

ABSTRACT

This study revolves around the functioning of the federation of Pakistan and attempts to spotlight the current barriers to cooperative and integrative federalism. Democracy and political institutions in Pakistan is considered to be a transitional and an evolving federation undergoing teething problems. The nature of relations between the center and provinces has been a subject of political and constitutional debate since the independence of Pakistan in 1947. Pakistan is a heterogeneous society divided into a number of ethnic and linguistic groups. The geographical enormity of the state demands decentralization and federation. The objective resolution passed by the first constituent assembly of Pakistan adopted federal form of government in the country keeping in mind the ethnic nature of the society and the coming constitutions also followed the same. Federalism was regarded as an important means to achieve political harmony in the country. But some challenges and misconceptions associated with the federation of Pakistan especially from the smaller provinces. 18th amendment is a great step forward in the right direction, but there are some challenges and prospects about the future of federation. The issues covered spin around the status of legislative, administrative and financial autonomy to the provinces through the 18th constitutional amendment in the constitution of Pakistan. Because the devolutionary initiatives introduced by the 18th constitutional amendment has been swinging between different narratives of too little or too late and too much too soon. There are mix views regarding the effects of the 18th amendment there are opinions that it has strengthened the federation by grating maximum autonomy to the provinces and others believe that it has weakened the federation by weakening the central government. Qualitative research methodology, as necessitated by nature of study, has been carried out, employing iterative analysis technique to semi-structured interviews of a purposive sampling to produce an amalgam having elements of both collected data and relevant theories. The results reflect the opinion of respondents situated in contextual theories to spotlight the current barriers to cooperative and integrative federalism and provide prudent policy solutions to the status quo.