Facets of Accountability in the Perspective of Pakistan (1999-2008): Problems and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

Accountability is a significant topic that needs thorough examination to understand its limitations and possibilities. This paper aims to elucidate the concept of accountability from the viewpoint of Pakistan and to investigate the relationships among the different elements of accountability and their effects on the political system. This elucidates the phenomenon of four-dimensional accountability from the viewpoint of Pakistan from 1999 to 2008. Accountability in Pakistan is broadly categorized as legal, social, administrative, and political accountability. The article has examined several facets of the weak democratic accountability process in Pakistan. It is fraught with drawbacks that far surpass its advantages. Every dimension is burdened with significant limitations. Consequently, this delineates a worst-case scenario resembling an obstacle course of accountability. The decline in several aspects of the accountability framework has been noticed in Pakistan. This paper has used an interpretivist research technique owing to its pertinence to the contextual nature of accountability inside organizations and agencies in Pakistan. This paper aids in understanding intriguing situations and important concerns.

Keywords: *Political Accountability, Social Accountability, Administrative Accountability, Bureaucratic Accountability.*

INTRODUCTION

Accountability encompasses several forms, including political, social, administrative, ethical, and legal accountability. Social accountability entails establishing a commitment and fostering a direct accountability relationship between citizens and the state (Malena & McNeil, 2010). It is fundamentally a strategy to empower the people to exercise their rights and hold government officials accountable for the use of their powers (Pradhan, 2010). Civil society organizations, pressure groups and mainstream media have achieved broader recognition for their role in fostering public awareness about the accountability of public officials for their conduct, authority, and responsibilities. The mainstream media has played a predominant role in this regard. (Familoni, 2005). The majority of theoretical investigations are predicated on the rational actor model. Strom's (2000) and Muller (2000) studies on accountability and delegation exemplify this

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tendency in the literature. Strom articulates accountability within the "democratic chain of delegation". He views a contemporary representative democracy as a manifestation of principal-agent interactions (Strom, 2000).

Accountability is a fundamental standard of the political system (Zarei, 2000). In accordance with democratic principles and standards, all individuals are considered to possess the same political rights and equally benefits from governmental initiatives. Political and administrative officials are accountable to people and oversight institutions for the powers and obligations assigned to them. Political analysts examine the core issue of accountability via the perspective of power. Accountability, as a concept, has a rich historical background in political science. John Locke said that for representative democracy to work, the governed must be separate from the governing. This is because accountability can only be achieved in this way (Grant & Keohane, 2005). Public accountability refers to the obligation of public officials, whether elected or appointed, to answer to the public for the execution of their assigned tasks, responsibilities, and conduct (Koen *et al.*, 2005). Stokes says:

> "…Political scientists often define accountability with consideration of perspective: accountability often signifies that voters are aware of, or can accurately deduce, the acts of parties while in government and then reward or penalize them based on these actions…" (2005, 316).

Pakistan adopted British vice-regal system; whereby public workers wielded authority largely devoid of political interference (Sayeed, 1966). As a result, the construction of a political structure on a bureaucratic base led to an institutional imbalance between political and civil-military entities. The parliamentary system of accountability failed because political parties weren't organized or disciplined, there wasn't enough political leadership, it was hard to build constructive opposition, the political climate was tense, and the military and civilian bureaucracy were involved in politics (Afzal, 2000). The civilian institutions, such as the judiciary and parliament, have been marginalized and rendered subordinate to the military authorities. The populace of Pakistan aspires to a transparent and responsible political system; yet, these aspirations are unlikely to be fulfilled until literacy is achieved (Ziring, 2006).

Pakistan has implemented internal and external measures of accountability from both historical and present viewpoints. Accountability methods in Pakistan are broadly categorized into political, administrative, social, and legal aspects. These various accountability mechanisms provide a framework that may be beneficial for taking a comprehensive approach and conducting comparative analysis about the topic of accountability. The different governments have not been able to make the rules and principles of a political culture of accountability permanent. As a result, there is a lot of corruption, bad management, theft, favoritism, and nepotism in society as a whole. Consequently, a robust culture of accountability is essential for steering society toward growth and effective government. Surprisingly, despite the considerable importance of the accountability problem, this field of study has remained relatively unexplored. The current research aims to address the deficiencies in the interpretative comprehension of accountability concerns by examining all its dimensions (1999-2008). The goal of this article is to investigate how the various

components of accountability relate to one another and how this influences the political system during Musharaff regime.

This paper has endeavoured to reveal the authentic character of the accountability process growth in Pakistan over the particular timeframe of 1999-2008. The author aims to address the deficiencies in the interpretative comprehension of accountability by examining all its dimensions. This article examines the connections between different dimensions of accountability and their effects on the political landscape.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Making sense of Accountability

The term "accountability" originates from the Anglo-Norman period rather than the Anglo-Saxon era and is historically linked to accounting, namely in its literal sense of bookkeeping (Bovens, 2007). William I of England laid the foundation for the contemporary notion. In 1008, the assets of property holders were examined and cataloged by royal agents. The landowners were required to take vows of allegiance to the sovereign (Dubnick, 2002). The royal administration not only relied on this record for tax collection, but it also served as its foundation. By the early twelfth century, the highly centralized monarchy governed via a system of centralized auditing and semi-annual accounts (Bovens, 2007). The concept of accountability has gradually broadened over time since William I of England's reign. In contemporary political discourse, 'accountability' and 'accountable' pertain to financial management and the pursuit of transparent and equitable government. Since the late 20th century, it has evolved into a more expansive kind of public accountability. In contemporary political and academic discussions, 'accountability' is often an overarching concept encompassing distinct notions, including justice, democracy, efficiency, responsiveness, duty, and integrity (Behn, 2001).

Accountability as a Normative Sense and Institutional Set-up

Accountability is an important criterion for government leaders and state institutions (Akpanuko & Asogwa, 2013). It shows a readiness among government officials to conduct themselves fairly and impartially. In the context of virtuous activity, accountability is susceptible to exploitation; nevertheless, it is inherently difficult to define.

Accountability as a Concept

The notion of accountability is an elusive concept that is challenging to articulate with precision. The term 'accountability' refers to the ability to be held responsible. Accountability emerges when a person or organisation's fulfilment of obligations is subject to oversight, guidance, and obligation to another party. As a result, the idea of accountability comprises two distinct elements: answerability and enforcement. Accountability necessitates that the government, its institutions, and officials explain and justify their decisions to the public and oversight bodies. Enforcement involves individuals or entities endowed with the authority to

ensure accountability. Bentham's principle asserts, "The more closely we are monitored, the more exemplary our conduct" (Hood *et al*., 1999).

Accountability as Principal-Agent Relation

The theories of accountability provide valuable insights for comprehending the objectives of the article about accountability concerns. These accountability theories have arisen from the experts' universally-based research concepts. These concepts may be broadly categorised into three theoretical components. Principal-Agent frameworks, New Public Management viewpoints, and an Institutional methodology.

The essential traits of accountability involve an agent who holds a domain under the principal's accountability. The principal may request information and reasons about the use of rights and authority from the responsible parties. Consequently, the principal holds their respective domains accountable. The actor may be an individual public worker or a corporation. The significant counterpart is the accountability forum. It may refer to an individual like a superior, minister, or journalist. Alternatively, it can denote an entity such as the general populace, parliament, court, or audit office. A principal-agent relationship may establish the connection between the forum and the agent (Bovens, 2007). The forum serves as the principal that has conferred power to a parliament; the agent is accountable for its performance in office on a regular basis. This role is often associated with the political mechanisms of accountability.

Traditional principal-agent models are improbable to accommodate the accountability process in the evolving dynamics of political systems that are in perpetual flux. Consequently, the institutional perspective aids in understanding the complexities and dynamism of contemporary events (Olsen, 2013). Currently, many nations, both established and emerging, contemplate the concepts of New Public Management (NPM) as helpful for public sector reforms (Fatemi & Behmanes, 2012). The aforementioned framework is likely to be adopted by other nations in the near future owing to the bureaucracy's obstinate disposition stemming from legislative structures and hierarchical decision-making processes (Yamamoto, 2013).

Accountability as Horizontal, Vertical and Diagonal Channels

Accountability may be executed via vertical, horizontal, and diagonal channels. Vertical accountability establishes a direct or indirect link between citizens and the government (e.g., via elections). Vertical accountability is the mechanism by which individuals, media, and civil society organizations endeavour to impose norms of exemplary performance on politicians. They seek assistance from lawmakers to address public concerns and grievances and to intervene in instances of unlawful or insufficient actions by those in authority. The parliament, as a conduit for public issues, may address complaints via public hearings, committee inquiries, and accountability via public petitions. Alternatively, state institutions serve as oversight entities for government officials via horizontal accountability mechanisms, including the judiciary, ombudsmen, auditor generals, anti-corruption agencies, and legislative bodies, among others.

Social Accountability

Social accountability initiates a direct accountability connection between people and the government. Social accountability refers to the mechanism by which authorities are held responsible by the ordinary citizens and civil society groups (Malena *et al*., 2004). This method of accountability utilizes a hierarchical approach. People commonly acknowledge social accountability mechanisms as a type of vertical accountability, demonstrating significant public engagement in holding governmental authorities accountable for their actions. Social accountability initiatives enable citizens to assert their fundamental rights and demand governmental accountability for the use of power and authority (Pradhan, 2010). The requirements for social accountability include monitoring public expenditure, participatory public policy making, protests, investigative journalism and advocacy campaigns (Malena *et al*., 2004). The social accountability process is most successful in governments with a robust internal accountability system that is visible to the public and functions transparently.

Political Accountability

Power is essential in politics. Consequently, regulation is necessary to avoid abuse. This issue has been the central topic of discussion in political philosophy from the ancient times. In modern times, this issue has resurfaced as a more complex concept known as political accountability. Political accountability is an essential part of democratic administration (Waseem, 2022). The democratic accountability concept enables principal-agent interactions in sequences (Strom, 2003). Political leadership is answerable to constituents via regular, fair, and competitive elections. Individuals confer power to elect their representatives by casting vote, who are then accountable to the public during elections. In parliamentary democracies, the people delegate their authority to the executive branch via elected representatives. Consequently, the ministers supervise their civil workers or administrative bodies. These are subject to the executive's oversight (Smith, 1991).

Administrative Accountability

Administrators have significant power and influence in most countries owing to their competence, longevity, position, discipline, organizational structures, and proximity to political power. Administrators hold the discretionary power to implement policies. The administrative accountability system comprises internal laws and regulations designed to hold public officials accountable for their conduct and activities. Secondly, government workers operate within a hierarchical structure and are accountable to their senior authorities. However, the executive, legislative, and judicial institutions may also hold administrative personnel accountable for their actions (Smith, 1991). Accountability for administrators and the bureaucracy is essential to ensure governmental legitimacy and to validate the public administrator's duty as a servant of the citizens. The accountability inside the bureaucracy may be classified as either external-internal and informal or internal-external and formal. Formal internal and external instruments include the bureaucratic hierarchy, rules and regulations, performance assessments, legislative reviews, advisory groups, judicial proceedings, and ombudsman services, among others. External and internal informal variables, such as personal professionalism, ethics, dedication, public discourse, interest group influence, and media, among others.

Legal Accountability

Legal accountability to public institutions is becoming more significant due to the heightened institutionalization of social interactions and the greater faith placed in the court rather than the legislature (Waseem, 2022). Legal accountability is the most overt type of accountability, rooted in comprehensive legal standards defined by civil, criminal, and administrative statutes, together with court precedents. This kind of accountability is often mandated by tribunals and courts. Legal accountability guarantees universal accountability, irrespective of an individual's economic, social, or political standing in society. The judiciary exerts horizontal legal supervision on executive authority and ensures the executive's accountability to the law. It has jurisdiction over legal affairs and may get assistance from diverse bodies, including central banks, securities and exchange commissions, auditing agencies, and anti-corruption groups, among others.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative technique. The author has selected this methodology because it is most appropriate for the topic at hand and aligns with the article's aims. Many qualitative research methodologies believe that some domains of existence inherently need qualitative data that is both exact and significant (Neuman, 2015). The primary emphasis of the paper is the acquisition and examination of qualitative data. The interpretivist approach is crucial for this paper since it pertains primarily to governmental institutions and agencies (White, 1994). This is due to the inherent context-driven nature of interpretivist research (McNabb, 2005), which establishes a strong connection with the functioning of accountability in Pakistani organizations and agencies. We have extracted the meanings and patterns from the specific political and historical environment of Pakistan, where the phenomenon of accountability emerged.

Qualitative surveys provide the capacity to generate extensive, nuanced, and diverse forms of data. Qualitative data is well-suited for analyzing a broad study subject. It is an appropriate instrument to use when the study aims to comprehend and investigate individuals' experiences, opinions, and viewpoints regarding both general and specialized research inquiries. The shortcomings of qualitative data may be addressed (Braun *et al*., 2017). Qualitative data is inherently subjective and relies on the interpretative principles of social sciences. This article has explored several data-gathering procedures appropriate for qualitative analysis. This comprises archive material, papers, media data, research publications, and personal interviews.

Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data comprise two stages: data management and data analysis. The first phase involves the commencement of the collecting procedure, which includes meticulous selection of the research sample and the formulation of a data-gathering system. Subsequently, the interpretation process commences, whereby data is condensed, presented, and conclusions are derived using an interpretivist method.

DISCUSSION, RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Political Accountability

Electoral Politics of Clientelism

The Musharraf dictatorship conducted contentious local body elections and a referendum on a non-partisan basis (Jaffery, 2002). Zaid Hussain stated:

"…Pervez Musharraf sought to legitimize his authoritarian rule bypassing the conventional party-centric voting system at the local level. The military junta used the newly appointed nazims as intermediaries to secure favorable results in the impending presidential referendum and pro-Musharraf political parties during the 2002 general election. The government's political maneuvers led to the creation of political clientele to counteract opponents…" (Z. Hussain, Interview, May 27, 2024).

Flawed Parliamentary System of Political Accountability

The proposed amendments by General Musharraf's military administration in the Constitution unequivocally undermined the legal framework of democratic accountability. The reintroduction of Article 58(2) (b), which gives the president the discretionary power to dissolve the National Assembly and the central government, compromised the parliamentary system of democratic accountability (Butt, 2002). The establishment of the National Security Council (NFC) in the Constitution, including the Chiefs of the military forces and politicians as key figures in political accountability, was influenced by an unelected entity. Musharraf's persistence as president in military attire, while concurrently holding a political office and a lucrative position within Pakistan's services, constituted a violation of the democratic principles of political accountability as delineated in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973. Atta Muhammad Nasar of the view that:

"…Following the military government's endorsement of PML-Q, local elections devolved into a simple mechanism for creating party-less affiliates who could be politicized and used at the discretion of the Patron dictatorship. Thus, it was unsurprising that tensions dominated the political scene among bureaucrats, provincial executives and political parties…" (A. M. Nasar, Interview, January 23, 2025).

Dysfunctional Political Accountability

The military regime allocated substantial funds to Nazis who supported the government to assist its political partners in the 2002 elections (Waseem, 2002). In an interview with S. Rahman on May 11, 2024, it was said that the military administration used the National Accountability Bureau to compel political adversaries to align with the King's party, PML-Q. The 2002 elections were substantially undermined and intentionally distorted. The ruling elites rejected these allegations from the opposition. The government acknowledged providing various forms of assistance to pro-regime candidates. Before the elections, the government put together the Sindh Cabinet with members of the anti-PPP Sind Democratic Alliance (Staff Reporter, 2002). Justice

Irshad, who was Chief Election Commissioner, denied claims that state officials had tampered with the voting process (Qasir, 2002). Political parties in the opposition and civil society groups were worried about how reliable and fair the Chief Election Commissioner was. The Pakistan Bar Council denounced his nomination as commissioner. They saw it as a governmental award for his endorsement of Musharraf's regime while serving as Chief Justice of Pakistan.

Legal Framework Order, 2002

Muhammad Azhar said:

"…. It was the LFO's goal to weaken the military's control over civic and legislative accountability institutions. It was strange that the Supreme Court didn't do what the Constitution says it should do and stop the executive from abusing its power. It attempted to transfer its legal responsibilities to the political actors of accountability (Parliament)… After that, Parliament gave in to the strong demands of the military establishment and added the LFO to the Constitution. The military dictatorship has undermined the political institution of accountability, making it susceptible to manipulation..." (M. Azhar, Interview, April 17, 2024).

Controversial National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO)

A new political debate arose about the enactment of the NRO. After hearing the arguments from the respected lawyers, the Supreme Court threw out the NRO. General Musharraf used it to negotiate a political agreement with Benazir Bhutto, the former Prime Minister (Shaikh, 2007). The NRO paid back everyone who was accused of corruption or doing corrupt things. This included politicians, businesspeople, and people in public office (Noorani, 2008). Prior to the court's ruling, the government had the authority to withdraw the prosecution. It is also possible to stop the prosecution of an accused person who has gone missing and was a victim of political victimization between 1986 to 1999 (Shaikh, 2007). The NRO ostensibly sought to foster national reconciliation and enhance mutual trust. Government officials also used it to bolster trust and eliminate remnants of political conflicts, persecution, and prejudice (Shaikh, 2007). Dr Mubarak Ali commented on NRO:

"…Designed for a specific timeframe, it was imprudent and irrational. Furthermore, the enactment granted amnesty to a specific group of accused individuals. Benazir Bhutto arranged an agreement, demonstrating that the NRO was a practical partnership. She aligned with the military ruler to safeguard herself and ensured her political party's (PPP) unimpeded access to the following elections in Pakistan. Unfortunately, General Musharraf knew that the ways his government tried to hold people accountable for corruption, whether they were politicians or government officials, were not working. This made it easier for the corrupt officials, politicians, and businesses to get away with their actions…" (M. Ali, Interview, March 26, 2024).

Parliament's Failure as the Most Operative Tool of Accountability

Ehsanullah Babar said:

"…The Parliament constituted a component of the broader accountability framework. Along with making laws and representing the people, Parliament's main job was to look over public spending and audit reports made by the Auditor General of Pakistan. Each legislative committee can take public petitions, look into them, call on public officials, and suggest actions that should be taken…" (E. Babar Interview, May 11, 2024)

Fundamentally, parliament was intended to provide a comprehensive and robust legislative framework for accountability. Nonetheless, this expectation remains unfulfilled in Pakistan. Muhammad Ayub stated:

"…During General Musharraf's military dictatorship, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), tasked with enforcing accountability, consisted of appointed members. The selection of PAC chairpersons from the treasury benches did not improve the performance of civilian administrations. Moreover, the PAC lacked sufficient authorization to implement its recommendations. Consequently, its function was advisory. It only proposed acts, but their execution was the accountability of the administration…" (M. Ayub, Interview, June 21, 2024).

Selective, Politically-Motivated, and Discriminatory Accountability Process

Political elites left their jobs to take part in the Musharraf dictatorship's "spoils system" in exchange for more power. This kept them from having to deal with the military government's unfair, biased, and politically motivated accountability process. At the behest of the military ruling classes, they formed a king's party with the rebellious parts of the PPP and PML (N) to work with the military government and get benefits and advantages from 1999 to 2008. Their focus was on governance rather than on serving their constituents. [Z.R. Qazi, Interview, March 13, 2024] In this classic case of clientelist politics, General Musharraf's government put rewarding its "clients" ahead of the people, who are the main people who hold politicians accountable. The plan to improve democratic accountability wasn't put into action to break up the ruling political elites' hold on all economic and political power. Consequently, the initiative could not contribute to the fortification of the party system, the rule of law, the advancement of democratic accountability, or the provision of social justice (1999-2008).

Absence of Self-Accountability of the Political Parties

Political accountability originates inside political parties. Regrettably, political parties in Pakistan lacked an intra-party accountability system under the Musharraf government. Unfortunately, Pakistani political parties don't have any ways to hold each other accountable within the party, such as free, fair, and open elections. There were no genuine contenders for high-ranking party posts. The political parties had turned them into strongholds of political authoritarianism, with party leaders being blindly followed by their subordinates. Nazir Mahmood said:

"…Dynastic and feudalistic tendencies in modern politics (1999–2008) caused politicians to change their allegiances in the pursuit of power, which took them away from their duty to serve the public. The ambitions and expectations of the populace were largely unmet by those in authority under the civilian rule of Musharraf…" (N. Mahmood, Interview, July 23, 2024).

Because political parties don't take real accountability for their actions, politicians don't do their important jobs as the main and most important people who can improve political accountability. Under civilian-military rule, political parties were not well organized and did not follow rules, which made it harder for them to create a culture of political accountability (1999-2008).

Social Accountability

The Politics of Social Patronage

Dr. Mubarak Ali said:

"… The politics of social patronage remained profoundly alienated in Pakistani society even throughout Musharraf's regime. Familial, tribal, feudal, and ethnic affiliations dominated Pakistani politics. Males made all significant political decisions during election periods, indicating a predominantly patriarchal family structure. In Pakistani rural areas from 1999 to 2008, life was ruled by patriarchal, feudal, tribal, and ethnic groups…" (M. Ali, Interview, March 26, 2024).

Pakistan inherited a system of land ownership that gave the feudal class power and control. They exerted control over the economically disadvantaged and uneducated populace in the rural regions. About a month before the 2002 elections, politicians, mostly in rural areas, tried to get the support of tribal leaders or feudal lords in exchange for benefits (Husain, 2018). The tribe deemed the leader responsible for making decisions in favour of any candidate. As a result, the culture of patron-client relationships in politics has made the social accountability process worse since 1999 and weakened the standards of social accountability. The patron-client relationship (1999-2008) embodied the requisite social conduct of a person within society. Pakistan organized its sociocultural framework on the basis of classes, tribes, and family ties. Political parties relied on local influencers or patrons during the 2002 elections (B. Ayaz, Interview June 13, 2024). Unfortunately, issue-based politics was not a big part of the 2002 elections because the balance of power did not change. As a result, there was little talk about the important social, economic, and political problems the country was facing at that time. This period was characterized by feudalism, patronage, and authority. The period of Musharraf did not see any overt change in the socioeconomic structure of Pakistan (Qadeer, 2002). Dr. Mubarak Ali argued that:

"…Fundamental problems of the people will not be solved until the country has real democracy, which gets rid of hereditary and dynastic politics as well as the feudal system and allows for big changes in society. People need to work together to build a real democracy so that their problems can be solved. We expect the rising

generation, marked by greater enthusiasm, diligence, and skill, to positively contribute to societal transformation…."

Institutional and Legal Accountability

Supreme Judiciary as Legal Accountability Watch-Dog

The judiciary is a crucial legal institution of accountability. Its function is essential for a resilient accountability framework in a democracy. The judiciary's fundamental role in the legal accountability process affirms its prominence as a formidable player in legal accountability. Many people think that the judiciary didn't do its fair job as an outside body that holds people accountable and instead "legitimized" the illegal and unconstitutional regimes of Pakistan's dictators. (T. Rahman, Interview, May 26, 2024). Irfan Husain said:

"…The Superior Courts often failed to seize possibilities for independent action. From 1999 to 2002, the civil-military administration and some members of the judiciary did a lot of damage to this institution and legal watchdog of accountability. This compromised the judiciary's autonomous function in countering governmental authority abuse…." (I. Husain, Interview September 3, 2024).

The irony of this position was heightened by the fact that all other accountable players, both political and social, were in dire circumstances throughout the aforementioned era. Under the Musharraf administration, the court became the ultimate hope for anyone seeking to curb the unchecked executive power. Regrettably, it lost its reputation as an impartial and equitable overseer of the executive. Subsequent to the military coup on 12 October, the court acquiesced to the new regime. In the case of Zafar Ali Shah vs. General Musharraf (2000), the military takeover was upheld by the highest courts. The court's decision stuck to what it had done in the past, which hurt its role as an impartial body with external accountability. Had it ruled against Gen. Musharraf, the prevailing view of external accountability for the executive under the military dictatorship may have differed. The judiciary's first stance on the military's infringement of the rule of law was ambiguous. Undoubtedly, compelling judges to swear an oath under the PCO was an infringement on the independence of the judiciary. The Superior Courts lost their status as an independent institutional entity responsible for the administration's external accountability after taking the oath under the PCO. This undermined the judiciary's role in ensuring legal accountability (B. Munir, Personal Communication, December 13, 2024).

Bureaucratic Accountability

Musharraf's nine-year term saw a substantial escalation of military engagement in civil services. Musharraf established military oversight teams to supervise all tiers of the civil ministries. Junior military commanders supervise and evaluate the performance of senior civil officials (Z. Hussain, Interview, May 27, 2024). The civil bureaucracy suffered demoralization as a result of this dictatorial conduct. The regime explicitly formed surveillance squads, consisting of 3,500 active and retired military personnel, to reduce corruption and improve the accountability of public officials. The practice led to the violation of authority and power. The military controlled

and supervised almost all facets of the civil bureaucracy, including promotions, postings, and even recruitment. A retired lieutenant general led the Pakistan Administrative Staff College, while a former major general chaired the Civil Services Academy. The appointment of military commanders as leaders of public service training institutions is unjustifiable (Z. Hussain, Interview, May 27, 2024). Granting authority to military officers to formulate this government policy and instruct its bureaucracy was inconceivable. Musharraf's leadership incorporated current and retired military personnel into the civil sector to an unprecedented degree. Former military leaders were in charge of all significant civil service institutions. Politicians and members of civil society were unhappy with how General Musharraf's military rule was taking over more and more power and making decisions in civil institutions.

> "…The Army functioned as a sovereign entity inside the state two decades before. The government still controls all civil institutions. The growing problem is that the civilian administration is losing its professional edge because it relies too much on military skills instead of administrative ones…" (I. Husain, Interview, September 3, 2024).

Civil services must ensure the continuity of state policies regardless of the political leadership; their accountability is to arbitrate governmental policy problems and cultivate the consensus necessary for the sustainability and effectiveness of official policies. An effective accountability system has two dimensions: political and technical. The political dimension anticipates the rule of law, dedication to a culture of accountability within society, and the development of independent media, with legislative and judicial institutions of accountability. The technical aspect of the accountability mechanism envisions a professional, skilled, trained, and accountable civil service. It is a recognized fact that both the political and technical dimensions of bureaucratic accountability did not flourish under the Musharraf regime.

The former senior civil servant was of the view that:

> "…Because elected officials were involved in hiring and promoting public employees, dishonest and politically loyal bureaucrats were able to move up, which led to a culture of corruption. Politicians and bureaucrats' unfair actions hurt the tradition of using honesty and skill to decide who gets promoted and where they work…" (M. Azhar, Interview, April 17, 2024).

CONCLUSION

In the accountability perspective of Pakistan, all four aspects of accountability reflected worst case situation. All these dimensions of accountability mechanism did not present any strength or effectiveness. Loopholes, weaknesses, hurdles and contradictions had been observed in the conduct of the process of accountability in the given period. The institutions established for the purposes of conduct of accountability had been made dysfunctional due to the non-institutionalized behaviour of the ruling class. Resultantly, partial, selective, discriminatory process of accountability had lost its credibility and shaken the trust of the people in the state's institutions of accountability. Process of accountability, during the Musharraf era, did not work

well. As the military and civilian elites had engaged in power politics, the true victims were the masses. The primary custodians of political accountability found their hopes shattered.

Following General Musharraf's military coup in October 1999, the judiciary's performance was disheartening. The highest judiciary has failed in its role as a legal watchdog for accountability. The political accountability takes its beginning from and within political parties. Surprisingly enough, political parties in Pakistan operates in the political arena without having intra-patties transparent elections within their ranks. The nexus of vested interests between political actors and military elites was witnessed during Musharraf regime. Regrettably, the political and military elites were more concerned for their rulership rather than the electorate who were the major actor of political accountability. The social accountability system wasn't working well enough within a feudal, mostly illiterate, and economically disadvantaged community. But Musharraf's military government didn't care about this. The Administrative introduced by Musharraf in 2002 to rectify the bureaucracy. However, these changes did not address the problems pertaining to effective government. The bureaucratic changes resulted in considerable confusion and reluctance. Musharraf government failed to reform the bureaucratic structure so as to make it more accountable. As these institutions of accountability did not operate well, the transitional process of accountability had been struck during Musharraf regime.

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