



Impact of Affirmative Actions to Enhance Participation of Minorities in Governance of Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Paper is an effort to assess the impact of affirmative actions to enhance the participation of religious minorities in governance in Pakistan. Quantitative research approach is employed in the research. Researcher used both secondary and primary sources of data for in-depth understanding of the issue. For secondary data various research papers, reports and policy papers were analyzed keeping in mind the research questions. Survey has been conducted with the help of questionnaire from the relevant population. Research found that there are adequate legislation and policy aiming at enhancing minority participation in governance and society. To some extent minority population is satisfied with existing policies and quotas however, certain issues and challenges have been identified which obstruct the inclusion of minority population which include cultural factors, some historical hostilities among Muslim and some no-Muslim groups, sense of self-isolation of minority, role of certain fundamentalist groups. To solve these issues government and civil society must take certain steps like proper implementation of quotas, protection of minority, propagation of cultural tolerance and religious pluralism, inter-faith dialogue and research on minority issues.

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Introduction

A group that is considered to be a minority is one that is numerically smaller than the rest of the population of a state, is in a subordinate position, and whose members, despite being citizens of the state, possess cultural, religious, or linguistic characteristics that are distinct from those of the majority of the population. It is a singled-out group of society because of physical and cultural characteristics and generally consider itself as a victim of discrimination. According to national

population census, 96.28 percent Pakistani population is Muslim, remaining 3.72 percent belong to other religious groups like Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis etc. Being numerically inferior groups, minorities throughout the globe suffer social exclusion and discriminations, Pakistan is no exception. States try to bring these isolated groups in national mainstream. Affirmative actions are those mechanism which aims at providing equal citizenship to minority groups. Constitution of Pakistan guarantee equal rights to its minority groups, but certain cultural and historical factors obstruct their inclusion and equal social participation. The paper is an effort to analyze various minority policies, affirmative actions of state and their role in enhancing participation of these groups. It will also cover the issues and challenges which impede equal participation of minority groups. The sense of extreme nationalism and religious sentiment, which prevails in the people of Pakistan have marginalized many ethnic and religious communities in Pakistan or at least they feel so. When Pakistan came into its existence, it inherits a multi-cultural, ethnic, lingual and multi religion with dominant Muslim population. Pakistan ensured the fundamental rights of the minorities, and it has been written in the Objective Resolution of 1949 (Preamble of Constitution of Pakistan). The constitution of Pakistan ensures that all of the country's people, regardless of their race, creed, or religion, have the same rights and responsibilities.

Statement of Problem

Effective participation of minorities at the national and societal level is the hallmark of an egalitarian society. It is crucial not only for societal growth and development but also reflects the extent of pluralism and tolerance prevailing there. However, in order to achieve this end a number of initiatives are required at the government and societal level. Most important among which are effective legal and policy frameworks. The Constitution of Pakistan in general and Article 36 in particular guarantee fundamental rights to the minorities yet a detailed analysis of the post-1947 treatment shows that minorities have not been given as much effective participation as was required to realize their full potentials. Pakistan came into being on the basis of a religious ideology. Muslim dominate the national scene as they are numerically superior. Minorities like many parts of the world suffer lack of political and social participation, normative disintegration, and political disengagement. State of Pakistan has been trying to end exclusionary state of affairs of minorities and affirmative actions have taken place in this regard and look into the issue that whether problem still exists. This research will explore the effectiveness of state affirmative actions with respect to enhancing minority participation in governance and society This research intends to present not only the extent of problem, but the nature, magnitude and scale of solutions attempted and their impact.

Research Questions

The present research covered the following questions

- 1- What is the status of Pakistani minority groups in society?
- 2- What are the constitutional frameworks and state policies aiming at giving equal citizenship to non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan?
- 3- What is the role of affirmative actions to enhance the participation of religious minorities in governance?

- 4- To what extent actions taken by state to encourage minority inclusion in governance of society, are effective
- 5- What are the potential barriers in the way of inclusion of minorities in national mainstream?

Significance and Scope of the study

Various reports and research reveal that Pakistani minority is facing discrimination in many walks of life. This justifies the need of a study to assess the effectiveness of state policies regarding the inclusion of minority. The state policy of Pakistan focuses on equity and inclusion. The focus of this study is to determine the role of affirmative actions in achieving the goal of enhanced participation of minority groups as affirmative actions are very important mechanisms to enhance the role of minority groups in governance of society. The scope of this research is to analyze various policy frameworks made by state to enhance the participation of minority segment of society because less research work has been done on evaluation of affirmative actions and government policies aims at enhancing minority participation. It also reviews that to what extent state policies contributed to the process of engaging minorities in national mainstream and diminish their sense of being discriminated. It also covers the issues and challenges in the way of giving non-Muslim citizens an equal status. Sources of data in this research will be both primary and secondary.

2. Literature Review

For in-depth understanding of the issue, review of exiting literature will be made in a systematic way. It will cover the following domains concerning the problem under study. The available evidence will be analyzed about the impact of affirmative action policies in encouraging the participation of minorities in governance. Literature review will cover the areas like minority status, minorities in global context, demography of non-Muslim minority of Pakistan, laws, and policies of state regarding protection of religious minorities of Pakistan, effectiveness of minority policies and the social, cultural and political factors which impede the inclusion of minorities in society and its governance. The literature which consists various research papers, reports, policy documents, newspaper articles and books will provide a deep insight into the issue and help in getting the answers of above-mentioned research questions.

3.0 Methodology of the study

Research methodology adopted in this research paper is quantitative and descriptive. Both primary and secondary sources of data are used. Descriptive method allows researcher to explore a concept within its scope from a range of data from various sources of literature including research articles, reports, policy document, news articles etc. A discourse analysis from existing sources of data is made. For getting primary data survey was conducted with the help of a questionnaire from relevant group of population. Survey is considered a good method when researcher is interested in exploring the opinion of a group about a certain issue. Tool of data collection (Questionnaire) is made by keeping mind the research objectives. Survey data are analyzed with the help of SPSS. A scoping review of literature will provide a deep understanding of role of affirmative actions in mainstreaming of minority groups. Through both sources of data an effort is made to explore the issue in detail.

Results and Discussion

Section-I: Minorities

1.1 Minorities in Global context

In the majority of cases, members of minority groups are subjected to prejudice and discrimination, or at the very least, they have the perception that this is the case in the society in which they live. This leaves members of minority groups vulnerable to receiving a variety of different treatments. Their rights are always being put into question. Various civilizations each have their own unique social systems, which often act to oppress their members. As a result, from the beginning of the 20th century, the word "minority" has often been employed in conjunction with a rhetoric of civil and collective rights. It is also clear that in certain cultures, groups who possess a numerical advantage have been relegated to the margins. It indicates that numerical superiority alone is not sufficient to determine whether a group is a "minority" or a "majority;" rather, power is what determines the dynamics of being a minority or a majority; for example, the Black population of South Africa is numerically superior but economically and politically inferior.

Minorities are seen as a social category that should be marginalized and ostracized anywhere in the globe. They are subjected to a lack of monetary resources, discrimination, a lack of political representation, an absence of access to social rights, and a fragmentation of their cultural identity. Because of the social identities they have, they are often the targets of victimization. Religious minorities, such as Muslims, as well as ethnic minorities, such as Tibetans residing in Tibet and Uyghurs living in Xinjiang, exist in China. Tibetans also live in other parts of China. There is poverty and socioeconomic inequality not just between minority groups but also within minority communities themselves. Minorities consistently have lower incomes than majority populations, regardless of whether we're talking about relative or absolute poverty. In India, the situation has not changed much, and Muslim minority continue to have lower incomes than Hindu majorities do. The marginalization of India's Muslim population and their alienation from society as a whole. He claims that Muslims, who make up 13.4 percent of the population, are a backward and marginalized minority on all fronts, including socially, economically, and educationally. The Muslim minority of India is the most disadvantaged group in the country, and as such, they demand social justice on par with other underprivileged groups such as Dalits and OBCs. Despite the fact that the overall rate of poverty has decreased, there are still a significant number of individuals living in poverty. Both China and India have significant problems with discrimination against their country's minority populations due to internal and foreign conflicts.

1.2 Demographic characteristics of minority population in Pakistan

POPULATION BY RELIGION

(In percent)

Administrative Unit	Muslim	Christian	Hindu (Jati)	Qadiani (Ahmadi)	Scheduled Castes	Others

Pakistan		96.28	1.59	1.60	0.22	0.25	0.07
	Rural	96.49	1.10	1.80	0.18	0.34	0.08
	Urban	95.84	2.59	1.16	0.29	0.06	0.06
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa		99.44	0.21	0.0*	0.24	0.05	0.08
	Rural	99.65	0.03	0.15	0.22	0.02	0.08
	Urban	98.42	1.06	0.11	0.31	0.01	0.09
F A T A		99.6	0.07	0.03	0.21	0.03	0.07
	Rural	99.63	0.04	0.03	0.21	0.03	0.06
	Urban	98.16	1.17	0.32	0.10	.007	0.23
Punjab		97.21	2.31	0.13	0.25	0.03	0.07
	Rural	97.66	1.87	0.15	0.19	0.05	0.08
	Urban	96.25	3.27	0.06	0.37	0.02	0.03
Sindh		91.31	0.97	6.51	0.14	0.99	0.08
	Rural	88.12	0.14	9.77	0.12	1.79	0.06
	Urban	94.67	1.84	3.08	0.17	0.14	0.10
Baluchistan		98.75	0.40	0.49	0.15	0.10	0.10
	Rural	99.42	0.06	0.15	0.14	0.12	0.10
	Urban	96.61	1.49	1.58	0.16	0.05	0.10
Islamabad		95.53	4.07	0.02	0.34	*	0.03
	Rural	98.80	0.94	*	0.23	*	0.03
	Urban	93.83	5.70	0.03	0.40	*	0.03

Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. 1998. "Population by Religion"

According to the population census carried out in Pakistan in the year 1998, a profile of the country's religious minority reveals that Muslims make up an overwhelming 96.28% of the population (175,376,000). 9 Table 2 provides information on the percentages as well as the estimated numbers of various religious groups. Sindh is a more pluralistic province with 91.32% Muslims and 6.51% Hindus as opposed to the predominantly Muslim provinces of Punjab, NWFP, and Baluchistan, which each have respective populations of 99.44%, 97.22%, and 98.75% of Muslims. However, Baluchistan has the highest percentage of Muslims in Pakistan at 99.75%. 9.77% of these people dwell in rural regions, while just 3.08% call the cities their home.

1.3 Affirmative action

The concept of affirmative action is always controversial and hard to define. Various definitions of this contested concept are being used in politics and social sciences. It is sometimes used synonymously with the 'positive action', 'Preferential treatment.' Sometimes it is called 'positive discrimination'. The term was first introduced in America in 1960s and used for a broad

range of measures that by taking historical disadvantage into account and efforts to rectify these problems. It basically denotes those actions which are taken to uphold those groups which are left behind due to courses of society, history, politics, and culture. There are different historical and structural inequalities in every society which obstructs certain groups to participate equally in society. Affirmative action refers to those mechanisms and efforts aims at overcoming these inequalities by creating equal opportunities in economic and political affairs. It is also defined as the set of policies which support those groups like minorities who have historically being facing certain disadvantages. The concept got popularity in last decades particularly in the areas of protection and development of minorities. Here in this paper affirmative action refers to those policies and mechanisms of government of Pakistan which ensure equal participation of religious minorities of Pakistan. Broadly these actions cover the legislations and policies focus on the inclusion of Pakistani minorities in politics, legislature, education, and government jobs.

Affirmative action refers to an active effort to enhance employment and educational opportunities for minority group. Affirmative action starts when the government is interested in reducing the long-term effects of discrimination against minority groups and also to revise the policies, procedures and programs that provide limited preferences to minorities and another marginalized groups in job market, education and other social welfare programs. Affirmative action's focus on the well-being and uplifting of those groups which are left behind.

1.5. Governance

The term "governance" refers to the relationship between the private sector, the public sector, the corporate sector, and the many other structures that make up society. Its purpose is to manage far-reaching development by addressing issues of accountability, meritocracy, inclusion, democracy, rule of law, and predictability. This will be accomplished. Not only does it concentrate on a single industry or a single stakeholder, but it also necessitates the adoption of cross-cutting, unified strategies and the cooperative efforts of a large number of stakeholders. Governance ensures the establishment of a system in which individuals have unfettered access to social justice and the rule of law is consistently upheld. It is essential to the attainment of the strategic objectives, strategies, and programmes, as well as a necessity for economically progressive and environmentally responsible growth. Good governance assures that the benefits of development will trickle down to all facets of society as it reduces levels of poverty and raises levels of income. The Pakistan Vision 2025 offers a realistic and sound framework for dealing with the challenges of governance that the government is now facing. In addition to this, it provides a strategic plan for the economy, which serves as the foundation for Pakistan's transformation into the next Asian Tiger. The development of human and social capital, in which many historically excluded groups such as women, minorities, geographically isolated groups, and so on are included, is one of the most important aspects of the vision framework. Inclusion of excluded groups in governance and policy forums would improve the degree of social justice and human development in society, both of which are necessary for the advancement of socioeconomic development (United Nations (2012) Promoting and Protecting Minority Rights, n.d.)

The country has been mired with the menace of terrorism and worship places of all faiths have been target of terrorist attacks. Special deployment of police /security personnel has been ensured for protection of minority worship places.

Section II

Affirmative Actions and Participation in Governance

2.1 Constitutional status of minorities in Pakistan

The minorities identify strongly with a Pakistani national identity although they face certain cultural barriers in the way of their equal participation and getting equal status of citizenship in society. The constitution of Pakistan gives them all the rights that are being enjoyed by Pakistani Muslim population. Minorities have a strong historical connection to Pakistan and they have contributed adequately to Pakistani society since its independence in 1947 but unfortunately sometime they have a feeling of marginalization due to certain cultural factors and some terrorist activities aiming at distorting the image of Pakistan.

2.2 Laws and policies to protect Minorities and Enhance their Participation

In his speech to the Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947, Mohammad Ali Jinnah provided a policy framework for equitable and equal citizenship. "You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques, and you are free to go to whatever other places of worship you want inside the borders of the State of Pakistan. You are free to practice any religion, belong to any caste, or adhere to any belief; the state will not discriminate against you on such grounds. We are going to begin with this basic premise, which states that everyone of us is a citizen of one state, and that we are all equal in that capacity. Now I believe that we should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find that in the course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims. Not so much in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as a citizen of the State.". "Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find that in the course of time you will find that Hindus would cease to be Hindus the statements made in the passages cited above demonstrate the father of the nation's dedication and vision for an inclusive policy of state and an equity-based model of governance.

In the constitution that was passed in 1973, reserved seats in the national and provincial legislatures were allotted to religious minorities. They have ten seats reserved for them in the national assembly, eight seats reserved in the provincial assembly of Punjab, nine seats reserved in the assembly of Sindh, three seats reserved in the provincial assembly of KPK, and three seats reserved in the national legislature of Baluchistan. When this is done, proper representation for minorities at the federal and provincial levels is achieved. Legal and fundamental rights in the state are protected for them by the constitution, specifically Article 20. It guarantees different rights to different minority groups, such as (a) the right of every citizen to profess, practise, and propagate his religion; and (b) the right of every religious denomination and every sect thereof to establish, maintain, and manage its religious institutions. These rights are guaranteed in the constitution. However, Article 227(3) asserts that "Nothing in this section will alter the Council of Islamic Personal laws of non-Muslim citizens or their position as citizens." Article 227 specifies that all

laws are to be formed in conformity with the principles of Islam. In addition, the Constitution of 1973 includes Article 36, which declares that "the State should preserve the legitimate rights and interests of minorities," including "their fair representation in the Federal and Provincial services."

Over the time government of Pakistan took several measures and affirmative actions to protect the rights of minority groups and to enhance their participation in social, economic, and governing spheres of society. Although there is lack of effective organization of these policies. Quota system is not properly implemented. According to Tahira and Mushtaq (2018) A lesser number of injustice and misconducts have occurred towards the minority groups for making laws and policies effective but it will not be right to say that minorities have been mistreated and victimized on the account of their separate identity.

2.3 State's pledge to protect minority rights

President and Prime Minister Imran Khan assured the protection of all rights of minorities residing in the country. In a message on the Minorities' Day, being celebrated throughout the country, On the occasion Prime Minister and President vowed to remain committed to the protection of religious, social, political, and economic rights of its minorities and to ensure their participation in governance of society. Role of minorities in the development of Pakistan was commended. Prime Minister Imran Khan emphasized on the empowerment of National Commission For minorities to play its pivotal role in effective manner. He also pledged that we were committed to implement five percent minority quota in government services. He also applauded the role of minority parliamentarians, civil servant working in different government and non-government sectors.

2.4 Participation in Political Institution

The constitution of Pakistan makes a pledge to include non-Muslim inhabitants of Pakistan in the electoral and legislative process. This promise is fulfilled by incorporating minority representatives in various chambers of the legislature at both the federal and provincial levels of government. In Pakistan's upper house, there are four seats set out specifically for members of minority groups. According to the Constitution of Pakistan, all citizens of Pakistan are treated equally, and there is no discrimination of any kind based on factors such as religion, race, gender, or any other factor. In accordance with article 36, the principles of policing highlight that the state is obligated to protect the lawful rights and interests of minorities, including ensuring that they are adequately represented in services provided by the federal government and provincial governments.

The National Assembly of the nation has set aside 10 of the 342 available seats for them. In the provincial parliament of Punjab, there are 8 reserved seats out of a total of 371; in Sindh, there are 9 reserved seats out of 168; in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there are 3 reserved seats out of 124; and in Baluchistan, there are 3 reserved seats out of 51. The breakdown may be seen in the following table.

2.5 Non-Muslim reserved seats in the Senate of Pakistan

Province	Punjab	Sindh	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Baluchistan	Total
Seats reserved for non-Muslims	1	1	1	1	4

2.6 Non-Muslim reserved seats in the National Assembly of Pakistan

Within Pakistan's National Assembly, there are ten seats set out specifically for members of minority groups. The Constitution specifies that the whole nation is to be considered the constituency for these specific seats in the legislature. This indicates that no precise quota has been set for any geographical region or federating unit, and political parties are free to choose candidates from any part of the country for nomination. The system of proportional representation is used to choose candidates for these seats. Parties get a certain number of minority seats in proportion to the number of general seats they have been victorious in during the elections. If a party receives less than five percent of the total seats in the general election, it does not qualify for any of the reserved seats.

In a similar vein, minority groups are guaranteed seats in each and every one of Canada's provincial assemblies. At the now, there are a total of twenty-three reserved seats out of which members of Provincial Assemblies are going to be chosen in the General Election of 2018. The following is the allocation of seats throughout the provinces:

2.7 Non-Muslim reserved seats in the Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan

Province	Baluchistan	KPK	Punjab	Sindh	Total
Non-Muslim reserved seats	3	3	8	9	23

The 25th constitutional amendment, which was approved by Parliament in May 2018, resulted in the merging of FATA and KPK, which resulted in an increase in the number of provincial seats allocated to KP. Following the conclusion of the General Election, this modification will be implemented. The 25th constitutional amendment will be updated to reflect the increased number of members for the KPK parliament, and the number of reserved seats for minority groups will also rise from three to four in accordance with this change. As a direct consequence of this change, the total number of reserved seats for Pakistanis who are not Muslim would increase to 24.

Specific legislation in order to address the issues of minorities has been done by the parliament. Christian Marriage and Divorce Act 201 before this piece of legislation, the Hindu marriage act 2017 was also passed by the parliament.

Pakistan national commission for minorities has been established in 2020 by te act of

parliament. The commission comprises six ex-official members and twelve nonofficial members amongst them are two Muslims, three Hindus three Christians, two Sikhs one Zoroastrian and one kalasha member. The supreme court of Pakistan and other high courts of provinces are proactive in protecting minorities.

2.8 Inclusion in Education and Government Jobs

Government of Pakistan have taken many initiatives aimed at enhancing the access of religious minorities to government institutions and services and a just distribution of resources. Minorities have five percent quota in all federal and provincial jobs. Ejaz Alam, who is the minister for Human Rights and Minority Affairs Department, has said that the government of Punjab would shortly offer 19,800 jobs specifically for members of minority groups. The minister said that these roles had been empty for some time and had been carried through from the previous administration while speaking at a nationwide conversation that was held by the Human Rights and Minorities Affairs Department to create a culture of dialogue in Pakistan. During the conversation, we discussed and assessed the minority empowerment package as well as the execution of the 2 percent quota for minority students in the higher education institutions in the state of Punjab. According to the minister, having an open conversation is the most effective way to achieve equal citizenship. A significant portion of the minority population does not possess the education that is necessary for certain occupations, which results in a significant number of positions being unfilled.

Pakistan's government has made policies to bring all of its citizens at par with one other and quotas for civil service have been framed for this purpose. In this job quota five percent has been allocated for minorities. Likewise, 2 percent quota has been allocated for students belonging to minority communities for admission in the educational institutions of Punjab and KP. Additionally, there is no restriction for placement of members of minority groups on open merit as well. The subject quotas are in addition to the open merit. Quotas are also being envisaged in all provinces on the similar lines.

The government of Pakistan has announced the formation of National commission on minorities (NCM). The government of Pakistan claims that formation of the commission will serve as a landmark in the development of inclusion of minorities at national level. The commission will include the members of all religious minorities in Pakistan. In this regard a parliamentary bill was introduced by Miss Belam Hasnain on 17th March 2015 in National Assembly of Pakistan. According to the National Commission for Minorities act 2015 main function of the commission is to evaluate the progress of minorities under the federation and its unit, to safeguard the rights of minorities provided by the constitution, to look into complaints of minorities against deprivation of rights and discrimination against minorities and to recommend proper measures to the federal and provincial governments to tackle these issues. The committee is comprised of 12 members including the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson who themselves are selected from minorities community. However, the formation of commission is being criticized by the exclusion of

Ahmadiyya community and inclusion of Muslim members¹. Also, the senate committee has rejected the approval of the bill citing the minorities under the constitution are already observing unprecedented religious freedom and proposals of the bill are already included in the law².

Since the independence of country non-Muslim Pakistanis have been contributing to the progress of country by serving at different key positions. Many a distinguished personalities have served Pakistan in different positions in executive judiciary and legislature. Sir Zafarullah Khan Pakistan first foreign minister justice Cornelius, Justice Bhagwan Das Cecil Chaudhry are some of them to name a few. One man commission headed by Dr Shoaib Suddle reported that 30000 jobs are lying vacant and to be occupied by members of minority community.

According to the findings of a research on the execution of quotas set aside for various minority groups that was carried out by The Peace and Development Foundation (Dawn). According to the findings of the research, there was no mechanism in place within the public sector for conducting systematic evaluations of how the quota system for minorities had been put into practice. In certain contexts, such as in municipalities, there is a need that minorities be given a quota of five percent of the available occupations. In these contexts, this quota is met by providing positions that are low-paying and low-skilled, such as sanitary employees. This may sometimes lead to certain discriminatory behaviours and the establishment of stereotypes against minority groups. In 2016, 744 positions were unfilled because there were insufficient minority and female applicants who met the required qualifications.

The research also found that there was no method for systematic assessment to be found in the public sector, indicating that there was no way to determine how well the quota regime for minorities was being implemented. There were some minority community women who did gain from employment quotas, but there were other minority community women who experienced double discrimination, as was disclosed by representatives of women's and minority groups.

The fact that the majority of towns were able to meet the five percent employment quota by hiring minorities primarily in sanitation jobs was perhaps the most problematic application of the quota, as it contributed to the formation of perceptions and behaviours that were discriminatory. In a similar vein, Article 22 (1) of the Constitution of Pakistan forbids schools from coercing pupils to accept teachings or participate in any ceremony that is not associated with their particular religion.

Section III

Issues and challenges and Cultural Impediments

Pakistan government has taken many affirmative actions at constitutional, institutional and policy level to enhance the participation of religious minorities and these policies also bears certain fruits but certain historical and cultural factors impede their inclusion in mainstream of society. These factors have been discussed as under:

3.1 Poverty and Economic Exclusion

The main religion in Pakistan is Islam, although there are also significant populations of

Christians, Hindus, and Sikhs, amongst other religious minorities. Pakistan is a multi-ethnic state. Since Pakistan's founding in 1947, members of the country's religious minorities have been unable to improve their socioeconomic standing or get adequate human rights protections. They are a vulnerable part of society in terms of socioeconomics, politics, and psychology, all of which have contributed to their marginalization. Historically, members of religious minorities, particularly Christians and Bhails, have been at a disadvantage financially. They are subjected to prejudice on occasion on account of the racial and ethnic origins they come from. The ability of a society to generate revenue is largely dependent on the state of its commercial and corporate sectors. However, in the economic world, members of religious minorities are often disregarded and excluded when it comes to the formation of partnerships in commerce and industry. (Alam 2021). Their precarious circumstances make it impossible for them to accumulate adequate funds for investment. As a result, their opportunities in the commercial and corporate spheres are limited or nonexistent. They have been given special quotas in government employment, but because of their inadequate education and lack of skills, they can only work in occupations that are considered to be low-level. Non-Muslims who cannot read or write are often hired for menial occupations. Therefore, they work in the most menial capacities such as cleaner, laborer, and farmhand. Despite the fact that the government had guaranteed certain quotas for them, the legislation was never created (HRCP, 2014). In addition to that, there are a few problems with the implementation of the policy on employment quotas.

3.2. Islamic Identity of State and role of religious fundamentalist groups

Pakistani society is primarily a religious society with traditional understanding of religion in general masses. It emerged as a state where national identity is linked with religion i.e. Islam. Many fundamentalist groups take the advantage of this phenomenon and discriminate other religious groups because there are certain historical hostilities with different religious groups. This affects the social milieu of society. Society have not been modernized with scientific education and cultural pluralism. This creates some issues of stereotyping and biases against religious minorities. Some orthodox religious groups use the anti-minority slogan to promote their political agendas and draw political advantages from a hostile situation. Sometimes, they experience terrorist attacks on their houses of worship and continue to experience threats, violence, and discrimination. At community level sometime people use Blasphemy law against minority members to settle their own scores with them. Although this state of affair is contrary to the tolerant and plural vision of father of nation Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

3.3 Historical Stigma and Stereotyping

The historical issues determine the status of minorities like Christians in Pakistan is that which comes from the caste structure of pre-partition sub-continent Many, and according to some sources the majority of, present Pakistani Christians are the descendants of “untouchables” who during the time of colonialism converted to Christianity in the hope of getting better economic and social opportunities. As a result, many Pakistani Muslim groups consider Christians as inferior in social hierarchy because of that historical stigma which resultantly leads to the attitudes of stereotyping. Prejudice and discrimination.

3.4. Improper implementation of Job and Educational Quota

Constitution of Pakistan gives them equal status of citizenship, they have 5% quota in government jobs and seats have been reserved in national and provincial assemblies. 2% quota have been allocated to minority students in all educational institutions. Supreme court of Pakistan has given many verdicts in favor of elimination of discrimination against religious minorities. But unfortunately, due to certain cultural and historical factors they have been suffering from discrimination, stereotyping and in some cases even persecution. The job quota seats allocated to the minorities, however in 2016 almost 714 job quota seats in Punjab reserved for minorities are still vacant due to the lack of required qualification for the said seats. The minority quota seats for minority students are mostly vacant. For example, In University of Sargodha 2% seats are allocated to minority students according to Registrar office of university but at presents only 10 minority students are studying in the University.

3.5 Self-Isolation of Minority Groups

Some research reveals that sometime minorities consciously exclude themselves from the cultural life of society. They have a feeling of strangeness and incompatibility with the culture of minority and. They make their in-groups and cults in which they practice their own distinct culture. This phenomenon further pushes them out from national mainstream and restricts them from equal social participation in national life. This problem prevails in all societies where minority populations live, and Pakistan is no exception.

3.6 Lack of research on inclusive policies and role of Ministry of Minority Affairs

The Ministry of Minority Affairs has been subject to experiments by each government. It is not working consistently. No sufficient funds have been allocated to the ministry. No genuine research and data are available on the status of religious minorities and their issues. The government of Pakistan has announced the establishment of National Commission on minorities (NCM). The government of Pakistan claims that establishment of the commission will serve as a landmark in the enhancement of participation of minorities at national level. The commission will include the members of all religious minorities in Pakistan. In this regard a parliamentary bill was introduced by Miss Belam Hasnain on 17th March 2015 in National Assembly of Pakistan. According to the National Commission for Minorities act 2015 main function of the commission is to watchdog the welfare of minorities, to protect the rights of minorities guaranteed by the constitution of Pakistan, to look into complaints of minorities against deprivation of rights and discrimination against minorities and to recommend proper measures to the federal and provincial governments to tackle these issues. The committee is comprised of 12 members including the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson who themselves are selected from minorities community. However, the formation of commission is being criticized due to exclusion of Ahmadiyya community and inclusion of Muslim members. Also, the senate committee has rejected the approval of the bill citing the minorities are already observing religious freedom and proposals of the bill are already included in the law³.

The study was conducted to explore the impact of raising interest rates and contractionary monetary policy applied by the State Bank of Pakistan and rigid economic and political policies of the Government and the effect of these on the changing behavior of individual private investors. Structured interviews were conducted and transcribed and manually, codes were created, and redundant codes were removed and reduced to 15 codes and four themes. The themes reported that the safest investment avenue available at present is fixed deposits, but there is a hurdle of strict tax laws. Investors are not clear about the future direction of the present Government. Small scale private investors, students, and researchers studying Government policies may be benefited from the findings of this research to formulate their investment strategies. Moreover, researchers and students may help in developing better policies, and that may help the policymaker, in the long run, to tackle this kind of situation presently faced by the economy. There were fewer resources and time available for carrying out the research. This study captured the views of only ten participants, and all those were small-scale investors with vast knowledge of finance. Future research may be carried out by including fund managers or institutional investors to examine the conflict.

Conclusion

Affirmative actions and policies are steps taken by Pakistan's government to enhance the participation of religious minorities in the governance of society. Since the inception of Pakistan state vision is very clear on the equality of citizenship and abolishment of any form of discrimination. Laws and policies have given proper attention to the issues of numerically inferior groups on society who share a separate identity and sense of isolation and powerlessness. By keeping the idea of 'positive discrimination' in mind state has given adequate share in government jobs, educational institutions and federal and provincial legislatures. Courts of Pakistan are very much concerned about the implementation of policies aiming at inclusion of minorities and abolishing all kinds of discriminations. Hence, unfortunately there are certain factors which obstruct Pakistani minorities to be mainstreamed and get the equal status of citizenship. These factors include historical legacy of minority and majority, religious fundamentalism, culture of intolerance, lack of proper implementation structures and lack of research on the issue. Much have been done but what remains demands the attention of government and civil society. State should improve the policy implementation mechanisms and promote the culture of tolerance and pluralism through academia and media. Research have been done with the limited resources and limited time. Available data on the issue is also insufficient but the research will draw the attention of other researchers to further explore the issue.

Recommendations

Present research enables the researcher to suggest certain measures, short term as well as long term, to overcome the social exclusion of religious minorities and enhance their participation in governance of society. Issues of religious minorities of Pakistan can be solved with collective efforts of all segments of society includes Government institution, legislature, civil society, academia, religious scholars, and media. Following measures will eventually help to improve the

prevailing situation

- a. Laws and policies to enhance the participation of minorities are sufficient but there is an implementation gap, government should facilitate proper impact assessment of affirmative actions and overcome the flaws regarding implementation of minority policy and quotas
- b. The role of Ministry of Minority affairs should be proactive. Government must provide funds and staff to the Ministry to watchdog the implementation of affirmative actions. Government may involve non-governmental organization to assess the policy implementation. Proper research with the help of social researcher, on the problems faced by Pakistani minorities should be facilitated by the state.
- c. Allocated quota seats in jobs and education for minorities should be properly utilized and minorities should be educated and encouraged to avail those 'positive discrimination' opportunities. A minority commission may be established by the state to address the grievances of minority members regarding implementation of minority job and education quota
- d. Minorities everywhere in the world 'self-isolate' themselves in make their in-groups due to lack of normative integration in society. This phenomenon keeps them away from national mainstream. State and civil society should initiate different programs to eliminate their sense of isolation and differentiation of minority groups.
- e. Media and academia should promote the culture of pluralism, mutual existence, diversity, and tolerance. Every person who lives in a multi-religious society should be educated about religious pluralism and respect of other beliefs
- f. Hatred speech delivered by some religious clerics against some minority groups which sometime declare them as 'heretics', should be strictly banned and punished by the state.
- g. Law and order agencies should take strict action against those who commit violence against minority members.

Authors Contribution

Sajida Feroze: Conceived the presented idea and developed the theory literature search, study design, data collection

Tauqeer Ahmed Lak: Literature search, proofreading and editing

Muhammad Asif Malik: Methodology, Drafting and data analysis

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

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