

Conflict Management and Good Governance in Pakistan: Lessons from Germany

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Abstract

Pakistan, like many post-colonial states, is still grappling with the issues encompassing the whole range of governance and the unresolved conflicts threatening the lives of millions of people. As a fragile state with multiple domestic and external security challenges, the issue of good governance is central to the existence of ethnic, sectarian, political and resource based conflicts in Pakistan. Several governments in the recent past expressed their resolve to strive for good governance but in reality such commitments never went beyond statements, promises and rhetoric. The question arises: can foreign assistance help achieve the goal of good governance in Pakistan? What is the role and involvement of Germany in the sphere of providing technical expertise to Pakistan in the area of good governance?

Keywords: good governance, conflict management, human development, corruption, work ethics, rule of law

Introduction

Good governance and conflict management are the two major approaches for bettering the lives of people in order to achieve peace, stability, human security and human development. Most of the conflicts are the result of state's neglect of vital issues ranging from preserving human rights, upholding the rule of law, providing better economic opportunities particularly to the youths, health, educational, housing and transport facilities to common people and most important a functional justice system. These issues can be managed if the state focuses on good governance and providing good quality of life to people.

Pakistan, like many post-colonial states, is still grappling with the issues encompassing the whole gamut of governance and the unresolved conflicts threatening the lives of millions of people. As a fragile state with multiple domestic and external security challenges, the issue of good governance is central to the existence of ethnic, sectarian, political and resource based conflicts in Pakistan because if there is rule of law and effective justice system, it becomes possible to provide basic necessities of life to people and check corruption.

Several governments in the recent past expressed their resolve to strive for good governance but in reality such commitments never went beyond statements and rhetoric. Federal and provincial assembly elections held in Pakistan on July 25, 2018 and the results emerging from such elections prove one thing: majority of the people of Pakistan have voted to seek a good quality of life, better governance and the rule of law.

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The question arises: can foreign assistance help achieve the goal of good governance in Pakistan? What is the role and involvement of Germany in the sphere of providing technical expertise to Pakistan in the area of good governance? Certainly, external help, assistance and facilitation can go a long way in enabling a particular state to proceed for bettering its administrative and governance system, yet it is local and indigenous effort along with will and determination on the part of concerned stakeholders that the vision to have good governance can be transformed into a reality. Germany, can be one of the models of good governance as the rule of law, justice system, infrastructure development and quality of education are termed as the pillars of a welfare state. The government elected as a result of July 25 general elections in Pakistan is determined to provide good governance but it is yet to be seen how it can break the age-old cycle of corruption and nepotism which are termed as major impediments to provide a better quality of life to 220 million people of Pakistan. Certainly, if the regime assuming charge after July 25 general elections is able to have a smooth sailing to implement its election manifesto on providing good governance to the people of Pakistan in that case one can see management and positive transformation of conflicts in the country.

A lot of research has been done as far as the theme of good governance is concerned. Likewise, authors have undertaken valuable research to examine the issue of good governance in the case of Pakistan. However, there is dearth of research on studies which tries to develop a link between conflict management and good governance particularly in the context of Pakistan and how the two can help the process of peace and stability in that country. Hence, this research study will try to fill the gap and come up with innovative ideas which may be considered by the policy makers of Pakistan for managing conflicts in the light of the option of good governance.

An interesting research study on good governance was done by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) entitled, *Good Governance in Practice: Approaches and examples from development practice* (Berlin: BMZ Information Brochure 4, 2012). In the executive summary of that brochure, it has been stated that, “good governance is one of the most important prerequisites for the development of a country. Development and prosperity are not possible under conditions of legal insecurity, disregard for human rights, poorly functioning administration and corruption. German development policy has therefore supported good governance for many years on the basis of a comprehensive understanding of the concept.” (Brochure, 2012) One can certainly study how the German model of good governance functions and how countries with serious challenges in the arena of good governance can learn from Germany.

This paper will examine in depth four major areas which are relevant as far as good governance, conflict management and learning lessons from the German experience are concerned. First, the concept of conflict management in the context of Pakistan and how it can be linked with the task of good governance. Second, the impediments

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which one can figure out for good governance in Pakistan and how these could be removed. Third, institutional framework for managing conflicts in Pakistan by applying the methodology of good governance. Fourth, the example of Germany in the realm of good governance and what lessons Pakistan can learn in this regard. Furthermore, the paper will focus on ten issues which are central for the management of conflicts while applying the framework of good governance in the context of Pakistan. These issues are as follows:

1. An effective justice system which is able to address the grievances of common people.
2. Upholding the rule of law without any discrimination.
3. Clean and efficient local, provincial and federal administrations.
4. Accountability and transparency in public institutions.
5. Access of basic necessities of life to people namely, quality education, health, transport, housing and employment opportunities.
6. Eradication of corruption and nepotism.
7. Short and long-term policies to modernize infrastructure; uninterrupted supply of utilities particularly electricity, clean and safe drinking water.
8. Inducting professionalism in work ethics particularly in the functioning of bureaucracy, judiciary and political parties.
9. Fair distribution of resources to provinces and their proper utilization.
10. Monitoring of the overall governance issues by neutral and professional civil society organizations.

The purpose of this research study is not to reinvent the wheel but to argue for practical measures which can improve the governance system of Pakistan for the mitigation and better management of conflicts. In most cases, conflicts are generated when,

1. The justice system is either corrupt or inefficient.
2. The lives and property of people are not safe.
3. People do not have an access to the essential necessities of life.
4. Corruption and nepotism are rampant.
5. The state is indifferent to the vital issues which threaten the ordinary lives of people.
6. There is no hope for a better future.

It is certain when there is good governance, conflicts may exist at different levels but these conflicts are positive and not negative in nature. Bad governance exposes the fault lines in terms of ethnic, lingual, religious, sectarian and resource based conflicts resulting into their escalation and the outbreak of violence. Therefore, good governance will certainly help mitigate the level of conflicts and their better management, if not final resolution.

While conflicts have their historical roots and societal causes for their escalation at different levels, a better system of governance covering 10 areas mentioned above, can certainly help de-escalate and manage conflicts. For instance, poor justice system, absence of the rule of law, lack of equal employment opportunities, absence of better, health, educational, transport and housing opportunities for common people results into the accumulation of frustration, anger, antagonism resulting into the outbreak of conflicts and their violent transformation. It is not the failure of democracy which is reiterated by some sections of Pakistani society, but the failure of political parties, particularly those in the government to provide better governance and in areas which impact on the lives of ordinary people.

The main question which will be addressed in this research study is: *how good governance can mitigate and manage conflicts and what lessons Pakistan can learn from the experience of Germany in the area of good governance?*

Following sub-questions which will be raised and responded in this research study are as follows:

1. What are the conceptual *dynamics* of good governance?
2. What are the major *areas* of misgovernance in Pakistan and how these could be addressed?
3. How better work ethics could be *promoted* in Pakistan as a pre-requisite for good governance?
4. What is the *linkage* between good governance and conflict management and how it can be applicable in case of Pakistan?
5. How Germany evolved and established its system of governance and what *lessons* Pakistan can learn from the example of Germany?
6. What will be the *implications* of the present research study and how it can impact on the policy making process of Pakistan?

Conflict Management and Good Governance

What is conflict management and how such an approach can help the process of good governance and improving quality of life of people. Conflict management is termed as the most innovative approach in the field of peace and conflict studies because resolution of a conflict may take a long time or may not be possible because of the

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complex and complication nature of a particular conflict. Therefore, conflict management is a middle path so as to give the conflicting parties a break from the vicious cycle of conflicts and to manage its intensity to that it doesn't go out of control. Theorists in the field of conflict studies have defined conflict management in a different manner. For instance, Peter Wallensteen argues that "Conflict Management can help in reducing the danger of crisis, creating some confidence and lessening (potential or actual) suffering. Conflict resolution is more ambitious as it tries to affect the basic issues, the incompatibilities that direct the conflicting parties." (Wellensteen, 2007) Conflict management is however an uphill task because of ten conditions which are required by the stakeholders of conflicts:

1. Political will and determination.
2. Patience.
3. Perseverance and prudence.
4. Tolerant and moderate approach.
5. Time line.
6. Purposeful dialogue.
7. Flexibility.
8. Cessation of hostile propaganda against each other.
9. Striving for a win-win situation.
10. Positive role of media.

The list of conditions mentioned above cannot be undermined because a single missing item can fail the process of conflict management. Mark R. Amstutz a noted expert of International Relations is of the opinion that,

Conflict Management assures that conflict is in part constructive and beneficial. It seeks to manage social and political conflict, rather than to eliminate it altogether or to disregard its consequences. This approach seeks to resolve disputes without destroying the fabric of a free society based on the political independence of actors. Conflict Management thus seeks to maintain human communities based on the free and responsible action of members, while establishing procedures and institutions that resolve conflicts and settle disputes effectively and efficiently. (Amstutz, 1999)

Peter Wallensteen further elaborates his assessment of conflict management by stating that "Conflict management typically focuses on the armed aspect of the conflict: bringing the fighting to an end, limiting the spread of conflict and thus containing it. Such actions may even be regarded as successes. The interest in a particular conflict many disappear." (Amstutz, 1999) Four conclusions could be drawn from the definitional part of conflict management. First, conflict is constructive and beneficial

as a lot of energy is released from a particular conflict yet it possesses the risk of escalation. The mismanagement of conflict takes place when the energy released from a conflict is not used in a constructive manner. Second, the challenge of governance and human development in case of Pakistan can be addressed if conflicts which are at the intra-state level like water, resources, ethnic and sectarian are properly managed so that the threat of violence is mitigated. The role of state and society is imperative as far as conflict management is concerned because state has a dual role: it can trigger a conflict and can also play a role for its management and resolution.

Good governance is a concept which focuses on four things. First, the rule of law as an ordinary citizen must feel secure of his/her life, property and freedom of movement. Second, affordable and efficient justice system so that people can file their cases in courts and can get justice without further delay and paying any bribe. Third, efficient and effective bureaucracy which can run the pillars of state and providing access to people to the basic necessities of life like clean and safe drinking water, affordable public transport and housing, quality and free education till high school, smooth functioning in government offices and expression of proper sense of responsibility. Fourth, eradication of corruption, nepotism and the upholding of merit. Pakistan's predicament in the realm of governance is deep rooted culture of corruption, nepotism and compromise of merit which tends to promote inefficiency, incompetence and irresponsibility.

Managing natural, mineral, financial and human resources is essential in order to ensure good governance and the rule of law. According to a study in a book, *Governance, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peace building*: "because problems such as corruption, inequity, and lack of accountability often occur in contexts related to natural resources, efforts to address such issues require improvement in natural resource governance. In addition to helping fight corruption, improve equity and accountability, and promote participatory governance, improving natural resource governance can increase governance capacity more generally for example, in financial, infrastructure, and other sectors." (Bruch, Muffett, & Nicholes, 2016)

The link between conflict management and good governance is obvious but one can figure out two major connections between the two importance concepts relevant in case of Pakistan and other post-colonial states. First, most of the conflicts in a developing country like Pakistan emanate because of bad governance and the failure of state to provide basic necessities of life to the majority of people. When 25 million children in Pakistan are out of school; educational system is of low quality; clean and safe drinking water is not available to the majority of people; reasonable and respectable public transport is not available; affordable, efficient and quality medical treatment is not accessible and unemployment is on rise, the outcome is the surge of frustration, anger and antagonism leading to the surge of conflicts in society. Such conflicts cannot be managed unless governance, justice system and the rule of law are

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ensured. Second, bad governance can also cause the outbreak of intra-state conflicts particularly those related to resources like water, energy and finance. The water conflict in Pakistan between provinces is primarily the outcome of failure of government to address issues which result into conflict between the upper and lower riparian provinces. If there is conflict management mechanism in Pakistan, it can certainly help the country in mitigating issues which may emerge because of conflict over resources. In the same way better governance can ensure political and economic stability thus managing conflicts which can destabilize state and societal structures.

Learning Lessons from Germany?

Germany is called as Europe's power house and is world's fourth largest economy. A country which had lost the Second World War and was divided re-emerged on the world scene as an economic giant and technologically advanced country. How the miracle of Germany took place and how a country of 82 million gained enormous clout and weightage in Europe and at the international level? How good governance in Germany is termed as a fundamental reason for its success and strength?

While no country is perfect in terms of governance or good governance, there are models which one can study and learn from such cases. Germany is one of the models of good governance and certainly a country like Pakistan which is facing serious crisis in governance can certainly make use of the German experience.

There are four areas where Germany has made strides following the end of the Second World War and in the post-reunification period. First, proper work ethics which include sense of responsibility, efficiency and time management. Second a work oriented environment which negates non-serious behavior in a work place and discourages wastage of time. Third, financial and administrative discipline through a mechanism of tax collection and monitoring public utilities like water, gas, electricity and public transport. Fourth, the justice system and the German basic law which ensures fundamental rights of people. While passing through the trauma of defeat at the hands of allies powers in the Second World War, the government of Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) which was established in 1949 made it a legal compulsion in the constitution of the country not to tolerate racism and anti-Semitism. After the Marshall plan was launched under the patronage of the United States in late 1940s to help war devastated countries of Europe to rebuild and reconstruct their economies, FRG made full use of the money which was made available to rebuild the country. Within a span of four decades after the end of the Second World War, FRG emerged as a major economic power of Europe and the world.

No country is perfect in providing good governance to its citizens. Yet, what is possible keeping in mind constraints and impediments to ensure relative good governance. And, Germany through its sheer hard work, brilliance, honesty, commitment and dedication managed to turn around things and overcome the

devastation caused during the Second World War and by attempting to provide good quality of life to its people.

In order to share the experience of its governance experience, programs on good governance under the domain of public policy are offered in various German universities like the University of Erfurt, University of Leuphna, Leunburg, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, University of Passau. In such programs, courses on good governance are offered. Students admitted particularly from developing countries are given an opportunity to learn from the German experience in the field of good governance. A decade ago, with the financial support from German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) a program at the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy, University of Erfurt was launched on Good Governance In Afghanistan (GGA). The program which lasted for six years had the enrollment of students from Afghanistan under the Master of Public Policy (MPP). The idea to launch GGA program was to train Afghanistan students in the arts of governance and to implement the knowledge and skills obtained under the program in their own country.

Like other post-colonial states located in global south, Pakistan can certainly learn lessons from the success story of Germany in the arena good governance. Yet there are obvious and strong variations in the societal and state structures of Pakistan and Germany, The two cases are different in terms of work ethics, development, education, rule of law and justice system but Pakistan can learn two major lessons from the German experience in governance and good governance. First, ownership, commitment and dedication of the people of Germany for the proper and best utilization of resources. It was because of such a spirit that the process of reconstruction and rebuilding of post-Second World War Germany reached a logical conclusion. Pakistan also faced enormous hardships and challenges when it emerged as a new state on world map on August 14, 1947. The economy and governance in Pakistan till early 1970s were better but things began to deteriorate from mid-1970s when the erosion of merit and work ethics unleashed the process of degeneration in the country. Whereas, in case of Germany, the graph of development, work ethics and good governance remained high. The reason for German success in rebuilding and reconstruction was the higher level of education, focus on research, sound work ethics and excellence in science and technology. Although, Germany was defeated and destroyed during the Second World War, but since the German nation was educated it was able to turn around in just quarter of a century.

Second the political system of Germany, despite its fault lines has remained democratic amidst Communist rule in the Soviet run East Germany from 1945 till 1990. Whereas, in case of Pakistan, military has directly ruled the country for 35 years. The political culture of Pakistan is still tribal and feudal which is not the case with Germany. Since, political tolerance, sanity, integrity and professional approach to deal with challenges is imperative in good governance, Germany has been able to its political system in which interference from undemocratic forces is not to be seen.

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German political parties, despite their cleavages have made sure not to destabilize the system but to strengthen the country's economy. Pakistan must learn lessons from political wisdom, prudence and maturity inherent in the German political system and the political parties regardless of their differences do not play politics at the expense of governance and economy.

In its essence, much can be learned from Germany as far as the phenomenon of good governance is concerned. But, as pointed out earlier, unless there is political will, determination, commitment and dedication, there is no possibility of creating a culture of responsibility and proper work ethics. It is yet to be seen to what extent the government of Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf (PTI) which came into power on August 18 after winning general elections of July 25, 2018 is able to implement party's manifesto in which good governance will be a major challenge in the days to come.

Conclusion

With only five months in power, the PTI government needs more time to show performance in good governance, rule of rule and justice system. Certainly, the PTI regime wants to learn from the successful model of good governance particularly from Germany. **As rightly stated by** Walter Lindner, State Secretary Federal Foreign Officer, Berlin during his visit to Pakistan last year that,

We are working closely and successfully with Pakistan in the fields of good governance, sustainable economic development and energy. I would like to name three examples here: we are helping Pakistan to develop vocational training in order to give young Pakistanis better employment prospects. In the export-oriented textile industry, so vital to the country, we are working with Pakistan to improve working and social conditions – and to increase productivity. So far, more than 13,000 employees have benefited from our efforts. Pakistan and Germany are also cooperating in the field of renewable energies.

Ten major steps which the PTI government needs to take so as to expedite the process of good government in the country are as follows:

1. Strict adherence to the policy of merit.
2. Adopting a professional approach.
3. No compromise on establishing the rule of law.
4. Across the board accountability.
5. Zero tolerance for corruption.
6. Zero tolerance for nepotism.
7. Enforcing time management.
8. Enforcing zero tolerance for tax evasion and money laundering.

9. Training the youths.

10. Promoting political maturity, prudence and tolerance.

The above mentioned steps cannot be enforced without the support of people and the civil society including print and electronic media. Unlike Germany, where the culture of strong work ethics, rule of law and justice system ensured good governance, in case of Pakistan it will take a long time to induct a sense of responsibility and time management as far as people and state owned institutions are concerned. Pakistan is already reeling from corruption and nepotism and the four priorities for 2019 identified by the Prime Minister Imran namely, poverty alleviation, eradication of corruption, injustices and nepotism, if taken seriously will go a long way in ensuring good governance in the country. What is required is political will, determination, clarity, consistency and coherence on the part of those who matter and without such requirements the whole notion of good governance in Pakistan would remain a myth.

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