

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DEMAND FOR NEW PROVINCES IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The paper delineates the primary factors contributing to the demand for new provinces in Pakistan by conducting quantitative research. The data has been collected through a structured questionnaire based on close-ended questions. This study is based on the responses of indigenous people of Pakistan living in three divisions: Hazara division in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Karachi Division in Sindh and Multan Division in Punjab. The data is collected from male and female above 18 years old living in urban or rural areas in the cities of Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Karachi, Multan and Vehari where the demand for new provinces is high. Any individual aged 18 years and above, who has right to vote and is the permanent resident of the sampled geographic areas is included in the population of this study. Representative sampling strategy through stratified sampling has been used. The data is collected from 300 respondents. After the data collection, data is analysed in the quantitative software of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). Findings of the study show that people desire for new provinces is rooted in the administrative reasons rather than ethnic. It is also calculated that people are more sensitive with establishment of new provinces on ethnic identities because they think that new provinces will lead towards desecration, violence and clashes in Pakistan.

Keywords: Factors, Demand, Provinces, Administrative, Ethnicity, Pakistan.

Introduction

Pakistan consists of seven administrative units comprising Islamabad Capital Territory, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, and four provinces including Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. There is considerable diversity among people with and across provinces in terms of ethnicity, religious sects, languages, cultures, and traditions. While the administrative structure of Pakistan is divided into capital, provinces, divisions, districts, tehsils and union councils.¹ Pakistan is a country of multi-ethnic identities on the bases of language, caste, sects, customs, creed, and traditions. All provinces have their own culture and traditions like Punjab have Punjabi, Sindh have Sindhi, Balochistan have

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with Balochi traditions and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has Pashtun culture. In addition to provincial identities i.e., Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pashtun etc., there are several regional identities in provinces such as Hazarawal in the Hazara division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Saraiki in the Multan Division of Punjab and Mohajir in the Karachi. These regional allege disenfranchisement during budget allocations, and in respect of employment opportunities and developmental works.

The demand for creating new province is increasing in Pakistan. The voices for new provinces have been louder since the passage of 18th Amendment which gave greater autonomy to provinces within the federal structure. The politics on new provinces has historical connotations in Pakistan, especially in Karachi, Abbottabad and South Punjab. Political elites and stakeholders have politicized the movements of separate province at the time of election in South Punjab and Hazara division. However, these political stunts are converted into violent conflict between government and political ethno-nationalist movements after the elections in 2013 or 2018.

This study highlights that people are demanding more provinces due to provincial autonomy. In the 7th National Finance Award, every province get budget based on geographical area and population. After the 18th amendment, the ethnopolitical conflicts started in 2010. The feelings of isolation are based on unequal distribution of resources between provinces and cities. Hence, the provincial and regional minorities are demanding new provinces in their regions for their rights and development. The Hazarawals have launched a movement for the new province of Hazara with seven districts like Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Battagram, Torghar, Upper Kohistan and Lower Kohistan in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. People of Seraiki have founded a movement for separate province in the name of Saraikistan which includes Multan, Vehari, Khanewal, Bhakar and Mianwali. Another demand is for a Mahajir Province based on six districts of Karachi i.e., Central, East, West, South, Malir and Korangi. Figure 1 shows different factors behind the demand of new provinces in Pakistan, which is based on cultural, political, administrative and economic. The feeling of isolation is depending on ethnic identity, language, unequal distribution of resources and budget allocation.

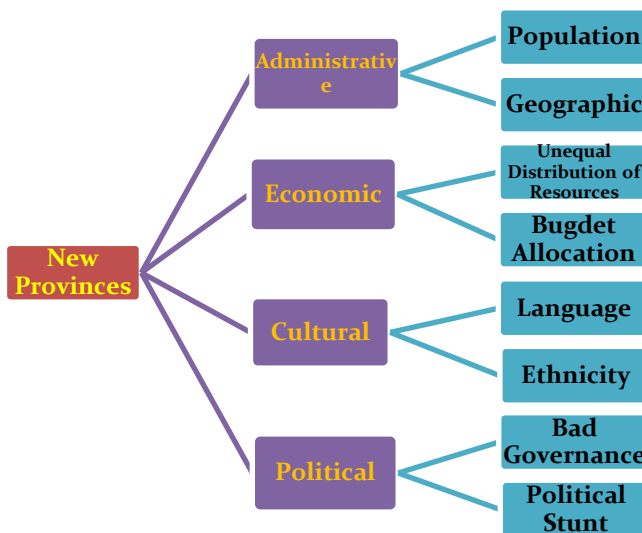


Figure-1: Model of exposure to factors for new provinces

This quantitative paper is based on the responses of indigenous people of Pakistan living in three divisions, Hazara division in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Karachi Division in Sindh and Multan Division in Punjab. Pakistan has a population of about 207 million, out of which 56% reside in Punjab, 23% in Sindh, 14% in KP. Hazara Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a population of 5.3 million; total population of Karachi division in Sindh is 13 million and 12.2 million population of Multan division in Punjab. The data is collected from male and female above 18 years old which were residence of urban or rural areas in the cities of Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Karachi, Multan and Vehari where the demand for new provinces is high. Any individual aged 18 years and above, who has right to vote and is the permanent resident of the sampled geographic areas have been included in the population of this study. The sampling strategy used by researcher to select the sample is representative sampling strategy through stratified sampling. The reason is that respondents are accessible, and the researcher purposefully choose as per the requirement of study. The researcher has used the simplified formula for proportion through Taro Yamane’s formula. Where n is the corrected sample, N is the population size and e is the error of chances. By doing so, the Sample Error would remain within the acceptable limit of 10% at 90% Confidence Interval. It is measured using the formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

The researcher selected the representative sampling strategy to draw a sample from three divisions of different provinces in Pakistan. The researcher selected the sample size of 100 respondents from every division. The data was collected from 300 respondents from Haripur, Abbottabad and Manshera in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Karachi in Sindh, Multan and Vehari in Punjab where the voices are more loudly heard for new provinces. The researcher used questionnaire as an instrument to conduct the survey. The questionnaire composed of closed ended question.

Finding of the Study

In this section, researcher has given a comprehensive overview of the sample characteristics and interpretation of them, the distribution of the responses of the “factors contributing in demand for new provinces in Pakistan”.

Table-1: Distribution of the Multiple Questions in Favour of New Provinces

| Factors contributing in the demand of new provinces with respondent's answer of YES (Frequency) | | | |
|--|------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Questions | Responses | | Percent of Cases |
| | YES^a | Percent | |
| Are you in favor of new provinces in Pakistan? | 222 | 14.0% | 82.5% |
| Do you think that your area of residence should belong to new province? | 205 | 13.0% | 76.2% |
| Do you think that large geographic area is the reason for demand of new province? | 181 | 11.4% | 67.3% |
| Do you think that big population in your area is the reason for separate province? | 218 | 13.8% | 81.0% |
| Do you think that more provinces can play effective role in good governance in Pakistan? | 207 | 13.1% | 77.0% |
| Do you think that new provinces are important for economic development in Pakistan? | 216 | 13.7% | 80.3% |

| | | | |
|--|------|--------|--------|
| Do you think that new provinces can reduce ethnic issues in Pakistan? | 174 | 11.0% | 64.7% |
| Do you think that new provinces can reduce sectarian issues in Pakistan? | 159 | 10.1% | 59.1% |
| Total | 1582 | 100.0% | 588.1% |
| a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1. | | | |

Table 1 shows that respondents are in favour of new provinces. Furthermore, big population and large geographic area are the reasons for demand of new province in addition to effective role in good governance for economic development. New provinces can reduce the ethnic or sectarian conflict from Pakistan. While 82.5 percent respondents are in the favour of new provinces in Pakistan, the factors which are contributing to the demand of new provinces are administrative rather than ethnic. The results depict that those respondents who wanted a new province for reasons apart from 'area of residence should belong to new provinces' are 76.2% respondents. They said that there are many ethnic issues in their regions.

The people of Hazara region highlighted that the change of province's name from NWFP to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the reason for separate province and it is just for the sake of name. However, this difference in numbers was marginal. Therefore, it can be safely said, that the name KP is not the most significant reason underlying the demand of the Hazara people for a separate province, there are obviously issues other than the just the name KP. Therefore, keeping in view the results, it is evident that Mohajir wants a new province because of large population in the region. The respondents from Karachi highlighted many issues of management, population, and issues of developmental work in the region. The interesting part here is that 77.0% of the respondents said that more provinces can play effective role in good governance with respect to control on corruption, crime, decentralization of power and administrative management. The statistics reflects that 80.3% of the respondents are in the favour of the new provinces because this is important for the economic stability as far as development in Pakistan is concerned.

A considerable majority of the respondents (64.7%) desire for a separate province because it can reduce the ethnic conflicts as witnessed in Hazara divisions and Karachi divisions. It also reflects that 59.1% of the respondents are in favour of new provinces because they are deemed important to reduce sectarian issues. This shows that most of them are active participants in campaigns and other activities carried out to voice the sentiments of the Karachi, South Punjab and Hazara community about a separate province. Some of the studies propose that new provinces and small administrative units will become negative effects for the country

in future.² However, respondents contradicted this by saying that new provinces will lead to strong democratic governance and effective performance of the institutions by reducing crime, corruption and ensuring better management system in administrative sectors.

Table-2: Distribution of Responses according to Administrative Factors

| Frequencies of Administrative factors with respondent's answer is Not at All | | | |
|---|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Questions | Responses | | Percent of Cases |
| | Frequencies (Not at All)^a | Percent | |
| To what extent, are you satisfied with the present administrative setup of your area? | 95 | 32.8% | 65.1% |
| To what extent, are you satisfied with the present administrative setup of your Province? | 105 | 36.2% | 71.9% |
| To what extent, are you satisfied with the present administrative setup of your country? | 90 | 31.0% | 61.6% |
| Total | 290 | 100.0% | 198.6% |
| a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 3. | | | |

Table 2 depicts the response regarding administrative factors in the demand of new province. Administrative performance is based on federal, provincial, districts and tehsils level where governmental bodies are working for effective governance. The above table reflects that 71.9 percent of the respondents are not satisfied with the provincial setup in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

Table-3: Distribution of Responses according to Economic Factors

| Economic Factors with respondent's answer is Not at All (Frequencies) | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Questions | Responses | | Percent of Cases |
| | Frequencies (Not at All) | Percent | |

| | | | |
|--|----|--------|--------|
| To what extent, employment opportunities are reason for demand for new province? | 44 | 46.3% | 64.7% |
| To what extent, budget allocation is the factor for demand for new province? | 51 | 53.7% | 75.0% |
| Total | 95 | 100.0% | 139.7% |
| a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 3. | | | |

Table-3 reflects that most of the respondents think that employment opportunity is the biggest reason to acquire a separate province. More than 75% percent of the respondents said that budget allocation is not a factor in the demand for new province because there have been many developments projects through provincial budget allocation. The people of Hazara division highlighted that there are many developmental projects in Hazara division like dams, transportation facilities, industrial zones and tourism but still there is lack of proper budget allocation for Hazara's development.

Table-4: Distribution of Responses according to Cultural Factors

| Cultural Factors with responses of Not at All (Frequencies) | | | |
|--|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Questions | Responses | | Percent of Cases |
| | Frequencies (Not at All)^a | Percent | |
| To what extent, language is basis for demand of new province? | 95 | 54.9% | 84.8% |
| To what extent, ethnic identity is basis for demand of new province? | 78 | 45.1% | 69.6% |
| Total | 173 | 100.0% | 154.5% |
| Dichotomy group tabulated at value 3. | | | |

Table-4 shows distribution of the responses in terms of cultural factors contributing in the demand of new provinces in Pakistan. Many respondents think that language is the basis for demand of separate province especially in the province of KP where the Hindko speaking people feel isolated because of language barrier. They said that Hindko language is like Punjabi language rather than Pashto. Pashtuns in provincial assembly speak Pashto language which makes it difficult for Hazarawals to understand it. Hazarawal feels that besides language, there is also an

identity crisis in the province. Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents feels to great extent that ethnic identity is the basis for demand of new provinces in Pakistan.

Table-5: Correlation between Creation of New Provinces and Good Governance

| Correlation between favour of new provinces and it can play effective role in good governance | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--------|--------|
| Questions | Categories | | Do you think that more provinces can play effective role in good governance in Pakistan? | | Total |
| | | | Yes | No | |
| Are you in favor of new provinces in Pakistan? | Yes | Count | 190 | 32 | 222 |
| | | Percentage within Do you think that more provinces can play effective role in good governance in Pakistan? | 91.8% | 34.4% | 74.0% |
| | No | Count | 17 | 61 | 78 |
| | | Percentage within Do you think that more provinces can play effective role in good governance in Pakistan? | 8.2% | 65.6% | 26.0% |
| Total | Count | | 207 | 93 | 300 |
| | Percentage within Do you think that more provinces can play effective role in good governance in Pakistan? | | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Table-5 guides about the relationship between demand of new provinces in Pakistan and the perception that more provinces can play effective role in good governance in Pakistan. It indicates that 74% of the respondents answered in the favour of new province and said it can play effective role in good governance with respect to less crime, corruption and country's stability. There are prominent issues of governance in the division of Karachi because of high rate of crime and political crisis due to large population of the region. A person of South Punjab also pointed out that region is not good in governance as compared to upper Punjab like Lahore and Faisalabad. This is creating feeling of isolation in Hazarawal, Mahajir and Saraiki people, which in turn is the main reason to acquire separate provinces.

Discussion

The research is carried out to know the perception of the people of Multan, Hazara and Karachi divisions about the demand of new provinces in Pakistan. The research aimed to know whether the problem of Saraiki, Mohajir and Hazara province is based on administrative problems or is an issue of identity of people in Karachi, Multan and Hazara regions. The issue had emerged after the passage of 18th amendment and changing of the name of NWFP province to KP. The findings of this study showed that majority of the people including women are demanding new provinces in Pakistan. It transpired that majority of educated people in the sample have also been part of the processions demanding separate province. The issue has influenced the minds of people of the area as majority of the people are convinced that even violent agitation and protests are justified to acquire their province. During the field visit, the researchers came to know that twelve persons have died in Abbottabad in violent protests for Hazara province.

The research finds out that there are several factors which contribute to the demand for new provinces. These include self-identity, language, unequal distribution of resources, large population and administrative. Hazarawal people are bound to go to Peshawar for the sake of official tasks. People of the Karachi division feel that the budget allocation is the main reason for the demand of separate province because most of the revenue generated by Karachi is allocated to other parts of Sindh. Moreover, the people from South Punjab cite unequal distribution of resources as one of the main reasons. According to them, major part of development budget is spent in Central and Northern Punjab and less heed is paid to South Punjab.

The people seemed irritated as the name of their province has changed from NWFP to KP, which was deemed contradictory to the identity of people of Hazara, and people of Hazara may lose their identity in future. During the research, people of

the area are asked if they would withdraw from the demand of a new province if the name of KP gets restored to NWFP. Many people seemed convinced to withdraw from the demand of a new province if the name of province gets restored to the previous name, but majority of people denied withdrawing at any cost. This proved that people are more concerned about their identity rather than administrative problems. As far as the feeling of Multan's people about identity is concerned, they are demanding a new province because of their unique culture and traditions.

Conclusion

The research provides ample information to understand the factors that contribute to the demand for more provinces in Pakistan. It also helps in understanding that ethnicity is an aspect of inter-group relationship and not a property of a group existing in isolation. In the case of Saraiki and Hindko speaking people, despite being affiliated with a political outfit, people stressed on self-identification based on their language and cultural values, which were different from those of the neighbouring Pashtuns and Punjabis. In case of Hazara province movement, even the difference in language is strong enough to compel people to organise and mobilise for a new province. The resentment of the Hazarawal people is not unique as it has prevailed among them even before independence of Pakistan. However, the Muslim identity has overshadowed their ethnic identity. But changing the name of province has once again articulated their cultural identity. Hence, the demand for making Hazara province is basically a derive to secure the lingual and cultural identity of the overwhelming minority of Hindko-speaking Hazarawal people.

The people of the South Punjab think that their area of the residence should be part of new province by the name of Saraikistan or South Punjab. The province of Punjab has a larger population than the other three provinces of Pakistan. So, people feel that such a large province cannot be effectively governed. This is not only for self-identity but also for the population management in the province through new administrative units in the Punjab. The people of Bahawalpur have distinct reasons for a province because of the historical aspect that Bahawalpur was the State of Nawab at the time of British era.

Karachi is an economic hub and contributes a large amount in the revenue of Pakistan. However, residents of Karachi believe that they do not get proper budget allocation for infrastructure development in the division. They want separate budget for the development and economic stability in the Karachi. There are numerous administrative issues in the division that might improve through separate province in the Sindh.

It is concluded that more provinces can play a better role for economic development, reduce ethnic or sectarian issues, foster good governance and improve population management in the country. In the current research only three divisions have been taken as research population. One may conduct another research by including Balochistan and Gilgit Baltistan. In the present research, respondents are from regions where the demand for new provinces is most vibrant. Future research can also be conducted on other divisions and districts of Pakistan. The present research is done with few respondents, one may conduct research on large sample size of the people's opinion about new provinces.

References

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