Islamic Slogans in Pakistani Politics

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Abstract:

Slogan is a very useful tool to raise the voice of general public with regards to their demands and recognition of their right in a mass gathering. Slogans play a role of strong voice to highlight the pent up emotions of any community or group of likeminded people. Islamic slogans were extensively used in the Pakistan movement to motivate the Muslim community to come forward for the creation of Pakistan. Having inspired by the catchy slogan of Pakistan ka Matlab Kya La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ (What does Pakistan mean?... There is no God but Allah), many political parties has also used Islamic Slogans to gain popularity in the masses. This article analyse the role of Islamic Slogans in the politics of Pakistan and how Islamic Slogans affect the voting behaviour in electoral politics of Pakistan. Either any concrete effort was made to materialised the Islamic Slogan or these slogans were remain mere catchy words to gain the vote of the people who want Islam in the main stream politics in the country like Pakistan where a significant portion of population is illiterate and being exploited in the name of religion by the way of catchy Islamic Slogans.

Keywords: *Slogans, Islam, emotions, elections, political parties, impact, results.*

INTRODUCTION

The creation of Pakistan was the outcome of many contributory factors in which the most attractive and equally important factor was the use of popular and catchy Islamic slogans which had rejuvenating effects in mass mobilization. The general public was ready to sacrifice everything including their lives and property after hearing beautiful and catchy Islamic slogans.

Different Islamic slogans have always been used to raise the emotions of general public especially in large gathering. Pakistani politics has witnessed many popular and catchy Islamic slogans in the history of Pakistan. Slogans act as a means by which the general public may express their opinions on public issues. Bailey goes so far as to assert, "slogans or catch phrases are about the only medium through which large numbers of ordinary citizens can express their views personally and repeatedly for or against given candidates or propositions.[1]

History and definitions of Slogan

Dictionary dates the word 'slogan' back to the 16th century and attributes it Gaelic origins: sluagh-ghairm, from sluagh, 'army' + gairm, 'cry.' This means that originally the slogan was used as 'a battle cry' by the Celtic tribes in parts of Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man and it was meant to galvanize the members of a tribe or clan to fight fearlessly for its protection or the extension of its glory.[2] The linguist, William Safire in Safire's Political Dictionary gives an introductory definition of slogan as "a rallying cry; catch phrase; a brief message that crystallizes an idea, defines an issue, the best of which thrill, exhort, and inspire." Here Safire asserts a purpose for the slogan that captures its persuasive use within political society. To thrill, exhort, and inspire is at the heart of persuading an audience. To evoke these emotions is the start of persuasion. As such, the slogan was meant to focus the attention of the warriors and press them into action embodying several features: dynamism, spontaneity, and rhythm.[3] Barry defines a political slogan as "a catchword or rallying motto distinctly associated with a political party or other group." It is possible for slogans to transcend party lines and become adopted by the nation as a whole. While its origins might remain rooted in an event or administration, the most successful slogans need not be forever tied to a particular party.[4] In function, political slogans are typically a brief statement of a single idea" Brevity makes them" easy to remember and repeat. Slogans can come to characterize the ideas of those who use it. They become concise expressions of consent for a political action. By adopting a

[1]Thomas A. Bailey with Stephen M. Dobbs, *Voices of America: The Nation's Story in Slogans, Sayings and Songs*, (New York: TheFree Press, 1976) 501.
[2]Geoffrey Hare, "*Studying political slogans as communication*." *Francophonie: The French Journal of the Association for Language Learning* 3 (June 1991): 24.
[3]William Safire, *Safire '.s Political Dictionary 3d ed., An enlarged, up-to-date edition of The New Language of Politics* (New York and Toronto: Random House, 1978) 654.
[4]Herbert Barry III, *Politically Speaking*, ed. Ofer Feldman and Christ'l De Landtsheer (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998), p, 161.

slogan, the user is offering his or her approval of the action that it defines. A single slogan contrasts starkly with an entire multi-faceted political agenda. The slogan is a generalized conception of what may in reality be a complex political initiative.5

History of Slogans in Islam

The Islamic slogans play a key role during the elections and election campaigns to attract the voters. Political leaders and other Politicians use Islamic slogans to gain their personal goals. Historically, the slogans were used in the battle fields to boost up the moral the constabulary and get them ready to fight fearlessly against the enemy. Allah-Hu-Akbar الله أكبر is the most powerful, popular and frequently chanted slogan in every war against the non-Muslim and sometimes against their own Muslim brothers in wars or armed conflicts. The magic words of Allah-Hu-Akbar الله أكبر always proved very useful and equally effective in all circumstances regardless of the imminent defeat it rejuvenate the forces to fight back. In famous war of uhud the women of Quresh in the leadership of Hinda (wife of Abu Sufyan) chanted slogans like:[6]

نحن بنات طارق	We are the daughters of the stars of sky
نمشی علے النمارق	We walk on soft carpets
ان تقبلوانمانق	We will embrace you if you fight
او تبروانفارق	We will leave you if you retreat

These words played a significant role in the battle field which were culminate in the form of victory in the war. In the same way catchy and beautiful war slogans were the integral part of every war. The most of the wars in Islamic history were fought on the beautiful slogans of glory or supremacy of Islam over the territory of enemies. In modern period war is the last resort of any conflict and the whole world is in the search of peace among nations to resolve their outstanding and long standing issues. With the end of old war techniques, slogans find its survival in political arena. Now slogans are in best use of political activities and mass mobilization in the whole world.

Slogans in Politics

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Shibli Numani, *Seerat-un-Nabi*, Huzaifa Academy (Lahore 2000), 209.

phrases are about the only medium through which large numbers of ordinary citizens can express their views personally and repeatedly for or against given candidates or propositions. "[7] While it is to the merit of slogans that they at least encourage interest and participation in the political system, a negative implication of their use is that they do not foster in-depth knowledge of public issues. Several authors have pointed out that slogans may have detrimental effects on the public. "Catch phrases are undoubtedly foes of sober reasoning; they implant the comfortable but illusory feeling that the user is thinking when only mouthing."? "Most people would rather die than think. In fact some do."[8]

Slogans or catch phrases are almost invariable one sided, with little or no room for qualifiers or argument. They often contain untruth or half-truths. Because slogans generalize the idea in question, typically with the intent to evoke persuasive emotion from the listener, they encourage that a blind eye be turned towards the facts surrounding the issue. In this type of use, a slogan serves not only to generalize the matter at hand, but also as an "opiate for the conscience." For the listener, adopting the slogan serves as a substitute for mentally weighing the moral aspects of a political decision. The attractiveness of a slogan from a rhetorical standpoint does not determine its success with the public. Alliteration, a popular rhetorical tool within political slogans, often suggests by its presence, the absence of content: the less specific the idea, the larger the vocabulary a speech writer can select from in order to find a matching consonant.[9] Meaning is key to the success of slogans. Regardless of the pleasantries achieved through sloganeering, the message must be one of meaning and importance to achieve popular use and success. Slogans work better if they mean something.[10]

Emotions and Slogans

Emotions are attached with all human being and it plays a significant role in molding a situation into the favor of particular groups or nations. The relation between emotion and politics is deep rooted existing in all layers of relations at individual level, group level, community level and mass level. Politics is also an emotional activity. The role of emotions in politics is not a new phenomenon; it is only a rediscovery of process after decades of negligence. The Greek philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle have

[7] Thomas A. Bailey with Stephen M. Dobbs, *Voices of America: The Nation's Story in Slogans, Sayings and Songs*, (New York: The Free Press, 1976) 501.
[8] Bertrand Russell, qtd. in Bailey, *Voices of America*, (1931)502.
[9] Alliteration Abuse, *The Economist, (*15 January 1994), 20.
[10] Ibid,

described emotions as playing important role in political rhetoric and misleading the common people through demagogues. Machiavelli and Hobbes evaluated how emotion of love and fear influence power and Hume analyzed the impact of moral sentiments on human reason.[11] Emotions help to understand the way in which people construct their political attitudes, behavior, motivations, perceptions, intentions which have undeniable effects for democracy. People built their opinion and political behavior, likeness and dislike, selection and rejection not only through reasoning but also through emotions. Emotions appear first and come before cognition, thoughts and perceptions. Thus emotions are basis of an individual behavior. In politics, emotions appear as power and act as a determinant for political decision making process. On the basis of emotions an individual evaluates political leader and decides to vote in elections. A candidate with good character and reputation creates a good feeling of honor, respect, or hope while a politician with bad character and negative repute causes uneasiness, anger and irritation. Individual is the fabric of society and on the basis of these emotions, one elects or rejects a candidate in election and emotions becomes a determining feature of decision making process in electoral politics.[12]

Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ

Religious slogans were remained the centre of the politics even before the creation of Pakistan. A beautiful slogan Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ (What does Pakistan mean?... There is no God but Allah) was a couplet and political slogan coined in 1943 by Urdu poet Asghar Sodai.[13] Muhammad Asghar was the real name of Asghar Sodai, who lived in Sialkot and was educationist by profession. He was professor at Islamia College Sialkot and later on become principal of the same college. The Indian Nationalists used to ask the Muslim to make fun of them "What is the meaning of Pakistan" because they were unaware of the word Pakistan. But Asghar Sodai in 1944 recited his famous poem Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ and gave them the true meaning of Pakistan which becomes a most popular slogan for all Indian Muslims. The slogan became a battle cry and greeting for the Muslim League, which was struggling for an independent country for the

[11] Hobbes, T. *Leviathan*. London: (1968) Penguine Books 153.
[12] Marcus, G. *Emotions in Politics*. Political Science Annual Review (2000), 221-50.
[13] Ayres, Alyssa. *Speaking Like a State: Language and Nationalism in Pakistan*. *(*Cambridge University Press 2009). 194.

Muslims of South Asia, when World War II ended and the independence movement geared up.[14] Due to popularity and spot on meaning of word Pakistan, Quaid-E-Azam declared that the role of Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لاالہ الا اللہ in Pakistan movement was 25 percent. This slogan shows the religious identity of Pakistan too. Today mostly Pakistani religious parties use this slogan in their rallies.

The Muslim League used Islam as a political tool during the freedom struggle to bring the Muslims together against the Indian National Congress.[15] Whether Pakistan was created for Islam or not is a dispute that has not been settled yet and there is no indication that it can be settled in the near future. The religious lobby, however, uses this slogan to strengthen the country's Islamic identity. On paper, Pakistan is an Islamic republic and the religious lobby, which raises this slogan, wants to ensure that it remains so. So far, they have been very successful in achieving this target because Pakistan has not only retained its religious label but has also become much more conservative than it was in 1947, when it was carved out of India.[16]

Since its inception, like other developing countries of the world where democratic institutions are weak and political parties lack structure, organization and intellectual depth, Pakistan's both civil and military leaders mostly rely on political rhetoric and slogans rather than political reality and substance to deliver. Before independence of Pakistan, leaders of Muslims used political rhetoric and slogans to unite the masses to achieve the ultimate goal of Pakistan. The slogans like Pakistan Ka Matlab Kya La Ilahah Illalah, Pakistan Zindabad and Ban Kay Rahy Ga Pakistan were very famous among the people.[17]

The founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah provided the Muslims with a goal when he decided that "only strong issue on which the Muslim League could mobilize was religion. Islam's driving force could be used to attract Muslims to the Muslim League which hitherto had remained divided among themselves.[18] Jinnah had wanted to restrict the usage of Islamic slogans only for the purpose of the greater unity. For him, it was obvious that Islamic symbolism was tactically very significant. There was no other way except

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[14] Ḥasan, Khālid. *Remembrances*. Vanguard.. (2001*)* Retrieved 29 October 2018. 154.

[15] Ashutosh Misra, *Rise of Religious Parties in Pakistan: Causes and Prospects*, (Strategic Analysis, Vol XXVII No 2) 13

[16] Anwar Iqbal, *Daily Dawn*, (July 19, 2014).

[17] Muhammad Shafiq, *Political Rhetoric; Slogan Politics in Pakistan and Role of Parliament,* (FWU Journal of Social Sciences, Winter 2017, Vol II, No2), 26-38.

[18] Iqbal, J. (1985). *"Islamization in Pakistan"*, Journal of South Asia and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. VIII, Spring.

Islam for separatist movement bent upon getting a separate country to homogenize a wide range of interest within the Muslim community. Jinnah was consciously and carefully advancing the Islamic concept in his mass mobilization campaign as a "higher aspect" of Pakistan demand.

Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ remain a slogan and toll for gaining vote. After the creation of Pakistan, it is said that Pakistan was created with the use of the slogans "Islam in Danger" and "Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ " both slogans were ironically never used by the founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Indeed, Jinnah ruled out Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ when he censured a leaguer in the last session of All India Muslim League after partition and first Conference of All Pakistan Muslim League Council which were held under the President ship of Quaid-e-Azam in the Dena Hall Karachi, on December 14, 1947 and clarified him by saying that "Neither I nor the Working Committee of All India Muslim League ever passed a resolution Pakistan ka matlab kya, La Illaha Illal Allah. پاکستان کا مطلب کیا لا الہ الا اللہ, you may have used it to catch votes."[19]

Islamic Slogans after Creation of Pakistan

Since the 1950s, the Islamization of Pakistan has been sustained not only by the religious parties but more so by the mainstream parties and the military who have always used the religious card as a convenient tool to garner public sympathy and secure legitimacy for their regimes. In the 1970 manifesto Pakistan Peoples Party directly dealt with masses. The manifesto starts with the words of "**Islam** is our faith, **democracy** is our policy, **socialism** is our economy, and all power to the **people**". Now Islam, democracy, socialism and people are the words of great importance. Bhutto wanted to spread a sense of confidence that PPP was not against the very basis of Pakistan. Hanif Ramay insisted that there should be progressive aspect of Islam because of preventing party looking atheistic/communist party.[20] It's a historical fact that Bhutto government introduced a number of reforms for the development of the country. However, as far as concentration of powers and prolonging his rule is concerned, he was no less than a dictator. His

[19] Ghulam Nabi, *Qissa Aik Sadi Ka*, (Sang-E-Meel Publications, 2004) 106.
[20] Nadeem F. Paracha, *Riding the arrow: An ideological history of the PPP*, (*Daily Dawn*, January 7, 2012), accessed December 25, 2015, http://www.dawn.com/news/724608/riding-the-arrow

concentration of powers in his own person even created differences within his own party. On the other hand, the rapidly increasing inflation and law and order issue particularly the murder of some well-known personalities led to anti-Bhutto sentiments among the people. It was in these circumstances that his political opponents started propaganda against his governance style. In the start of 1977, Bhutto announced elections before the expiry of the already serving assemblies. The opposition parties formed an electoral alliance called Pakistan National Alliance1 (PNA). The Alliance consisted of nine parties with a diverse set of ideologies, backgrounds, and political goals. The PNA started propaganda against the governance style of Bhutto and alleged that Bhutto would rig the upcoming elections. Despite the fact that the nine political parties adhered to different socio-political values, a slogan to Islamize the political system of the country was the most common factor among them. Thus, they promised that they will enforce Islamic laws (Nizam-e-Mustafa) and Sharia if came into power. Opposition to the autocratic rule by Bhutto and his party PPP seemed to be the main force holding the otherwise diverse nine political parties together.[21] The religious parties proved of immense importance for General Zia to capture political power. As implementation of Sharia was a main slogan of the opposition parties in their struggle against Bhutto, General Zia saw in them prospective supporters for his future plans to rule the country with the slogan of Islamization. General Zia tried to cash the PNA's slogan of implementation of Tehrik-e-Nifaz-A-Nizam-A-Mustafa.[22]

In order to challenge the existing political setup of Pakistan, an alliance of Islamic forces titled Islami Jamhoori Ittehad was formed in year 1988. Leadership of the Ittehad agreed to confront the democratic and socialist agenda many political parties including Pakistan People's Party. The composition of nine rightist parties was also known as centre-of-right political alliance. Although Pakistan Muslim League, National Awami Party and Jamat-i-Islami apparently presented a moderate standpoint, yet an Islamic identity and provision of Islamic democratic system was presented as the main objective behind the formation of Ittehad.[23]

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[21] Mian Saeed Ahmad, *A Political Romance of Islamic Parties in Pakistan: An Analytical Study*, (Al-Qamar,Vol 4, Issue 3, July-September 2021).

[22] Arshad, Afshan. 2007. *Pakistan Ki Siasat Mai Adaro Ka Kirdar*, Dissertation. The Islamia University of Bahawalpur.

[23] Muhammad Rizwan, *Alliances of Islamic Forces in Politics of Pakistan; A Case Study of Islami Jamhoori Ittihad,(*Al-Duhaa Journal of Islamic Studies, Vol 3, Issue 2, July-Dec 2022).

Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) was a coalition of Islamist parties, formed in 2001 to contest that year's provincial and the following year's general elections. It comprised Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam's Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Maulana Samiul Haq factions (JUI-F and JUI-S), Jamiat-e-Ahle Hadith (JAH) and the now-banned Tehreek-e-Jafria Pakistan (TJP, currently known as the Pakistani Islami Tehreek). JUP leader Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani initially headed the coalition. MMA captured the majority of seats from the North West Frontier Province (NWFP, now Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa) in the 2001 regional and 2002 general elections with ever adopted Islamic slogan Nizam-A-Mustafa. The success of MMA in the general election 2002 solely rests on the coalition of almost all Islamist Political Parties of the country and its slogan of Nizam-A-Mustafa was all time recognition of religious minded people of the society.

Tehrik Labaik Pakistan has been characterized as a far-right Islamist populist party, its civilizational populism being centered around the concept of Nizam-e-Mustafa, the idea of establishing a hard-line Sharia-driven Islamic state, catering to the country's Sunni majority population in general and to the Barelvis in particular while targeting minorities such as the Ahmadiyya, criticizing the elite for abandoning Sharia and being overall critical of Western civilization with talking points against a supposed Jewish lobby as well as against leftist ideologies and secularism.[24] TLP finds its sympathizers mainly among the Sunnis of Barelvi affiliation, who make the majority of Pakistan's Muslim population, ranging from rural madrasa students to urban working professionals.[25] TLP is fortune enough to have a slogan which is echoed by the heart of every Muslim not in Pakistan but all over the world where a single Muslim resides. Labaik ya Rasool Allah - لبیک یارسول اللہ is very popular slogan of TLP which has been taken from the famous poem named after it written by the poet Zulfiqar Ali Anjum. This slogan play a significant role in the mass popularity of TLP in all over the country. The founder of TLP masterly used this slogan in large gathering to put life in the dead souls of every Muslim.

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[24] Fizza Batool; Yilmaz, Ihsan & Shakil, Kainat. *Contest between leaders of the Ummah: Comparing civilizational populisms of PTI and TLP in Pakistan." Populism & Politics (P&P)*. European Center for Populism Studies (ECPS). February 15, 2023.

[25] Ebad Ahmed,. *For TLP cadre, Karachi is not yet lost*. The Friday Times, (1 September 2023).

Conclusion

But unfortunately while Islam was called upon for reassurance and strength, no attempt was made to provide the corresponding strength and revitalization to the principles of Islam as a radical and revolutionary message of transforming the socio-political aspects of society. The whole exercise has been carried out without understanding that Islam was essentially a social philosophy which brought changes in social institutions which could subsequently be developed into political thought. Since the motive of Pakistani leadership has been to seek legitimacy and widen their constituencies, Islam was reduced only to political slogans and to prolong dictatorships and unhealthy politics. In other words, Islam was never given an upper hand as a guide to reform the society but was allowed a subservient role in propagating the political mandate of the rulers. And these are mere slogans with no practicability as long as power politics exits. The general public emotionally follow the wording as enchanted by the way of slogan in the mass mobilization but their emotions remained unfulfilled and the slogans by the Islamist Political parties remain slogan. The political elite of all political parties enjoys the fruits of successful slogans and the efforts of the masses go in vain.