

Abstract

It is an established fact that tribalism has dominated the body-politic and the social fabric of Balochistan from decades on end. It started during the mediaeval era and was given an impetus by the colonial powers as the latter regularized it. After the partition of India, although it was abolished in India, yet Pakistan maintained status quo concerning sardari-system. Some sporadic efforts were made to abolish it but they too lacked a genuine political will and backing. According to some writers these moves were politically-motivated and halfhearted attempts that is why they did not pay dividends. Historically speaking, once based on consensus, the tribal chief slowly and gradually grew into a totalitarian figure. Some voluntary deeds were made to be the sanction of the tribal code, and were forcefully taken from the masses. As they amassed economic clout, it had a trickle-down effect into the realm of politics as well. The sound financial footing paved the way for a political leverage for them. Then they remained in and out of power, many a tribal chief assumed the charge of the chief-ministership of the province. But the plight of the masses went from bad to worse. The ethno-nationalist politicians and the tribal chiefs passed the buck of the perpetual political decay on the center, while the Islamabad, bureaucracy, military establishment, Balochistan's intelligentsia and some progressive and rational voices in Balochistan saw the villain in these tribal chieftains. This dissertation is an attempt to analyze the veracity of the claims by taking into account the extent of political development in the province under the tribal lords. First of all, this research work traces out the historical background of sardari system in Balochistan. It sheds light on its compatibility with the democratic dispensation. It appreciates the extent of economic development and industrialization in the province. It has been an effort to appraise different indicators of political development in the tribal and non-tribal areas. This research suggests that with the introduction of parliamentary form of government, the sardars' clout has increased manifold. This thesis also problematizes the development funds doled out to the tribal chiefs and their lobby's monopolizing the political culture within political parties. Furthermore, this research takes into account their mobilization of the resources in their favor and their role in legal and administrative developments. Lastly, this dissertation calls for some positive steps and initiatives to be taken to overhaul the issue. The aspects of Political Development as outlined by Lucian Pye have been opted for as the theoretical framework. After a thorough and deep study, it was found that sardari system has been running counter to positive political development.