

**INTERRELATIONSHIP OF IDENTITY POLITICS AND  
DEMOCRATIC SPACES:**

**A CASE OF STUDENTS' COUNCILS IN PAKISTAN**

**BY**

**SARA ABDULLAH BANGASH**



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
ISLAMABAD**

**January 2020**

**INTERRELATIONSHIP OF IDENTITY POLITICS AND  
DEMOCRATIC SPACES:**

**A CASE OF STUDENTS' COUNCILS IN PAKISTAN**

**BY**

**SARA ABDULLAH BANGASH**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC POLICY**

**TO**

**DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC POLICY  
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
ISLAMABAD**

**January 2020**



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

**THESIS / DISSERTATION AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM**

The undersigned certify that they have read the following thesis, examined the defense, and are satisfied with overall exam performance, and recommend the thesis to the Faculty of Management Sciences

Thesis/Dissertation Title: **Interrelationship Of Identity Politics And Democratic Spaces: A Case Of Students' Councils In Pakistan**

Submitted by: **Sara Abdullah Bangash**  
Name of Student

Registration No.: **1216-MPhil/GPP/S16**

**Master of Philosophy**  
Degree Name in Full

**Governance and Public Policy**  
Name of Discipline

**Syed Waqas Ali Kausar**  
Name of Research Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Research Supervisor

**Prof. Dr. Naveed Akhtar**  
Name of Dean FMS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Dean FMS

**Brig. Muhammad Ibrahim**  
Name of Director General

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Director General

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

**CANDIDATE DECLARATION FORM**

I, **Sara Abdullah Bangash**

Daughter of **Abdullah,**

Registration No. **1216-MPhil/GPP/S16**

Discipline of **Governance and Public Policy**

Candidate of **Master of Philosophy**

at **National University of Modern Languages,**

do hereby declare that the thesis “Interrelationship of Identity Politics and Democratic Spaces: A Case of Students’ Councils in Pakistan” submitted by me in partial fulfillment of M.Phil. Degree. This is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Candidate

**Sara Abdullah Bangash**  
Name of Candidate

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

## **THESIS SUBMISSION APPROVAL FORM**

**(SUPERVISOR)**

A thesis “**Interrelationship of Identity Politics and Democratic Spaces: A Case of Students’ Councils in Pakistan**”

Submitted by **Sara Abdullah Bangash,**

Registration No. **1216-MPhil/GPP/S16**

Discipline of **Governance and Public Policy**

Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at **National University of Modern Languages,**

This thesis has been read by me and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style and consistency, and thus fulfills the qualitative requirements of this study. It is ready for submission to the Department of Governance and Public Policy, Faculty of Management Sciences for internal and external evaluations.

**Syed Waqas Ali Kausar**

Name of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

## **CERTIFICATE**

It is certified that the research work contained in this thesis title “**Interrelationship of Identity Politics and Democratic Spaces: A Case of Students’ Councils in Pakistan**” has been carried out and completed by **Sara Abdullah Bangash** under my supervision during her M.Phil. in Governance and Public Policy at the Department of Governance and Public Policy, Faculty of Management Sciences, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad.

Submitted through,

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Syed Waqas Ali Kausar**  
Supervisor  
HoD/Asst. Prof. Governance and Public  
Policy  
Faculty of Management Sciences  
National University of Modern Languages,  
Islamabad

# Acknowledgement

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Allah Almighty for His love, compassion and strength for this successful research work. I would like to present my special gratitude to my supervisor and HoD Dr. Syed Waqas Ali Kausar for his continues counseling, assistance and guidance during whole thesis work that enable me to accomplish this valuable work. I would like to thanks all the faculty members of the Department of Governance and Public Policy who provided me a vibrant atmosphere of study and share their knowledge of research. I would like to say thanks to all friends and family for their valuable time, undying love and support to help during this research work. Finally, I would like to express my heartiest thanks to my senior officer Mr. Bilal Mustafa Hashmi, Assistant Accounts Officer of office of the CGA, Islamabad, my fellow researcher Mr. Muhammad Arshad Warsi and my little nephew Ahmad Hamid Bangash, for their generous cooperation, patience and precious time.

Thanks all of you and Allah Almighty richly bless you.

---

Sara Abdullah Bangash

# Dedication

To my mother...

**“ZAHIDA ABDUL MALIK”:**

For I am a strong woman because a strong woman raised me.



# Abstract

Pakistan is a multicultural country having diverse identities comprises of different regions, languages, ethnicities, religions and so on. Being multicultural country, Pakistan is experiencing tensions amongst different identities from day first. Linking to an identity can be described as a societal force that compels you to give importance to your own identity and make space for it in a certain environment. In a certain environment, identity cannot be denied or ignored. Norms, culture linked to any identity goes side by side with you wherever you go or whatever you do. It is a human nature. When it is denied or ignored, or rejected, it is always confronted back from those who are deprived.

Pakistan faces an interesting challenge of conflicting identities These challenges are so intense that they could not be ignored. Pakistan is a state of diverse identities. These diversifications work at different levels. At one point it emerges from religious basis where religion is common at most identity related domains. At other point it emerges as national unity of being Pakistani as a central or singular identity to address the confrontation and conflicts amongst the society.

For a single Pakistani identity, it is mandatory to integrate sub national identities in a diverse society. Democratic governance and diverse identities are directly linked together for a central Pakistani identity. In Pakistan, often time this central identity is challenged by regional, provincial and ethnic identities.

Transparent and participative societies based on dialogue, pluralism and tolerance can exists only where State and non-State actors respect the exercise of rights, including freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association and participation in public life to nurture democratic spaces.

This study aims to explore relationship of identity politics and democratic spaces in the context of students' councils in Pakistan. For the purpose four student's councils was selected in order to explore the youth participation in identity politics and the reasons behind their participation.

This research focuses on investigating the relationship of identity politics and democratic spaces by assuming that with decrease in democratic spaces in Pakistan there is a rise in identity politics and to identify the role that reduced democratic spaces plays in order to causes the people to adopt identity politics and what is the understanding of the actors of identity politics with reference to reduced democratic spaces of Pakistan.

This study is based on proposition that when democratic spaces are reduced, it causes the people to adopt identity politics dominated by nationally or ethnically defined collectivities. How reduced democratic spaces shapes the identity politics is studied by assuming that with increased democratic space, the culture of identity politics can be reduced. The main area of focus of this study is the students' councils of different universities in Islamabad who are mainly based on any specific identity or promoting their ideological stand point.

This research aims to gain further understanding of the phenomenon *democratic space* by examining the situation for student's councils in Pakistan. This qualitative study examines the freedom of speech/freedom of expression and opinion, political structure, identity consciousness and sense of belongingness and participation for student's councils through the method of focused group discussions and semi-structured interviews. To gain deeper understanding of the current situation in Pakistan, this study puts forward the question of whether the democratic space is expanding or shrinking in this context and if this has an effect on/relationship with identity politics.

A total of four Focused Group discussions were conducted from two students' councils namely Pakhtun Council and Mehran Council from Quaid-e-Azam University and International Islamic University in Islamabad. Five In-Depth Interviews were conducted from young politicians emerged from students' councils of universities. Themes that have emerged during Focused Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews are presented under sub headings.

The key findings of the study are two main themes or issues i.e. Identity Politics and Reduced Democratic Spaces with four sub themes of Democratic Spaces and three sub themes of Identity Politics. The themes showed that Democratic Space is considered as genuine right space for freedom of expression. Due to restrictive laws and bans students complain that they have no platform to express their view in the context of political representations. With less avenues of expression, they are facing dominance by other identities. They resolve such issues through negotiations and through their respective councils who are bound by Strong Administration, Cooperation and Coordination, though sometimes they face Harsh Behavior, yet there is a hope of Positive Response. Democratic Space is also considered as intellectual activity, which nourishes young leader, as it stopped due to bans, it ignites institutionalization of corruption. With its stoppage youth is also facing lack of clarity, they are confused regarding many terms due to lack of awareness.

As Democratic Space has major role in political character building, with ban now it is more like we have only watch dogs due to which our youth is lacking sense of integration. At our front line we can only see elites while our youth is lagging behind by them. Youth perception is unclear about being part of political leadership. Democratic Space is also a tool of intellectual grooming, intellectuals gives their ideas and explains it in their study circle. With reduced democratic space students' minds are poisoned by misinterpretation of many concepts. With misconception and lack of leniency, Absolute Corruption of Power (Game of Power) arises.

Freedom of association is a fundamental right of every citizen; it gives representation and sense of belongingness. It is a sense of security to those who are identity conscious. For many it's a tool for survival and important to define oneself. Culture hybridity is also a motive for association. Students councils provide awareness and accommodation for their respective representation. They are non-political and Properly Functioned. Students has Free Will to join them, there is no restriction. There are difference of opinion and ideas but every person is born as a free man therefore he has the right to express freely. Those who are class conscious they have the fear of deprivation, therefore like to be represented as per their identities.

Student Unions and Student Political Wings are two different things, due to lack of awareness amongst students they mixed it up. Identity politics aroused due to Stakeholder's Interest. They propagated their interests in a way that peoples are trapped in it. Identity politics is used as a tool of dominance. Due to reduced democratic spaces and less representation of youth we are lacking Emancipated, Informed Political Leadership.

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgement .....	v
Dedication .....	vi
Abstract .....	vii
List of Figures, Tables and Annexures .....	xv
List of Abbreviations .....	xvi
Chapter 1 .....	1
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Prologue.....	1
1.2. Problem Statement.....	4
1.3. Research Questions.....	4
1.4. Research Gap.....	5
1.5. Research Objective.....	5
1.6. Delimitation of the Research .....	6
1.7. Scope of the Research.....	6
1.8. Proposition of the Research.....	6
Chapter 2.....	7
2. Literature Review.....	7
2.1 Identity Politics.....	7
2.1.1. Background Theories .....	7
2.1.1.1. Conceptualization.....	8
2.1.1.2. The Western Context.....	8
2.1.1.3. Non-Western Context.....	9
2.1.2. Causes of Identity Politics.....	9
2.1.2.1. Material-Based Perspective .....	9

2.1.2.2.	Economic Inequality and Exploitation .....	10
2.1.2.3.	Internal and External Conditions.....	10
2.1.2.4.	Non-Material Perspective.....	10
2.1.2.5.	Class-Based Movements .....	11
2.1.2.6.	Contemporary Social Movements .....	11
2.1.3.	Impact on National Politics .....	12
2.1.4.	Pakistan Context.....	13
2.1.5.	World Context.....	18
2.2.	Democratic Spaces .....	18
2.2.1.	Background Theories .....	19
2.2.2.	Democratic Spaces in Pakistan .....	19
2.3.	Students Councils in Pakistan.....	21
2.3.1.	History.....	22
2.3.1.1.	Student Unions vs Student Political Wings.....	23
2.3.2.	Student Councils .....	24
Chapter 3.....		26
3.	Research Methodology .....	26
3.1	Ontology and Epistemology of the Research .....	26
3.2.	Conceptual Framework.....	27
3.2.1.	Research Map.....	28
3.3.	Research Design .....	29
3.3.1.	Research Method.....	29
3.3.2.	Data Analysis Technique (s) .....	29
3.3.3.	Sampling Technique (s) .....	30
3.3.4.	Construction of Interview Guide.....	31

3.3.4.1. Focused Group Discussion .....	33
3.3.4.2. In-Depth Interviews.....	33
Chapter 4.....	34
4. Findings and Results .....	34
4.1 Themes Map .....	36
4.2. Themes Overview.....	37
4.3. In Depth Interviews .....	39
4.3.1. Current Democratic Space .....	39
4.3.2. Dynamics of Identity Politics in Pakistan .....	50
4.3.3. Student Councils in Pakistan and Identity Politics .....	68
4.4. Focused Group Discussions.....	71
4.4.1. Identity Politics and Students Councils.....	71
4.4.2. Reduced Democratic Spaces and Student Councils .....	79
Chapter 5.....	87
5. Analysis and Discussion .....	87
5.1 Current Democratic Space.....	87
5.2. Identity Politics in the context of Students Councils.....	96
5.3. Interrelationship of Identity Politics and Democratic Space .....	105
Chapter 6.....	115
6. Conclusion and Recommendations.....	115
6.1 Conclusion .....	115
6.2. Recommendations .....	117
7. Bibliography .....	118
Annexure-A.....	121

### Interview Guide for Focused Group Discussions

Annexure-B..... 123

Interview Guide for In-Depth Interviews



## List of Figures, Tables and Annexures

### Figures

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
01	Conceptual Framework	27
02	Research Map	28
03	Themes Map	36

### Tables

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
01	Contributing Factors	32
02	Themes Overview	37-39

### Annexures

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
A	Interview Guide for Focused Group Discussions	121-122
B	Interview Guide for In-Depth Interviews	123-124

## **List of Abbreviations**

ANP	Awami National Party
APMSO	All Pakistan Muttahidda Students Organization
FUUAST	Federal Urdu University of Arts, Sciences and Technology
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
IIUI	International Islamic University Islamabad
JI	Jama'at e Islami
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KU	Karachi University
MQM	Mutahida Qoumi Movement
MSA	Mehran Student Association
PU	Punjab University
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PTI	Pakistan Tehrik e Insaaf
PSF	Pakhtun Student Federation
PTM	Pakhtun Tahafuz Movement
QAU	Quaid e Azam University

# Chapter 1

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Prologue

Pakistan is a multicultural country having diverse identities comprises of different regions, languages, ethnicities, religions and so on. Being multicultural country, Pakistan is experiencing tensions amongst different identities from day first. According to Mushtaq, “The Bengali nationalism, the Pashtun separatism, the Sindhi regionalism, and the Baloch nationalism have challenged the stateness of the state of Pakistan at various junctures of history” (Mushtaq, 2009).

Linking to an identity can be described as a societal force that compels you to give importance to your own identity and make space for it in a certain environment. In a certain environment, identity cannot be denied or ignored. Norms, culture linked to any identity goes side by side with you wherever you go or whatever you do. It is a human nature. When it is denied or ignored, or rejected, it is always confronted back from those who are deprived. Ethnicity and nationalism are the dominant issues of war and peace in contemporary world politics. Though ethnic tensions stem from multiple causes, conflicts over competing visions of political identity are frequently at the root of many current disputes (Khory, 2007). Many scholars argued that whenever efforts are made to suppress any specific identity, or deprive them of their rights, it also arises conflicts and tensions among the society which later on ended in weakening of the national unity and harmony.

A primary concern in the political systems of multiethnic countries is the fear of domination or exploitation of some ethnic groups and assimilation by the other ethnic group (Khan M. S.). The purpose of identity politics is to accommodate diverse

cultures; religions and customs and given respect, which is their due. Contemporary Pakistani political scene on the one hand is dominated by religious groups and on the other ethno-nationalist political parties (Khan D. R., 2018).

Pakistan faces an interesting challenge of conflicting identities, self-righteousness, stereo typing and negative tagging (Iqbal, 2017). These challenges are so intense that they could not be ignored. They need constant attention and address. To understand the role of diverse identities in Pakistan, first we need to know how identity and self-consciousness goes together. Martin Sökefeld (Sökefeld, 1999) opines that an analysis of how a particular individual act in situations involving contradictory identities requires a concept of a “self” as it emerges from the actions of individuals while managing the shared identities (Khan D. R., 2018). A person at times linked to specific cultural attributes and to its self which works according to its own will and perceptions. This self and culture is necessary for each other. In Pakistan, identities are segmented differently. A person at times is linked to its regional, racial, linguistic identities and to its central identity of being Pakistani. Pakistani identity at its core again is strongly linked to / associated to Islam in its political spectrum as well as in the religious context.

Pakistan is a state of diverse identities. These diversifications work at different levels. At one point it emerges from religious basis where religion is common at most identity related domains. At other point it emerges as national unity of being Pakistani as a central or singular identity to address the confrontation and conflicts amongst the society. How identity works in both levels, the main purpose is to promote the concept of single identity. Besides the concept of one national identity due space is needed to all ethnic, regional etc. identities in order to promote harmony among all. There is an interesting debate between those who consider Pakistani identity to be basically religious, to be more precise, Islamic, and those who, though agreeing to the Muslim identity of Pakistan, argue that being Muslim does not mean being Islamic. They point out to some apparently secular articulations of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (htt).

A democratic progressive Pakistan is tied with a Pakistani identity based on the facts of plurality of its being (Khan D. I., 2006). For a single Pakistani identity, it is mandatory to integrate sub national identities in a diverse society. Democratic governance and diverse identities are directly linked together for a central Pakistani identity. In Pakistan, often time this central identity is challenged by regional, provincial and ethnic identities. According to Iqbal, these centrist identities are, in turn, challenged by regional/provincial and ethnic identities, that include Pushtun, Baluch, Sindhi, Punjabi and since the 1980s the Muhajir (Refugees who came from Bangladesh to Pakistan after 1971, earlier they had migrated from India to East Pakistan in 1947) (Iqbal, 2017). Besides these, there are other identities that are arising at prominent level which includes Siraiki in Punjab, Makrani's, Hazara's and Barohi's in Baluchistan and Chitrali's, Gilgiti's and Hazarawal's in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Transparent and participative societies based on dialogue, pluralism and tolerance can exist only where State and non-State actors respect the exercise of rights, including freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association and participation in public life to nurture democratic spaces (Khan D. R., 2018). In countries where democratic governance is limited, freedom of association and expression is a challenge for political system of that country. In States in transition, where democratic space is nascent or limited, the protection of these freedoms is a test of political will and capacity for change (Mulkerrins, 2018). However, in many cases and scenarios freedom of expression and association is disputed in a multicultural country which hinders smooth functioning of democratic process. As a result of these reduced or limited democratic spaces identity politics became a dominant factor to hurdle democratization in a pluralist society.

This study is conducted to explore relationship of identity politics and democratic spaces in the context of students' councils in Pakistan. For the purpose I select four student's councils in order to explore the youth participation in identity politics and the reasons behind their participation.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

This research focuses on investigating the relationship of identity politics and democratic spaces by assuming that with decrease in democratic spaces in Pakistan there is a rise in identity politics. To identify the role that reduced democratic spaces plays in order to causes the people to adopt identity politics and what is the understanding of the actors of identity politics with reference to reduced democratic spaces of Pakistan. What are their arguments or ideas backed up by their ideological standpoints and how they exercise their discourse?

This study is based on proposition that when democratic spaces are reduced, it causes the people to adopt identity politics dominated by nationally or ethnically defined collectivities. How reduced democratic spaces shapes the identity politics is studied by assuming that with increased democratic space, the culture of identity politics can be reduced. The main area of focus of this study is the students' councils of different universities in Islamabad who are mainly based on any specific identity or promoting their ideological stand point.

## **1.3. Research Questions**

### **Main Question**

What is the relationship between identity politics and democratic space in the context of students' councils in universities?

### **Sub Questions**

- Q1. What role reduced democratic spaces plays to causes the peoples to adopt identity politics in Pakistan?
- Q2. What are the dynamics of identity politics in Pakistan?

- Q3. How undemocratic regimes/reduced democratic spaces in Pakistan contribute towards adopting identity politics?
- Q4. What is the interrelationship of student councils, student unions and identity politics in Pakistan?

#### **1.4. Research Gap**

A lot of research has been done specifically on identity politics in relation to ethnicity, language, cast, race, etc. but its relationship with democratic spaces whether positive or negative, have not yet studied. Furthermore, relationship of students' councils in universities of Pakistan and identity politics has not yet investigated. This study specifically aims to identify the relationship of identity politics and democratic spaces in the context of students' councils in Pakistan.

#### **1.5. Research Objective**

Through field work including Focused Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews, this study attempted to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Analyzed the relationship between identity politics and democratic space in the context of students' councils in universities.
- ii. Analyzed the role of reduced democratic spaces that causes peoples to adopt identity politics in Pakistan.
- iii. Analyzed dynamics of identity politics in Pakistan.
- iv. Analyzed interrelationship of student councils, student unions and identity politics in Pakistan.

## **1.6. Delimitation of the Research**

There are more than 40 public and private sectors universities in Islamabad, it is not possible to include all of them in this study, therefore, the researcher narrowed down it to two main universities of Islamabad i.e. Quaid-e-Azam University and International Islamic University.

Following factors are taken into consideration while selecting them for the study:

1. Both universities are public sector universities.
2. Both universities have a history of political and identity-based activism.

## **1.7. Scope of the Research**

This research identifies the interrelationship of identity politics and democratic spaces in Pakistan. It increases the existing body of knowledge about rising narrow identities/sub identities regarding right of representation amongst various identity groups and extent of its relationship to democratic spaces in Pakistan. For the purpose data is collected from the four student's councils of two universities of Islamabad.

## **1.8. Proposition of the Research**

When democratic spaces are reduced, it causes the people to adopt identity politics dominated by nationally or ethnically defined collectivities. How reduced democratic spaces shapes the identity politics is studied by assuming that with increased democratic space, the culture of identity politics can be reduced.



# Chapter 2

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Identity Politics

Identity politics is a politic of interest geared by groups of peoples of common identities or interests. In identity politics people of common identity and interest shape their perspective through social organizations mainly in a group. These groups are mainly based on regional, provincial, linguistic, class, religion, gender, age, caste, ethnicity, culture, profession, political party affiliation and so on.

#### 2.1.1. Background Theories

The term identity politics emerged initially in social sciences and humanities by Renee R. Anspach in 1979 in order to elaborate social movements which seek to alter the self-conceptions and societal conceptions of their participants (Anspach, 1979). The concept of identity politics is based on self-perception and how one changes it. There exist multiple identities for an individual and a group (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996). A person may be a man, at the same time he is brother, a son, he may be a member of any movement, a worker and so on. Moreover, the same person may be a member of a group for example ethnically Pashtun, religiously Muslim, geographically residing in urban or rural. According to Eric Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm, 1996), these multiple identities for a person/group make the analysis of identity politics much more difficult because human beings often do not choose between the various characteristics that define them. On the contrary, their actions are the product of a combination of their characteristics.

### **2.1.1.1. Conceptualization**

Identity politics refers to a series of political actions ranging from multiculturalism, the feminist movements, gay and lesbian movements and recent violent ethnic and sectarian conflicts (Bernstein & Cressida, 2005; 2009). Identity politics is broadly studied in west, wherein three issues are mainly focused. First issue is its nature which is central. That is to say that individuals and groups have multiple identities (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996); that subjective self-identification is not necessarily identical with one's objective characteristics and that there exists a complex relation between subjective and objective identities depending on the context as well as the position of the researchers and practitioners (Moya, 2006).

Second, is the cause of political actions, that are based on identity. Many have focused on material causes while other on religion, social, cultural and so on. Third issue is regarding its importance that as to whether it really matters in society or not. There are some who are in its favor as a factor of recognition of self and for cultural, ideological and social differences. Besides there are others who defend it as agent of change against domination. Though it is also criticized as a negative factor for division and space.

### **2.1.1.2. The Western Context**

In the western world, identity politics is perceived very differently, they have their own culture and traditions. They have a functioning state which can provide security and effective system to their citizens irrespective of the fact that to which identity they belong to. They are also able to protect and defend the sovereign rights and the interests of their state. They have a relatively stronger central authority compared to most of the developing countries (Herring, 2006). In west relationship between state and society are stronger than any other state where state failures are not taken as a factor of identity-based politics.

### **2.1.1.3.Non-Western Context**

There are many scholars who have studied identity politics in the non-western context. Amongst them are Idris who have studied political conflict in Sudan. (Idris, 2005) Hintjens (Hintjens, 2008) studied the ethnic conflict in Rwanda. Herring and Rangwala (Herring, 2006) studied the ethnic and sectarian conflict in Iraq. There are also a group of scholars who have studied the political conflict in Afghanistan and others have studied ethnic based revivals in general (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996). These studies provide a background for the current study because they have described the nature of the identity-based conflicts and how they function. However, before generalizing those studies one must take into account that every member of the society is unique in its nature and composition with diverse nature and characteristics. At times that, unique member may show some characteristics of collective identities as well.

### **2.1.2. Causes of Identity Politics**

#### **2.1.2.1.Material-Based Perspective**

The material-based perspective is also known as the anti-humanist approach to identity politics. It is strongly influenced by and associated with Marxism (Bondi, 1993). Mary Bernstein (Bernstein & Cressida, 2005; 2009), in her literature review, identifies what she calls the New-Marxist approach to highlight the material causes of identity politics. Mary is of the view that those who study this approach, also study identity politics at higher level. It explains the relationship between economics with elite class, or those who are rich or producers, because they oppressed the working class. Economic power is more dominant than other powers because it controls social and political relations of a society. It can be said that economic inequality is the reason of oppression.

Many scholars argue that to solve all such issues social awareness and movements are necessary. It also can help in ending oppression. Influenced by this idea, Rosaura Sanchez (Sanchez, 2006) rejects all types of idealisms and focuses on a materialistic account of identity formation. In her view, identity politics has a strategic rationale which is to develop a critical political agency (p. 33). It is the rationale for a critical political agency that defines a particular role for identity politics: that is to generate a political agency capable of creating critical spaces from which to resist and contest the hegemonic shaping and definition of reality (Sanchez, 2006: 31).

#### **2.1.2.2.Economic Inequality and Exploitation**

Those who advocate the material perspective as a reason of identity politics discusses that economic disparity is the cause of rise in identity-based politics in many regions. In order to overcome economic inequality and injustice state has to develop such factors which resolve or ensure social justice. To ensure equality transformation and solid reforms are needed to be applied so that external and internal dimensions of economic inequality are addressed.

#### **2.1.2.3.Internal and External Conditions**

In Sanchez analysis two points are emphasized, first is that external and internal factors are the reasons of forming identity-based politics, the other is that objectives and approaches of identity politics are not always similar to bring social change. Some however follow transformation while others follow or pursue reforms.

#### **2.1.2.4.Non-Material Perspective**

In contrast to a material-based perspective, the non-material or the humanist (Bondi, 1993) views culture, social values, traditions, belief systems, language and technology as sources of identity politics in society. The humanist perspective rejects the idea that economic power is more central in social interactions and argues that social

differences such as differences in belief systems can also cause or at least exacerbate identity-based political actions (Bernstein M. , 2005). Paul Sawyer (Sawyer, 2006), for example, examines the role of symbolic authority, speech and language in identity-based political actions. He is of the view that authority is the basic factor in shaping identity-based politics, the role of authority, orders; instructions are the basics to change and shape the identity. Sawyer, in contrast to Sanchez who prioritized the role of material aspects of identity formation, focuses on the role of religious beliefs such as the concept of calling in King's speech, A time to Break Silence, language and charismatic authority in identity formation (Sawyer, 2006). Many argued that authority, beliefs, language influences the behavior of individuals as a single and groups as a whole.

#### **2.1.2.5.Class-Based Movements**

The advocate of non-material perspective differentiates between movement of different eras in group of class-based movements and social movements. It is because the context of study, or the nature of the Western countries in which these studies took place, has shifted from industrial to post-industrial societies (Bernstein & Cressida, 2005; 2009). Those movements also dissolve the structure of authority as well. It is also important to analyze differences and course of action of those movements and how they affect the society in different times.

#### **2.1.2.6.Contemporary Social Movements**

If we analyze contemporary social movements according to different views of scholars, we can see that, contemporary social movements aim to strengthen social values like democracy, environmental protection and peace rather than to be only concerned with economic survival (Inglehart, 1981). The contemporary social movements are political practices to fight to expand freedom, not to achieve it; they mobilize for choice rather than emancipation (Cerulo, 1997). Besides material forces,

non-material factors, for example ideology, ethnicity, culture, technology and social values- play pivotal role in the rise of identity-based politics in society.

### **2.1.3. Impact on National Politics**

Many are of the view that identity politics is important in national politics and believe it as an instrument for social change (Sanchez, 2006), for social recognition (Brunt, 1989) and for respecting social differences (Young, 1990). Sanchez believes that identity politics matters because it has the potential to create and develop an agent of change capable of altering structural power relations (Sanchez, 2006). Brunt is of the view that identity politics matter because it allows members of a society to acknowledge and recognise various social groups. Building on Brunt's idea, Axel Honneth (Honneth, 1995) argues that recognition has three phases: demand for love, demands for rights and demand for recognition. In first phase it builds self-confidence, in second phase it promotes equality, every individual as equal human beings and in third phase it promotes mutual respect and tolerance.

Young argues identity politics as the politics of differences (Young, 1990). In her opinion, differences promote identification of self and others and develop sense of relationship among groups and it leads to social diversity which resultantly develop mutual understanding in a society. On other hand, there are some who criticize identity politics as it propagates differences and exclusion which is against universalism. The critics of identity politics see no future for identity politics and no triumph over the pain they embrace (Hekman, 2004: 88). In Bourne's words, identity politics is all rage.

Exploitation is out (it is extrinsically determinist). Oppression is in (it is intrinsically personal). What is to be done is replaced by "who am I" (Bourne, 1987). There are some issues in studying identity politics. The term identity is central, on the other hand different approaches and dimensions of identity which explains different aspects. Besides it is studied differently in different regions as per their culture and norms.

In the western world, identity politics is perceived very differently, they have their own culture and traditions. They have a functioning state which can provide security and effective system to their citizens irrespective of the fact that to which identity they belong to. In west relationship between state and society are stronger than any other state where state failures are not taken as a factor of identity-based politics.

In west relationship between state and society are strong to protect and defend the sovereign rights and the interests of their state. In other words, they have a relatively stronger central authority than most of the developing states (Herring, 2006). Some scholars have studied identity-based conflicts in Sudan (Idris, 2005), in Rwanda (Hintjens, 2008), in Kosovo (Duijzings, 2000); in Iraq (Herring & Rangwala, 2006) and in Afghanistan (Maley & Saikal, 1992; Maley, 2002; Rubin, 2002; Saikal, 2004 and Marsden, 2005). Others have studied ethnic-based revivals in general (Smith, 1981 and Smith & Hutchinson, 1996). Those have provided a strong basis for the study but not specified the regional and ethnic issues in the context of identity-based politics. These studies provide a background for the current study because they have described the nature of the identity-based conflicts and how they function. However, before generalizing those studies one must take into account that every member of the society is unique in its nature and composition with diverse nature and characteristics. At times that, unique member may show some characteristics of collective identities as well.

#### **2.1.4. Pakistan Context**

Pakistan is a multicultural country having diverse identities comprises of different regions, languages, ethnicities, religions and so on. Being multicultural country, Pakistan is experiencing tensions amongst different identities from day first. Linking to an identity can be described as a societal force that compels you to give importance to your own identity and make space for it in a certain environment. In a certain environment, identity cannot be denied or ignored. Norms, culture linked to any identity goes side by side with you wherever you go or whatever you do. It is a human nature.

When it is denied or ignored, or rejected, it is always confronted back from those who are deprived.

Pakistan faces an interesting challenge of conflicting identities, self-righteousness, stereo typing and negative tagging (Iqbal, 2017). These challenges are so intense that they could not be ignored. They need constant attention and address. To understand the role of diverse identities in Pakistan, first we need to know how identity and self-consciousness goes together. A person at times linked to specific cultural attributes and to its self which works according to its own will and perceptions. This self and culture are necessary for each other. In Pakistan, identities are segmented differently. A person at times is linked to its regional, racial, linguistic identities and to its central identity of being Pakistani. Pakistani identity at its core again is strongly linked to / associated to Islam in its political spectrum as well as in the religious context.

Pakistan is a state of diverse identities. These diversifications work at different levels. At one point it emerges from religious basis where religion is common at most identity related domains. At other point it emerges as national unity of being Pakistani as a central or singular identity to address the confrontation and conflicts amongst the society. How identity works in both levels, the main purpose is to promote the concept of single identity. Besides the concept of one national identity due space is needed to all ethnic, regional etc. identities in order to promote harmony among all.

For a single Pakistani identity, it is mandatory to integrate sub national identities in a diverse society. Democratic governance and diverse identities are directly linked together for a central Pakistani identity. In Pakistan, often time this central identity is challenged by regional, provincial and ethnic identities. Besides these, there are other identities that are arising at prominent level which includes Siraiki in Punjab, Makrani's, Hazara's and Barohi's in Baluchistan and Chitrali's, Gilgiti's and Hazarawal's in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Gilgit-Baltistan. In countries where democratic governance is limited, freedom of association and expression is a challenge for political system of that country. However, in many cases and scenario freedom of expression and association is



disputed in a multicultural country which hinders smooth functioning of democratic process. As a result of these reduced or limited democratic spaces identity politics became a dominant factor to hurdle democratization in a pluralist society.”

Ethnicity and nationalism are the dominant issues of war and peace in contemporary world politics (Khory, 2007). Though ethnic tensions stem from multiple causes, conflicts over competing visions of political identity are frequently at the root of many current disputes. Many scholars argued that whenever efforts are made to suppress any specific identity, or deprive them of their rights, it also arises conflicts and tensions among the society which later on ended in weakening of the national unity and harmony.

A primary concern in the political systems of multiethnic countries is the fear of domination or exploitation of some ethnic groups and assimilation by the other ethnic group (Khan M. S.). These grievances have arisen with times when due attention is not given to solve the problems of those who belongs to different identities. Public policy of such states has become silent about discussing issues of regional and ethnic identities. Pakistan is one of such countries where multiple identities are striving to live together in peace and harmony. In Pakistan politics based on identity is in practice from very beginning. Leaders of different ethnicity coupled with culturally sensitive intelligentsia plays their pivotal role to enhance ethnic behavior particularly during political process. The purpose of identity politics is to accommodate diverse cultures; religions and customs and given respect, which is their due.

According to Rahman, Pakistan is multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual society like most of the developing countries in South Asia (Rahman, 1998). Another scholar have described it as, From very first day of its inception, the aspirations of the people of Pakistan to live in peace and harmony and to have a modicum of material security have been unfulfilled (Ahmed F. , 1998). Rahman further added that, much has been written about the history, facts and legitimacy of ethnic grievances and ethnic competition in Pakistan time and again (Rahman, 1998). The relationship between ethnic

identity and political process is of much importance because it is a continuous process between two identities.

A.D. Smith defines political organization as a group that maintains the internal order; preserves territorial limits and allocates power and decision making over group action in a relationship with regional, national and international political power structure. While Fredrick Barth views “Ethnic behavior results from the self-identification of the members of a population whereby they distinguish themselves from members of another cultural or ethnic group with whom they have contact” (Barth, 1969). Living in two different regions and racial differences, there emerge differences between communities, who tend to develop their identity.

On the basis of these identity differences, leadership belongs to any specific identity evoke emotions of individuals and evoke language, culture and myths of racial origin in support of their aspirations and objectives (Axmann, 2009). Cartwright indicated that ethnic leadership appeal and influences the community in “direct contact” for the collective or group benefits, which can be either of a material or of an intangible nature (Cartwright, 1978). Particularly, in the event of the political structure being in the hands of a particular ethnic group, the dominant-subordinate group tussles for power sharing for societal rewards and goods manifests itself in ethnic terms. The identities formed on common language base (primordial) and taking political forms (instrumental), causing ethnic competition and conflict. The factors contributing are sense of belongingness and security; the fear of being deprived of the resources; being powerless; and the superiority of one’s culture and language over the other language (Hechter).

Power is that instrument which enables one to impose one’s will directly or indirectly over others or resist the imposition of other’s will. The consequences of the exercise of power would be the increase of tangible or intangible gratification of its possessor. This gratification could come from having influence, prestige, security and the possession of political offices. The exploitation of resources, development funds and

other material benefits while in political offices do result in the conflict among different ethnic groups in plural society.

As a federal republic since its inception, Pakistan has experienced endemic problems that have plagued its center-province relations, including perceived inequitable allocation of financial resources and the extent of political autonomy. Current crises include a rise in separatist and violent secessionist movements, a demand for new provinces, and a marked rise in peripheral politics.

Nationalism denotes a shared identity revolving around a sense of jingoism associated primarily with a nation. It involves a sense of belonging to a communal identity and sharing a common culture, ethnicity, or religion. The pattern of identity construction varies from state to state. Pakistan offers a unique case study of identity construction, using Islam as an instrumental variable (Raja Qaiser Ahmed).

Raja Qaiser Ahmed describes three key factors that have contributed to the erosion of a common Pakistani identity: (1) inequitable allocation of financial resources (2) army's dominance over political processes and its tendency to adopt discriminatory policies; and (3) political marginalisation of the smaller federating units (Ahmed R. Q., 2015). In particular, the relationship between Punjab and Pakistan's other provinces evidences these key factors. Punjab is Pakistan's most populous province and holds disproportionate control over the national economy, distribution of jobs, and institutional development. As a result, the other provinces exhibit underdevelopment — both structural and institutional — relative to Punjab. Based on these discrepancies, constituents of many Pakistani provinces perceive Punjab as exploiting their national financial resources. Punjab heavily influences the federal government, and other provinces presume the centre — identified in this piece as the Pakistani federal government — to be subservient to Punjab (Ahmed R. Q., 2015).

### **2.1.5. World Context**

There is a general consensus amongst the scholars on the significance of identity and its features in identity politics. However, they differ significantly on the causes of identity politics and on whether it really matters in a society. Regarding the causes of identity politics, some scholars have emphasised material factors while others stressed the role of social, political and cultural factors. Moreover, scholars are also divided on the issue of whether identity politics really matters in a society. There are those who defend identity-based political actions as an instrument for „social recognition“ and social „inclusion“ and those who criticise it as a reinforcing mechanism for social exclusion and social divisions.

Moreover, the role of identity politics is also rarely studied in national unity. National unity which encompasses national integration and improving state capacities is perceived as a response to state fragility since the 1980s. For many years, it used to be an exogenous or a top-down process in which the external forces have dictated the forms, types and conditions of state institutions. In the exogenous state-building process, often the interests of the donor states and organizations were prioritized over the local needs and traditions. In addition, the top-down model of state-building, through its stress on developing formal institutions, has substantially ignored the role of informal actors as well as the place of local cultures, identities and traditional values in the process of state-building (Debiel & Lambach, 2010). There is, therefore, a need for understanding the role of identity politics in national unity because it has the potential to prioritise the local context over the interests of donor states as well as to examine whether ethnic and sectarian power relations foster or constrain the national unity.

## **2.2. Democratic Spaces**

Democratic Space is described as a breathing space, within the plexus of a complex social order, to agitate and protest. It is an unwritten permission to think, a fundamental consideration and respect granted by a state to its subjects to raise a voice of

dissent and disagree. It is this democratic space which forms the basis of a vibrant democracy (Roy, Apr 28, 2017).

To maintaining a vibrant and pluralistic society that enables political participation and decision-making, democratic space plays pivotal role. In States in transition, where democratic space is nascent or limited, identity politics became a dominant factor to hurdle democratization in a pluralist society.

### **2.2.1. Background Theories**

Shrinking democratic space is a phenomenon that has accelerated in recent years and can be described as “the implementation of restrictive laws that limit the operations of a society” often as a process of power consolidation. Shrinking democratic space is part of a general authoritarian pushback against democracy and is intensifying in both democratic and non-democratic countries, a process often referred to as *democratic backsliding* (Mulkerins, 2018). Established democracy and human rights indicators report that general democratic development in the world has started to decline, with many countries revealing a negative trend of power deconsolidation. Although it is not a new phenomenon, shrinking democratic space has deepened in recent years resulting in an infringement on human rights and in a repressive media climate in many parts of the world. Threatened in particular are the right to freedom of speech and the freedom of opinion and expression. These human rights are fundamental for democratic participation and often signal a limit of several human rights and freedoms in a country. To maintaining a vibrant and pluralistic society that enables political participation and decision-making, democratic space plays pivotal role.

### **2.2.2. Democratic Spaces in Pakistan**

Contrary to common perception, the process of democratic development can move in another direction, away from human rights implementation, democratic governance and the principles of the rule of law. This is becoming increasingly known as

*democratic backsliding* and is the process whereby a country retrogresses or backslides to authoritarianism rather than continuing to progress democratically.

Despite the fact that Pakistan has entered the longest uninterrupted period of elected civilian rule in its history, democracy appears to be weakening. While elected governments and political leadership ceded space in policy spheres, the military has increased its overreach into areas outside of its professional domain.

With parliament and the civilian law-enforcement agencies having been rendered ineffective by the elected leadership, weak governance has allowed the judiciary to extend its role. Some judges too appear to have succumbed to populist pressures when they give mostly unwarranted observations during the course of judicial proceedings.

Lack of internal policy cohesion and focus on national issues has further weakened the democratic process. One of the factors obstructing the growth of a democratic culture and ethos has been the absence of democracy within the political parties. Most have turned into family enterprises or revolve around personalities.

There is no tradition of internal party debate on critical policy issues and it all depends on the whims of the leaders. Party elections are a sham and conducted merely for the sake of fulfilling a legal formality. The swiftness with which politicians change their party affiliations overnight for the sake of expediency, and the manner in which political parties woo so-called ‘electables’ illustrate the lack of principles in our political culture.

Instead of a steady transition towards an improvement in the quality of democracy, Pakistan has been sliding in the opposite direction more rapidly since 2013 when the PML-N returned to power and Nawaz Sharif was elected as prime minister for a record third time.

According to a report by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency, while the quality of democracy in 2013 scored its highest in four years at 54pc, the scores slid 10 percentage points in 2014 to 44pc, rose a little to 50pc in 2015

and slipped again to 46pc at the end of 2016. The situation has become worse in the past two years.

The challenge to democracy in Pakistan has worsened because there is a lack of crucially required reforms. There has not been any substantive improvement in the fundamental functioning of key democratic institutions. The failure of parliament in resolving issues such as the Panama scandal and the inability of the government to take the lead in formulating national security and foreign policies have further eroded civilian control.

The government's failure in institutionalizing a consultative decision-making process too has been a major factor in the expansion of space for unelected institutions such as the military and judiciary. Another aspect of the systemic failure of democratic governance is its inability to deliver on critical economic, social and political issues. That has resulted in waning public faith in democracy.

These are the vital issues plaguing the country's political process. It is apparent that democracy cannot function without the rule of law. There is a need for fundamental structural reform to achieve these objectives.

### **2.3. Students Councils in Pakistan**

Student groups in most public sector universities are deeply polarized along linguistic, sectarian and political lines (Haq, 2017). Since 1984, there has been a complete ban on student unions across the country. Clashes have been reported between student wings of various religious, political and ethnic parties in the universities of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

Most incidents were reported from Punjab University (PU), Karachi University (KU), Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) and the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUUAST) (Student groups clash at Quaid-e-Azam University, April 24th, 2017). In a

recent incident reported in The Express Tribune, Sep 25, 2018, students force IIUI to shut down the university on account of blocking Pashtun Cultural event.

Students of the varsity had wished to hold a cultural programme to mark the International Pashtun Culture Day on Sunday. The programme was due to include a poetry recital (mushaira) and was allegedly due to be accompanied by a showcase of cultural music and dance that is part of the Pashtun culture.

But the varsity, apparently succumbing to pressures from a **religiously-inclined student body**, refused to allow the event to be held. The university administration, though, has claimed that they could not allow un-Islamic events to be held on campus. This **angered the students** who contended that the event was supposed to offer a **cultural display**.

### **2.3.1. History**

Student councils/unions were banned during Gen. Ziaul Haq's regime. The order was rescinded by the late Benazir Bhutto in 1988, however, in 1993; the Supreme Court imposed a ban on the unions on the grounds that they contributed to violence on campuses.

According to a review published in "The Nation" the ban on student councils/unions in 1984 put society in a prolonged suffering for more than three decades; slowly allowing fundamentalism, extremism, linguistic hatred, sectarianism and other reactionary negative tendencies at education institutions of Pakistan, which are considered a hub of ideas, innovation and knowledge creation (Khaleel Jatoi, 2019). This step also eliminated the representation of elected student representatives at university senates/syndicates, governing and decision-making statutory bodies.

The absence of student councils/unions has also severely affected the culture of dialogue, democratic values and engagement of students in positive extra-curricular activities at university campuses. During more than one and half years of



deliberations, it was noticed by the committee that the ban on student unions had affected campus development and welfare, damaged the personal growth of students and healthy debates, caused damage in form of lack of student elections. And by extension, it leads to the death of the concept of representative governance in the minds of our youth. The committee acknowledged the vital role of youth in the progress of the country and society around the globe.

A few months ago, there were clashes between Pakhtun and Sindhi students of Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) and now we have seen clashes between Baloch and Sindhi students. Student's councils, ostensibly formed in the name of education and culture, are breeding grounds for such ugly incidents in prestigious institutes like QAU. Most of these councils tend to support the inappropriate and illegal actions of their student members.

The cultural and educational councils of Quaid E Azam University and International Islamic University are no different than the political and nationalist parties of University of Sindh, Bolan University and Peshawar University, and are also often divided into political and ethnic camps. Instead of being educational or cultural, these councils simply tend to reflect ethnicity, feudal values and the Khan system in Pakistan.

### **2.3.1.1. Student Unions vs Student Political Wings**

A student union, or association, or another name it may come under, is a student-run group that dedicates its time and resources to give the whole student community of the university, fairness, opportunities and a voice. The students' union is the students' organization in a university or college which organizes leisure activities, provides welfare services, and represents students' political interests.

They are two separate things. Student unions have nothing to do with the student political wings of an organization. They are two different things. Islami Jamiat e Talaba, Pakhtoon Student Federation (PSF) or APMSO, they are not unions. Union is an elective body. They do election and a student body elected; they are union. If few people together make baloch national movement or in Quaid e Azam University makes Punjabi Student Federation, they are not union. That is not a union. It is like; people party is not a government until it wins election. Similarly, when student political wing wins election, then it will be union. They mixed it up, like you did it for one reason and end up totally against it. They propagate that these students are militant wings. They should have ban militant wings rather than elected body. They banned islami jamiat e talaba and PSF; resultantly they matured in silence and indulge in quarrel and fights.

### **2.3.2. Student Councils**

On the other hand, A student council is a curricular or extracurricular activity for students. It's a group of volunteer students working together with an adult advisor within the framework of a constitution or bylaws to provide a means for student expression and assistance in school affairs and activities, give opportunities for student experience in leadership and encourage student / faculty / community relations.

Mehran Students Association (IIUI) and (QAU), Islamabad, In Quaid e Azam University Mehran Students Association came into being in 1983, In IIUI struggles started from 2005 and finally became fruitful in 22.04.2008. Initially members were very few which increases gradually. There are approximately 40 to 45 different councils in international Islamic university based on political, religious and nonpolitical basis. Jamiat has major hold in the university being a religious party which gives them advantage in every aspect. The basic reason behind other council is to resist for their rights. The slogan of MSA is itihad e insani, aman e alam and taraqi e baniadam that all the members has to be united. This unity will lead them to peace followed by development and improvement. The association facilitates students coming from Sindh region to Islamabad. These

include residence, language barrier, admissions, hostel accommodation, culture promotion and belongingness (Home Sickness). MSA conduct weekly discussion circle in which they discuss different issues faced by the students in university. They also conduct two events every year including a grand night which is a cultural promotion show in order to pay tribute to sindhi poets. MSA has an admission committee which starts campaign and display banners during admissions in order to facilitate approximately 400-500 students arriving from rural areas of Sindh like Tharparkar, Mithi, Nawabshah etc. every year. Those students normally face language and communication issues in a different environment of Islamabad. MSA act as a survival guide to those students. They also help those students in solving their educational issues like to communicate with teachers and class mates, understanding to take notes and attempt papers. Association also takes up admission issues with administration regarding seat allocation etc. As far as political affiliation is concerned, MSA is nonpolitical association and functions as a nonpolitical body on front line. However, association's internal structure is systematically designed as a political body. MSA raised their funds on monthly contribution basis from members only or those affiliated to the association, for the purpose a fixed amount is decided in committee which is managed by a Finance Secretary of the association. There is no foreign funding or any idea of that from university or any other institution. MSA has a constitution and is registered in the university and coordinate with university through proper channel.

# Chapter 3

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1 Ontology and Epistemology of the Research

The study is qualitative in nature. The basic aim to conduct a qualitative study is to create knowledge. Knowledge is created in social interaction between investigator and respondents and the "results" or "findings" are literally created as the investigation proceeds (Denzin, 1994).

The ontological position of this study is constructivist, which aims to explore the phenomenon of democratic spaces in the context of identity politics, whereas epistemology of this study is interpretive to find out the relationship of identity politics and democratic space and how it can be studied and explored.

The study is inductive to look for patterns and associations that will be derived from observations of the respondents. Data will be used to generate ideas in order to move from explaining specific observations/responses to broader generalizations and theories.

The purposes for using an inductive approach are to (a) condense raw textual data into a brief, summary format; (b) establish clear links between the evaluation or research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data; and (c) develop a framework of the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the raw data (Thomas, 2006).

### 3.2. Conceptual Framework

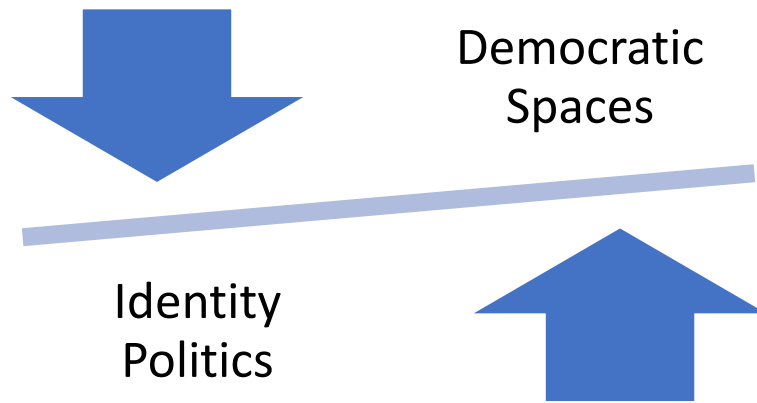


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### 3.2.1. Research Map

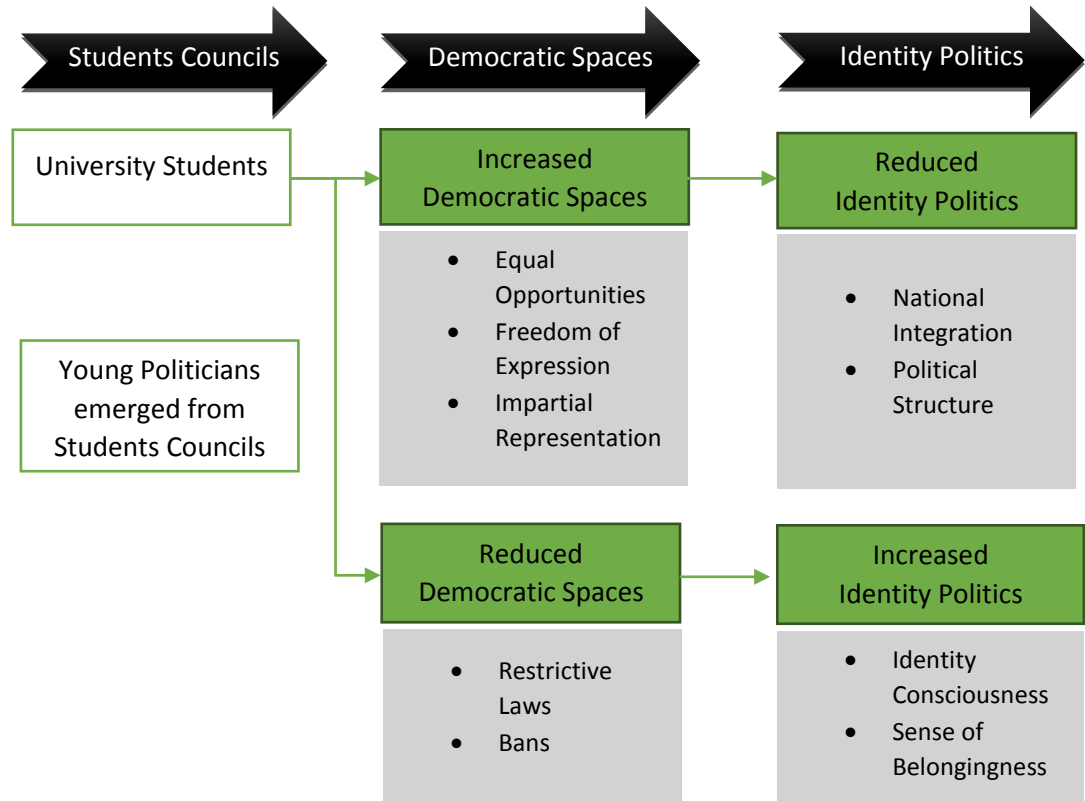


Figure 2: Research Map

### **3.3. Research Design**

This research aims to gain further understanding of the phenomenon *democratic space* by examining the situation for student's councils in Pakistan. This qualitative study examines the freedom of speech/freedom of expression and opinion, political structure, identity consciousness and sense of belongingness and participation for student's councils through the method of focused group discussions and semi-structured interviews. To gain deeper understanding of the current situation in Pakistan, this study puts forward the question of whether the democratic space is expanding or shrinking in this context and if this has an effect on/relationship with identity politics.

#### **3.3.1. Research Method**

Qualitative research method is used for primary data collection based on focused group discussion with students' councils' representatives and interviews of young politicians emerged from students' councils in Pakistan. The type of investigation is Exploratory and analytical. Thematic analysis technique is used for data analysis. Study is carried out in a non-contrived setting. Unit of analysis is Individual (Student/representatives, Young Politicians). Time-Horizon for data collection is cross-sectional.

#### **3.3.2. Data Analysis Technique (s)**

Basically, a pure qualitative technique of thematic analysis is used (Amanda Coffey; Paul Atkinson, *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1996)

- At first the in-depth interviews and focused group discussions were transcribed and verbatim transcripts were made.
- Then the transcripts were used in analysis to understand the emic perspective of the study (the viewpoint of the study: participants in their own words)
- Later, the data was made anonymous by giving the fictitious names to the participants in order to fulfill the ethical consideration.
- Then the data was categorized based on themes/concepts arise from the responses.

### **3.3.3. Sampling Technique (s)**

In order to reach the target group for interviews, a purposive sample technique is used. Purposive sampling focuses on the theoretical aspects of the data, explores the characteristics of the items selected to form an opinion on them, hence, and focuses on qualitative research. In purposive sampling, the items are selected in such manner that each of them is rich in information about the parameters that we are trying to study in the population. The main target for this sampling is not to represent the whole population but to get sufficient information on identity conscious people. A purposive sample is strategic in nature as it intends to reach agreement between research questions and the chosen sample. Therefore, the researcher makes their sample group with an intention to interview persons that are relevant for the research questions at hand.

In purposive sampling, we are always in search of samples that are rich in certain information. The intended sample group for this study is Students' Councils Representatives of universities in Islamabad and young politicians emerged from students' councils. Key persons were contacted in order to reach potential interview respondents.

The prevailing concept for sample size in qualitative studies is "saturation." It implies that the more information the sample holds, relevant for the actual study, the lower number of participants is needed. Therefore, the researcher will stop at the point of saturation, where adding new data does not improve the explanations of the themes or the categories or add any new ones.

Qualitative analyses typically require a smaller sample size than quantitative analyses. Qualitative sample sizes should be large enough to obtain enough data to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest and address the research questions. The goal of qualitative researchers should be the attainment of saturation. Saturation occurs when adding more participants to the study does not result in additional perspectives or information.



### **3.3.4. Construction of Interview Guide**

The primary methods for data collection were focused group discussions and in-depth interviews. This interview type is qualitative in nature and is both flexible and dynamic in its approach. According to methodological research, “a qualitative interview seeks qualitative knowledge expressed in normal prose and doesn’t seek to quantify results” and ultimately aims to gain nuanced descriptions of the respondent’s perspectives and understanding of the world.

The interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide that present questions thematically. The use of a similar thematic approach to the interviews allowed for later comparison of interview responses. The themes are selected on the basis of their relevance for the research questions.

<b>Contributing Factors</b>	<b>Studies where used/References</b>
Sense of belongingness and security	Michael Hechter, “Response to Cohen: Max Weber on Ethnicity and Ethnic Change”
The fear of being deprived of the resources	Pris-Notebooks (N.p. International Publisher,1971)
Being powerless	Pris-Notebooks (N.p. International Publisher,1971), Michael Hechter
The superiority of one’s culture and language over the other language	Michael Hechter, “Response to Cohen: Max Weber on Ethnicity and Ethnic Change”
Identity Consciousness	Muhammad Shahid Khan, The Politics of Identity: Ethno-Political Identity in Local Political Structure; Khalid Iqbal, Conflicting Identities in Pakistan
Political Structure	Muhammad Shahid Khan, The Politics of Identity: Ethno-Political Identity in Local Political Structure
Equal Opportunities	Pearl Mulkerrins, A case study of democratic spaces
Freedom of Expression	Pearl Mulkerrins, A case study of democratic spaces
Participatory Government	Khalid Iqbal, Conflicting Identities in Pakistan

Table 1: Contributing Factors

#### **3.3.4.1. Focused Group Discussion**

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The group of participants is guided by a moderator (or group facilitator) who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst them.

For the purpose, key questions were developed by developing an agenda for conducting, and planning how to record the session. Between six to eight suitable participants were invited. Even participation, careful wording of the key questions, maintaining a neutral attitude and appearance, and summarising the session to reflect the opinions evenly and fairly was ensured. A detailed report was prepared after the session is finished. Observations during the session was noted and included in the report. Participants of focused group discussions were representatives of students' councils in universities of Islamabad.

#### **3.3.4.2. In-Depth Interviews**

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. For the purpose in-depth interview was planned and instrument was developed. Key respondents for in-depth interview were young politicians emerged from students' councils of universities.

# Chapter 4

## 4. Findings and Results

A total of four Focused Group discussions were conducted from two students' councils namely Pakhtun Council and Mehran Council from Quaid-e-Azam University and International Islamic University in Islamabad. Five In-Depth Interviews were conducted from young politicians emerged from students' councils of universities. Themes that have emerged during Focused Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews are presented under sub headings. The participants are coded while carrying out data analysis and presentation of result with Focused Group Discussion as FDG X and In-Depth Interview as Respondent X.

Five In-Depth Interviews were conducted with one representative from Mutahida Quomi Movement (MQM), one from Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI), one from Awami National Party (ANP) and two from research institution who have actively participated in students' councils of universities during their studies. Interview persons are coded in the presentation of the results and collected data is presented thematically with relevant themes that emerged during the interviews.

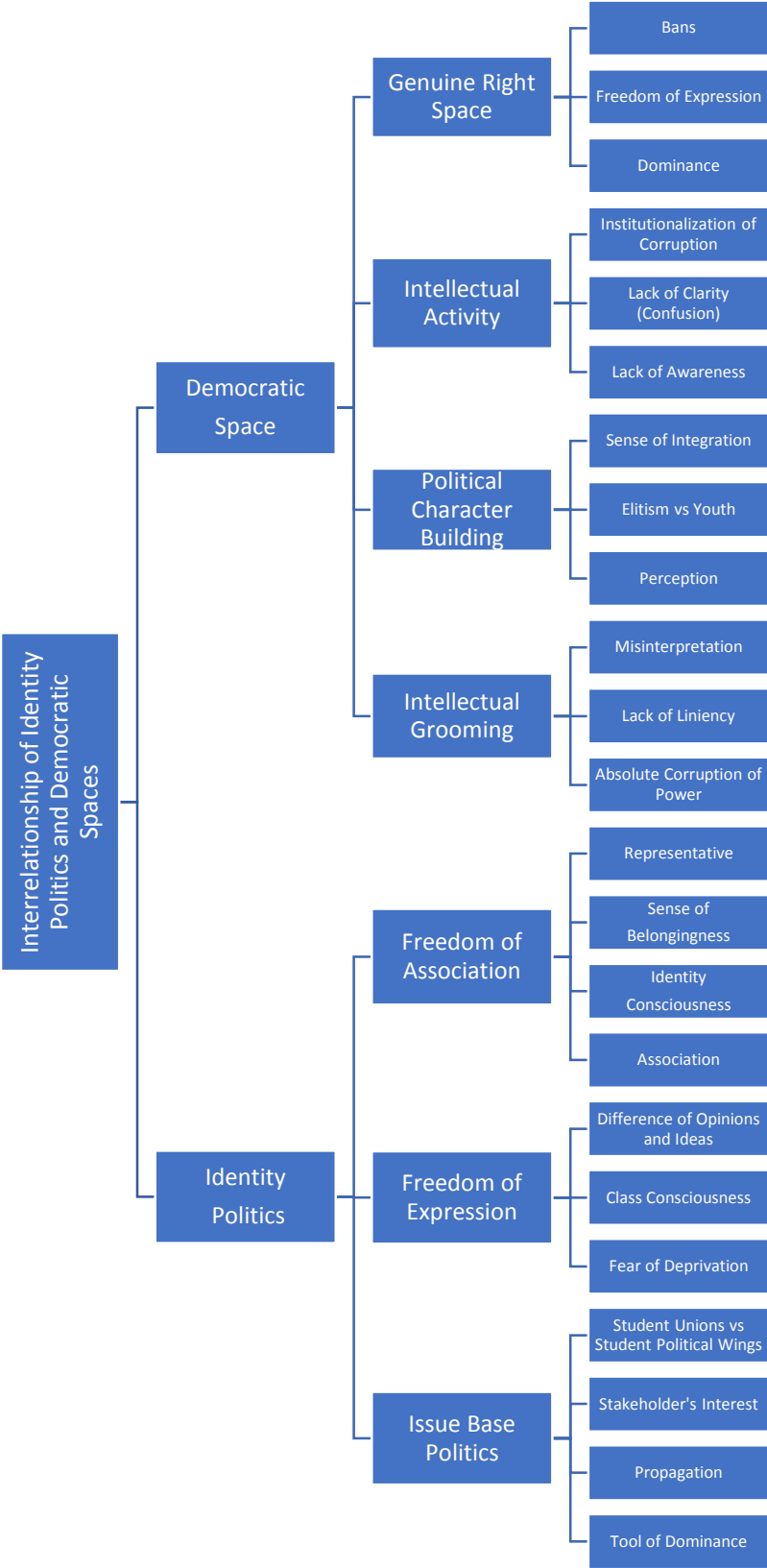
The first two Focused Group Discussions took place with students' representative of Sindh from both universities, their council is named as Mehran Student Association. Both discussions last, on average, for approximately one hour and forty-five minutes that gives insight to the perception of students about identity politics and democratic space in the context of students' council in the universities. This discussion is coded as FGD-1 and 3 for ethical reasons and the purpose of continuity in thesis; all respondents' names are kept confidential. The next two Focused Group Discussions took place with students of Pakhtoon Council from both universities which are coded as FGD-2 and 4. These discussions last, on average, for approximately one hour and fifty minutes. All the discussions are coded for ethical reasons and the purpose of continuity in thesis; all the respondent's names are kept confidential.

Focused Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews were recorded, the recordings were transcribed verbatim and a thematic codebook was created. Each transcript was reviewed twice, new themes were identified and created new codes corresponding to those themes.

All codes were defined and emergent themes were noted down. Saliency of the themes were graded as per its appearance in discussion (proxy measure of salience). The focus group discussion lasted, on average, one hour and fifty minutes. Each focus group had six to eight individuals.

Of the forty (40) individuals who expressed interest in study participation, four (04) did not meet the eligibility criteria. Seven (07) eligible individuals consented and were scheduled but did not attend the focus group. Twenty-nine (29) individuals had joined scheduled focus group. Out of twenty-nine four participants shows very less response during discussion due to low insight of discussion in progress. Rest are fully aware and shows determination and participated well during discussion.

# 4.1 Themes Map



## 4.2. Themes Overview

Themes Overview			
Themes	Sub Themes	Data/Participant's Opinion	Saliency
Democratic Space	Genuine Right Space	Democratic Space is considered as genuine right space for freedom of expression. Due to restrictive laws and bans students complain that they have no platform to express their view in the context of political representations. With less avenues of expression, they are facing dominance by other identities. They resolve such issues through negotiations and through their respective councils who are bound by Strong Administration, Cooperation and Coordination, though sometimes they face Harsh Behavior, yet there is a hope of Positive Response.	High
	Intellectual Activity	Democratic Space is also considered as intellectual activity, which nourishes young leader, as it stopped due to bans, it ignites institutionalization of corruption. With its stoppage youth is also facing lack of clarity, they are confused regarding many terms due to lack of awareness.	Medium
	Political Character Building	As Democratic Space has major role in political character building, with ban now it is more like we have only watch dogs due to which our youth is lacking sense of integration. At our front line we can only see	Medium

		elites while our youth is lagging behind by them. Youth perception is unclear about being part of political leadership.	
	Intellectual Grooming	Democratic Space is also a tool of intellectual grooming, intellectuals gives their ideas and explains it in their study circle. With reduced democratic space students' minds are poisoned by misinterpretation of many concepts. With misconception and lack of leniency, Absolute Corruption of Power (Game of Power) arises.	High
Identity Politics	Freedom of Association	Freedom of association is a fundamental right of every citizen; it gives representation and sense of belongingness. It is a sense of security to those who are identity conscious. For many it's a tool for survival and important to define oneself. Culture hybridity is also a motive for association. Students councils provide awareness and accommodation for their respective representation. They are non-political and Properly Functioned. Students has Free Will to join them, there is no restriction.	High
	Freedom of Expression	There are difference of opinion and ideas but every person is born as a free man therefore he has the right to express freely. Those who are class conscious they have the fear of deprivation, therefore like to be represented as per their identities.	Medium
	Issue Base Politics	Student Unions and Student Political Wings are two different things, due to lack of	High



		<p>awareness amongst students they mixed it up. Identity politics aroused due to Stakeholder's Interest. They propagated their interests in a way that peoples are trapped in it. Identity politics is used as a tool of dominance. Due to reduced democratic spaces and less representation of youth we are lacking Emancipated, Informed Political Leadership.</p>	
--	--	--	--

Table 2: Themes Overview

### 4.3. In Depth Interviews

#### 4.3.1. Current Democratic Space

During discussion it has been emerged that providing Democratic Space is a constitutional right. One of the respondents have explained that, *“it’s a constitutional right”*. They explained that, *“Irrespective of the identity politics, Constitution of Pakistan gives Right and freedom of association”*. Article 17 of Constitution of Pakistan gives freedom of assembly and freedom of association and expression and It’s not a principle of policy, it’s a fundamental right and in any case no law or institution can restrict / restrain it from you. Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order (Chapter 1, Fundamental Rights of Part II: Fundamental Rights and Principles of Policy).

Freedom of Association is that, *“Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or union, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality”* (Article: 17), explained by one of the respondents that, *“like we cannot make LGBT right organization as a matter of morality. Pakistan Army cannot make their trade unions as a matter of integrity*

*and Baloch cannot make Baloch freedom movement as a matter of sovereignty”. It has to be in the ambit of law, “Riyasat k daayerey k andar, daayerey se bahar nahin honi chahiye”.*

### **Genuine Right Space**

A very interesting and rightly chosen term emerged during interview about democratic space was that it is a “*genuine right space*” which is currently not seen that much as previously. One of the respondent recalled that, “*In the recent past, the intellectuals and learned segment of society, in universities and colleges, from Pak tea house culture of this country, like Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Habib Jalib, they talk about burning issues of the society, there they create ideas, students listened to them, labors listened to them, where they have a democratic movement, and a genuine right space, where they don’t want to be MNA, or to get any seat of authority but to discuss and resolve issues and illness of the society*”.

In recent days it can be seen that our institutions have no Pak Tea house culture where students can sit together with intellectual segment of the society and debate about the issues of the society, where they can broaden their vision and present their very own opinion about different issues. One of the main reasons behind this is pointed as “*a ban on indulging of students in any political activities during their studies*”.

### **Intellectual Activity**

One of the respondents explained that, “*democratic space was regarded as an intellectual activity provided to the young people in order to exchange their ideas and create new ones*”. And now when we have no Pak tea house culture, where any other intellectual together with students can talk or give ideas how can we expect from our youth to take the responsibilities of leadership. They explained that we don’t have any single name in Pakistani literary spectrum which could be a true representative of today’s

literature. Up to 1979 Pakistan education system, not from any foreign university but from our own universities, produced one after another, Amjad Islam Amjad, Parveen Shakir, they all are 70s generations. And then it stopped; a complete silence.

### **Political Character Building**

Another theme that has emerged was that these spaces were the institutions for “*political character building*”, where students learn about politics of their country. One of the respondents is of the view that, “*when these activities stopped due to bans and restrictions from the government, it stopped political character building of our youth. It also stopped or at least slow down the process of self-recognition and awareness. It stopped the process of critical thinking of our new generation where they don’t know how to take decisions*”. When another respondent was asked to express its view about this process, he replied that, “*Yes, we only increase number of our votes without having new ideas, without gaining know how of the democratic system. Our youth don’t understand the purpose of their life, of their education, they are becoming money making machines, and it is because their critical thinking process has stopped*”. And the reason behind this is because they are not involved or indulged in any positive activities which collectively benefit them and society as well.

### **Bans / Restricted Laws**

Answering to the question, “*Why students unions do not exist or banned?*” respondent explained that, “*they are banned due to Supreme Court decision long ago*”. One respondent was of the view that, “*they are purposely banned after observing their violent behavior towards establishment*”. Due to this ban, students and intellectual segment of the society became restricted to express their opinion openly, this is the reason that now we have no Pak tea house culture irrespective of the fact that personal representation and expressing of your opinion is a fundamental right. It wouldn’t be

happened if responsible authorities have taken into consideration the fundamental rights of constitution.

### **Institutionalization of Corruption**

While talking about the impact of reduced democratic spaces or bans and restrictive laws, one of the respondents explain that, *“it has emerged that when intellectual activity stopped and people stop talking about ideas, their fundamental rights, right and wrong, there they find the way to institutionalize the corruption. In which they find and pave ways for making money openly through institutionalized corruption where they straight away ask for their share”*. The other express their views as, *“It was a planned process, where they segmented the political system on identity basis to start a blame game in order to divert the attention of masses from the real issues”*.

### **Watch Dogs**

During discussion it also emerged that those spaces were restricted on purpose just to produce *“watch dogs”* in order to restrict new minds and ideas. They have to make them purposely because they want to propagate vigilantism because they think it amazing and great. It’s a process where you gradually propagate extremism, where you start from one point, where you think that you are the only keeper of all wellbeing and you are the only authorized for promoting all wellbeing. And only you will propagate it, so if only you are the responsible or in authority then where is the states standing?

### **Intellectual Grooming**

Providing genuine right space to young peoples is a process of intellectual grooming. In Pak tea house culture, where they gather and discuss to groom minds of

young people because there they sit together with intellectuals. It all happened there, in those houses, the intellectual grooming, when there were students' politics. Where people over a cup of tea, decide ideas to bring change, "*chaye ki piyali men toofan wohin sey uthta tha*". According to a respondent, "*all the movements were happened in the universities by those ideologues. Who were Rousseau, Nietzsche, Plato, Aristotle, Imam Ghazali, Imam Jafar Sadiq, Shah Wali Ullah, they all were think tanks. We stop that grooming and now we want to bring change in the country*". So, until we revise it as per law, then we will have ideology base politics. And when we talk about someone that he is a Jiyala, what do you think, how they became Jiyalas? Why the followers of Jamaat-e-Islami is so committed, because both of them have study circles. When Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto says that socialism is our economy, people have started writing books on the topic of Islam and Prophet (PBUH). They have proper study circles where they explain it. How they became Aitizaz Ahsan, in which international university Raza Rabbani studied, from where Choudhry Manzoor came. They all are your local craft. Government College Shaikhu Pura, Government College Jhanrhwala, Government College Qasoor, they all are from there, because they talk about issues. Who contested Molana Modoodi? Now no one can dare to write a book like he did. But Molana Kausar Niazi or Rafi Raza, and Mehmood Ali Qasoori they talk about Molana Modoodi's ideas. They all were the politicians who were intellectuals and philosophers. And they were active, they contest elections. Now today do we have a single person except Aitizaz Ahsan who is active in politics? About whom you can say that he is in his own rights a political scientist. They are the people who will go up from bottom and will talk about ideas, ideologies and issues. They were qualified and best people.

### **Lack of Emancipated, Informed Political Leadership**

When democratic spaces are restricted from the higher level it ends up that now we don't have "*emancipated, informed political leadership*". According to a respondent, "*we want to work on merit yet we still exercise Parchi system in order to get undue favor. We avoid merit, we work on short cut basis, our new generation has tricks to crowned morality and it's a serious matter*". And if we look in a broader spectrum, the most successful student in MBA is the one who bring more clients. So, we teach them

swindling the reality. And somebody who is very articulate in swindling, will get more incentives from its organization. This is a bad form of new colonialism. It's capitalism. It's a bad form of American capitalism that we are promoting. And honestly speaking this is eradicating morality in our children over a period of time. We only are teaching them making money, a job with a tie and in a bigger firm, this is all they need. Now a day's our children don't want to study humanity and literature, because there they can't find jobs and why it happened, because we stopped their intellectual grooming.

### **Democratic Spaces in a Non-Democratic Culture**

Talking about democratic spaces respondents is of the view that, "*in our society we don't have democratic culture. Reduced democratic space is actually the main cause to push people towards identity politics*". If they got the proper space, platform and proper representation, the people will not seek refuge in belongingness to their identity. In our system we don't have avenues for minorities, we are not ready to let them study in our institution, and students don't want to learn from anyone who belongs to a minority. Yet we want them to integrate into our system, this is just because we are intolerant towards them. This is because we don't have democratic culture, because in a democracy rights of every human being are equal. Every person has a liberty to choose, there are pre-defined rules about liberty in our religion as well. Founder of Pakistan also has defined it that every religion has liberty in our country; we are united as a Pakistani. They will be treated equal but our culture now a day does not allow this liberty. Even you don't have the liberty to join any political party, your family; your friends force you to vote for certain parties or representatives. This is because of reduced democratic spaces at every level even if we talk about universities as well.

Another view was that, "*Students don't have freedom of speech, there are certain universities where you can express your opinion but yes there are others where you cannot think about expressing your opinion*". There are certain platforms that allow you to talk about religion as well while there is some where it is thought to be a sacred topic and you don't dare to talk. A head of literary society of a university admit that,

*“they can talk openly because they don’t have any such restriction from the administration and yes, we can witness some where you also receive threats on this basis”*. Similarly, you cannot openly debate on media, at local places, if you belong to a political party you cannot appreciate the good job of another / opposite party, there are certain sensitive issues like Salman Taseer and Asia Bibi cases, where you cannot express your opinion irrespective of the fact whether it is right or wrong. Only people’s party owns him and it is just because of party’s philosophies, otherwise most of them tries to ignore. You do not accept court decisions if it is against your opinion and start protests. We can quote Mashal khan’s case, no one step forward to save him, because of dominance and extreme behavior, because of intolerance. When you reduce democratic space, it causes intolerance in behavior due to the fear of deprivation from your due rights and resources. Which drives you to stick to your identity and your community, it is also due to the lack of awareness that restrict you from broadening your vision. These factors contribute towards sense of belongingness and dominance; you want to feel dominated in order to get due rights and privileges. And due to the reduced spaces, a person is conscious of its identity and feels secure near the people of its own identity.

They further explained that, *“there are certain situations in which you have to show your primary identity and that could be any, your regional, racial, language, sect etc. because people on the basis of this want to decide whether to support you or not, whether to establish relationship with you or to establish certain boundaries”*. They want to decide whether you are right or wrong irrespective of the fact that every person is free in its opinions and living style. If you are of the same identity and wrong than its ok, but if you are from different identity and right than there is no tolerance. Our political parties and religious parties both have this level of intolerance. They don’t want to support or criticize you on the basis of right or wrong but on the basis of who you are or affiliated to. Recently, Prime Minister has wrote a letter to the ministries from the prime minister’s secretariat instructing them not to mention his name as Imran ahmad khan Niazi rather to use only Imran Khan due to certain interests. Chairman Pakistan People’s Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari wanted to be identified as the descendent of Bhutto instead of his own father due to political interests. Mariam Nawaz wanted to be known through his father’s name instead of husbands, again there are political reasons. It

is all happening from upper level to the lower level; we do it to gain certain interests. If three major parties in Pakistan i.e. Pakistan People's Party, Pakistan Muslim League-N, and Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf are openly promoting identity politics. Instead of expanding democratic space it is shrinking day by day. We can see that measure have been taken to oppress pakhtun tahafuz movement. They don't want to listen to them that what are their concerns. The other very important issue is that we are lacking good and groomed leadership and we are facing it due to lack of awareness, we don't have any such institutions where our youth can flourish and learn critical thinking. We are also lacking study circles where they can debate on different issues and be able to analyze situations.

### **Current Democratic Spaces and Identity Consciousness**

During discussion it is observed that democratic spaces and identity consciousness are interrelated in one way or other. Democratic space means that you don't have the fear of deprivation from your resources, expressing your ideas and opinions etc. It is that you won't be judged by your identity but by the integrity you have. If you have fear that due to your identity you cannot go somewhere, or get job, or education, that shows you are lacking democratic space which is a major issue in our country though it is not very intense in federation, but you can feel it in other parts of the country. You can see that those muhajirs who came to Punjab have blend in and they are now known as Punjabi instead of muhajirs, but those who decide to stay in Sindh, they are still known as muhajir instead of sindhi, they are not accepted there. Sindh inhabitants didn't provide them their right space. In Punjab they were provided with residence and property as a replacement what they left behind while in Sindh they weren't provided with residence and property as a replacement. Minority from Karachi didn't move to India, they choose to stay, therefore, muhajir who came from India weren't accommodated in Sindh; instead they establish their self at their own. They from very start struggled for their self on the basis of un acceptance, resultantly when they find their selves deprived from jobs and other resources, they establish Mutahida Quomi Movement, which became a distinctive identity for muhajir. So we can see that the reason of promoting muhajir identity was their un acceptance and deprivation, as a result



Mutahida Quomi Movement became the representative party of Muhajir community. This problem arises only in Sindh, where they were segregated as Urdu speaking, in Sindh only 4% quota was fixed for urdu speaking. This segregation wasn't made in other provinces. Before Mutahida Quomi Movement they don't have any identity or representation. MQM arises as Muhajir Quomi Movement which later on in 1992 became Mutahida Quomi Movement. Reason behind giving name to their movement as muhajir, and promoting them on the basis of this identity where muhajir community shows affiliation to it was their un acceptability because sindhi history never witness invasions, they never merge other nations, being a nation, they are very old and have vast history, towards other nations they are not that flexible like others. Like in other regions from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Delhi, invaders like Ghouri, Soori, with their invasion changes the dimensions of those regions.

Answering to the question that, “*who is promoting division?*”, one of the respondents expresses that, “*Federation itself doesn't promote division, they consider all as a different region of a country. At a structural level federation is strong but that is not promoted positively. Whereas regions are promoting their identity at individual level, they are not taking it collectively*”. Though federation is strong at central level, but is facing difficulties in promoting sense of nationhood. Promoting identity as nationalism is not going to work, because this is a false conception because it is based on hate towards others. German Nazi's leave it behind after fighting two wars, only then they realizes that it is a false idea when they are left with nothing, no money, no lives, nothing. Here we are promoting the same and do not want to leave it just because of our ego and arrogance. This is not only the case within; we are not lenient outside the boundaries as well. Being an enemy or having ideological differences are two different things, we are mixing them together. We are unable to prioritize our interests, we don't know where to focus and what to leave. We need to integrate our nationalism within the society like other countries do, they don't promote nationalism within the society, as a nation they are one and united. We also need to work on this. Like what we did in 1947, we link nationalism with religion and got separated, same is happening again, we segmented our society on the basis of regional identities which is increasing internal crises and tension. Local democracies are at stake, when you oppress the political voice of the society, where will

they go or what will they choose, they aren't even able to decide who to vote for. It seems like society is divided amongst some political parties and their interests. Right now, in center is Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf, in Sindh we either see Mutahida Quomi Movement or Pakistan People's Party, in Punjab it is Pakistan Muslim League-N, and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa it is all Awami National Party, though Awami National Party doesn't flourish at that level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as they don't have any learned or educated back up. Educated and learned people don't support them due to their dual and extreme behavior. ANP in KP has different stance, there they don't show extreme behavior while in Sindh they express extreme and hated behavior through their speeches, MQM expose their dual behavior to the people of Sindh that they are playing dual game in order to spread anarchy in Sindh and this is the main reason that ANP is not flourishing at that pace because educated pakhtun don't support them in playing dual game. In KP they link their self as a follower of Bacha Khan, a pakhtun leader while in Sindh they do strikes and fights. Federation has to change its strategy to control such behavior, here the responsibility of integration lies within federation, in PML-N government, they tried to better the trade relations with neighbors which was a better stance, in present government we again are losing trade relations with our neighbors. It would have reduced your economic issues instead of increasing them.

### **Political Structure**

Talking about role of political structure in reducing democratic spaces it is emerged that political structure does not promote participatory government; to some extent we can say this. But if we look at structure of our senate, it is based on equality; similarly, if we see structure of parliament, seats division is on equality basis. No one have reservation about this. Government at its best tries to take on board every segment, like they try to promote inclusiveness and integration. Resources are distributed through NFC award. Yet there is still unjust distribution in terms that if you receive higher revenue from a unit, you should give them more share which is not the case. If you collect seventy percent revenue from Karachi only, in return what portion you give back, similarly in Islamabad, from E sector, you don't collect enough revenue, a lot of politicians' lives there, but your share of investment is huge in E sector. Instead you are

propagating that people don't pay taxes, how can you say this when a single person wakes up in the morning, he got his teeth brushed with tax paid tooth paste. Instead you are spreading false information. Places where people are in huge number pay more taxes, tax is not only the deduction from the earnings, it is paid in every aspect. When a person buys a car, he pays tax to the government, if a person starts a business, he first has to pay tax, instead what facilities or incentives government is paying back. These are the indirect taxes and you don't consider those, these are the tactics of ending or reducing democratic spaces. Government is not ready to accept the contribution from citizens. False circumstances have been created that only federation and its departments are contributing in the government. This culture is promoted to make people feel that they are not contributing in the economy so they don't have the right to claim for democratic space. Whereas in reality even a vendor too is contributing in the economy through circulating his earning by spending it to fulfill his needs. You also collect from citizens on accounts of dams, projects, charity etc.

### **Reduced Democratic Spaces**

Answering to the question that, "*where and how these spaces are reduced?*", one of the responses was that, "*on political basis we talk about parties, we talked that federation in not doing it, the structure is supporting, but the culture is promoting divisions and spaces are reducing*". Political parties, religious parties are doing it, institutions itself are not involved, but within the institutions they create tensions, you can quote dozen such cases where peoples are deprived of on account of their case, religion, ethnicity and race, where unjust decisions / action are taken on the basis of these divisions. In our culture, people make relationships on their identity basis; they find links on the basis of religion to religion, race to race, and ethnicity to ethnicity. Currently, the present government is not following this stance which is a positive gesture and hope so it prevails. Mostly, blood relations are favored in different organizations and institutions. But still there are some departments who don't favor blood relations or relatives. In private or corporate sectors, relatives are not favored because they believe it unjust. It creates conflict of interest and influencing the department or the administration. But if we take it in another scenario, we also see that it is in human nature that we don't

trust strangers, we only trust our relatives or loved ones. As far as the organizations or departments are concerned, they should base on a proper and systemized structure rather than on relationships or links. In proper structured institutions, decisions are not made on the basis of relationships which are seen at a higher level in our political set up. There should be a merit-based system which only promotes deserved and eligible candidates, and there must be a strong accountability system. In our system and in our culture, we have to spread awareness about following the rules and laws, to follow a proper structure and procedure. We must realize that no one is above the law. We must not give or seek privileges on the basis of relationships in institutions and departments. In our country authorities are negatively used to gain personal interests. We need to spread awareness to bring eligible people in front line, this is in human nature that we want to be around trustworthy circle, it is not bad, but people in this circle should be eligible and as per the merit, we should not compromise on merit. In our and in every political structure, cabinet is formed as per the discretion of Prime Minister where he tries to choose those who he knows well in order to work smoothly. In our department we don't have proper anti-discrimination policies which meet international standards.

### **4.3.2. Dynamics of Identity Politics in Pakistan**

#### **Freedom of Association**

During discussion about dynamics of identity politics the respondents have explained that, *"it's a constitutional right"*. They explained that, *"Irrespective of the identity politics, Constitution of Pakistan gives Right and freedom of association"*, which shows that association is a fundamental right. Article 17 of Constitution of Pakistan gives freedom of assembly and freedom of association and it's a fundamental right. It's not a principle of policy, it's a fundamental right and in any case no law or institution can restrict / restrain it from you. Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order (Chapter 1, Fundamental Rights of Part II: Fundamental Rights and Principles of Policy).

Freedom of Association is that, “Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or union, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality” (Article: 17), explained by one of the respondents that, *“like we cannot make LGBT right organization as a matter of morality. Pakistan Army cannot make their trade unions as a matter of integrity and Baloch cannot make Baloch freedom movement as a matter of sovereignty”*. It has to be in the ambit of law, *“Riyasat k daayerey k andar, daayerey se bahar nahin honi chahiye”*.

### **Freedom of Expression and Issue Base Politics**

While discussing association as a fundamental right, one of the respondents have explained it in relation to the movements in past, they discuss that, *“as we can see that freedom of expression is a fundamental right and it’s by design and by default. We can see that a movement run against Ayub Khan, there were three main segments involved in it, it was three origins, one, students come out on roads against him, and those students talk about fundamental rights. Second, all labor unions go against him, and third, the intellectuals and learned segment of society, in universities and colleges, this was because of a democratic space, they have such circles where they discuss and express their issues”*.

When intellectual activity stopped, then it ends in issue base politics. Then what had happened, they stuck in issue base politics like sewerage issues, the one who bring gas will got our vote, and we witnessed party less elections. There must be a party so we have witnessed party less elections which is basically characteristics democracy.

### **Belongingness**

Identity is different as per situation, when you are in America, you identify yourself as a Pakistani, if you are with some religious persons, then you identify yourself as a Muslim. A person is conscious about his identity when he has to show his identity or

he is in a situation where it is necessary to show its identity, and when it is not needed /demanded, he is not conscious. A respondent explained it with an example that, *“for example, if a person lives in USA, he doesn’t need to show the identity of from where he basically belongs. There they use only two terms, native American, the other is non-native American. Like either you are American or you are not, third term is that you visit for a shorter time span and then go back. So, it doesn’t matter what is your religion, or where you live or from where you belong. And if a person is in Pakistan, here a person has to show his identity, and it depends on your surrounding or your circle. If your circle is highly educated and learned, there you don’t have to identity your mother tongue, or your region, this does not make any difference. But if your circle is lower, then they develop their perception about you as per your region, or the language you speak”*.

From this example we can assume that, individuals show their affiliation and belongingness on the basis of identity especially in a multicultural society and a pluralist environment. But the problem is that here you have to show your affiliation and belongingness but the tolerance level is reduced, diversity is not honored. Here in our society diversity is taken in a wrong sense. They don’t take it as a good sign. They say and show that here people from different religions and culture lives but do not own it. The fact is totally against it, another respondent explained that, *“at bundar road, Karachi, there were 20 houses of Parsi peoples, today there are only two, and those are their religious places in fact otherwise they all ran away from here. In Pakistan, whether it is parachinar or Quetta, where hazara community lives, or in Punjab, where you witness burning of the villages, the reasons were intolerance by not allowing merging of other cultures into ours in a multicultural society. Here identity crises are at extreme level. For their survival they focus on fighting with each other”*. From this we can see that, it is important in this society to understand multicultural dimensions of this society by discussing them instead of fighting. Instead of denying different identities it is the need of hour to integrate them, else we are moving forward towards a society where everyone is afraid of others due to diverse identity or even opinions. they are conscious while living together that with which kind of people are, they living, they are conscious when considering any marriage proposal, because they don’t want to live or establish relationship with different identities. It shows that these relationships are not based on

humanity or human qualities or abilities, those are based on identities until and unless they are forced by certain limitations. A highly qualified university professor in Islamabad university, don't want to marry his daughter to a person who is not from his cast. Cast is a sub identity which is at very minor level, which is assumed, and don't have language and region of its own, but an educated person is not ready to forgo its identity. These are the identity crises in Pakistan. It shows that in Pakistan identity consciousness and sense of belongingness is at extreme level which resultantly appearing to be an identity crisis. Those who are from extreme minorities like parsi etc., they are even afraid of showing their identities. We see that Christian community are facing problems. A man from Hindu community explains that, *"I am always conscious of showing my identity just to avoid any problem or issue, if I start division on religion basis, I am afraid that something bad will happen. I just want all to treat me on the basis of humanity rather than my religious identity"*. In Asia Bibi case, from Christian community, was basically a social issue, which starts from fight between two women on some domestic issue, and it ends on religion basis. It shows that at different points, different identities are used/misused to get some benefits or to harm the oppressed identity or community. The main reason behind this is that this society is primarily based on identities, so wherever and whenever you have interest on religion basis you show your religious identity, and when it's the matter of your cast, there you show your cast. Where you can benefit by showing your sect you don't miss a chance and if is the matter of political party, it's a plus point as well. And it is just because people know that by showing their identities at different points, they can get their interests. Identity is the basic of relationships in our society.

### **Consciousness**

Consciousness also depends on where you spend most of your time, if it is a place where all people are too conscious about their identity, and then there you will have to be conscious. If you are in a place where no one cares about your identity, then you too are not conscious to identify yourself.

Discussing aforementioned scenario with a respondent, he explains that, *"places where people are not conscious about identity, they appear to be more tolerant,*

*while where they are more conscious, they appear to be intolerant towards your identity, there they will decide for you for who you are or should be. There on the basis of sects they will divide you and allow you or permit you to do certain acts. Due to your party affiliation, you cannot join the other party, or even to know the others. This is actually intolerance that makes us conscious".* Researches shows that the class differences also appear to be a major factor in building tolerance level, the higher your level of elitism is in terms of money and intellectual level, the more tolerant you will be. And the lower your level of elitism is, the narrower you will become, you will see things on the basis of identity. The basic reason of this is your approach to resources. When you feel you are not approachable to the resources, you start looking for the reasons where some finds or think that it is due to the migrants' afghans who utilize our portion of resources, so they should be sent back. Though it is not the reason, you cannot measure that the water resources are for how many peoples, or the production we have from agriculture, how many people will utilize it, businesses that are done, generates the economic activities. It develops healthy environment. But people look for the reason. People who already are in short of resources they start blaming, this blame game increases intolerance and people become scattered.

### **Identity vs Ideology**

There is a huge difference in identity and ideology, identity doesn't have any specific ideology, ideology is a mindset, which is based on right or wrong, good or bad pattern, a thought process. A respondent explains it with example that, *"for example, I am a Muslim and I believe on Allah, this is my ideology, but where I born, the language I speak, the place and people where I grow up, there I develop my identity. Like you speak any language, other might not like it, but as you speak that language, you definitely will like it. The point is what you feel good. But when we talk about ideology, it doesn't mean what you feel good, it means what is right. Identity can rely on ideology but ideology cannot rely on identity. Identity is your affiliation in a narrower sense; ideology is a broader concept like we say Muslim Ummah. It means those who follow the same ideology".* If you go to Malaysia they will not allow you blend in, even you go to saudia, they would not allow you to make property. They only need you when they need



workforce otherwise, they won't allow you to visit even. Though we are sharing the same ideology but the difference is of identity, because they are identity conscious. Sometimes ideological differences also create intolerance. Like some say that we cannot live with the peoples of other religions, even countries are built on ideological differences. Though they create a country on the basis of ideology but still unable to tackle identity crises. Identity magnetizes you, connect you.

### **Political Structure**

Political structure which is basically the three tiers of government, are not suppressing or oppressing any identity. As far as representation of prime minister or president is concerned, they are representative positions, where it is the matter of constitution or state sovereignty; therefore, it is un-debatable, because state sovereignty is the ultimate concern of every individual of that state. Political structure which includes the three tiers i.e. Executive, Judiciary and Legislature, too are not suppressive or oppressive of any identity because every person is free to affiliate to a certain identity. They allow any political party who got mandate to form government irrespective of the identity. Judiciary doesn't take decisions on identity basis. Administration don't give deputations on the basis of identities, if anyone is Punjabi, he can be an AG of Sindh, if anyone is Sindhi, he can serve in Gilgit, people of federation can serve in Kashmir committee, however socio-political structure of Pakistan, the society, promote those differences. There the crises are huge, because political parties to gain power in order to got mandate, play identity cards. Major political parties, like Pakistan Muslim League-N, they raise the slogan of Jaag Punjabi Jaag, they start it almost 25-30 years back and they are doing it today as well. Mutahida Quomi Movement play Muhajir identity card, Awami National Party Pakhtuns card, Pakistan People's Party play Marsoo Marsoo, Sindh na daisoo (that we are sindhi and we will not divide Sindh) card and show their belongingness to Sindh, and gain votes on the basis of these cards though administratively they are massively fail in delivery of services. But with the help of this card they always get strong position in senate and national assembly. It shows that socio economic culture of our society is strongly based on identity politics. And they properly divide you in segments, even Jamat e Islami play religious card on every occasion. Our

society is massively divided on socio political basis in identity politics on the basis of religion, regional, language, cast etc. Pakistan Muslim League-N also plays Biradri Politics card, due to which it is also on the rise. This is the basic reason in the rise of cast-based identity at narrower level. With the increase in your awareness level, the first factor is that you forgo the cast, which is because your cast doesn't have any broader standing. You start going for the broader level. But in Pakistan identity is narrower down to its lower level to gain more benefits from it rather to integrate it into broader and national level. And it should be done with the increase of knowledge and awareness but it doesn't happen because though knowledge is increasing by graduating of thousands of students from universities but they are lacking the awareness, personality groom, higher level of intellect.

Identity suppression is there on socio political basis due to which different associations and movements are there, if you don't have identity-based suppression there would be no Mutahida Quomi Movement in Sindh, they won't be there, on similar basis, today PTM (Pakhtun Tahafuz Movement) are strengthening its roots. Like Sindhi Mahaz, Baloch revolution/regulation front. Similarly, when we talk about provincial divisions in Pakistan, like we heard about Punjab divisions, we heard about Potohar province, when they talk about their own identity, when we do the analysis we see that, Potohar Province or Bahawalpur Province, we see that they don't have any strong stance, they never remain suppressed and remain on strong positions and economically good, they don't have strong stance on the basis of their language, because they can't do this division on the basis of their Potohari or Seraiki language only, but if you talk about the Sindh, there the case is different. There you see the strong affiliations, they don't talk about division. Similarly, hazara community in Baluchistan, they are not yet accepted by the locals, though they tried to be accepted, but they are not accepted because they are not pakhtun/Baloch irrespective of the fact that being pakhtun or Baloch does not give you the right to suppress or terrorize the others to leave their identity or place of living, this shows the intolerance in certain communities. In 1986, in Ali Garh, Karachi, there was a fight between Pakhtuns and Muhajirs. The basis of conflict was that in lower Sindh muhajir was getting stronger, and sindhi too were not ready to accept pakhtuns and muhajir communities, pakhtun was facing problems from both sides, neither sindhi were

accepting them nor they were establishing patch up with muhajirs. Resultantly a reaction generates from pakhtuns that we are living here and we have to live here. Two groups have fight and, in a day, killed approximately 150 peoples of the other group. This shows that they fight for their survival and today karachi is a biggest city for pakhtun inhabitants, for survival showing intolerance towards others is common now a days. In balochistan, hazara community cannot use force to fight for their survival because they are not that strong. Karachi itself is a multicultural city, where you can find people from almost every identity and ideology even the residence and graves of Jews.

### **Identity Politics**

Answering to the question as to whether political parties are involved in promoting identity politics, the response was that yes, political parties play cards of ethnicity, race and religion. Jamat e islami use religion for political gain. Mutahida Quomi Movement is ethnicity-based party and use race as well for political gain mostly in Karachi. Awami National Party also use it, Pakistan People's Party is totally based on it, like Jiye Sindhi Mahaz. Similarly, Baloch Liberation front, all of these is based on ethnicity, race and religion. The most moderate party right now in Pakistan is Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf who do not use identity card till now. They talk about Pakistan only instead of specific identity. Pakistan Muslim League-N are thought to be open party but in fact they also use slogan of jaag punjabi jaag, they only work for development of Punjab, in their five years tenure they did not start any single development project in Sindh while in Punjab they finished almost 12-15 mega projects. They started metro project in a small city like Multan, where population is very less and mega project like metro is not needed. That project is in loss right now, but they didn't consider a bigger city like Karachi where it was more needed. And they did it intentionally, facilitate Punjab only, these are the practical things that shows that how they left others and promote a specific stance. Like in 2013 when Pakistan Muslim League-N wins elections, he was greeted as congratulations to the prime minister of Punjab; this is just because he got 80 percent votes from Punjab and 20 percent from others. While Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf, on the other hand does not use any specific identity. If we look in the history, we witnessed that on the basis of identity we lost our East Pakistan. Studies shows that

identity crises were there from 1966, there Punjabi and Bengali cannot sit together even at the university level, the only platform where they can sit and talk together was jamat e islami. Religious identity was used in 1947 as a tool or instrument for independence but they could not manage it afterwards to keep different identities together. It was used back then, but in 1971 we could not use it and we can see it today as well. At that time oppression was there even from the state organizations as well. In 1969, from all over the Pakistan in Pakistan army only three brigadiers and one general were from Bengal, and the rest of the army was from here, it was a massive division, in this situation how can you say that from two areas of equal population, representation of one is five percent and the other is 95 percent, these were the basis of separation. And after that separation, here sindhi, Balochi are integrated to bring them in stream line to avoid Baloch and Sindh division, pakhtun and Panjabi were already present in the army but sindhi and Balochi were not the part of it. This is why Baloch and sindhi are given accelerated promotions to bring them in streamline. For them quota and merit are quite lenient, if they did this before, the situation may be different today in the case of east Pakistan but later on they learnt from this situation and make changes in different scenarios.

### **Integration**

Answering to the question about facing difficulties in integrating identity conflicts, it is observed that there are different reasons that in our society different cultures are facing difficulties to integrate in a nationhood or come together at a single platform, the main reason is the lack of education, people are unaware that there could be possibility to live outside the box of their identity, they have concerns. The other reason is the division of resources; people are not getting their through share of resources. We have to work on it, it seems like we are very strong at federation, but in fact it is too weak, because it is standing on the foundations that are not factual. For example, majority are saying that federation has nothing to do with the Higher Education Commission, while few people in Federation decides that it should be run and controlled by the federation. If they are rejecting stance of 99 percent people and accepting only 1 percent, how are they going to integrate and facilitate different identities and their concerns. It is the world of globalization, in it, it is not important to think about that in a student who is

graduated from Sindh, is still at matric level, while a graduate from Punjab is at different level. Let them both free and compete with the world, they their self will know their worth. But if you don't allow them to explore their true potentials, they will never raise their level and standards. Similarly, due to restrictions, you continuously will face these identity crises. Today mayor of Karachi is saying that in CSS exams, no single Urdu speaking candidate is allowed to qualify. They dropped them in interview and couldn't go ahead. They too are educated and capable. But why it happens, because they created a power game, where you only allowed influential to sit and clear the exam to claim institutional and influential posts. Those positions are related to power, until and unless state look into these divisions, you will face issues and problems from different segments of society. Federation has to devolve its power to the lower level to gain their trust and develop sense of integration, let them exercise those power and responsibilities. Only issues or institutions that are sensitive could be run by the federation like security and finance. Just like Punjab developed and the previous government did work in these areas and show the development in Punjab, let the other provinces do the same, so that they can come forward, rather than federation interfere in posting of IGs in provinces, this isn't federations job, policing is society's concern, every society has its uniqueness, and they know better the crimes that are happening in there and how to tackle them. A person who lives in a certain place can better understand the loss of their beloved homeland, they can better understand the needs of their people and how to fulfill them, and an outsider will never understand that pain. Let them do the policing instead of federation. And involve political parties, their representatives and local community as well for effective policing. You do not allow them to do this, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa a head is from Punjab, who don't know the exact dimensions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; this isn't right because you want to control them. Controlling them isn't the right thing, you should control what is necessary to be controlled, let them solve the minor problems their self. Rather you interfere in every petty issue, you kept water issues with federation, you are controlling WAPDA, let them produce their own electricity if they want so and if it is needed. At least let them try and distribute. But federation wants to establish plants and produce electricity and decided where it has to be distributed and who to keep deprived. Where you produce electricity, people who are living nearby, does not have it or access it. This

is the matter of resource distribution which actually is not fear. Let those people find and distribute their resources. Let them be benefited. It is known that in Sindh we have second largest coal resources. Let those people dig it and use it. But you dig it from there and don't provide them even gas which is their birth right. In Pakistan seventy percent gas is produced from Sindh and you only promote sui and people don't know the facts, you don't let them think that why Sindh is deprived of the gas if it is produced in Sindh. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is producing oil but there the situation is same as in other provinces. Federation has to change the pattern of exercising its power. They have to talk seriously about national level issues like kala bagh dam, diyamir bhasha dam, issues where people don't only think about petty issues but feel sense of integration at a national level. Where they feel that federation is working for the betterment of the country. Federation actual concern is national level issues, where people want them to work on it; they expect them to work on national issues. Instead federation could not manage to distribute resources amongst them, Sindh chief minister has given its stance that Sindh is not receiving its due share. Federation deprived them of their right; this is the stance of the representative of the province. If a representative of million people is saying this, it means this is the view point of those million peoples. And they can promote division on the basis of his stance and these are the reasons in deprived areas in promotion of identity base divisions. Why representation from Quetta has not emerged? Because they are not allowed, let them avail benefit from gawadar. When they will be benefited they will stand for national interest rather than self-interest. There are a lot of examples where local peoples are deprived off of employment because they are not recruited in their local institutions; they have to travel far for getting jobs because they are not given opportunities by their local departments. This is why rural areas are not developing and this too is the reason for urbanization and over population in big cities. In Sindh there are wind power plants, they don't give jobs to the locals, the reason they give for this is that they are not hard working and lazy. This is actually not the fault of those workers, but the flaws in your management that you are not able to achieve optimum work done from your employees. They blame East India company that they use our resources and deprived us of our right, what you are doing now is the same thing they did to you and now you are repeating it. And you don't give awareness to people so that they know their

rights or can ask for it, because you know that you are depriving their genuine rights. You go to a resourceful place, drag out their treasure, you don't give them jobs, you don't work for their development, your CSR don't work there and you blame political representative and others for non-development, where is your role? Where is your CSR? Federation has to work at least on the issues highlighted in 18<sup>th</sup> amendment. But today a member of National Assembly from Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf, submit its petition in Sindh to nullify 18<sup>th</sup> amendment. Why they are going back for centralization when developed countries choose for decentralization to make federation more strong. Why don't you want your institutions to flourish and exercise their power as per their own discretion? Why federation wants to keep all power and control at a center, these are the questions that have to be answered. Where developed countries already tested that centralization and saturating control at center is a loss and not beneficial for development, this is why they choose decentralization. Strengthening federation means you have to give out put rather than saturating control at center. People choose their representative through their vote, they don't build them. They don't want charisma personalities, lies, they want development, and they want output. In 2010, Karachi became so strong that they were making agreements with different countries of the world, they became sister city to Houston America, their mayor became second best mayor in the world. They make an agreement with turkey to filter sea water into drinkable water, the only condition from turkey was to have consent from federation but federation didn't approve it due to conflict of interest between political parties in federation and today there is a shortage of drinking water in Karachi. Those political parties have reservation regarding their political interests. They don't want that people came out from their domestic issues and question their work performance. If we see in Punjab, they had had number of international agreements. Shahbaz Sharif paid number of international visits; he made agreements with turkey, china, goes to different countries. He made development in Punjab because he has back up of federation. He had approvals because they were in the government. In other provinces, federation didn't allow you to make some development; they didn't allow locals to work independently. This became the culture now; these issues cannot be resolved until and unless it is changed. There are certain political elements who don't want to resolve these issues. If we talk about today's government, first they stand

against metro project on some political grounds, then they started making it in peshawar, because they got pressure from the public, they have to do it, and there was a record mismanagement in their project that now they ask for more budget because the roads mistakenly constructed too narrow and it needed to be enlarge in order to pass buses through them. Now who will question them for this extra budget which they asked due to their mismanagement at first place? Who is responsible, nobody is going to take the responsibility. And how come the roads became narrower, didn't they do the planning for the project, the measurement, the feasibility. It is not like everything is wrong in our country, we have institutions, department, they are working well, but the undue restrictions and pressure don't allow them to work in smooth environment. It is the matter of mindset, the culture that has been developed there didn't allow them to do their proper task. The level that Punjab has achieved, that has to be sustained or upgrade, but today's chief minister don't have the capability to even sustain the level. Previous government made huge development; they upgraded the hospitals, drug regulatory authority, food authority, their inspections and check and balance, the higher level of good governance people witness there. They stopped government doctors from running private clinics in official timings. But today's government deploy incapable person just to make him puppet so that he can obey your orders only and play dummy.

### **Identity Conflicts**

Identity based conflicts normally destruct everything and every relationship; it separates peoples rather than bring them closer. Yes conflicts could be constructive, if resolved and transformed on mutual understanding basis. But the reality is that we are not willing to resolve our conflicts, instead we use violence which creates or give rise to another conflict. Sometimes our conflicts are too violent that they are inherited from generation to generation. Instead of working together to reduce the intensity of conflict, to transform it into constructive conflict, it became worsen and destructive. In my personal experiences I more often have to restrain myself to say even



right thing just because I realize that the other intends me to say something on the basis of which they will get a point to raise a conflict and end up in fight. We need to realize that through debate and listening to the others opinion in the only and better way to resolve conflicts. We have to understand others, to own our mistakes, and not to blame others, our society mainly suffers from blame game. Our government is doing the same thing, not to own their mistakes and blame others. The same thing happens in our students' circles, in universities, in our political talks, which is not healthy and productive. When you purposely promote a culture where your win is to blame others and prove them wrong, then you will not be able to transform destructive conflicts into constructive conflicts. You will not be to resolve your issues, your problems. When you are not ready to own diversity, to accept uniqueness of others, and insult them, how possibly can you think about the integration of different and diverse identity. Unfortunately, we do so in our stage plays and TV Drama which is promoting the culture of insulting others, disrespecting them, their culture, their race etc. We need to adopt measures to stop promoting this culture of insulting other which is creating insecurity amongst others. Forums in our society are based on anti-propagation, the basic motive behind this is to prove others wrong by any means. They do not support the right and justice, but to prove the opponent wrong. We arrange marches and strike to humiliate others and not to bring positive change in our society and ask for what is right and just. Our new generation are headed towards what is not the right and purposeful and it is because they are not provided the valid forums and right space, the intellectual study circles. We only provide them hate, if it is state, we promote hate with our alliances, if it is political parties, we teach them how to hate the opponent parties, if it is religion, then we teach about how to hate different sects. When we talk about the organizational structure of institutions, we are amazed with how brief they are, but at operational level, they are totally the opposite. What happened to hazara community? We give them solution of making boundary walls, how many boundary walls are we going to build? There are different cultures. In the reaction of APS incident, we try to kick out all the Pashtun vendors from our markets according to government orders, how many others are we going to kick out? Is this the better solution to build walls and kick out others? What does that mean, isn't it the reduction of democratic space? The fact is that you do not have a

single expert on conflict resolution or transformation. You don't have experts at all. Those who have done MBA in marketing are the analysts on politics and they even don't know what politics is because they never studied it, who don't know or differentiate amongst different paradigm of politics, who are not the people of social science and who don't understand the social psychology of the society.

### **Identity Politics and Political Structure**

Those who have come to Punjab after separation, they merge in here; they left their own identity and adopt Punjabi identity and never indulge in identity crises. On the other hand those who go to Sindh, they didn't do that; they choose to keep their own identity. The question is that the identity on the basis of which you are approaching ahead, every person is proud of something, like some says that my father is a great man or some says that I have a 500 years history which keeps me alive. To make this identity alive and flourish they celebrate cultural days and events, even the councils are based on the cultures and its promotion, even due to the severe governance issues in Sindh, they are not ready to leave their identity and adopt sindhi identity. They celebrate their cultural days like pakhtun day and mahajir day but not ready to be identified as sindhi. One of the reasons of this may be that political representation of Sindh is unable to address/resolve Sindh issues. To resolve these issues because when you facilitate others your identity too will be flourished and those who became the permanent residents of Sindh will be willing to adopt sindhi identity a clear stance has to be adopted regarding identity differences.

It is also observed that they don't have any political alternate, with sindhi peoples, people's party have full control of Sindh, and they have control throughout the history. Their feudal system is too much strong that we cannot challenge it. Even though we tried, its roots are that strong that couldn't be shaken easily. Other thing is that we are fond of peeri mureedi as well. We also have that influence. Our major issues are not being solving due to these three main issues. Our intellectuals focus on these things/issues to shake them, to break the ice. Because they are too strong, their slogans are the symbols like jiyaley, hur. Like I belong to a particular race, I am a Mehar, even though I am in Islamabad, doing BS English, reading different literature, studied different

nation, yet again if I have to vote I will vote to ghous bakhsh Mubarak. It's dominance. I cannot challenge this dominance alone.

Actually, these are not the current problems, they are from the very beginning, from 1947, because on which principles we got separated we are unable to implement those principles. The motives, grounds and ideology that we had, we couldn't implement it. The conspiracy arises from there. (There are a lot more issues, like the river of Sindh, according to international law, no one can take canal from river bank, but in Sindh you have hundreds of canals, and Sindh has shortage of water and resources. Gas issues, produced in Sindh, name used of Sui and utilized by others. Baloch too are fighting for their rights. They are fighting for their fundamental rights. Sui does not have gas, it is utilized by others.) It's the fear of the power loss rather than identity loss.

But our youth is changing, paleejo, although talk in limited sindhi context, but he talks about the problems because he knows about the fundamental problems. He has a study of Sindh and talk on behalf of that study. And it is our misfortune that we lost such peoples. We didn't support them. Now it is seen that in our youth a utopian or we can say a nostalgic thinking is developing. They debate and arrange conferences that what to do to bring change. But it will take time to improve Sindh and its youth/generations. It is not that easy. If you keep people away from educational process, you don't educate them; do not make them aware, how you will bring change.

The other participant discusses it that they don't have alternate, the available persons are almost the same, who to choose? People's party is not the alternate, their manifesto is totally different. Education is not the only problem, health is another thing, if a child is not healthy how will he get other things, we have disabilities, mothers are malnourished a lot more others. Dyslexia, ADHD patients, gastro patients, in a worse condition that no one could identify them. Education is the secondary issue, if you don't have health. In many districts water is polluted due to huge number of industries.

In 2010 it was planned to make sea water drinkable through a plant by city government of Karachi. Turkey was involved in it. Turkey had a condition to get back up of federation; they were not ready to do contract with city government. Federation till today never allows that plant to be operational.

There is also a huge class difference, elitism, in that where at one hand you talk about drought, you also can witness swimming pools there. If they can provide water to those pools, why not to the poor people. You can find huge water supply in defence, though it may not be available in other areas of Karachi. In Clifton you have no issue of water, electricity, pollution etc. we have established class differences.

In previous years we also face issues regarding freedom of speech, if we make it specific, from 2006 to 2009, MQM was dominant, they even took sacrificial animals' skin at gun point. If someone doesn't want to attend a program, they call shutter down strike. But after the recent operation, it is quiet changed.

If we talk about MQM, even though they are in suppressed environment, they are forced to do different tasks, but they are loyal towards their leader. Even if it is allowed in our religion, they will bow down to Altaf Hussain because they got the reward for it. Like if there is a vendor, and he has shown some progress for its party, in next election he will be a minister.

Same is the case in interior Sindh, vote is biased through money. Our election system is too cheap; we cannot support intellectual persons, until he has something to offer. He has something to buy a seat first. Our youth, don't have enough money to print a pamphlet how he will undergo a political process.

One of the participants talk about Jamiat that when they look them in general, they are very polite, decent. But here in universities, they do everything by force, and dominated. If they openly talk about/against jamiat, it will increase the clash, we can take the example of Mashal Khan, we also can take the example of Professor who is killed on the basis of religion. Under the party, their ideas, system is very convenient, pro society, revolutionary, but dealing with other they became harsh. When we make divisions on personal basis, it became more complex and unacceptable. In our case, ideology is great but there is no implementation.

We have not learnt that what is politics and how can we do this. State is unable to fulfill its responsibilities. They are unable to provide education and health to the citizens. We talk about right to information but are we even getting correct

information, is our media providing correct information, if you are isolated and only watch TV channels, you will never be able to know the exact problem of Pakistan. As far as the youth of Pakistan is concerned, today's youth is just like a machine. When he born, he is vaccinated, for the first year he remained ill, after that he has to face a lot more issues, like where will he study, what will he do, when he became young, he is indulged in gaming and other stuff on net, he has nothing to do with the ideology or identity. He slept all day in the hostel, read one day before exam, and give exam only to pass paper. He has no critical thinking; neither has he had ability to think about his nation or nationhood. We read propagated syllabus, we only read course books, we don't have the habit of books reading, course that I read is pro state, and there is no such critical thinking in it. Our youth don't know about Michael foco, Nietzsche, Marx. And the reason what they give about not reading them is that they are atheist. Despite them, we even don't want to read about our local literature including abulkalam azad, ubaid ullah sindhi and shams ul ulema. Similarly, amongst the socialist we have habib jalib, faraz, faiz, jun alia, manto. About manto we say that he is fascist. We don't go for realities rather give excuses.

In my personal opinion, what I observe is that, when we talk about political concerns of people of four provinces, people of Punjab are more concerned to politics, secondly the people of KP are concerned and they have broader view of politics, they are more open. They don't want to remain in bandages, boundaries. In case of Sindh, they never remain invaders, they don't have broader political vision, they are more concerned to culture and identity rather than politics. Political crises may be a reason that good political leadership could not emerge, ayaz palejo was emerged before 12 years and now there is a huge gap.

The other crisis is that our young leaders are used by intelligence, our leaders if wanted to talk, they are silenced. In Punjab, leaders don't talk about ground realities, they talk about temporary solutions, and they count for their interests, their family's interests and their society's interest. While our sindhi leaders, when our Bhutto rises, they don't talk about temporary solutions, their voices are heard over years. We take him as our leader, he was a constitutional reformist, and he addresses nation and

national interest in united nation. He was a brave leader, he doesn't talk about temporary interest, and he demanded permanent solutions.

Our people when come, they talk about Pakistan, not about nationality, those who talk about nationality does not make it to the front, other parties like ANP etc. they only talk about their identity, not in general. We have to respect all cultures whether it is Punjabi or sindhi, no one is superior but respectable. We only have to make sure the respect of our culture and people and not to show any ones superiority. We should be proud of our identity but not at the cost of others respect.

### **4.3.3. Student Councils in Pakistan and Identity Politics**

#### **Misinterpretation**

During discussion it is emerged that due to lack of guidance and proper platform the concept of identity politics has been misinterpreted for students in order to use them for personal gain and interests. One of the respondents shares his personal experience that, *“in an engineering university, where student unions were banned, political parties would propagate their party's interests through university students”*.

#### **Student Unions vs Student Political Wings**

While discussing with respect to students it has been observed that there are certain confusions amongst student unions and student political wings which are explained by the respondents, they explain that, *“there are two separate things. Student unions have nothing to do with the student political wings of an organization”*. They are two different things. Islami Jamiat e Talaba, Pakhtoon Student Federation (PSF) or APMSO, they are not unions. Union is an elective body. They do election and a student

body elected, then it became a union. If few people together make Baloch National Movement or in Quaid e Azam University makes Punjabi Student Federation, they are not union. It is like; people party is not a government until it wins election. Similarly, when student political wing wins election, then it will be a union. Mostly students mixed it up, like you did it for one reason and end up totally against it. They propagate that these students are militant wings. Government should have ban militant wings rather than elected body. When they banned Islami Jamiat e Talaba and PSF; resultantly they matured in silence and indulge in quarrel and fights.

### **Role of Youth in Politics**

We recently have witnessed the role of youth in politics that their vote got the higher mandate, those are now in government who are chosen by the youth by giving their vote. They properly participated where they have to participate and resultantly, they got their desired results and prove importance of their role in politics. Which shows that youth can / are capable to bring change in our society. Their main concern in present scenario should be to educate their selves so that they can identify their right direction. So that they can differentiate between right and wrong, understand it, see it in broader way, think and act upon it in order to explore new horizons of possibilities. If youth is aware and empowered enough, they could bring a positive change in this country. We have witnessed in many cases that our youth is determined to be identified as a one nation, Pakistani, rather than Sindhi, Punjabi, Balochi or Pakhtun. We also have seen them coming out of religious segregations and proud to be identified as a true Muslim rather than any specific sect. Their role is to change the destiny of our nation but with this role, there becomes responsibilities, which is to change yourself and your society for better and for this they have to be aware enough about their problems, their solutions, critical analysis of what is wrong and right on the basis of justice. Right now, they are struggling with their responsibilities because they don't have proper or suitable platforms to present their ideas and to flourish their selves by focusing on their areas of interests. They don't have the proper guidance, institutions and structure in order to groom. We are not focusing on our corporate social responsibilities. We don't have proper structure to

stream line local communities. We don't give opportunity to speak up to our youth, to represent, to participate, to give their opinion. We build so much boundaries around them that they are afraid to talk about or comment about any issue, even if they know that they are right. They keep their ideas to their selves because they know we are not ready to own them and appreciate them. Today the need of hour is the ethical education, to improve our life style, to upgrade our education system. We have a lot of institutions for social issues but we don't promote their functions, their responsibilities, today a person don't know how to get aid from Bait-ul-Mal for education but he properly knows how to beg from 100 peoples. It is because people don't know about Bait-ul-Mal, not only the Bait-ul-Mal today we have a lot more institutions and organization, what is more needed is to spread the word to make people aware of their rights. We put all the responsibilities on any one, rather it has to be on both sides, not only the organization but the end user or stakeholder too is responsible to fulfil its duties towards those organizations. In Pakistan, only banks have started it that they put pamphlets on their counters which explain the responsibilities of not only the banks but the clients as well. We must be clear about role and responsibility, both, this is a long way process that start from parents towards children, teachers towards students and organizations towards their employees. Organizations has the major role, when they act justly, it leaves imprints on the whole society. When they do the other way, it surely has a negative impact on all. If organizations are unjust and corrupted, it affects the whole country. Here the role of youth increases, in our policy making there is not any defined role of youth. It is because their presence and importance are not yet accepted here. In local government system, only one seat was allocated for youth which was shared with women. They need proper support, back up to perform their role efficiently and effectively, they need platforms, which are in present scenario not present. Student unions are banned. We don't train our youth to lead, we teach them to get job and make money. Because for such training they need hands on practice, which could only be done through student unions, and this is one of the main reasons that we lack leadership. Even youth representatives in political parties are in their fifties.

Answering to the question about ban on students unions, one of the respondents discuss that their ban basically is because of their violence, when they grow



in violence and intolerance, they got uncontrolled and became threat for the state's sovereignty, they were being used by different parties. This shows that they need proper nursery which is controlled by the state, where they can groom. Identity based politics and indulging students in it may seem harmful or a threat to others, but for those who are actively involved in it, it is a best part of their job. They look for the those who can join and help them, because for them every individual is a resource person in different aspects. If we can take the example of MQM, before its creation it was known as APMSO, which shows before going towards bigger canvas you need a nursery, where you can properly define your rules and interest. What we need in it is the proper supervision, so that they may not got towards the negativity. It is not only the reading the contents or syllabus, it basically is the hands-on practice which can only be achieved through student unions. There are student wings in the political parties, but they are not properly functioned but only used to gain specific political interest. They are educated, young, aware, and educated. They need of hour is to properly train them, provide them platform, opportunities, they must be allowed to practice, to do debates, critically analyze the situations. They must have proper control structure. Student participation in politics is essential, we should give them opportunities.

## **4.4. Focused Group Discussions**

### **4.4.1. Identity Politics and Students Councils**

#### **Representative**

A very interesting and rightly chosen term emerged during Focused Group Discussions about Students Councils in universities that it is a platform for students of all ethnicity in order to provide them a healthy and neutral platform where they can flourish without any worries. Where their issues can be heard without any discrimination and resolved. It is the basic motive of this council to promote culture and education

awareness. The other participant explains that there are two basic needs of forming Students Council, first is to promote our culture and identity. Other is to promote awareness amongst students belongs to the rural area of Sindh and to accommodate them in the university. Another participant explains its view point as the prime and sole purpose of students' council is to promote our culture and to address and resolve all social, moral and academic issues of the students.

The discussants also explain that they conduct weekly discussion circle in which they discuss different issues faced by the students in university. They also conduct two events every year including a grand night which is a cultural promotion show in order to pay tribute to sindhi poets. MSA has an admission committee which starts campaign and display banners during admissions in order to facilitate approximately 400-500 students arriving from rural areas of Sindh like Tharparkar, Mithi, Nawabshah etc. every year.

It is further explained that to safeguard the needs of those students who came from their region and to promote their unique culture and to solve their problems. The other member explains it that they need a platform from which we raise voices for our right, solve our problems, and to promote our culture. Another participant of the discussion gives its opinion as, in my opinion basic reasons behind creating a council is to promote one's culture, to safeguard their own people, to address their problems in front of authorities and to reach their voices to other peoples and to make their own identity. They also need to be organized, so in order to organize themselves and to address to the globe.

The head of the council explains that actually, these councils are form in those universities where students of different thought, political ideologies are facing various problems which are common to all of them. Secondly students are divided in universities or campuses on the basis of different religious thought and they join different political groups so the reason behind this is normally the federations used these students to promote their own specific agenda instead of solving their problems. So, it's a kind of platform which is fast in solving student problems. Yes, there are some universities in which councils are facing different problems such as Islamic. But still it's a platform

where students represent their culture and social values. They also know about the cultures of other councils or nation.

They further explain that in every university there are students from different identities and they face different problems. In order to solve these problems collectively, councils are formed. It is the councils' responsibility to help their own students in admissions, arrange hostels for them, to work for fee issues and other problems. Besides all this they also work for cultural promotions.

### **Sense of Belongingness**

With regard to the sense of belongingness, the discussant describes that one of the important reasons behind this council is that as jamiat has main hold in this university, therefore those non-Muslim students coming from Sindh region have no platform or guidance; therefore, it was a need of hour to provide them guidance regarding their different issues. Other thing is that to solve academic issues of the students this platform was needed. Another participant explain that it also gives you sense of belongingness, like if I move somewhere else, I would try to find someone of my own identity to ask a favor from him/her. It gives you material advantages as well as societal connections.

Another explains that those students normally face language and communication issues in a different environment of Islamabad. MSA act as a survival guide to those students. They also help those students in solving their educational issues like to communicate with teachers and class mates, understanding to take notes and attempt papers. Association also takes up admission issues with administration regarding seat allocation etc.

They further express their views that deprivation is not necessary for council. We have same culture, language, history etc. so we need to be together. One may be deprived but not necessarily. Yeah, a sense of belongingness and security also, because they understand you better than anyone else. Another explains it that peoples of one nation are feeling proud of its nationality and culture and do not let it degrade/disrespected. Every nation has its own style of living, and only that nation fit into

that particular style. Other peoples do not fit into it and don't feel comfortable with it. This is why it is necessary that every council has its own and different identity. Every member of that council feel itself secure with people of its own identity. One participant expresses that this is not only about secureness, one may feel definitely happy if he is attached to his own cultural values.

### **Sense of Security**

Answering to the question about sense of security, the participants explain that one may be deprived but not necessarily. Yeah, a sense of belongingness and security also, because they understand you better than anyone else. They also describe that every member of that council feel itself secure with people of its own identity.

### **Identity Consciousness**

Talking about identity consciousness they describe that it is a societal force that compels you to give importance to your own identity and make space for it in a certain environment. It is just like cultural and religious norms. We promote them as well besides promoting our identity. Promoting identity is as important as promoting these norms. They also say that you cannot ignore or deny your identity. Your norms, culture goes side by side with you wherever you go or whatever you do. Another participant describes identity as human nature. It has two major divisions, religion and nationality. It work as two modes, some people get benefits from it while others may not. Those who get benefited always try to promote it at bigger level while others act passively. They also discuss that if you see today's politics, specifically in Pakistan, it is all based on identity politics. Even religious parties are divided on the basis on their sects and getting more mandates in elections. We can take the example of Khadim Rizvi Sahab. They are calling out the strikes on major level and shutting out the cities. It wasn't expected that they would address their problems in parliament and houses but now they are in. Another linked it to a history that people are conscious about their identity from the very beginning. Some relate it to their region; others may be to its affiliation to any party or

association. They think that these conflicts are identity based, like religious identity, sindhi identity, siraiki identity, so these are the basis of conflicts.

It is observed that reason behind identity representation is, actually one thing which is very common in our state is that we always say Pakistani nation is doing this and that etc. etc. but actually if we look towards reality Pakistan is not a nation. Pakistan is a state a country but not a nation. It's a combination of different nations such as pukhtoon Punjabi siraiki Baloch. Pakistan came into being on 14 August 1947 but our nations are from the day first. Our national identity is going demolishing day by day. We can't sacrifice our honorable national identity for this. Yes, we love our country. Pakistan is our state but it's a combination of different nations. So, for the purpose of securing our national identity (qoumiyat), these identities are normally based on national grounds.

Another participant explains that when one knows and loves his origin, history, culture and all these unique things which are only related to his nation and never compromise on it. One of the members discusses that identity is the basic part of one's life. It is the relationship between oneself and one environment; I mean your living (gham khaadi, nasta pasta). It represents your culture values and all the codes of pukhtoonwali. He further explains identity consciousness as in his opinion their quality, personality look and expression defines them but according to him their rich culture defines their naturalness which is their national identity. Two things which are quite necessary for one's identity are personality how you are living and awareness about your cultural values, your elders teaching, your traditions and customs.

### **Tool for Survival**

They referred identity as tool for survival, in their opinion it is very important for survival in a society e.g. if I am sindhi, similarly I am affiliated to jamat e islami as well. It became more important when I move in certain areas or regions like in Sindh, I would be more emphasizing on being related to jamat e islami being a Muslim but if I move in to Islamabad, I would like to be identified as sindhi. Similarly, if I am moving abroad, I would be recognized as a Pakistani rather than a sindhi. In these

contexts, identity is important to define you. In political scenario identity increases your vote bank.

### **Important to Define You**

They discuss that, “*according to them their quality, personality look and expression defines us but our rich culture defines our naturalness which is our national identity*”. Two things which are quite necessary for one’s identity are personality how you are living and awareness about your cultural values, your elders teaching, your traditions and customs.

They explain that it became more important when I move in certain areas or regions like in Sindh, I would be more emphasizing on being related to jamat e islami being a Muslim but if I move in to Islamabad, I would like to be identified as sindhi. Similarly, if I am moving abroad, I would be recognized as a Pakistani rather than a sindhi. In these contexts, identity is important to define you.

### **Culture Hybridity**

They further explain that it is also a culture hybridity that we produce. Like if I talk about history, I am a sindhi from 5,000 years and a Muslim from 1400 years, a Pakistani from 70 years. These are the crisis that we exaggerate. I cannot abandon my previous history, this too is used in politics.

### **Association**

The participants discuss that one of the important reasons is that if I want to come in front line, I will choose my slogan and manifesto that is pro community. To which I am associated like in my case a Sindhi community. Like if someone from Pakhtuns or Marwat wants to come in front line, as a first step he/she will identify the native problems of that community to which he/she is associated. Like in the element of nationalism, he/she will take his narrative which supports his/her cause. Like in the case of Khadim Rizvi Sahab, his party is an emerging party and he took the slogan or stance of khatm e nabuwat in order to get more attention and mandate. The other example is of

hazara community who has their own problems. Their stance and slogan is based on their beliefs. These are the factors which contribute.

### **Awareness and Accommodation**

It is described that the association facilitates students coming from Sindh region to Islamabad. These include residence, language barrier, admissions, hostel accommodation, culture promotion and belongingness (Home Sickness).

### **Non-Political**

Answering to the question about political affiliation, they describe that as far as political affiliation is concerned, MSA is nonpolitical association and functions as a nonpolitical body on front line. However, association's internal structure is systematically designed as a political body.

### **Properly Functioned**

Asking about functioning of the Mehran Student Association, it is described that it raised their funds on monthly contribution basis from members only or those affiliated to the association, for the purpose a fixed amount is decided in committee which is managed by a Finance Secretary of the association. There is no foreign funding or any idea of that from university or any other institution. MSA has a constitution and is registered in the university and coordinate with university through proper channel.

### **Free Will**

All the participants of discussion were of the view that students have free will to join the council or not. We welcome all who came from Sindh, like I am a Baloch but I am a member of sindhi council because I live and came from Sindh. The other describes that our main aim is to unite all those who came from our region, there are a lot of students who came from rural areas and face problems, sometimes they became afraid of joining this council as if they might not use by them. But we unite them on the basis of our culture and identity. By joining the council, we get too much benefit from it, like if anyone of us is going for some interview, he will be accompanied by two or three senior

members to make his moral up, similarly if someone is ill, we arrange ambulance for him and eight to ten members go with them to show solidarity, and it became a kind of trip for all of us. One senior member explains that it was the previous practice that those who come from our region will join the council, now a days in 2019 we made reforms in our constitution that those who come from our region will join the council if they want to, otherwise he is not restricted to be the part, and it's his discretion.

### **Difference of Opinion and Ideas**

One of the members of the discussion explains that there are difference of opinions and difference of ideas that I cannot impose on anyone. I cannot force any one about the idea that I am giving that it is the end and nothing could be done except it.

### **Class Consciousness**

The senior member of discussion shows its concern about class consciousness, and says that we are even unable to end class consciousness. Our whole nation from its lower segment to the higher segments are conscious about their class struggle, and it is the reason that it gives rise to identity politics because when we see that higher segments is exploiting the rights of the lower segments, it ignites the tensions amongst the masses.

### **Fear of Deprivation**

The discussants explains that as we mention earlier that our sole purpose of the council is to promote our culture, our culture is our way of life and if someone is creating obstacles in our way of life, we for sure will resist it. Ultimately it will arise the conflicts between the councils. Another member describes the reasons of conflicts are like if any one spoils the others integrity as a siraiki, sindhi or from jamat e islami, and you are hurting someone's feelings by action or words. Or you are using abusing language against each other. Like ATI displayed its poster, jamiat and ATI has some issues, a jamiat student thorn that poster into pieces. And they got into big fight due to



this act of one student. So, these are the issues that became the reasons of conflict. A participant discusses that Jamiat has major hold in the university being a religious party which gives them advantage in every aspect. The basic reason behind other council is to resist for their rights. The slogan of MSA is itihad e insani, aman e alam and taraqi e baniadam that all the members has to be united. This unity will lead them to peace followed by development and improvement.

#### **4.4.2. Reduced Democratic Spaces and Student Councils**

##### **Bans**

They describe the reason behind forming of students' councils in the universities due to ban imposed by the supreme court, they explain that students' councils started came into being when unions are banned which were previously active in the history. They further explain that to resolve student's issues, councils are needed; therefore, these councils are working on it.

##### **Freedom of Expression**

While discussing about freedom of expression, the discussants explained that students' councils are the platform where students of respective identities can freely express their opinions regardless of any judgments and restrictions. They also explained that their association has uniqueness in that it is a non-political and non-religious students association. As they don't have any political affiliation with any party, they also don't have any religious affiliation. They have members from different identities including Hindu, Christians, Baloch living in Sindh and from Muhajar communities.

##### **Lack of Freedom of Speech**

Expressing their views about shrinking democratic spaces for freedom of expression and speech the discussants shows reservations that they don't have freedom of speech. People can't talk; they are not allowed to talk. Now that today we have a platform that you produced and I am here to talk, we don't have such platforms anywhere else.

These are the things that we may have through our education core or different procedure that we evaluate and convey our ideas to other peoples. It would not be that easy or happen overnight but there are our fundamental problems but let's see when can we have it.

One of the participants quoted a beautiful quote from the poetry of a poet who was a social activist and talk against the system with respect to shrinking democratic spaces in the country, “is zulm ko jabar ko hum nahin maantey”, he explained those were never heard because they were thought as kind of rebellious.

A senior member of the discussion describe that we couldn't establish a society where anyone can talk as a free man. We have such movement in our history by Ahmad Faraz, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Jun Elia and Habib Jalib etc. they were poets and socialists for a longer time but they were not that fruitful because they didn't prepare youth, they were old, they didn't involve young people. Further they were not allowed to be in front line because they were poets and were thought as a crazy, people thought they are talking crazy, because in a state's concept they were not logical. In a state where people's opinions are not honored being considered as not logical, young thoughts and ideas would suffocate to death.

### **Dominance**

Another participant of the discussion explains that if I talk with reference, two weeks before siraiki and jamiat councils have faced an issue. Earlier Jamiat council was dominant though it is not now, Siraiki council has a united platform, and they air a message in its platform, resultantly siraiki students from NUML University, Federal Urdu University and Arid Agriculture University gathered outside the gate of International Islamic University Islamabad. Negotiation was ongoing, as I was too present there being a mediator, to resolve the issue. Jamiat has refused our mediation by saying that we have issues with siraiki council not you, it is needless to talk to you. I said that if you are fighting with them we will fight with you because we have a united platform of IUSF (Islamic United Student Federation) and we are treaty bound. Then they agreed to talk. And that issue is resolved through table talk. Our university administration is quite strong and they don't want to ignore such issues if it happens, they also interfere and resolve the

issue and councils concerns. And students are also very much cooperative towards each other like few months back we too have an issue with baloch council, huge numbers of bolochi and sindhi were gathered from all over the Islamabad but that is resolved through table talk.

One of the participants of the discussion discusses that Jamiat being dominant party, call us the barbarians, they say that you have nothing to do with the religion; you are rebellions just because we promote our culture only and support the minorities from our region.

### **Negotiation**

The one of the participants of the discussion discusses that most of our conflicts between councils are resolved through discussion as they are bound by their united platform of Islamic United Student Federation. He also explained that the only solution to our national conflicts and conflicts between political parties is negotiation; we have to be united at one platform for our national unity and national sense of integration.

### **Treaty Bound**

Answering to a question regarding treaty bound negotiation; they explains that earlier students councils were not unified, every council has their own independent functions but in order to bring them united to a one platform, it is decided to create a unified platform where issues of every council would be heard and resolved as per procedure. This is needed to minimize the arising conflicts between different councils.

### **Strong Administration**

They explained that their universities have very strong administration, where they properly handle all the issue arises between the respective councils of their university. This has minimize the intensity of the conflicts between these councils further it also gives us the opportunity to express our concerns freely.

### **Cooperation and Coordination**

They further explained that our councils exercise a high level of cooperation and coordination towards each other. Whenever any conflict arises, they

work with full cooperation and coordination in order to resolve those conflicts promptly and in a lesser time.

### **Harsh Behavior**

One of the discussants of the discussion shows his concern about the behavior of university administration and says that sometimes a behavior of the members of the councils or university administration is too harsh that make the environment tense, they treat the students like they are homeless.

### **Positive Response**

One of the participants of the discussion responded that their council receives positive response from the university administration; they meet those regarding issues, and have good relationship with administration and their issues are heard. Minors issue are resolved very promptly but there are some which takes some time, sometimes we have to show stress to get resolved those issues.

### **Time Taking Issues**

When discussing about issues, they discuss that there are some issues in which high ups are involved and they need proper and justifiable response, such issues take time to be resolved. But sometimes we have to show stress to get those issues resolved. Sometimes it creates tensions between the council members and the administration, but we always interfere through negotiation.

### **Lack of Clarity (Confusion)**

They discussed that basically it's a problem before creation of Pakistan; first of all we are even not clear about our two nation ideology. It is the first question of every discussion. Anyone who talked about Pathan, Punjabi, Baloch, people think he is crazy or he is removed from scene by the authorities. First of all when we talk about ideology, I think that the country which we have on the basis of religion, we must try to clear our stance.

### **Lack of Awareness**

They further explained it in the context of political parties of Pakistan that the parties that we have now a days do not have any ideology, previously every party have some ideology, we can say that peoples party have up to some extent an ideology, they have devoted workers (jiyaley), none of other have any ideology or clear stance. Our generation or we can say that the generation of 90s till now didn't witness any movement (tehrick). Like imadi tehrick, our elders talk about it that how we sacrifice for it, the difficulties they faced for it. Our generation didn't witness any sacrifices, they don't know how the movements have been run. Internationally, parties didn't work like Pakistani parties. We can take example of party of Tayyab Erdogan, few years back; their workers were too much devoted that they can do anything at the orders of their party leader. Our parties don't have such devotions, they look for their interests.

### **Sense of Integration**

It is further explained it that first of all when we talk about ideology, I think that the country which we have on the basis of religion, we must try to clear our stance. If we are not able to do this, we can see that India too is a big country. An Indian citizen is more integrated than a Pakistani citizen. He is too much devoted to his country; he can sacrifice his life for his nation Hindustan irrespective of the fact that he is Hindu or a Muslim. They promote their nationhood/nationality through movies, cricket, gaming's and much more other things. While in our case, what we do to our nationality, when its 23<sup>rd</sup> march we should promote our nationality through our flags but we exhibit our ammunitions/warheads, planes, boots. It was not the spirit of 23<sup>rd</sup> march if we look into the resolution. We never expose our youth to the true literature and history; it was never allowed to be published. No one is allowed to talk about it.

### **Elitism vs Youth**

In a discussion about youth participation in politics, one of the participant quoted about Gordas Puri, a writer, who writes about PPP era, that when he was young he was so much inspired from Bhutto that he started struggle for the rights of people. One day an old politician said to him that your struggle is good but it isn't for you, you will get killed and we the elites will sit with Bhutto. This is what politics is all about in Pakistan, elitism. Our feudal (chodhries) make it to the parliament rather than young

people. It is just like someone said “power is everywhere”, so it’s the same situation that, power exists. Till yet we cannot end absolute corruption of power.

### **Perception**

Most of the discussants were of the view that it is a matter of perception; there are some who criticize the system rather than work and participate actively for its restoration. There are few who consider that democracy itself is a conflicted term; it’s what we perceive according to our requirement. They referred to the democracy in china, there its uni polarity in the party, and with it we can see their development that how they are emerging.

### **Lack of Leniency**

Some of the participants of the discussion are of the view that we are lacking the leniency in a way that we don’t give leniency. Neither we are ready to heard the others opinion nor we are listened. This is the main reason of shrinking democratic space, we talk about the space at broader level but we didn’t exercise it individual level as well. We have to revisit it from the lower level to upper level.

### **Absolute Corruption of Power (Game of Power)**

When discussing about political power in Pakistan, they discusses that this is what politics is all about in Pakistan, elitism. Our political parties exert power in the democratic process of election. Our feudal (chodhries) come to the parliament and those who don’t have power and resources are unable to make it, like someone said “power is everywhere”, so it’s the same situation, power exists. Till yet we cannot end absolute corruption of power.

### **Petty Issues**

One discussant of the discussion explains that conflicts between councils are always amongst the general members, it is never with the council’s general secretary

or secretary and chairman. Issues are normally minor like on chair, or paratha etc. Another explains that sometimes the conflict is totally un-understandable, like the conflict between jamiat and ATI, jamiat were chanting the slogan of naara e takbeer and ATI were of naara e risalat, the hurting situation is that no one is non-Muslim, yet they fight with each other on the name of Islam.

### **Stakeholder's Interest**

They explain that if we take the international politics, we will safeguard our own interest. When we talk about United Nation, India follows their stance as per their own prime interests according to their status quo, their nation irrespective of the fact that whether it is right or wrong. It is also a matter of transparency too. How election commission address the transparency issues, whether your vote is rightly addressed in the parliament or not. What is their integrity and transparency?

The other member explains that in our politics vote has no such worth. It is defined by the stakeholder's interests. Peoples are involved by the stakeholders to gain mandate in order to rule or fulfill their interests. Policies are set somewhere else where it is decided that whose turn it is to propagate interests.

### **Propagation**

The senior member of the discussion expresses its point of view that I don't think so people got involved in such politics at their own will, they are grabbed/forced to indulge in a way to segregate them. Earlier JUI in KPK, ANP in Balochistan and KPK were in Government and they never promote identity politics. It started divided peoples on identity basis like in 2008 Imran Khan wins in KPK on the basis of Pakhtun identity. Balochistan dominates by baloch identity. PPP starts representing Sindh though previously it was united and talk about all four provinces of Pakistan. One of their famous slogans was "chaaron soobon ki zanjeer, Benazir Benazir". After assassination of their leader Benazir in 2007, after 2008 election, this chain broke

up and they became stick to Sindh identity only. In Punjab, Nun league stick in Punjab to Punjabi identity.

The other member expresses its view that State should be sovereign, he is responsible for every act, and it was in the past resolution. But it's a big blunder now what we promote through our propagated literature. Another member shows its concern that democracy is only a term, nothing beyond it. It's only an ideological war, nothing else, they are promoting it according to their interest, and it gives rise to the identity conflicts. Identity is emerging, we can say that it's nourishing now a days. Right now identity is not at its peak that we can say or straight forward can give any such statement that anything is happening on the basis of identity.

### **Tool of Dominance**

They explains that political parties started divided peoples on identity basis like in 2008 Imran Khan wins in KPK on the basis of Pakhtun identity. Baluchistan dominates by Baloch identity. PPP starts representing Sindh though previously it was united and talk about all four provinces of Pakistan. One of their famous slogans was "chaaron soobon ki zanjeer, Benazir Benazir". After assassination of their leader Benazir in 2007, after 2008 election, this chain broke up and they became stick to Sindh identity only. In Punjab, Nun league stick in Punjab to Punjabi identity.



# Chapter 5

## 5. Analysis and Discussion

### 5.1 Current Democratic Space

This study began with a discussion regarding rising trends of identity politics and democratic space in Pakistan. It was further expanded in the context of students' councils present in the universities who are very actively participating in different activities organized in the universities. Current Democratic space in the country is described under the sub themes emerged from the Focused Group Discussions with students' councils and In-Depth Interviews with young politicians emerged from such Councils.

Democratic Space is described as a breathing space, within the plexus of a complex social order, to agitate and protest. It is an unwritten permission to think, a fundamental consideration and respect granted by a state to its subjects to raise a voice of dissent and disagree. It is this democratic space which forms the basis of a vibrant democracy (Roy, Apr 28, 2017). The interview results and focused group discussions suggested that democratic space in Pakistan is not that supportive, though it was a genuine right space which is currently not seen that much as previously. In the recent past, the intellectuals and learned segment of society, in universities and colleges, from Pak tea house culture of this country, like Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Habib Jalib, there they talk about burning issues of the society, there they create ideas. In recent days it can be seen that our institutions have no Pak Tea house culture where students can sit together with intellectual segment of the society and debate about the issues of the society, where they can broaden their vision and present their very own opinion about different issues. One of the main reasons behind this is ban on indulging of students in any political activities during their studies.

Shrinking democratic space is a phenomenon that has accelerated in recent years and can be described as “the implementation of restrictive laws that limit the operations of a society” often as a process of power consolidation. Shrinking democratic space is part of a general authoritarian pushback against democracy and is intensifying in both democratic and non-democratic countries, a process often referred to as *democratic backsliding* (Mulkerrins, 2018). Democratic space was regarded as an intellectual activity provided to the young people in order to exchange their ideas and create new ones. And now when we have no Pak tea house culture, where any other intellectual together with students can talk or give ideas how can we expect from our youth to take the responsibilities of leadership. These spaces were the institutions for political character building, where students learn about politics of their country. But when these activities stopped due to bans and restrictions from the government, it stopped political character building of our youth. It also stopped or at least slow down the process of self-recognition and awareness. It stopped the process of critical thinking of our new generation where they don't know how to take decisions. Yes, we only increase number of our votes without having new ideas, without gaining know how of the democratic system. Our youth don't understand the purpose of their life, of their education, they are becoming money making machines, and it is because their critical thinking process has stopped. Because they are not involved or indulged in any positive activities which collectively benefit them and society as well.

When intellectual activity stopped and people stop talking about ideas, their fundamental rights, right and wrong, there they find the way to institutionalize the corruption. In which they find and pave ways for making money openly through institutionalized corruption where they straight away ask for their share. It was a planned process, where they segmented the political system on identity basis to start a blame game in order to divert the attention of masses from the real issues.

Providing genuine right space to young peoples is a process of intellectual grooming. Where people over a cup of tea, decide ideas to bring change, “chaye ki piyali men toofan wohin sey uthta tha”. All the movements were happened in the universities

by those ideologues like Rousseau, Nietzsche, Plato, Aristotle, Imam Ghazali, Imam Jafar Sadiq, Shah Wali Ullah, they all were think tanks.

It is observed that there are different reasons that in our society different cultures are facing difficulties to integrate in a nationhood or come together at a single platform, the main reason is the lack of education, people are unaware that there could be possibility to live outside the box of their identity, they have concerns. The other reason is the division of resources; people are not getting their through share of resources. We have to work on it, it seems like we are very strong at federation, but in fact it is too weak, because it is standing on the foundations that are not factual. For example, majority are saying that federation has nothing to do with the Higher Education Commission, while few people in Federation decides that it should be run and controlled by the federation. If they are rejecting stance of 99 percent people and accepting only 1 percent, how are they going to integrate and facilitate different identities and their concerns. It is the world of globalization, in it, it is not important to think about that in a student who is graduated from Sindh, is still at matric level, while a graduate from Punjab is at different level. Let them both free and compete with the world, they their self will know their worth. But if you don't allow them to explore their true potentials, they will never raise their level and standards. Similarly, due to restrictions, you continuously will face these identity crises. Today mayor of Karachi is saying that in CSS exams, no single Urdu speaking candidate is allowed to qualify. They dropped them in interview and couldn't go ahead. They too are educated and capable. But why it happens, because they created a power game, where you only allowed influential to sit and clear the exam to claim institutional and influential posts. Those positions are related to power, until and unless state look into these divisions, you will face issues and problems from different segments of society. Federation has to devolve its power to the lower level to gain their trust and develop sense of integration, let them exercise those power and responsibilities. Only issues or institutions that are sensitive could be run by the federation like security and finance. Just like Punjab developed and the previous government did work in these areas and show the development in Punjab, let the other provinces do the same, so that they can

come forward, rather than federation interfere in posting of IGs in provinces, this isn't federations job, policing is society's concern, every society has its uniqueness, and they know better the crimes that are happening in there and how to tackle them. A person who lives in a certain place can better understand the loss of their beloved homeland, they can better understand the needs of their people and how to fulfill them, and an outsider will never understand that pain. Let them do the policing instead of federation. And involve political parties, their representatives and local community as well for effective policing. You do not allow them to do this, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa a head is from Punjab, who don't know the exact dimensions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; this isn't right because you want to control them. Controlling them isn't the right thing, you should control what is necessary to be controlled, let them solve the minor problems their self. Rather you interfere in every petty issue, you kept water issues with federation, you are controlling WAPDA, let them produce their own electricity if they want so and if it is needed. At least let them try and distribute. But federation wants to establish plants and produce electricity and decided where it has to be distributed and who to keep deprived. Where you produce electricity, people who are living nearby, does not have it or access it. This is the matter of resource distribution which actually is not fear. Let those people find and distribute their resources. Let them be benefited. It is known that in Sindh we have second largest coal resources. Let those people dig it and use it. But you dig it from there and don't provide them even gas which is their birth right. In Pakistan seventy percent gas is produced from Sindh and you only promote sui and people don't know the facts, you don't let them think that why Sindh is deprived of the gas if it is produced in Sindh. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is producing oil but there the situation is same as in other provinces. Federation has to change the pattern of exercising its power. They have to talk seriously about national level issues like kala bagh dam, diyamir bhasha dam, issues where people don't only think about petty issues but feel sense of integration at a national level. Where they feel that federation is working for the betterment of the country. Federation actual concern is national level issues, where people want them to work on it; they expect them to work on national issues. Instead federation could not manage to distribute resources amongst them, Sindh chief minister has given its stance that Sindh is not receiving its due share. Federation deprived them of their right; this is the stance of

the representative of the province. If a representative of million people is saying this, it means this is the view point of those million peoples. And they can promote division on the basis of his stance and these are the reasons in deprived areas in promotion of identity base divisions. Why representation from Quetta has not emerged? Because they are not allowed, let them avail benefit from gawadar. When they will be benefited they will stand for national interest rather than self-interest. There are a lot of examples where local peoples are deprived off of employment because they are not recruited in their local institutions; they have to travel far for getting jobs because they are not given opportunities by their local departments. This is why rural areas are not developing and this too is the reason for urbanization and over population in big cities. In Sindh there are wind power plants, they don't give jobs to the locals, the reason they give for this is that they are not hard working and lazy. This is actually not the fault of those workers, but the flaws in your management that you are not able to achieve optimum work done from your employees. They blame East India company that they use our resources and deprived us of our right, what you are doing now is the same thing they did to you and now you are repeating it. And you don't give awareness to people so that they know their rights or can ask for it, because you know that you are depriving their genuine rights. You go to a resourceful place, drag out their treasure, you don't give them jobs, you don't work for their development, your CSR don't work there and you blame political representative and others for non-development, where is your role? Where is your CSR? Federation has to work at least on the issues highlighted in 18<sup>th</sup> amendment. But today a member of National Assembly from Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf, submit its petition in Sindh to nullify 18<sup>th</sup> amendment. Why they are going back for centralization when developed countries choose for decentralization to make federation more strong. Why don't you want your institutions to flourish and exercise their power as per their own discretion? Why federation wants to keep all power and control at a center, these are the questions that have to be answered. Where developed countries already tested that centralization and saturating control at center is a loss and not beneficial for development, this is why they choose decentralization. Strengthening federation means you have to give out put rather than saturating control at center. People choose their representative through their vote, they don't build them. They don't want charisma personalities, lies, they want

development, and they want output. In 2010, Karachi became so strong that they were making agreements with different countries of the world, they became sister city to Houston America, their mayor became second best mayor in the world. They make an agreement with turkey to filter sea water into drinkable water, the only condition from turkey was to have consent from federation but federation didn't approve it due to conflict of interest between political parties in federation and today there is a shortage of drinking water in Karachi. Those political parties have reservation regarding their political interests. They don't want that people came out from their domestic issues and question their work performance. If we see in Punjab, they had had number of international agreements. Shahbaz Sharif paid number of international visits; he made agreements with turkey, china, goes to different countries. He made development in Punjab because he has back up of federation. He had approvals because they were in the government. In other provinces, federation didn't allow you to make some development; they didn't allow locals to work independently. This became the culture now; these issues cannot be resolved until and unless it is changed. There are certain political elements who don't want to resolve these issues. If we talk about today's government, first they stand against metro project on some political grounds, then they started making it in peshawar, because they got pressure from the public, they have to do it, and there was a record mismanagement in their project that now they ask for more budget because the roads mistakenly constructed too narrow and it needed to be enlarge in order to pass buses through them. Now who will question them for this extra budget which they asked due to their mismanagement at first place? Who is responsible, nobody is going to take the responsibility. And how come the roads became narrower, didn't they do the planning for the project, the measurement, the feasibility. It is not like everything is wrong in our country, we have institutions, department, they are working well, but the undue restrictions and pressure don't allow them to work in smooth environment. It is the matter of mindset, the culture that has been developed there didn't allow them to do their proper task. The level that Punjab has achieved, that has to be sustained or upgrade, but today's chief minister don't have the capability to even sustain the level. Previous government made huge development; they upgraded the hospitals, drug regulatory authority, food authority, their inspections and check and balance, the higher level of good governance

people witness there. They stopped government doctors from running private clinics in official timings. But today's government deploy incapable person just to make him puppet so that he can obey your orders only and play dummy.

Political structure which is basically the three tiers of government, are not suppressing or oppressing any identity. As far as representation of prime minister or president is concerned, they are representative positions, where it is the matter of constitution or state sovereignty; therefore, it is un-debatable, because state sovereignty is the ultimate concern of every individual of that state. Political structure which includes the three tiers i.e. Executive, Judiciary and Legislature, too are not suppressive or oppressive of any identity because every person is free to affiliate to a certain identity. They allow any political party who got mandate to form government irrespective of the identity. Judiciary doesn't take decisions on identity basis. Administration don't give deputations on the basis of identities, if anyone is Punjabi, he can be an AG of Sindh, if anyone is Sindhi, he can serve in Gilgit, people of federation can serve in Kashmir committee, however socio-political structure of Pakistan, the society, promote those differences. There the crises are huge, because political parties to gain power in order to got mandate, play identity cards. Major political parties, like Pakistan Muslim League-N, they raise the slogan of Jaag Punjabi Jaag, they start it almost 25-30 years back and they are doing it today as well. Mutahida Quomi Movement play Muhajir identity card, Awami National Party Pakhtuns card, Pakistan People's Party play Marsoo Marsoo, Sindh na daisoo (that we are sindhi and we will not divide Sindh) card and show their belongingness to Sindh, and gain votes on the basis of these cards though administratively they are massively fail in delivery of services. But with the help of this card they always get strong position in senate and national assembly. It shows that socio economic culture of our society is strongly based on identity politics. And they properly divide you in segments, even Jamat e Islami play religious card on every occasion. Our society is massively divided on socio political basis in identity politics on the basis of religion, regional, language, cast etc. Pakistan Muslim League-N also plays Biradri Politics card, due to which it is also on the rise. This is the basic reason in the rise of cast-

based identity at narrower level. With the increase in your awareness level, the first factor is that you forgo the cast, which is because your cast doesn't have any broader standing. You start going for the broader level. But in Pakistan identity is narrower down to its lower level to gain more benefits from it rather to integrate it into broader and national level. And it should be done with the increase of knowledge and awareness but it doesn't happen because though knowledge is increasing by graduating of thousands of students from universities but they are lacking the awareness, personality groom, higher level of intellect.

Identity suppression is there on socio political basis due to which different associations and movements are there, if you don't have identity-based suppression there would be no Mutahida Quomi Movement in Sindh, they won't be there, on similar basis, today PTM (Pakhtun Tahafuz Movement) are strengthening its roots. Like Sindhi Mahaz, Baloch revolution/regulation front. Similarly, when we talk about provincial divisions in Pakistan, like we heard about Punjab divisions, we heard about Potohar province, when they talk about their own identity, when we do the analysis we see that, Potohar Province or Bahawalpur Province, we see that they don't have any strong stance, they never remain suppressed and remain on strong positions and economically good, they don't have strong stance on the basis of their language, because they can't do this division on the basis of their Potohari or Seraiki language only, but if you talk about the Sindh, there the case is different. There you see the strong affiliations, they don't talk about division. Similarly, hazara community in Baluchistan, they are not yet accepted by the locals, though they tried to be accepted, but they are not accepted because they are not pakhtun/Baloch irrespective of the fact that being pakhtun or Baloch does not give you the right to suppress or terrorize the others to leave their identity or place of living, this shows the intolerance in certain communities. In 1986, in Ali Garh, Karachi, there was a fight between Pakhtuns and Muhajirs. The basis of conflict was that in lower Sindh muhajir was getting stronger, and sindhi too were not ready to accept pakhtuns and muhajir communities, pakhtun was facing problems from both sides, neither sindhi were accepting them nor they were establishing patch up with muhajirs. Resultantly a reaction generates from pakhtuns that we are living here and we have to live here. Two groups have fight and, in a day, killed approximately 150 peoples of the other group. This shows



that they fight for their survival and today karachi is a biggest city for pakhtun inhabitants, for survival showing intolerance towards others is common now a days. In balochistan, hazara community cannot use force to fight for their survival because they are not that strong. Karachi itself is a multicultural city, where you can find people from almost every identity and ideology even the residence and graves of Jews.

In promoting identity politics, political parties play cards of ethnicity, race and religion. Jamat e islami use religion for political gain. Mutahida Quomi Movement is ethnicity-based party and use race as well for political gain mostly in Karachi. Awami National Party also use it, Pakistan People's Party is totally based on it, like Jiye Sindhi Mahaz. Similarly, Baloch Liberation front, all of these is based on ethnicity, race and religion. The most moderate party right now in Pakistan is Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf who do not use identity card till now. They talk about Pakistan only instead of specific identity. Pakistan Muslim League-N are thought to be open party but in fact they also use slogan of jaag punjabi jaag, they only work for development of Punjab, in their five years tenure they did not start any single development project in Sindh while in Punjab they finished almost 12-15 mega projects. They started metro project in a small city like Multan, where population is very less and mega project like metro is not needed. That project is in loss right now, but they didn't consider a bigger city like Karachi where it was more needed. And they did it intentionally, facilitate Punjab only, these are the practical things that shows that how they left others and promote a specific stance. Like in 2013 when Pakistan Muslim League-N wins elections, he was greeted as congratulations to the prime minister of Punjab; this is just because he got 80 percent votes from Punjab and 20 percent from others. While Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf, on the other hand does not use any specific identity. If we look in the history, we witnessed that on the basis of identity we lost our East Pakistan. Studies shows that identity crises were there from 1966, there Punjabi and Bengali cannot sit together even at the university level, the only platform where they can sit and talk together was jamat e islami. Religious identity was used in 1947 as a tool or instrument for independence but they could not manage it afterwards to keep different identities together. It was used back then, but in

1971 we could not use it and we can see it today as well. At that time oppression was there even from the state organizations as well. In 1969, from all over the Pakistan in Pakistan army only three brigadiers and one general were from Bengal, and the rest of the army was from here, it was a massive division, in this situation how can you say that from two areas of equal population, representation of one is five percent and the other is 95 percent, these were the basis of separation. And after that separation, here Sindhi, Balochi are integrated to bring them in stream line to avoid Baloch and Sindh division, Pakhtun and Panjabi were already present in the army but Sindhi and Balochi were not the part of it. This is why Baloch and Sindhi are given accelerated promotions to bring them in streamline. For them quota and merit are quite lenient, if they did this before, the situation may be different today in the case of east Pakistan but later on they learnt from this situation and make changes in different scenarios.

## **5.2. Identity Politics in the context of Students Councils**

Culture of Identity Politics is at rise between political parties in Pakistan as well as students' councils present in the universities. Identity based politics or we can call it identity representation amongst students' councils in the universities of Islamabad primarily backed up by the political representation is described under the sub themes emerged from the Focused Group Discussions with students' councils and In-Depth Interviews with young politicians emerged from such Councils. The result depicts different opinions of the respondents about identity politics.

Pakistan is a multicultural country having diverse identities comprises of different regions, languages, ethnicities, religions and so on. Being multicultural country, Pakistan is experiencing tensions amongst different identities from day first. Linking to an identity can be described as a societal force that compels you to give importance to your own identity and make space for it in a certain environment. In a certain environment, identity cannot be denied or ignored. Norms, culture linked to any

identity goes side by side with you wherever you go or whatever you do. It is a human nature. When it is denied or ignored, or rejected, it is always confronted back from those who are deprived.

Pakistan faces an interesting challenge of conflicting identities, self-righteousness, stereo typing and negative tagging (Iqbal, 2017). These challenges are so intense that they could not be ignored. They need constant attention and address. To understand the role of diverse identities in Pakistan, first we need to know how identity and self consciousness goes together. A person at times linked to specific cultural attributes and to its self which works according to its own will and perceptions. This self and culture is necessary for each other. In Pakistan, identities are segmented differently. A person at times is linked to its regional, racial, linguistic identities and to its central identity of being Pakistani. Pakistani identity at its core again is strongly linked to / associated to Islam in its political spectrum as well as in the religious context.

Pakistan is a state of diverse identities. These diversifications work at different levels. At one point it emerges from religious basis where religion is common at most identity related domains. At other point it emerges as national unity of being Pakistani as a central or singular identity to address the confrontation and conflicts amongst the society. How identity works in both levels, the main purpose is to promote the concept of single identity. Besides the concept of one national identity due space is needed to all ethnic, regional etc. identities in order to promote harmony among all.

For a single Pakistani identity, it is mandatory to integrate sub national identities in a diverse society. Democratic governance and diverse identities are directly linked together for a central Pakistani identity. In Pakistan, often time this central identity is challenged by regional, provincial and ethnic identities. Besides these, there are other identities that are arising at prominent level which includes Siraiki in Punjab, Makrani's, Hazara's and Barohi's in Baluchistan and Chitrali's, Gilgiti's and Hazarawal's in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Gilgit-Baltistan. In countries where democratic governance is limited, freedom of association and expression is a challenge for political system of that

country. However, in many cases and scenario freedom of expression and association is disputed in a multicultural country which hinders smooth functioning of democratic process. As a result of these reduced or limited democratic spaces identity politics became a dominant factor to hurdle democratization in a pluralist society.”

Many scholars argued that whenever efforts are made to suppress any specific identity, or deprive them of their rights, it also arises conflicts and tensions among the society which later on ended in weakening of the national unity and harmony. These grievances have arisen with times when due attention is not given to solve the problems of those who belongs to different identities. Public policy of such states has become silent about discussing issues of regional and ethnic identities. Pakistan is one of such countries where multiple identities are striving to live together in peace and harmony. In Pakistan politics based on identity is in practice from very beginning. Leaders of different ethnicity coupled with culturally sensitive intelligentsia plays their pivotal role to enhance ethnic behavior particularly during political process. The purpose of identity politics is to accommodate diverse cultures; religions and customs and given respect, which is their due.

According to Rahman, Pakistan is multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual society like most of the developing countries in South Asia (Rahman, 1998). Another scholar have described it as, From very first day of its inception, the aspirations of the people of Pakistan to live in peace and harmony and to have a modicum of material security have been unfulfilled (Ahmed F. , 1998). Rahman further added that, much has been written about the history, facts and legitimacy of ethnic grievances and ethnic competition in Pakistan time and again (Rahman, 1998). The relationship between ethnic identity and political process is of much importance because it is a continuous process between two identities.

A.D. Smith defines political organization as a group that maintains the internal order; preserves territorial limits and allocates power and decision making over group action in a relationship with regional, national and international political power

structure. While Fredrick Barth views “Ethnic behavior results from the self-identification of the members of a population whereby they distinguish themselves from members of another cultural or ethnic group with whom they have contact” (Barth, 1969). Living in two different regions and racial differences, there emerge differences between communities, who tend to develop their identity.

Consequently, the ethnic organizations and ethnic leadership called as ‘social engineers’, deliberately stir up the atavistic emotions of the masses and evoke language, culture and myths of racial origin in support of their aspirations and objectives (Axmann, 2009). Cartwright indicated that ethnic leadership appeal and influences the community in “direct contact” for the collective or group benefits, which can be either of a material or of an intangible nature (Cartwright, 1978). Particularly, in the event of the political structure being in the hands of a particular ethnic group, the dominant-subordinate group tussles for power sharing for societal rewards and goods manifests itself in ethnic terms. The identities formed on common language base (primordial) and taking political forms (instrumental), causing ethnic competition and conflict. The factors contributing are sense of belongingness and security; the fear of being deprived of the resources; being powerless; and the superiority of one’s culture and language over the other language (Hechter).

Irrespective of the identity politics, Constitution of Pakistan gives Right and freedom of association. Article 17 gives freedom of assembly and freedom of association and it’s a fundamental right. It’s not a principle of policy, it’s a fundamental right and in any case no law or institution can restrict / restrain it from you. Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order (Chapter 1, Fundamental Rights of Part II: Fundamental Rights and Principles of Policy).

Freedom of Association is that, “Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or union, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality” (Article: 17). Freedom of expression is a fundamental right and it’s by design and by default.

We recently have witnessed the role of youth in politics that their vote got the higher mandate, those are now in government who are chosen by the youth by giving their vote. They properly participated where they have to participate and resultantly, they got their desired results and prove importance of their role in politics. Which shows that youth can / are capable to bring change in our society. Their main concern in present scenario should be to educate their selves so that they can identify their right direction. So that they can differentiate between right and wrong, understand it, see it in broader way, think and act upon it in order to explore new horizons of possibilities. If youth is aware and empowered enough, they could bring a positive change in this country. We have witnessed in many cases that our youth is determined to be identified as a one nation, Pakistani, rather than Sindhi, Punjabi, Balochi or Pakhtun. We also have seen them coming out of religious segregations and proud to be identified as a true Muslim rather than any specific sect. Their role is to change the destiny of our nation but with this role, there becomes responsibilities, which is to change yourself and your society for better and for this they have to be aware enough about their problems, their solutions, critical analysis of what is wrong and right on the basis of justice. Right now, they are struggling with their responsibilities because they don't have proper or suitable platforms to present their ideas and to flourish their selves by focusing on their areas of interests. They don't have the proper guidance, institutions and structure in order to groom. We are not focusing on our corporate social responsibilities. We don't have proper structure to stream line local communities. We don't give opportunity to speak up to our youth, to represent, to participate, to give their opinion. We build so much boundaries around them that they are afraid to talk about or comment about any issue, even if they know that they are right. They keep their ideas to their selves because they know we are not ready to own them and appreciate them. Today the need of hour is the ethical education, to improve our life style, to upgrade our education system. We have a lot of institutions for social issues but we don't promote their functions, their responsibilities, today a person don't know how to get aid from Bait-ul-Mal for education but he properly knows how to beg from 100 peoples. It is because people don't know about Bait-ul-Mal, not only the Bait-ul-Mal today we have a lot more institutions and organization, what is more needed is to spread the word to make people aware of their rights. We put all the responsibilities on

any one, rather it has to be on both sides, not only the organization but the end user or stakeholder too is responsible to fulfil its duties towards those organizations. In Pakistan, only banks have started it that they put pamphlets on their counters which explain the responsibilities of not only the banks but the clients as well. We must be clear about role and responsibility, both, this is a long way process that start from parents towards children, teachers towards students and organizations towards their employees. Organizations has the major role, when they act justly, it leaves imprints on the whole society. When they do the other way, it surely has a negative impact on all. If organizations are unjust and corrupted, it affects the whole country. Here the role of youth increases, in our policy making there is not any defined role of youth. It is because their presence and importance are not yet accepted here. In local government system, only one seat was allocated for youth which was shared with women. They need proper support, back up to perform their role efficiently and effectively, they need platforms, which are in present scenario not present. Student unions are banned. We don't train our youth to lead, we teach them to get job and make money. Because for such training they need hands on practice, which could only be done through student unions, and this is one of the main reasons that we lack leadership. Even youth representatives in political parties are in their fifties.

One of the main reasons of ban on students unions is because of their violence, when they grow in violence and intolerance, they got uncontrolled and became threat for the state's sovereignty, they were being used by different parties. This shows that they need proper nursery which is controlled by the state, where they can groom. Identity based politics and indulging students in it may seem harmful or a threat to others, but for those who are actively involved in it, it is a best part of their job. They look for the those who can join and help them, because for them every individual is a resource person in different aspects. If we can take the example of MQM, before its creation it was known as APMSO, which shows before going towards bigger canvas you need a nursery, where you can properly define your rules and interest. What we need in it is the proper supervision, so that they may not got towards the negativity. It is not only the reading the contents or syllabus, it basically is the hands-on practice which can only be achieved through student unions. There are student wings in the political parties, but they are not

properly functioned but only used to gain specific political interest. They are educated, young, aware, and educated. They need of hour is to properly train them, provide them platform, opportunities, they must be allowed to practice, to do debates, critically analyze the situations. They must have proper control structure. Student participation in politics is essential, we should give them opportunities.

Identity is different as per situation, when you are in America, you identify yourself as a Pakistani, if you are with some religious persons, then you identify yourself as a Muslim. A person is conscious about his identity when he has to show his identity or he is in a situation where it is necessary to show its identity, and when it is not needed /demanded, he is not conscious, for example, if a person lives in USA, he doesn't need to show the identity of from where he basically belongs. There they use only two terms, native American, the other is non-native American. Like either you are American or you are not, third term is that you visit for a shorter time span and then go back. So, it doesn't matter what is your religion, or where you live or from where you belong. And if a person is in Pakistan, here a person has to show his identity, and it depends on your surrounding or your circle. If your circle is highly educated and learned, there you don't have to identity your mother tongue, or your region, this does not make any difference. But if your circle is lower, then they develop their perception about you as per your region, or the language you speak.

From this example we can assume that, individuals show their affiliation and belongingness on the basis of identity especially in a multicultural society and a pluralist environment. But the problem is that here you have to show your affiliation and belongingness but the tolerance level is reduced, diversity is not honored. Here in our society diversity is taken in a wrong sense. They don't take it as a good sign. They say and show that here people from different religions and culture lives but do not own it. The fact is totally against it, at bundar road, Karachi, there were 20 houses of Parsi peoples, today there are only two, and those are their religious places in fact otherwise they all ran away from here. In Pakistan, whether it is parachinar or Quetta, where hazara community lives, or in Punjab, where you witness burning of the villages, the reasons



were intolerance by not allowing merging of other cultures into ours in a multicultural society. Here identity crises are at extreme level. For their survival they focus on fighting with each other. From this we can see that, it is important in this society to understand multicultural dimensions of this society by discussing them instead of fighting. Instead of denying different identities it is the need of hour to integrate them, else we are moving forward towards a society where everyone is afraid of others due to diverse identity or even opinions. They are conscious while living together that with which kind of people are, they living, they are conscious when considering any marriage proposal, because they don't want to live or establish relationship with different identities. It shows that these relationships are not based on humanity or human qualities or abilities, those are based on identities until and unless they are forced by certain limitations. A highly qualified university professor in Islamabad university, don't want to marry his daughter to a person who is not from his cast. Cast is a sub identity which is at very minor level, which is assumed, and don't have language and region of its own, but an educated person is not ready to forgo its identity. These are the identity crises in Pakistan. It shows that in Pakistan identity consciousness and sense of belongingness is at extreme level which resultantly appearing to be an identity crisis. Those who are from extreme minorities like parsi etc., they are even afraid of showing their identities. We see that Christian community are facing problems. A man from Hindu community explains that he is *always* conscious of showing my identity just to avoid any problem or issue, if I start division on religion basis, I am afraid that something bad will happen. I just want all to treat me on the basis of humanity rather than my religious identity. In Asia Bibi case, from Christian community, was basically a social issue, which starts from fight between two women on some domestic issue, and it ends on religion basis. It shows that at different points, different identities are used/misused to get some benefits or to harm the oppressed identity or community. The main reason behind this is that this society is primarily based on identities, so wherever and whenever you have interest on religion basis you show your religious identity, and when it's the matter of your cast, there you show your cast. Where you can benefit by showing your sect you don't miss a chance and if it is the matter of political party, it's a plus point as well. And it is just because people

know that by showing their identities at different points, they can get their interests. Identity is the basic of relationships in our society.

Consciousness also depends on where you spend most of your time, if it is a place where all people are too conscious about their identity, and then there you will have to be conscious. If you are in a place where no one cares about your identity, then you too are not conscious to identify yourself.

Places where people are not conscious about identity appear to be more tolerant, while where they are more conscious, they appear to be intolerant towards your identity, there they will decide for you for who you are or should be. There on the basis of sects they will divide you and allow you or permit you to do certain acts. Due to your party affiliation, you cannot join the other party, or even to know the others. This is actually intolerance that makes us conscious. Researches shows that the class differences also appear to be a major factor in building tolerance level, the higher your level of elitism is in terms of money and intellectual level, the more tolerant you will be. And the lower your level of elitism is, the narrower you will become, you will see things on the basis of identity. The basic reason of this is your approach to resources. When you feel you are not approachable to the resources, you start looking for the reasons where some finds or think that it is due to the migrants' afghans who utilize our portion of resources, so they should be sent back. Though it is not the reason, you cannot measure that the water resources are for how many peoples, or the production we have from agriculture, how many people will utilize it, businesses that are done, generates the economic activities. It develops healthy environment. But people look for the reason. People who already are in short of resources they start blaming, this blame game increases intolerance and people become scattered.

There is a huge difference in identity and ideology, identity doesn't have any specific ideology, ideology is a mindset, which is based on right or wrong, good or bad pattern, a thought process, for example, I am a Muslim and I believe on Allah, this is

my ideology, but where I born, the language I speak, the place and people where I grow up, there I develop my identity. Like you speak any language, other might not like it, but as you speak that language, you definitely will like it. The point is what you feel good. But when we talk about ideology, it doesn't mean what you feel good, it means what is right. Identity can rely on ideology but ideology cannot rely on identity. Identity is your affiliation in a narrower sense; ideology is a broader concept like we say Muslim Ummah. It means those who follow the same ideology. If you go to Malaysia, they will not allow you blend in, even you go to saudia, they would not allow you to make property. They only need you when they need workforce otherwise, they won't allow you to visit even. Though we are sharing the same ideology but the difference is of identity, because they are identity conscious. Sometimes ideological differences also create intolerance. Like some say that we cannot live with the peoples of other religions, even countries are built on ideological differences. Though they create a country on the basis of ideology but still unable to tackle identity crises. Identity magnetizes you, connect you.

### **5.3. Interrelationship of Identity Politics and Democratic Space**

Identity Politics and Democratic Space is interrelated in a sense that it has much more importance in the intellectual grooming and development of the society. One cannot deprive the other from expressing his true self in a genuine right space, how these spaces are provided or can be created is another issue and matter of concern. With respect to the students' councils or unions, they in all respect should be aligned in all three aspects of morality, integrity and sovereignty, so that in its genuine right space, they can flourish and groom to meet the need of hour. Due to lack of guidance and proper platform the concept of identity politics has been misinterpreted for students in order to use them for personal gain and interests. Student groups in most public sector universities are deeply polarized along linguistic, sectarian and political lines (Haq, 2017). According to

a review published in “The Nation” the ban on student councils/unions in 1984 put society in a prolonged suffering for more than three decades; slowly allowing fundamentalism, extremism, linguistic hatred, sectarianism and other reactionary negative tendencies at education institutions of Pakistan, which are considered a hub of ideas, innovation and knowledge creation (Khaleel Jatoi, 2019).

There are certain confusions amongst student unions and student political wings, they are two separate things. Student unions have nothing to do with the student political wings of an organization. They are two different things. Union is an elective body. They do election and a student body elected, then it became a union. If few people together make baloch national movement or in Quaid e Azam University makes Punjabi Student Federation, they are not union. It is like; people party is not a government until it wins election. Similarly when student political wing wins election, then it will be a union. Mostly students mixed it up, like you did it for one reason and end up totally against it. They propagate that these students are militant wings. Government should have ban militant wings rather than elected body. When they banned Islami Jamiat e Talaba and PSF; resultantly they matured in silence and indulge in quarrel and fights.

Identity based conflicts normally destruct everything and every relationship; it separates peoples rather than bring them closer. Yes, conflicts could be constructive, if resolved and transformed on mutual understanding basis. But the reality is that we are not willing to resolve our conflicts, instead we use violence which creates or give rise to another conflict. Sometimes our conflicts are too violent that they are inherited from generation to generation. Instead of working together to reduce the intensity of conflict, to transform it into constructive conflict, it became worsen and destructive. In my personal experiences I more often have to restrain myself to say even right thing just because I realize that the other intends me to say something on the basis of which they will get a point to raise a conflict and end up in fight. We need to realize that through debate and listening to the others opinion in the only and better way to resolve conflicts. We have to understand others, to own our mistakes, and not to blame others, our society mainly suffers from blame game. Our government is doing the same

thing, not to own their mistakes and blame others. The same thing happens in our students' circles, in universities, in our political talks, which is not healthy and productive. When you purposely promote a culture where your win is to blame others and prove them wrong, then you will not be able to transform destructive conflicts into constructive conflicts. You will not be able to resolve your issues, your problems. When you are not ready to own diversity, to accept uniqueness of others, and insult them, how possibly can you think about the integration of different and diverse identity. Unfortunately, we do so in our stage plays and TV Drama which is promoting the culture of insulting others, disrespecting them, their culture, their race etc. We need to adopt measures to stop promoting this culture of insulting others which is creating insecurity amongst others. Forums in our society are based on anti-propagation, the basic motive behind this is to prove others wrong by any means. They do not support the right and justice, but to prove the opponent wrong. We arrange marches and strikes to humiliate others and not to bring positive change in our society and ask for what is right and just. Our new generation are headed towards what is not the right and purposeful and it is because they are not provided the valid forums and right space, the intellectual study circles. We only provide them hate, if it is state, we promote hate with our alliances, if it is political parties, we teach them how to hate the opponent parties, if it is religion, then we teach about how to hate different sects. When we talk about the organizational structure of institutions, we are amazed with how brief they are, but at operational level, they are totally the opposite. What happened to the Hazara community? We give them solutions of making boundary walls, how many boundary walls are we going to build? There are different cultures. In the reaction of the APS incident, we try to kick out all the Pashtun vendors from our markets according to government orders, how many others are we going to kick out? Is this the better solution to build walls and kick out others? What does that mean, isn't it the reduction of democratic space? The fact is that you do not have a single expert on conflict resolution or transformation. You don't have experts at all. Those who have done MBA in marketing are the analysts on politics and they even don't know what politics is because they never studied it, who don't know or differentiate amongst different paradigms of politics, who are not the people of social science and who don't understand the social psychology of the society.

Those who have come to Punjab after separation, they merge in here; they left their own identity and adopt Punjabi identity and never indulge in identity crises. On the other hand those who go to Sindh, they didn't do that; they choose to keep their own identity. The question is that the identity on the basis of which you are approaching ahead, every person is proud of something, like some says that my father is a great man or some says that I have a 500 years history which keeps me alive. To make this identity alive and flourish they celebrate cultural days and events, even the councils are based on the cultures and its promotion, even due to the severe governance issues in Sindh, they are not ready to leave their identity and adopt sindhi identity. They celebrate their cultural days like pakhtun day and mahajir day but not ready to be identified as sindhi. One of the reasons of this may be that political representation of Sindh is unable to address/resolve Sindh issues. To resolve these issues because when you facilitate others your identity too will be flourished and those who became the permanent residents of Sindh will be willing to adopt sindhi identity a clear stance has to be adopted regarding identity differences.

It is also observed that they don't have any political alternate, with sindhi peoples, people's party have full control of Sindh, and they have control throughout the history. Their feudal system is too much strong that we cannot challenge it. Even though we tried, its roots are that strong that couldn't be shaken easily. Other thing is that we are fond of peeri mureedi as well. We also have that influence. Our major issues are not being solving due to these three main issues. Our intellectuals focus on these things/issues to shake them, to break the ice. Because they are too strong, their slogans are the symbols like jiyaley, hur. Like I belong to a particular race, I am a Mehar, even though I am in Islamabad, doing BS English, reading different literature, studied different nation, yet again if I have to vote I will vote to ghous bakhsh Mubarak. It's dominance. I cannot challenge this dominance alone.

Actually, these are not the current problems, they are from the very beginning, from 1947, because on which principles we got separated we are unable to implement those principles. The motives, grounds and ideology that we had, we couldn't implement it. The conspiracy arises from there. (There are a lot more issues, like

the river of Sindh, according to international law, no one can take canal from river nail, but in Sindh you have hundreds of canals, and Sindh has shortage of water and resources. Gas issues, produced in Sindh, name used of Sui and utilized by others. Baloch too are fighting for their rights. They are fighting for their fundamental rights. Sui does not have gas, it is utilized by others.) It's the fear of the power loss rather than identity loss.

But our youth is changing, paleejo, although talk in limited sindhi context, but he talks about the problems because he knows about the fundamental problems. He has a study of Sindh and talk on behalf of that study. And it is our misfortune that we lost such peoples. We didn't support them. Now it is seen that in our youth a utopian or we can say a nostalgic thinking is developing. They debate and arrange conferences that what to do to bring change. But it will take time to improve Sindh and its youth/generations. It is not that easy. If you keep people away from educational process, you don't educate them; do not make them aware, how you will bring change.

The other participant discusses it that they don't have alternate, the available persons are almost the same, who to choose? People's party is not the alternate, their manifesto is totally different. Education is not the only problem, health is another thing, if a child is not healthy how will he get other things, we have disabilities, mothers are malnourished a lot more others. Dyslexia, ADHD patients, gastro patients, in a worse condition that no one could identify them. Education is the secondary issue, if you don't have health. In many districts water is polluted due to huge number of industries.

In 2010 it was planned to make sea water drinkable through a plant by city government of Karachi. Turkey was involved in it. Turkey had a condition to get back up of federation; they were not ready to do contract with city government. Federation till today never allows that plant to be operational.

There is also a huge class difference, elitism, in thar where at one hand you talk about drought, you also can witness swimming pools there. If they can provide water to those pools, why not to the poor people. You can find huge water supply in defence, though it may not be available in other areas of Karachi. In Clifton you have no issue of water, electricity, pollution etc. we have established class differences.

In previous years we also face issues regarding freedom of speech, if we make it specific, from 2006 to 2009, MQM was dominant, they even took sacrificial animals' skin at gun point. If someone doesn't want to attend a program, they call shutter down strike. But after the recent operation, it is quiet changed.

If we talk about MQM, even though they are in suppressed environment, they are forced to do different tasks, but they are loyal towards their leader. Even if it is allowed in our religion, they will bow down to Altaf Hussain because they got the reward for it. Like if there is a vendor, and he has shown some progress for its party, in next election he will be a minister.

Same is the case in interior Sindh, vote is biased through money. Our election system is too cheap; we cannot support intellectual persons, until he has something to offer. He has something to buy a seat first. Our youth, don't have enough money to print a pamphlet how he will undergo a political process.

One of the participants talk about Jamiat that when they look them in general, they are very polite, decent. But here in universities, they do everything by force, and dominated. If they openly talk about/against jamiat, it will increase the clash, we can take the example of Mashal Khan, we also can take the example of Professor who is killed on the basis of religion. Under the party, their ideas, system is very convenient, pro society, revolutionary, but dealing with other they became harsh. When we make divisions on personal basis, it became more complex and unacceptable. In our case, ideology is great but there is no implementation.

We have not learnt that what is politics and how can we do this. State is unable to fulfill its responsibilities. They are unable to provide education and health to the citizens. We talk about right to information but are we even getting correct information, is our media providing correct information, if you are isolated and only watch TV channels, you will never be able to know the exact problem of Pakistan. As far as the youth of Pakistan is concerned, today's youth is just like a machine. When he born, he is vaccinated, for the first year he remained ill, after that he has to face a lot more issues, like where will he study, what will he do, when he became young, he is indulged in gaming and other stuff on net, he has nothing to do with the ideology or identity. He



slept all day in the hostel, read one day before exam, and give exam only to pass paper. He has no critical thinking; neither has he had ability to think about his nation or nationhood. We read propagated syllabus, we only read course books, we don't have the habit of books reading, course that I read is pro state, and there is no such critical thinking in it. Our youth don't know about Michael foco, Nietzsche, Marx. And the reason what they give about not reading them is that they are atheist. Despite them, we even don't want to read about our local literature including abulkalam azad, ubaid ullah sindhi and shams ul ulema. Similarly, amongst the socialist we have habib jalib, faraz, faiz, jun alia, manto. About manto we say that he is fascist. We don't go for realities rather give excuses.

In my personal opinion, what I observe is that, when we talk about political concerns of people of four provinces, people of Punjab are more concerned to politics, secondly the people of KP are concerned and they have broader view of politics, they are more open. They don't want to remain in bandages, boundaries. In case of Sindh, they never remain invaders, they don't have broader political vision, they are more concerned to culture and identity rather than politics. Political crises may be a reason that good political leadership could not emerge, ayaz palejo was emerged before 12 years and now there is a huge gap.

The other crisis is that our young leaders are used by intelligence, our leaders if wanted to talk, they are silenced. In Punjab, leaders don't talk about ground realities, they talk about temporary solutions, and they count for their interests, their family's interests and their society's interest. While our sindhi leaders, when our Bhutto rises, they don't talk about temporary solutions, their voices are heard over years. We take him as our leader, he was a constitutional reformist, and he addresses nation and national interest in united nation. He was a brave leader, he doesn't talk about temporary interest, and he demanded permanent solutions.

Our people when come, they talk about Pakistan, not about nationality, those who talk about nationality does not make it to the front, other parties like ANP etc. they only talk about their identity, not in general. We have to respect all cultures whether it is Punjabi or sindhi, no one is superior but respectable. We only have to make sure the

respect of our culture and people and not to show any ones superiority. We should be proud of our identity but not at the cost of others respect.

We recently have witnessed the role of youth in politics that their vote got the higher mandate, those are now in government who are chosen by the youth by giving their vote. They properly participated where they have to participate and resultantly, they got their desired results and prove importance of their role in politics. Which shows that youth can / are capable to bring change in our society. Their main concern in present scenario should be to educate their selves so that they can identify their right direction. So that they can differentiate between right and wrong, understand it, see it in broader way, think and act upon it in order to explore new horizons of possibilities. If youth is aware and empowered enough, they could bring a positive change in this country. We have witnessed in many cases that our youth is determined to be identified as a one nation, Pakistani, rather than Sindhi, Punjabi, Balochi or Pakhtun. We also have seen them coming out of religious segregations and proud to be identified as a true Muslim rather than any specific sect. Their role is to change the destiny of our nation but with this role, there becomes responsibilities, which is to change yourself and your society for better and for this they have to be aware enough about their problems, their solutions, critical analysis of what is wrong and right on the basis of justice. Right now, they are struggling with their responsibilities because they don't have proper or suitable platforms to present their ideas and to flourish their selves by focusing on their areas of interests. They don't have the proper guidance, institutions and structure in order to groom. We are not focusing on our corporate social responsibilities. We don't have proper structure to stream line local communities. We don't give opportunity to speak up to our youth, to represent, to participate, to give their opinion. We build so much boundaries around them that they are afraid to talk about or comment about any issue, even if they know that they are right. They keep their ideas to their selves because they know we are not ready to own them and appreciate them. Today the need of hour is the ethical education, to improve our life style, to upgrade our education system. We have a lot of institutions for social issues but we don't promote their functions, their responsibilities, today a person don't

know how to get aid from Bait-ul-Mal for education but he properly knows how to beg from 100 peoples. It is because people don't know about Bait-ul-Mal, not only the Bait-ul-Mal today we have a lot more institutions and organization, what is more needed is to spread the word to make people aware of their rights. We put all the responsibilities on any one, rather it has to be on both sides, not only the organization but the end user or stakeholder too is responsible to fulfil its duties towards those organizations. In Pakistan, only banks have started it that they put pamphlets on their counters which explain the responsibilities of not only the banks but the clients as well. We must be clear about role and responsibility, both, this is a long way process that start from parents towards children, teachers towards students and organizations towards their employees. Organizations has the major role, when they act justly, it leaves imprints on the whole society. When they do the other way, it surely has a negative impact on all. If organizations are unjust and corrupted, it affects the whole country. Here the role of youth increases, in our policy making there is not any defined role of youth. It is because their presence and importance are not yet accepted here. In local government system, only one seat was allocated for youth which was shared with women. They need proper support, back up to perform their role efficiently and effectively, they need platforms, which are in present scenario not present. Student unions are banned. We don't train our youth to lead, we teach them to get job and make money. Because for such training they need hands on practice, which could only be done through student unions, and this is one of the main reasons that we lack leadership. Even youth representatives in political parties are in their fifties.

Answering to the question about ban on students unions, one of the respondents discuss that their ban basically is because of their violence, when they grow in violence and intolerance, they got uncontrolled and became threat for the state's sovereignty, they were being used by different parties. This shows that they need proper nursery which is controlled by the state, where they can groom. Identity based politics and indulging students in it may seem harmful or a threat to others, but for those who are actively involved in it, it is a best part of their job. They look for the those who can join and help them, because for them every individual is a resource person in different aspects. If we can take the example of MQM, before its creation it was known as

APMSO, which shows before going towards bigger canvas you need a nursery, where you can properly define your rules and interest. What we need in it is the proper supervision, so that they may not get towards the negativity. It is not only the reading the contents or syllabus, it basically is the hands-on practice which can only be achieved through student unions. There are student wings in the political parties, but they are not properly functioned but only used to gain specific political interest. They are educated, young, aware, and educated. They need of hour is to properly train them, provide them platform, opportunities, they must be allowed to practice, to do debates, critically analyze the situations. They must have proper control structure. Student participation in politics is essential, we should give them opportunities.

# Chapter 6

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 6.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the results suggest that there is a positive relationship between identity politics and democratic space. The analysis shows that whenever democratic space is reduced it increases the tension amongst people of various identities which ends in identity politics. Themes that have emerged during study with respect to democratic space are Genuine Right Space, Intellectual Activity, Political Character Building and Intellectual Grooming.

Genuine right space is a need of hour to promote Political character building, where students learn about Pakistani politics, where you can nourish emancipated, informed political leadership. It all happened here, the intellectual grooming, when there were students politics. Where people over a cup of tea, decide ideas to bring the positive change in society. All the movements were happened in the universities by those ideologues. Where great minds share their ideas in a proper study circle, where they explain it, which is identified as an intellectual activity by those ideologues. They are the people who will go up from bottom and will talk about ideas, ideologies and issues.

Themes that have emerged with respect to identity politics are Freedom of Association, Freedom of Expression and Issue Base Politics. When intellectual activity stopped, it ends in issue base politics. Where political process stick in issues rather than national integration, where citizens segregated on the basis of their races and ethnicity rather to integrate into nationhood.

Freedom of association and expression is a constitutional right of every citizen of Pakistan to associate him/her to its appropriate identity. Constitution of Pakistan gives freedom of assembly and freedom of association and it's a fundamental

right. It's not a principle of policy it's a fundamental right and in any case any law or institution cannot restrict/restrain it from you. Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order (Chapter 1, Fundamental Rights of Part II: Fundamental Rights and Principles of Policy).

Freedom of Association is "Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or union, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality" (Article: 17). Similarly students unions in all respect should be aligned in all three aspects of morality, integrity and sovereignty.

During the process students councils have also been discussed that and it appears that there are two separate things. Student unions have nothing to do with the student political wings of an organization. They are two different things. Union is an elective body. They do election and when a student body elected, they form a union. If few people together make baloch national movement or in Quaid e Azam University makes Punjabi Student Federation, they are not union. It is like; people party is not a government until it wins election. Similarly when student political wing wins election, then it will be union. Most of the students don't know this difference which is why they don't have appropriate study circle and the political space is where these concepts would be clarified and discussed.

## **6.2. Recommendations**

Universities all over Pakistan should promote study circles where students belong to any race, ethnicity, region could participate and exchange their ideas in order to develop their sense of national integration rather than to stick to their regional identities.

Students' councils and unions should be properly administered and supported by the universities without any biasness and under proper established platforms.

The authorities should work on to lift ban imposed on student union in order to provide our youth a genuine right space where they can exchange their ideas and create new ones.

We have to establish a culture of intellectual grooming by involving our youth in political process of this country in order to broaden their vision and wisdom.

## 7. Bibliography

(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.na.gov.pk/en/content.php?id=74>

Ahmed, F. (1998). *Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan* (illustrated ed.). Oxford University Press.

Ahmed, R. Q. (2015). Pakistan: between nationalism and identity making. *Journal of John Hopkins University*.

Anspach, R. R. (1979). From Stigma to Identity Politics: Political activism among the physically disabled and former mental patients. *Social Science & Medicine. Part A: Medical Psychology & Medical Sociology*, 13, 765-773.

Axmann, M. (2009). Back to the Future: The Khanate of Kalat and the Genesis of Baloch Nationalism 1915-1955.

Barth, F. (1969). Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Cultural Difference.

Bernstein, & Cressida. (2005; 2009, August ). Identity Politics. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 31:47-74.

Bernstein, M. (2005). Identity Politics. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 47-74.

Bondi, L. (1993). Locating Identity Politics" in Keith, Michael & Pile. In S. P. Michael Keith, *Place and the politics of identity*. London, New York: Routledge.

Bourne, J. (1987). Homelands of the Mind: Jewish Feminism and Identity Politics. *Race and Class*.

Brunt, R. (1989). *The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s*, London, Lawrence & Wishart.

Cartwright, J. (1978). *Political Leadership in Sierra Leone*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Cerulo, A. K. (1997). Identity Construction: New Issues, New Directions. *New Review of Sociology*, 385-409.



- Denzin, N. K. (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Haq, R. (2017, February 12). Campus Violence Rising across the country.
- Hechter, M. (n.d.). Response to Cohen: Max Weber on Ethnicity and Ethnic Change.
- Herring, E. &. (2006). *Iraq in Fragments: The Occupation and Its Legacy (Crises in World Politics)* (1 ed.). Cornell University Press.
- Hintjens, M. H. (2008). Post-genocide Identity Politics in Rwanda. *Ethnicities*.
- Hobsbawm, E. (1996). Identity Politics and the Left. *New Left Review*.
- Honneth, A. (1995). The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflict.
- Hutchinson, J., & Smith, D. A. (1996). *Ethnicity*. Oxford University Press.
- Idris, A. H. (2005). *Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan* (1 ed.). Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Inglehart, R. (1981). Post-materialism in an Environment of Insecurity. *American Political Science Review*, 880-900.
- Iqbal, K. (2017, February 16). Conflicting Identities in Pakistan: Challenges and the way forward.
- Khaleel Jatoi, M. (2019). *Student union*. Islamabad: The Nation.
- Khan, D. I. (2006). Contenting Identities of Pakistan and the issue of Democratic Governance. *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*.
- Khan, D. R. (2018). *Ideology vs identity in Politics*. The Express Tribune.
- Khan, M. S. (n.d.). The Politics of Identity: Ethno-Political Identity in Local Political Structure.
- Khory, K. R. (2007, December 24). National integration and the politics of identity in Pakistan. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 1(4), 23-43.

- Moya, M. P. (2006). What's Identity Got to Do With It? Mobilising Identities in the Multicultural Classroom. *Identity Politics Reconsidered*.
- Mulkerrins, P. (2018). Is the Democratic Space Shrinking? - Human Rights Implementation in Viet Nam: A Case Study of the Democratic Space for Civil Society in Viet Nam.
- Mushtaq, M. (2009). Managing Ethnic Diversity and Federalism in Pakistan. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 279-294.
- Rahman, T. (1998). Language and Politics in Pakistan. *Oxford University Press*, 176-205.
- Roy, A. (Apr 28, 2017). *On democracy and dysfunction: In Pursuit of Cultural Freedom*.
- Sanchez, R. (2006). On a Critical Realist Theory of Identity. In *The Future of Minority Studies* (pp. 31-52). New York: Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Sawyer, P. (2006). Identities as Calling: Martin Luther King on War, Identity Politics Reconsidered. In *The Future of Minority Studies* (pp. 69-77). New York: Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Sökefeld, M. (1999, August/October). Debating Self, Identity and Culture in Anthropology. *Current Anthropology*, *The University of Chicago Press on behalf of Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research*, 40(4), 417-448.
- (April 24th, 2017). *Student groups clash at Quaid-e-Azam University*. The Express Tribune.
- Thomas, D. R. (2006, June 1). A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.
- Young, I. M. (1990). Five Faces of Oppression. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, *Princeton University Press*, Princeton New Jersey.

## Annexure-A

### NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC POLICY



#### Interrelationship of Identity Politics and Democratic Spaces: A Case of Students' Councils in Pakistan

#### Interview Guide for Focused Group Discussions among Students' Councils Representatives of Universities in Islamabad

---

The purpose of this interview guide is to gather data regarding **interrelationship of identity politics and democratic spaces: A case of students' councils in Pakistan**, to furnish the needs of research work for a Master of Philosophy Degree in Governance and Public Policy. Any information provided by you will be dealt with confidentially.

<b>Participants information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Religion</b>	
<b>Study Level (BS/MS/etc.)</b>	
<b>Area of Study</b>	
<b>Affiliation (identity)</b>	
<b>Council's Affiliation (Multi/Single) Please elaborate</b>	
<b>Position in Council</b>	
<b>Party/Political Affiliation (if any)</b>	
<b>Contact No.</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	

Sr.No.	Statement
<b>Identity Politics and Democratic Spaces in the context of students' councils in Pakistan</b>	
1.	What is the rationale behind forming any students' councils? Why students need it?
2.	Students' councils are normally based on identity representation (Pashtun/Punjabi/Siraiki/etc.), what are the reasons behind it? /Does any specific identity feel deprived? /Is it sense of belongingness? /Does you feel secured when you are attached to any council of your choice?
3.	How do you see identity (your perception)? How do you define identity consciousness?
4.	Do you see any difference between identity and ideology?
5.	What is the legal status of your council? Do you have organized structure of your council? Can you explain it?
6.	Are you heard, when you talk about any agenda or any issue? Does the authority resolve your issues?
7.	How council's affiliation effects your party/political affiliation? Does it give you any advantages/disadvantages?
8.	Having affiliation with specific identity, how you define sense of belongingness in a pluralist/multicultural society like Pakistan?
9.	Do you think political structure of Pakistan is suppressing/oppressing any specific identity? How do you see it?
10.	Do you think political structure of Pakistan is promoting participatory government?
11.	Do you think political parties in Pakistan are promoting identity politics based on specific ethnicity/race/religion? What is your understanding?
12.	What are the reasons behind promotion of multiple identities?
13.	Do you have any understanding of democratic space? How do you perceive democratic space in a pluralist society?
14.	Do you think reduced democratic space is the cause of identity politics in Pakistan? Or is it the sense of belongingness/consciousness of identity?
15.	How and when these democratic spaces are reduced? What are the rationales behind this?
16.	In a pluralist society how, identities could be integrated to form an uncontested form of nationhood?
17.	How identity-based conflicts can be transformed into constructive conflicts to promote a sense of nationhood?

## Annexure-B

### NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC POLICY



#### **Interrelationship of Identity Politics and Democratic Spaces: A Case of Students' Councils in Pakistan**

Extensive/Detailed Interview Guide for In-Depth Interviews of Young Politicians  
emerged from Students' Councils in Pakistan

The purpose of this interview guide is to gather data regarding **interrelationship of identity politics and democratic spaces: A case of students' councils in Pakistan**, to furnish the needs of research work for a Master of Philosophy Degree in Governance and Public Policy. Any information provided by you will be deal with confidentially.

#### **Introductory Note**

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is Sara Abdullah Bangush and I am student of M.phil. Governance and Public Policy. I would like to talk to you about your experiences participating in the students' councils/movements (if any) and your political struggle. Specifically, as a researcher I am trying to find out the interrelationship of identity politics and democratic spaces in Pakistan in order to find out the role of students' councils in universities of Pakistan.

The interview should take less than an hour. I will be taping the session (with your permission) because I don't want to miss any of your comments. Although I will be taking some notes during the session, I can't possibly write fast enough to get it all down.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that any information I include in my thesis does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview at any time. So can we start the interview?

<b>Name</b>		<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Age</b>		<b>Religion</b>	
<b>Affiliation (identity)</b>		<b>Party Affiliation</b>	
<b>Political Experience</b>			
<b>Position in Party/ Govt. (in govt/opposition/others)</b>			

<b>Any Affiliation (council/body/movement) during student life (if any)</b>	
<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>Identity Politics and Democratic Spaces in the context of students' councils in Pakistan</b>	
1.	How do you see identity (your perception)? How do you define identity consciousness? Do you see any difference between identity and ideology?
2.	Having affiliation with specific identity, how you define sense of belongingness in a pluralist/multicultural society like Pakistan?
3.	Do you think political structure of Pakistan is suppressing/oppressing any specific identity? How do you see it?
4.	Do you think political parties in Pakistan are promoting identity politics based on specific ethnicity/race/religion? What is your understanding?
5.	In a pluralist society how, identities could be integrated to form an uncontested form of nationhood?
6.	Do you think reduced democratic space is the cause of identity politics in Pakistan? Or is it the sense of belongingness/consciousness of identity?
7.	How do you perceive democratic space in a pluralist society?
8.	Do you think political structure of Pakistan is promoting participatory government?
9.	How and when these democratic spaces are reduced? What are the rationales behind this?
10.	How identity-based conflicts can be transformed into constructive conflicts to promote a sense of nationhood?
11.	How will you describe the role of youth in political structure of Pakistan?
12.	Being a student, what was your role in such councils (unions/movements)?
13.	How do you see politics based on any specific identity and indulging of students on the basis of these identities/differences?
14.	Students' councils/unions/movements etc. are banned long ago, still they have very vibrant role in political struggle of different political parties, what is your view point about this?
15.	What is your expert opinion about student's participation in politics?

<b>Closing Note</b>
Is there anything more you would like to add? Thank you for your time.