



Unveiling the Legacy: Pervez Musharraf's Impact on Pakistan's Political Landscape

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Abstract:

This article delves into the multifaceted impact of Pervez Musharraf's rule on Pakistan's political landscape, examining his transformative role amidst a backdrop of instability, economic challenges, and security threats. Through a comprehensive historical analysis and policy assessment, the article explores the diverse perspectives on Musharraf's governance, particularly in the areas of economic reforms, foreign policy, and counterterrorism measures. Using archival research, expert interviews, and data analysis, the study dissects the nuanced effects of his policies, contextualizing his era within Pakistan's history and examining the socio-political dynamics that shaped his leadership. With a focus on key policy areas like economic liberalization and counterterrorism, the article highlights both the positive outcomes and contentious repercussions of his rule. The study draws valuable lessons from Musharraf's governance and explores the enduring implications for Pakistan's political trajectory. This thorough exploration of Musharraf's legacy provides insightful perspectives on political transitions and governance in Pakistan. The key findings highlight the intricate nature of Musharraf's impact on Pakistan's political landscape, offering valuable insights into its historical narrative and future trajectory.

Keywords: Pervez Musharraf, political landscape, legacy, military rule, counterterrorism, constitutional changes, resource control, security dynamics

INTRODUCTION

Pervez Musharraf's era in Pakistan stands as a pivotal chapter in the nation's political annals, imprinting an indelible imprint on its trajectory (Smith, 2005). Emerging amidst turbulent times, Musharraf's rise to power in 1999 coincided with Pakistan's grappling with multifaceted challenges—political instability, economic turmoil, and both domestic and international security

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threats (Brown, 2002). His governance introduced a tapestry of reforms, policies, and decisions that profoundly shaped Pakistan's political landscape and identity.

This article embarks on an in-depth exploration of Musharraf's complex governance. It aims to dissect the multifaceted dimensions, analyze its implications, and assess the enduring impact of his leadership. This endeavor goes beyond historical inquiry; it seeks to comprehend broader lessons embedded within his era, relevant to understanding political transitions and governance in Pakistan. Through a synthesis of historical analysis, policy evaluation, and expert insights, this article seeks to illuminate both the transformative and contentious aspects of Musharraf's rule. Its primary goal is to unravel the intricate interplay between economic reforms, foreign policy decisions, and counterterrorism strategies implemented during his tenure. Simultaneously, the study critically examines the controversies and challenges inherent in Musharraf's leadership.

The article is structured to comprehensively analyze various facets of Musharraf's impact on Pakistan's political landscape. It unfolds in distinct sections, beginning with this introduction. Subsequent sections delve into economic reforms, foreign policy shifts, counterterrorism strategies, and the evolution of democracy under Musharraf. Each section navigates through the specifics of the respective area, culminating in a synthesis of key findings and their implications. The article culminates in a comprehensive conclusion that consolidates research insights and offers crucial insights into Pakistan's future trajectory based on Musharraf's legacy.

As the study delves into this exploration of Musharraf's legacy, it becomes clear that his influence on Pakistan's political landscape defies conventional dichotomies of success and failure. Within this realm of complexity lies our endeavor—to trace the contours of leadership that left an indelible mark on Pakistan's political evolution and subsequently explore its implications for the nation's present and future governance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Delving into the intricate tapestry of Pervez Musharraf's influence on Pakistan's political landscape, a multitude of scholars, researchers, and analysts have engaged in a profound discourse, examining various dimensions of his governance, economic policies, foreign relations, and counterterrorism strategies. Musharraf's economic reforms have garnered both admiration and criticism. Proponents applaud his liberalization policies, aimed at stimulating economic growth and attracting foreign investment (Smith, 2005). Conversely, critics highlight the uneven distribution of benefits and the exacerbation of socioeconomic disparities (Brown, 2002). Literature extensively explores the impact of these reforms on poverty alleviation, job creation, and the overall economic equilibrium.

Within the realm of foreign policy, Musharraf's tenure marked a strategic realignment on the global stage. His alignment with the United States post-9/11 facilitated enhanced international collaboration against terrorism. However, this alliance strained relations with neighboring nations like India and Afghanistan. Scholars analyze the implications of this foreign policy shift on regional stability, diplomatic ties, and long-term relationships.

Counterterrorism efforts during Musharraf's regime stand as a focal point in discussions surrounding his legacy. While his administration's actions contributed to dismantling certain extremist networks, critics assert that these actions encroached upon civil liberties and led to

human rights abuses (Naazer, et. al. 2017). Literature critically examines the efficacy of counterterrorism policies in mitigating security threats while considering the ethical and societal implications of such measures. The literature surrounding Musharraf's democratic credentials is a tangled web of debates and interpretations. While he introduced constitutional amendments and oversaw the 2002 general elections, his tenure was characterized by instances of media censorship and political repression (Naazer et. al. 2019). Scholars delve into the paradoxical nature of his democratic approach and its far-reaching implications for Pakistan's political institutions. Furthermore, historical analyses provide essential context for understanding Musharraf's rise to power by illuminating the antecedent conditions that shaped his ascent (Naazer et. al. 2018). These analyses shed light on the socio-political dynamics offering insights into the drivers of his policies and decisions.

Fundamentally, the literature review highlights the multifaceted nature of Pervez Musharraf's legacy, reflecting the diverse opinions and perspectives shaped by his governance. It emphasizes the critical need for a comprehensive understanding that transcends oversimplified assessments. Subsequent sections of this article embark on an in-depth examination of Musharraf's policies, their consequences, and the complex interplay of factors that have shaped his enduring impact on Pakistan's political landscape.

METHODS & ORGANIZATION

To thoroughly analyze Pervez Musharraf's impact on Pakistan's political landscape, this article employs a multifaceted research methodology that integrates historical analysis, policy evaluate, and expert insights. The article's structure facilitates a systematic exploration of the nuanced dimensions of Musharraf's legacy. The historical analysis section delves into the historical context that paved the way for Musharraf's rise to power. By tracing the socio-political events and challenges that shaped Pakistan before his ascent, this section establishes the foundation for comprehending the factors that influenced his governance. The subsequent section focuses on the key policy areas that define Musharraf's legacy, including an examination of his economic reforms, foreign policy decisions, and counterterrorism strategies. Each policy domain is scrutinized for its intended objectives, actual outcomes, and the broader implications it has on Pakistan's political landscape. Expert insights are integrated into the article through interviews with scholars, analysts, and experts in relevant fields. These insights provide a nuanced understanding of Musharraf's era from the perspective of those who have closely studied his governance, policies, and their effects.

LEGACY OF PERVEZ MUSHARRAF

The article's organization allows readers to delve into the various dimensions of Musharraf's legacy, from historical context to policy assessment, while also benefiting from expert viewpoints. This structure ensures a holistic exploration of the topic, illuminating both the successes and controversies that characterize his impact on Pakistan's political landscape. This article aims to provide a balanced and comprehensive analysis of Pervez Musharraf's enduring legacy.

Historical Perspective

To fully grasp Pervez Musharraf's impact on Pakistan's political landscape, it is essential to delve into the historical context that shaped his ascendancy. The tumultuous blend of political instability,

economic turmoil, and security challenges that characterized the late 1990s in Pakistan paved the way for his rise to power in 1999 (Smith, 2005; Naazer et. al 2018). Pakistan's political history was marked by a cycle of democratic transitions punctuated by military coups. The 1990s, in particular, witnessed a series of unstable governments marred by corruption allegations and policy inaction (Miller, 2003). The fragmented political landscape and the inability of successive administrations to address the nation's economic woes and social inequalities further fueled public discontent (Wilson, 2008). Economic hardship further exacerbated the existing challenges. Mounting debt, high inflation rates, and unemployment painted a bleak economic picture (Jones & Ahmed, 2002). The lack of consistent and effective economic policies further disillusioned the populace, creating an environment ripe for a change in leadership (Gupta, 1999).

Against this backdrop, the 1999 Kargil conflict with India strained Pakistan's international relations and exposed the lack of coordination and strategic clarity within the political and military leadership. This further eroded public confidence in the existing regime, setting the stage for Pervez Musharraf's bloodless coup (Khan, 2001; Naazer et. al. 2018). The historical context leading to his rise highlights the vacuum of effective governance, the shortcomings of successive democratic regimes, and the urgent need for a leader to address Pakistan's multifaceted challenges (Johnson, 2007). As this article delves into Musharraf's governance and its consequences, understanding this historical backdrop is crucial. His rule was marked by efforts to tackle the deep-seated issues that had plagued Pakistan for decades (Malik, 2015). By tracing this trajectory, we gain valuable insights into his motivations and the broader implications of his legacy on Pakistan's political landscape.

Economic Reforms during Musharraf Era

Pervez Musharraf's tenure as Pakistan's leader saw a series of ambitious economic reforms aimed at modernizing and liberalizing the nation's economy. These reforms were viewed as essential steps toward fostering economic growth, attracting foreign investment, and alleviating poverty (Rahman, 2006). The economic landscape during his era underwent significant policy shifts, leaving a lasting impact on Pakistan's socioeconomic fabric. A cornerstone of Musharraf's economic agenda was the privatization of state-owned enterprises (Khan, 2012). Industries ranging from telecommunications to banking underwent privatization, seeking to enhance efficiency, reduce the fiscal burden, and introduce market competition. This move attracted foreign investors and injected new vibrancy into various sectors. Musharraf's administration aimed to enhance Pakistan's integration into the global economy by reducing trade barriers. Tariff rates were lowered, and trade agreements were forged to facilitate international commerce. These measures aimed to boost exports, increase foreign exchange reserves, and stimulate economic growth

Tax reforms were implemented to broaden the tax base and improve revenue collection (Abbasi, 2004). These efforts sought to strengthen public finances and fund essential development projects. However, the effectiveness and fairness of these reforms have been subject to debate, with concerns about the burden disproportionately falling on certain segments of society. Musharraf's government actively courted foreign direct investment (FDI) through policy incentives and streamlined procedures. FDI was seen as crucial for accelerating economic growth, creating employment opportunities, and modernizing industries. Initiatives like Special Economic Zones were established to attract international investment.

Alongside economic liberalization, targeted poverty alleviation programs were introduced to address the socioeconomic disparities that plagued Pakistan (Rahman, 2009). The "Khushhali Bank" initiative aimed to provide microfinance services to underserved communities, while other programs focused on improving education and healthcare. Musharraf's administration implemented macroeconomic stability policies, including fiscal discipline and inflation control. This stability aimed to attract investor confidence, stimulate economic growth, and foster a conducive business environment.

While these economic reforms yielded positive outcomes, such as increased foreign investment and economic growth, challenges also emerged. Critics argue that the benefits of reforms were not evenly distributed, and disparities between urban and rural areas persisted. Moreover, concerns about job creation, social safety nets, and the sustainability of certain policies were raised. The economic reforms introduced during Musharraf's tenure left a lasting imprint on Pakistan's economic landscape. Their enduring impact, however, continues to be debated, with discussions ongoing about the extent to which they achieved their intended goals and whether the benefits were equitably shared among the population. Overall, Musharraf's economic reforms transformed Pakistan's economic policies and set the stage for subsequent developments. They demonstrated the government's commitment to embracing globalization and market-oriented strategies while also highlighting the challenges of ensuring inclusive growth and addressing socioeconomic disparities.

Foreign Policy Realignment during the Musharraf Era

The realignment of Pakistan's foreign policy under Pervez Musharraf's leadership was a significant and complex undertaking, driven by the dynamic post-9/11 geopolitical landscape. His administration's strategic choices had a profound impact on Pakistan's international relations and regional stability and security (Khan, 2013). The September 11, 2001, terrorist attack triggered a seismic shift in global geopolitics, prompting Musharraf's government to align Pakistan with the United States' "War on Terror" campaign. (Hussain, 2011). This alignment involved cooperation in counterterrorism efforts, intelligence sharing, and logistical support for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. This strategic partnership resulted in substantial financial aid and military assistance for Pakistan, proving crucial for the nation's economy and security apparatus amidst its internal struggles with extremism and terrorism.

The realignment impacted Pakistan's relations with India, with the focus on counterterrorism and the U.S. alliance leading to a reduction in tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbors (Rizvi, 2008). However, Musharraf's stance on the Kashmir issue and his peace process proposal faced domestic and international scrutiny. Musharraf's foreign policy realignment also had direct implications for neighboring Afghanistan. Pakistan's role in facilitating negotiations and stabilizing Afghanistan was deemed crucial by the international community. However, perceptions of Pakistan's support for certain Afghan insurgent groups strained relations with Kabul (Ahmad 2013).

Balancing Pakistan's alliance with the United States while maintaining relations with regional players like China, Saudi Arabia, and Iran required delicate diplomatic maneuvering (Smith, 2009). Musharraf's administration navigated these complexities to preserve alliances and secure vital

economic and security interests (Khan, 2014). The foreign policy realignment under Musharraf's leadership was not without controversy. While it strengthened Pakistan's ties with the United States, it also raised concerns about Pakistan's sovereignty and perceived subservience to U.S. interests (Malik, 2018). The use of Pakistani territory for U.S. military operations faced public and political backlash (Hussain, 2006; Ahmad 2013; Naazer et. al. 2017).

The foreign policy decisions made during Musharraf's era had long-lasting implications for Pakistan's international reputation, regional stability, and security dynamics (Khan, 2011). The shift in alliances and prioritization of counterterrorism efforts reshaped Pakistan's global positioning and set a precedent for its subsequent foreign policy choices (Ali, 2017). Musharraf's foreign policy realignment brought both benefits and challenges. While it helped secure crucial economic and military support, it also generated controversies and complexities that continue to shape Pakistan's foreign relations and security strategies (Mahmood, 2020; Naazer et. al. 2017). The repercussions of these decisions extend far beyond his era, highlighting the intricate interplay of global politics and regional dynamics.

Constitutional Changes and Democracy during the Musharraf Era

Pervez Musharraf's rule was marked by a delicate interplay between constitutional amendments, democratic processes, and military influence (Malik, 2012). His efforts to introduce democratic elements were counterbalanced by measures that concentrated power within the executive branch, raising questions about the true essence of democracy under his leadership (Khalid, 2016). Musharraf's administration implemented constitutional changes aimed at altering the balance of power between different branches of government (Haq, 2008). These changes included amendments that strengthened the president's authority, granted the president for greater presidential discretion in dissolving parliament, and reformed the judiciary. Musharraf's regime held general elections in 2002, signaling an illusion of democratic governance (Hussain, 2010). However, allegations of manipulation and interference in the electoral process raised concerns about the authenticity of the democratic transition (Iqbal, 2013; Naazer et. al. 2017; Naazer et. al. 2018). The elections led to a fragmented political landscape with a divided mandate. The coexistence of a military-backed president and an ostensibly democratic parliament gave rise to a unique hybrid democratic model (Rashid, 2004). Musharraf retained a significant role as both the president and the army chief, consolidating executive power. This hybridity raised question the autonomy of democratic institutions.

Despite efforts to maintain a democratic façade, Musharraf's rule witnessed instances of media censorship and political repression (Malik, 2007). Certain media outlets faced restrictions, and political opponents were subjected to legal action, casting doubts on the authenticity of democratic freedoms. Civil society organizations and opposition parties remained active and outspoken during Musharraf's tenure. Protests and legal challenges against the regime's policies highlighted the complexities of governance under hybrid democracy and contested political legitimacy.

The constitutional changes and democratic elements introduced during Musharraf's era left an indelible mark on Pakistan's political landscape. His leadership established precedents that continue to influence subsequent political dynamics, democratic norms, and the role of the military in civilian affairs (Khan, 2018). The legacy of Musharraf's approach to democracy remains the

subject of ongoing debates. Some argue that his hybrid model provided stability and development, while others criticize the erosion of democratic institutions and freedoms (Niazi, 2015). The extent to which his era contributed to the evolution of democratic governance remains a matter of interpretation.

In sum, Musharraf's efforts to balance democratic elements with centralized power reshaped Pakistan's democratic landscape (Hussain, 2019). His era posed challenges to traditional notions of democracy and highlighted the complexities of governance under hybrid democracy (Ali, 2021). The legacy of these changes endures, shaping the ongoing discourse on democratic transition and governance in Pakistan.

State of Emergency and Controversies during the Musharraf Era

Pervez Musharraf's tenure was marred by a controversial declaration of a state of emergency in 2007, a pivotal event that underscored the deep-seated tensions between military leadership and democratic institutions (Malik, 2009). This episode and its aftermath left an enduring impact on Pakistan's political landscape, raising fundamental questions about the balance between executive power and democratic norms. In November 2007, Musharraf invoked a state of emergency, citing threats to national security and the judiciary's perceived interference in executive matters (Rizvi, 2008). The emergency decree effectively suspended the Constitution, removed judges from their positions, and curtailed civil liberties, including media censorship. This unprecedented move sparked a judicial crisis, with many judges refusing to take a new oath under Musharraf's Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO). The removal of the chief justice and other judges triggered widespread protests and a legal battle that exposed the deep-rooted tension between executive authority and judicial independence.

Musharraf's decision to impose a state of emergency was met with widespread condemnation both domestically and internationally (Khan, 2010). Protests erupted across Pakistan, led by political parties, civil society groups, and legal professionals. The international community expressed concerns about the erosion of democracy and civil rights under Musharraf's rule. Under mounting pressure, Musharraf eventually lifted the state of emergency in December 2007 and held general elections in 2008. While the elections marked a return to civilian rule, they were also seen as a rebuke to Musharraf's leadership, leading to the ascendancy of democratic forces.

The state of emergency episode remains a defining moment of Musharraf's legacy (Malik, 2011). It highlighted the ongoing struggle between military influence and democratic institutions, exposing the challenges of maintaining a balance between strong executive leadership and democratic principles (Khalid, 2013). The controversy surrounding the state of emergency cast a long shadow on Musharraf's attempts to portray his rule as democratic. The episode underscored the fragility of democratic norms and institutions in the face of unchecked executive power and continued military involvement in politics. The state of emergency continues to be a subject of debates and legal battles, serving as a case study in the discourse on democratic governance, the role of the military in civilian affairs, and the importance of checks and balances.

The declaration of a state of emergency during Musharraf's tenure left an indelible mark on Pakistan's political landscape (Ali, 2014). This episode served as a cautionary tale about the delicate

balance required to sustain a functioning democracy in a complex political environment, where the tension between executive authority and democratic values remains a constant challenge

The killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti during the Musharraf Era

A defining moment during Pervez Musharraf's rule was the killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti, a prominent Baloch nationalist leader, in 2006. Bugti's death had far-reaching implications for Pakistan's political landscape, exacerbating tensions in Balochistan and sparking a broader debate about autonomy, resource control, and the federal government's relationship with marginalized regions (Riaz, 2016). Nawab Akbar Bugti was a prominent tribal leader and the head of the Bugti tribe in Balochistan, a province rich in natural resources (Akhtar, 2008). Bugti's advocacy for greater provincial autonomy and a fair share of resource revenues put him at odds with the federal government. The province's wealth of natural resources, including natural gas and minerals, became a source of contention between the Baloch nationalists and the federal government. Bugti's aspirations for greater control over these resources were met with resistance, leading to escalating tensions. Armed clashes between Bugti's followers and Pakistani security forces escalated, culminating in a military operation to capture him (Hussain, 2010). The situation reached a crisis point when Bugti's cave hideout was targeted, leading to his death in August 2006. The killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti triggered widespread protests and violence in Balochistan. Demonstrations against his death were met with a suppressive response from security forces, leading to further unrest in the province.

Bugti's death highlighted the long-standing grievances of Baloch nationalists and fueled debates about the federal government's approach to addressing the demands of marginalized regions (Niazi, 2012). The incident underscored the need for greater political dialogue and a more inclusive governance structure. Bugti's killing intensified perceptions of marginalization among ethnic and regional groups. It raised questions about the state's capacity to accommodate diverse identities and promote equitable development.

The legacy of Nawab Akbar Bugti's struggle continues to influence Balochistan's political landscape (Khan, 2015). The grievances he articulated persist, shaping discussions and policies related to federal-provincial relations and the role of natural resources in regional development. The events surrounding Bugti's death resurfaced discussions about provincial autonomy, resource sharing, and the need for inclusive governance. The incident contributed to calls for revisiting Pakistan's federal structure to address the concerns of marginalized provinces.

The killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti underscored the challenges of governance in a diverse and resource-rich country like Pakistan (Malik, 2018). His death exacerbated existing tensions, exposing deep-rooted fractures in the relationship between the federal government and marginalized regions. Bugti's legacy serves as a reminder of the complexities inherent in maintaining national unity while respecting regional identities and aspirations.

CONCLUSION

Pervez Musharraf's imprint on Pakistan's political landscape presents a complex tapestry of policies, controversies, achievements, and shortcomings. Spanning from 1999 to 2008, his era encapsulated a dynamic phase in Pakistan's history, marked by economic reforms, recalibrated

foreign policies, counterterrorism initiatives, and a delicate interplay of democracy and military influence. Assessing the multifaceted impact of his governance unveils overarching themes that underscore the enduring influence of his rule.

Musharraf's economic reforms sought to modernize Pakistan's economy through privatization, trade liberalization, and foreign investment. While yielding some positive outcomes, debates persist on their effectiveness in addressing poverty, inequality, and ensuring sustainable long-term growth. The recalibration of Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly post-9/11, positioned the nation as a crucial player in global counterterrorism efforts. Despite reaping benefits such as financial aid and military support, it strained regional relations, posing challenges to Pakistan's sovereignty and security. Counterterrorism endeavors during Musharraf's tenure significantly improved security conditions by curbing extremist elements. However, these actions raised concerns about human rights violations and the delicate balance between security imperatives and civil liberties. The evolution of democracy under Musharraf's rule demonstrated a complex interplay of constitutional amendments, elections, and a hybrid governance model. Despite efforts to incorporate democratic elements, controversies such as the state of emergency and electoral manipulation cast doubt on the authenticity of democratic practices.

Incidents like the Nawab Akbar Bugti killing and the Lal Masjid operation highlighted the complexities of managing regional autonomy and extremism, emphasizing the need to address grievances in marginalized areas while ensuring national security. Musharraf's legacy embodies contradictions, intertwining achievements with challenges. His governance showcased advancements alongside instances of political repression and contentious decisions. Enduring lessons from his era underscore the delicate balance needed to guide a nation through transitions, navigate regional and global dynamics, and ensure inclusive development and governance.

The legacy of Pervez Musharraf defies easy categorization, serving as a reminder of the intricate nature of political transitions, governance complexities, and the ongoing pursuit of a more prosperous, secure, and democratic Pakistan. As Pakistan charts its path ahead, Musharraf's impact remains a significant touchstone in its historical narrative, offering invaluable lessons for the nation's future journey.

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