



## Application of consociational theory in the political system of Pakistan from 2008-2012

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### Abstract:

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This study aims to investigate the application of consociational political strategies during the tenure of the Pakistan People's Party's Regime from 2008 to 2013. We question the conventional wisdom claimed by different political analysts that, being a heterogeneous society divided into different social segments, consociational theory cannot solve segmental issues in Pakistan. We argue consociational strategy is not irrelevant to Pakistan. The political system of Pakistan experienced a drastic transformation in attitude, style of politics, and even preferences of political elites in the post-Charter of Democracy's political environment. The leadership of the PPP successfully materialised different aspects of consensual democracy, such as the grand coalition, the supremacy of parliament, segmental autonomy, and proportionality, during its five-year tenure. We also argue that the regime strengthens the parliament and political parties, which are the fundamentals of consociational strategy. The research is qualitative by nature, and a descriptive approach and interpretive methods have been adopted to answer the research puzzles.

**Keywords:** Political system, Democracy, Federalism, Ethnic conflicts, Consociational politics, Pakistan Peoples Party, Heterogeneous society, Political strategies, Social segments.

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## 1. Introduction

The political system practiced by the British government in India was colonial in nature and authoritarian in manifestation. In this political system, state intervention and hegemony were always inculcated and supported by the powerful civil-military institutions (Akhtar, 2018). The political system revolved around the personality of an unelected official in the form of a Viceroy who was not responsible to the Indians for his policies and actions. The system stood upon the principles of vice-regalism and authoritarianism with very limited fundamental democratic principles (Qasim, 2013). At the time of independence, Pakistan inherited and adopted the same political system of colonialism which had been under the influence and direction of non-elected civil and military institutions. In Pakistan after independence, the non-elected institutions developed a troika composed of civil and military bureaucracy and judiciary. These institutions continued maintaining their dominancy in the political system either through direct interference in the shape of imposing martial laws and removing chief executives (Prime Ministers) or through indirect interference in the shape of political engineering and political victimization in Pakistan. On the other hand, the political history of Pakistan shows that political elites not only failed in taking defensive steps to counter interference of anti-democratic forces and institutions, but they also failed in building the principles of compromise, adjustment, and accommodation amongst themselves which are the core principles of the consociational theory of Lijphart (2002).

The traditionally set political patterns experienced a transformation at the level of political elites after two major political parties i.e. Pakistan Peoples' Party and Pakistan Muslim League (N) signed the Charter of Democracy (CoD) in London on May 15, 2006. The charter paved the way for the practical implementation of different consensual political strategies in the political system of Pakistan from 2008-2013. Under CoD, the two dominant political parties, PPP and PML (N), agreed to bury their mutual differences and politics of hate and confrontation in the future. As democracy had always been under threats from non-elected institutions, they also agreed that they shall safeguard democracy from the interference of anti-democratic forces (Rabbani, 2011). To forward the cause of consensual political strategies, Nawaz Sharif remarked that we would not be a part of any puppet show as we have buried the dirty politics forever. (Rabbani, 2011; Marwat & Samina, 2022). Political forces agreed upon making institutions, such as political parties, parliament, Elections Commission, and judiciary more supreme, independent, and stronger. They agreed that they shall take steps and develop a consensus to make the military subordinate to civilian governments and to ensure principles of segmental autonomy for the successful functioning of democratic governance in Pakistan.

In their leading work, Mushtaq and Muhammad (2011) Contended that consociational arrangements seem irrelevant to Pakistan. Thus, instead of non-consociation, they claimed that centralization of power at the hands of federal governments has always been a source of segmental and ethnic conflicts in Pakistan. However, Marwat and Samina (2022) considered that consociational theory is not irrelevant to Pakistan, because of the centralization of power, as the consociational theory itself is against the concentration of powers. Similarly, if devolution of powers and provision of segmental autonomy are the basic features of federalism, they are also the essential components of consociational politics. This research attempts to end the debate on the relevance and irrelevance of the application of consociational political strategy in the context of Pakistan. The main objective of this study is to examine the application of consociational political strategy during the tenure of the Pakistan People's Party's Regime from 2008 to 2013.

This paper is divided into five major sections. The first section deals with the literature review. The second part deals with the methods and materials, while the third one concerns the theoretical framework. The fourth section concerns the application of this theory in the context of Pakistan. The last unit is a conclusion that offers this study's reflection, findings, and limitations.

## 2. Literature review

To analyze and evolve the theoretic approaches and empirical studies to review the power-sharing models in the hastily evolving world, different scholars have produced a vast body of literature about the governability of multi-ethnic and plural states (Kuszevska-Bohnert, 2023). Lijphart (1977) suggested a consociational model of democracy and government to manage segmental differences in plural societies better. This theory indicates that the issues in multi-ethnic and plural states can be addressed and resolved in a better way through a consensual approach that involves the formation of a “grand coalition government” having representation of all social segments (Lijphart, 1977, 1996, 2002, 2012). The other features are segmental autonomy, minority veto, and representation of different social segments in state services according to their population (Lijphart, 1977, 1996, 2002, 2012). The consensual model of Lijphart was recognized later. Many scholars, such as Peleg (2007), Wolff (2017), Doorenspleet (2013), and Somer and Mccoy (2019), produced new aspects, models, and strategies of consociational theory. The current research also explored that lack of consociation among the political elites can exacerbate not only ethnic tension but also generate pernicious polarization, where ruling elites consider opposition political forces as a threat to national integrity (Somer & Mccoy, 2019).

Pakistan is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious state. It has always faced the problem of ethnic and centre-provinces tussles (Adeney, 2006; Mushtaq & Muhammad, 2011; Ejaz & Khan, 2021). Scholars have shed light on the reasons and solutions of ethnic and segmental tussles through different perspectives (Akhtar, 2018; Ejaz & Rehman, 2022; Kuszevska-Bohnert, 2023). Kukreja (2020) believes that centralization of power and authority by the central government is one of the dominant factors responsible for ethnic tussle and political polarization. She argued that central governments have eroded the principles of power-sharing in Pakistan. The central government has never allowed various ethnic and segmental groups to have a share in the power structure, which has generated a sense of deprivation and aloofness in the minds and attitudes of smaller ethnic groups. Adeney (2012) argued that the central governments in Pakistan have considered any wish and demand for segmental or ethnic autonomy as a threat to national integrity. There is a long list of scholars who also support the above narrative and contend that the lack of devolution of powers and lack of adjustment and accommodation of different segments in the power structure are the reasons for polarization and ethnic mobilization in Pakistan (Bukhari, 2020; Mushtaq & Muhammad, 2011; Bukhari, 2020).

Some scholars have related the role of Pakistan's military to the rising ethnic clashes and politics of polarization. These scholars described that Pakistan's army has become a state within the state. It has ruled for many years directly and indirectly. Throughout its rule, the military has denied devolution of powers and has mostly ignited ethnic clashes (Mariam et al., 2020). While highlighting the cause of ethnic movements in Baluchistan, Ejaz et al. (2023) contend that the ruling elites have always denied accepting the plural composition of the Pakistani state. Thus, instead of adjusting ethnic groups in the process of making and

implementing policies, they have considered ethnic diversity as a threat to national integrity. On the other hand, Arif (2001) and Shah and Sareen (2019) mentioned that the political leadership of Pakistan is inefficient and non-consensual in its approach. As they do not believe in consociation, they oppress and marginalise them instead of pacifying the demands of smaller segments. Some scholars suspected the application of this approach to the ethnolinguistic groups in Pakistan (Mushtaq, 2022). However, as indicated by many scholars, instead of different challenges from the military and judiciary, the political leadership of Pakistan managed ethnic movements and adjusted the long-awaited demands of various segments through the politics of consensus after the 2008 general elections. Many other scholars supported this stance (Adeney, 2012; Mahar, 2021; Ejaz et al., 2024; Kuszewska-Bohnert, 2023).

Considering the worth of the above-produced literature, this paper aims to evaluate the issue of segmental cleavages and political polarization through the lens of Lijphart's consociational model, which has not been properly applied in the Pakistani context.

### **3. Theoretical framework**

The pluralism and ethnic tensions have prompted many theories and approaches to settle standard issues among the groups. Famous theorist Horowitz (1985, 2000) presented the theory of compromise and concessions for ethnic settlement. McGarry and O'Leary (1993) and McGarry (2024) offered the integration or ethnic equality as a model. The alternative approach that got currency is the consociational theory. It is an elite compromise theory that seeks to ensure democratic stability through restoring relationships of accommodation, respect, and compromise among political elites. Lijphart (1977) also termed it "negotiation democracy," because this strategy prioritises negotiation among the ruling elites in plural and heterogeneous societies, such as Pakistan. In his early works, Lijphart presented four essential characteristics of consociational theory: formation of the grand coalition government, ensuring autonomy of various social segments, minority veto, and proportionality in public sector employment (Lijphart, 1977). In his later works, he further limited consociational theory to two fundamental characteristics, "grand coalition government" and "segmental autonomy" (Wolff, 2017). Implementation of these features can ensure the dignity of democratic institutions and result in solutions to various segmental issues that ultimately lead to flourishing democracy in a country (Williams, 2010). It prioritises consensus, adjustment, compromise, and respect between the parliament's ruling and opposition political forces. The consociational theory does not believe in the concentration of powers. Rather, it supports the principles of power sharing among the political elites sitting in the parliament as a grand coalition. Further, the nature of negotiations and power sharing in grand coalition in the parliament among the political elites has always had positive and gentler impacts on different state institutions and their performance (Lijphart, 1977). This study is interested in the application of consociational theory in the context of Pakistan because it, without a glitch, suits the range and historical epoch that the researchers have selected.

### **4. Research methodology**

This research aims to develop the theory of the applicability of the consensual theory in the political system of Pakistan; therefore, a qualitative research methodology has been adopted. The basic research queries are related to "What" and "Why," thus descriptive and interpretive methods have been employed. Data has been collected from both primary and secondary

sources. Primary sources were collected from electronic interviews of the signatories of the Charter of Democracy, the original text of CoD, Lijphart's theory, parliamentary debates, and the Constitution of 1973 of Pakistan. Secondary sources, such as books, journal articles, and newspapers, were consulted. However, a significant part of the data relies upon a literature review. The collected data was used after checking its internal and external validity. For the analysis of data, the "Six Stages Thematic Analysis Method" of Braun and Clarke (2006) has been utilized.

## **5. Application of consociational theory in Pakistan from 2008-2013**

The politics of hate and confrontation followed by political forces during the 1990s, as said by Qasim (2013), taught a bitter lesson to political forces, particularly to PPP and PML (N). As the political forces did not adhere to the principles of consociation, mutual respect, and accommodation, the political system and democratisation process remained dominated by frequent military interference. Resultantly, not only was democracy derailed, but even democratic institutions like parliament, political parties, and even the position of Prime Minister, the chief executive, remained weak and subservient to non-elected institutions and personalities. Therefore, to strengthen the federation of Pakistan and to ensure the smooth functioning of democratic governments, PPP and PML (N) decided to follow and work under the policy of reconciliation, adjustment, and accommodation which are, in fact, the core principles of consociational theory of Arend Lijphart (Naeem, 2012). We argue that even despite different institutional and structural challenges, the CoD political forces successfully implemented the following aspects of consociational theory between 2008 and 2013.

### **5.1. Power sharing under grand coalition government**

Consociational theory believes in a power-sharing mechanism among the political elites. It is one of the core principles of Consociational theory. Contrary to the principles of exclusion and competition in majoritarian democracies, the consociational theory argues that the political elites shall act upon the principles of inclusion, accommodation, consensus, and power sharing. Therefore, it stresses maximizing the size of ruling elites and, for that purpose, suggests the formation of a broad or grand coalition government (Lijphart, 1977, p. 32). PPP followed the same principles after the 2008 general elections. After securing a majority of seats in the 2008 general elections, Asif Ali Zardari visited the leadership of major political parties like PML (N) and MQM. In these meetings, the PPP supported and invited political leadership to form a grand coalition government with major stakeholders. After winning a majority of seats, the Pakistan People's Party did not prefer the formation of a minority cabinet. Rather, it opted for making a grand coalition government and, for that purpose, formed a government with PML (N), MMA (JUI-F), ANP, and MQM that indicates the policy, priorities, and tilt of PPP towards politics of consensus, adjustment, and mutual respect.

Before the formation of the grand coalitional government, Nawaz Sharif and Asif Ali Zardari met in Islamabad and held a press conference. In this conference, Zardari said, "I requested Nawaz Sharif to form a coalition government with PPP for the broader benefits of Pakistan and national democracy. Our purpose behind negotiation is to have a government with a broader consensus" (Mukhtar, 2008). Similarly, Asif Ali Zardari held separate talks with Asfandyar Wali, President of Awami National Party, and invited him to join the "government of national consensus" (Zardari, Nawaz agree to form a coalition, Dawn, February 22, 2008). Likewise, Asif Ali Zardari met with the leadership of MQM and requested them to join the coalition

government. As a gesture of cooperation, PPP agreed to retain Ishratul Ebad, nominee of MQM, as governor of Sind and gave it various portfolios according to its demand (Azfar-ul-Ashfaque, 2018).

## 5.2. Supremacy of parliament

In consociational theory, parliament remains supreme and vibrant. There is an environment of trust, bargaining, and compromise among the political elites sitting in the parliament. It is this culture of consensus among elected elites in the parliament that results in gentler and kinder policy outcomes (Lijphart, 1977). PPP and PML (N) had already agreed in the Charter of Democracy (CoD) that practical steps should be taken to strengthen parliament after coming into power. Therefore, after forming a coalition government, the PPP soon focused on strengthening the institution of parliament which was under the despotic shadow of the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Under Article 58 (2) (b), the president had been given the power to dissolve elected institutions, i.e. the parliament. This was contrary to the spirit of parliamentary democracy. In the parliamentary system, the power of dissolution of the National Assembly rests with elected representatives and is exercised by the Prime Minister (Adeney K. , 2012). Looking at the necessity of repealing the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment and restoring parliamentary supremacy, the government formed a Parliamentary Committee for Constitutional Reforms (PCCR). In the committee, the government gave representation to leaders belonging to all political parties in the parliament (Rizwan et al., 2014). According to Adeney (2012), a political expert, members from different political parties worked under the sense not to return to 1990s politics of confrontation and on April 8, 2010, passed the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment which contributed to the restoration of parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. To many academicians, the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment became possible because of the consensus among the elected representatives in the parliament. It proved to be a considerable development toward restoring the principles of a true federation in a country with having long history of political polarization and confrontation (Shah, 2012). According to Muhammad Zubair, former Governor of Sind and a PML (N) member, “during the PPP regime from 2008 to 2013, we did follow principles of friendly opposition. As an opposition political party, PML (N) criticized various policies of PPP but we set the principle and decided that we should not compromise on parliamentary supremacy and its dignity. Resultantly, parliament remained one of the most viable institutions where political elites remained engaged in positive debate from 2008 to 2013 (Umar, 2021).

## 5.3. Segmental autonomy

Segmental autonomy is one of the core principles of the consociational theory of Arend Lijphart. Although, to Lijphart, segmental autonomy is the group autonomy in the cultural sector (Lijphart, 2002), this feature of consociational theory has been widely studied and empirically tested by different subsequent researchers. A vast body of literature and experts on consociationalism agree that inherently segmental autonomy refers to sub-national autonomy, group autonomy, sub-state autonomy, or regional autonomy (Brailey, 2020). Following a similar proposition, scholars such as Wolff (2017) and Adeney (2012) argued that the wish to have maximum sub-national or provincial autonomy and to have a federal form of government in different countries across the world further necessitates the need and application of consociational political strategies.

Considering this nature of segmental autonomy, we have co-related segmental autonomy with the case of provincial autonomy and decentralization in Pakistan during the PPP regime. The

demand for provincial autonomy has been one of the major sources of contention between central and provincial governments in Pakistan. A vast body of literature has been produced that considers the centralization of powers in the hands of central governments and the authoritative interference of central governments in the domain of provincial matters responsible for the centre-provinces tussle in Pakistan. PPP government addressed this issue for the first time and solved it through the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan. According to the essence of federalism, the amendment increased the powers and resources of provincial governments (Shah, 2012). Before this amendment and apart from having command over the Central Legislative List, the central government was exercising a monopoly over the Concurrent List in case of controversy with provincial governments. Under the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the government abolished the Concurrent List and took practical steps towards devolution of seventeen ministries to provinces (Anjum, 2021). The government confirmed that the process of devolution has been focused on devolving all subjects to provinces except five subjects i.e. finance, defence, foreign affairs, communications, and revenue (Khan, 2011). Responding to concerns regarding the lack of human and financial capital of provinces to cope with decentralization in the form of devolution, Senator Raza Rabbani, leader of the Constitution Reform Committee, said that ‘provincial autonomy ensured under the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment should not be taken up as an ideal situation. No doubt, it is a just step taken towards provincial autonomy in Pakistan but provinces would face difficulties in the early phase of implementation. We, however, recommend that issues related to devolution be taken up and resolved on the forum of the Council of Common Interest (Khan, 2011). Considering the heterogeneous structure of Pakistani society, we argue that the PPP took a required decision in the form of decentralization towards the right direction. A major part of current literature has extensively documented the philosophy behind the decentralization of powers. It has been testified that decentralization of powers is necessary in heterogeneous societies like Pakistan (Doorenspleet, 2013).

#### **5.4. Proportionality**

Proportionality is another principle of the consociational theory of Lijphart required for the establishment and preservation of consociational democracy (Lijphart, 1996). By proportionality, apart from the voting system, Lijphart also means that all social segments must be proportionally represented in public sector employment as the under-representation of certain groups in state institutions may generate the sense of exploitation which can ultimately create problems in the smooth functioning of democracy (Lijphart, 1977). So far as the case of Pakistan is concerned, the under-representation of certain groups, particularly of Baluchistan, in civil and military institutions has generated ethnic tension many times. A vast body of literature has been produced considering the lack of services and employment in state institutions in Baluchistan as one of the major causes of the Centre-Baluchistan conflict (Ejaz & Rehman, 2022; Ejaz et al., 2023; Ejaz et al., 2024 ). The political forces had realized the sensitivity of this marginalization of Baluchistan at the time of signing the CoD and they had agreed that steps shall be taken to ameliorate the people of Baluchistan in this regard. According to Adeney (2012), the PPP government for the first time practically addressed the issue of under-representation in key state institutions. Moving towards guaranteeing proportional representation, the PPP government reviewed Article 27 making it obligatory for parliament to determine and address the under-representation of any social segment (Constitution of Pakistan 1973, Article 27). Practically, to address the issue of under-representation of Baluchistan, the government introduced the Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Baluchistan Package. The package, according to many analysts, was a political, administrative, and

economic initiative taken by the Pakistan Peoples' Party government which was focused on ameliorating under-represented segments in Pakistan. It was predominantly focused on making Baluchistan an equal partner in the Federation of Pakistan (Moin, 2009). Under the package and in the initial stage, four thousand people from Baluchistan were inducted into the military as soldiers. Military officers openly came in support of Baluchistan and confirmed that 10,000 soldiers having domicile in Baluchistan shall be inducted into the army to meet the criteria of 'share in the military per population' (Malik, 2010).

To make the people of Baluchistan economically equal and well-off, the government gave special attention to uplift the people of the province through education. Having this purpose in mind, the 'Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Baluchistan Project', a special scholarship package for youth and students of Baluchistan, was initiated by the political forces through the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. Under the project, hundreds of students from Baluchistan obtained overseas and local scholarships for higher education (HEC, 2019) In fact, this policy of inclusiveness and proportionality in state services by PPP invited appreciation of different nationalist leaders of Baluchistan like Hasil Bizenjo (Zia, 2011).

### **5.5. Safeguarding provincial economic resources**

Under the 7<sup>th</sup> National Finance Commission (NFC) in December 2009, the government took steps towards increasing the share of provinces in available resources. The share of provinces from the divisible pool increased from 45 per cent to 57.5 per cent (Ahmad et al., 2007). Before the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the central government of Pakistan exercised control over mineral resources and land of provinces. PPP government revised this mechanism under Article 161 which maintains that a province where a well-head of oil and natural gas is located shall exercise right over its usage and economic gains (Constitution of Pakistan 1973, Article 161).

The government put in concerted efforts and revised the formula of resource distribution between central and provincial governments. Since the implementation of the 1973 Constitution, the ratio of population has been the deciding criteria for resource distribution which in principle benefited Punjab due to its larger population ratio (Jalal, 1999). Instead of population as criteria for resource distribution, KP and Baluchistan had always demanded backwardness while Sind stood for 'contribution of a province to national revenue' as standards for resource distribution. In the past, not only NFC had resisted such types of demands by provincial governments but in fact, population as a standard for resource distribution had always been a source of dissension between the central and provincial governments in Pakistan (Ahmad, 2010). PPP brought changes in conventional methods and devised a new formula that was based on multiple factors. According to the revised formula, it was decided that 82 percent of resources should be allocated based on population, 10.3 percent based on backwardness, 5 percent based on revenue generation, and 2.7 percent based on inverse population density (Zahid, 2018).

### **5.6. Institutional reforms**

Lijphart (1977) argued that in a consociational democratic setup, political elites who represent a grand coalition government make legislation in such a way that has positive impacts on the institutions of the state. He argued that steps are taken to make institutions inclusive and responsive to the demands of different social segments (Lijphart, 2012). Similarly, the government of PPP has taken different constitutional steps towards making various institutions

responsive to the demands of social segments. In this regard and having the intention of resolving disputes between central and provincial governments, PPP amended Article 153 of the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan under which the Council of Common Interests (CCI) was made more inclusive and powerful (Constitution of Pakistan, Article 153). Headed by the Prime Minister as Chairman, representation was given to provincial governments in the form of giving membership to provincial Chief Ministers. Moreover, the council was given the task of resolving disputes between central and provincial governments. It was provided that the Council shall submit an annual report to Parliament and shall be answerable to Parliament in exercising its powers and functions (Ahmad, 2013).

The political and judicial history of Pakistan is full of examples where the appointment of judges to superior courts can be seen as a source of conflict either between executive and judiciary or between prime minister and president. PPP government resolved this conflict under the 19<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment. While introducing changes in Article (175 A) of the 1973 Constitution, the procedure of appointment of judges to the superior judiciary was framed by the Parliamentary Committee for Constitutional Reforms (PCCR) (Ahmad, 2010) Apart from creating the Judicial Commission under the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, a Parliamentary Committee of eight members having equal strength from government and opposition and both houses of parliament was constituted. To make the appointment of judges less controversial and to ensure the supremacy of parliament, it was provided that the judicial commission shall forward nominations to the Parliamentary Committee to get approval. The committee has been given the power to approve or reject the nomination of the Judicial Commission. However, in case of rejection, the Committee has to provide solid reasons for rejection (Ijaz, 2014). Thus, according to many experts, by involving the judiciary and Parliamentary Committee in the process of appointment of judges to the superior judiciary, the PPP government reformed the traditional method of appointment of judges that lacked impartiality due to the dominant role of judiciary and president. More importantly, involving parliament in the process of appointment of judges strengthened the base of parliamentary supremacy (Ijaz, 2014).

## 6. Conclusion

The political system of Pakistan has a long history of detestation and confrontation. Political parties failed to practice principles of consociation, such as accommodation, trust, and adjustment. This practice has always had negative effects on the flourishing democracy and working of democratic institutions, such as parliament and political parties. The practice has been proved precarious for building working relationships between central and provincial governments. The polarized politics and confrontation at the level of politics elites have always been exploited by non-representative institutions, such as military and the apex judiciary. Political and democratic institutions remained fragile during direct military rule, whereas, during the democratic intervals, the institution of judiciary has performed the anti-democratic role and interfere in the domain of legislature and executive. The tenure of PPP from 2008-2013 can rightly be called the tenure of the judiciary because of the frequent interference of the apex judiciary into the domain of the executive and parliament.

The research found that consociational theory is relevant to the Pakistani context and, after the signing of CoD, changed the political landscape of Pakistan for the first time. In the post-CoD era and particularly during the PPP regime from 2008 to 2013, the political leadership of Pakistan demonstrated a certain level of maturity. They decided to discard their traditional style of politics and agreed to work according to the spirit of consociation, respect and adjustment

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that ensured the supremacy and dignity of different democratic institutions such as, parliament, constitution and political parties. Looking at the long and severe rivalry of political forces in the past, the transformation towards consensual politics was a drastic change indeed.

It is revealed that the political leadership during the PPP regime also worked under the spirit of accommodation, adjustment, and compromise that paved the way for the implementation of various features of consociational theory. Supremacy of parliament, provincial autonomy, and revising the formula of resource distribution between central and provincial governments ensured the parliamentary system in Pakistan. These strategies helped in resolving long-standing confrontations between the centre and provinces.

The current work is a small drop in a big ocean, as it deals with the context of Pakistan and a small epoch of history. Investigating the nature and direction of Pakistan's politics after 2013 through the perspectives of consociational theory would be a fascinating study. .

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