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The Debate of New Provinces in Pakistan: Solution or New Problem

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Abstract

The formation of new provinces in Pakistan has now become important topic of political, constitutional, administrative and socioeconomic discussion. The demands for new provinces are mainly related to regional inequalities, administrative problems, political representation, ethnic identification, and the balanced allocation of national resources. The supporters believe that the creation of smaller provinces would help in the improvement of governance, enhance administrative decentralization, encourage regional development and give neglected areas more political representation. But critics point to a variety of concerns such as higher administrative costs, budgetary pressures, political uncertainty, constitutional issues and ethnic tensions. The study aims to investigate the possibility of new provinces in Pakistan as an answer to the current governance issues and if it might create new political and administrative problems. It discusses the evolution of the provincial demands, the constitutional and legal context, the process of administrative decentralization, economic impacts and political/sociocultural issues of provincial restructuring. The study is qualitative and descriptive in nature, with secondary sources such as books, academic research articles, constitutional provisions, government documents, and relevant policy literature. The research reveals that institutional reforms, financial sustainability, and democratic consensus are essential to achieve effective governance and economic development, otherwise there is no guarantee of that, even with provincial restructuring. It believes that all decisions in favor of establishing new provinces should be made following constitutional procedures, the economic feasibility, public consultation, transparency in the distribution of resources and administrative capacity. Overall, the study suggests a balance between regional autonomy and national integration, representation and sustainable development as the key factors of the success of provincial restructuring. Hence, there is a need to have a whole-of-region and whole-of-country strategy to respond to regional grievances and keep the political and constitutional stability of Pakistan intact.

Keywords: *New Provinces, Pakistan, Federalism, Provincial Autonomy, Administrative Decentralization, Regional Inequalities, Political Representation, Economic Development, National Integration, Constitutional Framework.*

1. Introduction: Historical and Political Background of the Demand for New Provinces in Pakistan

Pakistan is a federal state with different provinces having different geographical, linguistic, cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic features. The issue of provincial boundaries and administration has been prominent in the country's political and constitutional history since independence in 1947. The demands for administrative decentralization and political representation, equitable distribution of resources and region development have brought the establishment of new provinces into the spotlight. Different communities and political parties insist that the current provincial structure doesn't meet the agendas of administrative and development needs in all regions. This has led to the emergence of new provinces as a prominent topic in Pakistan's federal politics (Qasmi et al., 2023). The discussion on new provinces is tied to the historical grievances and feelings of political and economic marginalization. Several areas, especially South Punjab, Hazara and others have seen movements calling for separate provincial status. The proponents of these movements say that large provinces can experience management problems when it comes to providing equal developmental opportunity to distant and relatively undeveloped areas. They believe that centralisation of political power and administrative setup in the provincial centres can lead to inequalities in provision of public services, infrastructure, education, healthcare, jobs, etc. In such a context, formation of new provinces is often discussed as a means to make the government more responsive and responsive to the citizens, as well as more representative and representative in terms of representation (Siddiqi & Mirza, 2022). It was raised more after the passing of the Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment (2010).

The amendment increased the autonomy of the provinces and changed the federal-provincial relationship. It also raised again the issue of "representation" and "regional identity. The name change of North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for example, pushed the demand for separate province of Hazara into the agenda from the Northwest Frontier Province.When the NWFP was renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for example, the demand for separate province of Hazara was pushed up in the agenda. Likewise, the people of South Punjab who speak Saraiki language still called for establishing a separate province in the region on linguistic basis, ease of administration and feeling of deprivation (Siddiqi & Mirza, 2022). These changes reflect the fact that the issue is not just about administrative reform, but about an issue of identity, political participation and national integration.

The new provinces must be established through a formal and democratic process, in accordance with the constitutional perspective. A constitutional amendment that alters the boundaries of a province can only be introduced for the President's assent, subject only to the proviso that it must be passed by the relevant Provincial Assembly with a two-thirds majority of all its members. This underscores the need for provincial consent and political consensus in the event of any territorial reorganisation (Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973, art. 239). Thus, the creation of new provinces is not an act of administration alone but one that must be agreed to constitutionally, politically and institutionally. However, there are a number of concerns with the new provinces proposal, despite the benefits it may

offer. Critics have raised doubts about the utility of the proposed division of existing provinces to enhance accountability or generate costs of administration and competition or institutional complexities. There are numerous key issues that need to be carefully considered, including financial sustainability, distribution of natural resources, water rights, provincial assets, and ethnic relations. Furthermore, it is not always a solution to the governance issues if additional provinces are created without strengthening local government institutions (Shah, 2012). So the discussion on creation of new provinces in Pakistan comes with two important dimensions; one the efficiency of administration and equal opportunities in the country and another is the financial difficulty, constitutional intricacies, and potential threats to national integration. This study reviews the possibility of creating new provinces as a viable solution for the administrative and political issues that seem to plague Pakistan or create new problems for the federation. It seeks to examine the past, constitutional, economic, political and administrative dimensions of the creation of new provinces. The main idea is that any decision on provincial restructuring must be made in a democratic manner, with financial viability, administrative capacity and equality and national unity taken into consideration.

2. Constitutional and Legal Framework for the Creation of New Provinces in Pakistan

The formation of new provinces in Pakistan is a legal process and a constitutional issue that needs a political consensus and parliamentary approval. Pakistan has a federal system of government, with powers and responsibilities shared between the federal government and the provincial governments. The Constitution of 1973 is the constitutional basis of provincial administration, territorial borders, legislative powers and relations between the federation and its components. Thus, any claim of new provinces should be weighed within the framework of the constitution to see if it is constitutional, popular and stable (Government of Pakistan, 1973). Article one of the Constitution mentions the territorial structure of Pakistan and the present provinces of Pakistan are Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. This is to make the provinces a constitutional part of the federation. If the existing provincial structure change is required it must be done by a constitutional amendment, not just an ordinary administrative notification. Thus, a new province is preceded by changes in the constitution relevant to the territorial area, the representation of the area in the parliament and the institutions of the province (Government of Pakistan, 1973, art. 1). Article 239(4) of the Constitution is the most significant constitutional clause pertaining to the establishment of new provinces. This article provides that a constitutional amendment which imposes limits on a province may not be brought to the President for assent if the Provincial Assembly of that province has less than 2/3 of its members voting for the amendment. This is needed to make sure that the province in question has a notable constitutional role in matters of its territorial boundaries. For instance, in the case of a separate province within Punjab, the consent of the Assembly of the province, by constitutional majority, is necessary. This provision indicates that restructuring the provinces should be done with the constitutional consent of the concerned provincial governments and not by the unilateral decision of the federal government (Government of Pakistan, 1973, art. 239(4)).

In addition, there is Article 51 of the Constitution which addresses the composition of the National Assembly and sets the mechanism for parliamentary representation. The introduction of more provinces would need suitable constitutional mechanisms with regard to their representation in the National

Assembly. Likewise, Article 59 discusses the makeup of the Senate, which gives each province representation (regardless of its population). As a result, the reconstitution of new provinces would have consequences on the seating arrangement and the overall representation in Parliament (Government of Pakistan, 1973, arts. 51, 59). The Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment of 2010 is also important in the context of the current discussion on the issue of provincial autonomy. It consolidated the power of Provinces in the constitution, increased their legislative and administrative powers and removed the Concurrent Legislative List. This was an important development in favour of the provincial autonomy in Pakistan's federation. It also pointed to the need to respond to the needs of the region through constitutional and democratic processes (Government of Pakistan, 2010). Furthermore, under Article 153 there is an institutional arrangement for consultation and coordination between the federation and provinces, the Council of Common Interests. It may be used to support the constitutional process provided for under Article 239(4) but is not an alternative thereto. It can be helpful for discussions on shared resources, administrative coordination and federal relations (Government of Pakistan, 1973, art. 153). To conclude, Pakistan's Constitution allows for changes to the provinces on a constitutional basis through a well-defined democratic and legal procedure. The process of forming new provinces needs constitutional reform, the consent of the provinces, involvement of Parliament, and solid institutional planning. Thus, constitutional adherence and political agreement are crucial to make the provincial restructuring a positive development for the strengthening of federalism, not a new cause of political and administrative complications.

3. Historical Evolution of Provincial Demands and Regional Movements in Pakistan

This desire for new provinces in Pakistan has historical antecedents and is tied to regional identities, administrative disparities, political representation and economic grievances. Pakistan has undergone multiple changes in the provincial and administrative system since its independence in 1947. At first the country was a legacy from British India comprising various provinces and princely states having diverse political and cultural backgrounds. These differences posed problems for national integration and the balanced development of a federal system. There was a growing movement for provincial restructuring from various parts of the country over time, where the regions called for greater political independence, administrative representation and cultural recognition (Talbot, 2012). The One Unit Scheme was the most important event in Pakistan's provincial history. The solution under this was that the provinces and the princely states of West Pakistan were amalgamated into a single administrative unit so that East and West Pakistan would become equal. The policy was put forward and marketed as a way to make administration easier and keep the peace politically, but it left some smaller ethnic and regional groups unhappy with it. The process was seen by many political leaders and groups as a move towards centralization and to erode provincial identities. However, the One Unit system was still in controversy until 1970 when the provinces of West Pakistan were restored (Khan, 2009). After the partition of East Pakistan in 1971, the issue of provincial autonomy gained greater prominence with the national integration alongside. The Constitution of 1973 was based on a federal parliamentary system and provided for four provinces of Punjab, Sindh, NWFP (known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at that time) and Balochistan. The issue of demands for increased provincial autonomy and administrative changes

remained to be influenced by regional disparities and political grievances, despite the constitutional recognition, however (Government of Pakistan, 1973).

The demand for separate South Punjab or Saraiki province has been a significant political demand in Punjab. Those who advocate this argument say that southern districts have historically received a comparatively poor level of infrastructure, jobs, education and administrative representation. The Saraiki movement is also linked to language and culture, with its supporters wanting to see their language, culture and a separate provincial identity be recognized in the constitution. As a result, the demand is now discussed in political circles and in the election debates in Punjab (Rahman, 1996). Likewise, the movement of the Hazara has become more visible on the political scene after the renaming of NWP as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2010. Some political and social groups in the Hazara region were unhappy with the new name of the province and called for a separate province for the safeguarding of the regional identity and administrative representation. This movement has shown how the language problem, identity and political recognition can make an impact on the demand for provincial restructuring (Government of Pakistan, 2010). Demands for administrative and political restructuring have also emerged in other parts of Pakistan, apart from South Punjab and Hazara. Various communities in Sindh, Balochistan and other areas have voiced apprehensions about how resources are allocated, how they are represented and how they are administered. These demands, however, have different historical backgrounds, political goals and popular backing. Thus, they should be analyzed in their local and institutional settings. In all, the provincial claims are not a recent political phenomenon, as seen in the evolution of them throughout history. It raises a long-standing set of federalism, regional identity, administration and equitable development issues. It is crucial to have a clear understanding of these historical developments to assess the potential impact of new provinces on the solution of Pakistan's regional issues and the added political and administrative complexity.

4. Administrative Decentralization and Governance: Potential Benefits of Creating New Provinces

One of the chief arguments given to establish new provinces in Pakistan is administrative decentralization. Decentralization is the delegation of administrative, political and financial power from the central decision-making bodies to smaller units of government at the regional level to enhance public service delivery and increase local participation. Pakistan's existing provincial setup has large geographical size and vast diversity in the population of each province, making administration of far-flung and relatively underdeveloped provinces difficult. Advocates for new provinces believe that smaller administrative units would increase the accessibility, responsiveness and efficiency of governance by bringing decision-making institutions closer to people. Still, the benefits that could accrue would rely on institutional capacity, financial capacities, and effective governance mechanisms (World Bank, 1999). One of the possibilities for the creation of new provinces is better administrative accessibility. In big provinces, it may be difficult for citizens residing in remote areas to reach provincial government offices, public institutions and administrative authorities in provincial capital cities. Serving as a provincial capital, the new provincial government locations could break the geographical barriers and provide better access to basic services. For instance, it might be possible to give the people of the southern districts more access to administrative institutions at the provincial level within a separate South Punjab province. It can also save time and expenses of travelling to far off administrative centres for official

business. Further advantage may be enhanced service provision to the public. Smaller provinces might have more opportunities to identify regional problems and more opportunities to create policies based on the local needs.

There are several areas that have the potential to benefit from region-specific planning to enhance administrative outcomes, such as education, healthcare, transportation, agriculture, and infrastructure development. The World Bank (2004) noted that good decentralization can enhance service delivery if responsibilities, resources and accountability mechanisms are properly allocated and devolved. Thus, new provinces have the potential to offer an institutional structure to better serve regional development needs. The establishment of new provinces can also enhance the political representation and democratic participation. Geographically large provinces, if the population is distributed unevenly and/or the provincial politics are competitive or political institutions are established in the main cities, may experience a sense of political under-representation in certain areas. There would be opportunities for local political leadership, local representation in provincial assemblies, and for local involvement in policy decision-making in smaller provinces. This might engender people's sense of belonging to government institutions and increase people's political participation. Representation would not be based exclusively on provincial divisions, however, it would depend on clear electoral procedures and political institutions that would be open to the people. Moreover, administrative decentralization may also play a role in achieving a more balanced regional development. Government at a lower level (e.g., district level) can better recognise areas that are underdeveloped and target their resources to local priorities. Regional planning can foster investment in roads, educational and health facilities, agricultural facilities, and employment generating projects. Another aspect of fiscal decentralisation is to match financial responsibilities to financial capacity and administrative capacity (Oates, 1972). One of the other benefits that may be gained is increased administrative accountability. An effective communication of citizens' problems, the control of public officials and the pressure for improvements of public services, may be more easily possible when government institutions have more contact with citizens. Local political leaders too could be under more pressure to respond to the needs of the region for development. Yet, transparency of institutions, efficient auditing, citizen involvement, robust legal frameworks are necessary for accountability. The establishment of new provinces does not ensure good governance, however.However, it does not follow that new provinces will automatically bring improved governance. Administrative limitations such as financial constraints, institutional capacity and qualified personnel may also be an issue for smaller administrative units. Hence, administrative reform, fiscal planning, and effective local government systems should come along with provincial restructuring. To sum up, the creation of new provinces may help enhance the administration's accessibility, political representation, public services and regional development in Pakistan. However, the success of these outcomes is reliant on effective decentralization, financial sustainability, institutional capacity and democratic accountability. Restructuring the provinces should thus be seen as one component of the governance reform strategy and not as a standalone solution to administrative issues.

5. Economic Implications of New Provinces: Resource Distribution, Development, and Financial Viability

One of the most significant aspects of the current debate on the provincial restructuring and the issues of new provinces in Pakistan are the economic consequences of it. Supporters believe that smaller provinces would allow for balanced economic growth, more efficient allocation of resources and a more equitable distribution of economic resources throughout the region. But critics point out that the creation of new provincial governments could also drive up costs, bring financial strain and make the allocation of national resources more complex. Hence, there is a need to evaluate the economic viability of new provinces in terms of revenues, expenditure authority, natural resources, planning and development and fiscal sustainability. The promise of new provinces is the decrease in regional disparities in the economy that is promoted by one of the biggest economic arguments.A one of the greatest economic arguments for new provinces is that regional economic disparities would decrease. There are pockets of varying levels of industrialization and agricultural productivity, infrastructure and access to public services in the existing provinces of Pakistan. There are some relatively underdeveloped areas that say that their economy has not been fully exploited due to development priorities being placed in the big urban centres. A separate provincial government might be able to enact economic policies that are unique to the province, as well as allocate development funds based on the needs of the area, and promote investment in underdeveloped provinces. A fair distribution of resources (Oates, 1972) and regional development are significant goals of fiscal federalism. The allocation of federal and provincial financial resources is also a major concern. The National Finance Commission (NFC) Award is a constitutional tool for allocation of federal resources to provinces. The Constitution of India has laid down the framework of NFC under article 319 and the Seventh NFC Award of 2009 brought in several parameters for horizontal distribution of population as poverty and backwardness, revenue generation/revenue collection and inverse population density. If new provinces were established, there would need to be arrangements to allocate the revenues from the federation and the shares of interest in the federal transfers (Government of Pakistan, 1973; Government of Pakistan, 2009). Another factor to consider is the availability of natural resources. Pakistan has significant agricultural, mineral, energy and water resources in various geographical areas. The development of policies based on local economic conditions could enhance management and utilization of regional resources, potentially improving the management and utilization of resources in new provinces. Agricultural areas may be geared towards modern farming practices, irrigation, food processing, and markets, for instance. Likewise, mineral rich regions can establish a mining industry and can be the targets of investments. But the division of the existing provinces would also demand explicit settlement of issues of ownership, ownership shares, infrastructure, and natural resources management. Yet, the establishment of new provinces might result in extra financial and administrative costs. If each new province was to have a provincial assembly, secretariat, government departments, administrative infrastructure, and public institutions, then the situation would become unmanageable. If each new province was to have a provincial assembly, secretariat, government departments, administrative infrastructure, and public institutions, then all this would become unmanageable. This may add to government's financial burden in terms of increased salaries, pensions, operational costs, and development budgets. Newly created provinces may be unable

to generate revenue, making them extremely reliant on transfers from the central government. The literature on fiscal decentralisation recognizes the need for an accompanying set of revenue sources and financial accountability to the assignment of expenditure responsibility (Oates, 1999). In addition, new provinces may offer economic opportunity through investment and job creation, and infrastructure development. New provincial capitals could draw both public and private sector investments into the built environment for housing, transportation, education, healthcare services and economic development. Enhanced infrastructure would create opportunities for trade, agricultural marketing and the development of industry. These economic advantages, however, would hinge on good governance, planning, political stability and good financial management. To sum up, the economic implications of a situation where new provinces are established in Pakistan can have both positive and negative impacts. While there are benefits in restructuring the provinces to promote equitable development and better regional resource management, it may also raise administrative expenses and fiscal pressures. For this reason, proposals for new provinces should come with in-depth economic development assessments, sustainable revenue generation plans, clear rules on resource sharing, and long-term development planning.

6. Political, Ethnic, and Socio-Cultural Challenges in the Creation of New Provinces in Pakistan

The establishment of new provinces in Pakistan is not just an administrative and/or economic matter but it is intricately linked with political interests, ethnic identities, language diversity and socio-cultural matters. The country of Pakistan is a multicultural and multilingual nation where various communities bear their own historical backgrounds, cultural tradition and regional identity. While the demands for new provinces may be given the guise of administrative efficiency and development of the regions, they can also lead to political conflict, ethnic diversity and issues of national integration. Hence, to assess the likely impact of provincial restructuring, it is crucial to be mindful of these challenges. Lack of consensus among political parties and regional leadership is one of the big political problems. Various political parties have taken different stands on the creation of new provinces, based on their political agendas, electoral strategies and regional support. There are those who want to create new provinces to improve the representation of the region, and those who fear the prospect of political instability and fragmentation of the provinces. These differences can result in postponement of constitutional changes and difficulty in formulating a national policy. Political stability in federal systems necessitates cooperation, negotiation and trust between various levels of government (Watts, 2008). There are also various factors that have contributed to the discussion on new provinces, including ethnic identity. Pakistan is a country of various ethnic and linguistic groups such as Punjabis, Sindhis, Pashtuns, Baloch and Saraiki. There are numerous regional movements that have requirements for the recognition of linguistic and cultural identities. For instance, the demand for a separate province of Saraiki in South Punjab is linked with the demand of more political representation and recognition of Saraiki language and culture. Likewise, the movement in Hazara area mirrors the issues of regional identity and political representation. But the boundaries drawn to the provinces on the basis of ethnic or linguistic criteria can lead to more conflicts between the communities of mixed populations (Rahman, 1996). The potential for the development of new ethnic and regional divisions is another important issue. There could be conflicts regarding the name, capital, borders and language of the new province. Where the

geographical and cultural, linguistic and economic interests overlap districts and communities may vie for a proposed province, especially where cultural, linguistic and economic interests are distinct.

These conflicts can lead to tensions between neighboring communities and make the task of provincial restructuring more difficult. Hence, new provincial boundaries should be decided on the basis of consultation, history, geography and popular opinion. Political representation and the allocation of power are also touchy subjects. New provinces would impact the makeup of the Senate, National Assembly, and other constitutional bodies. Political stakeholders may voice issues and concerns regarding changes in political influence and representation. The institutional structure of federal systems is very important as it is able to accommodate multiple identities and ensure democratic stability, Stepan (1999) argues. Thus, any restructuring of provinces must be accompanied by constitutional protection and political solutions which will secure the interests of all communities. There is also a need for a significant focus on socio-cultural issues. Language, literature, historical events, traditional values and culture are frequently associated with regional identities. The argument for provincial recognition is that this will help to safeguard cultural identity, yet some oppose the idea of administrative division on the grounds that it will undermine existing social ties or lead to unwarranted regional rivalry. Promoting cultural diversity while upholding national unity and citizenship is therefore important. Also, lack of proper public consultation can lead to unhappiness of affected populations. Actions taken without taking the opinions of local communities, politicians, civil society and minority groups into account could be illegitimate. To resolve conflicting regional demands, a democratic process and inclusive dialogue is essential. To sum up, the issues of political tensions, ethnic sensitivity, cultural identity and resource distribution pose significant challenges in establishing new provinces in Pakistan. The restructuring of the provinces should thus be done in a democratic way, in accordance with the Constitution, inclusive political dialogue and with respect for cultural diversity. This can help prevent further regional divisions arising from administrative reforms and promote national integration.

7. Major Challenges and Potential Consequences of Establishing New Provinces in Pakistan

There are various administrative, constitutional, economic, political and institutional issues that face in establishing new provinces in Pakistan. Restructuring the Provinces is often cited as one way to strengthen governance and mitigate regional disparities, but the process can introduce more challenges if there is no proper planning and institution building process. There are more than just geographical adjustments to be made in the division of existing provinces; government departments must be reorganized, financial resources apportioned, administrative institutions established, and measures taken to coordinate between federal and provincial governments. Hence, the possible implications of establishing new provinces need to be thoroughly analysed before any constitutional or administrative action is considered. Financial costs of forming new provincial governments is one of the big issues. Each new province would have a provincial assembly, secretariat, chief minister, administrative departments, judicial system and other government components. These institutions would need to be provided with significant amounts of money for equipment, payroll, pension, travel, and other expenses. A new province with a small revenue stream could easily rely on money from the federal government. This reliance may lead to further strains on the national budget, and make existing fiscal federalism systems more complex (Oates, 1999). The distribution of existing provincial assets and liabilities is another big

concern. A division of a province would entail decisions about government buildings, public universities, hospitals, roads, irrigation systems, electricity infrastructure, financial institutions, and government employees. Likewise, there might be questions about how provincial debts can be divided, who should be responsible for pensions, and what projects should be continued. If the allocation of these resources is not clearly specified, tension could arise between the new province and its remaining provincial government.

The National Finance Commission framework should also be kept in mind appropriately to accommodate the number of provinces if any changes are made (Government of Pakistan, 1973). The administrative capacity is another key issue to consider. The new province would require effective civil service, technical team and experts, financial management, and institutional leadership. Where administrative facilities are already scarce, it may take time and effort to create new ones. Lack of skilled manpower may have an impact on the delivery of public services and decrease the efficiency of government agencies. Decentralization literature has made a strong point of the fact that decentralization of responsibilities to bodies without adequate institutional and administrative capacity can actually reduce governance (World Bank, 2004). Additionally, regional reorganisation might lead to conflict regarding the boundaries, provincial capitals and representation. Geographical, historical, economic and cultural considerations may lead to a request for inclusion in a proposed province by different districts. The choice of provincial capital can also be an issue of contention since various cities might claim significance for administration and politics. This opposition might stall the constitutional journey and raise political tension between the regions. The other potential impact has to do with the relationship between the federal and the provincial governments. The creation of other provinces would entail changes to the representation in Parliament, coordination between levels of government and resource-sharing. Province restructuring may raise constitutional issues and reduce institutional cooperation if these changes do not occur in a spirit of consensus. To coordinate the interests of a nation and the autonomy of its regions, effective mechanisms are needed in federal systems (Watts, 2008). Furthermore, the creation of new provinces could not necessarily remedy issues of corruption, unemployment, poverty, poor institutions and uneven development. Smaller provinces may suffer from the same problems of administration and accountability in absence of efficient administration and weak accountability systems. So, provincial division must not be a replacement for the comprehensive institutional and economic changes. To summarize, there are several challenges that may arise when the new provinces in Pakistan are established: financial costs, resource conflicts, lack of institutional capacity, political conflicts, and constitutional issues. Provincial restructuring can provide a pathway for regional development, but it must be carefully planned, financially viable, have administrative capacity, have a democratic outcome and ensure the resources are distributed transparently. Such measures are necessary to avoid creating new challenges rather than solve the existing ones of governance, if new provinces are created.

8. Conclusion

The formation of new provinces in Pakistan is a continuation of the federalism, administrative efficacy, regional imbalance, political representation, and national integration issues that have plagued the nation over the years. However, all over its political history the different provinces in Pakistan had been

demanding provincial autonomy and administrative reorganization. The primary feature of these demands is the sense of unequal development; the lack of political representation; administrative challenges; and the wish to preserve regional and/or linguistic identities. The discussion illustrates the possibility of new provinces to improve governance and regional development, but also to bring constitutional, financial, political and administrative complexities. An administrative point of view, smaller provinces may be easier to reach smaller citizens, and provide better access to public services. Regional governments might have better opportunity to define the development priorities and develop policy to suit the population's needs. Likewise, provinces may have opportunities for increased political representation and equitable regional development if new provinces are established. But territorial division is not enough to achieve these benefits. In addition to successful provincial administration, the following elements are also critical, namely, effective institutions, transparent governance, financial resources and administrative capacity (Oates, 1972, World Bank 2004). The issue of the creation of new provinces carries financial, economic and resource implications, which need to be weighed carefully for its economic viability. Each new province would have to establish its administrative machinery, and provide adequate financial means to carry out its constitutional duties. Hence, any provincial restructuring proposals should be tested for its economic feasibility before launching it. The size of the population, the revenue generating potential, natural resource requirements, infrastructure needs, public expenditure and the financial implications for the existing provinces and the federation should be considered in these studies. Provincial restructuring should be carried out in a democratic way, with public participation and consensus. Respect for language, culture and historical grievances in the decision making process must be granted. There should be meaningful dialogue between the federal government, provincial governments, political parties, civil society organisations and representatives of affected communities. A change in provincial boundaries must be done in accordance with Constitutional requirement, which includes Article 239(4) to ensure legal and democratic of the change. (Government of Pakistan, 1973)

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