

Role of Biraderism in Democratization in Punjab, Pakistan; a Conceptual Framework

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ABSTRACT

Pakistan has been in pursuit for stable democratic system since its creation. The patron-client relationship is shaping and defining the general politics and the biraderi politics of Pakistan. These links also legitimize the politically dynamic biraderies' clench on means and resources as well as the transfer of these resources as a bequest to coming generations of biraderies. The process of democratization is directly correlated and undermined due to biraderism that makes its pace very sluggish and inactive. It has been considered irresistible for non-democratic forces. It is generally argued the prehistoric group identities like family, kinship and caste, or biraderi membership, played a more important role in determining voting behaviour than the individual's political rational preferences. This phenomenon is overwhelmingly rule in the life of an individual in a society which is still in the transitional phase of democracy. The settlement policies of social engineering of the British had worked very well in the central region Punjab specifically. This is a theoretical and analytical study that presents a conceptual framework between biraderism and democratization process. The process of democratization is a dependent variable and the dynamics of biraderism work as an independent variable.

Keywords: **Biraderism, Patron- Client Relationship, Democratization, Emancipating Power, Voting Behaviour.**

Introduction

Biraderism or client politics is the trading of goods and services for political gains, often involving an implied or overt quid-pro-quo. Biraderism involves an asymmetric relationship between groups of political actors described as patrons, brokers, and clients. However, it is pertinent to define “*Biraderi*” and “*Biraderi* Politics”.

Here in Punjab and specifically in Pakist the *Biraderi* ties are very strong which regulating the sociopolitical and economic sphere of society and destabilize the road map of democratic process. Oscar Lewis writes that in academia behind the democratic system the hypothesis on voting is that the individual is a self-determining, by having a capable thinking and set to take his own choice. But, in a kinship structured society..... it is the large extended family, which is the basic

component of most decision making. So the preeminent is that voting becomes an extended family process. (Lewis, 1965, P.149) This argument was commonly perceived stating to the important role that *biraderi* played in the political process of the Punjab, especially in elections. *Biraderi* (literal meanings are ‘brotherhood’ and fraternal or fraternity) was an important affinity system effective in Punjab. Zekiye Eglar (Eglar Zekiya,1960)has described it in this manner that a paternal lineage to whom all men can trace their relationship to a common progenitor, no matter how he/she is far-off but belongs to the same *biraderi*.

Conversely, both Eglar and Hamza Alavi (Alavi Hamza, 1972) have pointed out that the term was not very specific as it can also be used to define other associations and groupings too. Inayatullah, (Inayatullah, 1963) writes about the rural Punjab, that the term is to be used for referring to the patrilineal affinity groupings of the Zamindars, or landowners, but also indicated the different occupational groups of landless too.

So, Political manoeuvring of *Biraderies* is very important in the process of democratization. The colonial Raj had assigned certain roles in respect of *biraderi* dynamics through social engineering those still persist in post-colonial period and the state in its own interest deliberately projected factions and *Biraderies* to gain its set objectives. Due to this the *biraderies* acquired a manipulating position in the social set up of the state through that its socio-political and economic dynamics subjugate the individuals and do not let him free in all his/her rational decisions. This colonial legacy is persistent, even after 75 years of partition. It can be witnessed through the mindset of aristocrat landed *Biraderies* in Pakistan.

The colonial and post-colonial history of Punjab discloses the manipulation of power of *biraderies*. It presents that the *biraderies* are working as a tool of manipulation for the political authority of the colonial rule. In Pakistan’s political history this area has received little attention. It is important to shed light on the domination of *biraderi* dynamics in such a micro level that properly develops an understanding of this phenomenon that how it works and creep into our social economic, political life. To further understand the phenomenon of *Biraderi* Politics, it becomes mandatory to review the literature.

Conceptual Framework

Due to that it has become a prey for non-civilian forces and consequently, political scenario of Pakistan is continuously deteriorating and failed to pave the path of democratic process. The non-democratic attitudes of social institution “*Biraderi*” are evident in nature and structure of political institutions. These dominant behaviours of social institutions are reflected by political institutions. The societal and political configurations links and influence each other; due to this it is assumed that democracy is not external but internal Phenomenon. It cannot artificially insert in a state, but can set up it through a particular process of democratization. Social structure of Pakistan is set up on *biraderi* system. The British colonial legacy ironically have engineered and merged the elite landed

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biraderies in social construction in the expanse of Pakistani Punjab. So, first it is necessary to understand the democratization process that how it can be?

Process of Democratization

Christian Welzel Haerpfer (Haerpfer et al., 2009) explains it in the words of institutionalisation of people. According to Christian Welzel, "Democratization is sustainable to the extent to which it advances in response to pressures from within a society." (Haerpfer et al., 2009,P.75) He further explains that there are three different concepts or it may be explained in phases to understand the process of democratization;

- Emergence of democracy (Emergence in an authoritarian rule)
- Deepening of democracy (Strengthen its roots in the political system)
- Survival of democracy (Haerpfer et al., 2009) (Persistence of it in political System)

This can be understood by the initiation of democracy in a non-democratic rule, then after it can be understood how a democratic regime evolves in its political system the core values of democracy and third is how it can be consolidated or preserving to continue its existence. Democratization is the transition to a more self-governing, independent and democratic rule. It may be the conversion from totalitarian rule to a complete democratic rule, a conversion from an authoritarian political system to a semi-democratic or change over from a semi-authoritarian rule of political democratic rule. Democratization is persuaded by several dynamics, including economic progress, antiquity, and social setup. Primarily this transition is an evolutionary process which evolves social, political and economic aspects. In this regard the process of democratization means;

- The establishment of more democratic a state
- Ensuring that all individuals have access to everything or to make it probable for all individuals to capture something

There are different approaches to study democratization process. For example, Hague &Harrop (Hague &Harrop, 2007) describe the work of Huntington the three waves of democratization in the world who explains it in the phases and called them in waves that may exemplify as;

1. "First Wave; (1828-1926) according to him (Huntington) in first wave there emerged the liberal democracies like USA and UK France etc. but consolidated in the early 19th century.
2. Second Wave: (1943-1962) this wave emerged in WWII and persisted till 1960s. During this wave democracy emerged in India, Japan.
3. Third Wave; (1974-1991) according to Huntington this wave changed the political scenario of the world during this wave deepening of democratic values encouraged." (Hague &Harrop, 2007, P.53)

In this third wave of democratization the electioneering politics pervasively progress all through the world.

Christian Welzel 2009 presents a classification of the democratization process in accordance to him “the human emancipation powers are a route to democracy is approachable to mass stresses for democracy this path establish responsive democratization. There are other types of democratization like;

- **Enlightened democratization:** in this type of democratization the upper class the elite respect the freedom and democratic norms.
- **Opportunistic democratization:** in this type of democratization the roles of elite are very perverted and corrupt without any kind of public pressure they have no regard of democratic values.
- **Imposed democratization:** This is a forced democratization that is established on the aspirants of external influences it is a typical democracy that was seen after the II world war in the world like Japan, West Germany and Italy more often seen in Pakistan under martial rules.
- **Responsive democratization:** Responsive democratization is the only political process of democratization in which democracy becomes socially rooted and develops socially supportable. This is the one in which the every person knows his responsibility.

In all above first three types of democratizations power elites allocated interests exploiting power are overwhelmed by explanations other than mass pressures.” (Haerpfher et al.,2009,P.87) It is obvious that democratization is not a self-perpetuating process that escorts itself without its indicators rather it is the process of purposeful joint actions, involving the policies of power elites, campaigns of social move campaigners and mass participation.

He also presents different aspects or factors of democratization that are as follows,

1. Democracy and resource distribution
2. Capitalism, industrialization and democracy
3. Social division, distributional equalities and democratization
4. Colonial legacies, religion, traditions and democracy
5. Modernization, democratization
6. International conflicts, regimes alliances and democracy
7. Elite pacts, mass mobilization and democratization
8. State repression and democratize mass pressure
9. Mass beliefs and democratization
10. Elite -conceded versus mass -pressured democratization
11. Institutional configuration of democracy
12. The human empowerment path to democracy

However, there are also some recent advances in the study of democratization for example; According to UNDP report on Deepening Democracy the Developing countries pursued democratization in the face of massive poverty and

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pervasive social and economic tensions. (Human Development Report, 2002) This report has raised many issues regarding effective democracy;

1. An electoral system that guarantees for free and fair elections.
2. A system of checks and balances based on the separation of powers, with independent judicial and legislative branches.
3. A vibrant civil society, able to monitor government and private business—and provide alternative forms of political participation.
4. A free, independent media.
5. Effective civilian control over the military and from other security forces. (Human Development Report, 2002)

In this context, World banks' World Governance Indicators presents the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI, 2010) project reports aggregate and individual governance indicators for over 200 countries and territories over the period 1996–2015, it throws light on six dimensions of governance:

1. Voice, and Accountability
2. Political Stability and Absence of Violence
3. Government Effectiveness
4. Regulatory Quality
5. Rule of Law
6. Control of Corruption (WGI,2010)

The global program entitled “Varieties of Democracy based in Sweden, Gothenburg University” (V-Dem World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 5430) presents that Women’s rights linked with democratization. In this study, they focus on two things in democratization, first, changes in class power and demands for redistribution and second is mass behaviour and participatory civil society. Whereas, (Puddington and Roylance 2017) the Freedom house Survey on Freedoms in the World 2017 talk about the political rights and civil liberties. Along with that, it also highlights, human rights, civil society, freedom of expression rule of law and elections to gauge the level of democracy in a country.

These are all the different aspects or indicators of democratization that leads towards the consolidation of the democratization process that can be varied state to state. In this study under research the social division, distributional equalities and along with human empowerment is focused more. Practically speaking, the process of democratization has a continuous process that may take a long way to achieve its certain conditions that is defined by many scholars. So, the level of economic and social freedom enhances the political freedom that further sets the level of democratization. This long way or path is the process to attain to democratize a state or it can be called democratization/ process of democratization. There is great debate about the aspects which affect or in the long run confines democratization process. Basically the process of democratization evolves three factors, political, economic and social of any political system.

Political Factors of Democratization

Primarily the process of democratization deals with the political system. This indicates that every individual has the right to vote to participate in the political system through the electoral process of the state on equal basis may be called political democracy also. The individual has the freedom of expression, speech and writing as well, he/she is free to make his/her associations and involve in all kinds of legally allowed activities freely. The ultimate end of the democratization process is to attain the level of an ideal state in which a successful government is functioning; no individual is discriminated on any differences of religion, gender, caste, creed linguistic, or regional basis.

In this regard political democracy as Lord Bryce defined (Puddington and Roylance, 2017) it that “Democracy in the form of government in which ruling power of a state legally rested, not in any particular individual or class, but in the members of the community as a whole.” (Puddington and Roylance 2017,P.436) Every individual enjoys legally his /her freedom on equality bases.(Hague & Harrop,2007) The main principle of it lies in self –rule, self -governance; and more to it democracy denotes not only to the electoral process of the politicians or parliamentarians by the ruled, but to the denial of any separation between the two.

As per the views of Sir Stafford Cripps, ‘ by democracy we mean a system of government in which every adult citizen is equally free to express his views and desires, upon all subjects in whatever way he wishes and influences the majority of his fellow citizens to decide according to those views and implement those desires.’ (Sharma & Sharma, 2000, P.434)

For this purpose following are the indicators of the political democratization:

1. The Electoral Process:

Elections to choose members for a public office are key elements for democratization. According to Katz “Elections are the defining institution of modern democracy. (Hague & Harrop, 2007, P.185)” Basically, it is a decision making process, in which the general public takes part and give their opinion through voter balloting. The process held regular bases. Elections are the basic indicator to measure the process of democratization. Election process should be fair and free from all kinds of corruptions and interferences like Gerrymandering in delimitation of constituencies, suppression and tampering with election results may affect the process of democratization.

2. Voting Behaviour of People:

The Voting behaviour is a vital and central form of political participation. It focuses on such determinants that make the people to participate in elections

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and the way by which they cast their vote. In the democratization process the voting behaviour of people determines that whether it is supporting the democratic system or diverge it. So, the more the participation in elections and the choice of the people is, on rational basis the more the system track on democratic arena.

3. Role of Political Parties

The Political parties' role is very crucial as their function is to mobilize the people. They also unify them at collective issues, even though they don't agree on all matters; they form the political parties of the people who agree on the commonalities of the matters. As an enormous unit of individuals, the political parties are able to apply more power to acquire its set goals in government than a single person without support can do. A strong system of political parties is essential to stabilize democratic process.

The role of political parties is also a key indicator of democratization process as politically when a contestant is associated with a specific political party; the voters identify his position on the relationship between the government and its people. "Political parties are like trademarks". Voters trust on party platforms to say a political ideology. Political parties are an appropriate contrivance to articulate and consolidate ideas and positions pooled by a large group of people. Political parties aggregate various contradictory demands into coherent policy programs. All jargons and positions can't be picked up at once. The parties allow for one unifying say to be perceived. So in this regard the role of Political Parties is very crucial in interest articulation an aggregation. Their role determines the level of the democratization whether it is on the right way to democracy in which every section of society accommodated or not.

Civic Culture

Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba in the "Civic Culture and the civic culture revisited", 1963, held a comprehensive analysis of civic cultures. The main findings of them are that an assured and particular civic culture is indispensable for the persistence of democratic process.

The social factor of democratization process is to be determined by the social equality and assimilation of different segments or groups of society. According to Dewey as Urmila Sharma quoted him, "Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in the social relationship and control, and habits of mind which secure social change without introducing disorder." (Shrama & Sharma,2000,P.436) Kant embedded it with "good" means "good" to do with others and eventually have own "Good" or ones ends or objectives. Under a social democracy, it is believed that equality is pervasive

regardless of all kinds of prejudices of race, class, religion, gender discriminations. It indicates comprehensiveness in all aspects of social life of an individual and then let the individual to use his / her free will in the political arena by having a rational vision to act accordingly. In this regard, in the social process of democratization the empowerment and values of emancipation for an individual are a motivating force that is very important for democratization.

In democratization process the economic scenario presents a picture of economic equivalence and harmony. Distribution of resources and allocation of capital resources is equally distributed. Disparity, poverty and dependence obstruct the democratic transition. So, economic stability correlates with democratization process and that is why some academicians claim the rich democracies have never been witnessed to fall into authoritarianism. This puts forward the argument that states which have ample natural resources, such as agricultural land and other wealth resources, over and over again fail to democratize because the elite class lives on the natural resources rather than depend on general support for tax revenues. In those societies the elite class also avoids direct confrontation of revolution, so they compromise by giving concessions and democratise the political system for example landed elites the feudal, the industrialists or the big business tycoons monopolised the resources. And hence the fragmented society emerged where the gap between have and have not been stretching.

In this regard an ideal situation or somewhat transitional phase may come to pave the path of the democratisation where allocation and distribution of the means of production and resources must equally distribute. A sense of contentment in the individuals may occur towards the political system. Democracy and free market economy are directly related. This belief generally focuses on the idea that democracy and the market economy are basically two different personas of freedom. It is believed that the pervasive free market economy may boost norms such as individuality, dialogues, conciliation, rule of law, and equal in justice. These elements are seen as supportive for democratisation.

By summing up, the democratisation process looks like a government in which the free, rational and emancipating will of the people prevails. It visions for rule of law, justice, socio-political and economic equalities, which is also accountable and transparent. It certifies the decree of law and sovereignty of the constitution. It paves the path for good governance, which provides the people peace, harmony despite heterogeneity, development and prosperity. If a structure of government absences these basic topographies, then it is not a process of democratization. To achieve the ends, it is necessary to move on the path of democratization process.

These are the general aspects that may indicate their influence on the process of democratization. But in Pakistan and particularly in Punjab the role of factional /biraderi politics is overwhelmingly prominent in these indicators as it is a maneuvering element in the political arena. In Parochial political culture, family is

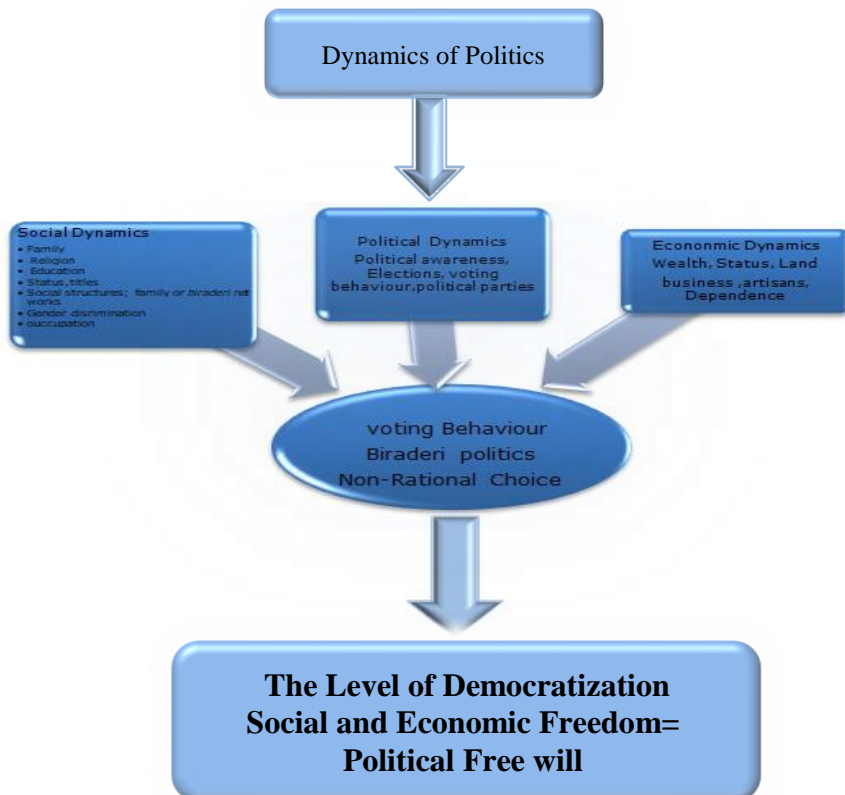
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the main agent of political socialization. So in this context the biraderi politics effect on the process of democratization through its political social and economic dynamics. For this research the following indicators are selected to study for the dynamics of biraderi politics. There are many aspects, i.e., historical, socio-economic, political and cultural, etc. that have been debated to influence the process, but in this study basically three aspects are selected with some specification of the research.

Here it is essential to mention that any part of an activity is needed to be explored within the broader perspective where it is occurring, like the domain of politics. In this realm it is suitable to find the relationship between the above stated concepts by knowing about them provides the premises from which different aspects of 'Social system impacts on the process of democratization are exposed and the question of its maturity and immaturity is judged in the socio-political and economic dynamics of *biraderi* politics milieu.

Fig. 2.1 Conceptual Framework

The Specific Perspective of Punjab



The above figure shows the dynamics of *biraderi* politics the independent variable in this study that how the *biraderi* setup empower or disempower the individuals through its dependent variables of social, political and economic dynamics and resultantly the level of democratization can be measured either receives effects or not. In all above mentioned indicators of democratization process the *biraderi* politics have manifestly played their role.

In political perspective, there are different parameters that can be analysed in political participation under the cover of *biraderism* i.e. political awareness, elections, voting behaviour of individuals, role of political parties etc. In developed countries this basic social institutional structure the family, lineage prejudices is doing very important role in political socialization of the people and supports them to use their free will in rationale bases that's why the level of democratization is very high, but the same institution of the society in Pakistan more specifically in Punjab is subjugating the individuals and not let them free to choose a rationale choice as the figure show.

As for the concern, political indicators of democratization their roles are also hijacked by the *biraderi* politics and hence restrict the individual empowerment in general Pakistan and particularly in Punjab under study. Even the 1970 elections also could not bring any drastic change in the political trends through which PPP of Zulifqar Ali Bhutto had got the populist support against the Ayub Khan's military rule as aftermath Bhutto, he himself needed the support of these landed *biraderi* elites for its rule. The dominant landed classes in Punjab were able to hold their political locus and strengthen it in the two military regimes of Zia-ul-Haq and Musharraf through the elections held under their controlled rule, and consequently in the decades of democracy that preceded after both of them till today. Due to that history it is pertinent to explore those political sub- dependent variables of the *biraderi* politics like, political participation i.e. awareness, elections, voting behavior of the masses, role of political parties, Gerry meandering, etc. As for the concern of the social dynamics of *Biraderi* politics is generally discussed about the prehistoric group identities like family, clan, *biraderi* kinship and caste, played a more important role in determining voting behaviour in the subcontinent, than individual political preferences., Oscar Lewis argues that

“The theoretical assumption behind a democratic system based on voting is that the individual is an independent, thinking being capable and ready to make his own decision. However, in a kinship organized society...it is the large extended family, which is the basic unit for most decision making. At, best, voting becomes an extended family process”.
(Lewis, 1965, P. 149)

Social indicators of democratization are also hampered by the domineering position in a *biraderi system in Punjab* for example, social inequalities are shown

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in, norms, values, status, prestige, titles of the biraderies, social structures, culture, gender, and occupations all are regulated through biraderi system and the self-cohesive force of *biraderism* obstructs the powers of the individuals. Those all variables contributing in restricting the use of free will of the individuals. The economic perspective of democratization also hinges up by *biraderi* Politics. It highlights the importance of economic security of the individual, but in rural agrarian set up of Punjab is also embedded by the *biraderi* system. The class structure of the *biraderies* clearly indicates that the upper strata is enjoying the freedom of democratic standards, whereas the lower strata of biraderies are submissive and do not have the fruits of democracy. Economic instability makes them vulnerable to dependent and this dependency has captured their preferences. Land, wealth and affluences are guarantors of one's emancipating power. The first elections in the history of Punjab were held in 1883 that introduced limited representation in the government of the province in order to enhance more effective role. That was based on a limited franchise, which granted to big landowners and they had the power of the vote. These elections made only few in power who privileged and were becoming part of advisory capacity to the governor of the province. Both kinds of the participation gradually extended, the franchise and the domain of elected representatives, although institutional limits were introduced that guaranteed the persistent reproduction of the political supremacy of the rules of the landed *biraderies*. In this the sub variables like Wealth, Status, Land, business, artisanship, Dependence very much count for the freedom of individual's free will for rational choice in a democratic process.

Conclusion

Pakistan has been striving for the democratization of its political system since its beginning. The process of its democratization has been slow, inert and continued flimsy. It has high tendency to accommodate non- democratic forces in its system. Along with that, the repetitive episodes of military regimes divert its path of democratization. Consequently, Pakistan, especially Punjab has been uninterruptedly failing to offer what a democratization process needs.

Such awful situation has several explanations behind it at all three levels: State, government and society lying on all these three levels social phenomena of *biraderi* politics overwhelming has raged the situation. The non- democratic social structures reflect themselves into the nature and structure of political institutions. Political institutions don't arise in a vacuum; they are a manifestation of social institutions. Political and social compositions interplay and influence each other. That is why; it is said that democracy is not outward but inward phenomenal. It cannot implant rather it can be established and facilitated through a specific process of democratization. There are many shortfalls of the existing system that may subsidize the *biraderi* politics. For example, Colonial inheritances and institutional imbalances support the phenomenon of *biraderi* politics is

extending its roots from the British era. Pakistan has leased its governmental system, political and legal legacies from the British rule.

As for the concern of the administrative legacies, Punjab got high institutional discrepancies characterized with strong and organized civil and military bureaucracies. As a result, it lacked robust, dynamic and sustainable political institutions which could hold regular elections based on universal franchise that could build trust of the masses into the democracy that could protect the democratic process against constitutional transgression provide a favourable environment for democracy to flourish and could correspond to desire and aspirations of the masses.

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