

Examining the Stance of International Donor Organizations Uplift the Role of Civil Society in Social Development during Post Musharaf Era

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This research study examines the role of international donor organizations to uplift the involvement of civil society in social development in post Musharaf era.

Methodology: The study was conducted in District Jhang and Chiniot where various development programs were launched. The nature of this study was qualitative and subjective experience of representatives of International Donors Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations about social development was assessed. Interpretive research was a methodological philosophy of this research that creates meaning and social reality within subjective experiences. Population of the study was those NGO's which were involved in developmental programs in district Jhang and Chiniot. (N=15) representatives of NGO's were approached through snowball sampling technique because many NGO's had been closed their offices and respondents were not easily available. Interview guide was used as tool of data collection and field notes were prepared during interviews.

Findings: Thematic analysis was used to approach the themes including creating democratic values, women's participation, poverty alleviation, community engagement in emergency response.

Conclusion and Suggestions: International donors and local NGO's have concerns all sides of human development. The role of these NGO's is crucial and important to know what development has been taking place in Post Muharaf era, the era was dominant by involvement of NGO's to uplift the standard of living of local people. It was suggested that government must enhance the capacity of civil society through administering and technical support for social development. Government must ensure the participation of NGO's and civil society in policy making to have collective impact on society.

Keywords: NGO's, Civil Society, Social Development, Post Musharaf Era.

Article History

Received:
March 23, 2023

Revised:
June 09, 2023

Accepted:
June 14, 2023

Published:
June 17, 2023

Introduction

The concept of civil society

The term civil society has been used and connected with associational aspects of life to build up the social network, social capital and social values of human in relation with others. Civil society is not an economic institute but also to create social values among people for peaceful and standardized life; it is defined as “loose and baggy monster” by (Kendal and Knapp, 1994), and the community of citizens come close together for public space (Gabriel et, al., 2004). Another definition was given by Taylor as web of association apart from states which bind locals to common interest and affect public policy (Kligman, 1990) by liberal democratic norms (Edward, 2009; 2013). The nature of civil society is to promote peace through democracy, statehood, nationalism, development and conflict resolution elongate peace building interventions (Marchetti and Tocci, 2011).

Idea of civil society is a western concept that limits the state (Tacqueville, 1835:1840), essential element of structuring the state (Hegel, 1821) and it is a source of power and space to construct hegemony with the alliance of dominant class by Marx and Gramsci (1929-1935). Commonality in this context civil society and state remain active with each other and existence of one constitutes another. So the term civil society has rooted and informed democracy, civil liberalization and realm of organizing social life voluntarily and self-struggled self-regulating apart from state bound by share set of rules (Shipper 2017, Diamond 1994, and Mercer 2002).

Role of Civil Society in Pakistan in Post Musharraf Era

In the beginning, Musharraf's government was dictatorial in nature. Musharraf welcomed the promotion of civil society. As previously stated, Pakistan's constitution stated that the country aimed to be a democratic and civil society. However, Musharraf's government became increasingly authoritarian over time. To expand his control, Musharraf resisted various, sometimes unconstitutional systems. For instance, during his administration, the constitution was amended four times to increase central power—in 1994, 1996, 1998, and 2003 (www.state.gov; www.osce.org). The constitution's credibility and connotation were diluted by frequent amendments. In addition, Pakistan's financial situation did not improve during Musharraf's rule. As Petic (2005) put it, Pakistan fell into external obligation and became a "global protectorate." Moreover, Aksartova (2005) said that, after freedom, Pakistan had supplanted Moscow appropriations with Western ones. It is important to note that Pakistan was one of the poorest countries after Musharraf Pakistan and heavily reliant on Russia. As a result, it developed a meager economy following the Musharraf Pakistan Union (Abazov, 1999). Pakistan, as a whole, is a small, landlocked nation with few natural resources and poor transportation connections (Olcott, 1996; Huskey, 1997).

Musharraf's representation of moderate democracy rules system advertiser was completely destroyed when he turned into a president for a third term by disregarding the constitution which confined that the president could serve just for two progressive terms. According to Akcali (2005), the constitutional court granted Musharraf permission to run for president on the grounds that his first term should not be counted because it began in 1990, when Pakistan was still in the post-Musharraf Pakistan Union. Further, the 2005 parliamentary races were the most awful during Musharraf's administration. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) report on these elections (www.osce.org,c) states that their flaws included de-registration of candidates, vote-buying, a lack of trust in polling and judicial institutions for voters and candidates, and media pressure. Consequently, family members of the President and his advocates were included in the 2005 parliament. Musharraf's son, girl and sister by marriage are the most splendid models. That's what a few pundits suggested, by enrolling his relatives, Musharraf had needed to clutch power in spite of proclaiming that he wouldn't turn for the fourth term of administration (Saidazimova, 2005).

Relationship between Civil Society and State

Pakistan's administration stifled common society and fundamentals of enthusiastic qualities of a majority rules government like right to speak freely and right to gathering. Pakistan's 2007 constitution no longer stated that the country would establish a civil society and democracy. Further, the public authority made an endeavour to apply command over NGOs' exercises and subsidizing (Allain, 2017) and value of sustainability in transition of sustainable economy with the involvement of civil society collaboration to enhance knowledge and awareness about popular governmental strategies (Machin and Ruser, 2023) empowers individual and groups (Adloff, 2021). The government restricted religious freedom as well as the media's crackdown. (<http://kg.akipress.org>) The political opposition faced state harassment that included threats of imprisonment and death. In 2009, Freedom House downgraded Pakistan from "partly free" to "not free" as a result (Marat, 2009). Most importantly, Pakistan should not have a democracy based on elections and human rights, according to Bakiev (2010; Pannier and Heil, 2010). In something like five years of Pakistan's standard, Pakistan experienced expanded debasement, a hydro-energy emergency, and more coordinated wrongdoing that has grown (Marat, 2008b). The existence of individuals deteriorated emphatically with the expansion in costs. In addition, Bakiev appointed members of his family to government positions ahead of Musharaf. His six siblings and two children stood firm on key footings in the public authority (Reeves, 2010).

Investing Role of International Donors

International donors and development organizations assist developing and under developing countries in the terms of financial, technical and administrative support to remove the impediments or barriers in socio-economic development. International donors establish state level relations with these countries and these states in response achieve the objectives uplift the masses to act as initiation or implementation of different plans. The network of NGO's and donors collaborate and address importance of organizing social and economic realities (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2004), working more efficiently and progressively with nongovernmental organizations (Brown and Korten, 1991) partnership as popular approach to privatization and non-profit government relations (Brinkerhoff, 2002) by volunteer efforts for government, market failure and organization of governance (Ben-Nur, 2021).

Foreign aid is sought of assistance provided by U.N with the collaboration of NGO's in different developing and under developing regions as multilateral financial donor collaborate with private business entities in developing countries (Lawson, 2013; Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), 2010). U.S leadership lapelseyes on the democratic movements to develop international relations from management to governance in global economic context (Spero and Hart, 2010).

Research Question

The instance of Pakistan shows that gives endeavours to advance a liberal common society all through the 1990s and mid 2000s didn't deliver the ideal outcomes. Contributor programs on common society promoted sympathetically in the ascent of NGOs and in hardening of their ability. Pakistan saw a rise in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Nonetheless, as per the writing, they neglected to meet the vital expectations of contributors: to connect with the communities in the area and represent and promote their interests. On the other hand, NGOs developed reliant upon benefactors. The Pakistani state had a liberal start by striving to build a democratic and civil society. However, it abused democratic mechanisms and gradually became authoritarian. Curiously, the public authority in Pakistan likewise developed subject to monetary help from the international community.

Research Objectives

- To assess the role of international donor's organizations to uplift the involvement of the NGO's in development sector in Pakistan.
- To highlight the contributions of local NGO's in development through collaboration with civil society organizations.

Literature Reviewed

Donors' "grantrain": the "Golden age of NGOs"

In Pakistan as well as elsewhere civil society has played a significant role in the development agenda of donors during the 1990s, particularly in the early years. This was straightforwardly connected to the neo-liberal economic policies and democracy promotion agenda that donors were implementing globally at that time. Consequently, civil society has played a crucial role in democratizing and assisting former communist nations in their transition to a liberal economy. The literature on Pakistani civil society aid (Adamson, 2002; Aksartova, 2005; Shishkaraeva et al., 2006) indicate that six particular donors have played a significant role in assisting civil society: USAID, DFID, EC, the World Bank, UNDP, and the Soros Foundation. The United States was a key contributor in supporting civil society in Pakistan. The main US aid provider is USAID. Since foundation of the Pakistan office in 1993, USAID has worked to support Pakistani NGO sector as a piece of its democracy promotion agenda (<http://centralasia.usaid.gov>). Under this program

Partner furnished arising NGOs with three sorts of help: specialized (preparation phases), monetary (seed awards) and educational to lay down a good foundation for themselves, pick up raising money, procure the board abilities and gain other valuable abilities to deal with their associations. Counterpart continued its work in Pakistan in the year 2000 by establishing a network of civil society support centres (CSSCs) with two goals: 1) to make its activities more local, and 2) to help out-of-the-way NGOs with technical and informational support. This prompted making of eleven CSSCs in five provinces of Pakistan. Counterpart lounge launched a second program in 2004 to improve CSSCs and local NGOs' accountability, transparency, sustainability, professionalism, and advocacy involvement. (The National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Eurasia Foundation are two additional international NGOs that USAID has supported, and their work also involved Pakistani civil society. Both of these non-profit organizations were established in the United States. Since the 1990s, they have also had a location in Pakistan. Nonetheless, their exercises were not solely centred on common society as partner. They had different objectives like the creating media and ideological groups on account of NDI and working on advanced education and work movements in Eurasia Establishment (www.ndi.org and www.ef-ca.org). It began funding a program solely aimed at supporting the establishment of NGOs in Pakistan in 1994. As USAID typically works through contractors, the program was implemented by Counterpart Consortium (hereafter Counterpart), an international non-governmental organization (Satarov et al., 2005).

The Mushrooms effect: the NGO boom

The preceding section demonstrated that substantial donor support to promote NGOs existed in the middle of the 1990s. The Pakistani NGO sector has grown as a result of these significant funding opportunities and technical support. Various chronologies of the growth of NGO sectors have been suggested by relevant literature. Shishkaraeva et al., (2006) identified three NGOs in Pakistan's development stages. The first phase focuses on the years between 1985 and 1994, when civic initiatives were launched in response to issues brought on by the crisis and subsequent demise of Pakistan's post-Musharraf Union. The creators stressed that appearance of contributors in Pakistan in the mid 1990s was a significant component in this stage and a preface to the subsequent one. Shishkaraeva and her colleagues (2006) argued that the second phase, from 1995 to 1999, saw an increase in NGOs as a result of donors' financial and technical support. These authors also stated that during the third stage of their chronology, from 1999 to 2004, NGOs matured and began to influence Pakistan's political process and decision-making.

Buxton et al., (2019) draw on a number of INTRAC civil society research projects in Central Asia and workshops with local experts and researchers in the field. 2005) likewise proposed three phases of NGO improvement in Pakistan. The first phase of their timeline runs from 1991 to 1997. It is characterized by the emergence of public associations in Pakistan and the influx of donors and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that promote civil society, such as Soros, UNDP, Counterpart, and

INTRAC. These authors claim that the second stage began in 1998, when NGOs realized they needed to participate in advocacy and lobbying. The creators not know obviously depict highlights of the third stage, which covers the early 2000s, since they were bantered among INTRA affiliated scientists and trained professionals. Some of them stated that simply the "fittest" NGOs were making due. Others guaranteed that supportive of dynamic NGOs had arisen after an underlying multiplication of NGOs which occurred in light of outside financing. The third gathering expressed that connection among NGOs and the state had expanded since the early 2000s. The two sequences demonstrate the improvement of the NGO area in Pakistan yet according to alternate points of view. The time of 1991 to 1994 makes up the main stage when givers began to send off their common society exercises in Pakistan and NGOs began to arise. The second era of NGO development encompasses the years between 1995 and 2005, the peak of donors' efforts to promote civil society. As depicted in the first area, contributors zeroed in on common society fabricating and gave specialized, monetary, and educational help to NGOs during this time. Eventually, there were a lot of NGOs during this stage.

Quantity Vs Quality: NGO's as voluntary initiatives, professional organizations or nongovernmental Individuals

NGO sector in Pakistan has been criticised for an array of weaknesses. Since only a small portion of the NGO sector is actually in operation, the large number of NGOs was considered to be misleading first and foremost (Ubysheva and Pogojev, 2006). It was argued that a significant number of NGOs were established to profit from donors. Pakistan experienced a severe economic crisis immediately following the dissolution of the post-Mushraf Pakistan Union, which led to a dramatic decline in living standards. The majority of public sector employees were left without regular pay. The unemployment rate was high in other industries. It became widespread to be poor (Anderson et al., 1997). As a result, Aksartova (2005) and Adamson (2002) noted that generous donations from donors¹⁶ enticed the local population to use them for personal gain rather than public benefit. As Adamson (2002:193) put it, "everything from PC hardware to school text books and donated heating oil" went to the black market.

In addition, it was simple to obtain donor funding, particularly seed grants for individuals interested in starting an NGO. Individuals did not have to do anything convoluted with the exception of assembling a proposition indicating their interest in framing a NGO and proposing several activities¹⁷. In addition, it is suggested that donors were uncritically supportive of all initiatives taken by individuals to establish an NGO because they equated the growth of NGOs with the growth of civil society and as a result, one can draw the conclusion that Pakistan's rapid expansion of the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector was a mix of factors, including the country's poor economic situation, the abundance of donor funding, the ease with which it was possible to obtain it, and donors' desire for NGO formation in the name of building society (Howell and Pearce, 2001).

Methodology

Research Design

Interpretive qualitative research design was used that situates meaning making practices at the centre of scientific exploration (Quinlan, 2017). Interpretive research aims to acknowledge human actions and involvement in a particular control. The understanding of human actions on particular event from actors point of view and rely on social construction of ontological emphasis on interaction and relationship in describing social realities. The stance of interpretive research is to redefine research question in research practice. Social research questions in execution by which the phases of data collection subsume holistic view of personal experiences, and this research use interview guide in order to understand the topic under investigation within subject perspective (Elliott and Temulak, 2005). This research explored the phenomena of involvement of international donor agencies to uplift the position of civil society in improvement through the actor's perspective who are remained involved in describing, identifying and promoting all sides' development of society known as NGO's. The role of NGO's by their representatives is explored by taking part in all sides' development of Pakistani society in Post Musharaf era.

Study Setting and Participants and Sampling

In qualitative research, the most important part of the research design is to approach research participants, this research has used non probability sampling that is used to select or develop representative sample for specific purpose that depends on situation (Neuman, 2014). Non probability is not a random selection but a true representative sample creates trustable information and data so following the guidelines 15 participants were selected through snowball sampling because target features of population is not easily accessible (Naderifer et al., 2017). Researcher focused on those NGO's which was more relevant and in reach because many NGO's has been closed their offices. This situation assumes the collaboration between researcher and available representative of and donors to discuss the research objectives with a head of a civil society, in the wake of discussion between these the most authentic piece of information created. The interview with the representative of NGO's was done after taking permission of head of the NGO's.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection is sensible aspects to choose the methods of collecting information in qualitative research. Researcher conducted open ended interviews by using interview guide as tool of data collection in qualitative research for in-depth information (Smulowitz, 2017)it was further accompanied and practiced into three languages Urdu, English and Punjabi.

Interviews were audio recorded and filed notes were established during interview and double check was used to listen recorded interviews carefully after interviews to make a clear understanding of collected information. All these notes were re-examined by another expert who thoroughly gone through the whole interview text and sought out important meanings. The initial stage of analysis started immediately after recording and note taking of interviews, in qualitative research analysis start during interview and lasted it at the end of the research, for this purpose thematic content analysis (Braun and Clark, 2012) was performed to find out the themes. Analysis was started during interviews to overcome the loss of information, first hand information is important to make social science research empirical that was done by the researcher himself and his team. To avoid this big trouble all the written document in the form of notes were examine and important text were highlighted manually and transformed it into pattern that was the collection of important pieces of information. These patterns were elaborated as important part of the text that was the combination of different text of information that describes important contents to draw a theme. Researcher converted all these efforts into final comprehensive stage of data analysis that was done in second half of December 2021 and January 2022. At this stage researcher with the help of research team thoroughly overviewed the initial analysis that was earlier done after ending up of every interview and reviewed found some information was misinterpreted and put it more effort to exclude this misinterpretation in the front of participants this technique was known as members check and helpful to capture true meaning of the text.

Themes and Discussions

Theme 1: Creating Democratic Values

Human beings are born free and have multiple opportunities to adopt new process of social life for attaining peaceful and standardized patterns of living based on social networks and relationship that build on mutual coercion in a social system. In developing countries people sacrifice all of their belongings to develop or to create basic practices and traditions to run a social system. So, the normative control of various actions in a social system aggregate existing preferences of deliberate arguments in full swing among individuals to perform different actions for smooth running of matters of state or country (Fair, 2014). The sovereignty of state is matter of convenient power politics, during mid 19 to 20th century set new actor of as international nongovernmental organizations for promotion of international democracy (Thomas, 2001) and civic engagement promote democratic values such as trust and tolerance (Gabriel et al., 2004), ensure good governance and democratic political system (Keping, 2018, Mlabo, 2019) and

democratic institutions create these values to be achieved for fair play between democratic values and institutions (Besley and Persson, 2016).

One of the respondents said that;

“The role of international NGO’s was an assert to raise the voice of democratic state of affairs of the country where people can choose their actions to draw people perspective to promote liberty, freedom of speech, free movement and political affiliation”

Another respondent shared his experience as;

“Before arrival of NGO’s at local level in communities people were not more aware about democratic movements in power politics, aligning with locals people want know about the true representatives and recognized plat form to elect their representatives to bring them into to house of policy making and interventions”.

Another picture of democratic values are described by representative of international NGO

“In democratic states citizen’s role is defined to promote public policy concern to realize definite goals, a true leadership for public management connecting the world with native countries where NGO are performing productive to achieve common interest in the favour of big public interest”.

Theme 2: Women’s Participation

The developing significance of women's portrayal and cooperation in administration is likewise because of the overall orientation mindfulness crusade through media, women's activist developments all over the planet, better admittance to valuable open doors, that is to say, training, wellbeing and business or more all, ladies' self satisfaction in adding to the vote based method for administration. In the United Nations Security Council Resolution ensures woman participation and protection in leadership and advocacy (Mlabo et al., 2019) , the fact that gender issues are social issues and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to complex gender issues, the role of indigenous research in gaining an understanding of the phenomenon in the context of a country has also been recognized. Through research and publications, professionals, academics, researchers, and scholars have also worked to raise awareness of gender issues. Women participation in state affairs is an important aspect for social capital development, poverty alleviation and good governance (Jabeen and Jadon, 2009).

One of the representative of local NGO opined that;

“The period was an immense importance in transition stage of women empowerment for good governance and remarkably the women’s involvement in parliament increased in local politics as a democratic means of governance”

Another respondent shed light on rights of the women;

“Within women perspective who also addressed the role of women in local government because male and female ratio is somehow equal but women representation was lows since many decades due to different political, legislative and cultural factors”.

Another respondent said that;

“Local government policies were reviewed and suggested women’s role in decision and community engagement for human resource development is inevitable”.

Theme 3: Poverty Alleviation

Idea of non-governmental organizations is an alternative approach to social development and people in Pakistan live under minimum wage which is strong impediment of socio-economic development (Ghani and Ghani, 2020). So the role of NGO’s to uplift the local people to enhance living standard and reduce

poverty is pivotal and terms of developing social capital is necessary for social development of people of specially people of developing countries. To reduce the level of poverty in favour of providing basic necessities of life to the poor people Jhang and Chiniot to assess these initiatives, some respondents have shared their views below.

One of the representative of local NGO's shared views as;

"NGO's are essential part of society and poverty reduction is common phenomena based on multicoated functions of social institution as political, social, cultural and economic and many NGO's had worked in Musharaf era for poverty alleviation through providing skill training programs, welfare activities for economic development, micro credit schemes for rural people through rural development program".

Another key person from international NGO's told that;

"International NGO's are most important pillar of non state actor of social development and their participation in local development cannot be diminished. I have worked with international NGO's for seven years, and most of time i had spent with NGO's in Musharaf regime, it was a great welfare boom for community development in Pakistan, unfortunately some of the local NGO's has showed negative concerns and did not show such grace to great art of work for welfare of the people".

Other respondents shared his experience as;

"Free rashan distribution scheme was launched to approach poor people of rural towns who were not in position to fulfil family needs due to limited economic resources."

An owner of the school who also own local NGO in Jhang stated that;

"To educate children of poor people who were dropout and not enrolled in school before due to poor education facilities in rural areas kept children of poor dwellers from mainstream of education circle. NGO's run school was an initiative taken by local NGO's with the help of civil society participation groomed rural children with basic education that was constitutional right of every citizen".

"Health facilities in rural areas are limited and many NGO's hold free medical clinics and dispensaries run by NGO's with the help of philanthropists, in this scenario a reprehensive of local NGO's in Chiniot told that many people in surrounding areas of district Chiniot were out of health facilities due poor economic conditions, they cannot afford basic necessities of life in which health issue is one of the most prominent social problem in these areas, our ngo worked for children, women, and aged people by establishing free medical campus to diagnose different diseases free of cost and its treatment facilities were also provided to poor people, and complete guidance was provided by the MBBS doctors, people who could not afford medical facilities from their own means this inactive helped these people".

Theme 4: Community Engagement in Emergency Response

Emergency response in climatic hit areas and community engagement reduced and minimized the pain and sorrows of people of affected areas, NGO's involvement was recorded fruitful and remarkable contribution has been by INGO's and local NGO's. In 2005 earthquake break out on morning 8 October, 2005 all over Pakistan with 7.6 intensity was recorded on rector scale and millions of people were out of home and shortage of food, medical facilities, homelessness, destruction of infrastructure, and 80% of affected area was destroyed (Hicks and Pappas, 2006).

A respondent shared his experience as;

“The earthquakes in 2005 have brought dramatic demand for shelter, food, clothing, and access to medical facilities, water contaminations and sanitary infrastructure was the major issues. In response to provision of medical facilities for health care, we have approached to affected areas with our team of MBBS doctors, and bring with packed food to the people who do not find sufficient amount of food and water. At large scale rescue operations were launched with the help of INGO’s where they did spent many days to minimize the loss of people”.

Another representative of NGO’s opined that;

“Our NGO established relief services by providing technical and financial resources for arrangement of disaster management”.

Conclusion

Social Development is all sides’ exposure of community revolves around socio-cultural, economic and political aspects. All round development of human society is an ultimate objective of civilized societies. International donor organization’s have concern about development of all aspects of human life to make sure the dignity and security of all human beings. Every society has legitimate social institutions that involve upgrading the level of living standard. So the role of NGO’s is crucial and pivotal to enhance all sides development and civil society in this regard paid improve their working with the collaboration of international non government organizations. Many ngos had worked in Musharaf and post Musharaf era with the integration of local NGO’s, and this period was considered as NGO’s boom. This study has been processed to know about the role of INGO’S in social development and concluded that these NGO’s contribute through financial, technical and administrative support and local NGO’s were involved to upgrade the quality of life of the people. Joint efforts of INGO’S and local NGO’S are resulted in upgrading the socio-cultural, economic and political aspect people life living in district Jhang and Chiniot. Basic democratic values including trust, tolerance decision making and self determination emerged during this era. Women participation and role of women in socio-economic development of the country was a major concern of these NGO’s because women are comprised of 49% population of Pakistan (statisticsTimes.com). Emergency response rate was maximum at the time of earthquake in 2005 and community engagement services to provide medial health facilities and care services, food and shelter and response of the community towards drastic destruction remained remarkable.

Suggestions

- Govt. must enhance the capacity of civil society through administering and technical support for social development.
- Govt. must ensure the participation of NGO’s and civil society in policy making to have collective impact on society
- Permanent solutions must be done to remove poverty rather than temporary relief to enhance economic condition of people because it increases dependency.

Acknowledgments

None.


Conflict of Interest


Authors declared no conflict of interest.

Funding Source

The authors received no funding to conduct this study.

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