Factors Influencing Civil Society in Pakistan and Türkiye: A Comparative Analysis

Samina Mazhar*

Abstract

The elements affecting civil society in Pakistan and Türkiye are compared in this study, with an emphasis on their contributions to democratic growth. It looks at how the strength and efficacy of civil society in both nations have been influenced by historical paths, civil-military ties, institutional frameworks, and socioeconomic circumstances. The study shows that although civil society in Pakistan has become more visible and active, political unpredictability, military rule, and inadequate institutions continue to influence it. In contrast, Türkiye has experienced relatively stronger civil society development, supported by institutional reforms, political transformation, and socio-economic progress, although not without challenges. Using a historical and comparative methodology based on primary and secondary sources, the study concludes that a robust and autonomous civil society is essential for democratic consolidation, and that Pakistan can draw important lessons from Türkiye's experience in strengthening institutional balance and civic engagement.

Keywords

Human Rights, Social Organisation, Law and Order, Civil Military Relations, Socialisation, Central Asia, South Asia.

Introduction

Civil society is a collection of voluntary organisations and groups, such as NGOs, unions, and community groups, through which citizens collectively express their interests, hold authorities accountable, and

* Associate Professor, Department of Politics and International Relations, FGCW, Islamabad.

contribute to social development. Its role is to represent people's voices, promote accountability, and provide social services. It develops when people share common concerns and have the freedom and awareness to organize themselves. Its main purpose is to promote the common good, protect rights, and strengthen democracy. It is the third sector, a space between the state and the Market, filled with voluntary organisations, NGO's, unions, community groups, etc., where citizens pursue shared interests, hold government accountable, provide services, and foster social cohesion, acting as a vital pillar for democracy by advocating for change, facilitating public dialogue, and promoting values (Al Mandalawi, 2024)

It includes essential services, promoting social justice, monitoring governance, empowering citizens, and moulding public opinion, which are all essential for a healthy and balanced society. In the past years, the relations among the executive, the military, and the judiciary have not been ideal. Pakistan has sought to promote a democratic system; the biggest challenge for Pakistan in its success is to maintain a balance between institutional pillars (Reayat, 2025).

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, comparative, and historical research design to examine the development and role of civil society in Pakistan and Türkiye. The comparative method is used to identify similarities and differences between the two countries, particularly in terms of civil-military relations, institutional development, and democratic consolidation. A historical approach is employed to trace the evolution of civil society within specific political and socio-economic contexts. The study relies on both primary and secondary sources. Primary data includes interviews, official statements, and policy documents, while secondary data consists of books, research articles, reports, and archival materials.

To analyse the data, a thematic content analysis method is applied, whereby information is systematically categorized into key themes such as governance, civil society development, and institutional dynamics. However, the case studies of Pakistan and Türkiye are based on their comparable historical experiences, including military and democratic transitions, while also reflecting divergent outcomes in terms of civil

society strength and democratic consolidation. This makes them suitable cases for comparative analysis.

Literature Review

Aknur (2012), examines the question of why the consolidation of Turkish democracy has taken so long and analyses various factors in this regard, including the state, civil society, civil-military relations, political parties, European Union, socio-economic development, separatist Kurdish Nationalism, and the rise of political Islam. Akboga (2014) explores the complex relationship between Islamic societies and the development of civil society and democracy. The work contributes to the scholarly conversation by analysing how concepts of civil society and democracy interact with Islam. Weinberg (2013) investigates the link between terrorism and underlying principles of democracy, both from a historical perspective and against contemporary developments in the Middle East and elsewhere. Nasr (2010) clarifies that this could be an effective strategy for the West in the face of Islamic-based intellectual and political opposition.

Castillo (2022) looks at how civil society organizations contribute to democratic erosion in developing states and, in it, proposes that the strength of civic actors is largely determined by the legal and political space in which the state allows them to act. Its results have direct implications for the Pakistani context, whereby frequent efforts to curtail civil society have undermined its ability to act as a meaningful control over authoritarian tendencies. Yilmaz and Demir (2023) discuss the experience of Islamic civil associations operating in the context of Türkiye without destroying the secular state machinery, but instead, promoting the deepening of democracy. Their work offers a powerful comparative analytic tool toward comprehending how civil society, based on religious foundations, can become an effective instrument in Muslim-majoritarian democracies like Pakistan. Lührmann et al. (2022) offer extensive empirical throughput of statistically significant evidence that proves that the country with a more robust and free civil society is much more resilient against democratic backsliding. Their comparison data across the globe supports the main conclusion of this paper that societies in both Türkiye

and Pakistan require the autonomy of civil society as a prerequisite to sustainable democratic consolidation.

Grömping and Garnett (2022) consider the way in which civil society organizations counteract the pressures by authoritarian regimes in such a manner, and they conclude that the most successful methods include legal mobilisation, coalition-building, and international networking. Their model can be used to understand the success of civic mobilization of lawyers in Pakistan in the 2007-2009 movement, which had not been successful in previous efforts.

Historical Background

Pakistan and Türkiye are analysed with the civil-military relationship in mind; there are definite similarities. However, there is a vast difference in the historical role of the political parties as well as the armed forces of both countries. The military institutions of both states played a crucial role in civil upbringing. In the early years of the republic, Türkiye's civil society was plagued by vast structural and political difficulties that prevented the free formation of civil society. Under single-party Republican People's Party (CHP) rule between 1923 and 1946, the state engaged in a top-down modernization project that was not suitable for the traditional civil society institutions such as religious brotherhoods, charitable foundations and minority community organizations, and replaced them with state-controlled alternatives, such as the People's Houses (Halkevleri), which were mostly at the service of party ideology instead of the interests of civil society (Khan, Shah, & Khan, 2023). The 1938 Law on Associations mandated state permission to establish associations, and outlawed religious, class, and ethnic associations, leaving little room for independent association. Underdevelopment only added to these problems, as the majority of the population continued to live in rural areas of subsistence farming, and the literacy rate was below 30%, so there was almost no well-educated middle class to sustain an independent civil society (Özdemir & Zeb, 2024). Even three decades after the founding of the Republic, during the chaotic 1950s and the military rule in 1960, civil society was weak and occasionally suppressed; political parties were outlawed, press freedoms limited, and civic associations shut

down whenever they posed a challenge to the status quo (Özbudun & Gençkaya, 2022).

The leader of modern Türkiye, Mustafa Kamal Pasha, united a fragmented and disunited nation. He gave them a constitution and parliament, which his government abrogated in 1960. The Ataturk reforms were aimed at modernizing Türkiye and transforming it into a secular, modern nation-state. During his era (1923-1938), the role of civil society was largely subordinated to the state, as the new Republic pursued top-down modernization aimed at creating a secular and homogeneous nation-state (Rahman et al., 2015).

An autonomous civil society independent of state pressure was suppressed. Secular measures that limited public religious expression during that reign limited the room for autonomous civil society. Tensions between secularism and individual rights grew during this time, even though explicit constraints did not emerge until later. The matter developed into a significant civil rights discussion in the decades that followed, with civil society being crucial in promoting individual liberties and influencing legislative changes (Konuralp, 2016).

During the era of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, civil society had a minimal autonomous role in political or democratic processes. However, after Atatürk died in 1938 and the subsequent transition toward a multi-party system, civil society gradually expanded with increased space for associations, unions, and professional groups. In later decades, especially during democratic reforms and European Union–driven transformations, Turkish civil society became more active in promoting human rights, political participation, and democratic accountability, thereby contributing significantly to the consolidation of democracy (Konuralp, 2016).

Pakistan's case is very different, as its independence movement was not fought by the military but by politicians. In the first two decades after the inception of Pakistan, civil society played a humanitarian and stabilization role, rather than an adversarial political role, especially in the early years of the state when the country was struggling with severe economic hardships, administrative weaknesses, and geographical challenges such as the Kashmir war and regional instability. At the same

time, the emerging Cold War created an uncertain international environment that further complicated national development and security (Bashir, 2020).

Role of the Military in Türkiye and Pakistan

In Türkiye, four Martial Laws have been imposed. Furthermore, the army has the power to take part in decision-making during civilian rule with the help of the National Security Committee (NSC). Pakistan has also witnessed four military rules and with the help of the NSC, the army has a role in decision-making. Türkiye's present leadership tried to limit the role of the army in decision-making by first organizing itself and then by making amendments to the parliament (Gamascu, 2014). In 2009, Erdogan gave his perspective on the shelling by Israel on Gaza, making him a leader of the Muslim world. In the military courts, trials of civilians were stopped, and in civilian courts, trials of military personnel were stopped (Hussain, 2013).

On July 15, 2016, the Turkish military launched a failed coup attempt against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, resulting in 241 deaths and extensive injuries. Civilians and loyalist forces suppressed the insurrection within hours, leading to a swift defeat of the plotters. Erdogan telephoned CNN Türkiye and requested the people to come to the streets. When people saw their leader was ready to go on the streets, they came in front of tanks and retained their democracy (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2026). Still, Türkiye has not designed the new system, and the civil-military relationship has not been defined as yet. But surely, the overemphasis on the army has gone. Bringing adventurist elements under accountability has contributed to discouraging military coups; mutual distrust persisted (Al Jazeera, 2017).

Traditionally a heavily military-inflexed system, Türkiye can now proudly proclaim success in democratization and a healthy relationship between its political wing and the military (Malik, 2013). The main causes of existing reforms-oriented Türkiye were accession to the European Union (EU) and the decision to shift to a market economy. This has not been easy; several hard steps are needed in order to use the right of political

education; however, the current setup has proven both sceptics and critics wrong (Tol, 2010).

Unlike Türkiye, Pakistan faces a number of challenges that affect democratic processes and civil-military relations. Although the system of government has strengthened somewhat, political instability and the effects of past Martial Laws persist. A democratic system needs to foster trust and cooperation among state institutions to ensure democratic processes in the future (Ali, 2015). Pakistan is such a Muslim state that has managed to develop a balance between secularism and ideology. Secondly, it is also a regional power broker and is one that has successfully democratized its own political system and integrated the military by subsuming it within the political fabric. Although the Musharraf era was authoritarian, the media and NGOs were given great freedom. General Pervez Musharraf's regime expanded civil liberties through the PEMRA Ordinance (2002), which ended the state's monopoly on information and encouraged the growth of private media and NGOs. However, this liberal environment later played a significant role in mobilizing the media and civil society against Musharraf during the 2007 judicial crisis (Sher et al., 2025).

Institutional Challenges

Pakistan has been beset by many challenges that have endangered democracy, which is one of the major causes of institutional deadlock. This has also led to a rise in inter-institutional antipathy and clashes that, from time to time, have resulted in the downgrading of political institutions, principally the executive branch. It also had a deep impact on the political mindset, leading to the growth of encouraging affinities among some military cadres with certain political groups, a practice that only the military cannot be accused of, but one that mainstream political parties have indulged in to abet their own political survival and strength. There is no doubt that the collusion of civilian leadership with the military has fostered, encouraged, and developed this practice.

In Türkiye,

> There was an understanding between the military and the civilian elite. In the past, the judiciary has also been part of a collusion

mechanism, often sanctioning military rulers to continue their rule after the expiry of the preliminary emergency period (Alagappa, 2004, p. 42).

But moving on to the recent resurgence of political leadership is an encouraging development. Credit for this must also be given to the military that wisely stayed away from politics and resisted the temptation to oust the civilian setup. The PPP was able to complete its five years in power. It had to suffer a defeat in the 2013 polling, when the PML-N swept to power. The other integral factor is that the evolution of this democratic pattern has received a major boost from a robust and vibrant media, which has led to the development of a democratic society (Narishman, 2012). Though it may not be ideal, thanks to its vigilance, the media has unintentionally provided a check and balance. But Pakistan's media still has a long way to go in a more responsible manner and not become a proxy for different political factors to target each other (Mayfield, 2013).

The judiciary is an important pillar of democracy that plays a key role in balancing state power and delivering justice. Institutional relations in Pakistan are still weak, so restoring trust and improving coordination between state institutions is essential. In this regard, the Turkish model is important to study, where different government institutions work with relatively good cooperation. Pakistan can learn from Türkiye's experiences, especially in the reforms of military and administrative institutions, to strengthen its democratic and institutional system (Kaya, 2011).

The first major Turkish pattern to follow is a forum-like National Security Council. It is the highest-level body where the rationalized balance of civil and military leadership openly talks over things regarding all aspects of security, including armed conflict, terrorism, energy, logistics, education, cyber security, food security, etc. (Aknur, 2012, p. 39).

Furthermore, civil society is divided into sub-sectors, each with its own role in democracy. In the social sector, welfare organisations and community associations provide services that supplement the state's efforts. In the economic sector, unions and labour associations protect workers' rights and economic justice. In the political sector, human rights

groups, advocacy coalitions, and electoral observers ensure government accountability and transparency. In the cultural and religious sector, civil society promotes interfaith dialogue and unity, while in the media sector, independent media produce informed citizens who hold the state to account (Youngs, 2023). These sectors do not operate in a vacuum; they create pressure and public opinion, and provide independent policy input to challenge the responsiveness of democratic institutions. Civil society, therefore, shapes the democratic process not only by complementing governance but also by developing the norms of participation, accountability, and pluralism that keep democratic institutions vital (Lührmann et al., 2022).

Domestic Crisis

Leadership represented religion, technological advancement, economic prosperity, better institutional presence and nationalism had helped Türkiye in the last 11 years to get where it was (Heper & Sayan, 2002). What will have an immediate effect in Pakistan is to start countrywide small-scale projects principally in provinces that felt neglected by the previous government, which will employ the local population, investing in the water sector to secure the lifeline of Pakistan, and setting up schools and vocational and skills training centres that also offer employment to local communities will have a positive impact (Akboga, 2012).

Blaming administrative structures or a lack of resources is not enough. Every government, especially a democratic government, has adequate resources to allocate for this purpose. It is incumbent upon Pakistan to provide these basic facilities for its people. For Pakistan, there is a point well embedded in the Turkish model, which is more budgetary allocation to health and education (Nasr, 2012). Human resource capital is something that can impact the economy and develop a well-educated and active civil society that can strengthen democratic institutions and contribute towards nation-building. The knowledge-based human resource is important for Türkiye to transform into a high-income country. Good governance, democracy, and systems in society are important for people to think, innovate, and develop (Arat, 2005).

Türkiye has consistently sought to strike a balance between national security requirements and the protection of civil liberties. Counter-terrorism policies and activities have been designed in line with this principle, so that state security is maintained without completely affecting civil rights. In the early stages, the state was very dominant in Türkiye, where traditional social and religious institutions were curtailed, and reforms were implemented from the top to down. The activities of associations and organizations remained under state supervision, which weakened an autonomous civil society. The main goal of all these policies was to ensure national unity, state stability, and the formation of a modern nation-state (Gumuscu, 2023).

Policy and Institutional Issues

Pakistan has been a victim of terrorism for decades and it persistent, which greatly affected Pakistan's foreign policy (Zahid, 2015). According to the Turkish model, engagement and development are equally important as the use of force in order to defeat insurgencies. Pakistan will have to speed up efforts and take a timely decision in order to address terrorism (Aydinli, 2012).

According to Shaista Pervez Malik (2010), "The Turkish Government had made lives comfortable for its people before winning support for structural reforms, which Pakistan can learn from" (Malik, 2010, p. 89). Since its independence, Pakistan has experienced periods of military and democratic rule. Various factors, such as institutional imbalances, political instability, and civil-military relations, have played a significant role in shaping a strong democratic system (Sunawer, 2015).

The Military

The first constituent assembly was dismissed in 1954 by the Governor General Ghulam Mohammad with military support, who included in the cabinet senior military personnel. It signalled an important shift of political power from the parliament to the Civil Service and also the Governor General, with the help of the army. General Ayub, the army chief, became the first dictator of the country and led a military coup d'état in 1958. The Disqualification Order of Elected Bodies, 1959, was also sidelined, all political parties were banned, and political figures were punished (Kayani,

2015). It gave full power and authority to the bureaucracy and the army to run the country. The President General Ayub Khan also kept a tight rein on political parties. Unless permitted by an act of the parliament, Article 173 of the 1962 Constitution laid a bar on contesting elections (Jaspal, 2015). Pakistan's second Martial Law upheaval by General Zia in 1977 (Noman, 1989). Similarly, General Musharraf, who remained in power for 9 years, conducted local and national elections. In this way, too many powers were granted to the President as compared to the Prime Minister (Bell, 2014).

Military intervention in Pakistan resulted from a combination of political instability, security concerns, weak democratic institutions, and constitutional crisis. The early death of the founding fathers created a leadership vacuum, while ineffective political parties, delayed constitution-making, and tensions between East and West Pakistan weakened civilian governance. Meanwhile, bureaucratic and judicial cooperation, Cold War alliances, and the military's organizational power increased the military's political influence. As a result, the lack of democratic institutional failures enabled Pakistan to transform into a praetorian state with frequent military intervention in politics (Hassan, 2011).

Intelligence Agencies

In Pakistan, intelligence agencies play a pivotal role in democratic government and dictatorship. The government extends the power of agencies, especially in dictatorship eras, to monitor the actions and policies of various non-state actors and political associations for the sake of the administration. It is also necessary for the survival of the state, but the excess of everything also brings challenges (Khan, 2013).

In the past, Türkiye's intelligence services have been heavily influenced by the government and military, especially during times of political unrest and military actions. But as time went on, changes were made to strengthen civilian supervision and restrict unbridled authority. Türkiye has made strict policies in controlling the function of intelligence agencies more than Pakistan. This change has lessened institutional imbalance and strengthened democratic government. However, the

outlook of Pakistan and regional challenges keep demanding strength of intelligence agencies.

The Religious Groups

The government officials and political parties were disparaged; majority-rule norms and a vote-based system were criticized as incompatible with the social customs of Pakistan and the Muslim character of the state. During Field Marshal Ayub Khan's maintenance of Public Order Ordinance (MPO) of 1960, moderate politicians who opposed dictatorship were the main targets. Then General Zia -ul- Haq in the late 70‟s, stepped forward and based Pakistan's legal and educational frameworks on a strict religious elucidation of law (Hussain, 2013). At that point, the military and General Musharraf viewed not religious groups but secular leaders as their adversaries for political power, and they continued to use religious groups to position themselves favourably against secular political rivals (Akhtar, 2012).

One factor that needs more attention in the study of Türkiye's civic society is the interface between religion and society and their eventual accommodation, which has contributed to the emergence of civil society. Throughout the early Republican era, the Kemalist state imposed a rigorous secularism that confined the role of religion to the private sphere and placed Islamic institutions under state control, thereby suppressing independent religious civil associations. But this did not mean religious social networks disappeared; rather, they went underground, where they continued to function through informal networks, such as charitable foundations, neighbourhood societies, and educational clubs. As political opportunities began to open up following Türkiye's 1946 conversion to multi-party politics, these networks reappeared and became more active in the public sphere. Over time, religiously oriented civil associations grew to occupy important positions in the provision of education, health, and welfare, and gained respect from the public as a result, proving that religious identity and civil society can go hand in hand, and even complement each other, when the right conditions are present (Aksoy & Yilmaz, 2022).

The development of civil society in Türkiye was facilitated by a combination of domestic and international factors, creating a more conducive environment for civil society. The European Union (EU) candidature was important because it forced Türkiye to amend its association laws, improve press freedoms, and harmonise its human rights laws with European standards (Çarkoğlu & Kalaycıoğlu, 2022). At home, the 2001 and 2004 constitutional reforms lifted many of the legal restrictions on the establishment and operation of civil society organisations, enabling thousands of new associations to be formed and operate freely. Meanwhile, strong economic growth in the 2000s helped to grow the middle class and create more opportunities and incentives for people to engage in civil society. Professional associations, women's rights, environmental, and human rights groups all proliferated during this time, pointing to a shift in civil society away from its religious and nationalist origins (Yilmaz & Demir, 2023).

Political Parties

The major political parties have endured on account of the military in the struggle for democracy under dictators. In any case, they have been blamed for not meeting the vote-based models when they formed governments. All Pakistani elected governments have been accused of incompetence, corruption, partisanship, and patronage (Khalid, 2012). A few political leaders have helped in toppling the civilian government for their interests. They also helped in fragmenting the parties and had become a reliable source of intelligence (Johnston, 2005). The key to the military's capacity to debilitate prominent parties and keep control of the political system has been conceivable in light of the willingness of some political parties to conspire with the intelligentsia and military against their political opponents (Ahmad, 2005). In Türkiye, political parties have developed within a vibrant but regulated political environment, frequently encountering limitations, prohibitions, and reorganizations, especially during military rule. Nonetheless, political continuity and democratic consolidation were aided by the rise of stable parties like the AKP. In Pakistan, internal division, lack of internal democracy, and military interventions have often damaged political parties. In contrast to Pakistan's

precarious party system, Türkiye has thus attained comparatively stronger party institutionalization.

Ethnic Violence

Ethnic Violence has additionally been on the rise since the 1980's and reached its top in the 90's (Sirohi, 2015). The self-serving vested interest groups have exploited civil society in Pakistan. These groups are projected by external benefactor financing and prey to impulses and trends of improvement help. The massively different ethnic mosaic in Pakistan has been utilized to make a few factions, with minimal formal or casual affiliations. The effectively existing biradari (clan) and tribal framework that has brought on a great part of the dependable rivalries and feuds in rustic zones have been fortified by partisan (sectarian), religious, lingual, and 'place of birth groupings' (Hassnain, 2007).

Civil society has no doubt played a key part in progressing and developing ethnic viciousness by exacerbating ethnic differences; keeping social associations obligated to people of their own groups; staying silent when assertions and gossips adequately partaking in the savagery that is created. Starting late, the single 'urban move' taken by a single group, lawyers, that later joined the media and NGOs, was the lawyers' movement to rebuild the influentially ousted Chief Justice of Pakistan. The movement, accomplished paying little heed to political disguise at the most lifted sum, had all the earmarks of being the silver lining. Better trust was given to the coming civil society in Pakistan (Adil, 2015).

Terrorism

Since the 1980s, terrorism has been gradually increasing in Pakistan and has resulted in psychological disorders, social and financial recession. Since September 11, 2001, it has taken on another most obvious face. Terrorism and militants have made a 'mixed bag' of ideologically determined obsession, sectarian violence, outrageous prejudice, and political wars. Terrorism adopted an ethnic face in the business hub of Karachi in the late 80's, and sectarian violence expanded in a few sections of the nation. Baluchistan has been agitating for a long time, while before that, circumstances were a blend of political and ethnic issues, it is clear that this is a rich ground for militants to operate (Schneiderman, 2015).

The important role of elements supporting and encouraging 'non-state actors,' fanatics, extremists, and activists cannot be dismissed (Ahmed, 2015).

Far over the rates cited in government records, many accuse extreme poverty of being the basic reason for the offense among militants. Baiting the youthful with guarantees of a superior future: whether in the form of wealth in heaven in the great beyond, or in this world. Others refer to the spread of misjudged religious and rigid doctrines as a fundamental cause. The purposes behind the board destitution and religiosity, the nature of it, and any cures for the same require additional understanding and examination if militancy is to be countered effectively.

The control over Pakistan's assets is in a couple of families, and the majority deprivation has had a vast influence in increasing the poverty and in fairness levels, and in giving prolific ground to psychological militant belief systems to flourish. (Kristof, 2009). Not just are the lack of education and destitution at alarmingly abnormal rates, but an extensive number of individuals are jobless. (Zaman, 2013).

The democratization of Türkiye was not fortuitous, but the result of premeditated institutional measures that Pakistan can learn from and implement. In 2003, the overhaul of Türkiye's National Security Council reduced it to an all-advisory organ under civilian management, featuring no longer any organizational mechanism of military tutelage over elected administrations. At the same time, the process of Türkiye becoming a member of the EU forced the country to make certain changes to its laws, expanding the freedom of association, freedom of the press, and securing a more enabling environment in which the civil society organizations can act without fear of being closed down at any time or harassed by the state. The organizational resources of the Islamic civil associations were transferred by political parties (especially the AKP) into the mainstream democratic politics and proved that civic networks formed throughout decades of service provision to the grassroots would be useful in achieving political legitimacy. Each of the following steps can be drawn as a valuable lesson to Pakistan: reforming the constitutional place of the National Security Council in the country, liberalizing the growing restrictive legal framework of the country in regards to NGO and civil association

activities, and addressing the tendency of political parties to form actual grassroots civic networks instead of drawing on patron-client relations and manipulation of elections (Yilmaz & Bashiruddin, 2022).

The political parties in Afghanistan and the role they played during the times of military rule in Pakistan are of special concern, as their behaviour at that time formed the civil society and its impacts persist even in different centuries. The parties like the National Awami Party, the coalition of forces that formed the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) in 1981, especially continue to keep alive the democratic aspirations by organizing change through protests, maintaining political awareness and establishing networks with civil society-based organizations, including bar associations, student unions and human rights organizations, even under the system of the Basic Democracies of Ayub Khan and subsequent martial law led by the existence of these linkages was not accidental; they became the organizational foundation of the later civic mobilizations, most obvious the lawyers movement in 2007-2009, which was also successful specifically because the network of political parties afforded the reach and coordination that strictly civic organizations could not have offered by themselves. To enhance the strength of the civil society in Pakistan in the future, political parties should stop their historical practices to either collude with the military institutions or disintegrate under the influence of the elites, and they should also invest in internal democratization and financial accountability, and continue working with the independent civic groups as actual partners in the realization of democracy (Khan & Razaq, 2023).

Conclusion

The study shows that civil society is essential to the growth of democracy in both Türkiye and Pakistan, but the results in the two nations are very different because of institutional, political, and historical variables. Despite periods of state control and authoritarian tendencies, especially during the early republican era, Türkiye's comparatively stronger civil society and more solidified democracy can be attributed to persistent institutional reforms, a gradual rebalancing of civil-military relations, and socioeconomic advancement. On the other hand, Pakistan's civil society is nor matured enough, with political institutions,

socioeconomic difficulties, and slow consistency in democratic processes. The comparative research shows that institutional autonomy, political stability, and public engagement are all strongly correlated with the level of civil society. Even though Pakistan has advanced recently, especially through judicial movements, media activity, and civic engagement, it still faces substantial institutional and structural obstacles. The Turkish experience indicates that establishing democratic consolidation and bolstering civil society require a sustained commitment to institutional balance, political change, and inclusive government. Therefore, by fostering institutional unity, raising civic consciousness, and guaranteeing long-term democratic continuity, Pakistan may learn a lot from Türkiye.

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