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## **Electoral Authoritarianism with Pakistani Characteristics An analysis of mandate manufacturing from the dynamics of electioneering in hybrid regimes**

**Fahad Abdullah**

*M. Phil Candidate, Department of Political Science*

*Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan*

**Correspondence:** [243034145@formanite.fccollege.edu.pk](mailto:243034145@formanite.fccollege.edu.pk)

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The paper attempts to explain the discomfort and reluctance of such regimes to accommodate popularly elected governments. To identify the distinct traits and procedures that characterize hybrid governance, this paper conducts a feature analysis of hybrid regime typologies such as defective democracy, electoral (competitive) authoritarian regimes, neo-authoritarianism, and hegemonic authoritarian regimes. After a survey of literature through qualitative content analysis, it is hypothesized that in multiparty hybrid systems, the decision to organize free and fair elections is significantly influenced by elite fragmentation. Adopting democratic reforms becomes a calculated move to manage internal conflict and maintain the regime's legitimacy in the context of internal power dynamics and disagreements within the ruling class. This suggests that variation in regime capacity to channel political support needs to be taken into account when examining the relationship between state capacity and electoral control under authoritarianism. Thus, it follows that elite fragmentation among important institutions—the political class, over-ambitious factions of the judiciary, military, bureaucracy, business tycoons, powerful religious clergy, and other key stakeholders—play a significant role in maintaining the inherent nature of multiparty electoral authoritarianism to manufacture mandate and resist popular opinion.*

**Keywords:** *Electoral authoritarianism, Hybrid regimes, Mandate manufacturing, Elite fragmentation, Elections, Public opinion, State capacity.*

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### **Introduction**

Mainly in a multiparty system in transitional democracies, the electoral histories of authoritarian and hybrid regimes show an uneasy connection with competitive elections. Even though there have been major and ongoing violations of democratic ideals in these elections, authoritarian regimes rely heavily on them to extend their hold on power. A good amount of literature is published on the mechanisms involved in "authoritarianism through elections," with relatively little focus on the

particular difficulties that these electoral authoritarian (EA) regimes provide (Schedler, 2010, p. 1). In Pakistan, electoral authoritarianism has a unique form unlike Russia and China and functions via a convoluted web of elites that includes the over-ambitious factions of armed forces, judiciary, bureaucracy, business tycoons, electable politicians, clergy and even civilian institutions who face difficulties in letting go of authoritarian traits. These elites are part of the primary research puzzle because they jointly shape the political scene and show a reluctance to hold truly competitive, free, and fair elections. Schedler points out that the electoral arena turns into a battlefield where citizens, opposition actors, and ruling parties clash and shape the course of electoral authoritarian regimes.

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Political stability in competitive regimes depends on the incumbents' capacity to fabricate extensive win margins. In Pakistan, this frequently entails the electoral machinery to allegedly rig elections through direct and indirect means. The probability of regime change is raised by the opposition actors' competitiveness in the electoral sphere, which puts this elite network's deeply ingrained interests at jeopardy. In addition, the likelihood of such a shift is reduced by regime actors' devising strategies to quell competitive forces, such as limiting media freedom or influencing the courts, which preserves the entrenched elite's hold on power (Schedler, 2010, p. 22). With one important exception—electoral boycotts—competitive regimes like Pakistan seem robust to challenges from below. Opposition parties have the power to drive competitive regimes toward change by abandoning electoral competition and criticizing the administration from the sidelines. This can result in either an authoritarian breakdown or a democratic transition. This study slightly disagrees with Schedler's assertions of an electoral boycott because recent elections in Bangladesh and the overall electoral histories of authoritarian or transitional democracies provide a good amount of evidence that boycotts bring no results but rather strengthen authoritarian regimes.

Through this paper by the feature analysis of hybrid regime typologies this paper contends that, in order to fully comprehend the relationship between state capacity and electoral control under authoritarianism, it is necessary to take into consideration the differences in the ability of different regimes to direct political support. The division of elites within important institutions which I mentioned above, greatly hinders Pakistan's departure from the characteristics of a multiparty electoral authoritarian state. In order to halt elite network from dominating politics and electioneering, this departure entails instituting mechanisms to counter both the fabrication and manufacturing of a mandate and pushback against popular opinion (Schedler, 2010, pp. 22–23). But understanding the research puzzle in its entirety would require taking into account the larger structural conditions that influence the trajectory of elected authoritarian regimes. The empirical results as collected by Schedler highlight the importance of structural contexts, as demonstrated by the sharp difference between poor regimes that frequently collapse and oil-exporting electoral authoritarian governments that seldom experience regime change (Schedler, 2010, p. 23). The strategic dominance of the elite network in Pakistan over political parties, state institutions, and important economic sectors strengthens the connections between participants in the electoral process and the structural framework that shapes opportunities, limitations, and power relations.

This study is important because it adds to our understanding of Pakistani electoral authoritarianism with its own unique characteristics, a system whose functioning is

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closely entwined with the interests of the elite. While most of the work that has already been written has concentrated on the process of democratization through elections, this study intends to close this gap by exploring the intricate dynamics of electoral authoritarianism, particularly in multiparty systems to explain the reluctance of such regimes to hold competitive elections. In the Pakistani context, this study aims to disentangle the complex relationship among regime capability, elite fragmentation, and structural circumstances to offer a comprehensive view of the difficulties and consequences of holding competitive elections in such regimes. A more thorough examination of these complex electoral systems is required in light of the changing political landscape of the world, which is characterized by the emergence of hybrid regimes and democratic gray areas. As noted by (Bogaards, 2009, p. 399) it is becoming more and more important to define the term "hybrid" governments and clearly delineate the boundaries between liberal democracy and authoritarianism. This landscape is characterized in Pakistan by a complex interplay of elites that are hesitant to accept free, fair, and competitive elections, which is consistent with the research's current relevance (Bogaards, 2009, p. 415).

To sum up, this study had aimed to shed light on the complex dynamics of electoral authoritarianism in the context of the authoritarian and hybrid regimes in Pakistan. Further, it contributes to the ongoing discourse on the complexities of political systems that fall between democracy and authoritarianism by addressing the research puzzle, broadening it through empirical findings of the existing research, highlighting the importance of elite fragmentation and structural contexts. Pakistan provides a relevant example of how electoral authoritarianism with unique Pakistani characteristics is created by a network of powerful elites and is not just a theoretical concept.

### **Feature analysis of hybrid regime typologies and its relevance with Pakistan**

There is a growing number of terminologies used in the electoral literature on the development of political regimes that attempt to categorize the many forms of democracy and authoritarianism. Academics have created terms like "illiberal democracy," which refers to electoral democracies that violate civil freedoms, and "delegative democracy," which describes countries that are marginally democratic but lack horizontal accountability (Bogaards, 2009, p. 399). According to contemporary viewpoints, post-transition regimes are weak types of authoritarianism as well as imperfect democracies. Bogaards suggests a "double-root strategy" in response to this conceptual uncertainty, which involves integrating the ideas of electoral authoritarianism and flawed democracy. According to (Bogaards, 2009, p. 400), this approach makes a distinction between four categories of flawed democracies: illiberal democracy, exclusive democracy, delegative democracy, and democracy with reserved domains. A sophisticated framework for comprehending the various degrees of democratic inadequacies in political systems is provided by this classification.

After this contemplation of the state-of-the-art in the literature of hybrid regimes, Bogaards recognizes numerous core issues in the creation of new regime types. These are the fundamental conception of democracy, the variable of the state, the sources of subtypes of defective democracy, their empirical identification, and the limitations of a 'single-root strategy' that focuses exclusively on either democracy

or authoritarianism. Instead, Bogaards argues the need for a 'double-root strategy' that plots regimes on the full spectrum between liberal democracy and dictatorship (Bogaards, 2009, p. 401). By analyzing the current state of hybrid regime research, Bogaards highlights important problems in creating new kinds of regimes. These comprise the fundamental idea of democracy, the state as a variable, the discovery of flawed democracy subtypes through empirical means, and the drawbacks of a "single-root strategy" that concentrates either on democracy or authoritarianism. Bogaards proposes an all-encompassing 'double-root strategy' that charts regimes along the entire spectrum between authoritarian and liberal democracy (Bogaards, 2009, p. 401). This method offers a more nuanced understanding of political systems' characteristics by recognizing their diversity and complexity which this paper has incorporated in the analysis of electioneering from the dynamics of Pakistan's electoral category.

Moreover, Golosov uses Russia's political regime transition from a "managed democracy" to a hybrid political system to illustrate this approach. This shift passes through two hybrid systems: "electoral authoritarianism" and "defective democracy." Like electoral democracy, defective democracy is limited to the electoral minimum and lacks the fundamental elements of democratic constitutionalism. However, unlike certain other authoritarian types, electoral authoritarian governments get their legitimacy mainly from non-free elections (Golosov, 2011, p. 623). Electoral authoritarianism, as practiced in Pakistan, is consistent with the description of regimes that embrace democratic institutions but use them in order to maintain their power. As observed in Pakistan, the primary characteristic of electoral autocracies is the existence of political competition but its intrinsic unfairness. In contrast to more established closed dictatorships like monarchies or one-party systems, this system permits formalized methods of challenging authority, building a democratic facade that deceives both internal and foreign observers and electoral watchdogs (Matovski, 2021, pp. 6–7). It is clear that holding truly competitive elections is difficult in Pakistan's multiparty electoral authoritarian environment. To maintain its grasp on power, the elite network—which includes politicians, bureaucrats, corporate moguls, and the military—manipulates elections. The idea of electoral autocracies, in which elections serve as a weapon for authoritarian authority rather than a true representation of democratic processes, is consistent with this manipulation. As these regimes, like Pakistan's, assert genuine popular legitimacy while actively resisting calls for democratization, the practice of "democracy's doubles" becomes evident (Krastev, 2006) (Matovski, 2021, p. 10)

In election, authoritarian regimes such as Pakistan, Matovski's approach highlights the significance of coercive power and pseudo-democratic institutions. This is consistent with the situation in Pakistan, where the ruling class maintains control through economic performance, coercive tactics, and resistance to outside pressure (Matovski, 2021, p. 26). The public's desire for strong-armed, effective control, particularly in the wake of tragedies, is ingrained in the unwillingness to accept competitive elections (Matovski, 2021, p. 29). Moreover, Kim's examination of anti-regime revolutions and its correlation with the emergence of electoral authoritarianism offers more understanding of the Pakistani situation. The growth of electoral authoritarianism in response to major movements calling for regime change can be connected to the reluctance to organize competitive elections (Kim,

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2017, p. 111). In Pakistan, the regime tries to balance preserving authoritarian power with navigating the difficulties presented by society desires for reform. Protests against the regime are met with election manipulations. Kim's discussion of the impact of global dynamics on the local political landscape is pertinent to Pakistan because it highlights the role that international factors play in the emergence of electoral authoritarianism. The end of the Cold War and the regional spread of multiparty elections both increase the likelihood of transitions to electoral authoritarianism (Kim, 2017, p. 123). Additionally, the study of competitive authoritarian regimes by Bunce and Wolchik provides insight into how long-lasting weak governments can be. In Pakistan, the elite network maintains the regime's longevity and protection by splitting oppositions, disenfranchising the populace, and sowing doubt about the validity of voting (Bunce & Wolchik, 2010, pp. 73–74) The example of Pakistan highlights how the unwillingness to have competitive elections is a deliberate tactic used to safeguard the regime as well as a result of authoritarian political practices.

Likewise, Donno's analysis of democracy and electoral pressure in autocratic governments sheds light on the possibility of reform. Depending on the form of authoritarianism, Pakistan is more or less vulnerable to electoral pressure; competitive authoritarian elections are more likely to democratize in response to active local and international pressure (Donno, 2013, p. 703). This emphasizes how crucial outside factors are in determining how electoral authoritarianism develops. It is also consistent with the Miller's description of a dictator's strategic choice between closed authoritarianism, electoral authoritarianism, and democracy is consistent with the practice of electoral authoritarianism in Pakistan. This is also unswerving with the multiparty electoral authoritarianism seen in Pakistan, where the ruling class deftly manipulates elections to uphold its authority. By carefully manipulating elections, the dictatorship may maintain control over policy decisions while tying them to an electoral façade and projecting an appearance of democracy to audiences both at home and abroad (Miller, 2013, p. 153). The dynamics of economic inequality and regime strength are interwoven with Pakistan's inability to stage really competitive elections. Miller's analysis of the variables influencing the kind of regime and policy concessions clarifies the Pakistani situation, in which the intermediate values of uncertainty and inequality propel the elite network to deliberately choose electoral authoritarianism. By making this decision, the regime maintains its authoritarian hold on power while navigating political unpredictability (Miller, 2013, p. 153). Lastly, Seeberg's emphasis on the rulers' hold over the economy offers still another perspective on Pakistani electoral authoritarianism with the establishment of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC - Rising Pakistan, n.d.) . The complex relationship between economic power and electoral outcomes is highlighted by the influence that the elite network's economic dominance has on the manipulation of elections in order to maintain their rule (Seeberg, 2018, p. 33).

To sum up the feature analysis of hybrid regime typologies, the literature provides a thorough grasp of the methods used by electoral authoritarianism in Pakistan. The intricate interactions between coercive power, pseudo-democratic institutions, popular expectations for effective leadership, and foreign influences are at the core of the reluctance to have truly competitive elections. The situation in Pakistan is

consistent with the typologies of authoritarian electoral regimes, demonstrating the complexity of the problems and behaviors related to these political structures.

### **Electoral authoritarianism with Pakistani characteristics**

Scholars have examined the complex relationships between multi-party elections and authoritarian regime stability and most of them are relevant in the context of Pakistan's multiparty electoral authoritarianism. A more thorough examination of the abilities of defecto rulers, notably their economic management, has been spurred by the conflicting empirical results about the influence of elections. According to Seeberg's reasoning, broad economic control gives authoritarian regimes the ability to quietly affect elections, averting the collapse of their regime through economic pressure and voter manipulation (Seeberg, 2018, pp. 44–45). This revelation clarifies the electoral dynamics in Pakistan, where the elite network, with considerable economic sway, manipulates elections in a calculated manner to uphold authoritarian power. The conditioning effect of economic management on the influence of elections is further supported by cross-national investigations. Elections raise the possibility of a government collapse at lower levels of economic control, while elections are less likely to bring down a dictatorship or authoritarian regimes at higher degrees of control (Seeberg, 2018, p. 45). This is consistent with the situation in Pakistan, where the elite network's economic sway aids in the deliberate manipulation of elections and mandate manufacturing, lowering the likelihood of regime collapse. Rob Mugabe of Zimbabwe is one well-known example of how economic dominance helps autocrats hold onto power in the face of electoral challenges. These results have ramifications for the larger body of research on authoritarian institutions and electoral authoritarianism. Seeberg notes that election dynamics are greatly influenced by the extent of a ruler's control over the economy, despite the fact that prior studies have concentrated on authoritarian regime types. The dynamics of an authoritarian regime are not set by elections per se; rather, their consequences depend on the specific conditions surrounding them (Seeberg, 2018, p. 45). This viewpoint casts doubt on the traditional knowledge of authoritarian regimes by highlighting the importance of taking governmental and economic capabilities into account.

Moreover, Seeberg proposes expanding on current research by delving more into elements like state and economic capabilities in the context of authoritarian regimes. Although it is recognized that repressive capacity and resource income are barriers to democratization, there are many mechanisms by which authoritarian regimes use the state and the economy that need to be examined (Seeberg, 2018, pp. 45–46). These ideas are helpful in comprehending the complexity of the electoral authoritarian system in Pakistan, where the elite network's control over the state and economy is crucial.

Election years are marked by an average of almost 200% more protest occurrences than non-election years, which highlights the destabilizing effects of authoritarian elections (Shirah, 2016, p. 1). This is consistent with the elite network's unwillingness to allow for truly competitive elections in Pakistan in order to control any potential upsurge in anti-regime movement. According to Shirah's study of 136 authoritarian regimes, administrations with competitive elections experience greater political instability than regimes without elections (Shirah, 2016, p. 1). This is consistent with the situation in Pakistan, where the ruling class deliberately uses

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contested elections to uphold authoritarian control. The results point to a trade-off that authoritarian leaders must make because elections help the status quo while simultaneously making anti-regime demonstrations and disruptive political activity more common. Although Shirah's argument appears contradictory to my assertions but still reinforce the claim that competitive, free and fair elections, and representation of popular opinion is still feared by authoritarian regimes. Furthermore, the literature suggests a connection between elections that are autocratic and the ensuing democracy. Empirical data as collected by Shirah indicates that democratic regimes are more likely to replace electoral authoritarian regimes than totally closed authoritarian states, even while the study cannot forecast the type of regime that will emerge after a dictatorship falls (Shirah, 2016, p. 13). This raises questions about the long-term effects of multiparty electoral authoritarianism in Pakistan and its potential to help forward democratization.

Additionally, the body of research on hybrid regimes offers a framework for comprehending the intricate relationship between stable regimes and authoritarian elections. This viewpoint is especially pertinent to the situation in Pakistan, where the strategic maneuvers and mandate manufacturing of the elite network and multiparty electoral authoritarianism are consistent with the dynamics noted in the literature. Morse's analysis can be utilized to question presumptions regarding improved electoral conditions signifying democratization in the context of Pakistani multiparty electoral authoritarianism. Competitive elections could be a sign of the persistence of authoritarianism rather than democratization. Particularly with regard to incumbent parties and neopatrimonialism, the political insights from Africa are pertinent. Morse emphasizes the importance of institutions and suggests that bigger opposition parties in tolerant hegemonies could help pave the way for democratic party systems in the future, even as they maintain authoritarianism (Morse, 2015, p. 140). Also, examining the discussions on "competitive authoritarianism" and "hegemonic authoritarianism" becomes relevant in light of Pakistan's multiparty electoral authoritarianism. Even though the research date back to the 1990s, they did not evaluate the propensity of these hybrid regimes to transition to democracy. According to Brownlee's analysis, which covered 158 regimes between 1975 and 2004, competitive authoritarian regimes are not particularly likely to fall from power, but they do increase the likelihood of a transition to electoral democracy, highlighting the importance of fierce electoral competition in determining the prospects for democracy after an incumbent government (Brownlee, 2009, p. 515).

Scholars studying electoral authoritarianism place a strong emphasis on the state's ability to control elections. Koehler explores the Egyptian elections under Mubarak by analyzing this relationship. The impact of state penetration varies according to the power of the ruling party, influencing outcomes differentially in rural and urban areas. State services strengthened the dominant National Democratic Party in urban areas and strengthened local elites in weaker rural regions. This emphasizes how crucial it is to take regime capacity into account when examining how state capacity and electoral control interact in authoritarian settings (Koehler, 2018, p. 97). According to Koehler's research, the institutional ability of the regime to direct political support determines how much of an impact state administrative infiltration has on electoral control. Robust regime structures are necessary for focused service supply and effective control. In Egypt, public services empowered local elites

instead of mobilizing support for regime candidates since there were no such institutions. This is supported by historical evidence, which shows that the NDP has a history of drawing in similar constituencies. The NDP acted as a sponge, absorbing the results of local support networks, rather than dividing the regime from the opposition (Koehler, 2018, p. 110)

Analyzing the subtleties of electoral authoritarianism in Pakistan necessitates comprehending the problems with state capacity and how they affect regime stability. A conceptual issue arises from the multidimensional nature of state capacity, which is inextricably linked with regime structures. This is relatable to Pakistan, where it is clear that the country struggles with multiparty electoral authoritarianism and is reluctant to have competitive elections. Hanson's study which examines the relationships between extractive, coercive, and administrative capacities appraises my previous assertions of reluctance of authoritarian regimes to hold competitive elections (Hanson, 2018, p. 17). Comprehending the aspects of state capability becomes crucial in the Pakistani context, where election strategies are shaped by the power of the ruling elite. The evolution of Pakistan's electoral authoritarianism is influenced by the interplay between state capabilities and regime strategies. Especially, my argument emphasizes how important it is for regime players to seize power over the state; this is a significant aspect of understanding Pakistan's regime stability in the face of elite disintegration. The inability of powerful regime parties to influence bureaucratic processes may prevent the state from fulfilling its capacity to provide stability (Hanson, 2018, pp. 29–30). Pakistan's multiparty electoral authoritarianism aligns with the theory that state capacity affects election turnover but can spur democratic transformation afterward. Election manipulation becomes difficult in states with limited capacity, as evidenced by Pakistan's unwillingness to have competitive elections. The Varieties of Democracy dataset, which covers 460 elections in 110 regimes between 1974 and 2012, highlights the complex influence of state capacity on electoral outcomes in regimes with different levels of multiparty involvement (van Ham & Seim, 2018, p. 49).

Pakistan's electoral landscape reveals the complex interplay between state capacity and democratic reform following elections. The divergent impacts of state capacity on turnover and democratic transformation highlight how intricate the process of democratization is. The difficulties in advancing democratic transformation in Pakistan arises where state capability and multiparty dynamics collide and qualify conventional 'strong state first' ideas in light of the contradictory impacts of state capacity. Pakistan's resistance to competitive elections is consistent with the claim that the ability of the state, when exercised by authoritarian rulers, restricts the possibility of democratic transformation and impedes the process of democratization as a whole (van Ham & Seim, 2018, pp. 59–60).

Pakistan's electoral authoritarianism has characteristics with other regimes, including the composition of founding members of rival parties. Given the variety of party founders' backgrounds—including civil servant, military, and revolutionary—multiparty electoral authoritarianism in Pakistan faces difficulties. Because of their political background, civil servants are excellent leaders who can forge coalitions and establish institutions that strengthen ties among the elite. On the other hand, military-founded parties, which are common in African contexts, frequently lack the social connections and political savvy required for long-term regime stability. This is similar to the multiparty system in Pakistan, where the



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military has a significant role in party dynamics and makes it difficult to have elections that are really competitive (Morse, 2012, pp. 189–190). Examining the shift from autocratic rule to electoral authoritarianism (EA) exposes a strategic calculation that is especially pertinent to comprehending the multiparty electoral authoritarianism in Pakistan. Autocrats use EA when weighing foreign incentives against the expenses of holding elections. In Pakistan's situation, the unwillingness to have competitive elections is consistent with the theory that EA changes are predicted by socioeconomic conditions influencing voter control, such as significant inequality and low average income. Pakistan's electoral system, where multiparty dynamics are impacted by these complex circumstances, reflects the strategic considerations of autocrats in striking a balance between domestic control and international pressures (Miller, 2020, p. 1).

A strategic theory of autocratic regime changes which is pertinent to the multiparty electoral authoritarianism in Pakistan. Autocratic leaders participate in disputed elections based on good socioeconomic conditions with the goal of gaining international benefits. Regional contagion, high inequality, low average income, and external reliance on democracies are among the predictors. Even though there aren't many indicators of democratization, the importance of changes from electoral authoritarianism to democracy is noteworthy and consistent with Pakistan's complicated political environment. This empirical data as collected by Miller, refutes presumptions regarding the promotion of democracy by showing that electoral autocracy can be encouraged to advance human growth and, in turn, democratic survival. Subsequent investigations ought to focus on particular instances of electoral authoritarianism adoption, offering refined perspectives on the workings of regimes (Miller, 2020, pp. 23–24). The election systems in Latin America, especially in Mexico, are not meeting democratic standards. Fraudulent cases erode credibility, marginalizing elected entities and consolidating authority in the hands of unelected officials. Neoliberal policies that are put into effect by elected governments show a divide between the electorate and the political class, as they depart from the promises made during the populist campaign. Techniques of authoritarian leadership, such as deceit and fraud, support the economic interests of the elite. Democratic governance, the deconstruction of authoritarian institutions, and the empowerment of citizens are all necessary for the shift from authoritarian electoral regimes to democratic politics. This paradigm shift highlights the necessity for genuine democratic politics and questions the compatibility of free markets and democracy (Petras & Vieux, 1994, pp. 18–19).

## **Conclusion**

This paper has examined that why authoritarian and hybrid regimes show reluctance in holding competitive elections, especially in a multiparty political arrangement from the dynamics of electioneering in Pakistan. This study focused on Pakistan's distinct hybrid electoral classification by using a feature analysis of hybrid regime typologies, such as competitive authoritarianism, neo-authoritarianism, defective democracy, hegemonic authoritarianism and so on with a dedicated section. By doing so, it added significant knowledge to the understanding of hybrid electoral political scene in Pakistan. A key hypothesis connecting elite fragmentation with the conduct of free and fair elections in multiparty hybrid systems was discovered through the qualitative content analysis carried out in this investigation. According to this theory, the implementation of democratic reforms is a calculated move made by the ruling class to maintain regime legitimacy in the face of power struggles and internal tensions. This emphasizes how important it is to take into account the regime's ability to direct political support when examining how state capability and electoral control interact in authoritarian settings. Additionally, the study emphasizes the critical role that elite fragmentation among powerful institutions—such as the over-ambitious factions of judiciary, military, bureaucracy, business magnates, powerful religious leaders, and other important stakeholders—plays. This fragmentation turns out to be a crucial factor that moves multiparty electoral authoritarian states away from their core characteristics and affects their propensity to mold mandates against the wishes of the people. Furthermore, the study highlights the complex relationship between elite fragmentation and regime dynamics, illuminating the complexities of election procedures in hybrid political environments. This complex analysis provides a thorough framework for comprehending the intricacies present in authoritarian and hybrid regimes' decision-making processes as they balance internal power struggles, electoral procedures, and maintaining the legitimacy of their governments. In the end, it promotes a more thorough investigation of these complex dynamics to improve our understanding of electoral authoritarianism in many geopolitical circumstances.

Summing up this study with Ganguly & Fair assertions that Pakistan's democratic transition is hampered by the historical authoritarianism that shaped the country. The enduring authoritarian tendencies inside civilian democratic institutions are involved in electioneering and otherwise, in contrast to popular narratives that center on military dominance (Ganguly & Fair, 2013, p. 122). It is quite insightful and paints the complete picture of reluctance towards competitive elections. Additionally, in order to steer Pakistan away from illiberal tutelary hybridism, Samad's study highlights the critical importance of institutional dynamics and the necessity of significant reforms. When Pakistan's trajectory is examined, a "gray zone" with a propensity toward illiberal hybridism is revealed. The shift towards a hybrid regime of illiberal tutelary and constriction of democratic space is ascribed to military operations. The continuance of neo-patrimonialism and tutelage obstructs democratic advancement. It is essential to confront tutelage and challenge neo-patrimonial structures in order to accomplish democratic transformation. (Samad, 2017, pp. 509, 524–526).

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