

DOES SALARIAT EXPLAIN ETHNICITY IN INDO-PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Communal and ethnic politics in Indo-Pak subcontinent is a popular theme of research in the discipline of history, sociology and political science. Among influential studies on the theme, Hamza Alvi's study on the role of classes in social structure of India and Pakistan offers interesting interpretation of this phenomenon. His analysis provokes further investigation on the role of classes in colonial and post colonial subcontinent.

This study reexamines Alvi's terminology of 'Salariat' class which according to him played instrumental role in the uprisings in the subcontinent specially during independence struggle from the British empire. This study uses several examples and events that help to understand the issue from different perspectives. Using deductive logic, this study raises questions from the Alvi's arguments which perhaps need to be readdressed. Because the set of forces have been changed in post colonial period and some angles, this research finds, are missing in Alvi's Salariat class. For instance, Hamza Alvi did not explain the issue of ethnicity specially when ethnic communities claim to be sovereign in particular territory within the sovereign state and superseded state-nationalism.

This study offers a critique on Hamza Alvi's 'salariat' and presents other models for explaining the interplay of classes in inter and intra-ethnic environment and role of the state policies in shaping the events in colonial and post colonial subcontinent.

The purpose of this study is to review Hamza Alvi's article " Politics of Ethnicity in India and Pakistan" with particular emphasis on his terminology¹. Examining the role of classes, Alvi introduces a new formulation of "Salariat" which defines the particular class that played a central role, along with other classes, in most of the ethnic uprisings in India and Pakistan. According to him the Salariat class "was a product of the colonial transformation of Indian social system in the nineteenth century and it consists of those who have received an education that equips them for employment in the state apparatus, at various levels²."

Being a sociologist, Alvi examines the social roots of the ethnic politics in the region with emphasis on class construction. He explains the role of working class in the struggle for independence. Communal standpoints of the two communities of the subcontinent, that is, Muslims and Hindus, overwhelmed the existence of ethnic communities. This overly class-based arguments ignores the historical realities of various ethnic groups in India and Pakistan, perhaps because Alvi does not seem clear in defining the terms ethnic movements 'subnationalisms' and regional groups³. In developing his arguments he follows Ballard's views of social category and social group and believes that in Pakistan ethnic community is not a politically mobilized condition of a pre-existing group of people. However the factual situation is in some ways different.

Contrary to India, Pakistan has no ethnic units at its periphery. In Pakistan, ethnic identities are defined through complete federating units, that is, Sindhi in Sindh, Punbies in Punjab, Baluchis in Baluchistan and Pukhtoon in Khyber Pakhtoonkwah. All federating units are indispensable for the federation. With these ethnic identities Hamza Alvi confuses with the term ethnic communities, though they are deemed and claimed as

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knowledge and traditional using medical methods, malnutrition, were all like a saga, which were not addressed properly during the last five years.

The security problems such as physical and mental torture; sexual abuses; kidnapping; trafficking, and using children for suicidal bombs were not improved in last decades. Government claimed many laws imposition, but it was revealed that not many laws were imposed, related to children.

There were many barriers in implementing children rights in Pakistan such as: the government was not very serious in raising issues of children; there was political unrest in the country and the political issues were always raised rather children issues. Similarly, most of the NGOs were not working in collaboration with Government due to many reasons. Among all these issues, children were only grinded and their issues were left unheard.

Much of the respondents have not shown any expectation level from the government and NGOs to provide better opportunities for children.

CONCLUSION:

The research concluded that children are still in a state of dismal, here in Pakistan. So far, our country has not attained well results in implementing children rights in Pakistan.

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The statement made by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child also revealed that the record of Pakistan in protecting children's rights was unsatisfactory.

The literature also revealed that all those government institutions, working to provide safeguard to children were weak and suffered from mismanagement, lack of interest, lack of funds and commitment. Most of the children still stare to get their social, education and protection rights; but their rights have not yet resumed.

The issue of Children Rights and the Implementation of the Children Rights in Pakistan was over shadowed and rarely touched during the last few years. The convention on the rights of the child is not serving as a guaranteed savior here in Pakistan, because children rights were not implemented in most of the vulnerable areas. Education, security rights and social rights were not given proper attention during the last five years to its best, due to which much effective results were not produced in improving children rights. .

There was no proper security for children and freedom of speech was not practiced in our country. Illiteracy was at peak, as compared to other nations because good education was unavailable to many. According to the respondents, there was a lack of serious attitude of officials in favor of children and there was a lack of infrastructure.

Billions of rupees were spent since the ratification on children rights convention, at the same time, few bills and laws were passed in context to the implementation of children rights in Pakistan. Few of the researches and studies were produced from the published news items or International reports, based on the repeated work. Although some of the reports may have indicated that hundreds of seminars were organized, but much funds were not utilized to provide better opportunities to children. International like Norwegian, UNICEF and International Amnesty must consider this issue as a serious threat to the money provided to Pakistan and must check and balance all the status of the funds, provided so far.

NGOs did some impressive work such as setting up schools and to work for juvenile justice; but during the research it was revealed that a lot more has to be done such as working in close contact with government. During the research, it was observed that few NGOs did a great job by establishing different schools in collaboration with civil society, which has escalated the rate of literacy, but these schools are still insufficient as compare to the growing population of children. NGOs played its part in creating awareness by arranging seminars and spending millions without much positive outcomes. Rehabilitation programs were developed, materials were disseminated, advocacy was provided; but there was a lack of implementation of policies and laws by Government.

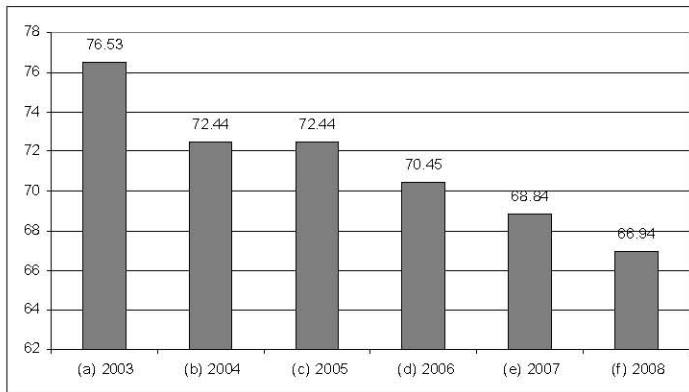
Corporal Punishment is still practiced commonly in Pakistan. It has demoralized and developed complex of inferiority in children rather producing any positive results.

As far is health is concerned, government provided free vaccinations and other medical facilities to the poor and needy people in a limited areas. Death of children due to air borne diseases and water borne diseases decreased in only urban areas. Health centers and vaccination centers were increased and health standards were improved only in urban areas, but for rural population, health issues such as lack of availability of pure water; lack of quality vaccinations; expensive treatments of sexual diseases, lack of

In its 'State of the World's Children' Report for 2007, released in December, UNICEF stated 500,000 children in Pakistan died each year before reaching the age of five years. Save the Children reported that out of every 100 children born, nine would die before their first birthday. The government of Pakistan, in the Economic Survey for 2005-2006, acknowledged that Pakistan lagged well behind other countries in the region with respect to indicators on the situation of children. According to the report, infant mortality for 2003 stood at 74 per thousand live births, and under-five mortality at 98 per 1000 live births. The figures were the worst in South and East Asia. Save the Children reported that approximately one-third of the population in Pakistan lived in poverty, 70 million did not have access to health facilities and these realities particularly affected the health of children. According to Annual Report UNICEF 2007, every day, about 590 children in Pakistan die during their first 28 days of life. An additional 500 who survive their first month die at under five years of age every day. About 420,000 children under the age of five die every year in Pakistan. Lack of awareness about health and nutritional care and practices during and after pregnancy leaves women and children highly vulnerable.⁵⁴

The Health Ministry of Pakistan had set specific goals for 2008 because of the unsatisfactory performance of the health sector in 2007, but it was unsuccessful in achieving them. The state was unable to permanently eradicate polio, unsatisfactory performance of the National Aids Programme took Pakistan from being described as a 'low prevalence country' to a 'concentrated epidemic country' for HIV/AIDS, mother-child care, hepatitis and TB control programmes remained below the mark.⁵⁵

According to CIA World Fact book, 2008⁵⁶, the infant mortality rate of Pakistan is:



INFANT MORTALITY RATE OF PAKISTAN

Source: CIA World Fact book, 2008

Data Analysis of Literature and Questionnaire: During the last five years, children's education and health rights in Pakistan were in dismal state. The poor health indicators and literacy rate alarmed that the implementation of children rights were practically missing. As far as security is concerned, children are vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse. Child abuse and corporal punishment were widely practiced phenomenon in the world, particularly in Pakistan.

It was also observed that new laws were passed by Pakistan after 2000 to protect children from violence, but the studies revealed that after 2000, children were more subjected to violence, which indicated that the laws were not implemented practically.