

# **The Ideological Divide of the Nonprofit Sector in Pakistan**

**By**

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## The Ideological Divide of the Nonprofit Sector in Pakistan

The nonprofit sector in Pakistan currently faces a number of issues among which ideological divide is identified as the most significant internal difference (Pasha and Iqbal 2002). There exists a strong polarization between religious and modern 'secular' organizations. During the 1980's the tension between religious and secular NPOs (Nonprofit Organizations) increased significantly and it continues to grow till today. The conflict is more visible in advocacy of human rights, particularly women's issues. There have been controversies in the field of service provision too, for example, in providing education to girls in a co-educational system and in pursuing family planning programs. On occasions, this tension has culminated in ideological/political attacks on the nonprofit organizations that are working for advocacy of social and political rights. This ideological divide stems from different worldviews that leaders of religious and secular NPOs possess. Issues relating to women's rights are at core of this contention. Pakistan has a complex socio-cultural setup where traditional values are mixed with religious beliefs. The religious elite, tribal mentality and local customs limit opportunities for women in the society. Thus, modern concepts of women's rights - including freedom of expression, freedom of movement, and economic emancipation - are at odds with those interpretations of Islamic teachings about women's rights that have been presented by conservative religious scholars in Pakistan.

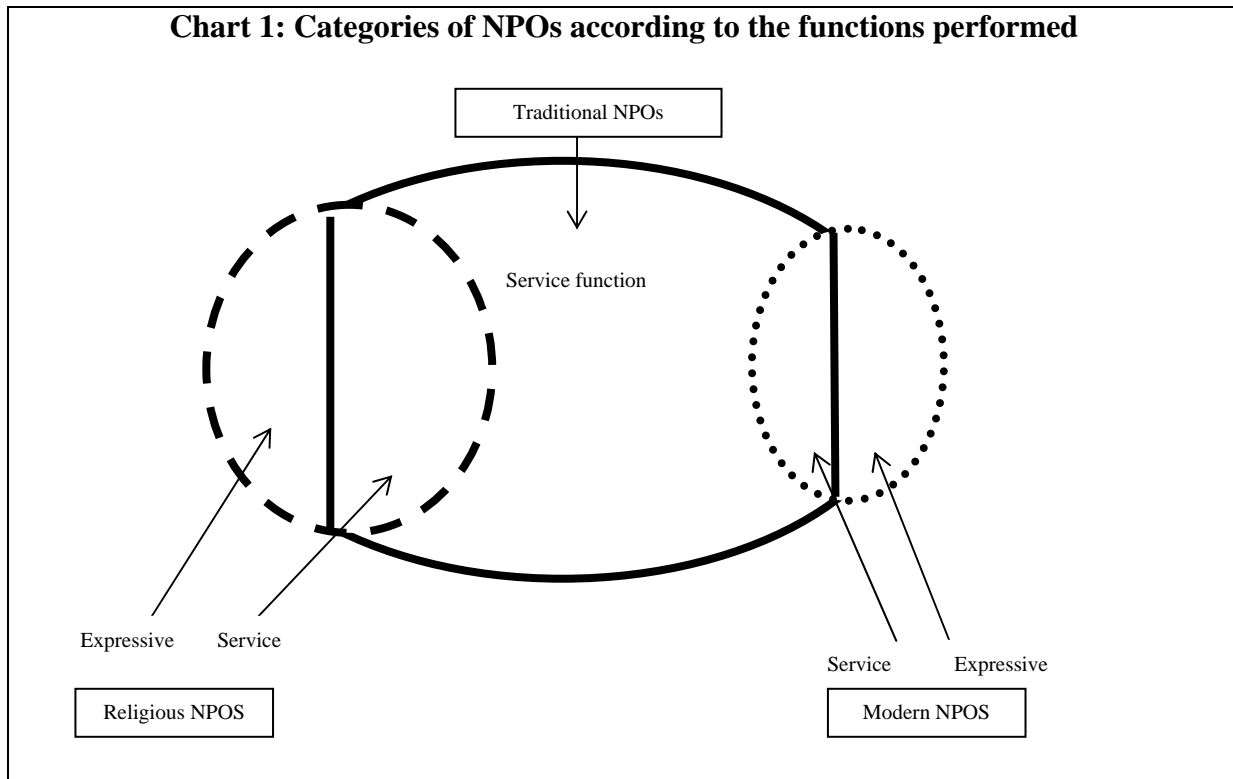
Objective of this paper is to analyze the nature and sources of internal differences within the nonprofit sector in Pakistan. The methodology is primarily based on the review of available literature and documents, and interviews with the experts of the field including religious leaders, political leaders, and scholars. The paper is organized in five sections. Section 1 provides background while Section 2 describes recent history of the nonprofit sector in Pakistan. Section 3 discusses the nature of the conflict, and Section 4 analyzes various factors that contribute to the existing tension within the nonprofit sector in Pakistan. Section 5 summarizes conclusions.

### **1. Background**

Voluntary and philanthropic activities and initiatives have a long history in the region that is now Pakistan. Religion has been the foremost driving force behind this phenomenon. However, the role of Nonprofit Sector (NPS) has changed with the evolution of society itself. This sector is characterized by diversity in its synthesis, role, and functions, and includes age-old welfare organizations, as well as modern development-oriented NGOs. However, there is a strong presence of service organizations as compared to organizations involved in expressive activities. Pasha, Jamal and Iqbal (2002) estimated that there were about 45,000 NPOs in Pakistan, of which only 18 percent were involved in civil rights and advocacy. Among the civil rights NPOs, only 2 percent were involved in human rights activities.

For the sake of analysis, nonprofit sector of Pakistan can be categorized into three overlapping segments in terms of their role in the civil society (Chart 1). A large portion of the sector consists of welfare-oriented organizations that work for the welfare, benefit, and betterment of either society as a whole or of a certain segment of society. These organizations are involved in a wide range of activities. Voluntarism and welfare-oriented activities are among the basic characteristics of these organizations. These organizations range in size from small entities such

as *mohallah* (neighborhood) and village committees established either for a specific purpose or for a general wide-ranging sphere of activities, to large organizations such as welfare associations and societies set up to provide education, health, and other social services to people at the national level. The second segment consists of religious organizations. Majority of these NPOs are involved in providing religious education<sup>1</sup>. They also provide shelter and food to the deserving students. A number of religious organizations are also involved in expressive activities such as advocacy for imposition/ implementation of religious laws in the country.



Third segment of NPS in Pakistan consists of modern development-oriented organizations. They are also referred to as being ‘secular’ organizations. Many of these are involved in social service delivery while others are engaged in expressive functions such as advocacy for human rights, particularly the rights of women, and political education. Majority of these organizations are able to attract revenues from international donor agencies. Although, theoretically almost all kinds of organizations mentioned above can be referred to as NGOs, however, generally, in Pakistani society, the term NGO is used to refer only to relatively modern organizations espousing secular causes, and, by and large, with specific purposes, e.g., freedom of speech, freedom of association, and basic human rights. The conflict or polarization exists between the religious and modern organizations that are mainly involved in expressive activities.

<sup>1</sup> Religious education refers to education of the Holy Quran and other curriculum of Islamic Laws. Majority of registered entities also provide primary education i.e. subjects of mathematics, English language and general science are taught in addition to religious education.

## 2. Recent History

Over time, political and social (including religious) influences have played a role in shaping the nonprofit sector in Pakistan. While the traditional role of nonprofit organizations has been the provision of social services, new advocacy organizations emerged in the 1980s and 1990s (Pasha and Iqbal, 2003). The early 1980s was a starting point of a conflict-ridden period of the recent history of NPS in Pakistan.

In 1977, General Zia ul Haq assumed power after imposing Martial Law in the country and during the decade that followed, the nonprofit sector in Pakistan went through significant and multidimensional changes. The backdrop was provided by the Islamization drive, the Afghan War (1979-89), and liberal flow of foreign funds. It also coincided with the general perception of people and development practitioners that the government had failed to provide adequate basic social services to the masses and self-help was the answer. This decade witnessed a rapid growth in small, intermediary and large nonprofit organizations working in almost every sphere of life. All fields of nonprofit activities ranging from charitable endowments to individual philanthropy, religious and secular welfare services, development, advocacy and human rights activism flourished in an unprecedented manner. Some organizations grew due to state patronage while others emerged in response to state coercion (Iqbal, Khan and Javed, 2004).

*The Islamization Drive:* General Zia placed demands made by Islamic parties and groups at the crux of state ideology, offering them a power-sharing arrangement in which the state would act as the senior partner and the Islamic forces would gain state patronage (Rais, 1997). This gave great impetus to at least one section of the NPS i.e., the religious organizations and their students and women's wings dominated educational and social institutions.

Apart from increased welfare activities of religious organizations, two significant phenomena emerged. First, a high degree of militancy was exhibited by religious organizations that were involved in Afghan War. Second, the differences among various religious sects soon became evident leading to intolerance and sectarian violence, which disrupted the pattern of society. This trend led to a proliferation of sectarian organizations.

*The Afghan War:* The Afghan War also played an important role in shaping the development of nonprofit sector in Pakistan. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979) and the subsequent Afghan resistance, led to a massive Afghan refugee influx of about 3.5 million to Pakistan. Their initial destination were the refugee camps set up by the government of Pakistan in various areas of NWFP and Balochistan provinces bordering Afghanistan. This opened a vast field of activity for the nonprofit sector in Pakistan. Over 200 relief and emergency international donor and nonprofit organizations set up headquarters in NWFP and Balochistan. Some of the organizations that had come specifically to aid Afghan refugees diversified and expanded their activities into other parts of Pakistan (NGORC, 1999).

The Afghan War also contributed to the growth and strengthening of religious organizations, which presumably received support from United States and Saudi Arabia to fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. These organizations focused their attention on relief and welfare activities in refugee camps and established religious schools and welfare institutions in the

country where they provided shelter, food, education and healthcare services to the needy. However, there were political implications as well. NGORC (1999) notes:

“A negative impact upon the citizen sector that resulted in this proliferation of NGOs was that many were suspected of carrying out undercover activities. This is partly supported by the fact that the US and Saudi Arabia provided covert aid to Afghan *Mujahideen* from 1979 and overt aid from 1986 onwards ... Coupled with suspicions of foreign underground funding and undercover support of *Jihad* movements, this gave a negative connotation to the perception of the mosque as a community centre. Peaceable communities began to look elsewhere for support and within themselves for citizen based solutions”

It is interesting to note that a significant growth of advocacy oriented NPOs came about during a period when civil liberties were non-existent. Zia, like all unrepresentative rulers, suppressed all forms of opposition, from un-cooperative political parties to non-conformists members of intelligentsia. Further, the Islamization drive placed severe restrictions on the already marginalized sections of the society including women and, minorities. Under these conditions, the NPS undertook the responsibility of creating awareness and articulating civil society’s response. Trade and student unions, advocacy oriented NGOs and women’s forums were most prominent in these efforts.

Concurrently, a number of NGOs working in the field of advocacy and promoting awareness regarding human rights and individual and civil liberties emerged. The women’s movement became more strong and vocal in this period. This came as result of two concurrent developments: increased suppression of women through state’s policies; and increased international interest in women’s rights (NGORC, 1999). Women’s organizations were the most prominent during the anti-Zia and anti-Islamization protests. The controversial Hudood Ordinance (1979)<sup>2</sup>, law of evidence, venomous speeches of some religious scholars from state sponsored media, and the attempt to confine women to *Chadar and Chardiwari*<sup>3</sup> openly spoke of severe limits on women’s liberty and rights. (Mumtaz and Shaheed, 1987) As a reaction to this, many new organizations were created, while existing ones became more active and increased the scope of their activities.

### **3. The Conflict**

Some religious organizations, however, highly criticized, and even resisted, the kind of agenda being pursued by the modern NGOs like the campaigns against blasphemy law, honor killing, women’s empowerment, etc. In the case of service delivery, efforts of NGOs related to reproductive health have been under attack. This inflamed tension between secular and religious nonprofit organization flared in the 1980s and continues till today. As Saigol (2003) states:

“In Pakistan, the decade of 1990s has witnessed a growing trend of antagonism towards the secular civil society institutions particularly those NGOs that receive

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<sup>2</sup> Will be discussed in the next section.

<sup>3</sup> *Chadar* is a large piece of cloth worn over the normal dress while *Chardiwari* meant the confines of four walls of one’s home. This was the symbolism used to define the perfect model of modest women.

funds from international sources. This feeling of hostility has been largely based on the notions that NGOs primarily function as foreign agents and serve the vested interests of their international donors. Moreover, the religious bigotry in the country often accuse these organizations of promoting western values and culture, consider their approach as obscene and vulgar and a grave threat to the very traditions of the Pakistani society”.

This is also evidenced by well-known views of the majority of religious leaders. For example, Maulana Fazalur-Rehman, leader of a coalition of religious political parties, was quoted to state that “NGOs are out to spread anti-Islamic teachings with funds provided by the Jews in a well-knit conspiracy. ...They promote obscenity in the name of human rights” (HRCP 2000). Similar views have been expressed by numerous other religious leaders who have accused NGOs of working against the national interests, opposing Islamic provisions of the constitution, and pushing forward western values and culture. An interviewee of this study, Professor Ghafoor Ahmed<sup>4</sup>, states:

“Foreign donors want to have a secular state instead of an Islamic State. For this, they patronize NGOs, spend resources, so as to encourage secularism. For instance Agha Khan Foundation is doing good in the Northern Areas on education and health. But if the foundation hires young girls on handsome wages to advice family planning methods, then the orthodox society would feel bad and the conflicts would rise. So it is considered that the basic objective of the foreign NGOs is not social work but to make Pakistan a secular state. They work apart from our cultural norms, which is very obvious. NGOs gives rise to vulgar culture in the society. Therefore, they have a bad name. So, there is a perception that NGOs are working for foreign agents and they do not benefit our country.”

These views and statements at the nationwide level has had a trickle-down effect at the regional or community levels where local clergy has been instrumental in raising their dissent for the NGOs. On the other hand, leaders of progressive political parties are of the opinion that religious groups are feeling threatened by the rise of a liberal society in Pakistan. An interviewee, Senator Raza Rabbani<sup>5</sup>, states:

Religious political parties are jealous of NGOs as they feel that they are encroaching on the areas where they are operating. They are of the view that NGOs are working at the behest of western capital. There is a hidden economic and political agenda, which is being followed by the NGOs in preparing the groundwork for multi-national culture or multi-national take-over of the third world countries. They see it from that point of view and believe that the NGOs given their liberal attitudes, are perhaps setting the tone for a liberal society in Pakistan which is according to them, is either against or anti-Islam. They feel threatened by these NGOs as they believe that they provide opportunities to a large number of women to participate in various projects and have interactions

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<sup>4</sup> Professor Ghafoor Ahmed is Secretary General of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, which is a prominent religious political party in Pakistan.

<sup>5</sup> Senator Raza Rabbani is a prominent leader of a progressive political party, Pakistan People’s Party.

with their male counterparts. Religious political parties view it as the extension of western culture into Pakistani/Islamic society.

As mentioned earlier, the conflict between these two segments of the civil society surged in the early 1980s with the self-styled Islamization drive under military government. In 1979, the government introduced Hudood Ordinance (an Islamic Law<sup>6</sup>) that deals with many Islamic offences. The most controversial among these offences has been *Zina* or adultery. The law has legally “blurred the distinction between rape and extramarital sex, resulting in the imprisonment and/ or physical punishment of numerous women who have come forward with charges of rape without witnesses. Consequently, many rape victims are deemed criminals in a Pakistani court of law (Sahibzada, 1999)”.

Commenting on this situation, Synovitz (2004) states:

“ Women's groups in Pakistan, as well as local and international human-rights groups, have been complaining for years about inequalities under the Islamic laws that came into effect under the umbrella of the Hudood Ordinance. One often-cited example is that a woman rape victim in Pakistan who tries to bring her attacker or attackers to justice must obtain court testimony from four "pious" male Muslim witnesses to prove her case. If a woman rape victim fails to produce those witnesses during the trial, she is liable to prosecution under Islamic law for adultery.”

For the last two decades, human rights advocacy NPOs have been very vocal in raising their voice against these laws. Progressive political parties also joined them in this struggle. Consequently, President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf recently emphasized that the Hudood Ordinance and the Blasphemy Law should be studied afresh to ensure that they were not misused. Government also advised the National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) to review the Hudood Ordinance. The report of NCSW highlighted various flaws in the Ordinance that have led to an increase in injustice against women. It states “Without going into motive of the Zia-ul-Haq Government at the time for the enforcement of these Ordinances, which essentially lie in the political domain, it is obvious that these Ordinances were hurriedly drafted and equally hurriedly enforced. ...it was found that instead of remedying social ills, these Ordinances ... became an instrument of oppression against women.”<sup>7</sup>

These resent developments have again initiated heated debates. The NCWS report was termed misleading by the religious leaders. For example, Jamiat Ulema-i-Pakistan (women's wing) chief Dr. Farida Ahmad Siddiqui said that the Hudood Ordinance has provided protection to women and as such it should not be repealed in any circumstances<sup>8</sup>. Similarly, Maulana Fazalur-Rehman, leader of a coalition of religious

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<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that in this paper the term ‘Islamic Law’ is used to denote laws introduced by the military government of General Zia-ul-Haq under the umbrella of Hudood Ordinance. It is much debated that these laws do not truly reflect spirit of Islamic teachings.

<sup>7</sup> Taken from the extracts of NCSW report available on website: [http://www.hrcp-web.org/report\\_ncsw.cfm](http://www.hrcp-web.org/report_ncsw.cfm)

<sup>8</sup> Reported in the daily Dawn, March 24, 2004.

political parties, said that it was happening on the pressure from Western forces. He stated, “We will not allow the American agenda to be imposed on 140 million Muslims. Islamic laws will be protected with full force. And in this context, everything will be done to resist the ideology of secularism.”<sup>9</sup>

Apart from religious laws, religious groups have also heavily criticized the activities of modern NGOs related to service delivery, particularly, family planning programs, and girls’ education. A recent example is the establishment of the Aga Khan Education Board. In Pakistan, government’s examinations boards conduct examinations for Matriculation and Intermediate certificates<sup>10</sup> according to the curriculum specified by the Ministry of Education. There have been many apprehensions about the quality of examinations under these boards. Recently, Aga Khan Education Board (AKEB) has been established as a private nonprofit entity with a view to offer an alternative examination system to schools with the same curriculum prescribed by the government. Government allowed flexibility to all private and public schools to get registered either with government boards or with AKEB. Establishment of AKEB was bitterly criticized by the religious leaders who termed it a conspiracy to change national education system on secular lines.

An aspect of the conflict is that almost every thing turns suspect. Commenting on a survey of nonprofit organizations conducted by Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) as part of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, a religious dogmatist and economist, Dr. Javed Akbar Ansari asserted that the survey was aimed at collecting information on the activities of mosques and *madrassahs* and profiling the people who support religious organizations. According to him, the information was to be used by the enemies of Islam against religious NPOs. He states:

“ Our enemy wants to squeeze the resources of the *madrassahs* and want to impose secular ideologies on them. All over the country, the enemy has established research institutions, which are collecting detailed information about the *madrassahs* and the people associated with them. These institutions have particularly established systematic database cells pertaining to information collected on *madrassah* and mosques and in a situation where Muslims are being targeted by the Western forces; this is a very dangerous design. The true believers should not affiliate or keep any contact with these institutions.” (The daily *Islam* (Urdu), January 8, 2003)

#### **4. Factors Behind the Conflict**

By and large, Pakistan remains a rigidly patriarchal society in which women spend their lives serving the male dominated social systems that consider them as inferior beings. As Alavi (1991) observes: “It is not only a single patriarch, the head of the nuclear family but the whole dominated kinship organization has a stake in the subordination of women. No women, even one with an independent career in a city can set up a home on her own without the ‘saya’ (or protection) of a male. A divorced woman or a widow must turn to her father or brother, if they

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<sup>9</sup> As quoted in Synovitz (2004).

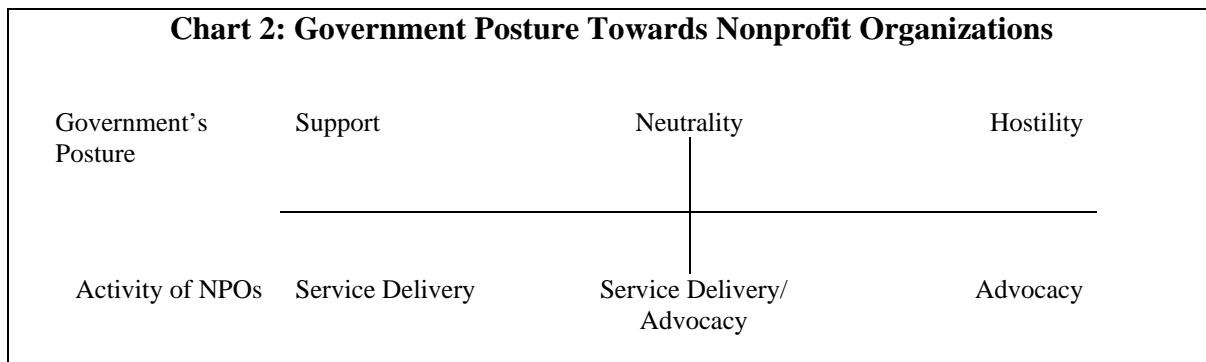
<sup>10</sup> Matriculation and Intermediate education refers to 10 and 12 years of schooling respectively.

will have her unless she has a grown up son under whose protection, she can live. This is a powerful factor of control over women.”

Similarly, Gazdar (2002) explains: “If patriarchy is defined as female disadvantage and male domination, then sex-wise disparities in statistical indices such as mortality and literacy are only some of the many aspects of the problem. Female disadvantage in law, rights, custom, social norms and conventions, and the exclusion or invisibility of women from key arenas of decision making are persistent features of the institutional environment of countries like Pakistan.”

Since modern NPOs have drawn attention to the subordination and suppression of women in Pakistan at the national and international forums and have demanded improvements in the political and legal structures; the conservative groups of society who traditionally believe in the subordination of women perceive these actions as a grave threat (Saigol, 2003).

**Role of Government Policy:** As far as the role of government policies is concerned, the historical development of the nonprofit sector in Pakistan is characterized by both conflict and coordination depending upon the nature of activities of the NPOs. On the whole, the relationship between government and the nonprofit sector is illustrated most aptly by dichotomous attitude of the government towards nonprofits regarding the issues of service delivery versus advocacy (Chart 2). With few exceptions, such as the nationalization policy of the Bhutto government in 1970s, the government’s posture towards nonprofit sector ranges from support to neutrality for NPOs engaged in service delivery and from neutrality to hostility for NPOs engaged in social or political advocacy.



The implicit government policy appears to be that the nonprofit sector should preferably stay away from issues that impinge on national security or upon strategic interests and relations with other countries. Also, the advocacy role of NPOs in the context of sensitive social, religious and political issues, has generally been discouraged by the government (Pasha and Iqbal, 2002). A number of government actions against labor unions, human rights NPOs, women rights NPOs, etc., indicate a hostile attitude towards advocacy organizations. On the other hand, the government has encouraged the complementary role of nonprofit sector in service delivery and social welfare.

Occasionally, the tension within the civil society sector has also been fuelled by hostile attitude of the government towards advocacy NPOs. For example, in 1998, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif addressing religious leaders at the National Consultative Convention on the Implementation of Islamic *Shariah* said: “ You should spread all over the country and stand against all the forces which are opposing the Bill (proposed Islamic law). You have been asking me to implement the Islamic system, I have done my job and now it is your turn to play your part ... My entire government and its machinery is now at your disposal ...you should launch a movement to force those opposing it to retreat and repent for their mistakes.” (The *News*, September 6, 1998).

Relations between religious organizations and the government have remained for the most part complementary. Apart from sharing government’s responsibility in providing welfare services, they have seldom challenged the state. Rather, they have helped maintain political and social status quo. Interestingly, religious organizations have always had good relations with the state during the periods of authoritarian military regimes. The period of General Zia’s rule (1980s) present an illuminating example of this when the state co-opted religious organizations in order to perpetuate an unconstitutional regime. However, in the backdrop of the ‘War Against Terrorism’, current government seems to have more hostile posture towards religious organizations. But, it is interesting to note that religious political parties played a deciding role in providing legal cover to the authority of General Pervez Musharraf through voting for a constitutional amendment in the parliament.

***Lack of Democratic Traditions in Society:*** There was almost a consensus among the interviewees that the lack of democratic traditions is a major factor contributing to the growing conflicts within the civil society in Pakistan. Decades of pervasive authoritarian rule have clearly undermined the emergence of a politically vibrant civil society. “Besides eroding civilian authority and capacity to govern the country, the militarization of state has embedded a collective intellectual and political paralysis on our social psyche (Shah, 2002).”

Similarly, an interviewee<sup>11</sup> of this study states:

“Democracy allows all issues to be debated and out of this confused debate, some form of consensus emerge- absolute consensus is impossible in any society but some form of consensus does emerge. And because of the absence of democratic debate in the country, different groups get isolated in their own mindsets. That is why we see that the same language is interpreted differently by different groups.”

Another interviewee, Javed Ghamidi<sup>12</sup>, observed that due to lack of tradition of dialogue in Pakistani society, tension between various segments continues to rise. He said that most religious scholars in Pakistan discourage dialogue on religious issues. On the other hand, leaders of modern/ secular organizations do not have the courage to explicitly pronounce that they reject religion to have any role in the collective decision making process. In such a situation, the terms of dialogue cannot be determined.

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<sup>11</sup> Dr. Kaiser Bengali, a prominent Political Economist of Pakistan.

<sup>12</sup> Javed Ghamidi is a progressive religious scholar and heads Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan.

Lack of democratic traditions in society may be attributed to the politics of power in Pakistan. The state has been controlled by a narrow elite. Major stakeholders in the state business have been the feudal and the military elite. The feudal elite plays an authoritative role in the affairs of the state. Since 1947, the feudal class has provided the bulk of Pakistan's parliamentarians, has dominated party politics in the country and, through matrimonial and economic alliances, has assumed the role of a trans-regional elite (Malik, 1997). There are large areas where feudalists are living today with the same authority as in the seventh and eighth centuries in Europe.

The feudal class is extremely conservative, oppressively status quo-oriented, and in nearly all cases it is totally resistant to change. At least on the local level, the worst and the most coercive form of feudalism reflects itself in the treatment of tenants, *kammis* (low-caste professionals and artisans), women and other dependents. Similarly, they are averse to politicization of masses or any such retransformation in the social sector. They do not encourage expressive initiatives (unless these initiative are taken under their patronage) as it may prove to be a threat to their self-preservation.

Under the circumstances, the emergence of a participative and democratic nonprofit activity has been stymied in most parts of the country. The feudal elites and religious organizations have generally tended to act as support bases for undemocratic, military regimes. It is thus not a coincidence that the political history of Pakistan has been one of military rule interspersed with quasi-civilian rule. There have been 4 military takeovers; in 1958, 1969, 1977 and 1999. With the exception of the 1969-71 Martial Law, all military regimes were followed by "managed" civilian regimes, where the military continued to exercise significant control over key areas of policy.

***Educational System:*** Within civil society, an important source of this conflict is the education system in Pakistan, which is stratified according to socio-economic class and is expressed roughly in terms of medium of instruction or type of educational institution. At one extreme, there are elitist English-medium schools that cater for the upper classes. On the other end of the spectrum are the *madrassahs*, which cater for very poor children mostly from rural and urban working class localities. In the middle, there are non-elitist Urdu medium schools catering for lower-middle and middle class children.

The worldview of the students of these institutions is so different from each other that they seem to live in different worlds. Here the textbooks play a critical role. The identity and value system of children is strongly shaped by the content of their curricula and textbooks. Elite and non-elite English medium and Urdu-medium schools follow curricula that may be described as secular, despite a heavy stress on 'Islamic Ideology' in officially prescribed textbooks used by students appearing for examinations in the Pakistani system. *Madrassahs* follow a curriculum that is distinctly religious.

The most acute polarization is between the students of *madrassahs* and of elitist English-medium schools. A survey conducted by SPDC (2003) reveals marked differences in perceptions and outlooks by the students belonging to various streams of education. It states that "the starkest difference is between students from elite English-medium schools and *madrassahs*, which stand diametrically opposed to each other in terms of their opinions on almost every issue, except equal rights to provinces. Elite English-medium students strongly support a free press,

democracy, equal rights for women and minorities, and peace, while *madrasah* students attach significantly less weight to these issues. By and large, they do not support equal rights for women and minorities, or reduction of the defence budget, and strongly support implementation of the *shariah* (Islamic law), the liberation of Kashmir, and the country's nuclear status.”

The conflicting opinions produced by Pakistan's education system do not bode well for the creation of a homogeneous society or for national integration. Different groups subscribe to different value systems and hold and cherish different perceptions of the kind of society they would like Pakistan to be. The resulting schisms have, perhaps, laid the foundation for continuing political instability and conflict, manifested by sectarian, ethnic, and other types of violence.

## **5. Conclusion**

There exist a strong polarization between religious and modern ‘secular’ organizations in Pakistan. The conflict is more acute on the issues related to human rights, particularly those of women. Several factors have contributed to this growing tension within the civil society. These factors include, patriarchal nature of society, nexus of conservative forces including feudal, military and religious elite, dichotomous government policies regarding nonprofit organizations, lack of democratic traditions in the society, and an educational system that is stratified according to socio-economic class and promotes extreme divergence of opinion among the students.

The ideological conflict between religious and secular organizations has had restraining impact on the development of nonprofit sector in Pakistan. Given the current state of polarization and a situation where there does not appear any form of compromise between two ideologies, this pattern of discord is more likely to prevail at least in the nearer future. There appears a need for a dialogue between various stakeholders of the nonprofit sector such as NGOs, political parties and religious organizations leading to a better understanding of the respective roles.

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## **LIST OF INTERVIEWEES**

1. Dr. Kaiser Bengali, Political Economist
2. Senator Raza Rabbani, Political Leader, Pakistan Peoples Party
3. Prof. Ghafoor Ahmed, Political Leader, Secretary General, Jamaat-e-Islami
4. Mr. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Religious Scholar, Head of Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan.
5. Dr. Mubarak Ali, Scholar (Historian)

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| AKEB  | Aga Khan Education Board               |
| HRCP  | Human Rights Commission of Pakistan    |
| NCSW  | National Commission on Status of Women |
| NGOs  | Non-governmental Organizations         |
| NGORC | NGO Resource Centre                    |
| NPOs  | Nonprofit Organizations                |
| NPS   | Nonprofit Sector                       |
| SPDC  | Social Policy and Development Centre   |