

Saeed Ahmed Butt¹

Muhammad Iqbal Chawla²

Marginalization and Minorities: Recontextualising the Role of Christians as a Minority in Pakistan

Abstract

The present study historicizes the dynamics of socio-cultural and political relations between the state of Pakistan and the Christian community as a minority. In a global perspective, minorities feel by and large pushed to the liminal spaces in the matters of national policymaking. And Pakistan is no exception to this phenomenon. It is a common notion that minorities globally are being marginalised in the policymaking process by the nation-states and Pakistan is no exception to that. It is generally alleged that the State of Pakistan has excluded the Christians from the mainstream decision making bodies and put them at the corner.³ However, Christians have played a significant role in the creation and consolidation of Pakistan.⁴ After the establishment of Pakistan, the Christian community has massively been contributing in all walks of life in Pakistan, but they have the feeling as if the state has excluded the minorities by adopting the exclusionary constitutional means.⁵ This paper attempts to understand the state policy towards minorities, particularly the Christians through a process of legislation adopted in the constitutional development of Pakistan, and the response of the Christians to the state policies is also analysed. Still, a few critics maintain that these constitutional safeguards are not enough to grant equal rights to the minorities. Instead, they argue that these measures have converted Christians into a marginalised community in Pakistan. Therefore, it is of immense significance to reevaluate the status of the religious minorities in Pakistan, especially that of Christians. This paper, while looking at the historical perspective, will try to investigate the State's policies towards the Christians and the role of Christians in the making and strengthening of Pakistan. It argues that the State of Pakistan has taken concrete steps towards the democratization of society where no segment of society feels marginalized. The Christians, who are active and vibrant citizens of Pakistan still feel that they have not been given equal opportunities to flourish in the mainstream politics of Pakistan; hence they feel marginalised.

KeyWords: Christianity, Marginalisation, Constitution, Education, Health and Rights

1. Introduction:

The socio-political, cultural and economic conditions which harbour the feelings of being marginalized among minorities, have emerged as new sites of knowledge production in academia. In Pakistan, there is a multiplicity of narratives regarding the phenomenon of socio-political marginalization and a degree of exclusivity experienced by minorities. The concept of inclusion and exclusion have opened new avenues of research in which exclusion is taken as a form of deprivation which can potentially manifest itself through the study of socio-political and economic domains in a particular area. The South Asians for human rights have good reason to want this

¹Saeed Ahmed Butt, a Ph D Scholar in the department of History, PU Lahore and working as Assistant Professor, Department of History, GCU Lahore).

² Professor (Rtd) Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Chawla (Former Dean of Arts & Humanities, Ex-Chairperson of the Department of History, Director Pakistan Study Centre and currently Director Research Society of Pakistan, PU Lahore).

³ This paper is mainly derived from the Ph D research done by the scholar and the supervisor at the Department of History, PU.

⁴Muhammad IqbalChawla, "Focusing on Marginalized Groups in Pakistan: A Case Study of Christian Minority in Lahore," *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 26, No. 2 Autumn 2018. pp. 105-116.

⁵AmartyaSen presented this concept of "Including the Exclusion" at the conference on "Including the Exclusion" arranged by South Asian For Human Rights, held in New Delhi, 11-12 November 2001.

versatility since we have to be interested in various types of deprivations.”⁶ Deprivation may have differed from various types of violations like denial of basic human rights like health facilities and equal educational opportunities and politico-civilian privileges leading to economic deprivation. Therefore, Our prime interest would be to find the Christian claims of exclusion from the socio-political and economic prospects of Pakistan, but also try to find the remedies on how to mitigate their concerns in Pakistan.

2. Christian Efforts of Social Inclusion:

After Pakistan came into being, the commendable role of Christian community cannot be Undermined regarding their services rendered in the social uplift of Pakistan. At the time of Pakistan making, they not only founded the Relief Camps⁷ for the Indian migrants, but they also founded many orphanages⁸ throughout Pakistan and tried to bring improvements in the lives of citizens of Pakistan Through their contribution to the social sector. But it seems that their role in the nation-building remains unrecognized and calls for a review of history to determine their rightful position in the national body politics. As a community, Christians have done a lot for Pakistani state and society, which we should be well aware of their efforts. They founded a chain of educational institutions like St Joseph’s Convent — spreading throughout Pakistan. During the late 19th century, the Christian community established hospitals and Orphanages. But the Project of Nationalization by Z.A. Bhutto caused irreparable damage to the efforts of the Christians. The nationalization of medical and educational institutions caused a setback the economic opportunities for the Christian community, resulting in a sudden loss of their employment opportunities in the missionary institutions. But the claim of *Nazir S. Bhatti* about Christians share in the Pakistan’s government departments is zero per cent, which is grossly incorrect, but the Christian community has less economic share in Pakistani federating departments. Majority of the Christian community has the employment in the sanitation departments as workers who receive the salary packages of Grade 4-5, which is not attractive from an economic point of view. Meanwhile, the nationalization of missionary schools and colleges have also enforced the merit system for the admission of Christian students in their missionary institutions,”⁹but there is still keeps for the Muslim students based on religion.

The Christians, as a minority in Pakistan, Have always been a victim of social prejudice in different forms by the state’s law and regulation and by the society. Though Christians faced a lot of subjugation and oppression by different ruling elites, but their key role in various fields have enriched the poor strata of the Pakistani society. In the study circles, their role towards the majority population of Pakistan is always ignored, rather their issue of fundamental rights is still discussed. Yet, no serious effort has been made to explain Christians contributions as a minority of contributing factor in the creation of liberal and conscious citizens in the Pakistani society. In Pakistan, millions of Christian’s people are facing a lot of harassment and oppression in the form of falsified blasphemous charges against them, putting attacks over the schools, churches and land grabbing, mistreatment of Christian prisoners, forced conversion of minor girls, raping and killing.¹⁰

3. Constitutional Exclusion:

The Christian as a community have Always struggled to claim their rightful position in the national power hierarchies. In Pakistan, they are experiencing several issues and problems with their commendable contribution in the medical as well as educational fields. Since the inception of Pakistan, Christians minority faced the issue of the separate electoral system as one of the most important issues in the coming decades of Pakistan. Before Punjab Boundary Commission in July 1947, S.P. Singha, one of the most important Christian leaders, opposed the joint electorates in the Indian subcontinent because it would create the Hindu hegemony in the united India. In his presentation, he also described the Christian sensitivity and obsession about the electoral system, and declared it “a question of life and death for them.”¹¹ Adopting the policy of inclusion, *Quaid-i-Azam* took *JogendraNath Mandal*¹², as 1st law minister of Pakistan, but later this policy was set aside by the later rulers of Pakistan.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Forman Christian College established many camps, and one of them was converted into a hospital known as United Christian Hospital (U.C.H.) Gulberg, Lahore.

⁸In 1892-93, Christians firstly founded an orphanage in Lahore, later in Rawalpindi, an orphanage school was established in 1897.

⁹ S. Bhatti, Nazir, *The Trial of Pakistani Christian Nation*, (), p.82.

¹⁰ (Aide-Memoire, Society for Threatened People, 7th Session of the UN Human Rights council 3rd March to 28th March 2008)

¹¹ S.P. Singha was then a speaker of the Punjab Assembly in united Punjab.

¹² *JogendraNathMandal* was the first law minister appointed by Quaid-i-Azam M. Ali Jinnah, belonging to East Pakistan and to Hindu scheduled-caste.

Since the creation of Pakistan, it seems that through a systematized coercion, an exclusionary policy was adopted by the state towards the non-Muslims from the policymaking process of Pakistan as a newly born state, which had severely undermined the Pakistani national unity. And many critics consider the Objectives Resolution as the first step towards the minorities' exclusion from Muslims' dominated Pakistani state. "Committee on Fundamental Rights of Citizens and Minorities of Pakistan"¹³ appointed by the legislators on 12th August 1947, would gauge the minorities' fundamental rights and recommend the measures for the minorities safety. But it seems that Quaid's vision of liberal and democratic Pakistan also saw its final destination with the demise of *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, when the first Constituent Assembly deviated from the outlines of *Quaid's* speech of 11th August 1947. The Christian leadership and many liberal thinkers take the passing of Objectives Resolution by Liaquat Ali Khan on 12th March 1949 as a declaration of minorities Second-Class citizenship and declare the supremacy of Muslim clerics, who would decide the future Pakistani nationhood based on the principles of religious conformity. Making Objective Resolution as a preamble of every future constitution in Pakistan according to Islamic principles resulted in "allowing a greater role for the *ulama*, who felt emboldened by this greater recognition."¹⁴ During the Constituent Assembly debates before the passing of a resolution, minorities legislators raised many objections like the use of Islamic terminologies in Objective Resolution and recommended to bring some of the amendments for the future safeguard of minorities' rights in Pakistan. "Still, this motion of amendment was left without any seriousness and considered it worthless."¹⁵

In 1949, the entire role of state began to shift when *Ahrar's* primarily wanted the announcement of declaring *Ahmadiyya* as a minority in Pakistan. The demand became instrumental in harbouring suspicions among non-Muslims of Pakistan and it had also determined the changing status of minorities in future. In 1954, the Federal government made all the provincial governments irrelevant by declaring the Martial law in Lahore. The Munir Report (1954) put many questions for deliberations about the state's role to determine the religion of its people and the announcement of its citizens as non-Muslim and Muslims. This report also explained in detail the deliberate involvement of the ruling provincial governments in organizing the disorders based on religion and described the governments' nexus with the fanatic Islamic groups. During the anti-Ahmadiyya nationalist movement, The state of Pakistan gave a lukewarm response towards the minorities further producing the feelings of fear and marginalization in the large sections of minorities.

the state responded unsatisfactorily and people's violence brought unimaginative results for the minorities, which resulted from into future manifestly, for the maintenance of law and order situation in Pakistan, the declaration of Martial law by the state introduced the state's new governing ideology, which authorized the federal government to bypass the provincial governments. Secondly, the state adopted the role of defining the non-Muslims and Muslims and this state's determination gave the concept of fractured citizenship to its people. Thirdly, the state would also assume the responsibility of safeguarding her citizens' fundamental rights and "showed its distrust over the elected representatives as biased and partisan."¹⁶

Following the guidelines of Objective Resolution (1949), twenty-four members of the Basic Principles Committee was made, which would prepare the 1st Pakistan's constitution. From 1951 to 1955, Mrs. *S.P. Singha*¹⁷, Mr. *Joshua Fazal-ud-Din*¹⁸, Mr. *C.E. Gibbon*¹⁹ and *Chaudhry Chandu Lal*²⁰ were the 4 elected Christians representatives in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, out of total one hundred and eighty-nine (189) legislators, who also helped to elect of *Mian Mumtaz M. Khan Daultana* as Chief Minister-ship of Punjab Province. Under 1956 Constitution²¹, a unicameral Parliament (National Assembly) consisted of three hundred members equally divided between the West and the East Pakistan, which enhanced its seats from three hundred (300) to three hundred and ten (310), 5 (five) women seats were reserved for both Pakistani wings for 10 years. On the other hand, the constitution-makers did not reserve any single seat for the non-Muslims of Pakistan. According to the Constitution of 1956, Pakistan was officially declared as an Islamic State and the legislators did not empower the lowest strata of the

¹³ On 12th August 1947, the title of "*Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah*" was given to Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

¹⁴ Malik, Iftikhar H., *Religious Minorities in Pakistan* (UK, Minority Rights Group International, 2002) p.14.

¹⁵ Saeed, Sadia, *Pakistani Nationalism and the state Marginalization of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan, Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism, 2007 ASEN Conference Special: Vol. 7, No. 3, 2007. SEN 7.3.indb p. 136.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

¹⁷ She was an Anglo Pakistani Christian woman and a wife of Mr. *SP Singha*.

¹⁸ He was a very popular Anglo Christian Pakistani parliamentarian having the distinction of completing his graduation with the degree of law.

¹⁹ He was an Anglo-Pakistani Christian too.

²⁰ Being an Anglo Pakistani Christian, he performed well for the Christians rights as a parliamentarian.

²¹ Till 1954, the final Constitutional draft was completed.

society like non-Muslims and women. The legislators just “paid lip service”²² to implement the Islamic orders and compromised the rights of the minorities, which resulted in abolishing the system of separate Electorates for the non-Muslims Minorities in the 1956 Constitution. The Government of *Hussain Soharwardy* abolished the system of Separate Electorates, which *persuaded Joshua Fazal Dean Chowdry, C. Gibbon and Chowdry Chandu Lal*, the prominent Christian leaders, to file a writ petition in the Pakistan’s supreme court in 1956. They also attached a document, in which *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah* gave assurance to *S.P. Singha* for adopting the system of separate electorates for minorities in return of Christian vote for Pakistan formation.²³ *C. Gibbon*, a key Christian representative, spoke for eighteen hours in Pakistan’s National Assembly for casting his protest against the Joint Electorates and supported the adoption of a separate electoral system for the minorities of Pakistan. Facing a lot of issues and difficulties, state’s policies towards minorities have resulted into intolerance, institutionalizing the discriminatory laws and the occurrence of socio-political suppression, thus “usurped the minorities’ basic rights for formulating their political lives having an equal and independent citizenship with the Muslims in future Pakistan.”²⁴

The arrival of General *Ayub Khan* brought a new constitution²⁵, making the Objectives Resolutions its Preamble and also dropped the word ‘Islamic’ from the state’s title. Leaving the parliamentary system, this constitution offered the unitary as well as a presidential governmental system with the Basic Democrats²⁶ system. This constitution describes the centralist type of narrowly elected assemblies and administration, having whole executive power in one hand, which severely scratched the Pakistani state’s “plural prerogatives”²⁷. A separate electoral system was adopted for the elections of their democrats and local representatives, but it also blocked the “Christian representation in the National Assembly.”²⁸ General *Yahya Khan* introduced The Legal Framework Order²⁹ (LFO) as an interim constitutional arrangement so that he might fulfil the wider political demands of his countrymen. On the other hand, *Yahya Khan*’s LFO neither segregated the non-Muslims nor it coopted “the religious groups,”³⁰ opined by *Iftikhar Haider Malik*. In the elections of 1970, the voters did not support the religious parties like JUI (*Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islami*) and JI (*Jamat-i-Islami*) and gave votes to the left-wing and liberal parties (PPP, ANP, Awami League) in the national assembly. The voters elected three hundred and thirteen (313) members in the first National Assembly, with thirteen (13) women seats, but no representation was given to minorities at all.

The Constitution of 1973 adopted a bicameral house at the centre, and the Parliament comprised of the two houses viz, the Senate, the National Assembly and the President. According to the 1973 Constitution, about six Christians and ten women seats were reserved in the Pakistan’s National Assembly and granted the system of joint electorates for the minorities. Reflecting the majority population of Pakistan, Objective Resolution was made the preamble of the 1973 Constitution. Meanwhile, the highest offices of President and Prime Minister were assigned to Muslims only, which was a great contrast to the prevailing democratic principles of citizenship. This showed a firm commitment of religious parties of declaring Pakistan as a Muslim dominated country with the non-Muslim population possessing no opportunity to assume the principal occupations in the state decision-making, opined by *Iftikhar Haider Malik*. According to the Constitution of 1973, Islam was declared as the state religion and it was declared mandatory for the President and the Prime Minister to be Muslims. The amendment empowered the Muslim clerks to enjoy the supreme authority of interpreting Islamic injunctions in terms of beliefs and practices.

²² *Malik, Iftikhar H.*, Religious Minorities in Pakistan (UK, Minority Rights Group International, 2002 p.15.

²³ *S. Bhatti, Nazir, The Trial of Pakistani Christian Nation*, p.71. *Mr. A K Brohi*, a prominent Muslim lawyer, acted as an advocate in this petition in which he favoured the importance of separate electorates for minorities. The judges dismissed this petition by declaring Parliament as a supreme constitution making body.

²⁴ *Salim, Ahmad, Non-Muslims in an Islamic State A case Study of Pakistan*, Al-mushir Vol.51, Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, 2009, No. 2, P.55, ISSN 0254-7856

²⁵ A Constitutional commission was appointed by General *Ayub Khan* on 17th February 1960, which reviewed the socio-economic and political life of the country and submit its proposals, so that the Muslims might make their lives according to the Islamic beliefs and democratic principles and. This commission submitted its report on 29th April 1961, which gave a new Constitution to Pakistan on 1st March 1962.

²⁶ Those native elected 80,000 Basic democrats would make the electoral college for the choosing the President of Pakistan.

²⁷ *Malik, Iftikhar H.*, Religious Minorities in Pakistan (UK, Minority Rights Group International, 2002 p.15.

²⁸ *S. Bhatti, Nazir, The Trial of Pakistani Christian Nation*, (), p.63.

²⁹ An Anglo-Indian Christian, Justice A. R Cornelius, prepared a constitutional order known as Legal Framework Order, which had many positive points like elections of the first National assembly, introduction of universal suffrage, promise of making a new Constitution and ending of One-Unit Scheme. It was because of this LFO, first General Elections (7th December 1970) were held in Pakistan on the population basis on 7th December 1970.

³⁰ *Malik, Iftikhar Haider*, Religious Minorities in Pakistan (UK, Minority Rights Group International, 2002), p.15.

Meanwhile the making of institutions like the Federal Sharia Court and the Council of Islamic Ideology etc. have also determined the state's ideological role for overseeing the lawmaking of the Parliament. The lawmakers abandoned the Jinnah's concept of separation of religion from the political domain and converted Pakistan into an Islamic state and appeased the religious political parties like *Jamiat Ulema Islam* and *Jamat-i-Islami* because the constitution-makers incorporated the Islamic articles in the constitution. Taking Islam as a binding force and appeasing the religious parties resulted in more Islamization in Pakistan. Article 33 of the Constitution also allows the state for taking responsibility of safeguarding the non-Muslim representation, their rights and legitimate interest in the national and the provincial civil services of Pakistan. And the state has kept it as an unclear role for following the due procedures. As the constitution of 1973 allows for granting full religious professions and preaching, but it also shut the doors of state's highest offices to the non-Muslims of Pakistan.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto introduced many changes in the 1973 Constitution which General Zia further continued, resulting in socio-economic segregation and organized exclusion of the non-Muslims and deprived the weakest gender of the society like women. On 2nd March 1985, General Zia introduced various changes in the 1973 constitution. Like the reduced the strength of Christian seats from six (6) to four (4) in the National Assembly. Following the principle of separate electorates, Col. (Retired) *W. B Herbert*, *Mr. Emmanuel Zafar*, *Captain (Retired) Sana Ullah*, and *Mr. Nasir Mahmood Khokhar* were elected by the Christian voters. The non-Muslim population of Pakistan always remembers Zia's regime as an era of darkness and tyranny because of the changes introduced in Blasphemy laws which deepened the cleavage between the Muslim and non-Muslim population. Depression and constitutional deprivation in the blasphemy laws and the electoral system put minorities in a very vulnerable position. Many additions were introduced in the clauses 295-C and 295-B in 1985 during Zia's period, which brought life imprisonment and death penalty to those for defaming Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Not only the Christians were targeted by the Blasphemy Law, but also cases were registered against *Ahmadiyya*³¹. During the Zia' period, amendments in the Blasphemy Laws had the objectives only to appease Pakistan's Muslim clerics,³² as described by Iftikhar Malik, which only strengthened the legitimacy of General Zia. In Pakistan, the ideologically religious centric blasphemy laws always provide a great danger to the minorities, which specifically damage their liberty, property and life, snatching their freedom of expression and sociability.³³ General Zia brought amendments in the Blasphemy Laws for appeasing 'the orthodox Muslim elements in Pakistan.'³⁴ From 19th October 1993 to 5th November 1996 during her second tenure, *Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto*, as Prime Minister of Pakistan included *Mr. J. Salikas* her cabinet member, which was the first Christian representation in the Federal Ministry of Pakistani political history. *Dr. John Joseph* gives a practical solution to the political demands of the non-Muslims in Pakistan, as they have equal political rights, but this political equality may be achieved only through joint electorates system, which seems to be an ideal one. He also considers continuing the separate electoral system for the interim period so that arrangements may be made for the complete practice of joint electoral process. In this way, the minorities' socio-economic conditions may be improved by taking special developmental projects launched through non-Muslim elected representatives.³⁵ *Ahmad Salim* has described the fact why the non-Muslims of Pakistan demanded "the dissolution of this system,"³⁶ because the separate electoral system has rapidly increased the incidence of intolerance and religious discrimination in the society. The genuine concerns of the non-Muslim minorities particularly Christians and opines that Christian population might enjoy their freedom of expression when they would elect their true representation through non-influenced electioneering process otherwise their cultural as well as religious freedom would prove a farce.³⁷

The process of Islamization in Pakistan by General Zia was his deliberate effort to get the widespread support of religious elements so that he might strengthen his unconstitutional government. *Shabaz Anwar Bhatti* declared it hanging "a naked sword over the Christians,"³⁸ because it is considered this law by the Christian leaderships as a continuous propelling threat to their security in their Pakistani state. The civilian governments of *Nawaz Sharif* and *Benazir Bhutto* miserably failed to resolve the constitutional issues, matter and conditions of

³¹ This sect still claims to be the Muslims, but *Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto* declared them minority during his ruling period.

³² Malik, Iftikhar H., *Islam, Nationalism and the West: Issues of identity in Pakistan* (London, 1999), p. 303.

³³ Jacob, Peter, *Religious Freedom in Pakistan: An analysis with the restriction-persecution Cycle Framework*, Al-Mushir Vol.55, Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, 2014, No. 1, p.22-23, ISSN 0254-7856.

³⁴ Malik, Iftikhar H., *Islam, Nationalism and the West: Issues of identity in Pakistan* (London, 1999), p. 303.

³⁵ Majid, Abdul, *Religious Minorities in Pakistan*, *JPUHS*, Vol.27, No.1, January - June, 2014

³⁶ Salim, Ahmad, *Non-Muslims in an Islamic State A case Study of Pakistan*, Al-mushir Vol.51, Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, 2009, No. 2, P.55, ISSN 0254-7856

³⁷ *Fazl-ud-Din, Joshua*, *Separate Electorates: The Life-Blood of Pakistan*, 1956. The preface of the book, was written by *Maulana Maududi*, which was published in 1956.

³⁸ *Pakistan Christian Post* (30 May 2006).

minorities and this dismal picture of minorities constitutional matters are the clear manifestation of these governments' failure. Most of the Christian leaders claim that there are a lot of shortcomings in the implementation of blasphemy laws of Pakistan because it is mostly misused having various reasons like personal vendetta and financial gains, which generally indicate the occurrence of a disturbance in the Pakistani general atmosphere. The registration of the blasphemous cases brings unusual incidents which put the lives of accused persons as well as their lawyers and judges at risk. The famous cases of *Tahir Iqbal*³⁹, *Qamar David*⁴⁰, Judge *Arif Iqbal Hussain Bhatti*⁴¹ and the fate of the Christian family of Gujranwala⁴² are the typical examples of fanatical vigilantes in Pakistan. In such cases, the arrested people become a symbol of hatred and minorities faced a collective resistance in the form of attacks on the church and their settlements sponsored by fanatic religious Clerics and extremist elements.⁴³ *Abdul Sattar Ghazzali* has declared Zia's amendment in Blasphemy Laws as a principal factor which has risen the extremism and intolerance, resulting into religious fanaticism in Pakistan.⁴⁴ The blasphemy laws are the direct contrast to minorities' constitutional and fundamental rights, because these rights are continuously deteriorating, which are posing serious dangers to the practising of minorities' religious beliefs and their liberty.⁴⁵ General *Zia-ul-Haq* amended laws lacked the popular mandate, which categorized Pakistani society as a less bigoted before its application.⁴⁶ Even the facts and figures show that blasphemy laws are used against the co-religionists. The number of Muslim v/s Muslim cases are greater than the minorities of Pakistan, which has become the major cause behind the frequent registration of the blasphemy cases in Pakistan.

Registered Blasphemy cases in Pakistan From 1987 to 2017

Religious Association	Number of Blasphemy Cases
Muslim	774
Ahmedi	501
Christian	219
Hindu	29
Unknown	11
Total	1534 ⁴⁷

The continuous demand by the Pakistani Minorities to abolish the Blasphemy Laws is also constantly supported by the foreign countries as well, which portray the image of Christians as financed by the foreign countries. Christians' identification in Pakistani society is perceived as an associated minority with the European states. Pakistan's key role as a military collaborator of US and European states in the war against terrorism has severely impacted the Pakistani society in the rising hostility by Muslims fundamentalism towards the non-Muslim communities of Pakistan.⁴⁸ But the ambiguous attitude of rulers after General Zia in Pakistan disappointed the minorities. General *Pervez Musharraf*, President of Pakistan, also tried to convince the Muslims for ending the path of extremism and militancy and seemed to be generally as sympathetic, fair and moderate, honest and to the demands of minorities in Pakistan,⁴⁹ but all his efforts proved futile. The most important step towards de-institutionalizing intolerance⁵⁰ in

³⁹ Due to his religious conversion from Islam to Christianity, he faced the charges of blasphemy laws, which are not implemented to this case but he was sentenced to death.

⁴⁰ A blasphemous case was registered against a Christian because he used to send a cellular message to his Muslim friend, which is also a violation of blasphemy laws for the case registration.

⁴¹ He was later killed after acquitting a Christian family from the blasphemy charges.

⁴² A Christian family of Gujranwala was convicted of blasphemy, in which family's members *Salamat, Rahmat and Manzur* were murdered. The Lahore High Court listened to their appeal and forgave their death sentence given by the sessions court. As the accused left the court, bullets struck into their bodies and Manzur was killed resultantly. The *Sipahi-I-Sahaba*, extremist Islamic fundamentalist party, took the responsibility of this incident as reported by the Amnesty International.

⁴³ *Asia News* (30 May 2006).

⁴⁴ Ghazzali, p. 139.

⁴⁵ Rahim, I.A., 'A critique of Pakistan's Blasphemy Laws', in Tarik Jan, pp. 195-207, p. 199.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁴⁷ Human Rights Monitor 2018, A Report on the Religious Minorities in Pakistan, p. 67.

⁴⁸ *Universe Catholic Newspaper* (3 July 2006). He is a Catholic Archbishop of Lahore.

⁴⁹ Musharraf, Pervez, 'Time for enlightened moderation', in *Dawah Highlights*, XV/5 (May-June 2004): 5-8, 6. But later his actions showed his seriousness about repealing of blasphemy laws because he rejected all the appeals and requesting letters by Justice and Peace Commission of the Vatican and Amnesty International.

Pakistani society is associated with the bringing of changes in the Blasphemy laws as described by the *Christian Voice*. Even Pervez Musharraf could not adopt reversal steps of changing those policies, who had severely damaged-Muslim communities of Pakistan during the preceding governments.⁵¹

Some of the unconstitutional developments and military *coups d'état* in Pakistan brought political instability in its governance, resulting in various many disagreements including violence and wars. The effects of Pakistan's responsible role in regional as well as international world has created problems and issues for the non-Muslim minorities of Pakistan. Many Pakistanis have not conceded Pakistan war an ally of the US against terrorism, Afghan Taliban rule and Islamic fundamentalism and consider Christians as foreign agents in Pakistan. Even the Christians clerics began to describe the increasing intensity of discriminations against Pakistan's Christian community due to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Christian church buildings are violated and bombed due to the emergence of Muslim fanaticism against the Christian community, described by Archbishop *Saldhana* of Lahore. He considers the gulf between Pakistani Muslims and local Christians has widened after the occurrence of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, resulting in discrimination against the Christian community⁵². Even sometimes the state authorities and ministers give provocative and unrealistic statements without noticing the feelings of non-Muslims in Pakistan. During Musharraf era, As *Ijaz-ul- Haqq*, Former Religious Affairs Minister gave an ultimatum to the Christians that in case of bringing a change in blasphemy laws, the jungle law would prevail on the streets of Pakistan.⁵³In his other statement, hesitated, "of more than one million "Christians lost their lives for changing this Blasphemy Law,"⁵⁴no change in the blasphemy laws would take place.

Tahir Mehdi declares *General Zia-ul -Haq* responsible for the segregation of non-Muslims and Muslims, when he made compulsory of faith announcement in the voter registration applications, which he introduced by bringing amendments in the election laws of September 1978. On March 2, 1985, General *Zia-ul-Haqq*also increased the reserved minorities seats in the National Assembly from 6 to 10 and similar allocations were introduced in the provincial assemblies for the minorities. On the contrary, General *Pervez Musharraf*introduced the system of joint elections⁵⁵ and abolished the system of separate electorates in 2002 and reserved the same number of non-Muslims' seats. "The election to these reserved seats was to take place at polling booths."⁵⁶An election formula was adopted. according to this formula, for each minority, the whole state of Pakistan would act as a single constituency for the minorities reserved seat in National as well as provincial Assemblies. Similarly, any member belonging to any community and minority may contest for the seat in the General elections and in this way, the decision-makers did not impose any restriction upon the non-Muslim communities of Pakistan. But on the other hand, a different culture prevails among the major Muslim liberal and democratic political parties that they have given their party tickets to the minority candidates in the General elections because those political parties know this fact that Muslims would never support their-Muslim candidates by casting their votes. General *Pervez Musharraf* also increased the number of women seats in the National Assembly form ten (10) to sixty (60), but no non-Muslim woman was given a chance to represent her community.

From 1985-2000, the electorate system for the minorities was the separate electoral system. In the legislative bodies of Pakistan, The Christians representation raised their voice for secure and real political representation in all Pakistan's elected assemblies and on different international forums, which put a great world pressure upon the Muslim governments in Pakistan to suspend the Separate Electoral system in Pakistan so that Christian cry for representation might be abolished. Some of the Christian leaders allege that the Pakistani establishment through their secret agencies patronize some of the non-Muslim representatives and field their candidates who hold seminars and press conferences in Pakistan, in which they give arguments in the favour of joint electorates by opposing the separate electorates not only in Pakistan as well as in abroad. Under the shield of these Christian tools, the government imposed the system of minorities' Joint Electorates in the General National Elections of 2002. The system of separate electorates has broadened the division between the minority and the majority, which has decreased the minorities' interests for the general election politics. All the minorities' elected representatives would act as a supportive role for the ruling government, having an unfinished agenda of minorities representation of Pakistan. The minorities of Pakistan face different types of challenges like Constitutional rights

⁵⁰ See *The Christian Voice* (20 June 2004): 5.

⁵¹ *Malik, Iftikhar Haider*, Religious Minorities in Pakistan, p.14-15.

⁵² *The Christian Voice* (11 July 2004).

⁵³ *Friday Times* (3-9 September 2004): 15.

⁵⁴ *BosNews Life* (27 June 2006).

⁵⁵ Under the joint electoral system, there were about twenty-eight Christian legislators became successful to get seats in the Parliament as a result of 2002 General Elections.

⁵⁶ *Mehdi, Tahir*, The Pakistan Election Compendium

and legal validations as the various substantive laws, constitutional packages and several regulations create many differences amongst their citizens based on “religion,”⁵⁷ as opined by *Ahmad Salim*. Those provisions, giving preferences to Muslims status, have ignored an important fact that Pakistan is a society having an agglomeration of various religious beliefs. To understand and resolve the prevailing crisis amongst the non-Muslims of Pakistan, these articles and laws must be changed.

Conclusion:

When we are trying to understand the status of minorities particularly through the prism of marginalised groups theories or the subaltern perspective, we can not apply these theories purely and simply and without peeping into the perspective of history.⁵⁸ Yet, in this paper, though it was more of an overview of the history of Pakistan, we have tried to understand the inclusion/exclusion of the Christian minority in the mainstream national politics of Pakistan. We have found that the Christians of Pakistan have tried their best contribute in the establishment and consolidation of Pakistan .t is quite evident from their efforts of social cohesiveness and inclusion in the form of building schools, colleges, universities, hospitals and orphanages. Their utmost efforts for the uplift of Pakistani society seem to be futile when they feel themselves deprived of finding solutions of their constitutional and representative issues enshrined in the constitutional documents of Pakistan and no serious effort has been made to resolve their issues and matters. Though the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan provides an arrangement of equal citizenship, but Christian leadership of Pakistan claims for more rights as equally given to majority Muslim population of Pakistan. This feeling of dissatisfaction among the Christian leadership is trickled down to most of the Christian population in Pakistan. Their main complaint is that they have not granted equal rights because in the constitution there is a constitutional barrier on the Christians for becoming President or Prime Minister of Pakistan. In largest and strong established democracies and secular countries, there are such issues of minorities; for instant In the United Kingdom, the mother of democracy not a single Catholic Christian has become the King or Queen since 1688. Therefore, maybe this is a wishful thinking that they should become the president or the Prime Minister in Pakistan to date. But on these bases, they cannot be regarded as exclusionary community in Pakistan because it is the state which helps them to start and promote their socio-economic, religious, cultural and political activities in Pakistan. Yet, there are some genuine demands of the Christians for mainstreaming them into the politics of Pakistan.

⁵⁷Salim, Ahmad, Non-Muslims in an Islamic State A case Study of Pakistan, Al-mushir Vol.51, Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, 2009, No. 2, p.66, ISSN 0254-7856

⁵⁸Muhammad IqbalChawla, “Focusing on Marginalized Groups in Pakistan: A Case Study of Christian Minority in Lahore,”*Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 26, No. 2 Autumn 2018. pp. 105-116.