

Good Governance, Institutional Capacity and Challenges: Case Study of Floods in Pakistan

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Abstract

Good Governance includes the preparedness on the behalf of institutions of state in order to face and manage crises among other factors. States are ranked on the index of good governance on the basis of measured characteristics like institutional strength and development of tangible and intangible resources to deal with large scale crises despite having vulnerabilities. Pakistan faced a large scale crisis in the form of monsoon floods in 2022 that affected 116 districts of Punjab, Sindh and KPK altogether and caused massive destruction of houses, crops and livestock. The federal and provincial governments had to take help of non-representative institutions to evacuate people from inundated area. This study endeavors to analyze the institutional strength of representative and non-representative institutions to deal with large scale crisis in Pakistan and the trust of citizens in these institutions as per their policy response and performance in the context of good governance.

Key Words: Crisis, Floods, Good Governance, Institutional Strength, Responsiveness Trust

Introduction

The concept of "governance" is not new. It predates human civilization. In colloquial terms, "governance" refers to the process of decision-making and decision-implementation. The exercise of authority related to governance consists of the mechanisms, processes, and institutions that are used to express the interests, exercise of legal rights, fulfillment of obligations, and mediation of disagreements. The application of adjectives of 'good' or 'bad' decides upon the quality of governance related policies by concerned institutions. Good governance describes the procedures and frameworks that direct political and socioeconomic interactions and lead to development of trust of citizens in institutions. The ability to manage and policy response to crises develop the trust of citizens in institutions. Governance is an art to manage the affairs of state in an organized way and good governance is functional aspect of state institution in the best interest of citizens of state. Governance is the decision making process and its implementation while good governance is an art to manage public affairs. This is an old concept but has become significantly popular with the disintegration process of USSR. The concept of good governance includes transparency process of political and economic decision making. It asks for liberal economic policies and political restructuring. It is considered most important responsibility of government to ensure rule of law and initiate measures for elimination of corruption.

Government makes efforts for the promotion of civil society and fundamental human rights, particularly with respect to political rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and etc. Government makes efforts to formulate those policies which would be able to protect global interests like health, education and environment. Good governance is considered as the only viable approach to sustainable long term development and prosperity. Good governance is more pertinent for countries where political systems are encountering shocks and breakdowns. Pakistan is no exception in this regard where there is hard need to put her economy on the right track which can lead to sustainable economy and political development. There are various reasons of failure of governance in the country such as: transitional society and concomitant effects, mushroom growth of political parties, military-bureaucratic oligarchy, and absence of planning, ethnic diversity and illiteracy. There is dire need to take various initiatives to resolve obstacles in the way of good governance.

However, the citizens do not trust the incompetent institutions that fail to operate as per values of integrity and fairness specifically in times of crises and ultimate result of this distrust between citizens and various state institution become a major source to escalate tension into crisis. Moreover, the power-sharing mechanism of state and its regime have the highest impact on governance. It is possible to create trust in the government by relying on the model of democratic government and its operational strategies. A 'crises test' scrutinizes the normative and actual functioning of institutions of good governance in different political contexts. Institutional trust refers to confidence in all types of institutions. However, the trust in non-governmental institutions is often used to refer to a more specific idea. Understanding institutional trust is crucial to comprehend the success of democratic governance as well as the operation of governments in general. Goal 16 of the SDGs, (Sustainable Development Goals) "promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, guarantee access to justice for all, and construct effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels", places a clear emphasis on governance, institutional quality, and political engagement <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace> .

The distinction between trust in competence whether the functioning of institutions meets expectations of people about the competencies of those guiding them and confidence in intentions adheres to notion which elucidates whether institutions act in a way that is perceived by people as ethical and fair. Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries of the world that has been worst hit by torrential rains and floods due to climate change in recent years. The analysis of existing data hypothesizes that non-representative institutions including military, NGOs and religious organizations acted promptly to respond to crises hit areas in comparison with civilian governments and earned the trust of people. This research aims to investigate this hypothesis with detailed analysis of performance of representative and non-representative institutions in floods in Pakistan with focus on floods of 2022.

Research Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature and expounds through case study design. The case study of monsoon floods in Pakistan in recent years with reference to policy response of civilian governments at federal and provincial level and response of military, NGOs and religious organizations primarily discussing the abilities to manage floods related destruction as indicator of good governance under the stress test of crisis develops foreseeable relation between performance and response of institutions and trust of citizens in their governance based on their integrity. This research comprises secondary sources that are chiefly used to gather pragmatic and rational evidences to support data related to research questions. The existing literature largely deals with policy responses of civilian governments and other institutions in terms of quantitative data only related to evacuation of people from flood hit areas, provision of food, medicines and shelter. This research aims to fill the gap based on output of policy responses in lieu of good governance and trust of citizens in specific non-governmental institutions.

Theoretical Framework

Raadschelders (2015) focuses on how government works, particularly the procedures involved in turning community demands into public policy. Since the 1880s, there have been significant changes to the way government is organized and run. The modifications indicate a change in the function and role of the government in society by concentrating on how it is internally structured and operated. In order to comprehend governance and government, policy and decision-making are essential. Government and governance are more complicated than ever nowadays. The existence of so many public organizations and social and cultural associations, the diversity of interactions between individual actors with different institutional and professional affiliations, and the multiple and conflicting demands placed on the government are just a few examples of the factors contributing to this complexity.

Vries (2013) propounds that the simplest understanding of good governance should revolve around proper conduct of government. He argues that the traditional and discourse based good governance agenda is idealistically long and growing longer over time. A multitude of governance

reforms caters the notion of what must be done but there is little guidance about vital or unnecessary aspects of governance, their orderly application and strategy to achieve in a short term and long term based on what is feasible and what is not. The enhanced focus to these questions explicates that instead of good governance, 'good enough governance' may be a realistic goal for many countries. A well-functioning public sector is one of the crucial factors of good enough governance. It is not the acts of politicians who distort interpersonal and institutional trust by making empty promises but the public sector that restores trust of citizens in governance by actually delivering the needed services. Nothing accomplishes without a capacitated public service. The provision of public services is the crises stress test of good enough governance. If one thing should be stable, or if there is one thing where stability should be created immediately after crisis, it is within the public service. It has been observed that non-governmental organizations and religious organizations are becoming popular through their good enough governance in recent years.

McConnell (2019) states that the significance of inaction in public policy has been a challenge for the policy sciences in recent decades. When decision-makers "do nothing" about societal challenges, this is referred to as inaction. In modern liberal democratic states with 24-hour news cycles, the emergence of social media, and citizen engagement, there are high expectations that governments as well as public organizations and governance networks, when confronted with imperfect, problematic, and undesired social conditions, will take some type of action even if just to establish markets or assist community organizations doing the actual job. Thus, inaction in the face of "self-evident" demands is often used as justification for government's neglect, irresponsibility, or incompetence. It is debatable whether a government is in fact doing nothing. Media and political opponents may charge the government with "doing little" to help resolve a humanitarian catastrophe despite the fact that the administration may claim it is "doing everything" it realistically can. For public organizations operating in a political environment and attempting to accomplish their objectives while facing numerous obstacles, the marginalization of some problems is purposefully justifiable in a minimal way.

Case Study

Javed (2022) argues that in the wake of disastrous floods of 2022, should civilians entrust the Pakistani government with relief efforts and donations? This is a typical query, one that was also posed following the 2005 earthquake and the 2010 floods. The fact that this issue is being raised reveals a lack of trust between Pakistani citizens and state agencies, including those in charge of relief efforts. The citizens prefer to give donations to NGOs, welfare organizations, individual aid workers, and religious political parties over government entities. What is the root of this mistrust? The straightforward response is that any genuine and practical interaction with the majority of government agencies is sufficient to make one strongly doubt the commitment of public institutions to social services. Evidence from other contexts also suggests that trust in government is further damaged by these groups' heightened propensity to suffer hardship during disasters and crises. Flood is one of these crises. Pakistan is one of the most hit countries by climate change phenomenon. The alarming situation of extreme weather patterns has resulted in a visible rise in the frequency and intensity of floods. Pakistan has faced catastrophic monsoons, floods and earthquakes resulting in massive destruction of human lives, infrastructure, crops and livestock. Federal Flood Commission's report states that Pakistan has been through at least 28 super fluvial floods since its inception. The first riverine flood swept the country in 1950 and later on in 1955, 1956, 1957, 1959, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1994, 1995, 2010 and 2022. In these horrific floods, deadliest impacts were witnessed primarily because of the lack of active disaster management mechanism (Anees, 2022).

The major victim of these recurring floods has been the area of modern-day province of Sindh. However, the governments have failed to take proactive actions and required responses for tackling these unfortunate disasters. The first floods that hit the country was in 1950 when the monsoon rains claimed the lives of at least 2190 people across Pakistan. It was caused due to overflow of river Ravi and the worst hit province was Punjab. An area of 17,920 square kilometers was flooded which destroyed almost 10,000 villages and 900,000 people were left homeless. The national economy also went through a huge setback facing direct losses of 488 million US dollars. Only a few years later, again

another calamity of a riverine flood hit the top plains at Bay of Bengal due to rushing down of twenty rivers from the Himalayan Mountains. The areas of Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) were hit hard and 20,480 square kilometers area was affected. The state economy had to face direct loss of 378 dollars, 679 people died and 6945 villages were destructed.

Floods had been ravaging Pakistan since its early years due to lack of any serious attempts to counter the problem. In 1956, again three cyclones brought massive rains in East Pakistan which resulted in severe hardships. Economy had to suffer from a loss of 318 million dollars, 160 lives were lost, and 11609 villages were engulfed by the heavy floods. A total of 74,406 square kilometers area was flooded which displaced hundreds of people adding to the complexities. In 1957 floods there was a direct loss of 301 million dollars to the economy, 83 people were killed, 4498 villages submerged under the water. A total area of 16003 square kilometers became a victim of the flood. Unfortunately, very soon on July 5, 1959 another flood swept the region of Punjab causing a 234 million dollars financial loss to state. Approximately 88 lives were lost, 3902 villages and an estimated total area of 10,424 square kilometer was affected by the floods (Anees, 2022).

In the coming years in Pakistan particularly in Punjab district, recurrent natural catastrophes were unveiled. However, in 1973 again 5134 million dollars loss was caused by one of the most dangerous floods due to collapse of protective barrier of river Indus near Sukkur. Most of the northeast Karachi region was worst hit and 41,472 square kilometers of area came under water. 9719 villages were destroyed with heavy damages particularly to crops. According to Dr. Mubashir Hasan then Finance minister of Pakistan, 250 million dollars loss was done to the crops which sky rocketed the food prices. In 1975 and 1976 again economic loss of 644 and 3485 million dollars was faced by an already crippling economy. 551 people were killed and an approximate 116,852 square kilometers of land got affected. In this context, Federal Flood Commission was established in 1977 with the purpose to manage and integrate floods across the country (Shah, 2020).

Before 1977 the flood management and protection projects were directly executed and controlled by the provincial governments themselves. However, since the establishment of FFC, it has constantly been accused of abusing the usage of funds and poorly managing the prevention procedures. In September 1992 Pakistan was once again hit by one of the deadliest floods of its history due to heavy monsoon rains. The worst hit areas were the north eastern region of Azad Kashmir and NWFP and the total flood affected area was estimated to be 38758 square kilometers. Due to the faulty policies huge losses of agriculture, property, economy and human lives were faced with 3010 million dollars loss to the state economy. The post-1992 floods period saw an extensive increase Himalayan deforestation to build road infrastructure. Military teams and government relief teams provided the support to the battered areas and evacuated the victims.

Only two years later, in 1994 there was 843-million-dollar financial loss and approximately 431 lives were lost submerging 1622 villages. Acres of standing crops of vegetables, cotton and sugarcane also got damaged. Government of Pakistan provided rehabilitation and relief projects to provinces to cope up with the situation. In July, 2001 heavy monsoons were recorded in Mansehra district, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and across other cities in the country. The resulting flash flooding due to overflow of Lai Nallah claimed the lives of at least 350 people and left 150 injured. 1500 families had to face homelessness Mansehra district was the worst hit area as 200 deaths and 1000 destroyed houses were of Mansehra. In 2010 another human disaster awaited the country which proved to be a havoc.

In July and August 2010 Indus River flooded due to record monsoons. The worst hit regions were Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Baluchistan. There was a direct 10000 US dollar loss to the fragile economy. After 1950, they were the second deadliest in terms of human lives loss and large-scale destruction. An area of 160,000 square kilometers came under flood which affected at least 21 million people. 1985 people died and 17,553 villages were submerged. Rescue and relief efforts were led by the Pakistan army and humanitarian aid was given by government. However, the government

response to the crisis has been criticized for its disorganized and non-preferential treatment to the victims (Mughal, 2012). The natural disasters particularly floods continued to destroy the socio-economic structure of the country in the following years. The data of damages caused by the floods has been given in the table below.

Table 1
The data of damages caused by the floods

Year	Direct Losses (US \$ million)	Lives Lost (no.)	Affected villages (no.)	Flooded area (Sq-Km)
2010	10000	1985	17553	160000
2011	3730	516	38700	27581
2012	2640	571	14159	4746
2013	2000	333	8297	4483
2014	440	367	4065	9779
2015	170	238	4634	2877
2016	-	153	43	-
2017	-	172	-	-
2018	-	88	-	-
2019	-	235	-	-
2020	-	409	-	-
2022	40000	1400	-	38287

Source: NDMA & Thomson Reuters Foundation

The country has faced serious destruction in the form of natural disasters particularly from the last seventeen years. The institutions working for the disaster management have miserably failed to take any practical steps to avoid further disasters. Along with this working inefficiency, the usual patterns of monsoon season seem to be departing worsening the situation further. A recent outcome of this is the June 2022 floods which affected 15% population of the country's population. Pakistan has experienced an unprecedented level of flooding that has resulted in large number of fatalities, loss of livestock, and damage to economy infrastructure. This disaster was caused by heavy rains and riverine, which harmed forests and fertile land, having an effect on ecosystems. The government declared 32, 23 and 17 districts of Baluchistan, Sindh and KPK respectively as "calamity hit". The loss in GDP of Pakistan according to UN's Post Disaster Needs Assessment is expected to be about 2.2 percent (GOP, Pakistan Economic Survey 2021-2022, 2022).

National Disaster Management Authority reported that between June and September, 2022 more than 1700 people lost their lives and 12800 people left injured by massive flooding. 7.9 million People were internally displaced and more than 33 million people were affected. Sindh province was the most affected region in the country. Already weak economy of the country was crippled by this flood wave due to the destruction of critical infrastructure and roads. Flood hit every sector of life in the flood-stricken areas, leading to demolition of 13000 km of road, 430 bridges, 1.4 million houses, 850000 houses, damage of 5.5 million acres of cropland and loss of 1.1 million livestock

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 9.4 million acres of standing crops was potentially and severely destroyed. This huge livestock and agricultural loss have increased the risk of food and economic security challenges. Another major consequence of the recent floods has been the prominent increase in poverty rate from 4.5 to 7 percent. The depth and intensity of poverty has pushed approximately 15.4 million people into poverty according to the preliminary reports of World Bank. Climate change is one of the major reasons behind this crisis despite Pakistan being not even a 1% contributor of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Antonio Guterres in his visit to the flood affected regions in Pakistan said that he has never seen a climate havoc on such a wide scale (FAO, 2022).

According to Pakistan's National Climate Change Policy published in 2021, climate change effects being felt in Pakistan are due to the melting and retreating of glaciers, unpredictable climate patterns resulting in decreased availability of fresh water, biodiversity loss and a rise in the forming and outburst of glacial lakes (Nations, 2021). Rafiullah Kakar who is a public policy specialist while explaining the root cause of this catastrophe stated that “For disaster management, lack of technical capacity is just one problem. Primarily, political interest is just not aligned with it. There is no such demand for disaster management, and no organized media advocacy around it from civil society. Unless there is a disaster, no one even remembers to write, talk or work on it (Anees, 2022).”

In order to somehow mitigate the severity of impacts caused by floods, government of Pakistan, NGOs and International community have tried to aid the affectees. The federal and provincial governments announced the establishment of Flood Relief Funds under the administration of National Disaster Management Authority. Global and local NGOs also played their part by collecting the funds for people. Among these NGOs, The Million Smiles Foundation, Indus Hospital Health Network, Muslim Aid UK, Al-khidmat Foundation and Akhuwat foundation were the most prominent (GOP, DMA Monsoon 2022 Daily Situation Report No 102, 2022). The UN office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) issued a report regarding the assessment of needs in the most affected area in collaboration with Provincial Disaster Management Authority of Balochistan. Provinces have their mechanisms in form of disaster management authority to manage various natural calamities but these authorities remain unable to perform their functions properly because of non availability of proper funds, lack of proper training and skills and most important absence of willingness to perform required functions.

The current civilian government amidst the huge climate and political crisis approached the army to step in for flood rescue and rehabilitation efforts. Military's efforts have been commendable in this havoc handling and they utilized all the possible resources to provide relief to the flood victims. Till now more than 150 flood relief camps had been established to provide food and emergency healthcare to the victims. According to NFRCC, over 300 medical camps to provide free health check up to affected were established by army. To evacuate the people stranded in the affected regions special helicopter operations were conducted by army, navy and air force. They have also been assisting the international aid operations being carried out in Pakistan which has eased the burden of government and bureaucracy (Jamal, 2022). Military's efforts no doubt were highly appreciable regarding providing relief to flood victims of 2022 in Pakistan. They did make their efforts to provide relief to all affected areas of Pakistan without making any type of discrimination on the basis of region, ethnicity, language and religion. Actually the people of Pakistan show their trust or sense of satisfaction upon the efforts of military institution of Pakistan than the civilian institution. Politicians and civilian institutions should perform their functions in such a way that people can trust upon them and support them as well. Though this is difficult for politicians to do but not impossible.

In these horrible times, the opposition as well as other politico social organizations also actively played their part. Among these, Tehreek e Labaik Pakistan was also one of the prominent ones in providing their relief efforts in Sindh and Punjab. It established relief camps for collection of relief items from its supporters and engaged them to help the people. The main focus of their activities was interior Sindh and Southern regions of Punjab apparently the areas where they need to establish their support base (TLYP, 2022). People of Pakistan always look up to army whenever any calamity hits due to their trust on institution. The sincere efforts of armed forces have been hailed by the people and they feel indebted to the young officers endangering their lives for them. However, Pakistanis particularly the flood victims are actually indebted to every section of the society which played their part in helping them. Apart of Muslim organizations, Christian organizations also participated in providing relief to Christian in flood affected areas of Hyderabad Sindh. (Carvalho, 2022).

Several surveys were conducted by the local and international research agencies in order to assess the response of Pakistanis to these relief efforts. According to the latest survey of IPSOS, 50% citizens believe that army has played commendable role along with federal government in providing

flood relief. Al Khidmat and Edhi foundation were considered the most trusted NGOs by the public (survey, 2022). In another survey report by GALLUP Pakistan for the 2022 flood assessment, most of the people wanted the government to further escalate their efforts to help the affected regions. 36 percent people credited the NGOs while only 7 percent attributed the relief efforts to government. 68%, 69%, 59% and 59% of the surveyed people knew about the Al Khidmat foundation, Edhi foundation, Red Crescent and Edhi foundation respectively (Pakistan, 2022).

Conclusion

To conclude, on the government side there is a lack of practical seriousness, participatory approach and focused policies which is quite alarming. Even this year an ill-timed national emergency was declared because at that point the damage was already done. Although there are a number of disaster management authorities in Pakistan, International organizations and states also provide support at times but this is not enough. The non-representative institutions do not participate in public policies but their readiness to provide public service during crises makes citizens trust them far more than civilian governments. A proactive, resilient and long-sighted approach to reduce natural disaster risks is needed and the attractive strategy approaches to deal with such calamities written on papers need to be taken in to practice. Governments should better adopt policies to practice good enough governance if not the good governance. It is need of the time to restore trust of common man on various governmental institutions. Institutions must play their active and constructive role to fulfill the needs of people and particularly help them to recover from severe conditions of floods. Government has to adopt organized mechanism through disaster management institutions to address various issues of flood victims in different parts of Pakistan.

Recommendations

There is also a strong need of positive coordination between federal government and government of provinces to provide relief to flood victims. Flood victims are homeless and without proper financial resources to manage their different problems. Non- governmental organizations and different public welfare foundations perform their functions in an organized way during this natural calamity. Flood victims express their satisfaction towards the efforts of relief by nongovernmental organization. International Organizations for example United Nations can provide technical assistance to government of Pakistan to deal with natural calamities timely and properly. During 2022 floods government of Pakistan had received financial assistance from international aid donor agencies and different states as well. But most important issue is here to identify that flood victims did receive relief from federal government and respective governments of their provinces. It is pertinent to mention here that government should evolve a vigilant mechanism to deliver to affected segment of Pakistan society during any natural calamity. Another effort which should be initiated by the policy makers of Pakistan to bridge the existing gap between rulers and masses is to initiate sincere efforts to help out people at least during times of disaster.

In case of Pakistan a step which should be taken by the government to deal uncertain situations is to evolve a strong mechanism through making various laws. System should try to work on its various capabilities such as resource generation and utilization of these resources timely and appropriately. There should be a strong mechanism of accountability of various institutions and this mechanism should be implemented in the true sense. Federal government did receive economic assistance from international institutions during 2022 floods in Pakistan to assist the flood victims but there is no proper system which can observe distribution of goods among victims. State has to take responsibility to deliver people according to their needs and during the times of natural calamity people have need of extra care and association but in case of Pakistan this care and association is absent because of wrong preferences of various institutions.

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