



RESEARCH PAPER

Challenges to the Electoral Politics of PPP in Sindh in 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

Provincial elections in Sindh as special rule in the electoral politics of Pakistan. Sindh assembly rule can be understood through its rule in parliament that include National Assembly, Senate and president as it has constitutional rule to elect the senate and president. Pakistan people's party is a leading political force that has been playing role for strengthening of democracy in Pakistan. There have been ups and downs in the electoral politics of PPP since 1971. The electoral politics and performance of the PPP in the Sindh remains very responsive as people in Sindh never discredit the PPP despite the fact the PPP has done nothing good for them during its rule in the province of Sindh that has prolonged on nearly three decades. Political Alliance against PPP has been very attractive and active since 1988 but their performance in the field of elections remains not good and appreciable. Nature of these political alliances and their performance in elections of Sindh is basic idea of this work as status quo in Sindh electoral politics is intact and any change in this status quo cannot be predicted.

Introduction

The arrival of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in the politics of Sindh turned the whole thing upside down. New stages of politics appeared in Sindh. Hope, enthusiasm and new avenues of development began to open up. The democratic era began. Assemblies settled. New development projects started in Sindh. Urban and rural areas sided with Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Urdu speakers from Karachi were also a pillar of PPP power. The politics that started from this period defeated the conservatives in Sindh. GM Syed's nationalist politics remained but he could not succeed in breaking the magic of PPP. In Sindh, linguistic disputes erupted over the legalization of Sindhi language in schools by the assembly. General Zia-ul-Haq imposed military rule on the country for ten years after the overthrow of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's government. In this worst period, including the country, the PPP remained active in Sindh despite the difficulties, while many other political forces were tried to be mobilized against PPP in Sindh. In Sindh, Altaf Hussain appeared in Karachi and

gave a distinct identity to the Urdu-speaking population of Sindh on linguistic grounds (Khalid, 2006). Politics is a game of impossibilities. In Sindh, various political alliances and forward blocs have been formed in different periods to break the influence of PPP in the field of elections. PPP won the 1988 elections in Sindh and formed government that could survived till 1990. When the PPP government came to an end in 1990, Jam Sadiq, Sindh's provincial liaison adviser, staged an internal revolt against the PPP. He became the caretaker Chief Minister of Sindh under a well-organized strategy. Jam Sadiq was given a task to unite other political parties against the PPP in Sindh. The strategy against the PPP in the 1990 elections was developed before the elections in which it was ensured that the PPP could not form a government in Sindh after the elections of 1990. Jam Sadiq formed the government with the help of local feudal lords, right-wing politicians and above all, with the help of Muttahida Qaumi Movement that had first entry in electoral politics in Sindh. In the same election, an electoral alliance was formed under the name of "Sindh National Front" and "Sindh National Alliance" headed by Mumtaz Bhutto, cousin of PPP founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and former Chief Minister of Sindh but could not succeed in harming the PPP. PPP after 1990 could return in power in the 1993 and this time retain till 1996. After 12 years it could return in power in 2008 and till date has maintained the status quo in Sindh. Looking at 2002 elections, the PPP topped the list with 51 seats from Sindh, while the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) won 31 seats, the PML-Q 14, the National Alliance 12 and the PML-F bagged 9 seats. The PPP had won a majority but was not allowed to form a government in the province despite its majority. Immediately after the election, the forward bloc was formed in PPP and a government of General Musharraf's supporters was formed in Sindh. After ousting the PPP from the government, Musharraf first gave the post of Chief Minister to Ali Muhammad Mehr, one of his allies from Ghotki district, and the second time in June 2004, giving the post of Chief Minister to Arbab Ghulam Rahim of Tharparkar. In 2008 elections PPP managed to form government in Sindh and remain successful to maintain the status quo in 2013 and 2018 elections.

Literature Review

In search of lost glory by Asma Faiz is very comprehensive book to study the identity politics in Pakistan that remained a very rare case in the electoral politics. Sindhi nationalism is very important part of the electoral politics of Sindh. Ethnic dissatisfaction seemed in Sindh in antagonism to the rule of the British rule; to the blitzkrieg of Punjabi immigrants in the wake of water dispute; and, most conclusively, to the entrance of millions of Urdu-speaking migrants just after the Partition of India in 1947. PPP Under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto after his death under the leadership of his daughter Benazir Bhutto and later on under Asif Ali Zardari, it has maintained the Sindh card, even PPP has been playing the game in its federalist politics of Pakistan. It is a matter of fact that in a half century there have been uncompromising Sindhi nationalist political groups, led by provincial autonomists, and landlords. There are also pirs and liberal intellectuals in recreation of ethnic outspending. This work is very important as it describes the politics of

Bhutto family and Muhajir factor in Sindh electoral politics, differences in the nationalist ideologues, dissenting disputes amongst the elites, and the role of these force as a creator and developer of Sindhi nationalism. Moreover, it examines the role of the Pakistan People's Party as an ethnic magnate over and done with an investigation of its electoral politics. Bringing together widespread research and reasonable studies of politic in Sindh the writer has provided many important details which are helpful for the current study (Faiz, 2019).

Pakistan's Political Parties: Surviving between Dictatorship and Democracy by Mariam Mufti, Sahar Shafqat, Niloufer Siddiqui is another important work on PPP and its politics. This is precisely a significant contribution to the literature on electoral reflections and political parties in Pakistan. This work is an appropriate and dynamic contribution to the literature of political science that is on the political parties in Pakistan and the south Asian region. It presents an remarkably smooth-tongued and well-crafted scrutiny of most important political parties in Pakistan in the context of electoral politics in the country, the role and functions of these parties including PPP in a promising democracy, and their relationship with in the political alliances and to other institutions are discussed in this very important work. This magnificent work is unquestionably crucial for sympathetic study of the democracy in Pakistan and all of the chief performers and interests convoluted. The innumerable writers accomplish very efficiently to syndicate deep understanding of the political parties and social groups in Pakistan (Mufti, Shafaqat and Siddique, 2019).

Hypothesis

Pakistan people's party has durable collaboration with the electable in Sindh and due to this strategy no single party can defeat it in the provincial assembly of Sindh in nearly twenty years of electoral politics of 21st century.

Nationalist politics in Sindh

The history of nationalist politics in Sindh is very old, looking at the British rule in terms of the formation of a modern state, Hosho Shaidi, a general of Talpur of African descent, is on the top of the list of those who fought against the colonial system in the nineteenth century. When the British troops suffered a heavy defeat in the first Afghan war, they expressed their anger by attacking Sindh under the command of Charles Napier. Hosho Shaidi, while protecting his homeland, had raised the slogan, "we will die but never give up Sindh " marson marson sindh na desoon" (Siddi, 2019). Similarly, in the twentieth century, when there was a trend of nationalist politics all over India, the role of GM Syed remained very important in Sindh. In April 1946, GM Syed being Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly was called on by Field Marshal, Viscount Wavel in Shimla, who was leading a cabinet mission to discuss the transfer of power in the subcontinent and he wanted to know the G.M Syed views on provincial factionalism. During his meeting GM Syed demanded recognition of the right of every province of India, including the province of Sindh, to self-determination and as an "empowered unit". Through his

efforts, the Sindh Assembly was the first to pass a resolution to merge Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, NWFP, Bengal and Assam into one country (Soomro, 2004). So the resolution of a country similar to the same map was passed in Lahore. After the formation of Pakistan, nationalist politics came to be regarded as a symbol of treason and the chastisement of nationalist politics had to bear by the nationalist leaders of Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Every struggle in which provincial autonomy or the rights of the people was included in Pakistan was suppressed or crushed. A clear example of this is when Governor General Ghulam Muhammad formed the One Unit and merged Sindh, Balochistan and the NWFP in West Pakistan in such a way that Pakistan refused to recognize their separate animation. The associates of Punjab, immediately after the separation from India, ended their Punjabi identity and started calling themselves only Muslims and Pakistanis. But when the nationalist leaders of Sindh, Balochistan and NWFP united and raised their voices against this decision and injustice, all the jails of the country were filled with political prisoners (Siddiqi, 2015). There is also a long story of Sindhi's nationalists and the PPP's affiliation and differences. The leadership that came after the demise of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the martyrdom of Liaquat Ali Khan was enslaved to its own desires, till it could neither unite the provinces of Pakistan nor protect the interests of the provinces. The changes in the politics of Sindh were of two kinds. The first is that the affluent class of Sindh played the game of defending its interests, the second is that it has learned to dominate politics and to survive, but at the same time behind the scenes a young, educated intellectual class has emerged that started talking about provincial traditions, water and people's rights. After the judicial assassination of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and especially during the MRD movement that started in the 1980s, when the PPP has need the nationalist leaders and organizations, the spirit of unity and joint struggle was seen in them. (*The World Factbook*, 1988) However, the PPP got a huge mandate in the 1988 elections and had the support of nationalist parties and oppressed people, but the PPP made Ghulam Ishaq Khan, a close ally of Zia-ul-Haq, the country's president. When the PPP was twice expelled from the government by the Establishment, they again needed the support of Sindhi nationalists. In other words, when the PPP is out of power, it becomes a sympathetic party of the oppressed people of Sindh and does not hesitate to go to jail. But as soon as it return back in government, it sings the song of "first reconciliation" and becomes ready to compromise on the interests of Sindh and the people of Sindh in order to prolong its rule. Before looking at the politics of Pakistan's major political parties, especially the PPP, the Muslim League and the MQM, and the alliance of Sindh nationalists, it is needed to see in what factions today's nationalists are divided into. After the formation of Pakistan in Sindh, various forms of nationalism could be seen. Today in Sindh things are changed and there are some nationalists groups in Sindh who, like the Baloch separatist nationalists, are trying to separate Sindh from Pakistan. Among them are some followers of GM Syed such as: Jey Sindh qumi mahaz (JSQM), Bashir Khan Qureshi Group, led by Bashir Khan's son Sanan Qureshi JSQM-Abdul Wahid Ariser Group; Jey Sindh Tehreek under the leadership of Dr. Safdar Sarkai, Jey Sindh Front under the leadership of Riaz Chandio and Jey Sindh Muttahida Mahaz, led by Shafi Barfat

(Pracha, 2012). On the other hand, there are nationalists in Sindh who do not want the separation of Sindh and believe in parliamentary politics. They want a new social contract to be drawn up between the people of Pakistan and the state on the basis of the Lahore Resolution, which would give autonomy to the provinces. These nationalist parties include: Qaumi Awami Tehreek led by Ayaz Paliyo, Sindh Progressive Party of Dr. Qadir Magsi, Sindh National Movement of Ali Hassan Chandio and Sindh United Party headed by Syed Jalal Mehmood Shah(Khan, 2013), There are also contradictions in the nationalist parties and there is a difference in their manifesto. But it is not surprising that there is a consensus on some issues, either ideologically or strategically. An example of this is the Kalabagh Dam, against which all Sindh nationalist organizations united. Similarly, when the PPP and its allies passed the Sindh People's Local Government Ordinance in the Sindh Assembly, all nationalists, whether they believe in parliamentary politics or not, were united against it. And because of their joint resistance, the PPP government had to withdraw the bill (Ali, 2015).

Ten Party Alliance and Elections 2013

Ten party alliance include PML-N, PML-F, Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Pakistan Sunni Tehreek, Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, National People's Party, Sindh United Party, Sindh Progressive Party, and Qaumi Awami Tehreek. The purpose of this alliance was to contest elections in Sindh against PPP and MQM as well as to contest elections in Sindh unanimously. This means that if a candidate of one party from a constituency contests an election, those from other parties will support him. While this alliance was supported on a large scale within Sindh, its opposition was also going on loudly. If we consider the opposition to this alliance, one opinion was that the manifestos of the organizations involved in this alliance were completely different from each other. Because this alliance includes religious parties as well as parties that have been claiming to be leftist and progressive since their inception, such as the National People's Movement, led by Ayaz Paliyo ("Ten-party electoral alliance to finalize strategy against PPP in Sindh: SAMAA", 2013) Sindh nationalists were facing criticism all over the country that they have been speaking against Punjab and Punjabis all the time and now they had become allied with Nawaz League a Punjab based political parties. Alliance was not based on harmony of ideas. The first was that the Qaumi Awami Tehreek, Sindh Progressive Party, and Sindh United Party, which were part of this alliance, had never spoken against Punjab or the Punjabi people, but have always spoken against the ruling class and establishment of Punjab because according to them, policy makers were the ones who have been returning to Sindh since the establishment of Pakistan. The Sindh nationalists who have been speaking against Punjab or the Punjabi people were not part of that alliance but belong to Jeye Sindh and its factions. Secondly, since Nawaz Sharif's government took over and he was forced into exile, there had been a significant change in Nawaz Sharif's thinking. But still it was not to be said with full confidence that PMLN would provide justice to the people of Sindh. Because PPP, when it is out of the government, seem to make big people-friendly claims, but as soon as it comes into the government, it changes its mind. So the real test of Nawaz Sharif was after the election. One opinion was that the nationalists

wanted to come to the assemblies on the basis of this alliance because some nationalists were going to contest elections for the first time and that time Nawaz Sharif's weight was also looking heavy.

Looking at the cracks inside that alliance in Sindh Assembly constituency PS-47 Qasimabad, Hyderabad, Ayaz Palijo, chief of Qaumi Awami Tehreek and Dr Qadir Magsi, chief of Sindh Progressive Party were both candidates. Dr. Qadir Magsi withdrew his nomination under pressure from the coalition parties. Syed Jalal Mehmood Shah of Sindh United Party, another coalition party in PS3, had decided to contest the elections and has fielded Latif Junejo Shami from his party. The purpose of that alliance was said to be to defeat the PPP and MQM in the 2013 elections in Sindh and to have transparent elections in Karachi as well as in the whole of Sindh. If it was a really alliance then including the Prevention of MQM from joining the government to avoid any post-election blackmailing, burying the Kalabagh Dam issue forever should also be the part of the coalition's goals (Sodhar, 2013). Because PML-N has always supported the construction of Kalabagh and their policy has been that one brother ie Shahbaz Sharif in Lahore says that he will definitely build Kalabagh Dam. And the other brother, Nawaz Sharif, comes to Sindh and says that the dam will not be built without the backing of other provinces. Candidates make a lot of claims before every election. The organizations in that alliance had also made big promises to the people for getting the support of the people. The said alliance was going to give the PPP a tough time in the 2013 elections. The participation of nationalist parties in the elections was providing a new option to the people.

Grand Democratic Alliance and Elections 2018

In the 2013 elections, the PPP ruled Sindh province. Syed qaim ali shah became Chief Minister of this province and was a very incompetent person. The Supreme Court had declared the PPP government of Qaim Ali Shah of Sindh from 2008 to 2013 ineligible. If there was no PPP government at the centre, the governor rule might have enforced in Sindh. He did not make any big development plan for big cities of Sindh. The law and order situation remained the worst. Karachi tops the list in terms of street crime (Ghuari, 2014). It was common practice to give jobs by taking bribes. In Qaim Ali Shah's six-and-a-half-year rule, more than 8,000 people were killed in terrorism and targeted killings in Karachi alone. The political situation in Sindh before 2018 elections was not clear as well as in the whole country ("8,610 people were killed in Karachi in last six years, says CTD report", 2018). The biggest change in Karachi, the capital of Sindh, was the internal disintegration of the MQM, which has led to the file candidates by PPP, PTI, Jamaat-e-Islami or MMA, NNP Karachi and suburbs. It must be understood that whether it was the federation or the governments of Punjab, Sindh and other provinces, no party seemed to have a clear majority. Coalition governments were being formed from the federation to the provinces. Before 2018 elections, in Sindh a coalition of political parties was formed that was called Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA), which included many nationalist

politicians, former ruling leaders and big names in parliamentary politics. This time too, a big alliance has emerged in front of the PPP. Ghulam Murtaza Jatoi even merged his father's National People's Party formed in Lahore in 1986 with the Muslim League-Nawaz. Ghulam Murtaza Jatoi re-registered his National People's Party in the Election Commission without informing Nawaz Sharif while staying in PML-N and holding federal ministries. The Grand Democratic Alliance consists of only four parties, including the Pakistan Muslim League-Functional, the National People's Party, the Awami Muslim League (Dr. Arbab Rahim) and the Pakistan People's Party Workers (Mukhtar, 2018). But in the 2018 election process in Sindh, every anti-PPP party and personality was involved in this alliance and there was no doubt that the Grand Democratic Alliance was the largest and strongest alliance in Sindh against the PPP. The parties with which the Grand Democratic Alliance has formed an alliance in the elections include Dr. Zulfiqar Mirza of Badin, Fehmida Mirza, Hasnain Mirza, Syed Jalal Mehmood Shah of Sindh United Party, his younger brother Syed Zain Shah, Ayaz Latif Palejo of Qaumi Awami Tehreek. It may be recalled that Ayaz Latif Palejo could not get his party registered with the Election Commission), Dr. Qadir Magsi also could not get registration for his party Sindh Progressive Party for 25 years, from the Election Commission. His party is also contesting from 20 constituencies across Sindh. He has also supported the candidates of the Grand Democratic Alliance for some seats in Sindh and withdrew his candidates in their favour (Butt, 2018). Even the Grand Democratic Alliance has formed electoral alliances and seat adjustments with the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal from several constituencies in Sindh. Interestingly, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) has also supported a hard-line opposition party like PTI in many constituencies. Other nationalist parties in Sindh, especially the Jai Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (Bashir Khan Qureshi), have also backed anti-PPP candidates across Sindh. Across Sindh, the Grand Democratic Alliance did not field any candidate against the strong PTI candidates. Apart from Karachi and Hyderabad, the Grand Democratic Alliance has also made seat adjustments with the MQM in Mirpur Khas and other seats. That is why it could be said that all the PPP opponents were together in July 25 elections of 2018 and this was the strongest and united alliance against the PPP in Sindh ("Dawn: With GDA help, PTI will defeat PPP in Sindh: Imran", 2018).

The PPP, which was confined to Sindh in 2103 elections and it was said that people have a strong hatred against the PPP, which has ruled Sindh for 10 years till the 2018 elections. People have once again choice to reject and choose a new alternative for themselves. What has happened that the people of Sindh, disgusted with the PPP, have again considered it as their redeemer? Before elections there was a political and intellectual class in Sindh which was hurling insults at the PPP and the people. Looking at social media, it seemed as if the people of Sindh had committed an unforgivable crime by voting for the PPP in 2013. Writers who did not support the GDA were also being criticized by such critics, as they were supporting the PPP. There is no doubt that that time in Sindh, if there was a strong opponent of the PPP, it was a group in the form of GDA which had fielded its candidates in every constituency. The constituencies of Tharparkar, Mirpur Khas, Umerkot and Hyderabad were expected to be challenged but immobile the PPP prevailed. It was

not all sudden or unusual or uncertain, but there were few motives. On the one hand, the GDA was not a political force that has been in touch with the people for the last five years. Besides, the GDA was not a political party. Even young people like Ayaz Latif Palejo were part of the GDA, but they too lost this time. Politicians who were the leaders of their respective parties lost their identity in the GDA alliance, or those who had a strong position in a political party became very small in the GDA. Examples are Dr. Zulfiqar Mirza and Ayaz Latif Palejo. Ayaz Latif Palejo joined the GDA with his political party behind him, while more importantly, he has not been in touch with the people of the constituency in the last five years where he contested in elections. People were tired from PPP performance, but the GDA was rejected by the people because the GDA was not a better political choice than the PPP. The weakness of nationalist politics in Sindh was also one of the reasons for the PPP's success. Sindh's nationalist political parties have been taking the election process as a part-time or leisure activity. They do not do any homework in this regard and they do not have much experience in electoral politics. Therefore, a voter who likes nationalists, when he sees that his nationalist candidate cannot get so many votes due to his lack of interest, also sees the PPP as the best option for him. In addition, a key role in the PPP's victory was the political weakening of the MQM. Although the PPP has not won so many seats in Karachi, but the vote bank of MQM also came to the PPP that benefited it in the new constituencies. At larger scale the people of Karachi considered the PTI better than the PPP and MQM. The PPP has been involved in electoral politics for decades and is well aware of how to bring voters from remote areas to the polling stations on polling day, how to get agents to work and all these factors also affect the results in Sindh. This time in the election campaign, Asif Ali Zardari kept himself behind the scenes and handed over the mike to his son Bilawal because even though Zardari had the status of co-chairman, he knew that his presence in the meetings will not have a positive effect on the elections. Just as a voter votes by looking at a party, so does a voter vote by looking at a candidate. The PPP chose for itself the 'electable' who had a very good chance of winning. Thus, this strategy of the PPP was also a key factor for its success. Although the independent candidate in front of PPP candidate belonged to the PPP in past, so most of the winners were those who were not given tickets by the party. The people of Sindh have voted for the PPP to bring it to power in spite of all its shortcomings. The main reasons for this are the PPP's strong electoral strategy and the weaknesses of the opposition, which need to be examined. There were political alliances against PPP in Sindh to counter the strategy and influence of the PPP in 21st century. The ground realities were not in favour of these alliance, as the PPP has won 74 seats in the Sindh Assembly in 2018 elections as compared to 67 seats won in 2013.

Conclusion

There are currently forty two political parties registered in Sindh, including some factions of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), the linguistically based Mohajir Qaumi Movement and Mustafa Kamal's Pak-Sar-Zamin Party. Some federal and Sindhi nationalist parties such as Separatists party, Sindh United Party of Syed

Jalal Mehmood Shah, who is grandson of popular nationalist leader GM Syed, Pakistan Muslim League-Functional of Pir Pagara, Sindh National Front of Mumtaz Bhutto, Awami Tehreek of popular political leader late Rasool Bakhsh Palejo are important parties. The Awami Democratic Party and Ayaz Latif Palejo's National Awami Tehreek, Dr. Qadir Magsi's Sindh Progressive Party are also electoral forces in Sindh ("List of Political Parties", 2019). In addition, some separatist Sindhi nationalist parties are also active. Sindh itself suffered the most from the political division of Sindh. Consider that in the last seventy four years, the province has left behind in education and health, law and order, governance, policing, clean drinking water and other issues. Even the most politically conscious people could not understand the basic premise that democracy comes from the people, not from family legacy. Everything is possible and nothing is final. Anything can change at any time. The politics of Sindh has been revolving around Bhutto family since 1971. The Bhutto family in Sindh has been ruling Sindh province as its own estate. Analyzing the electoral politics of 21st century, PPP was honored to form a government for the third consecutive term in a single province. If its leadership had sought, it was possible that the party would have fulfilled its 40-year-old slogan of bread, cloth and house. By making Sindh a model province, the PPP could have proven that it is a serious progressive party in Pakistan that has the potential to make the country a developed, poverty-free and economically stable nation in South Asia. It is a tragedy that the PPP government and allegations of corruption go hand in hand and the people of Sindh are waiting for fulfillment of PPP promise of bread, cloth and housing. The tragedy of the PPP is that Sindh which is now the stronghold of the party and its government has been established there for thirteen years, and this is its third term nothing has changed as far as the problems of Sindh are concerned. The same problems still exist today. The people of Thar are still dying with hunger, inside Sindh, basic deficiencies in health and education sectors are same as were thirteen years ago. It seems that the PTI wants to take advantage of this situation

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