

ABSTRACT

Federalism is a complex and dynamic political phenomenon. Its nature and direction are ever-evolving. 21st century is marked with the renewed popularity and utility of federalism especially in the diverse societies undergoing social, economic and political change. Pakistan is an ethnically diverse society with six to eight major ethnic groups territorially concentrated whose identity remains mainly politicized in the federation of Pakistan. Along with that, it is an emerging democracy and a post-colonial developing polity which has been, for most its history, under the siege of ethno-nationalism and ethnic conflicts. These geographical, socio-cultural, and political realities of the country demand a federal political system to best organize its state system. Pakistan has been consistent in constitutionally upholding Federalism as a political system since its inception in 1947. Although Pakistan has been a federation since its inception in 1947, the subject of federalism remained undermined in dealing with its problem. As a result, it has also been under-researched in academia in Pakistan. Only a few significant researches have been conducted so far. Historically, among other responsible factors, one was incompatible, fragile and flawed federal design behind the disintegration of the federation in 1971 resulting in the debacle of East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. After that tragic incident, policy makers realized to change federal design in order to strengthen the federation as whole. Though officially not declared, they opted for the model of Ethnic Federalism in the 1973 Constitution. Later on, the Model of Ethnic Federalism was cemented and enlarged in 2010 under the historic 18th Amendment in the Constitution. Maryam S. Khan has previously proven that Ethnic Federalism has its limitations. 12 long years of the practice of enlarged and strengthened model advanced that due to intricate conditions and unique factors in Pakistan, this model could not produce the desired results. Ethnic demands are not satisfied, ethnic conflicts are not resolved, economic efficiency is not attained, political stability could not be ensured, social modernization is a distant dream, and national integration remains an unfinished agenda of the federation. Federalism is of constant importance and utmost utility to achieve all these needs and objectives of the state. Then what model should be adopted for this purpose? Many scholars suggested Consociational Federalism as an alternative to this model. However, M. Mushtaq has challenged its applicability and proven through an empirical study that the success of Consociationalism appears uncertain in the federation of Pakistan. If the Ethnic Federalism has its limitation for Pakistan, and the success of Consociational federalism is risky and uncertain then what model of federalism Pakistan should adopt? Given what has been presented above, it is sought under this research to locate the missing-link in the current federal model of 18th Amendment and propose a suitable, practical and viable solution. In this regard, this research is primarily conducted to analyze the current model of federalism in Pakistan by studying three main areas/factors of federation-building: (1) Political Parties, (2) Local Governments, and (3) Federal Political Culture. This study includes the analysis of these factors on the basis of contemporary federal theory, and their role and status in the post-18th amendment federation of Pakistan.