



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Bureaucratic Dynamics in Transitional Governance: A Comparative Analysis of the Ayub Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Eras**

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the role of the higher bureaucracy in the policy-making processes of Pakistan during the periods of Ayub (1958-1969) and Bhutto (1971-1977). The study employs a historical-comparative approach to examine the evolution of bureaucratic culture and its connection to governance across two distinct systems. The analysis draws upon primary sources, official records, and secondary research to elucidate the structural, social, and political dimensions of bureaucracy across the two distinct periods. The analysis reveals that Ayub's authoritarian governance employed a centralised bureaucratic framework significantly shaped by British and American administrative traditions. During Bhutto's reign, efforts were made to institute a socialist framework and democratise bureaucracy. While this was an important initiative, a lot of it ran into challenges of structural nature and political interference. Each of the remnants illustrates how charisma is entwined with bureaucratic scrutiny in creating public policy. Consequently, it was proven that the concept of the bureaucracy working independently of the influence of political powers and being efficient is principally destructive of the reform discourse currently in vogue

**KEYWORDS** Bureaucracy, Bureaucratic Legacy, Civil-Military Relations, Pakistan, Postcolonial Governance

**Introduction**

In 18th-century Europe, the term 'bureau' came to mean workplace or office setting, and this concept entered the word 'bureaucracy' that we know today. As a term, this is as much an archetype for the overly bureaucratic framework that remains the very core of today's governance as for any particular period of time in history, most particularly the tumultuous period of the French Revolution of 1789. The administrative system is regarded as an important part of governance and is commonly intertwined with institutions like the judiciary, legislative bodies, and military. This is the primary function to promote effective policy formulation and implementation so it acts as the one essential backbone of the administrative framework in all nations.

Along with its own forms, the bureaucracy that evolved during the era of the British Empire in British India has largely been central to Pakistan's political development throughout much of its evolution. Following India, the Civil Services of Pakistan modelled themselves on the Indian Civil Services and, following independence, retained a colonial tinge that afforded huge administrative autonomy. The administrative structure could often function outside the immediate reach of political authorities and over time accumulate more and more power within the government. The functionaries of bureaucracy played a major role in Pakistan's early

years of statehood, and they often overwhelmed and overshadowed the dominance of political authority.

J.D.B.'s work on bureaucratic polity in Pakistan explained a well-known thesis about bureaucratic political abuse of power, especially in the aftermath of the military coup in 1958, where politicians were under the control of an administrative elite. This paper specifically attempts to understand the comparative position of higher bureaucracy in the two critical and politically transforming regimes of Ayub Khan (1958–1969) and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971–1977), both towards the broader critique of the Pakistani state's development. The governance under Ayub was in the beginning that of dictators, and Bhutto's was that of socialists. In their uses of the bureaucratic apparatus, the presidents extensively utilised it but differed greatly in their view of what that apparatus was and whether or not it needed replacing.

The colonial remnant of this administration was the rigid hierarchy and pursuit of centralised authority. Contrary to this, Bhutto wanted to tear down the structure of this bureaucratic machine in order to achieve an easier and more responsive system through significant reforms. By analysing various historical periods in comparison, this study seeks to enhance our understanding of the structural environment, administrative culture, and policy-making processes of the higher bureaucratic system in Pakistan. This examination leads into a wider political context, making possible new perspectives on the role of bureaucratic practices in shaping the nation's future at two critical junctures.

### **Literature Review**

Extensive scholarly work has been done into an understanding of the role of the bureaucracy in governance in the context of postcolonial nations, notably Pakistan. This section reviews the literature on the structure, culture, and politics of bureaucracy during the specific periods (Ayub and Bhutto eras) from the point of view of the interaction among bureaucracy, the military, and party systems.

A detailed study of the bureaucratic transition in Pakistan from British India is presented by Kennedy (1987), who describes this as a system of colonial bureaucratic frameworks with separate hierarchical levels. This framework, inspired by the ICS ideology, he notes, also upheld the centrality of the bureaucracy and an administrative independence that left a long imprint on the still young state of Pakistan. Chowdhury provides the socio-political dominance of bureaucracy in Pakistan, which reiterates the British administrative heritage of control rather than reform in public involvement. He basically claims that the formation of the country gave way to administrative authoritarianism due to the incapacity of an effective political leadership.

In his seminal analysis of the Pakistani governance is the fact that, he emphasises on the intricate dynamics between the military, bureaucracy and political parties (Shafqat, 1997). Astutely, he notes that triad is the driving force behind the governance landscape of Pakistan. He further asserts that during Ayub Khan's regime, bureaucratic elites worked in tandem with the military to consolidate power, sidelining democracy and instituting what he terms a "hegemonic democracy" (p. 767).

As to what Shafqat means by saying that the Bhutto era was the time in which the autonomy of the state was challenged and administrative bodies became politicised, he says that a state characterised by systemic inefficiencies and internal fracture was the result. What Rizvi (1997) examines are the dynamics of civil-military relations during

the Ayub Khan period, focusing on what he calls the 'controlled democracy' era. This was achieved especially in light of the bureaucracy's role as the main architect of the modernisation process, to the point that it had an extremely negative effect on the political landscape. To counter this, he refers to Bhutto's era, during which the political ecology is precisely geared to prevent the bureaucrat by means of reforms that give elected representatives more power.

Ziring (1971), in a detailed examination, studies the structure and functions of bureaucracy under the Ayub Khan regime and emphasises the importance of civil servants, professionals playing a decisive role in governing. Ziring emphasised, however, that the civil bureaucracy consisted of an authoritarian hierarchy that was resistant to change but worked well in implementing developmental policies. Shafqat (1989) looks specifically at the effects that different styles of leadership had on the performance of the bureaucracy under different Ayub and Bhutto regimes. He notes that in the case of Ayub, he sought to create a military bureaucratic alliance, which led to a pyramid structure, that is, an extremely centralised and very efficient organisational structure, which Bhutto, on the contrary, tried to break the bureaucratic authority earlier too and to coalition it with socialist goals.

Like Bhutto's modifications, which include the removal of reserved positions for CSP officers and the introduction of specialists through lateral entry, Mehmood (1990) evaluates modifications emerging out of Bhutto's reshuffle, which included Bhutto's team of officers riding on his coattails. However, Mehmood finds that bureaucratic obstacles, or organisational resistance, significantly blocked the implementation of these putative reforms, altering little in the democratisation of the state's governance.

Nazim (1973) provides a strong critique of the policies of Ayub and Bhutto on bureaucracy. Ayub utilised administrative elites to keep political order and use Bhutto's reforms to empower elective officials, yet he failed to uproot inefficient structures that continued. According to Weber's 1946 classification of bureaucracies, there exist three distinct forms of administering authority, which include: Such institutional characteristics under Ayub and Bhutto were colonial in character, suffused with charisma, and even tried to combine some legality.

According to Riggs (1963), the adoption of bureaucratic administrative systems in transitional societies is difficult due to socio-political mismatches in integrated colonial bureaucratic frameworks with the compositional features of many developing postcolonial states. The challenge facing Bhutto's reforms in transforming the bureaucratic framework of Pakistan is in sympathy with this viewpoint. Pakistan's governmental structures and its bureaucracy were greatly influenced by British colonial administrative responsibility, even today. The British procedures they implemented were orientated towards an exercise of administrative controls rather than fostering absentee accountability. But he also said several of the key features of this framework were set in Ayub and Bhutto's eras.

Syed (1992) undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the political strategies of Bhutto that were used to restructure the bureaucracy according to socialist lines. But Syed adds that they have struggled politically and also from an institutional point of view. In his analysis of party politics and governance, Shafqat (1998) emphasises the incapacities on the part of Ayub and Bhutto to allow the bureaucracy to be interfaced with the democratic setup. Moreover, during Ayub's regime, he argues that the bureaucracy remained neutral while being affected by military interests and urged that

the administrative framework was extended through measures put in place under Bhutto's reforms that made the structure politicised and almost useless.

Bureaucracy has played a significant and powerful role during the periods of Ayub and Bhutto, although in different ways; that's clear from the literature. Oftentimes employing a centralised, hierarchical model aiming at stability and modernisation, he endeavoured to instigate such a transformation within the bureaucratic framework, whereas Bhutto had wanted to carry out change through reforms that sought to de-stratify and democratise the bureaucratic structure. But both leaders face continuing structural problems and remaining vestiges of colonial influence in Pakistan's administrative infrastructure.

Shafqat's research (1997, 1998) on civil-military relations in Pakistan offers an invaluable repository of empirical data about the interaction of the military, bureaucracy, and party politics. His conclusions address the need for long-term, sustainable, endogenous reform in the conduct of the military in the political arena to deepen the level of bureaucratic and democratic autonomy and balance. This is an important point at which additional inquiry can be made to examine the structural, political, and cultural aspects of bureaucracy in Pakistan and how it views the several transitions that have taken place in the country.

### **Material and Methods**

This study employs a historical-comparative methodology to analyse the evolution and roles of higher bureaucracy in Pakistan, specifically during the eras of Ayub Khan (1958-1969) and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-1977). Consequently, the examination of both primary and secondary sources illustrates the scholarly pursuits aimed at elucidating the dynamics of bureaucratic and organisational frameworks, as well as the intricacies of policy-making within the broader socio-political contexts characteristic of these historical periods.

The primary sources for data collection in this research consist of historical document files, official and procedural documents, as well as official records and reports. The collection encompasses policy documents, reformative measures, and public addresses delivered by Ayub Khan and Bhutto. The documents from the Cornelius Commission (1959-62), the Administrative Reforms Committee (1972), and the Federal Land Commissions provide detailed accounts of the structural and procedural changes that took place during these times. The legislative records that encompass details about the administrative and land reforms implemented by Ayub and Bhutto significantly contribute to the depth of this research. Among the secondary sources are research articles about the civil bureaucracy of Pakistan, its governance and political history. The foundational texts include Kennedy (1987), Mehmood (1990) and Shafqat (1997) which provide a careful analysis of civil military relations, bureaucratic reforms and the nature of party politics. The purpose of the present paper is to argue that Max Weber's theoretical frameworks on bureaucracy and F.W. Riggs's prismatic model of transitional bureaucracies constitute a deeply insightful analytical tool for understanding how administration and power intertwine.

The research takes a thematic and meaning-based approach in an effort to evaluate the role of the upper echelons of administration in governance. Subsequently, it compares the bureaucratic frameworks as well as the methodologies employed during the Ayub and Bhutto administrations using a thorough examination of archival materials. This is a systematic analysis of the comparison between the type of

bureaucratic centralisation of power behind Ayub Khan's authoritarianism and Bhutto's attempts to democratise governance through organisational reform.

This analysis reveals how bureaucratic culture affects governance and configures the policy contour. A thematic analysis focuses on the different elements including the bureaucratic institutions independence, the political factors that may affect this policy, and the power of the civil and military elites in implementation of this policy. Major issues include political aspect of land, personnel management, management of the economy and civil service. For instance, Ayub used meritocracy to develop a bureaucracy of his own choice, while Bhutto's attempted to bring about lateral entry to open up bureaucracy faced stiff resistance from these professionalised groups (Mehmood, 1990).

The bureaucratic authority in Pakistan has evolved and in order to understand this research uses Max Weber's typology of bureaucracy; traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational. The line of Weber explained the providential evolution of the Pakistani State apparatus and its acclimatization during Ayub and Bhutto term. Under this circumstance, Riggs Prismatic Model (1963) has been adopted to analyse the problems of transformation of a colonial administrative structure into one that would serve post-colonial emancipation. A preliminary qualitative policy analysis that entails policy analysis of the organization's documents and reform proposals and a historical review of other documents and records of similar organizations is performed to recognize new trends in bureaucratic behaviour and their consequences. It is in this light, the analysis of these findings is contextualised within a discourse relating to the administrative history of Pakistan. Shafqat (1997) and Kennedy (1987) provided useful information that this research used while analysing bureaucratic behaviour with respect to the political agendas of the Ayub and Bhutto regimes.

While the concept of bureaucracy may include individuals throughout the entire organisational hierarchy, this analysis focusses specifically on the upper echelons of bureaucracy, particularly the engagement with selected senior civil servants in the development of societal governance and policies. While the focus is mainly on the Ayub and Bhutto eras, the findings are contextualised in relation to Pakistan's postcolonial administrative evolution. One could certainly identify certain objective constraints, particularly the potential incompleteness of the archives, which can be addressed through the utilisation of secondary sources and analyses. As a research approach, this method gives a solid and durable structure to study the structural and cultural features of higher bureaucracy in Pakistan and educates about its contribution in governance of the country during two important periods of its growth.

## **Results and Discussions**

Compared to governmental strategies and administrative frameworks during the periods of Ayub Khan (1958-1969) and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-1977), this paper finds variation. Ayub inherited the colonial framework, which emphasised professional competency, hierarchical authority, and policy stability, and this centralisation of the bureaucratic organisation was central. Many of the developments, such as the green revolution and industrialisation efforts, both of which were pursued by Ayub Khan, were propelled by the bureaucratic framework the country under Ayub established. While this was commendable, it produced the image of a government no longer connected to the people. The civil service, heavily influenced by its elite, contributed to the unresponsiveness of Pakistan PWD to societal needs (Kennedy 1987; Chowdhury

1988). Bhutto, nonetheless, endeavoured to both democratise and decentralise the bureaucracy to align with his socialist objectives.

Thus, his reforms aimed to dismantle boulevard CSP and transform it through initiatives like lateral entry, alterations in personnel selection, and the removal of CSP-specific positions. However, bureaucratic neoliberals who had been defending the existing status quo as their vested interests were opposed to these initiatives. Resistance, political interference, and favouritism, however, undermined the success of his reforms. However, in return, Bhutto's political leadership facilitated the politicisation of the bureaucracy and, as a result, undermined its autonomy, neutrality, and effectiveness in the policy-making and governance, as commented by Shafqat (1997) and Mehmood (1990).

This paper argues that both Ayub and Bhutto were dependent on bureaucracy to achieve their political objectives in seemingly contradictory ways depending on their leadership style and governance philosophy. In accordance to military bureaucratic cycles, Ayub stressed on the stability and order and staked engineering over the realms of politics and democracy. The perspective espoused in this paper suggests a Weberian (1946) legal rational bureaucratic perspective while at the same time suggesting the difficulties that a formal bureaucratic administration faces in dealing with the demands of a changing society. However, despite this Bhutto's attempts to democratise the bureaucracy encapsulated the ideas enunciated by Riggs (1963) prismatic model which promoted the reform of the colonial era administration to the dictates of the governing needs of the developing world.

Having inherited a bureaucratic civil service he sought to reform it through socialist policies and practises. But, these initiatives were not right for the public service bureaucracy, which resulted in the politicisation of the bureaucracy and policy failure. This also underscores the continuous existence of colonial administrative norms in the bureaucratic practise of Pakistan. They inherited a political system patterned in elitist, conservative terms and comparatively resistant to change and it was formed by colonialism. Thus, the entrenched cycle could not be disrupted by Ayub and Bhutto. It will be apparent that neither leader managed to reorientation the bureaucracy towards democratic organisational culture and or society's need, while using alternative approaches. However, the Pakistan bureaucratic landscape became a highly professional centralised system resembling on Ayub time but devoid of participatory features. On the one hand, Bhutto's revolutionary structural reforms were indeed so but were ruined by bureaucratic rigidity and political interference in the form of instability (Nazim, 1973; Rizvi, 1997).

The results illuminate the complex connection between the political leadership and the bureaucratic. A centralising model was articulated by Ayub, where he was a strength and a weakness of hierarchical administrative systems. Bhutto, by operating in a more culturally defined environment willing to fight for the possibilities of state-centred institutional reforms, however, revealed the limits and possibilities of bureaucratic institutional reforms. This demonstrates the importance of sustained and locally appropriate reforms to set in place an efficient and democratic governance-principled bureaucracy.

## **Conclusion**

The two eras of Ayub Khan (1958-1969) and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-1977) have been studied in relation to two distinct features of government and policy

formulation in Pakistan; the role of bureaucracy was critical in both eras. Framed by the belief in the control of urban areas through a centralised and professional bureaucracy, Ayub depended on the modernisation of the economy and administrative stability. However, the existence of colonial bureaucracy as an enduring legacy has ensured the continuance of an elitist organisational culture within administration, without democratically elected accountability. As having a socialist foundation and populist character, institutions in the government were expected to carry out structural reform efforts to democratise and decentralise bureaucracy so as to make the state organisation more representative to citizens. Nevertheless, bureaucratic resistance and political interference have created weaknesses and governance challenges in many of these reforms.

Each regime exposed the intractability of political authority as it came to exist in societies in transition and the difficulties that arose in attempts to modernise an antiquated administrative system. It can be argued that the efficiency and control as a centre of reforms in Ayub's neo-legalistic approach were more preeminent than Bhutto's efforts to politicise these reforms aiming to subsume democratic principles in a bureaucratic framework. In effect, neither leader had supplied the voice for confronting the enduring structural and cultural remnants of colonial bureaucracy that remained to affect an administration's attempts to act responsively and inclusively.

For this reason, the prevalent argument of continuous, localised, and transformational modifications to the administrative system as a functional entity through the harmonisation of its objectives with its task within a democratic framework is advanced. Capacity building, skills acquisition, and initiatives of bureaucratic responsiveness should be the focus of reforms. The purpose of this is to make use of bureaucracy as leverage for governance as well as development instead of it becoming a source of power. Insights drawn from the Ayub and Bhutto eras will prove very useful for future efforts to restructure Pakistan's top administrative layer to reflect the political and social needs of Pakistan.

### **Recommendations**

As a consequence, a policy of suitable reform must be introduced so that a system of merit-based recruitment, aided with specialised training, would be able to invigorate a system to do the job. The recruitment of personnel involved with the civil service should not shy away from using the processes of accreditation to identify who is the most qualified to occupy such roles in the civil service. The modernisation of bureaucratic training is necessary for the development to fit self-financing in view of the nation's socio-political landscape and cultural context. Integrating these historically relevant pieces into the solutions an organisation provides to the administrative workforce results in the growth of a more responsive and effective administrative workforce.

When one looks at the intensely centralised framework of that Ayub administration, one becomes aware of the necessity of a more distributed approach to governance. If we are to give greater autonomy to regional and local administrative units, we would significantly increase responsiveness to the diverse needs of the people throughout Pakistan. This shift would also promote local development while there is currently a gap between what policymakers are doing and what citizens experience every day. Transparency within the system should be ensured by the accountability frameworks that accompany decentralisation. Strengthened parliamentary oversight,

independent accountability commissions, and mechanisms for citizen feedback should see the duties of bureaucrats scrutinised.

To restore the professionalism of the bureaucracy, which was compromised during Bhutto's plan to achieve political reform through various interferences, it is necessary to remove political influences from the bureaucracy. The primary political struggles, which are tied to individual interests, should not be an obstacle for the administrative body to step beyond and concentrate its activity on the fulfilment of its responsibilities in the sense of the welfare of the State and its citizens. Reforms should be deliberate and customised, rooted out the pitfalls of simplistic copy and paste of other countries' strategies, as well as superficial map movements with the absence of the need for requisite institutional readiness. The handling of change initiatives, along with the socio-political background of the nation and making gradual changes, improves progress.

An additional important matter of bureaucracy is that one can concentrate on its service mission—perceive bureaucracy as a service provider rather than as an exercise of authority. This suggests the need for measures including resolving public grievances and ensuring the provision of standard service delivery and citizen participation in order to bring in improvements in the responsiveness of bureaucracy towards complaints. Beyond this, the rolls can be highly instrumental in the incubating of the institutional references into innovation, which grows the rolls' capacity to deal with the new complexities of governance and offers the bureaucracy a tool by which it can navigate the unknown.

The connection between administrative structures and academic or research institutions ought to be nurtured so that policy development is guided by empirical evidence. In this context, the research findings from Shafqat (1997) and Kennedy (1987) serve as valuable resources for effectively implementing reforms. These can be employed to enhance the application of theoretical frameworks to governance issues, with the objective of addressing the administrative challenges faced in everyday governance practices. Should these measures be implemented, Pakistan has the potential to transform its bureaucratic framework into a more efficient, approachable, and adaptable entity for the everyday citizen. The purpose of these reforms is to ensure that the bureaucracy effectively promotes equitable development and democratisation by addressing the shortcomings observed during the Ayub and Bhutto administrations.



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