



# Who Am I ?

A Study on Identity and Co-Existence in Pakistan



PAK INSTITUTE FOR PEACE STUDIES (PIPS)

# *Who Am I?*

*A Study on Identity and  
Co-Existence in Pakistan*



Copyright © PIPS 2019. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing from the publisher of this book.

All enquiries regarding reproduction should be sent to PIPS at its address given below.

Title by: Tariq M. Sajjad  
Formatting: Zee Graphics  
Printer: Haji Hanif Printers, Lahore,  
Pakistan.

ISBN: 978-969-9370-34-4

Edition: First



P.O. Box 2110, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Tel: +92-51-8359475-6

Fax: +92-51-8359474

Email: [pips@pakpips.com](mailto:pips@pakpips.com)

Web: [www.pakpips.com](http://www.pakpips.com)

Price: PKR 100.00

# Content

<i>Executive summary</i> .....	5
<i>Key findings</i> .....	7
<i>Introduction</i> .....	11
<i>Section I</i>	
What is identity?.....	13
<i>Section II</i>	
Understanding identity crisis .....	21
<i>Section III</i>	
Social contract or Constitution .....	31
<i>Section IV</i>	
The Role of religion.....	43
<i>Section V</i>	
Society and identity .....	49
<i>Section VI</i>	
Identity and state .....	61
<i>Section VII</i>	
Identity assertion .....	69
 <i>Annex-1</i> .....	 83
<i>Image gallery</i> .....	95



# *Executive summary*

Any discussion aimed at unpacking identity in Pakistan ends up inviting grievances of how different group of people fare differently, merely because of their faiths, ethnicities, domiciles, and economic status. They attribute their day-to-day problems to their beliefs or which part of the country they belong to. Lack of constitutional safeguards further substantiates their grievances. To overcome such reservations, there is dire need to constitutionally own the excluded territories and people – Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Kashmir, tribal areas, but also persons living with disabilities, and religious minorities.

These are some of the findings of the report ‘*Who Am I?*’, a study on Pakistan’s identities and co-existence, published by Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), an Islamabad-based think tank. The report is based on a series of group discussions with experts, scholars, journalists, students from all over Pakistan.

The report noted that in Pakistan, when an individual gets associated with one of those identities, voluntarily or inadvertently, mostly these identities pertain to religion, ethnicity, and nationality, they then tend to tenaciously cling to their group identity.

There is a reason too: People say how they are discriminated against and others are privileged just because of who they are. While people realize the way forward is living with multiple identities, they also are aware how external circumstances like conflict and inequality when thrust upon people force them to take sides.

In any case, identity-based politics is rising, with people affiliated with sectarian and ethnic parties – clearly showing where the society is headed. This trend of Pakistan is aligned with that of the world.

At the same time, the report noted that predominance of group-based identity has eclipsed any discussion on individual rights, even though one specific right – freedom of expression – has

become a contestation point currently. Meanwhile, young girls are also openly talking about what were long considered as tabooed subjects, thus transforming the entire focus of women's rights movements.

The state gets most of the flak for sowing the seeds of identity crisis in Pakistan. It was largely linked to "conscious effort" in which civilian and military players alike led the nation-building process that ended up withdrawing those who were not part of this part. Religion came as a handy instrument to glue the varied groups.

More specifically, lack of constitutional safeguards has rendered many confused about their sense of belonging to the land. Residents of GB and Azad Jammu and Kashmir complain they are being designated with "special" status, which, to them, betrays confusion about who they are. Likewise, there is no specific law protecting persons living with disabilities. Religious minorities, on the other hand, lament how state's tilt towards one religion, ended up excluding them slowly.

Protecting these varied citizens of Pakistan requires safeguarding their constitutional rights, or mainstreaming them, as is happening with the tribal areas. A more inclusive and participatory form of government, as in a democracy, can also surmount identity woes.

## *Key findings*

- In Pakistan, people tend to ***resort to their group identity***. Although a person can have his/her own individual identity, any discussion on the subject makes most references to his/her group identity – religious, ethnic, and national. An individual gets associated with one of those identities, voluntarily or inadvertently.
- Even identity politics in Pakistan is centred on group identities. There are sect-based and ethnic-based parties. Same is the case with those who talk about rights.
- Identity-based politics is on the rise in the country, with sectarian and ethnic parties dominating news – clearly showing where the society is headed. This trend cannot be separated from what is happening in the world over, where groups asserting themselves on the basis of their faith, ethnicity, and nationhood.
- When asked to comment on their identity, people say how they are discriminated against or others are privileged just because of who they are. To them, ***identity sits at the core of their existence***. A non-Muslim in Lahore may feel abandoned because of his religious identity.
- Three key causes that led people mobilize themselves around their identity group were: sense of security, welfare, and dignity. Each cause has certain examples. Security? “I feel threatened because of my religious beliefs.” Welfare? “I am poor, so are those around; our entire area is not being invested in.” Dignity? “I am suspected of links with terrorists or harassed by state authorities, just because I have a certain ethnic identity.”
- Predominance of group-based identity has eclipsed any discussion ***on individual rights***. Individual freedoms are rarely discussed.



- However, lately, one right which is mostly associated with individuals has come to the fore – freedom of expression. Many complain the denial of this right, irrespective of the right-holder's group identity, has forced people to settle abroad.
- Meanwhile, young girls are also taking on what were long considered as tabooed subjects, transforming the entire focus of women's rights movements.
- There is a ***strong realization that a person can have multiple identities*** rather than any single one, and the path to coexistence lies in admitting this reality. Yet, there is an equally important reminder that external circumstances like conflict and inequality thrust upon people forces them to take sides.
- One indicator of resolving conflict is by embracing one's multiple identities. Going by this standard, ***there are seeds of discontent in Pakistan's*** smaller provinces, where people eagerly prioritized their foremost identity. Similarly, their views about whether religion or state played any role in aggravating identity differences also differed from those of central or northern Punjab.
- One manifestation of ***identity crisis*** is of discarding One's own language and culture. It is about not acknowledging the diversity within the country.
- For many, the problem is not identity crisis, but inequality and improper implementation of law. This reasoning is more of chicken-egg dilemma. Inequality itself can be taken as outcome of grappling with identity problems, as people from underdeveloped areas think they are ignored by policies at the top that do not invest in those areas.
- The state gets the most flak for sowing the seeds of identity crisis in Pakistan. It was largely linked to "conscious effort", in which civilian and military players alike led the nation-building process that ended up excluding those away from this process. Key characteristics of this made-up identity have been: rejection of India, adherence to political Islam,

and Urdu as lingua franca – these three were seen as the gluing factor.

- At the same time, some saw state's role as more passive, driven from structural defects out of a non-participatory governance system. The state's tilt towards one faith or ethnicity was driven from its majoritarian approach.
- The **role of Islam** was also discussed in identity formation or crisis for that matter. Whether or not this has something to do with religious ideals per se was strongly contested. Most saw that religious interpretations were responsible to this end. Islam also came handy to different rulers, facilitated by the strong sense of association between Pakistan and Islam.
- Unlike many other countries in the Muslim world, in particular the Middle East, Pakistan has a diverse sectarian population. Islam's role in state then automatically has impact on its diverse sects.
- One of the common sentiments is the **fear of being turned into minority**, merely on the basis of numbers. Christians, Hindus, and other non-Muslims lament the term "minority" is consciously used is meant to exclude others. Baloch ethnic group worry that already small in number, they are being deliberately outnumbered in their own province, with the passage of time. Even a significant section of Punjabis complain how despite being a majority group, their language is losing usage, as if minority's language.
- **Constitutional recognition** has been at the core of identity. Different groups, vocal about their identity, ask about their relation with the state.
- Residents from the former tribal areas complained about how they were kept "special" for long, and even though their area is merged with the mainstream KP, the laws of the land are yet to be extended there. Similarly, residents from Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan said their chosen representatives lack power to adjudicate about all matters of the area and people, as if they are not part of the same country.

- Religious minorities in particular pointed at the discrimination etched in the Constitution which bases itself on one religion. Meanwhile, persons living with disabilities desired of a comprehensive law that defines them properly in a consistent matter.
- To be sure, the Constitution has clauses on fundamental human rights, which can be invoked to demand rights of all. But at times, these rights are curtailed in the name of morality, security, and so on.
- A more inclusive and participatory form of government, such as in democracy, can help overcome identity problems. While on the one hand, some of the most controversial laws have been passed without any parliamentary debates, on the other hand, statutes that went through parliamentary processes were accepted, notwithstanding the objections over it.

# ***Introduction***

No discussion on the challenges of Pakistan is complete without reference to the issue of identity. So frequently is it brought up that the term “identity crisis” is mentioned without unpacking it. Both listener and speaker are assumed to be on the same page.

Identity crisis is blamed for many of the big problems, whether it is about country’s foreign policy, internal political structure, constitutional arrangement, societal relationship – name anything and its cause is linked to identity crisis.

What really is identity crisis? Who caused it? What even is meant by identity? These are some of the questions whose answers are being sought in this report. Their interface with concepts related to harmony, such as citizenship, inclusion, and diversity, are also brought forth.

The report is largely a narration and analysis of empirical, or firsthand, data collected from the field in the form of closed focus groups discussions (FGDs). Six such discussions were conducted to cater to all areas of the country.

Below are the details of the discussions:

<i><b>Dates</b></i>	<i><b>Region</b></i>
Peshawar, 3 March 2019	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including former tribal areas
Lahore, 6 March 2019	Southern Punjab
Karachi, 12 March 2019	Sindh, Balochistan
Karachi, 13 March 2019	Sindh, Balochistan
Islamabad, 16 April 2019	Central and Northern Punjab
Islamabad, 17 April 2019	Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir



*SECTION I*

*What is identity?*



Dialogue participants said “identity” is about identifying someone. When a person is asked about her or his identity, it is to inquire who she/he is. The dialogues noted that generally in Pakistan, people often align themselves to the larger group identity. Most took it as something natural, that they had carried since birth. Several quoted religious texts saying that humans have been created in different groups precisely to identify each other. Basically a person’s sense of identity depends on where one lives.

Below are some aspects of identity that came in the discussion:

<p><i>Why define identity? Who defines it?</i></p>	<p>The reason why people opt for identity is that it gives them social security. It gives them a sense of backing or support, especially in tough times. There is a sense of association with people who can look after each other.</p> <p>For many others, the issue of identity directly sits at the heart of conflict. Balochistan participants said that identity is a matter of life and death for them.</p> <p>For the same reason, identity is not necessarily defined by the person herself/himself, but by those around her/him. It is one thing to define one’s identity, and quite another if others do so for you. The problem comes when One is dealing with the latter. In politically-charged or conflict-ridden environments, people are forced to take sides, and therefore their identities are polarized. One may want to be known in a religious context, but people and circumstances can force her/him to choose another.</p>
--	---



<p><i>Singular vs. multiple</i></p>	<p>The groups largely argue that a person can have multiple identities, rather than one alone. A person can be a Sunni, male, Lahorite, Pakistani, cricket lover all at the same time. Thus, when participants were asked which single identity they would prioritize for themselves? Several responded that they would rather go for multiple identities than any one in particular.</p> <p>A Karachi-based journalist said identity is like an onion. The top-most layer is personal identity – mother, father. Then, what is your caste, <i>biradri</i>, sub-caste, and so on.</p> <p>As much as each person has multiple identities, they can nonetheless prioritize their identities. Prioritization varies from person to person, or group to group. In KP and Sindh, participants repeatedly recalled how their leaders, when asked about which identity do they prioritized, retorted that they are “Pashtun or Sindhi for over a thousand years, Muslim second since they converted 1400 years ago, and Pakistani third since they have been Pakistani citizens for the last 50 to 60 years”.</p> <p>According to scholars, a conflict arises when a person prioritizes one particular identity over others. To resolve conflicts, therefore, One should accept the multiple identities she/he is carrying.</p> <p>Yet, there comes a time when despite multiple identities, One is supposed to choose one identity over the others. It can also warn against conflicts that simmer beneath the surface. In the groups’ discussion, when</p>
-------------------------------------	---

	<p>participants were asked about which identity they prioritize, there were many who, without waiting much, shared a single identity.</p> <p>Group members agreed that the identity One carries from birth is more natural. The problem arises when an identity is thrust as an ideology. Identity can take shape of ideology too. There is nothing wrong in having Pashtun or Sindhi identity, but the problem is that when this is translated into ideology, with a view of everything circling around it.</p>
<i>Changes in identity</i>	<p>The dialogues discussed the element of change in the identity. Many realized that their sense of key identity may change with time.</p> <p>A person's religious identity may come to the fore in religious settings; same can be said about gender in more social circumstances. In Pakistan, a person's <i>biradri</i> or even tribal identity comes to prominence when one is a rural setting.</p> <p>Thus, a person with the same set of multiple identities comes across situations where particular aspects of identity come forward while others go backwards. Context is the key, when prioritizing One's identity.</p> <p>The group participants largely defended their sense of top identity on the basis of its firmness. When asked why members prioritize ethnic identities, in smaller provinces, they said this is something "natural", which cannot be changed. One said, "In an ethno-centric society, identity is taken as a fixed and natural phenomenon –</p>

	<p>something that cannot be changed.”</p> <p>In recent times, with the advent of social media, there has been a rise in certain labels as identities. Many youngsters call themselves as feminists, activists, or liberals to show their commitment to a certain way of thinking on social media platforms.</p>
<i>Single vs collective</i>	<p>Each individual has an identity, but in Pakistan’s context, the discussion often center’s on collective or group identity. When participants are asked about their identity, they tend to refer to their ethnic or religious identity – all group-based.</p> <p>The concept of rights too is linked to collective rights. In the discussions too, participants talked about rights to certain ethnicities. That is how One feels alienated or empowered.</p> <p>Largely, individual identity or individual rights are not talked about in Pakistan. The downside is that it ends up justifying alienation as well.</p>
<i>Identity as behaviour</i>	<p>Identity is less about expressing Oneself, and more about “doing some activity”. As per this thinking, identity is how we behave with others. “What one does and the way it is done, becomes a part of his introduction.” It applies as much as to individuals, as to groups and the State. Behaviour is the most powerful aspect of One’s identity, it was stated. Pakistan’s response to Panama Scandal, 9/11 attacks, among other events are responsible for how the world sees us, a participant stated.</p>

***Identity markers in Pakistan***

<b><i>Identity marker</i></b>	<b><i>Areas with most responses</i></b>
<i>Language</i>	KP, Balochistan, Sindh, and parts of Punjab
<i>Religion</i>	Punjab, Sindh, KP
<i>Economic status</i>	Punjab, Sindh, partly KP
<i>Profession</i>	Partly KP, Punjab
<i>Caste</i>	Punjab, Sindh
<i>Global</i>	Punjab (northern)
<i>Ethnicity</i>	Sindh, KP, Balochistan, Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan
<i>Sect</i>	Punjab, Sindh, KP
<i>Biradri</i>	Punjab
<i>Hobby</i>	KP
<i>National</i>	Punjab
<i>Tribe/clan</i>	Balochistan, partly KP (ex-FATA)



*SECTION II*

*Understanding identity  
crisis*



Whenever the term “identity” is brought into a discussion, participants mostly jump to discuss “identity crisis”. Even before the term “identity” is unpacked, most of them try to unpack the crisis associated with it. This was observed not only during these discussions, but also in many other discussions and consultations PIPS has been conducting on social harmony. PIPS found in its work, over and over, how teachers, religious scholars, policymakers – all infer or explicitly bemoan about Pakistan’s identity crisis as one of the critical problems plaguing the entire governance system. This dialogue was held precisely to unpack the term.

### *Is there any identity crisis?*

Before this term is unpacked, it is necessary to test if participants of the dialogue think Pakistan suffers from identity. One of the questions asked from the participants was: do you think Pakistan suffers from identity crisis? An overwhelming majority answered in the affirmative. This response came from NGO workers in Peshawar as well as religious scholars in Karachi.

But a tiny minority said there is no identity crisis in the country. This mostly came from young participants of Punjab, who attended the dialogues in Lahore and Islamabad. Generally, those who argued Pakistan does not suffer from an Identity Crisis had these two justifications to offer:

One, what appears as identity crisis has economics at play in the background. The issue is less about intangible debates on identity, and more about tangible economic needs. Raise the economic status of individuals and group, and you will have little complaints regarding identity crisis.

Similarly, a few others said – again from Punjab – that what appeared as identity crisis actually is not abiding by the law of the land in spirit. The Constitution, they said, does not discriminate among people, nor does the country’s dominant religion, Islam. But it is the way these are practiced in the country that make people feel that there is an identity crisis. Lack of justice cannot be taken as a reason for any crisis, they reasoned.

But these two justifications cannot be linked to identity. For many in the dialogues, such reasoning – poverty or improper



implementation of law – in itself is a result of identity crisis. “Some” people are poor because they come from certain social backgrounds. Same is the case with justice. Those at the lower rung can only dream of justice, and those in the lower rungs include religious and ethnic minorities. When these justifications are applied at the collective level, there is reason to believe that they are left behind because of who they are.

Thus, when one of the questions that talked about why young people migrate to other countries, was probed, several said that while there can be economic, security, or identity-related reasons, these three are ultimately linked.

### ***Two-tier response***

When participants discussed identity crisis, they mostly talked about the *results* of that crisis, such as polarized political debates, lack of trust in state institutions, and so on. We argue these are mostly results of that crisis.

But such reasoning led us to probe another matter too: what really is meant by identity crisis? If identity crisis can be summarized in one single statement, it is ***“our inability to properly answer the question, ‘Who Am I?’”*** Related to it is how one defines one’s relations with those around.

Based on our discussion, responses to understanding of identity crisis can be categorized in two levels – individual level and social or group level. A few took it as more of a personal endeavor, restricting identity crisis to ***individual***. One teacher sharing his personal classroom experiences said that “when students ask them questions other than in textbook, most are about identity, which was mostly about the direction.” Lack of direction entails lack of proper identity about oneself, argued the teacher. Students do not know which group they belong to and what are their issues.

That said, most of the discussion was at the ***group level***. It is largely our inability to define a national identity that accepts in its fold the entire ethnic, religious, sectarian, gender identities within its fold – this was the crux of how participants view identity crisis

in Pakistan. Clearly, an individual's identity crisis is further enhanced by the group's to which she belongs.

<i>Level</i>	<i>What is Identity Crisis?</i>	<i>Results (Examples)</i>
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of direction, future</li> <li>• Confusion about Oneself, one's role for state and society</li> <li>• Confusion about group association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to leave the country or village</li> <li>• Falling for wrong tendencies/groups</li> <li>• Lack of freedom, opportunity</li> <li>• Minimal healthy role in society</li> </ul>
Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding of accepting people from different backgrounds</li> <li>• Confusion about relation with society and state</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proclivity to reject minority ethnic and religious groups in personal and collective life (Ghettos, separate societies, separate utensils)</li> <li>• Polarized opinion about different groups</li> <li>• Lack of freedom and opportunity, especially for religious and ethnic minorities</li> <li>• Objection over how state apparatus handles diverse groups</li> <li>• Minimal healthy role of some groups in society</li> </ul>

Reverting to the original question, should there be no identity crisis, none of the country's varied groups – Baloch, Pashtun, Sindhi and Punjabi, men and women, persons living with disabilities – would have second thoughts that their progress will be deterred in any way by who they are, how they look, speak, and wear.

## COMMENT

### *Gender identity in transformation*

BY SADIA BOKHARI

This year's Aurat March, created quite a stir in some circles. Organized by the feminist collective Hum Aurtain (We Women), participants of the March – women, men, transgender, rich and poor – demanded equality for women in all spheres of life. The placards of some protestors, mostly young girls, did not go well with its critics. One such placard read, “My Life, My Body!”

Critics quickly pounded on the participants of the March. To them, it amounted to “immorality”, the March had flouted the Islamic norms and ideology of the country by using vulgar and explicit language for sloganeering. There were feminist critics too, who opined that right now, what Pakistan needs is a feminist intersectional approach that takes into consideration Pakistan's cultural, traditional and moral aspects.

On many counts, the severe backlash was understandable: It has not been a norm that a woman publically talks about her control over her sexuality and touching upon topics like sexual harassment, rape, and honor killing. Not all of these were part of public discourse in Pakistan. March's organizers were derided for not focusing on what has now become the traditional gendered policy issue like Right to Education, Vote, or Employment, for that matter.

This year's March has changed the course of issues to be highlighted. Women, mostly young girls, are now demanding that the right to control their own bodies and their sexuality without any form of discrimination,

coercion, or violence is an absolute must for their empowerment. They are demanding an independent existence for themselves. Seen this way, the March has kick-started the discussion in Pakistan for a more nuanced approach to sexual rights of an individual and especially for women and transgender population.

This movement is in fact symptomatic of a much-awaited epiphany to do away with the stifling environment for women.

### ***What it means to have identity crisis?***

A brief summary of *what it means to have an identity crisis* in Pakistan is given below:

- Participants from almost all the four provinces say one manifestation of identity crisis is not of owning one's own languages and culture. Those from the smaller provinces complain that their languages and culture were set aside by the State's ambition of imposing uniformity. At the same time, many admitted that those who speak their mother tongue are viewed as rustic and inferior, compared to those who speak English and Urdu. This is a classic identity crisis, that we are not proud of our rich heritage, particularly in regional language. Ironically, Punjabi is one of the few majoritarian languages that can get extinct because of non-usage.
- To the participants from Balochistan, identity crisis invited fears. They said identity is a matter of life and death, as the words "identity" and "crisis" have symbiotic relationship for them.
- Similarly, some said for them their identity meant

overcoming identity crisis to become accepted as normal citizens. Participants from KP and Balochistan complained they are stereotyped for having a proclivity to violence. “Whenever we travel, we are stopped and asked for our identity cards”, as if they are not equal citizens of the country.

- Yet many others saw identity crisis as something to do with their unequal constitutional status. Residents from the former tribal areas said while their area is merged with the mainstream KP, the laws of the land are yet to be extended there. Similarly, residents from Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan said their chosen representatives lack power to adjudicate about all matters of the area and people, as if they are not part of the same country. Religious minorities in particular pointed at the discrimination etched in the Constitution which bases itself on one religion.
- The groups said that there is no inclusive Pakistani identity per se, which embraces the rich diversity in the country. A true Pakistani identity should be inclusive of all identities, provincial, religious, sectarian, gender, among others. Instead, attempts were made to impose an identity from the top.
- The constructed identity of Pakistan, participants said, is too majoritarian in nature. It excludes minorities, in particular religious ones, by clubbing Pakistani identity with Muslim one. There is a strong association of Islam and Pakistan. This is specially seen in Punjab: One participant from Lahore said that when they were holding a literature festival on Pakistani literature, much of the discussion was on Islamic literature.
- Yet another argument was that Pakistani identity crisis

emanated from the fact that it does not have its own positivity to stand on. All it revolves around is negation of India. In other words, it is a negative and rejection-based identity.

- As if this is not enough, in order to appear Islamic, many have donned an Arabicized version of religion. This too smacks of an identity crisis, reflecting the desire to escape South Asia.
- At national level, there is a feeling whether we will survive as a nation or not. Such fears in turn feed into embracing an identity that rejects India, the arch enemy.

### ***Causes of identity crisis in Pakistan***

Throughout the discussion, participants were also asked about what are the possible causes of identity crisis in Pakistan. These could be state players, religious authorities, or the structure holding citizens such as the land of the law.

An overwhelming number of participants blamed the **state** for sowing the seeds of identity crisis in Pakistan. This question was asked, and from all parts of the country, majority pointed to the state. How is the state blamed for creating this crisis? Well, no matter what is meant by identity crisis in Pakistan – whether it is opposition to India, top-down approach of nation-building, application of Islam – all these were acts of the state ever since its inception.

For those who blamed that certain religious interpretations paved the way for this crisis, or that the Constitution has some lacunas, the response was, in those cases too, the State was in the lead. The state exploited religion to further its agenda. It is the one to apply the law, which is open to interpretation.

There were others who argued that **religious thought**, as prevailing in the country, is also responsible for generating the identity crisis. The state did not ask for donning the Arabized Islam, but the clergy and their understanding of Islam did. The state has been trying to co-opt the religious minorities, but it is religious orthodoxy that is making the State's effort futile.

Identity crisis, especially over the question of religion, is not peculiar to Pakistan, but it is so in much of the Muslim world these days. Clearly, there is some commonality between them and Pakistan, and that common point is a particular understanding of faith.

Still further, some said it is the **society** that should take major blame for this identity crisis. Yes, people are discriminated on streets by other people from different backgrounds. People are not used to accepting each other, due to images they have made of the other in their minds and is reflected in their actions against each other.

State may be responsible, but state itself is the product of a society. As to religious interpretations, again, these come from the people. Islam has always been there, but the way it has been interpreted in different places and times speak about the people.

Participants were also asked about whether social **contract or constitution** is responsible for the identity crisis. Some said it does, especially with regards to non-Muslims, but others say the issue is about lack of implementation. A more nuanced understanding of the forces responsible for identity crisis point to interplay of all these factors, with varying intensity, and with an interdependent relation.

*SECTION III*

*Social contract or  
Constitution*

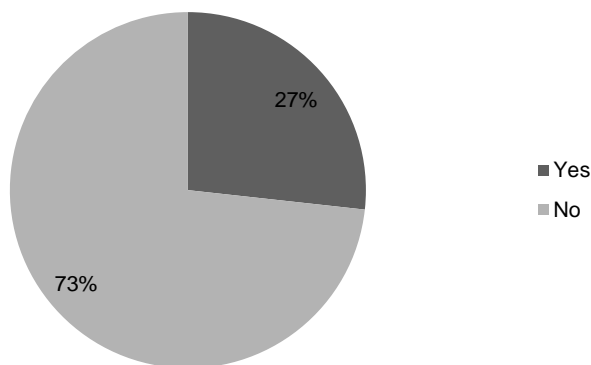




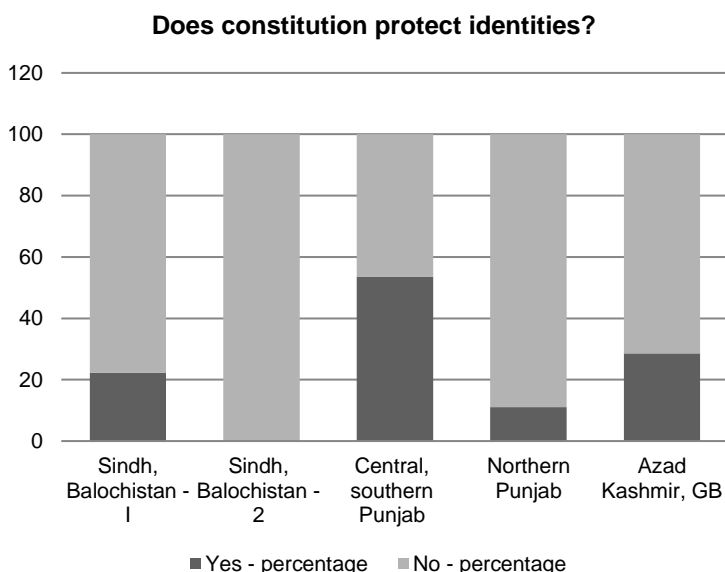
- Many participants interchangeably used the words “social contract” and “constitution.” When asked about social contract, they referred to the Constitution. Similarly, in their reference to Constitution as a guiding document, they throw in the concept of a “social contract”.
- Several, however, noted the difference, saying that whereas social contract is an implicit understanding among people about their bond with each other, which talks about responsibilities as much as their rights. This may or may not be reflected neatly in the Constitution. Pakistan’s Constitution, it was said, talked less of societal bond, and more of state-society relations, with state at the top. Participants urged for constitutional literacy for all citizens, especially students.
- One of the questions asked from the participants was about whether or not social contract, or constitution, was responsible for identity crisis.

As discussed above, overwhelming number of participants said that the contract does not cause identity crisis. There is nothing in the Constitution that discriminated against any member of identity.

#### **Does social contract/constitution protect identities?**



They argue that Pakistan's Constitution is one of the few to have so many clauses on fundamental human rights, starting from Article 9 to 19. Some of the latest entrants are right to education, right to information – these are even denied in some of the well-off parts of the world. And these clauses warn against discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, race, and religion. Being fundamental rights, these can in no way be set aside.



- There were, however, many critical voices regarding this issue. Criticism to this end was largely grounded on its religious bent and legal lacuna in terms of implementation.

*One*, non-Muslim in particular pointed out that the country's Constitution is tilted in favour of one religion against another. It openly declares Islam to be the state religion, which means that people of one faith are treated with more respect than others. This also trickles down in curriculum, where Islamic Studies is taught as a compulsory

subject. Similarly, many posts and positions are by law mandated for Muslims only. To them, there is no constitutional recourse against persecution. It is as if different faith members are citizens of different grades.

This despite the fact the thesis of Pakistan's creation was that the minorities will be protected, and that they will have their due rights. This is what 1940 Lahore Resolution too hints at, which became the basis of Pakistan's creation. But after Pakistan was created, the Resolution's spirit was set aside. Minorities in the newly-created state started raising their voices in protest claiming that they have been denied their rights. The social contract, they said, did not reflect the spirit of 1940 because Post-partition, we are stuck with the principle of "majority is authority."

*Two*, some ethnic groups also complained of being kept out of mainstream very much under the Constitution's umbrella. Their bond with the state and society is questionable. Residents from the former tribal areas said while their area is merged with mainstream KP, the laws of the land are yet to be extended there. They are already stereotyped, they complained. Similarly, residents from Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan said they are still treated as special territory, which binds them to the dictates of the ruling party or government at the Center.

*Three*, increasingly, the most marginalized segments of the society said that they are denied even proper identity under the law of the land. It was only in 2018 that transgenders were granted equal rights; as of now, Supreme Court of Pakistan admits them as third gender other than men and women. Meanwhile, persons living with disabilities argued that they are not being mainstreamed, as there is no comprehensive law for them, and different departments come with different definitions for them.

*Above all*, while it is true that the Constitution has clauses on fundamental human rights, those rights are at the same

time curtailed in the name of morality, security, and so on. There are freedoms, but also curbs on vague grounds.

For example, where there is freedom of expression, there are also restrictions on what can be said and what cannot be expressed. This allows the Constitution to be invoked against the politics in smaller provinces, which can be at loggerheads with the central government over a variety of policy issues. Thus, the politics of smaller ethnic groups is often restricted under this clause.

Most however said the problem with the Constitution is not what it says, but how it is applied. The problem is of implementation. They said there is no harm in openly declaring about Islam or putting certain restrictions on fundamental rights. The problem is of the state, which does not let the liberties be enjoyed.

Many in Lahore said that when the law was applied neatly, all felt protected. For instance, they pointed that the law says a person cannot marry someone below 18. If that is not followed, the problem is with the implementation of the law. Similarly, another participant reminded of the incident when one minister recently mocked Hindus, he was fired from his position. All these are guaranteed in the social contract or constitution.

Part of the problem comes from the people, some said, adding that even while constitution protects identity, social contract does not do that. As one participant said, "When you go to market places, you will find negative campaigns against some communities. These are accepted as a norm." The problem, they said, is about society, not the written law.

- Participants also shared their thoughts regarding different historical documents which can be taken as social contract:

<i>1940 Resolution</i>	The 1940 Lahore Resolution, which became the basis of Pakistan's foundation, was hailed as the way forward in terms of any social contract in Pakistan. The resolution talks about autonomy for certain minority regions. Today, all groups support this resolution, saying it acknowledges autonomy or the rights of various groups
<i>Objectives Resolution</i>	The Objectives Resolution, which was passed in 1948, and later became Preamble of the Constitution, drew mixed response. It says that the sovereignty belongs to Allah. This is hailed as a step in the right direction by those who stress on religious identity, since it justifies <i>raison detre</i> of Pakistan. But those from minority communities and even ethnic identities lament that it steered away the goal of the 1940 resolution, by discriminating among different citizens. As of now, there are polarizing views on this Resolution, with one participant in Peshawar even asking as to why there is the need for questioning the Resolution.
<i>1973 Constitution</i>	<p>The 1973 Constitution is hailed as the consensus document by all segments of the society. Some communities have reservations on some terminologies, but they argue that the way forward has to be the one mentioned in the Constitution. Largely, participants support it for being a consensus document. Even some of those having reservations over Objectives Resolution being its preamble, understand it was inserted not with consensus in 1980s.</p> <p>On the role of religion mentioned in the Constitution, non-Muslims do point to certain legal restrictions that are placed on them as a</p>

	consequence. Ethnic identities do not have much complains about it, as they have on Objectives Resolution. Its acceptance owes it to being consensus document. The Council of Islamic Ideology Chairman said, “the document was signed by leading religious scholars and secularists alike of their time.” That explains its acceptance.
<i>18<sup>th</sup> Amendment</i>	The 18 <sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment, which was passed in 2010 and which delegated provinces to the provinces, has been hailed by most segments of the society, in particular those from ethnic provinces. A segment in Punjab is also supportive of it.
<i>Paigham-e-Pakistan</i>	Paigham-e-Pakistan is a fatwa-cum-brief which denounces violence in the name of Islam. It is signed by leading scholars of all sects and enjoys full state support. Some participants, who knew about it, took it as a key document in the history of Pakistan, at par with the Objectives Resolution and even the Constitution. But many did not know about it and wondered why it was not presented for debate. They expressed surprise at the state’s involvement in denouncing violence in the name of Islam.

- While participants were divided on religion-based laws, they were mostly divided on statutes passed without any parliamentary debates. These include blasphemy laws, anti-women and even pro-women laws – with some in support and others in bitter opposition. Even the well-intended *Paigham-e-Pakistan* elicited some surprise over its passage.

On the other hand, statutes that went through parliamentary processes were accepted. Objectives Resolution saw divisive debate, but it was seen as a compromise, with interpretations open to all. Even with

that, the issue was it becoming Preamble of the Constitution in 1980s, an undemocratic era. Similarly, for all reservations on Constitution of Pakistan, participants said the way forward has to come through the same constitution.

Democratic continuity was hailed as shaping a national identity which would have been inclusive in spirit.



## **COMMENT**

### ***Disability – In Search of Legal Identity***

**BY ZULQARNAIN ASHGAR**

With thirty-three million persons living with disabilities in Pakistan, they form 15 per cent of the country's population. And yet there is no consistent definition of who they are or what their challenges are.

Surely, as citizens of Pakistan, the persons living with disabilities in Pakistan are entitled to basic rights enshrined in the Constitution. More so, there are certain laws that mention persons living with disabilities, foremost being an ordinance passed in 1981.

But the persons living with disabilities in Pakistan of Pakistan face peculiar barriers too: There are no separate ramps to facilitate their movements (Infrastructural barrier). Those around them stigmatize them and do not see any utility that they should vote (Societal barrier). And no political party gives them ticket, or their relatives do not think worth sharing inheritance with them (Institutional barrier). There are countless other examples. More so, disability has diversity too. There are different types of impairments and degrees of disabilities. These should be acknowledged.

These realities explain why there is a great need to have a specific disability-centric law, something that should give them legal definition and protection. That is at the core of the identity of persons living with disabilities in Pakistan.

## COMMENT

### ***GB's (lack of) identity***

**BY AZIZ ALI DAD**

It may sound bitter, but let us face this truth about identity on Gilgit Baltistan: It does not exist! The prerequisite for any group or region to be part of a modern nation-state is by being accepted as part of its constitution. Sadly, that does not exist for GB. It is only an administrative part of Pakistan, but constitutionally, it is not. Pakistan's Constitution does not even introduce it. GB is only marked on the map of Pakistan, but its people are not counted.

The state of limbo is derived from the undecided status of Kashmir conflict, a central dispute of Pakistan's with India. From day one, GB has been made associated with Kashmir and its dispute. All the limitations put in place on them are justified in the name of that conflict. To many, it seems as if GB has been made subservient and captive to the entire issue, even though GB's association with Kashmir was just a century old. It had its own existence.

This way, GB lost its traditional structure, and yet, because of the conflict, did not get modern empowered institutions. It has been made into a "subliminal region" where it is no more what it was and cannot become what it should be. This perpetual limbo is not identity but entity in darkness where it even cannot produce its own shadow.

It is a head without a body, and vice versa. The existing Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly is body without head, and position of Chief Minister is like a head without body. Both are subservient to the dictates of the central government. This zone is automatically relegated as sterile,

powerless and visionless. It creates a similar image of its people, powerless and visionless.

Because of sheer negligence of the people in center, there is a rejectionist narrative in building in GB. Locals, especially youngsters, are antagonized, which can be inimical to co-existence. Empowering the people requires embracing them first.

*SECTION IV*

*The role of religion*



- A segment of participants argued that the majoritarian religion is responsible for identity crisis in the country.
- All in all, participants couldn't escape the role of religion in identity formation or crisis for that matter. Whether or not this was something to do with religious ideals per se was strongly contested. Most saw that religious interpretations were responsible, which came from political Islamists rather than scholars per se. More so, to many, such interpretations came to prominence because of their influence on the state.
- *One*, some religious concepts like *towheed* are internalized in such a way that a unitary model is desired. Just as there is one God overseeing the mortals, there has to be one system on the Earth, or at least one ruler, whose obedience is binding on all. As a participant stated, "Our inclination is towards one-ness", adding it ends diversity for unity.

Many argued that the prevailing religious thought in the country, or those upholding it, also takes *us-versus-them* approach around religion. There is a sense of rejection of those who are different. When asked if this was unique, the response was that Pakistan itself was created on the idea that Hindus were different from Muslims.

Yet another way this got to prominence was when Islam was linked with the Middle East, and therefore an Arabicized Islam was followed. Several participants reasoned how the prevailing religious thought in the country has a propensity for the Arab world. This creates confusion, as Arabic-sounding names are borrowed, their mannerisms obeyed, and a sense of superiority-inferiority complex sets in. That too shapes identity crisis.

- Seen another way, *two*, participants argue that even if we blame the state for fomenting identity crisis, what cannot be denied is that it was because the state embraced one faith at the denial of others. Evidently, the state's position is that Islam can be used as powerful glue against disparate ethnic groups.

Many saw a very strong association between the state and religion. Clearly, Pakistan's identity has a strong hold with

Islam as the state's religion. And it started from day one, when the Objectives Resolution was passed, and was then peddled by successive governments, civilian and military alike. The state's embrace of Islam, as per this argument, was result of societal needs. In fact, religious exclusivism was so internalized that by the time the Independence struggle started, there was no need of reminding people much that Muslims are different from Hindus.

- But not all agree without rightly pointing at religious ideals, arguing that Islam has praised diversity and dialogue. Quran itself mentions that Allah created humans in different categories so that they can identify themselves.

The problem was less about what Islam says and more about what who says on behalf of Islam. Most of the contested explanations have come from political Islamists, whose core concerns are laden with political jargon like domination and power. The issue of identity crisis largely comes from political Islamists, who literally applied Islamic theology in their work. State relied on political Islamists. The state's reliance on political Islamists was a marriage of convenience.

Why state borrowed the concept of political Islam? Since inception of the country, the state authorities needed a common thread to stitch the various groups together, which they thought may end up dividing the country. A state created in the name of Islam has all the more reasons to fall back to such reasoning. State's own sense of insecurity from archrival India saw it fall to Islam, due to which relations with India came to be seen through a civilizational prism.

- One problem participants admitted was that the role of religion did not end with Muslims versus the rest. Internally too, there have been sectarian differences which came to the fore with time.

Participants were asked about how students of Madrassah

think of in terms of identity. They said that while on surface, they think all are equal, as much Pakistani and Muslims as other, in reality, they fall for sectarian beliefs, and think that those who subscribe to their views are better. This way, they face more issues of identity crisis and acceptance than others. According to a PIPS study, most of the messages being indoctrinated to madrassah students instilled a sense of superiority among them.

- Irrespective of how religion came in the formation of identity, it has been here, and if there is any way to understand the impact, better ask those who are not from the same faith.

For one, religious minorities are a key group who complain of being shunted out from not only state affairs, but also societal discourse. Too much religiosity, and Islam-Pakistan link, excludes non-Muslims from day-to-day conversations. It is as if non-Muslims are not around. Expressing thoughts in the same strain, one participant said, “We fear that if we express our identity, we will be victimized.”

Another impact of this approach has been that religious identity has been taken as antithesis of the ethnic one. Ethnic ones are presented as more secular, which is understood as anti-religion. Ethnic parties are accused of links with “Hindu” India, in response to which Islamic parties are supported. This happens despite the fact that even in those parts of the country where ethnic identity is given consideration, religious discourse is a norm for its practical utility.



## COMMENT

### *Sect-based identities to sectarianism*

PIPS REPORT

The term 'sect' is often translated into both *firqa* and *maslak*. While *maslak* is more positive and points to an intellectual effort behind, the word *firqa*, with its political motives, invites division and negativities.

Unlike many other countries in the Muslim world, in particular the Middle East, Pakistan has a diverse sectarian population. Resultantly, sectarian communities, which are smaller in number such as the Shias, are the first to face the brunt of sectarianism. It then spirals in an unending quest of providing other wrongs. Competition among these groups, especially as between Sunnis and Shias, or Deobandi and Barelvi, further narrows their worldviews, putting pressure on society, politics and state in general.

Resultantly, sectarian and faith-based discrimination have gradually been penetrating in individual attitudes and behaviours. Many complain of sect-based group thinking in various sectors of the society, including professional bodies like media and state institutions. Colleagues align with each other on sectarian lines; even if they don't do, others perceive so.

(Extracted from “*Pakistan’s Sectarian Mire & the Way Forward*”, 2019)

*SECTION V*

*Society and identity*



- Many participants argued that the issue of identity is a society's problem – the society is responsible for crisis and the society can help overcome it. Religious justifications are espoused by people on the basis of their circumstances. State functionaries are also influenced by the people around them, especially in democratic regimes.
- At a more national level, majoritarian identity or nationalism is being imposed, which tilts towards the most-populous province (Punjab) and largest religion (Islam). This is something that has clearly come from the people, the society.
- At national level, the acceptable identity combination is of being Sunni Muslim, Punjabi, having certain educational background, and detesting India. Some alleged that even attempts are made to prove that they are in the majority. Non-Muslims also asked as to why are the religion-wise findings of census not being released.
- One result of this is that the society's weaker identities were the most bitter in their complaints. They said not only the state but the larger reaction of society has been dismissive towards them.
- Specifically on religious identity, Islam itself cannot be singled out. For, throughout Muslim history, there are many examples of Christians, Jews, and Hindus coexisting peacefully with Muslims in different regions. If there are problems in recent times, it is because of the general societal makeup.
- Same can be said of the Constitution, which has many clauses on fundamental human rights, albeit with limitations. Problem is those limitations are invoked not necessarily automatically, but by other people.
- As per this line of reasoning, there is a sense of domination among all ethnic groups. The issue is not that smaller ethnic or religious identities are not given space. The issue is that there is a sense of domination among all. When the name of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was being reconsidered, the

concerns of Hazara region, where Pashto-speakers are not in majority, was completely set aside.

In our country, rights based movements in smaller provinces talk of their rights, but are least bothered about the rights of other smaller groups. When in Balochistan, groups attack Punjabis, no one is bothered to take to the street. The issue of identity, it seems, was never about equality, but about racing ahead of others.

- Similarly, even in sub-provincial levels, different groups try to dominate each other. In villages and towns, people tend to feel insecure from locals belonging to certain identity groups. Some castes are looked down at while others are mocked. This caste association is so important that people even change their name to hide their caste identity.
- Society's attitude towards each other is selective too. Constitutional obligations are followed in theory, not practice. While we all like to agree that all are equal and should accept each other, in practice, we do not do that. "Our acceptance of each other is verbal only," one participant stated. There is a desire that one is followed by others. "When religious minorities are killed, we say well we are also killed. Similarly, when they talk of discrimination, we say everyone is being discriminated against", this is how our society's responses have been.
- That is why one of the negative facets of identity representation is that people tend to take one's identity as superior and others as inferior by even going to the extent of excluding them. There is thus excessive usage of terms like "traitor" or "infidel" for those with divergent views.
- Societal attitudes, surely feed on the divisive politics and inequality. At the same time, there is too little interaction among people in the same country. They do not know how to interact with each other. The way out, they said, is teaching how to live in a multi-cultural society.

- Identities are also linked to social benefits or a sense of security. People get comfortable in their group identities, but if those identities are at loggerheads with other group identities, that gets reflected in the individual's behavior. In Pakistan, conflict or insecurity is mostly of group identities, rather than an individual's.
- Political parties can be a good outlet for identity-based catharsis. But due to a variety of reasons, parties are weak and struggling for their own survival. Identity-based politics, on the other hand, is rising, with people affiliated with sectarian and ethnic parties – clearly showing where the society is headed. But even parties who derive vote on identity often end up talking power politics, rather than identity issues. Social reforms are missing in such parties.
- Outside parliament, three broad political movements in the country are: Islamic movement, Balochistan movement, and Pashtun movement. The causes of these are entirely different. While to the adherents of these movements, they want to flag their demands, but to their critics, they are sowing seeds of discontent.
- There is no proper link between the society and the state. Society's representatives have not been heard of. Even parliaments are set aside, that is why the social processes do not arrive at any conclusion. Voices are heard, but solutions are not, resulting in social cleavages.
- On the positive side, some said, especially from Peshawar, that identity can also give a sense of empowerment especially to vulnerable communities.

## COMMENT

### ***“Azad Kashmir”: At Whims of Central Authorities –***

**BY ERSHAD MAHMUD**

In more than one ways, the identity of AJ&K, or Azad Kashmiris, has revolved around conflict.

This identity has come out the conflict in Kashmir. It is a conflict that sits at the centre of Pakistan-India dispute. It is often said that the future of Kashmiris depend on the relations between the two countries. True, the question of Kashmir is also important for the identities of the two countries: for Pakistan, to prove its Islamic credentials; for India, its secular makeup.

Nonetheless, this is just one aspect of identity. What this debate ignores is Kashmir's own identity. Historically stating, there wasn't any singular, compact, standalone identity of the people of what is known as Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The term “Azad Jammu and Kashmir” refers to the more than 13,297 sq. km of land that became part of Pakistan. There is other part too, occupied by India. It was only after 1947 that Kashmiris got straddled on different sides of what is now the Line of Control. Furthermore, Kashmiris on both sides have referred to themselves as Poonchi, Pahari, Kashmiri and Jammuites. When AJ&K became part of Pakistan, a common nomenclature to represent them was missing.

But since 1947, efforts have been initiated to shape a compact identity for AJ&K. In Kashmir, the discourse towards identity started in late 1950's, largely led by

nationalist politics in the region. This nationalist discourse, however, spanned the administrative territory of AJ&K, and included the Indian-occupied Kashmir too. Those behind it strengthened the cause of self-determination, without taking cue from one state or another. It created a Kashmir-centric narrative, inspiring the growth of nationalist political and cultural organizations.

Today, the discourse around this “Kashmiri identity” has become so entrenched that it has become our immediate identification sign. Today, a sizeable constituency holds this common Kashmiri identity, very dear. On the other spectrum are those who believe in a more Islamic orientation of Kashmir. This political fault-line is evident in every sphere of life, in the lives of students and their politics.

This identity, ironically, does not include Gilgit Baltistan, which otherwise was part of the princely state of Kashmir, a precursor of AJ&K. GB culture is different than AJ&K’s, too.

And yet, AJ&K cannot escape the original shadow of conflict. In AJ&K, there are those who do not want to lose GB. When the PPP government announced a special package for GB in 2008, it generated criticism in AJ&K, where it was alleged that the centre was preparing grounds to provincialize Gilgit Baltistan. Locals complain that if AJ&K is a disputed territory, and people are denied many rights citing same justifications, why deciding the fate of GB then? The people of Jammu and Kashmir have never been against the empowerment of GB, but they wonder why they should remain at the whim of the central governments and even parties. This is their core identity issue.



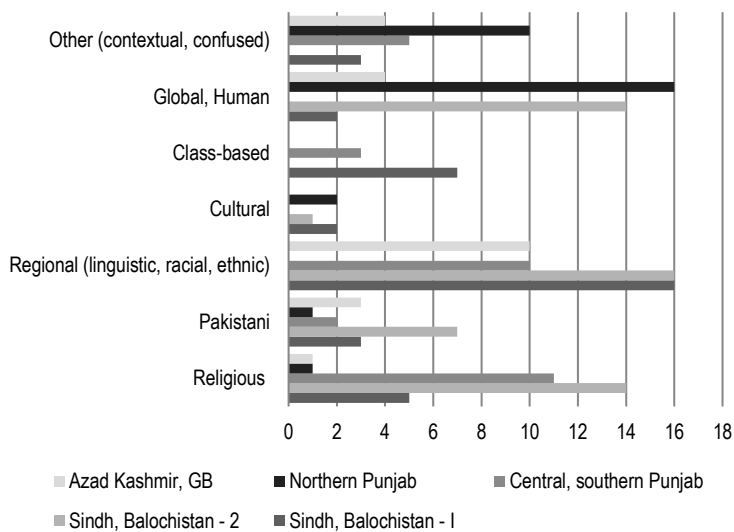
### ***Major identity groups and their issues***

- Participants from smaller provinces often say that they call for regional or linguistic identities, saying that they cannot change it, that's why. Even religion, some said, cannot be changed, but ethnic identity cannot be changed at all. There is thus a sense of permanence to it. "We give importance to natural identities. Other identities are important too, but they do not take precedence over regional or linguistic identities", one said.

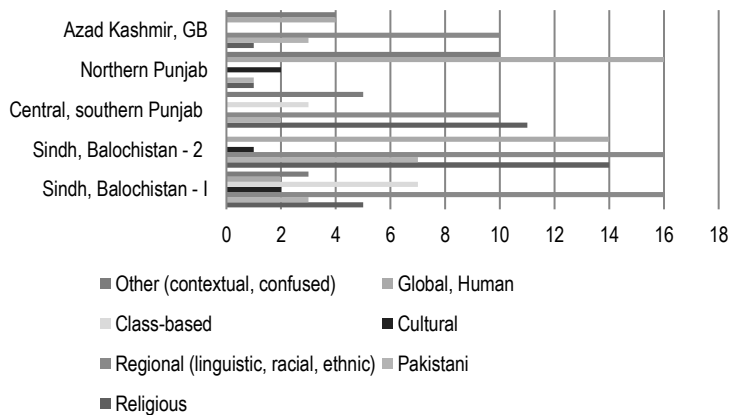
<i>Balochistan</i>	Most of them talked about their ethnic (Baloch) identity, saying to them, identity is a matter of life and death. There are fears that the very Baloch identity is under threat, either by becoming a minority or as a result of the on-going conflict. There are also complaints of being stopped and harassed, again eliciting questions over why their identity is being profiled.
<i>Punjab</i>	<p>Responses from Punjab have been mixed. From northern Punjab, people talked about national or religious identity, and some even talked about universal ones. But there were sceptical voices calling for giving prominence to Punjabi identity. They too were worried that their language is being excluded, and their introduction is being overtaken by religion.</p> <p>As to those from southern Punjab, there were talks of religious identity, which, to some, bordered on sectarian ones; as well as linguistic or ethnic identity.</p>
<i>Sindh</i>	Generally, the issue of language comes from Sindh in the discussion on the issue of identity, as participants take the ethnic line. But much of the conversation touched on

	religious identity too.
<i>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</i>	KP participants too touched on ethnic identity as well as religious ones. However, many participants from erstwhile tribal areas talked only of the ethnic identity. They also complained that they are being profiled for their identity.
<i>Azad Kashmir</i>	Azad Kashmir participants complained how their identity is viewed in relation to conflict with India, even though they are part of Pakistan. They also complained about absence of basic rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan, and also complained about their identity as wrongly shaped under the law.
<i>GilgitBaltistan</i>	As with Azad Kashmir, some GB participants talked of different identities, but others of association with Azad Kashmir. They said that they have been denied proper constitutional rights for long in the name of conflict with India.
<i>Non-Muslims</i>	Their complaints range from improper documentation to the lack of their number count to economic and political alienation. They argued religious identity is at the core of how they are seen.

### Prioritization of Identities? Theme-wise



### Prioritization of Identities? Region-wise



## COMMENT

### *Punjab's double dilemma*

BY ZAHID HASSAN

Like other provinces or ethnicities, Punjab and Punjabis too face the question of identity. But unlike others, they have historically shied from bringing that to the front. This dilemma in itself is at the core of identity struggle of Punjab.

The two words “Punjab” and “identity” recall many identity markers: language, culture, religion, lifestyle, tradition, agriculture, art, education, architecture, and so on. Each one of these is unique for Punjab, at times, more pronounced.

As with other provinces, Punjab faces questions about identity. There are concerns of the various Punjabi symbols being turned obsolete, of not being paid attention to.

What has happened is that Punjab's own Punjabi identity has been relegated to the back burner. Instead, the identities it (Punjab) embraced have become associated with it. The imprints of different identities in particular from Central Asia and Middle East are greatly felt by today's Punjab.

There is no harm in embracing different identities – such is the historical process. That is how identities evolve with time. But the problem comes with superficially superimposing other identities. This is what has happened with Punjabi's.

While other provinces can complain the same, an additional issue Punjab faces is that it is accused of leading

this process. And thus, it cannot bring to the forth its identity issues. So much so that in Punjab, when someone tries to revive part of its culture, that person is suspected of being rebellious in nature.

The clearest example of this is that if even attempts are made to make Punjabi language the official language there are accusations of conspiracy. In homes, middle-class Punjabis do not take pride in speaking the Punjabi language. Despite being the majority's language, it is being treated as if it is a minority group's language.

As a result, Punjab and Punjabis stay silent, out of expediency. It seems as if Punjab alone is to sacrifice its identity for the unity of the country.

*SECTION VI:*  
*Identity and state*



- The role of state repeatedly came in the discussion. Overwhelming, participants blamed the state for creating the identity crisis. Many expected the state to play a neutral role, should it want to end the identity-related issues. They said the state sided with some group or the other which resulted in the identity being excluded for others.
- When asked about how they think the state was responsible, most of them said that since the first day of Pakistan's creation, the state had deliberately tried to thrust a particular identity or nationalism on its citizens, which did not synchronize well with the varied groups of the country.
- Identity scholars pointed out that the "question of identity" in Pakistan has been among the first intellectual questions to be asked in Pakistan. Once the state was created, the question was how to glue the disparate groups and communities, who may have different experiences with the partition struggle and/or Islam. Some resorted to Islam, but after Pakistan was dismembered in 1971, the question reverberated, asking what now for a country in which Muslims could not live together.
- As per this thinking, it was a "conscious effort", in which civilian and military players alike led the nation-building process. Key characteristics of this made-up identity have been: rejection of India, adherence to political Islam, and Urdu as lingua franca – these three were seen as the gluing factor. Instead of treating nationalism as a process, it was imposed as an ideology.
- One essential feature was around security. Pakistan was an insecure state. It feared that smaller ethnic groups will divide the country, if they came to power. They were seen as being hand-in-glove with India. To stop that, religion was used to glue people together.
- The state wanted some glue precisely to counter the diversity, which it saw as discord. The conscious effort the state played had its reason: worried from neighbouring India with which Pakistan has fought several wars and from which it got separated, the state saw that the country's



diversity can be inimical for the country's cohesion. Thus, successive governments, in particular military, came up with unitary model of governance, with all powers centralized in the hands of one ruler. It was this thinking behind the One Unit formula of 1955 and the several presidential systems. The motto "Unity in Diversity" was set aside.

- Islam came handy because of the wave of political Islam, which borrowed the theological concepts of Islam. The country's separation from India and perpetual enmity with it is also justified in civilizational concept, with Islam being presented as what divides us from them. Even now, the issue of Kashmir dispute is as much about land and water, as it is about identity: Pakistan and India cannot let go of a Muslim state; Pakistan, for religious credentials, and India, for secular.
- This identity formation ignored regional identities, and minority religious ones too got discarded. Throughout the history of Pakistan, ethnic parties have complained that their identities are not accepted. A similar complaint actually spawned a movement in East Pakistan that snowballed into a separatist movement.
- Yet another stream of thought was that the state's questionable role was less of conscious effort, and more of structural defects out of a non-participatory governance system. Yes, the state favours one religion, but that was because the state is overwhelmingly of Muslim populace. Ditto about Punjab taking precedence in key decision-making bodies. The problem was more of majoritarian approach – something with which neighbouring countries like India have to struggle too.
- However, what it could not explain is how come Urdu then became the dominant national language. On this issue, it was said that the elite in the early-years of Pakistan's foundation actually paved the way for nation-building as per their own characteristics. Urdu itself was seen as close to

Islam.

- Many Punjabi participants rather complained that they were bracketed with state-imposed identity and Islam, even though they have their own identity. As discussed, many talked about religious identity, when asked which one do they prioritize. One noted that while hosting a seminar on Pakistani literature, he came to know much of the discussion was about Islamic literature. This also shows that the state identity formation has had a great impact on Punjab.
- At the same time, state's policies were also responsible for hitting at social cohesion. In this case, its role was more of a passive participant, than active. In early years, for instance, by embracing Islam or Urdu, the state ends up giving more space to certain groups at the cost of the other. In later years, the state's policy of whipping up anti-India sentiments and groups eats at the fabric of the society too, especially by making Hindus insecure. Thus when state functionaries assure people all are equal it is not absorbed easily.
- Absence of democracy further gave the state a primacy in the affairs of the society. There was no balance or channel to streamline the views of the society. Hence, democracy's role is critical. Democracy can streamline the voices, provided it is safe.
- One of the effects of the state's involvement is that the minority identities have often found themselves at the receiving end of the state. Ethnic political leaders and non-Muslim groups have often faced suspicion of having ulterior motives. Ethnic movements are in particular branded as traitorous. Bengali movement started with language, then evolved in nationalism, and culminated in the formation of a new state. Similarly, the Urdu-Mohajir rifts in Sindh were about their citizenry rights. Left unresolved, they evolved into violence.

- Social cohesion is easily damaged. Even negative attitude is condoned. What also emerged in the discussion was a lack of trust on state authorities.
- Surely, many argued that instead of pinpointing any single identity as being victim, actually all are at the receiving end. “State discriminates with all groups”, One said.
- But others disagree, saying state’s role is exaggerated. Society itself is to be blamed too. State functionaries have internalized the values prevalent among the people. State borrowed the good and bad from the society. Unfortunately, differences inside the society could not be channelized properly, as the existing channels, such as in the form of parliament, were set aside or not given due weightage.
- Lately, the country passed the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment, which was meant to correct the differences between central and provincial governments, with an additional result of addressing the issue of disparity. Participants hailed it, but expressed fears this amendment too is being rolled back.

<i><b>Key tools</b></i>	<i><b>Key arguments</b></i>
<i><b>Constitution or Social Contract</b></i>	<p>The various contracts, in particular Constitution and its amendment show the intention of the State.</p> <p>One, the Constitution’s religious bent shows which way the State is tilted. At the same time, the passage of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment shows that the State wants to correct historic wrongs committed against the provinces.</p> <p>Yet, the problem with the implementation of Constitution is largely derived from the state. Some of the basic curbs on fundamental human rights have come not</p>

	necessarily from society, but from the state institutions filing petitions against groups and citizens.
<b><i>State institutions</i></b>	<p>A segment of participants argued that when someone talks about state, one should qualify what is meant by that. They argued that the supreme bodies of the state, such as Parliament, could not even ensure its survival, what to talk of identities. To them, certain institutions were equated with the state. People have lately faced less problems from rival political groups and more from such institutions.</p> <p>Another argument was that state institutions are not necessarily fairly representatives of all identities, and hence the interests and fears of those groups are not given adequate attention.</p>
<b><i>Political Islam</i></b>	Yet another way, the state's role with identity came forward was the way it advanced the political Islam to its end. It either came handy to civil and military rulers alike to consolidate power or glue people, or in the shape of a wave of political Islamism it made inroads in the state apparatus.
<b><i>Social conditioning</i></b>	The way the state conveys its message to the public matters too. Education here plays a critical role. The projected concept of religious minorities in our curriculum instils a sense of inferiority, and the language they use also has some reservations. However, in the curriculum, there is no concept of equality among religions.



*SECTION VII:*  
*Identity assertion*



## COMMENT

### *Minority in one's own province*

BY AKBAR NOTEZAI

To the Baloch, the question of identity is about their very existence. Already a small percentage of the total population of the country, they fear they are being deliberately outnumbered, resulting in the fears of extinction in the long run.

Their quintessential concern is this: their numerical strength is being reduced in the province named after them.

In addition to Baloch, the province has sizeable Pashtun presence in the north. These Pashtuns have been there for centuries, but lately, many Pashtuns have been migrating from “outside of the province”. Foremost of these are the Afghan refugees, mostly Pashtuns, who ends up merging with local populace. Baloch nationalists allege that these refugees have been populated to outnumber the Baloch.

The province is marked for several mega development initiatives especially under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Given that Baloch people lack technical skill, there is a fear that jobs will be doled out to those outside the province, further increasing the anxieties of Baloch political leadership.

These fears are more clearly expressed regarding Gwadar, a prized port of CPEC. That the government is planning to declare Gwadar a federal territory led credence to those worries. These development initiatives, without taking into consideration local leadership, it is feared, will turn Baloch into a minority not only in the port town but the



province at large.

Similarly, attempts are being made to pit Baloch against Brahvi, another linguistic group. It is now being said that the Baloch are different from Brahvi. This is despite the fact that with time, the interests of Baloch and Brahvi have grown to become similar – the two share the same culture, history, and boundaries. The end result of differentiating Baloch from the rest is of further decreasing their number. Already, neither Baloch nor Brahvi language is taught in the schools.

Pointedly, Baloch are in a significant number in the western part of Sindh and southern part of Punjab. With time, however, being part of those provinces, they have lost their identity markers such as language and culture. This much, however, is partly understandable, given how majority ethnic groups end up merging others inside it. (This however is not with all the groups.) But to the Baloch, it shows how they will be lost in history.

All these developments ignite the greater anxiety of Baloch populace – they are being turned into a “minority” in their own province. This fear sits at the center of emerging Baloch identity. Should the state desire to invest for the Baloch, it will have to come to grips with this identity question of the Baloch.

- The reason behind holding these dialogues was to understand the link of identities in the country with peace and security.
- Interestingly, to many who were vocal about identity, the entire issue was about survival. The trend was of linking identity to security and rights. Identity is a question of survival in Balochistan. "People from Balochistan are scared from attending such dialogues."
- This seemed more natural for the participants. The entire issue of identity is meaningless, if there is no issue of peace and rights. Otherwise, there would be least sensitivity towards identity. In the run-up to Independence, identity along religious lines became an issue for those who believe in the two-nation theory, which after all was linked to peace and rights. After partition, compared to Punjab, smaller provinces talk about their ethnic identity, because that is what is linked to their rights and security. On the other hand, Punjab is relatively secure, and there is hardly any violence over there. So they do not feel endangered.
- The critical issue here was about the rights movement changing into one of conflict. State functionaries are suspicious of identity movements, saying they are stoking conflict in the names of rights. Perhaps, the best known case is that of the Bengali separatist movement. If this was a movement of rights, why take arms against the state, goes the argument.
- Rights activists say that when it comes to ethnic movements, they have been pushed into taking arms. It is for the state how it responds to its demands.
- Similarly, identities also have contest with each other. Here, one scholar quoting Amarta Sen argued that while every person has multiple identities, it is the identity that the person adopts which leads to eruption of violence. A person can be a Sunni Muslim, Punjabi, Lahorite, a cricket lover all at the same time. But if this person opts for one identity alone, say cricket, it is obvious he will engage in confrontation with others who too believe in singular

identities dissimilar to cricket. One scholar argued that one's sense of superiority can lead to conflict.

- Even there, the state was not excused: State's inability to manage multiple identities can lead towards violence too. The issue is not about multiplicity or singularity, but how the identities are managed.
- To be sure, there can be mismatch between what one thinks and what others think about. This too can generate conflict.
- The idea is to teach students each one of them to have and celebrate these multiple identities. The way forward is shunning binary thinking in terms of identity. Identities should be celebrated.

As a way forward, it was said that the passion to accept multiple identities does not come automatically, but one has to make a conscious effort. Change can be brought in curriculum and training. But in our curriculum and training, that is not done.

### ***Group consciousness: Security, economy, and dignity***

- Three key causes that led people mobilize around their identity group were – sense of security, welfare and dignity. These are more broadly stated of as their human rights.
- A group's identity in the country has a direct link with its sense of security.

The issue of security is mostly with religious minorities, who feel insecure as who they are: Hazaras in Balochistan are even being killed for their looks. Such incidents automatically force them to rally with their fellow community members.

- Economy is important too: Identities that feel left out are essentially at the lowest rung of the society. Their areas are underdeveloped. These groups think they are being kept

this way, by a mix of policies. Thus, in Pakistan, identity issues will start to resolve, once all the groups start believing they are economically at par with each other.

Even at an individual's level, much of the confusion is linked to less economic opportunities for the youth. There are no career counselling services. They are confused about their identity. As a result, they face indecisiveness and lack of confidence.

More so, religious minorities face discrimination largely because of their economic background. One participant stated that, "Our social contract is such that ... if a Hindu becomes a millionaire, he manages to get some sort of social protection." Needless to say that many of the Hindu girls who are forcibly converted or Christians who are accused of blasphemy are from the lower strata of society within their groups.

There were, however, some sceptical voices who argued that economic status is not a result of one's identity but policy blunders. To them, the problem is not of identity, but of basic governance and economy. Those need to be taken care of. However, all agree that economic progress of all segments of society should be at the centre of any response from the state.

Yet interestingly, when participants were asked about the local-level problems they face back home, majority of the responses were those that can be termed as civic issues such as pertaining to clean water, education, health, population management, traffic, among others. This was followed by issues related to personal liberties such as freedom of expression and physical security. Strikingly, many talked about local level disputes in the shape of class differences or local mafias. Specific economic problems such as unemployment were identified by few participants. See table.

<i>Types of problems</i>	<i>Examples cited</i>
<b><i>Personal economic problems</i></b>	Unemployment, lack of opportunities, career counselling
<b><i>Local-level disputes</i></b>	Qabza groups/mafia, religious differences, local mafia, class divides
<b><i>Civic problems</i></b>	Unregulated traffic, Lack of clean water, education, health, drugs, urbanization, sewerage, population pressure, police, justice
<b><i>Liberty</i></b>	Personal freedom, freedom of expression, security checking, physical security, discrimination, feudal mind-set

- Human dignity also sits at the centre of identity assertion: Participants said that more than economics or security, it is One's dignity too that brings in One's identity consciousness.

Participants from tribal areas and Balochistan said they feel humiliated when they are stopped at check posts and asked to prove their identity, even though they are from the same land. Such measures were a trigger to ethnic identity movements over there.

Likewise, group members said a big segment of youth went for jihadist groups not necessarily by falling for extremist ideology, but were awed by the stature of jihadis, and wanted that they too should be seen that way. The desire for power and prestige in their local areas is so pronounced that these youngsters were suffering from identity crisis about themselves.

## COMMENT

### *Pashtun's rights-based struggle is long*

*KHADIM HUSSAIN*

The core elements of Pashtun identity are about their cultural, social, political and economic rights. Even language and ethnicity, often considered as top identity markers, have never been at the core of Pashtun identity.

That is why historically, the Pashtun nationalist movements have demanded federal parliamentary democracy, maximum autonomy for federating units, parliamentary supremacy, equitable share in different resources like divisible pool or water, and many other rights from the central government. Even in public imagination, they have been associated with changing name of the province to a more Pashtun-centric name or merging the erstwhile tribal areas into the adjacent KP – both issues were raised in the context of rights.

These demands have served as bedrock on which the current Pashtun upsurge is built. At its core, Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) is seeking rights against the misguided foreign policy that launched private militias, whose offshoots ended up taking on tolls inside, most notably Pashtun area. If there is one phenomenon around which the entire Pashtun identity is being built, it is to deflect the impact of terrorism and counter-terrorism in the Pashtun-dominated regions.

Another unique feature about Pashtun identity's consciousness its rights-based movements have never been constructed in opposition to "other" community. The larger trend is of living "with the other."

In their struggle for rights, they have incorporated all other ethnic and linguistic identities in their fold internally, which makes them inclusive. At the same time, they have formed alliances "outside" – that is, with non-Pashtun parties and individuals, making them extrovert too. This can be seen as much as in the history of traditional Pashtun parties as in the newer youth-centric movement.

## COMMENT

### *Sindh's multi-fold identity woes*

SOHAIL SANGI

Sindhis are very touchy about their identity. Their fears are not one but many, not imaginary but have experienced.

Sindh struggle to retain distinct administrative struggle is one hundred years old. Before partition, one of the core demands was to separate Sindh from Bombay Presidency (province), a demand made part of Quaid-e-Azam's famed fourteen points too. This paid off in 1936, when the province acquired its separate status, with Karachi as capital.

Post-partition, Sindh's administrative solidarity pivoted around what will become of Karachi. The city was "taken away" from Sindh by making it capital of the new state of Pakistan. It remained so, until Islamabad was made new capital in 1960s. But since 1980s, the calls for making Karachi a separate province have further caused a stir in Sindh's identity quest.

As with Balochistan, one of the creeping fears of Sindhis is of being turned into minority in their own province. Sindh readily embraced the huge influx of migrants from India after partition. Construction of barrages along the Indus River further attracted the wealthy to settle in Sindh. The dismemberment of East Pakistan spawned another flurry of people in Karachi. Lately, growing insecurity in Afghanistan and Pakistan's tribal areas resulted in the most recent, ongoing migration to Sindh.

In Sindh, identity markers like language and culture are symbols of power and politics. Take language. When Ayub



regime reduced the status of Sindhi language, a wide movement started off. Even Bhutto's move to restore Sindhi as official language saw strident resistance, which he bypassed by passing ordinance. Presently, a bill declaring Sindhi (and other regional languages) as national languages is pending in the parliament. Sindh is the only province where signboards are displayed in Sindhi language (other than Urdu and English). Similarly, Sindhi Cultural Day is celebrated with great verve every December.

Sindh is a land of resources too, and is wary of any exploitation. The mighty Indus that traverses through it not only nourish the population but also gives the province its very name. That is why Sindh's voice for judicious distribution of resources is echoes loudly.

### ***Global context of identity assertion***

- The issue of identity has a global dimension, too. Identity politics inside the country cannot be separated from the one outside. The world over, there is a rise in identity-based politics, with groups asserting themselves on the basis of their faith, ethnicity, and nationhood. The demand for dignity, or being treated fairly, is at the centre-stage of this global phenomenon.
- In the western world, much of this demand of being treated properly is traced to inequality resulting from globalization. In an interconnected world, there are losers and winners, and losers, they say, are asserting themselves now. On the other spectrum are those who believe in the concept of global citizenship.
- Pakistan cannot escape these debates. Too many intellectuals see themselves as part of global citizenry, who see themselves as divergent from those living in narrow silos. The difference is, Pakistan was never much connected with rest of the world. It is even isolated from its neighbourhood, with which it otherwise shares culture and history. South Asia is one of the least integrated regions of the world. Yet, there are people who want to go for a more transnational identity and even a global one. In the dialogues, however, hardly anyone talked about South Asian identity, but some did mention their global associations.

### ***Impact on Youth***

Below were some of the responses of how youth feel about identity crisis:

<b><i>Isolated</i></b>	Inability to communicate with each other, inability to associate with diversity	<b><i>Negative</i></b>
<b><i>Powerless</i></b>	Inability to participate in	<b><i>Negative</i></b>

	decision-making	
<b><i>Confused</i></b>	Unable to decide right from wrong, good from bad	<i>Neutral</i>
<b><i>Disturbed (conflict-affected areas)</i></b>	Psychological disorders, lack of trust, vengeful, hurt	<i>Negative</i>
<b><i>Disoriented</i></b>	Unable to chart what to do in the future – where to stay, what to do, study, where/how to work	<i>Negative</i>
<b><i>Critically aware</i></b>	Start questioning themselves, about their identity, resulting in critical thinking	<i>Positive</i>
<b><i>Politically engaged</i></b>	Start joining identity movements, seeking rights	<i>Positive</i>
<b><i>Rebellious</i></b>	Some to the extent of taking arms to assert their identity	<i>Negative</i>
<b><i>Escape</i></b>	Desire to go abroad, largely, for economic and security reasons	<i>Negative</i>

When youth were asked about the reasons for going abroad, the top-most answers were for effectively dealing with economy and security issues. Many linked the two, saying one feeds into the other.

Strikingly, several participants disagreed if economy and security alone are responsible, saying that freedom of expression is a top-most concern for many who otherwise have better opportunities here.

*ANNEX-1*

*List of participants of the  
dialogues*



***First Identity dialogue, held on 03 March 2019 (KP including former tribal areas)***

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
1	Sajjad Ali	Peshawar Today
2	Mr. Abdur Rehman	Islamic Center
3	Dr. Khadija Aziz	Assistant Professor
4	Noreen Naz	Teacher
5	Sardar Khan	Novelist
6	Dr. Nafi Gul	Teacher
7	M. Waqas	Student leader, FATA University
8	Hanif Wazir	Student, leader/President/ RANNA Student Organization
9	Syed Misbah Noor	Provincial President KPK-Mustafvi Students Movement
10	Mujeeb-ur-Rehman	Teacher
11	Tahir Khan	Professor
12	Safdar Dawar	Journalist
13	M. Israr Madani	IRCRA
14	Mujahid Torwali	Writer IBT
15	Aftab Ahmed	Program Director IBT, social activist, writer and researcher
16	Abid Khan	FATA youth /UN
17	Nisha Kaur	K.K and Faith Friends
18	Kayenat Hameed	Project coordinator at Impact Dynamics/Book Author
19	Salma Bibi	Aware Girls
20	Kifayatullah	Sports Secretary Youth Parliament
21	Reena Patrick	Faith Friends DOP
22	Muhammad Sabir	Teacher Hazara University

*List of Trainers / Speakers and Participants of 6 Identity Dialogues*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
23	Syed Usman Badshah Barelvi	Scholar
24	Asadullah Jaan	Student/NUML
25	Allama Ihsanullah	Shia/ Jamia Shaheed
26	Syed Zakiul Hasan	Jamia Shaheed
27	M. Idress Awan	Advocate/ Human rights defender
28	M. Shafeequr Rehman	Phd Scholar/Asst Professor
29	Mamoon Akhtar	Journalist
30	Tahira Kaleem	The Enlight Lab
31	Raj Muhammad Khan	GSSC Peshawar

***Second Identity dialogue, held on 06 March 2019 (Punjab (Central & Southern Punjab groups)***

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
1	Dr. Riffat Iqbal	Professor/Bahauddin Zakariya University
2	Neelam Nisar	University of Education
3	Saira Rashad	Government Post-Graduate College (Lecturer)
4	Muhammad Jawad	Professor/Punjab University
5	M. Ayaz Naseem Phel	Lecturer/Concordia University
6	Lala Chaman Lal	Minority Rights Activist
7	Mazhar Javed	Government Post Graduate College (Assistant Professor)
8	Rai Haq Nawaz	Lawyer, Political Activist
9	Zari Jalal	Journalist/Dawn
10	Sher Ali	Journalist/The News
11	Ramesh Ram	Khwaja Fareed

*List of Trainers / Speakers and Participants of 6 Identity Dialogues*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
		Government Post-graduate College (Lecturer)
12	Zia Naqshbandi	Jamia Naeemia (Religious Scholar)
13	Shaukat Hayat Khan Daha	COMSATS (Lecturer)
14	Zahid Hassan	Research Associate, LUMS
15	Malik Muhammad Shaaban	Assistant Director, Labor Welfare Division
16	Haider Butt (referred by Ammar Jan)	Young Lawyer
17	Mohiba Ahmad (referred by Ammar Jan)	Young Activist
18	Maulana Muhammad Umar Qasmi	Religious Scholar
19	Waseem Nasir	Journalist (Dunya News)
20	Mirza Rajab Ali	Journalist (Geo News)
21	Mehboob Tabish	Saraiki poet, Author
22	Ali Raza	Chairperson Youth Inspiring Community
23	Muhammad Usman Tahir	Religious Scholar
24	Adeel-ur-Rehman	Poet
25	Miss Shania Asher	HFO
26	Ms. Sana Batool	Dunkin Donuts
27	Sabookh Syed	Journalist/IBC Urdu



***Third Identity dialogue, held on 12 March 2019 (Sindh and Balochistan groups)***

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
1	Dr. Riaz Sheikh	SZABIST (Professor)
2	Dr. Bela Nawaz	IQRA & Karachi University (Professor)
3	Steve Azarsh	Beaconhouse School System/teacher
4	Shehnaz Bano	GBPS (Lecturer)
5	Aaliya Irum	Government Girls College (Lecturer)
6	Manzoor Sheikh	Expert on Sindh Social Issues
7	Syed Ahmad Binori	Religious Scholar
8	Hanan Mario	University of Sindh
9	Fida-ur-Rehman	University College of Zhob (Lecturer)
10	Deepak Kumar	Teacher Hazara School
11	Raheem Alizai	University of Balochistan
12	Naheed Khan	Government Girls College (Assistant Professor)
13	Saima Ambreen Nagi	Government Girls College (Cantt.) (Lecturer)
14	Sanwal Thebo	Government Boys Divisional College (Lecturer)
15	Shehzada Zulfiqar	Journalist
16	Dost Muhammad	National Youth Organization
17	Sadiq Batozai	Runs a Youth Project
18	Abdul Momin	Religious Scholar
19	Saad Ullah Dehwar	Progressive Youth Forum
20	Rubina Zehri	Young Video Blogger
21	Zara Mariam	Behria University

*List of Trainers / Speakers and Participants of 6 Identity Dialogues*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
22	Ghulam Azam Dashti	General Secretary, Al-Khidmat Foundation
23	Nasreen Khuhro	GGC (Lecturer)
24	Shams-ud-Din	Religious Scholar
25	Ali Arqam	Newsline (Magazine)
26	Hafsa Noor	Young Blogger
27	Aamir Mughal	Social Media Activist
28	Khurram Suhail	Writer
29	Shazer John	Minority Rights Activist
30	Ahmed Somro	Lecturer Govt Arts and Commerce
31	Shamaon	Govt School
32	Mudassir Hussain	Lawyer

***Fourth Identity dialogue, held on 13 March 2019 (Sindh and Balochistan groups)***

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
1	Behram Khan	Journalist
2	Fayyaz Naich	Journalist /Sindh TV
3	Riaz Sohail	Journalist/BBC
4	Allama Akbar Zahidi	Religious Scholar (Shia)
5	Waris Ali Shah	Sindh university
6	Huma Raisani	Owner, Jalwan Law College
7	Daryan Khatoon Memon	Government Girls Secondary School (Lecturer)
8	Basharat Ullah	University College of Zhob (Lecturer)
9	M. Ashraf Khan	Youth Activist
10	Muzammil Shaikh	Writer, Medical Doctor
11	Tayyab Yallanzai	Noshki Press Club

*List of Trainers / Speakers and Participants of 6 Identity Dialogues*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
12	Sarang Baloch	Social Activist
13	Ms Madiha	Aas Research Foundation (Researcher)
14	Aleem Rehmani	Religious Scholar (Shia)
15	Maulana Fareed Qadri	Religious Scholar (Barelvi)
16	Ishfaq Mastoi	Community Development Foundation / Youth Activist
17	Mukesh Meghwar	Advocate / Human Rights' Activist
18	Ram Kohli	Advocate / Political Activist
19	Mohan Meghwar	Human Rights' Activist
20	Shankar Meghwar	Minority Rights' Activist
21	Mufti Sajjad Madani	Religious Scholar
22	Saba Hussain	Karachi University (Youth Activist)
23	Faheem Patel	Dawn Urdu
24	Waqar Muhammed Khan	Dawn Urdu
25	Noorul Huda Shaheen	Blogger
26	Dr. Farooq Haseeb	Principal Nusrat Bhutto Govt. Degree College
27	Dr. Amir Zrin	Lecture Nusrat Bhutto Govt. Degree College
28	Mrs Shehnaz Mazher	Director Physical Education Girls College
29	Mrs Asma Rafeeq	Lecturer Khursheed Govt. Girls Degree College
30	Dr. Sanam Lateef	Lecturer Khursheed Govt. Girls Degree College
31	Fakhra Mubarak	Lecturer English Govt. Girls Degree College
32	Mrs. Naheed	Lecturer Urdu
33	Mrs. Bilqees	Lecturer Govt. Girls

*List of Trainers / Speakers and Participants of 6 Identity Dialogues*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
		Degree College
34	Mrs Sauda	Lecturer Govt Girls Degree College
35	Muhammed Murad	ZABIST, Student Social Sciences
36	Syed Ali Shah	Lecturer, Zabist
37	Imran Alam	Zabist
38	Rohan Ahmed	Sama Digital

***Fifth Identity dialogue, held on 16 April 2019 (Central & Northern Punjab groups)***

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1	Safdar Iqbal shaheen	Assistant Prof, GDC BhoaAsal
2	Sadia Bashir	GDC for Women PhaliaMandiBahauddin
3	Khurram Shahzad	Teacher, chinyot college Jhang,
4	Syed Muhammad Raza	Student IR Department GCU
5	Hina Tahir	Teacher
6	Dr. Syed Muhammad Hussain Kazmi	Govt. Islamia College Chinyot
7	Muhammad Nasir	Assit prof. Govt. Islamia College Chinyot
8	Sartaj Fakhar Jilani	Assistant prof. Eng literature GCW Gujranwala
9	Hamza Abid	Shari'ah& Law IIUI, Researcher / writer
10	Syed Asad Ali Kazmi (Fatmi)	Artist\ writer
11	Amjad Islam	Member of International Marxists tendencies

*List of Trainers / Speakers and Participants of 6 Identity Dialogues*

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
12	Umar Waqas	Researcher\ Religious Scholar
13	Maleeha Sattar	PHD Research Scholar (Social Sciences)
14	Akhlaq Hussian Joiya	Religious Scholar (Shia community)
15	Ammar Yasir	Former Vice President of Character-building society (established by NAB) VF PU
16	Rafiq Shinvari	Religious Scholar (Deoband)
17	Usman Rimzi	Lecturer University of Central Punjab
18	Amir Hayat	Lecturer political Science, Shabaz Sharif College, Rawalpindi
19	Naseer Ahmad	Assistant prof, govt degree college, Rawalpindi
20	M. Yahya Maqbool	AL-Karam Foundation
21	Shahid Anwar	Govt. College Rehmatabad, Rawalpindi
22	Waqas Khan	Researcher Almarid
23	Robin Daud	Minority Rights Activist
24	Jamshed Iqbal	Pakistan Rawadari Tehreek
25	Abdullah Dayo	Civil Society member/FES
26	Imran Mukhtar	Journalist
27	Abid Siyal	Professor/NUML
28	Dr. Ravish Nadeem	IIUI
29	Rashad Bukhari	Chairman/Civil society member

***Sixth Identity dialogue, held on 17 April 2019 (Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir)***

<b>No</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
1	Javed Iqbal	Journalist/ GB
2	Hidayat Shah	Journalist
3	Muhammad Naseem	Lecturer University of Baltistan, Skardu
4	Safeer Husain	Prof University of Baltistan
5	Nayyer Abbas	Research Scholar NUST, Visiting Lecture at Karakoram University
6	Yaqoob Alam	Youth Activist
7	Tahir Zaman	Film Maker
8	Qasim Naseem	Journalist/ GB
9	Khansa Batool	Teacher Mariam public school/
10	Abdul Rauf Abbasi	Lecturer/Muzaffarabad
11	Bilal Ayub	Lecturer History Dept, Govt. PGC Kotli
12	Babar Ayaz	Researcher National Assembly
13	Nasir Shafiq Mughal	Lecturer English AJK University /Muzaffarabad
14	Saad Abdullah	Research associate at QAU
15	Saeed Akhtar	Social Worker/Muzaffarabad
16	Mudassir Fida	Assistant Prof. Law AJK University
17	Usama bin Naseem	M. Phil Scholar (NUST)
18	Bashar Alawi	PhD Scholar Islamic Education.
19	Abdul Rehman	CEO/ KTV/Reporter Neo News form Sudhonti/AJK

*List of Trainers / Speakers and Participants of 6 Identity Dialogues*

<b>No</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
20	Faryal Riaz	Social activist Rawlakot
21	Numan Ayyub	Principal MFK community model School/Kotli
22	Shakeel Ahmad	Independent researcher /GB
23	Yasir Chattha	Lecture Islamabad Model College/ISB
24	Dr. Shahbaz Manj	Sargodha University/ ISB
25	Azam Khan	Columnist/ ISB
26	Wisi Baba (Mian Asif)	Journalist/ ISB
27	Ayzaz Syed	Journalist, Geo
28	Younis Qasmi	Member editorial board Tajziat

## *Image Gallery*





Image Gallery

***First Identity dialogue, held on 03 March 2019 (KP  
including former tribal areas)***



## Image Gallery



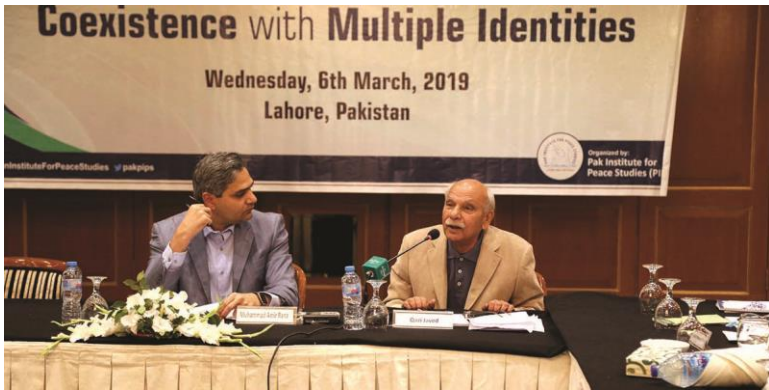
Image Gallery

***Second Identity dialogue, held on 06 March 2019 (Punjab  
(Central & Southern Punjab groups)***



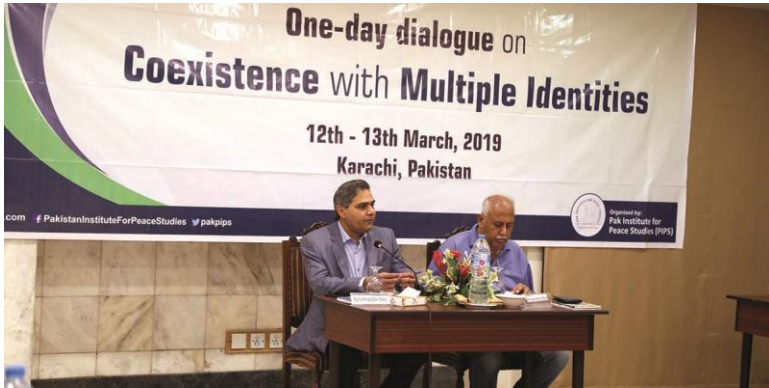


## Image Gallery



## Image Gallery

### ***Third Identity dialogue, held on 12 March 2019 (Sindh and Balochistan groups)***



## Image Gallery





Image Gallery

***Fourth Identity dialogue, held on 13 March 2019 (Sindh and Balochistan groups)***





## Image Gallery



Image Gallery

***Fifth Identity dialogue, held on 16 April 2019 (Central & Northern Punjab groups)***



## Image Gallery





Image Gallery

***Sixth Identity dialogue, held on 17 April 2019 (Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir)***



## Image Gallery



Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) is an independent think-tank committed to provide an in-depth understanding and objective analyses of regional and global issues. PIPS provides international strategic thinkers a forum to play an active role in understanding and researching real and perceived threats to regional and global peace and security. The objective is to engage leading regional and international strategic thinkers, academicians and media persons in pursuance and production of knowledge of national, regional and global security issues and to promote awareness about the importance of peace and democracy. The goal will be achieved through independent policy analysis, and collection, processing, interpretation and dissemination of information and skills/training.

PIPS carries out and disseminates policy analyses and research studies on the regional and global strategic issues such as conflict and development, political violence, religious extremism, ethnic strife, terrorism (including state terrorism), economics, governance and democracy, foreign relations, and cultural learning of policy-making processes. It also conducts dialogues, trainings and other educational programs for strengthening partnerships and resolving inter-state conflicts, and clashes between the government and the public. At the national level, the institute is dedicated to build a knowledge base for peace and enlightenment of the society. PIPS is building one of the largest database on peace and security issues at the regional level.

PIPS has also developed a vast regional and global network for information sharing and research on some of the key security issues facing Pakistan, which also have a profound impact on regional and global security.



Price 100/-

P.O.Box. 2110, Islamabad, Pakistan  
Tel: +92-51-8359475-6 Fax: +92-51-8359474  
Email: pips@pakpips.com