



RESEARCH PAPER

Emergence of Anti-American Sentiment in Pakistan after 9/11

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to analyze the phenomenon, causes of anti-Americanism after 9/11. This is a global phenomenon which cannot be linked with any specific state. Anti-American feeling is not against the people of the US (United States of America), but it is all about the policies taken by the US. It did not emerge at once but flourish with gradual development. After the incident of 9/11, policies taken by the US administration become the reason of hostile feelings not only in Pakistan but in many other Muslim states also. Major reasons of anti-American sentiment in Pakistan include the participation of Pakistan in war on terror, dual policy of America to achieve her interests, drone attacks, close collaboration with India and her intervening steps in social, political and economic spheres. Both governments should try to understand each other point of view. The sovereignty of Pakistan must be respected and the leadership of Pakistan tries to initiate steps to make Pakistan internally stable.

Keywords: Anti-Americanism, Intervention, Good Governance, 9/11 Incident

Introduction

Emergence of Anti-American sentiment in Pakistan after 9/11 is the topic of this research paper. Generally, this phenomenon depicts the hostility toward the United States (US). The prevailed hostility is not against American population but American administration's policies are the basic cause of this sentiment. After Second World War America emerged as a major power in the world scenario. The world was bipolar at that time. But after the disintegration of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) America emerged as the sole super power. A new world order was issued by the US and he started efforts to fulfill the hegemonic designs. During that period, America has adopted such policies which were not in the interest of many states. From this point, clash of interests start to evolve among different states (Muzaffar, et. al. 2017; Yilmaz, 2010)

Anti-Americanism is an international phenomenon which cannot be specified with any single state. After the incident of 9/11, this phenomenon increased sharply. The focus of this research study is on Pakistan. Different causes contribute toward the evolvement of this anti-American sentiment, are analyzed in this study.

The sentiment of anti-Americanism is developing in all over the world. Pakistan is also among those states where this sentiment is increasing. Majority of population believes that America is the worst enemy than India (Lieven, 2012). The study will provide an in-depth analysis of the causes those leads toward the emergence of anti-American sentiment in Pakistan. The findings of the research will be helpful for the policy makers of both countries to maintain friendly relations and to minimize misconceptions (Muzaffar, 2020).

This phenomenon is not easy to define as this is the most ignored scholarly area. The work done on the issue also lacks consensus. Different scholars think differently on this phenomenon. Although simply it can be described as Anti-Americanism is just a response of what America does around the world. It can also be taken as opposition to America. Richard Crockatt has written about this phenomenon as “like all essentially political terms, [anti-Americanism] proves difficult to define once you start peeling back the layers of meanings” (Crockatt, 2003).

Paul Hollander, used the term “to denote a particular mind-set, an attitude of distaste, aversion, or intense hostility the roots of which may be found in matters unrelated to the actual qualities or attributes of American society or the foreign policies of the United States” (Hollander, 1995).

Anti-Americanism has been defined as “any hostile act or expression that becomes part and parcel of an undifferentiated attack on the foreign policy, society, culture and values of the United States” (Blaydes & Linzer, 2012). This phenomenon also defined as “a psychological tendency to hold negative views of the United States and of American society in general” (Katzenstein & Keohane, 2007).

There are many major incidents, those become the reason of increase in this anti-American sentiment as ‘two events in the early twenty-first century have made anti-Americanism one of the central issue of our age: the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the Iraq war’ (O’Connor & Griffiths, 2007).

The focus of this study will be on the incident of 9/11 which incorporated a lot in watering this issue of anti-American sentiment. Merriam Webster has defined the phenomenon as ‘opposed or hostile to the people or the government policies of the United States’ but one thing must be clear that this hostile sentiment is not against American people but only American policies are under fire (Muzaffar, 2021).

Historical Background of anti-American Sentiment in Pakistan

Anti-American sentiment is an international phenomenon. It cannot be specified to some single state. After the disintegration of USSR, United States emerged as only super power in the world. These sentiments evolve in many states because of the US interest-centric policies.

Anti-American sentiment in the context of Pakistan is nothing new. It is deep rooted in the history of American role in Pakistan. After emerging as sovereign state, Pakistan decided to join American block. As the world was divided into two blocks during cold war; communist block was headed by Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and capitalist block was led by America. The relations of both countries remain stable in 1950s. While this stability of relations starts to deteriorate when US adopt the policy of supporting military regimes in Pakistan. During Indo-Pak wars 1965, 1971 America didn’t assist Pakistan. In 1980s America used Pakistan for its own purpose i.e. to disintegrate Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Hussain, 2005).

Other important element is her opposition to nuclear program, her political involvement in the elimination of Z. A. Bhutto government, economic sanctions on Pakistan for its nuclear pursuit, the famous threat of ‘hitting Pakistan to the stone age’, and the US anger over detention of Raymond Davis on murder charges. There prevails a long list of complaints that shape the adverse public perception towards United States. These all things show that the United States as a super power cares less for principles, rule of law and democratic values when it comes to protecting its own interests or citizens (Paul, 2014).

9/11 was the incident which vicissitudes the world's whole scenario. The US's world trade center and Pentagon was targeted by terrorists. This changed scenario also affects Pakistan and Pakistan was pressurized by US to support her policy on war against terror. This authoritative attitude of US toward Pakistan became the root cause of anti-American sentiment in Pakistan.

Causes of Anti-American Sentiment in Pakistan

Anti-American sentiment is not new for Pakistan. The major causes behind this anti-American sentiment can be analyzed as:

Participation in War on Terror

After the incident of 9/11 the anti-American sentiment got intensification in the world. Pakistan was also pressurized to join that war against terror. At that time military dictator was ruling Pakistan and in search of international legitimacy, he didn't take policy-makers into confidence and agrees to all terms and conditions offered by America. It is also said that Pakistan was left with no other option except to join that war as America defined terrorist state as those states that harbor the terrorism, those states support terrorist group and terrorist individuals would be declared as terrorist states (Hussain, 2009).

The US assumed her duty to take action against those states in order to make world a peaceful place to live. It is a hard fact that the US cannot win this war without the support of Pakistan. Pakistan's geographical proximity with Afghanistan made it more important for the United States.

Pakistan has to pay a huge cost of this war against terror. As Pakistan lost many military personals in this war, as well as huge burden on Pakistan's economy. Participation in this war against terror has created internal instability in Pakistan. Law and order situation deteriorated. Suicidal attacks have spoiled the image of Pakistan's society at global level. All these factors created the perception in masses that America is not our friend state but a worst enemy. This also shows the interventionist policy of US which follows on the name of moral values. The consequences or damages of this war against terror are much more as compared to the assistance provided to Pakistan (Hussain, 2009 & Muzaffar, 2020).

Drone Attacks

US took advantage by misusing her technological advancement. America has used her drone technology on Pakistan's tribal areas for a long period of time. The purpose behind those drone attacks was to kill those terrorist resides in tribal areas of Pakistan. US believe that these handfuls of militants are fighting against American motives. Amnesty international categorized this act of US as an illegal and against sovereignty of Pakistan. (Muzaffar, 2021). Drone attacks destructions beside casualties includes collapse of infrastructure, economic backwardness, barriers in front of education, and suppression policy caused mistrust, anger, revenge and hatred against ruling authority as well as America. Statistics shows that from 2005-2013, 286 drone attacks have been targeted in which 2594 people were killed and more than 300 people were injured (Kaltenthaler et. al., 2013).

Advisor to Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz reiterated once again that drone strikes in Pakistan were a violation of its sovereignty, had caused huge collateral damage and that Pakistan will continue to build international public opinion against them. Aziz certified the view that "drone attacks had violated tribal culture and America was fighting the wrong war against the wrong people with the wrong methods" (Ahmed, 2013). The federal government also showed reservations on drone attacks and

protest many times in front of America. Provincial governments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also show their point of view by very long 'dharna protest' and by blocking NATO supply route from that province (Ahmed, 2013).

It's the perception of majority that by drone strikes major casualties occur from civilian side and innocent people are killed more as compared to terrorists or extremists. But American figures show different results. Human basic rights were violated. This thing creates question mark on the reliability of US attempt to eliminate terrorism. This factor is also a very prominent cause of anti-Americanism in Pakistan's society.

Economic Crisis

The world is currently facing terrorism in different forms. After the 9/11 terrorist incident, the phenomenon of terrorism has abruptly changed the socio-economic and geopolitical situation of the world. Pakistan is also facing the danger of terrorism which is spoiling the country's social structure, economic development and political system. The acts of terrorism are threatening Pakistan's law and order situation, violating human rights of the citizens, damaging basic infrastructure and economic opportunities (Rafique, 2017).

The immediate costs of terrorist acts are loss of human lives, destruction of property and infrastructure and reduction of short-term economic activity. Additionally, terrorism creates uncertainty, reduces confidence and increases risk perceptions; leading to lower rates of investment and lower economic growth. In fact, Pakistan has not only lost precious lives and infrastructure; according to official estimates, it has also suffered a loss of around \$ 35-40 billion since 2001-2002 (Rafique, 2017).

The economic growth rate of Pakistan has decreased not because of global financial crisis but because of internal issues. The extremist or terrorist elements challenge the writ of government and create chaos and uncertain situation in state, which are harmful for business activities.

In Pakistan the rate of investment is falling and capital is flying from our state. Poor economies have negative impact on the standard of living as well as on health and education also. The budget of Pakistan goes to deficit because of deteriorated law and order situation. Revenue reserves are falling sharply. People see America as behind all these economic problems which became the reason of increase in anti-American sentiment in Pakistan (Rafique, 2017).

Social Crisis

The social setup of Pakistan is also disturbed by the American interventionist policies. The society of Pakistan is Muslim majority society and most of American policies are anti-Islam. Those are proving as a major cause of social division in Pakistan's society. In the perception of masses; America is targeting Islam with its policies. As her attack on Afghanistan, Iraq and its tense relations with Iran are clear example of American Anti-Islamic character. The United States represents a primary threat to Muslim society and is to blame for a variety of domestic and international political problems (Blaydes & Linzer, 2012).

American war against terror is also perceived as US war against Islam. America used to declare herself as the champion of basic human rights and at the same time by adopting anti-Islam policies the US negates her own tenet of human liberty and freedom to choose one's religion and live freely (Blaydes & Linzer, 2012).

The economic development is linked with social development. If economic situation of any state deteriorate then it also effects on its social scenario. Because of weak economic

condition, social problems as poverty and unemployment are evolving in our state. Socially people are also divided in many religious sects. After the incident of 9/11 religious extremist element increased sharply in our society. America provides aid to Pakistan on strict conditions. Sometime hidden military assistance was also given, which became the reason of institutional imbalance in Pakistan. Internal weak structure cannot resist against foreign pressure. Simply it is clear that anti-Islamic policies of the US have divided the society of Pakistan on many grounds (Rafique, 2017).

Political Crisis

The interventionist policies of the US into political affairs of state are also becoming the reason of anti-American sentiment in Pakistan. Every state gives priority to her national interest. The same case applies at the US and this country can do everything to achieve their targets. The major reason of anti-American sentiment is expansion of democratic agenda throughout the world to achieve its objectives (Hussain, 2009).

Democracy is a type of government which is better if evolve according to the norms, traditions, and historical context of any state. By other means imposing this agenda can create confusion and revolt situation as this happen in many Arab states (Sorensen, 2007).

The other thing which is very annoying about the US is that they are in favor of democratic system but most of the time it is observed that the US provide assistance to authoritarian regimes of the world to achieve her specific interests those cannot be fulfilled in the presence of democratic culture. Sometimes the US provides assistance to undemocratic forces to destabilize the system. In Pakistan military regimes were supported by the US and their analysis shows that they work according to the wishes of foreign agenda proposed by the US (Sorensen, 2007).

Myth and Reality of US Motives

The US motives and policies are not always much clear. There are some hidden objectives also. Its hypocrite behavior is one of the major reasons of anti-American sentiment in Pakistan. At one side the US talk about democracy, open system, human rights, and freedom of expression while on the other hand, US supported dictatorship in Pakistan always; never take sound strategy to help people of Kashmir and Palestine. So these double strategies for different perspectives are becoming the reason of anti-American sentiment (Hilali, 2017).

Different Surveys about Anti-American Sentiment

Anti-American sentiment is a broad phenomenon, and it cannot be only specified to Pakistan only. There are different surveys those show how sharply the image of US is tumbling. According to Pew Research Global Attitude Project, 74% of population in Pakistan calls America as an enemy (Fair et. al., 2014).

A global survey conducted by the Worldwide Independent Network and Gallup at the end of 2013 revealed strong animosity towards the role of US as the world's policeman. Citizens across over 60 nations were asked: "Which country do you think is the greatest threat to peace in the world today?" The US was at the top of list with 24% of people believing America to be the biggest danger to peace. Pakistan came second with 8% of the votes. These surveys show that anti-American sentiment is increasing day by day because of American policies (Fair et. al., 2015).

Conclusion

While concluding it can be stated that anti-American sentiment is not specific to only one or two states, but this sentiment is of global nature. This sentiment is increasing sharply. One thing must also be cleared that this anti-American sentiment is not against American people but this sentiment is against American administration policies. i.e. foreign policy with special reference. After the incident of 9/11 American hostility increased specially in Muslim countries because at that time American Policy was anti-Islamic in its nature. The relations between US and Pakistan have seen many fluctuations from the inception of Pakistan till date It is been observed that the relations of both countries based on mistrusts. Respect for sovereignty should be observed from the US side.

Recommendations

For the better execution of policies trustful relations are more helpful. So both states have to respect each other and try to eliminate misconceptions prevailed at both side.

1. The US should adopt a tribal approach to reconciliation. Use of Force cannot give desirable results. As tribal identity is far more deep-rooted in Pashtun society than Taliban identity, and thus tribes should be targeted for reconciliation rather than individual militants.
2. The US should adopt a more pragmatic tone when dealing with Pakistan.
3. Drone strikes in Pakistan by US must be eliminated as they are against sovereignty of Pakistan.
4. The US should contribute toward the stability of Pakistan, as Pakistan is the most important strategic ally of US. Trade opportunities must be given to Pakistan to improve its economic condition.
5. Pakistan should be more objective in policy making.
6. State priorities should be defined clearly to take action.
7. National interest should be the only objective of Pakistan's policy-makers.
8. Trade must be preferred over foreign aid.
9. Misperceptions prevailed among ruler and ruled must be eliminated. Truth must be told to nation for getting support on policies.
10. Good governance should be promoted.

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