**HUM111**

**Pakistan Studies**

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**Assignment:**

**04**

**Section:**

**A**

**Date:**

**30-12-2023**

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**Question 01: [CLO: 04 Bloom Taxonomy Level:<*Analyzing*>]**

**Identify and describe the factors behind Military being stronger as compared to State in Pakistan. Discuss in detail the impact of National Security Council (NSC) on political system of Pakistan.**

# **Introduction:**

The interplay between the military and the state in Pakistan has been a defining feature of the nation's political landscape since its inception in 1947. The intricate relationship between these two entities has shaped the course of Pakistan's history, influencing governance structures, political stability, and national priorities. This inquiry delves into the multifaceted factors that contribute to the military's prominence, often surpassing that of civilian authorities.

From a historical perspective, the military's interventions in politics have left an enduring imprint on the nation's trajectory. These interventions, whether overt or covert, have been justified by the need for stability and efficient governance. Simultaneously, budgetary allocations play a pivotal role, with a substantial share consistently directed towards the military, endowing it with not only formidable defense capabilities but also economic influence.

# **Factors:**

## **2.1. Historical Significance:**

The historical significance of the military in Pakistan is deeply rooted in the nation's post-independence journey. Since its inception in 1947, Pakistan has witnessed a series of military interventions that have left an indelible mark on its political landscape. The first military coup took place in 1958 when General Ayub Khan seized power, setting a precedent for subsequent interventions.

The military's involvement in politics and governance has often been justified by the need for stability and efficient administration. However, it has also been a source of controversy and debate. The 1971 war and the subsequent secession of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) marked a pivotal moment, underscoring the complex relationship between the military and the state.

Over the years, military leaders have assumed key political roles, both overtly and covertly. This intertwining of military and political spheres has shaped Pakistan's domestic and foreign policies, impacting its trajectory as a nation. Understanding this historical context is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of power and influence between the military and the state in Pakistan.

## **2.2. Budgetary Priorities:**

The allocation of a substantial portion of the national budget to the military is a critical factor in understanding its dominance. The consistent prioritization of defense spending has enabled the armed forces to maintain modernized equipment, invest in technology, and sustain a sizable personnel force.

The rationale behind such budgetary allocations often revolves around the perceived security threats facing Pakistan, particularly its longstanding conflict with India. The military, as the primary guarantor of national security, has successfully advocated for substantial financial support to maintain a credible defense posture.

This budgetary influence not only enhances the military's operational capabilities but also provides it with economic leverage and influence over national policies. The allocation of resources becomes a manifestation of the military's institutional strength and its ability to shape the broader economic and political landscape.

## **2.3. Perceived External Threats:**

The ongoing conflict with India and the historical animosity between the two nations contribute significantly to the military's strength in Pakistan. The military presents itself as the ultimate guardian of national security, framing its role as essential in defending the country against external threats.

The perception of a perpetual security dilemma, fueled by regional tensions, not only justifies the military's prominence but also creates a narrative that positions it as a necessary and indispensable force. This perception, whether real or exaggerated, is a potent tool in maintaining public and political support for the military's continued influence.

## **2.4. Political Turmoil:**

Civilian governments in Pakistan have often grappled with issues of instability, corruption, and governance challenges. This volatility has created opportunities for the military to intervene in the political sphere, presenting itself as a stabilizing force.

Military coups and interventions have been justified on grounds of restoring order, eradicating corruption, and ensuring the efficient functioning of the state. The military's intervention during times of political turmoil further reinforces its role as a decisive actor in shaping the political landscape, often to the detriment of civilian authority.

## **2.5. Governance Dynamics:**

The military's historical involvement in governance has led to its pervasive influence across various state institutions. This influence extends beyond traditional defense matters to include economic policies, foreign relations, and even domestic affairs.

The military's role in governance is not limited to direct rules; rather, it involves shaping decision-making processes and influencing policy outcomes. The integration of military personnel into key administrative and bureaucratic positions further solidifies its grip on the state apparatus, creating a complex web of military influence that extends well beyond its constitutional mandate. Understanding these governance dynamics is crucial for comprehending the depth of military dominance within the state structure in Pakistan.

# **Impact of National Security Council (NSC) on the Political System:**

## **3.1. Political Turmoil:**

The NSC, historically, has been characterized by a notable dominance of military officials, formalizing the military's role in national security and foreign policy decision-making. This institutionalization solidifies the armed forces' position as key players in shaping the country's strategic direction. The inclusion of high-ranking military officials in the NSC structure provides them with a platform to wield influence over critical matters of national importance.

## **3.2. Civil Military Relations:**

The NSC serves as a platform where civil-military relations manifest in a distinctive manner. The presence of the military within the NSC has allowed it to exert influence over national security policies, often overshadowing civilian authority. This influence extends beyond traditional defense matters, impacting the broader spectrum of policies that fall within the purview of national security. The NSC becomes a locus where the military's perspective can significantly shape the country's strategic decisions.

## **3.3. Political Formulation:**

The NSC's involvement in policy formulation has, at times, marginalized the role of elected civilian representatives. While civilian leaders are crucial stakeholders in the democratic process, the formalized structure of the NSC sometimes relegates them to secondary roles in matters of national security and foreign policy. This dynamic raises concerns about the democratic principles of representation and accountability, as the military's perspective takes precedence in critical policy decisions.

## **3.4. Stability vs Democracy:**

The NSC's influence introduces a perennial tension between the imperatives of national security and the principles of democracy. The prioritization of stability, often associated with strong military influence, can be perceived as a trade-off against the democratic ideals of civilian governance. This delicate balance becomes a central issue, as the NSC's decisions shape the nation's trajectory, prompting critical questions about the compatibility of a robust national security apparatus with the principles of democratic governance.

## **3.5. Checks and Balances:**

The NSC's role sometimes weakens the traditional checks and balances within the political system. As a powerful body involved in crucial decision-making processes, its influence can overshadow the mechanisms designed to ensure democratic accountability. This erosion of checks and balances raises concerns about the concentration of power, potentially undermining the democratic foundation upon which Pakistan's political system is built.

# **Conclusion:**

The impact of the National Security Council on Pakistan's political system transcends its formal role, permeating the realms of military dominance, civil-military relations, policy formulation, the delicate balance between stability and democracy, and the robustness of traditional checks and balances. Understanding these dynamics is essential for grasping the intricate interplay between security imperatives and democratic governance in the Pakistani context.