricacies of Pakistan's democratic path during this time by drawing on the perspectives of political analysts, journalists, and specialists. Despite some noteworthy successes, the system's difficulties serve as a reminder that democratic consolidation is still an ongoing process.

### **5.16 Introduction to Pakistan's Democratic Evolution (2013–2018)**

Pakistan's democratic journey is at a critical juncture between 2013 and 2018. With the establishment of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government following the 2013 general elections, Nawaz Sharif was appointed prime minister for the third time. With the peaceful handover of power following the 2013 elections, democratic governance was maintained during this time, laying the groundwork for Pakistan's political stability. Nevertheless, the government had to deal with a lot of problems, such as claims of political instability, inefficiency, and corruption (Akram & Azhar, 2023).

Significant changes were also made to Pakistan's legislative system between 2013 and 2018. Political friction, military influence, and problems like institutional disharmony and governance failings persisted in the system despite attempts to improve democratic processes. However, the fact that the term was successfully concluded without a military takeover or unlawful interference showed that democracy was being strengthened (Corsi, 2018).

From 2013 to 2018, this section attempts to give a thorough analysis of Pakistan's democracy and parliamentary system. The interview questions that were asked of politicians, journalists, political analysts, and experts served as its foundation and are covered in this section in a thematic manner. A thorough summary of the elements affecting Pakistan's political system during this time is given, which relates to one of the interview questions.

### **5.17 Political Parties and Their Role in Strengthening Democracy (2013–2018)**

Between 2013 and 2018, Pakistan's political parties remained crucial in determining the country's democratic and legislative environment. Nawaz Sharif's PML-N dominated politics, but opposition groups like the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) continued to be active and opposed the government's policies (Taj & Rehman, 2015). Humayon (2025) asserts that "political parties, despite internal conflicts, were essential in ensuring that democratic processes were upheld.

With the peaceful transition of power from one civilian government to another, the 2013 general elections were heralded as a major milestone in Pakistan's democratic history.

The transition marked the consolidation of democratic processes, where political parties played an instrumental role."

However, the growth of Pakistan's democratic institutions was still constrained by the dominance of dynasty politics. According to Irfan (2025), "dynamic leadership in parties like PML-N and PPP prevented new leadership from emerging, which stunted political evolution and hindered democratic reforms. Due to the continued dominance of family control, this problem was particularly common in PML-N".

Furthermore, the difficulties of political cooperation were illustrated by the split between the PML-N and PTI, especially during the latter's protest movement in 2014. Aziz (2025) contends that "the political impasse was further aggravated by the opposition's incapacity to effectively challenge the government in the parliament."

Khan (2025) opines "Political parties continued to play a crucial role in Pakistan's democratic system in spite of these obstacles, giving voters a say in elections and a way to hold the government responsible. Political parties were vital in sustaining democracy, even if their internal weaknesses hindered democratic maturation".

Between 2013 and 2018, political parties had a complicated and multidimensional role in bolstering Pakistan's democracy. Though their acts also brought attention to the difficulties of party-based politics in Pakistan, political parties like the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan People's Party (PPP), and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) all had a major impact on the political debate.

According to Ihsan (2025), "the PML-N, under Nawaz Sharif, played a key role in maintaining political stability during this period. The government of Nawaz Sharif prioritized economic reforms and infrastructure development, but it was also embroiled in corruption scandals, such as the Panama Papers investigation. This damaged the party's image and resulted in Nawaz Sharif's disqualification as prime minister in 2017, which was a major political event".

Fayaz (2025) said that "PTI became a powerful opposition party and was instrumental in casting doubt on the legitimacy of the current administration. With its anti-corruption stance and promise of "change, PTI's political message struck a chord with a sizable

portion of the voters, especially young people. But PTI was also criticized for its combative style of leadership, especially when it came to its demonstrations against the PML-N.

Despite playing a less influence in national politics, the PPP remained influential, especially in Sindh. the PPP's performance in Sindh remained mixed, with accusations of poor governance and corruption overshadowing its ability to govern effectively. The party was still having trouble balancing the need for internal reform with its past”.

The difficulties in attaining democratic consolidation were illustrated by the existence of various political groups and their changing interactions with one another. Khan (2025) opines "Political parties in Pakistan, while crucial to democracy, often struggle with issues of internal democracy, corruption, and patronage politics”.

### **5.18 The Role of Elections in Strengthening Democracy (2013–2018)**

From 2013 to 2018, elections were a major component of Pakistan's democratic system. Since it was the first time in Pakistani history that a civilian administration successfully served out its term and turned over power to another civilian government, the 2013 general elections were especially noteworthy (Beyme, 2015) Zia (2025) Said "The 2013 elections were a historic moment for democracy in Pakistan, showcasing the ability of the democratic system to endure despite numerous challenges”.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was in charge of the electoral process, and although it was criticized for several logistical problems, most people agreed that the 2013 elections were transparent overall. "The 2013 elections were a step forward in terms of transparency, but there were still issues with the fairness of the process, especially regarding the role of military influence in the elections, “opines Khan (2025). Elections were viewed as a means of guaranteeing popular involvement in the political process, notwithstanding the difficulties. According to Salman (2025) “The elections brought millions of people to the polls, and while there were concerns about rigging and military interference, they ultimately reinforced the principle of the people’s choice”.

Imran Khan's PTI campaign pushed for changes in the ECP by emphasizing the need for electoral reforms and fairness in the voting process. Zia (2025) claimed that "the PTI's agitation after the 2013 elections brought attention to the flaws within the electoral system, leading to some positive reforms."

Even though the elections during this time were not perfect, they were an essential part of Pakistan's democratic consolidation. Former Election Commissioner Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim writes, "Elections were a statement of the public's willingness to engage with the democratic process; they were not just about selecting leaders."

### **5.19 The Role of Legislation in Strengthening Democracy (2013–2018)**

Between 2013 and 2018, legislation was crucial in strengthening the parliamentary and democratic system. Numerous important laws, notably those pertaining to accountability, anti-terrorism, and electoral reforms, were passed under Nawaz Sharif's leadership (Abbasi, 2018). "The PML-N government pushed for legislation that aimed at curbing corruption and enhancing the powers of parliamentary institutions," according to a religious scholar.

The electoral reforms, which were intended to increase the legitimacy of elections and the ECP, were among the most important pieces of legislation passed during this time. According to Irfan (2025), "the electoral reforms were essential to making the voting process more transparent and credible. The effectiveness and quickness of these legislative changes were criticized, nevertheless, because certain measures were poorly executed or delayed".

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) played a key role in holding political leaders responsible in addition to election changes. When the NAB was accused of picking on opposition politicians, it became the center of controversy. Gauhar (2025) opines that "the NAB, while playing a role in tackling corruption, was often seen as being politically motivated, which undermined its legitimacy as a democratic institution."

However, numerous political disputes hampered the government's attempts to strengthen the parliament's role in governing. According to Aimal (2025), "the lack of

political consensus in passing key legislation often led to gridlock in the parliament, further delaying reforms."

Despite legislative advancements, the potential of these laws to improve democratic governance was frequently thwarted by difficulties with enforcement and political impasse. Khan (2025) opines "While legislative efforts were commendable, their impact was often diluted by inefficiency and political infighting,"

Between 2013 and 2018, legislation had a mixed impact in bolstering Pakistan's democracy. Although there were a number of significant legislative initiatives to enhance governance and solve problems such as election reform, the practical efficacy of these laws was frequently questioned.

According to Haider (2025), "one of the most significant achievements of Pakistan's parliament was the passing of the 18th Amendment. An important turning point in Pakistan's democratic development was the 18th Amendment, which sought to increase the autonomy of constitutional bodies and decentralize power to the provinces. However, a number of political parties' opposition made its complete implementation difficult".

According to Khan (2025) "The difficulty in passing key pieces of legislation highlights the challenges Pakistan's parliamentary system faces in achieving legislative efficiency". Partisan interests and political deadlock frequently prevented important laws from passing, which resulted in a system where numerous legislative attempts failed to produce noticeable advancements in government.

Implementation issues also plagued laws pertaining to governance and corruption, such as the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) statutes. According to Khan (2025) "NAB's selective targeting of politicians and its lack of transparency raised questions about the effectiveness of anti-corruption law".

Notwithstanding these obstacles, Pakistan's legislative system made notable strides during this time, with changes in a number of areas improving democratic institutions generally.

## **5.20 The Role of Opposition in Strengthening Democracy (2013–2018)**

Between 2013 and 2018, the opposition's contribution to bolstering Pakistan's democracy was characterized by both collaboration and conflict. Imran Khan's PTI, the primary opposition party, was very outspoken in its criticism of the PML-N administration (Akram & Azhar, 2023). According to Bashir (2025) "The opposition's role in holding the government accountable was crucial, especially as it raised concerns about electoral transparency and governance failures".

A pivotal moment in Pakistani politics was the PTI's 2014 sit-in protests calling for Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's resignation. According Ahmad (2025), "the protests mobilized the public, but they also led to political instability, which hindered the progress of governance and parliamentary proceedings. Even though the ECP proclaimed the 2013 elections free and fair, these demonstrations called into doubt the validity of the polls and the government's mandate".

Although the PPP and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) were frequently accused for their incapacity to successfully oppose the ruling party in parliament, other opposition groups also contributed to holding the government responsible. Khan (2025) opines "The fragmentation of the opposition prevented them from mounting a unified challenge to the government, thus limiting their impact on the legislative process".

Opposition parties, however, were crucial in encouraging discussion and increasing the political process's transparency. Humayon (2025) opines "The opposition's efforts in raising issues such as corruption, governance, and accountability kept the ruling party on its toes and ensured that the government remained responsive to the needs of the people".

Throughout the years 2013–2018, Pakistan's opposition parties were vital in maintaining responsibility, openness, and the defense of democratic procedures. However, there was frequently friction between the opposition and the ruling administration, especially when the opposition parties aimed to question the government's governance and policies.

According to Ihsan (2025), "the opposition parties, especially the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), led by Imran Khan, played a critical role in holding the government accountable,"

PTI's role in advocating for increased openness in Pakistan's political system was emphasized by its strong opposition to the PML-N government and its demand for election changes.

During parliamentary sessions, the opposition also raised a number of significant problems, such as corruption and ineffective government. According to Qaisar (2025) "the opposition parties regularly brought issues of national importance to the table, forcing the government to address them."

The opposition's strategies, however, were frequently criticized for being unduly disruptive. Ihsan (2025) contends that "the opposition's role in ensuring government accountability is important, but their constant protests and calls for resignations often led to political instability. The political system occasionally felt stuck as a result of these impasses".

Notwithstanding these obstacles, Pakistan's opposition persisted in acting as an essential check on the country's ruling administration, serving as a reminder to Pakistanis of the value of democracy in preventing the concentration of power in the hands of a single political party.

Lijphart highlights that the foundation of consociational arrangements is opposition cooperation. Respondents talked on the opposition parties' mature roles, particularly those of the PML-N (2008–2013) and PPP (2013–2018), which mostly complied with parliamentary regulations and refrained from extra-parliamentary activism. According to the respondents, the opposition's involvement in committees, particularly those dealing with constitutional issues, demonstrated a readiness to make a positive contribution an elite behavioral characteristic in line with Lijphart's model.

## **5.21 Constitutional Bodies and Their Role in Strengthening Democracy (2013–2018)**

From 2013 to 2018, Pakistan's constitutional bodies, including the National Finance Commission (NFC), the Council of Common Interests (CCI), and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), were crucial in bolstering the country's democratic and parliamentary system. These organizations were in charge of making sure that democratic procedures were open, just, and compliant with the constitution (Ahmad N. , 2012).

According to Qaisar (2025), "the ECP's role in conducting free and fair elections is critical to maintaining democratic legitimacy." The 2013 elections, which were led by the ECP, were generally regarded as a turning point in maintaining the legitimacy of the democratic process. The elections were generally regarded as being more transparent than prior ones, notwithstanding some complaints and claims of anomalies.

These constitutional bodies were crucial in preserving democratic processes. These organizations played a critical role in fostering good governance, electoral transparency, and the balance of power between the federal and provincial government.

Smaller provinces, who sought for a more equitable division of resources, continued to criticize the NFC, which was responsible with allocating federal funds among the provinces. According to Salman (2025), "the federal government frequently struggled with balancing provincial interests, leading to tensions that sometimes undermined the national unity. Similarly, in spite of some political disputes, the NFC award which determines how financial resources are distributed across provinces continued to operate efficiently. The NFC played a pivotal role in promoting fiscal federalism, ensuring that provinces received their fair share of resources".

The CCI, which was in charge of organizing and settling conflicts between the central government and the provinces, was essential in mediating disagreements over governance and resources. It was frequently criticized, meanwhile, for being ineffective. According to Irfan (2025), "the CCI was sometimes ineffective in addressing critical matters, especially in moments of political crisis."

According to Bashir (2025), "the CCI made sure that provincial concerns, especially regarding resource allocation, were addressed, which helped maintain national unity." The CCI promoted collaboration within the federal system and helped reduce tensions by giving the provinces a forum for discussion.

Notwithstanding their difficulties, constitutional bodies during this time were essential to maintaining Pakistan's democratic system's checks and balances. According to Khan (2025), "their functioning, although flawed, demonstrated the commitment to institutionalizing democracy and governance."

Nonetheless, there were still issues with these constitutional bodies' efficacy. Ahmad (2025) contends that "these institutions' potential to function impartially is undermined by their lack of independence and political interference." They frequently operated inefficiently because to partisan interests and a lack of political drive. Despite these obstacles, Pakistan's constitutional bodies made great progress between 2013 and 2018 in upholding the balance of power between the federal and provincial governments and encouraging democratic accountability.

In divided societies, institutional structures for power-sharing are crucial, according to Lijphart. A number of interviewees commended the National Finance Commission (NFC) and the Council of Common Interests (CCI) for their regular operations as inclusive forums that permitted provinces and ethnic groups to peacefully share power. Consociational devices are what these bodies do. But as Hudson would contend, these bodies must transcend formality in order to truly represent subcultures. Balochistan continue to feel underrepresented, according to some experts, which highlights flaws in democratic federalism.

### **5.22 Smooth Transfer of Power and Its Role in Strengthening Democracy (2013–2018)**

The peaceful handover of power following the 2013 general elections was one of the most important events in Pakistan's democracy between 2013 and 2018. An important turning point in the nation's political history was the orderly handover of power from the PPP to the PML-N (Ghulam, 2020). According to Zia (2025) "The 2013 elections and subsequent peaceful transfer of power marked the first time in Pakistan's history

that one civilian government handed over power to another without military intervention

In Pakistan's democratic evolution, this change was a positive step that demonstrated the political system's increasing maturity. Along with proving the democratic institutions' tenacity, the peaceful transition also showed that political parties had grown more receptive to the election process, even in the face of loss. According to Asif (2025) "For the first time, the political elites showed a commitment to the democratic process, accepting the results of elections without recourse to extra-constitutional measures".

One of the most important political developments of the time was the 2013 change of power from the PPP to the PML-N. An important turning point in Pakistan's democratic history, this peaceful handover of power reaffirmed that democracy could be established in spite of obstacles.

According to Tasbeh Ullah (2025), "the 2013 elections marked the first time in Pakistan's history that one civilian government handed over power to another peacefully. This development showed the tenacity of Pakistan's democratic institutions and was essential in setting a model for subsequent democratic transitions".

But there were some difficulties with this easy transfer. Political instability resulted from the opposition parties' demonstrations and claims that the elections were rigged, especially PTI. Riaz (2025) opines "The post-election protests raised concerns about the legitimacy of the process, even though the transfer of power itself was seamless". Despite not causing a constitutional crisis, the PTI protests put democratic systems to the test.

However, Pakistan's history saw a sea change when there was no military intervention during the transition, demonstrating the possibility of peaceful democratic transitions. According to Aimal (2025) "A precedent for future elections and political stability was established by the seamless transition of power between civilian governments".

The professionalism of the Pakistani Election Commission and the dedication of political parties to the democratic process allowed for a seamless transition of power. Khan (2025) opines "The military played a neutral role in this transition, allowing the

political process to unfold without interference. Given the military's longstanding influence in Pakistani politics, this was especially notable”.

But there were difficulties throughout that time. "The power transition in 2013 was smooth, but the new government inherited a host of problems, including energy crises, security issues, and an unstable economy," said Ali (2025). Nawaz Sharif's administration sought to calm the political climate and consolidate power in spite of these obstacles. "The peaceful transition set an important precedent, but it also exposed the vulnerabilities of Pakistan's democratic system, especially in terms of institutional capacity and political coherence," claimed Salman (2025). In addition to bringing attention to the continuous battles for democratic consolidation, the 2013 power shift also gave rise to some optimism.

### **5.23 The Role of Local Government and Media in Strengthening Democracy (2013–2018)**

Between 2013 and 2018, the media and local governments became more significant in Pakistan's democracy. The necessity of empowering local governments as a component of the democratic process was increasingly acknowledged, notwithstanding obstacles in local governance systems (Parveen & Hussain, 2024). According to Haider (2025) "The local government system under the PML-N government faced difficulties in implementation, but it represented an important step in decentralizing power and involving citizens at the grassroots level”.

Although local governance remained inadequate in many places, the introduction of local government elections in Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was perceived as a step towards greater political decentralization. According to Marifat (2025), "Local governments were often ineffective due to lack of funding, political interference, and a lack of administrative capacity." Notwithstanding these obstacles, local governments were crucial in promoting political engagement and offering a forum for it.

However, the role of the media in guaranteeing transparency and accountability was more significant. More political conversation was made possible during this time by the growth of digital and electronic media channels. "The media, particularly television channels, became an influential force in Pakistan's democracy, providing platforms for

political debate, government scrutiny, and social change," Shakir (2025), adds. But charges of political interference and bias frequently contested media freedom. Nonetheless, the media and local government systems played a crucial role in promoting a more open and transparent democratic process during this time.

Between 2013 and 2018, Pakistan's democracy was increasingly shaped by the media. Independent journalism, social media, and television channels all flourished during this time, adding to the political narrative. As a watchdog and a spur for political participation, the media grew to be a formidable force.

According to Hamid (2025) "Media outlets such as Geo News and ARY News provided extensive coverage of political events, which kept the public informed about government actions and political developments". But the media was also charged with sensationalism, frequently giving contentious issues precedence over important policy debates. Aimal (2025) continues, "While media freedom was a positive development, its responsibility to portray balanced and accurate news was sometimes compromised."

The increasing power of the military further complicated the function of the media. "The military had significant sway over media narratives, particularly concerning national security and foreign policy," Hamid (2025) , opines. The press's independence and impartiality in covering political events were called into question by this influence.

During this period, social media also became a major player. According Zia (2025), "platforms like Twitter and Facebook allowed citizens to voice their opinions and mobilize protests, as seen in the PTI's protests against the PML-N government." Social media provided a forum for political expression, but it also turned into a place where political polarization and false information were disseminated.

From 2013 to 2018, the media was an important part of Pakistan's democracy, acting as a forum for accountability as well as a tool for political participation. With more television channels, digital platforms, and social media, the media environment has grown throughout time. This growth added to the political conversation by giving citizens access to a range of political perspectives.

According to Hamid (2025), "the media has been at the forefront of Pakistan's democratic struggle, providing a voice to the people and acting as a check on government power." Investigative journalism flourished between 2013 and 2018, especially with significant political stories like the Panama Papers and corruption probes.

The involvement of the media has been a double-edged sword, though. "While the media has promoted democracy by holding politicians accountable, it has also been criticized for sensationalism and bias," said Khan (2025). Some media outlets have been charged with supporting political parties, which calls into doubt their reported objectivity.

According to Jan (2025), "The media's power to shape public opinion has made it both a strength and a vulnerability for Pakistan's democracy." The democratic discourse was occasionally weakened by the overemphasis on sensational problems and personal scandals, which took focus away from important policy discussions.

Notwithstanding these objections, the media was crucial in influencing public opinion and promoting political reform. The media's role in creating political awareness has undoubtedly strengthened democratic institutions, although it remains a battleground for competing interests. There was no denying the media's contribution to advancing democracy. The media contributed to the accountability of political leaders by exposing corruption, political scandals, and government inefficiency.

#### **5.24 Military Intervention and Its Impact on Democracy (2013–2018)**

The Pakistani military continued to play a significant influence in the nation's governance from 2013 to 2018, despite not directly interfering with the operations of the civilian government. One aspect of Pakistani politics that has remained constant is the military's influence on policy choices, especially those pertaining to defense, national security, and foreign policy (Behuria, 2009).

According to Khan (2025) "The military had a covert influence, especially on Pakistan's policies regarding Afghanistan, India, and its strategic partnerships with China and the United States. Tension between the executive and military leadership frequently

resulted from the military's supervision over important policy sectors, even while the civilian administration continued to hold sway. The military continued to play a crucial role in counterterrorism efforts and in shaping the nation's nuclear strategy.

Humayon (2025) opines "The balance between civilian and military control was always delicate. The military was regarded as a strong force that continued to have an impact on Pakistan's democracy even while it avoided direct involvement in civilian matters. Specifically, civilian administration was frequently eclipsed by the military's role in maintaining national security and managing political conflicts".

According to Aftab (2025) "Concerns were also raised about the military's close ties to political parties. The military's influence was evident not only in matters of national security but also in the political stability of the country. Pakistan's democratic system, according to some political experts, is still "hybrid," with military influence frequently limiting civilian governments".

Despite its minimal direct involvement in administration, the military maintained a substantial influence on Pakistani politics from 2013 to 2018. The military did not stage coups or directly intervene throughout this time, despite being a powerful force in the preceding decades. "The military leadership during this time, while influential in certain matters, largely adhered to the constitutional framework, and allowed the civilian government to continue its rule", Aimal (2025) opines.

Nonetheless, a major worry continued to be the military's influence over political matters. Naveed (2025) said "The military had significant influence behind the scenes, particularly in areas like foreign policy, national security, and defense,". In addition, the military continued to exert pressure on political parties, especially in the context of anti-corruption movements led by PTI.

Despite not being explicitly interventionist, the military's involvement remained a topic of discussion among observers and politicians. "While there was no direct coup, the military's power over key political decisions and its involvement in governance remained a critical factor in Pakistan's political stability," argued Aftab (2025).

The military's growing influence in internal matters, especially in the economic sphere, raised concerns about how it would affect democratic processes. Abdullah (2025) said "The growing military presence in economic decision-making through organizations like the Fauji Foundation and its control over major industries risks undermining civilian governance".

In spite of this, a number of public figures have stated their support for civilian rule. democratic leader and former lawmaker emphasizes that "the military's role in the political system, while significant, should remain within the bounds of constitutional limits." They go on to say that Pakistan's democratic future depends on having a powerful and autonomous civilian government.

The difficulties Pakistan had in attaining complete civilian rule were ultimately brought to light by the military's indirect influence. Jan (2025) opines, "Pakistan's political system remained a hybrid, where civilian governments were often overshadowed by the military's institutional power."

Despite not having a direct role in the government from 2013 to 2018, Pakistan's military continued to have a noticeable impact on the political system. Even under civilian governance, Pakistan's military has long been a potent entity that frequently operates in the background. Concern over the military's rising influence in foreign policy, economics, and national security issues grew in the years after the 2013 elections. The military's power to sway political events, including the 2014 Tahir-ul-Qadri and Imran Khan-led political protests, showed that its shadow hung over the democratic system.

### **5.25 Judiciary's Role and Its Influence on Democracy (2013–2018)**

Between 2013 and 2018, the judiciary was crucial in forming Pakistan's democracy. Pakistan's constitutional structure continues to be based on the judiciary's independence, which it uses to impose its authority over political power, accountability, and governance. Specifically, national politics centered on the Supreme Court's hearings in high-profile corruption cases like the Panama Papers case (Azeem, 2017).

According to Salman (2025) "While the judiciary's activism was necessary to curb corruption and maintain accountability, it often strayed into the political domain, creating tension with elected officials,". The historic Panama Papers case, which resulted in Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's disqualification in 2017, demonstrated the judiciary's expanding influence over political leadership issues. According to Aimal (2025), "the Supreme Court's intervention in disqualifying the sitting prime minister raised questions about judicial overreach, and whether the court was overstepping its boundaries."

Although the judiciary's efforts strengthened the battle against corruption, they also sparked worries about judicial activism and how it can undermine democratic processes. "Judicial intervention in political matters led to a confrontation between the executive and the judiciary, which impacted the functioning of the government," Aftab (2025) opines.

However, the concept of judicial accountability inside Pakistan's democracy was also strengthened by the court's rulings throughout the 2013–2018 timeframe. According to Rahman (2025), "the judiciary helped solidify the rule of law and gave weight to anti-corruption efforts despite its confrontations with the executive."

From 2013 to 2018, the judiciary remained an important part of Pakistan's democracy, but its engagement in political affairs elicited both favorable and unfavorable responses. The political landscape was significantly shaped by the Supreme Court's involvement, particularly in the issue of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's disqualification. According to Aminee (2025), "the judiciary emerged as a key player in determining the fate of elected officials during this period." An important turning point in Pakistan's political history was Nawaz Sharif's disqualification in 2017 due to the Panama Papers. Ihsan (2025) observes, "The ruling was viewed by many as a win for judicial independence, but it also raised concerns about the judiciary's involvement in the political process."

The judiciary's actions frequently made it difficult to distinguish between the judicial and executive arms of government, despite the fact that judicial independence was one of its main advantages. According to Ahmad (2025), "the judiciary was at times accused of overstepping its constitutional mandate and interfering in the legislative and

executive functions." Concerns regarding the courts' political neutrality and impartiality were raised by the prevalence of judicial activism.

In addition, the judiciary's supervision promoted democratic accountability, particularly with regard to matters of governance and corruption. "The judiciary provided checks and balances on the executive, ensuring that corrupt practices were scrutinized," adds Khan (2025). However, concerns regarding the independence and justice of the legal system were aroused by the selective character of its activities.

"The judiciary's role was crucial in preserving democratic processes, but its politicization during this period remains a point of contention" said Irfan (2025). Between 2013 and 2018, Pakistan's court became more involved in influencing the country's political climate. Its engagement in matters such as judicial reforms, election openness, and the disqualification of political leaders had both beneficial and detrimental effects on democracy and the parliamentary system.

According to Bashir (2025) "The judiciary, under Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, had already set a precedent for judicial activism, and this trend continued during the 2013–2018 period". Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's dismissal in the wake of the Panama Papers affair was one of the most important measures. While some saw the decision as judicial overreach, many saw it as an example of the judiciary upholding the rule of law.

Aftab (2025) opines "While the judiciary played a critical role in ensuring accountability, its interference in political matters often resulted in tensions between the executive and the judiciary". Some claimed that by interfering in political affairs, the judiciary weakened the separation of powers and fostered political instability.

During this time, the question of judicial independence was also brought up, with some claiming that political pressure may still affect the judiciary. Asma Jahangir, an activist and lawyer, contends that "the judiciary, while essential for upholding democracy, must remain neutral and avoid becoming a tool for political rivalry."

Notwithstanding these objections, the judiciary persisted in establishing itself as a vital component of Pakistan's democratic system, striking a balance between upholding political stability and advancing the rule of law.

### **5.26 Dynastic Politics and Its Impact on Democracy (2013–2018)**

From 2013 to 2018, Pakistan's political landscape remained dominated by dynastic politics, with political families having a major impact on the nation's governance. Pakistan's political system was still dominated by political dynasties, especially the Bhuttos, Sharifs, and others, which sparked worries about the concentration of political power in a small number of families (Qazi, Akhtar, & Fan, 2024).

Jan (2025), "The entrenched dynastic politics undermines the democratic process because it limits political competition and stifles new leadership." A cycle of few political options was maintained because of the dynastic structure of parties like the PPP and PML-N, which led to the belief that political power in Pakistan was concentrated among a small number of elite families.

According to Ahmad (2025), "dynastic politics, where leadership positions are often passed down within political families, heavily influence Pakistan's political system." It has become challenging for new political leaders to emerge as a result of this pattern, raising worries about the concentration of power around a small number of families. Former lawmaker Shireen Mazari contends that "the dominance of dynastic politics undermines democratic principles, as it often results in unaccountable leadership." Political dynasties tend to restrict democratic competition and hinder the emergence of a more inclusive political climate, even though they can offer continuity.

Nonetheless, proponents of dynastic politics contend that these dynasties have offered steady leadership during political upheavals. According to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, "dynamic families have a deep understanding of Pakistan's political system, and their experience can provide stability."

Dynastic politics' hegemony during this time has had both positive and negative effects. On the one side, it preserved leadership continuity, which guaranteed political stability. However, it hindered democratic innovation and postponed the rise of fresh,

autonomous political voices. "Dynastic politics has perpetuated a culture of political patronage, rather than encouraging merit-based governance," said Khan (2025).

Between 2013 and 2018, Pakistan's political scene was dominated by dynastic politics. Political dynasties founded on families, such the Sharif and Bhutto-Zardari families, remained powerful in the political sphere and frequently raised questions about the state of Pakistan's democracy.

According to Jan (2025) "Political dynasties have had a stranglehold on Pakistani politics, limiting opportunities for new leadership," With Nawaz Sharif and his family holding important roles in the government, the Sharif family in particular controlled the PML-N. Similar to this, the Zardari-Bhutto family remained in charge of the PPP, with Asif Ali Zardari becoming a key figure following Benazir Bhutto's murder.

Power was frequently concentrated in a small number of families as a result of dynamic politics, which impeded the growth of a dynamic, competitive political system. "Dynastic politics discourages merit-based leadership and fosters a culture of patronage," according to Bangash (2025). Because political parties were frequently viewed as family-run businesses rather than as organizations that represented the will of the people, this raised questions about the viability of democracy.

Ali (2025) observed that "the continued dominance of these families prevents the emergence of new political talent and ideas, stalling the democratic evolution of the country." Dynastic politics, according to critics, bolsters elite control over the political system, impeding the advancement and accountability of true democracy.

During the years 2013–2018, dynasty politics held up well in spite of these critiques, and there was little sign that Pakistan will soon abandon this system. Saleem (2025) stated that "The persistence of dynastic politics remains one of the major barriers to the development of a truly representative and democratic system,".

Dynastic politics did not, however, come without difficulties. Internal dissension between political parties grew as younger leaders demanded changes and a more open political system. Aftab (2025) asserts that "dynastic politics remains powerful, but there

is growing pressure within these parties to open up leadership to new, non-dynastic faces."

However, it is still unclear if Pakistan's democracy can progress past its dependence on political dynasties. "The challenge is whether the political system can foster new, independent leadership that can represent the diverse interests of the country," Said Jan (2025).

### **5.27 The Role of NAB in Strengthening or Weakening Democracy (2013–2018)**

Although it was frequently criticized for its selective targeting of political opponents, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) played a pivotal role in the battle against corruption from 2013 to 2018. Many saw the NAB's activities as politically motivated, despite the fact that it played a vital role in bringing officials accountable for wrongdoing (Imran, Murtaza, & Akbar, 2023). According Ahmad (2025), "NAB's selective approach to corruption investigations often undermined its credibility and reinforced the perception of a politically biased institution."

Whether the NAB's operations were motivated by political vendettas or justice principles has come into question due to the organization's focus on prominent individuals like Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif. Lawyer Asma Jahangir claims that there were worries that the military elite was using the NAB as a means of disparaging civilian politicians. The public began to doubt NAB's actual contribution to a just democratic system as a result of these worries about political manipulation.

However, NAB did contribute to drawing attention to the problem of corruption among Pakistan's political class. Khan (2025) opines, "Despite its flaws, NAB played a crucial role in initiating important investigations that brought to light corruption at the highest levels."

However, during the years 2013–2018, doubts persisted about NAB's credibility. Ali (2025) claimed that "the NAB's efficacy as a neutral organization for fostering accountability was compromised by the idea that it was being utilized to target opposition parties".

According to Almond and Powell, Pakistan has a disjointed political structure that is prone to instrumentalized institutions. The NAB and other organizations frequently represent elite conflicts rather than fair justice. According to several respondents, NAB's measures during the PML-N and PPP regimes were selectively implemented, eroding public confidence in democracy. Dahl's institutional theory cautions that democratic cynicism and weakened political socialization result from accountability systems that lack procedural neutrality. Therefore, in order to promote long-term democratic maturity, these institutions need to undergo reform.

### **5.28 Foreign Intervention and Its Impact on Democracy (2013–2018)**

From 2013 to 2018, Pakistan's political environment was still impacted by foreign meddling, especially from the US and its neighbors, including Afghanistan and India. With considerable pressure on the government to support U.S. policies, Pakistan's involvement in the War on Terror continued to be a major source of contention in its international relations.

Khurshid (2025) said, "While foreign aid and military cooperation with the United States were important, they often came with political strings attached, influencing Pakistan's domestic policies." Although the alliance with the United States and other Western countries was advantageous in terms of security and economic assistance, it frequently resulted in internal political instability and public discontent, particularly when national sovereignty was thought to be violated (Westwater & George, 1972).

Pakistan's internal politics were also influenced by its relations with India. Increased political rhetoric and militarism were caused in part by the ongoing conflict in Kashmir and tensions over the border. According to Hizbullah (2025), "the political class in Pakistan frequently used anti-India rhetoric to rally nationalist sentiment, which sometimes overshadowed the need for democratic reforms."

The political climate was also impacted by China's expanding economic influence in Pakistan, especially through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Ahmad (2025) states, "CPEC brought much-needed economic investment to Pakistan, but it also created new geopolitical dynamics that shaped domestic political discourse."

While foreign intervention helped some sections of the economy, it also made political instability worse by forcing Pakistan's political leaders to strike a careful balance between meeting demands from abroad and priorities at home.

Almond & Powell claim that because of institutional weakness, fragile democracies are extremely susceptible to outside forces. Respondents gave examples of how foreign powers affected domestic choices, particularly in the areas of security and the economy. Pakistan's classification as a democracy with little sovereignty and shaky internal coherence is further supported by this.

### **5.29 Corruption and Governance Challenges in the 2013–2018 Period**

From 2013 to 2018, corruption continued to pose a serious threat to Pakistan's democracy. Corruption persisted at all governmental levels in spite of the promises made by political parties, such as the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), to combat it. With significant scandals involving prominent leaders, the topic of corruption was frequently brought up during political debates (Ismail & Rizvi, 2010).

Ihsan (2025) Said that "the public's trust in democratic institutions was undermined by the lack of transparency in governance and the persistence of corruption." The political conversation was dominated by accusations of corruption against prominent leaders, including as Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif. The public's trust in democratic processes was damaged as a result of these scandals, which involved money laundering, kickbacks, and the misappropriation of public funds.

The public continued to have doubts about the efficacy of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and legal measures intended to combat corruption. According to hamid (2025) "Although NAB initiated several investigations, its selective targeting of political leaders led many to believe that the agency was a tool of political vendetta,". Despite democratic elections, the voters started to see little change in the system, which fueled their rising cynicism due to corruption and inadequate governance systems.

Public disenchantment was further made worse by poor administration and the ineffectiveness of bureaucratic processes, which continued problems like

unemployment, inflation, and power outages. Asif (2025) claimed that "poor governance and corruption stifled economic growth and deprived citizens of basic services." These elements added to the unstable political environment and made it more difficult for Pakistan to consolidate its democracy.

There were some encouraging advancements in spite of these difficulties. To fight corruption, the Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) was established, and the election system was reformed. The efficacy of these reforms was still hampered by corruption, though, and the system was frequently criticized for producing subpar outcomes.

Between 2013 and 2018, corruption continued to be one of the biggest threats to Pakistan's democracy and parliamentary system. There were numerous accusations of corrupt behavior by politicians, businesspeople, and government officials, and the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) kept concentrating on high-profile corruption cases.

Investigative writer Tariq Malik writes, "The Panama Papers revelations were a game-changer for Pakistan's political landscape, exposing the financial dealings of the country's political elite." Widespread public outrage and demands for responsibility followed the revelations. These disclosures directly led to Nawaz Sharif's removal from office in 2017 on corruption accusations.

Critics counter that corruption probes were frequently selective and driven by political motivations. "NAB has been criticized for targeting opposition leaders while allowing government figures to escape scrutiny," Aftab (2025) said. The public's confidence in the anti-corruption effort was weakened by this selective application of accountability. Additionally, the pervasiveness of corruption hindered governance. "Corruption remains a barrier to effective governance in Pakistan, with state institutions often compromised by powerful political and business interests," said Aziz (2025). The public's trust in democratic institutions and the operation of the state was steadily damaged by the failure to combat corruption.

Pakistan's democracy will continue to be undermined until it can deal with corruption at all levels of government.

Almond and Powell contend that in fragmented democracies, corruption erodes institutional credibility. According to numerous interviews, legislative legitimacy was seriously undermined by widespread corruption in both the PPP and PML-N regimes. Dahl would see this as a barrier to political socialization because it undermines the public's faith in democratic procedures. However, several respondents saw the smooth handovers of power in spite of corruption scandals as proof that democratic continuity rules are increasingly evolving.

### **5.30 Elections and Electoral Reforms (2013–2018)**

The first-ever democratic handover of power from one civilian government to another occurred as a result of the 2013 general elections, which were a turning point in Pakistan's democratic process. Nonetheless, ongoing discussion over the electoral process's fairness and the necessity of electoral changes to guarantee increased accountability and openness defined the next era (Khan A. A., 2014).

Aimal (2025) opines “that although the 2013 elections were praised as a significant advancement, accusations of vote manipulation and corruption remained. One of the main political groups that contested the election results was the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), which was led by Imran Khan and accused the ruling PML-N of electoral fraud. The validity of the election results and the ability of Pakistan's Election Commission were questioned as a result of the protests that followed these assertions”.

During this time, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) worked to enhance the electoral procedure. An advocate for electoral reform, remarks, "The adoption of biometric voting systems and the shift to electronic voting were important steps in improving the credibility of the electoral process." The potential of these reforms was, however, diminished by technical difficulties and the absence of implementation in many regions.

Opposition parties also criticized the election reforms, citing issues with vote counting's transparency in particular. Riaz (2025) contends that "the lack of confidence in the election results was caused in part by the ECP's inability to fully address the concerns of the opposition parties."

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the elections in 2013 and 2018 showed a significant trend toward higher voter turnout and a higher level of public awareness of elections. The voter turnout in both elections was higher compared to previous years, indicating a growing desire for democratic participation.

A fundamental element of Lijphart's consociational democracy is inter-elite cooperation, which is facilitated via parliamentary committees. Experts stressed that more inclusive decision-making across party lines was made possible by increased committee participation following the 18th Amendment. Dahl would see this as a procedural strengthening of democracy, where civic involvement and public trust are strengthened by institutional performance. However, other respondents pointed out that committee members lacked sincerity and had capability deficiencies, which serves as a reminder that behavioral transformation must accompany structural adjustments.

**Table 08: Theoretical Framework Application Across Interview Question.**

<b>Interview Theme</b>	<b>Applied Theorist(s)</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>
Political Parties	Almond, Lijphart	Fragmentation, Elite Cooperation
Parliament	Dahl	Institutional Legitimacy
Opposition	Lijphart	Inter-Elite Consensus
Constitutional Bodies	Lijphart, Hudson	Power Sharing, Representation
Military's Role	Almond, Dahl	Authoritarian Vulnerability, Civilian Supremacy
Judiciary	Dahl	Rule of Law, Democratic Socialization
Dynastic Politics	Hudson, Lijphart	Subcultural Dominance, Elite Stability
NAB & Accountability	Almond, Dahl	Selective Justice, Distrust
Media & Civil Society	Dahl, Lijphart	Pluralism, Watchdog Function
Elections	Lijphart, Hudson	Representation, Electoral Integrity
Corruption	Almond, Dahl	Legitimacy Erosion, Trust Deficit
Parliamentary Committees	Lijphart, Dahl	Procedural Depth, Cooperation

### **5.31 Conclusion: Democracy and Parliamentary System (2013–2018)**

Pakistan's political history from 2013 to 2018 saw both advancements and regressions for democracy and the parliamentary system. The successful 2013 peaceful transfer of power, the function of the media and constitutional authorities, and the initiatives to fight corruption were all encouraging signs of Pakistan's democracy's maturity. But obstacles including dynasty politics, military involvement, and the ongoing corruption issue made it clear that more reforms were required.

Aftab (2025) said, "Over the past ten years, Pakistan's democratic process has matured, but there is still much work to be done." Whether the political system can actually develop to the point where democratic institutions and norms can operate effectively and independently is still up for debate.

The ability of Pakistan's political system to handle these issues will probably determine the legacy of this era. Pakistan must ensure that the rule of law is upheld and strengthen its democratic institutions in order to move forward.

In the end, the years 2013–2018 were crucial for Pakistan's democracy. It demonstrated that democratic processes could be maintained, but it also made clear how urgently reforms were needed to guarantee a future political system that was more accountable, transparent, and inclusive.

## MAJOR FINDINGS

An in-depth review of democracy and parliamentary system of Pakistan during 2008-2018 highlights several key findings:

- Political parties were essential to preserving democracy, but their internal organizational systems were still quite anti-democratic. Wider democratic engagement was restricted since decision-making was concentrated in dynasties or close-knit leadership circles.
- Regular general elections were held in 2008 and 2013, but both were marred by claims of irregularities and inadequate supervision. Because of political claims and ineffective administration, the validity of the election results was still questioned.
- Even though a number of significant bills were passed, the executive frequently controlled parliamentary processes. The efficiency of the legislature was weakened by low attendance, poor debate quality, and little legislative monitoring.
- Opposition parties used disruptive politics, boycotts, and protests instead of encouraging discussion and political maturity, which hampered institutional collaboration and democratic advancement.
- On paper, organizations such as the ECP, CCI, NEC, and NFC existed, but they were frequently ignored or used for political purposes. Their lack of institutional autonomy has an impact on federal resource distribution and coordination.
- The 2013 transfer of power marked the first peaceful and democratic handover in Pakistan's history. This was a major democratic milestone, indicating increased respect for electoral outcomes.
- Despite the law, municipal administrations were either slow or largely ineffective. Grassroots democracy was weakened when elections were either postponed or conducted without administrative and financial empowerment.
- Although media outlets enjoyed more independence during this time, their influence frequently upset the stability of policy, and sensationalism, political prejudice, and corporate objectives undermined journalistic integrity.

- Both eras saw instances of judicial activism, particularly in relation to Articles 62 and 63. There was a sense of judicial interference in democratic affairs when elected prime ministers were disqualified.
- Although there was no overt military coup, the military continued to have a significant impact on internal political talks, national security, and foreign policy decisions, gradually weakening civilian authority.
- The Bhuttos, Sharifs, and other families continued to rule the mainstream parties, which alienated young and non-elite political actors. Party leadership violated meritocracy.
- Selective justice was questioned because the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was regularly utilized to target opposition figures rather than providing unbiased accountability.
- Foreign governments, donor organizations, and international financial institutions had a considerable impact on domestic policymaking, particularly in the areas of economics and security.
- Public trust was severely damaged and the legitimacy of democratic institutions was seriously undermined by widespread corruption, nepotism, and a lack of institutional accountability.
- Public trust in democracy remained low despite continuity because of subpar service delivery, political class capture, and elected governments' inability to live up to public expectations.
- Although the 18th Amendment to the Constitution was celebrated as a significant step toward restoring regional sovereignty, its implementation was uneven. There was poor interprovincial coordination and resistance to devolution from certain federal ministries.
- Long-term policy implementation was hampered by social protests, court disqualifications, and frequent leadership changes. Reactive governance that prioritized short-term survival hampered the advancement of the country.
- Despite the introduction of a number of judicial reforms, such as programs for access to justice, their implementation was hampered by antiquated procedures, a lack of collaboration with law enforcement, and procedural delays.

- Pakistan's policy research forums and academic institutions continued to be mainly cut off from the decision-making process. Seldom were their conclusions incorporated into executive planning or parliamentary discussions.
- Pakistan's democratic framework during 2008–2018 aligned only partially with Lijphart's theory of consensus democracy. While multiple parties existed and coalition governments formed, decision-making remained dominated by elite bargains rather than broad-based consensus.
- Almond and Powell's civic culture theory suggests democracy requires participatory citizens, but in Pakistan, civic engagement was largely confined to protests, strikes, and reactionary mobilization. Institutionalized channels for citizen participation remained underdeveloped.
- The role of civil society organizations and lawyers' movements was significant in judicial independence debates, but these movements rarely transformed into sustainable democratic watchdogs. Their activism was event-driven rather than institutionalized.
- The Hudson model of developing democracies emphasizes institutional maturity, yet in Pakistan, institutions like parliament, judiciary, and ECP demonstrated inconsistency strengthening in some moments (e.g., peaceful transfer of power in 2013) but regressing in others (e.g., selective accountability).
- The concept of polyarchy by Robert Dahl characterized by free elections, civil liberties, and inclusive participation was only partially realized. While elections were competitive and media vibrant, inclusiveness and equality of participation remained weak due to dynastic politics, elitism, and weak local governance.
- Security crises, terrorism, and counterterrorism operations consumed significant state energy, which limited the focus on parliamentary reforms, democratic consolidation, and policy innovation. This reinforced the military's centrality in politics and policymaking.
- Pakistan's democratic consolidation was hindered by weak political institutionalization. Party switching (lotocracy), floor crossing, and opportunistic alliances reflected personal rather than ideological politics.

## CONCLUSION

Pakistan's democratic transition from 2013 to 2018 occurred in a complex political landscape impacted by institutional issues, reform, and continuity. Pakistan exhibits traits of a continental European democracy, including institutional instability and fragmented political subcultures, in accordance with Almond and Powell's categorization. Although the second consecutive civilian government ended its term, marking a significant turning point in Pakistan's political history, the general course of democratic consolidation remained uneven. The PML-N-led government took over a country beset by economic instability, terrorism, and institutional conflict. However, crucial democratic processes like legislative action, parliamentary discussions, and voting continued in spite of these obstacles. Nonetheless, political fragmentation frequently eclipsed advancement, demonstrating Almond's concept of political immobilism.

During this time, political parties played a crucial but conflicting role. They lacked organizational transparency and internal democracy, while being essential to the democratic system. Dahl's theory, which emphasizes the need for strong institutions and inclusive political competition for an effective democracy, is consistent with this. Similar to Lijphart's criticism of fragmented democracies in which political elites do not participate in inclusive power-sharing, the dominance of dynastic leadership hindered political renewal. Parties frequently put family legacies ahead of merit rather than encouraging wider involvement, which hampered accountability and ideological advancement. This supports Hudson's claim that democratic legitimacy declines when major societal groups are excluded from political institutions.

Despite their persistent legitimacy issues, elections remained a crucial democratic expression tool. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's disqualification generated discussions about judicial activism, and accusations of manipulation and rigging continued. A helpful foundation for understanding how such incidents weakened democratic consensus is provided by Lijphart's consociational paradigm, which calls for elite cooperation and mutual confidence. Accountability procedures can worsen instability rather than improve government when they are seen as selective, as Almond and Powell contend. The public's ensuing disenchantment suggests a lack of civic trust and institutional resiliency.

Constitutional bodies such as the CCI, NFC, and ECP were essential to federalism and government. These forums are crucial tools for segmental representation and conflict resolution from a consociational standpoint. However, the brittleness of institutional development is illustrated by their uneven autonomy and effectiveness, which are frequently the result of political meddling or ineffective administration. This demonstrates Dahl's focus on the necessity of robust, autonomous institutions to promote significant political engagement and rule-based government. Notwithstanding several advances, the ECP's ephemeral credibility reflects the larger trend of inadequate democratic supervision.

The judiciary and media played a key role in influencing how people perceived democracy. Although both organizations promoted transparency and accountability, they were also charged with bias and overreach. Dahl and Lijphart concur that democratic institutions work best when rules are set and followed consistently, but this balance is upset by ideas of media sensationalism or judicial bias. These worries are in line with Almond's criticism of centrifugal democracies, which polarize people and undermine public confidence in democratic institutions due to a lack of normative consensus.

The hybrid governance structure of Pakistan was also made visible by civil-military ties at this time. Despite the military's official separation from politics, it continued to have a significant impact on foreign and security affairs. This is in line with Almond and Powell's theory, which holds that weak institutional checks make unstable democracies more susceptible to non-elected individuals intruding on democratic space. Dahl's idea of institutionalized democracy was hampered by the frequent reliance on military leadership in times of crisis, which weakened parliamentary authority and obscured constitutional boundaries.

The public's increasing desire for accountability, fueled by media attention, legal proceedings, and activism, was a good thing. But rather than being impartial watchdogs, organizations like the NAB were perceived as being politically influenced. Hudson's thesis supports the idea that accountability systems lose their democratic value and fuel disillusionment in the absence of justice and equal institutional access across political subcultures. The legitimacy of anti-corruption campaigns declined as people began to doubt selective justice.

A serious democratic shortcoming was brought to light by the disregard for local governments. Real devolution of authority did not take place, even though the judiciary pushed for local elections. Dahl asserts that both vertical and horizontal participation are necessary for a functional democracy and that grassroots representation was hampered by the underfunding of local organizations. Politically motivated centralized provincial control weakened administrative responsiveness.

A few powerful families continued to control major parties, making dynastic politics a structural obstacle. Although young leaders like Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Maryam Nawaz rose to prominence, their ascent was based on lineage rather than talent. This is consistent with Almond's theory of immobility in disjointed systems where powerful elites impede the advancement of politics. Furthermore, according to Lijphart's concept, democratic competition will continue to be superficial and personality-driven unless elite consensus shifts toward inclusivity.

Democracy was also influenced by outside forces, with the United States, China, and the Gulf states all having a big impact. The way that internal politics and outside interests interact is similar to how Almond's theory of political reliance in transitional democracies works. The CPEC and its associated investments sparked debates regarding equal benefits and sovereignty. When combined with shortcomings in internal administration, these outside forces strengthened Pakistan's institutional incoherence and vulnerability to influence.

Poor governance and corruption continued to be major challenges. Credibility was damaged by institutional inefficiencies and a lack of openness, notwithstanding verbal pledges to improve. Dahl and Hudson stress that democratic institutions fall short in the absence of impartial rule of law and merit-based systems. These shortcomings in governance strengthened elite control over public service and increased political indifference, especially among young people.

From 2008 to 2018, Pakistan's democracy made significant progress in spite of these obstacles. Incremental improvement was demonstrated by the maintenance of civilian government, the fortification of parliamentary procedures, and the rise in public awareness. According to Lijphart, a centrifugal system can gradually become more consociational through elite cooperation and institutional learning. Growing political

consciousness was mirrored in citizens' increased use of elections, courts, and the media, which laid the groundwork for further democratic strengthening. However, in the absence of thorough institutional and electoral reform, these advances were susceptible to reverse.

Furthermore, the democratic experience of Pakistan between 2008 and 2018 underscores the fragile but evolving nature of parliamentary governance in transitional states. While the political landscape remained marred by dynastic structures, selective accountability, and weak institutionalization, the uninterrupted completion of two civilian tenures revealed the gradual normalization of democratic continuity. Almond and Powell's notion of incremental institutional learning becomes relevant here, as Pakistan demonstrated the capacity to avoid outright authoritarian regression even in the midst of crises. This persistence, however, remained heavily dependent on elite bargains rather than the consolidation of broad-based participatory norms.

In the end, the 2008–2018 democratic experience provides a nuanced yet illuminating view of Pakistan's political evolution. It depicts a society that is undergoing change, battling between established institutions and contemporary needs, elite politics and popular engagement, and military power and civilian authority. Almond, Lijphart, and Dahl contend that democracy in Pakistan is a dynamic process that necessitates a persistent dedication to openness, inclusivity, and institutional integrity. Parliamentary democracy can only develop into a robust and truly representative system through political will, citizen empowerment, and institutional reform.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- To democratize political parties from within, enact laws requiring financial transparency, youth/women's representation, and intra-party elections.
- To improve election credibility, employ electronic voting machines, digitize electoral rolls, fortify the ECP's independence, and send out foreign observers.
- Improve parliamentary efficiency by enforcing attendance, training lawmakers, enhancing research support, and empowering committees for better legislative output.
- Create parliamentary discussion norms of conduct, promote the development of bipartisan consensus, and discourage boycott or protest-based politics.
- Assure CCI, NEC, NFC, and ECP that they function independently of political pressure by giving them secure tenures, independent budgets, and technology advancements.
- Hold all institutions responsible for upholding democratic mandates, encourage bipartisan cooperation, and codify guidelines for post-election transitions.
- Regular local elections should be held, administrative and financial authority should be delegated, and local governments should be granted constitutional safeguards in line with the 18th Amendment.
- To lessen sensationalism, create independent media oversight organizations, encourage fact-checking websites, and fund ethical journalism training.
- Clarify the constitution to establish the bounds of judicial action. Establish checks on the judiciary for politically sensitive decisions and suo motu actions.
- Activate national security committees and submit military finances to civilian audits to improve parliamentary supervision of the armed forces.
- Establish term restrictions inside the party, increase the number of party schools for developing leaders, and offer state incentives for the creation of merit-based leaders.
- A nonpartisan commission should be established to supervise NAB. Make its procedures legally neutral, time-bound, and impervious to political influence.
- By funding think tanks, lowering reliance on loans, and encouraging national control of development goals, you may support indigenous policymaking.
- Implement third-party audits, whistleblower legislation, and e-governance tools to lessen political and administrative corruption in the provision of services.

- To restore confidence, start civic education initiatives, fund public service improvements, and establish formal channels for public participation in governance.
- To eliminate federal-provincial inequalities, create a long-term inter-provincial coordination system, guarantee complete administrative devolution, and strengthen CCI's enforcement powers.
- Direct parliamentary research cells to interact with think tanks and academic institutions. Establish a central location for the submission, evaluation, and consideration of evidence-based policy recommendations by legislative committees.
- Institutionalize youth participation through parliamentary youth forums, internships in the National Assembly and provincial assemblies, and quotas for young leaders in party structures.
- Develop legal frameworks to limit dynastic control by requiring parties to hold transparent, competitive internal elections monitored by the ECP.
- Reform judicial procedures by creating fast-track democratic dispute resolution mechanisms, ensuring election petitions and disqualification cases are resolved within fixed constitutional deadlines.
- Introduce a comprehensive National Democratic Reform Package covering electoral laws, local government empowerment, judicial accountability, and parliamentary strengthening, to ensure continuity across political transitions.
- Expand anti-corruption measures by integrating e-procurement systems, publishing open data on government contracts, and establishing citizen watchdog councils at district levels.

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## APPENDIX 1

### List of informants with their Pseudonyms and other details

Interviewee	Details	Place	Date
Mian Hamyon kakakhel (PMLN)	A leading Khan of Charsadda belong to the Mian family	Charsadda	03 January 2025
Tasbeh Ullah	A prominent Politician and former senator of PPP.	Nowshehra	4 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Fazal Shakoor Khan(PTI)	A prominent politician hailing from charsadda. He is currently serving provincial minister of KP.	Charsadda	8 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Mulana Saeed Gohar Shah (JUI)	A former member of the national assembly of hailed from Charsadda belonged to JUI	Charsadda	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Muhammad Riaz ullah(JI)	Belonged to charsadda	Charsadda	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Aimal wali Khan(ANP)	A Prominent Politician and President of Awami National Party currently serving member of the senate of Pakistan.	Charsadda	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Muhammad Ali(PMAP)	Central president of Pukhtunkhwa Awami Milli party Khyber Pakhtun Khwa.	Peshawar	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2025

Salar Fayyaz Ali(MKP)	Central president and progressive leader of Mazdor kisan party belonged to Charsadda (north Hashtnagar).	Charsadda	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Qaisar Khan(NPW)	A progressive leader of National party wahdat Belonged to nowshehra	Tarojaba Nowshehra	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2025
Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao(QWP)	A Pakistani Politician hailed from charsadda belonged to Qaumi watan party. He was previously a member of the Pakistan people's party and serving member of the national assembly of Pakistan from November 2002 to May 2018.	Charsadda	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Mufti Abdur Rauf Shakir(Mayor Charsadda JUI)	A Prominent clergy of district Charsadda and currently serving mayor of charsadda hailed to JUI.	Charsadda	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Ihsan ullah Khan (village Nazim PPP)	He is the current member of the village council spalmi belonged to PPP.	Tarnab Charsadda	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2025
Muhammad Sareer ullah (member village council PTI)	Ex-member of the village council shahi kulali belonged to PTI.	Tarnab Charsadda	10 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Fazli Amin Pukhtun Yar	Ex- member District council Charsadda	Tarnab	17 <sup>th</sup> March 2025

	belonged to Awami National Party.		
Muhammad Naeem Ullah (Kissan councilor)	An independent candidate and kisan councilor of district charsadda belonged to shahi kulali.	Tarnab	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Muhammad Bashir Safi	A lawyer of the Supreme court of Pakistan hailed from Mohamand Agency and currently living in Peshawar.	Peshawar	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Irfan ullah Khan	A lawyer of the high court hailed from takht bahi.	Takht Bahi	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Nasir Naeem	A lawyer of the federal shariat court belonged to Peshawar.	Peshawar	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Mujeeb-ur-Rahman	An Advocate and former candidate of NA-25 Charsaada.	Sardaryab Charsadda	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Abdur Rashid Khan	A lawyer of the session court belonged to shahi kulali district charsadda.	Shahi kulali	17 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Mulana peer Hizbullah Jan Haqani	A prominent clergy belonged to tarnab Charsadda.	Tarnab Charsadda	10 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Molana Saddrul Shaheed	A prominent clergy of the panjpir sect belonged to tarnab charsadda.	Tarnab Charsadda	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2025

Mulana israr Madani	A progressive Alem din belonged to tarnab Charsadda.	Tarnab Charsadda	24 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Mulana Muhammad Shafiq Aminee	A prominent Alem of bralevi sect belonged to Umarzai Charsadda.	Umarzai Charsadda	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Professor Dr. Khan Faqir	Faculty member of the Pakistan Study center.	University of Peshawar	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Roos Khan	Faculty member of the Political science department university of Peshawar.	University of Peshawar	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Naimat Khan	Faculty member of IR department	University of Peshawar	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Naveed Khan	Faculty member of History Department	University of Peshawar	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Zia ullah	Faculty member of Political science Department	Bacha Khan University Charsadda.	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2025
Arshad Aziz Malik	Daily Jung Editor	Peshawar	5 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Riaz Khan	Peshawar Press Club President	Peshawar	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Kashif Khan	Pukhtoon Digital Bureau Chief	Peshawar	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Shamim Shaihd	Senior Journalist	Peshawar	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Faiz Muhammad	Local Journalist of Charsadda	Tangi Charsadda	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Bilal Khan	Senior Journalist	Charsadda	7 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Rashid Khan	Belonged to Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS)	Islamabad	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Mukaram Khan	A former member of the national Assembly	Charsadda	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2025

	hailed from Charsadda belonged to JUI		
Khurshid Khan	A Prominent Politician and former member of National Assembly	Nowshehra	24 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Umeed Khan	A leading Khan of Charsadda.	Charsadda	16 <sup>th</sup> April
Ahmad Khan	A Prominent politician hailing from Charsadda.	Charsadda	18 <sup>th</sup> April 2025

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Q1: Did political parties play any role in strengthening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q2: Did elections play any role in strengthening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q3: What role did legislation play in strengthening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q4: What role did opposition play in strengthening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q5: What role did constitutional bodies like CCI, NEC, NFC, and ECP play in strengthening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q6: Did the smooth transfer of power to successive governments play any role in strengthening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q7: Did local government and media play any role in strengthening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q8: Did military intervention in the affairs of governments during 2008–18 in Pakistan weaken democracy and the parliamentary system?

Q9: How did the judiciary weaken democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18, and what role did the judiciary play under Article 62 in disqualifying elected Prime Ministers during this era?

Q10: Did dynastic politics play any role in weakening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q11: Did NAB play any role in weakening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q12: Did foreign interventions play any role in weakening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?

Q13: Did corruption and bad governance play any role in weakening democracy and the parliamentary system in Pakistan during 2008–18?