

# The Affirmation of Pakistan's Islamic Identity: An Analysis of the Relevance of Fundamentalism in the Modern World

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## Abstract

As an Islam country, Pakistan was formed through an intense conflict of identity with India, in this case, Hinduism. The cultural influence of the Islamic world, which is wholly different from Indian Hinduism, poses a distinct challenge to Pakistan's uniqueness, even though they are now independent according to the two-state theory. Simplifying identity means opening up opportunities to create conflicts with India and identity conflicts that are even narrower than Pakistani Islam. Pakistani identity may threaten the concept of jihad nationalism that orthodox Pakistan espouses. The sharp intersection between India's Hindu identity and Pakistani Islam influences the ideology and system. Pakistan is moving towards Fundamentalism as India becomes more open to this modern world. This article will examine further the importance of a unique Islamic identity for Pakistan, although its usefulness still needs further analysis. On the other hand, Pakistan can deny the argument that globalization which makes the country more connected, automatically puts its identity aside. Because of Pakistan's attitude, Britain's departure from the European Union to Turkey's neo-ottomans policies can be commonly understood as a variation among other globalization impacts. Commonly, the final form of a relationship between countries was oriented towards a borderless community that supports international regimes and international or supranational organizations; however, it turns out that Pakistan is one of those who keep its self-image firmly, even if it means that they have a different direction. Pakistan's presence proves that the final form of state governance and identity has not been reached by avoiding the Westernized currents of globalization. Pakistan's efforts prove that some alternatives exist for other countries in this modern world.

**Keywords:** *Hindu; Pakistan; Fundamentalism*

## Introduction

In this very diverse world, identity is fundamental for an entity's survival. Individuals and even countries must assert their identity in this diverse world. What will be followed, the goal, and what will be done? A country is no exception. Many considerations must be made because each decision has positive and negative impacts. Even the national goals did not work as expected, even though the self-image projection had previously looked mature.

A topic that will be discussed, namely the strengthening of the Islamic identity of the Pakistani state. Many Islamic countries in South Asia have a background as an early Islamic region that emerged and developed, making the South Asian region contain Islamic countries. However, the Islamic state system, which is fundamental and based on religion, has been going on for quite a long time. The big countries currently prioritize the political system over religion or belief. This phenomenon is interesting because we can see a belief in a fundamental country with various policies to strengthen its national identity. The identity of Pakistan is increasingly interesting to review after it is known that Pakistan often has internal conflicts and is also involved in conflicts between countries because they believe in carrying out Islamic law to help others (Britannica, 2021). Pakistan can even maintain nationalism towards its national identity in the international world despite the onslaught that comes from globalization. Is the Fundamentalism of the Islamic state, especially in Pakistan, still relevant in today's modern world? With these questions, the answer will be how Pakistan can maintain its identity as a fundamental Islamic state.

### **Research Method**

The research method that will be used is qualitative research. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior (Moleong, 2000). This method is used to analyze a phenomenon independently and produce descriptive research data related to the research topic explored. At the same time, the data collection technique used is literature study, which is a data collection technique by conducting a review study of books, literature, notes, and reports that have something to do with the problem being solved (Nazir, 2013). Departing from the above understandings, the researcher will carry out the literature study method with objects in scientific journals, books, surfing the internet, and other relevant sources.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### *Constructivism Theory*

Constructivism is one of the perspectives developed and used in Sociology studies. However, in International Relations, this perspective falls within the scope of Post-Modernism, in line with critical theory, Postcolonialism, and Feminism. There are two crucial ideas in the study of IR; First, the structures that unite humans are determined by shared ideas, not material things. Second is the belief that actors' identities and interests are determined by these shared ideas (Pramono & Purwono, 2010). From these two points, it means that actors' actions are shaped by motives or interests and influenced by interactions between individuals. It can also be said that Constructivism states that the social world is not something that is 'given' but something that enters the intersubjective area and is not only influenced by scientific theory. Things that influence the construction

dimension from this perspective are opinions, issues, values, identities, norms, culture, and others (Pramono & Purwono, 2010).

To examine Constructivism more deeply, as a perspective that evaluates the identity of a very crucial thing, Fundamentalism can be explored further from Constructivism. Fundamentalism can be understood as the efforts of a group of people who adhere to the fundamental teachings they profess. Fundamentalism was born as a militant movement that wanted to carry past situations considered ideal. Following the development, 'Fundamentalism' was interpreted negatively because of its tendency toward absolutism, intolerance, and destructiveness (Fauzan, 2010).

### *Jihad versus McWorld*

Jihad and McWorld are the two "pole" concepts of the world that Benjamin Barber coined. McWorld here is a global political and cultural force that unites the whole world. At the same time, Jihad can be understood as a reactionary force in the form of groups that use ethnic, racial, ethnic, or religious identities (Ritzer, 2009).

For this paper, the author will focus more on Jihad. Jihad groups are part of the actors who play an essential role in addition to the existing nation-state. This group was born out of culture, not a state institution; A small part, not a representation of the whole country; Sect, not religion. They are rebel factions and dissenting minorities waging war on globalism and the traditional nation-state. However, this Jihad movement is a considerable irony. Nationalism was previously a force to promote integration and unity, a movement aimed at uniting different clans, tribes, and cultures under one banner of unity. Nevertheless, nationalism is now better known as a reactionary and divisive force, destroying a country that previously stood on the spirit of nationalism itself. These Jihadist groups include Kurds, Basques, and Catalans (Barber, 1995).

### *Two-Nation Theory*

Strangely, the two-nation theory is an identical analytical tool used in analyzing Pakistan's identity situation, especially with its development relationship as a country in contact with India. The two-state theory explains that Pakistan is a nation whose Islamic culture differs entirely from Hinduism and India, so both are entitled to their governance. The culture includes religion, beliefs, traditions, and the state's fundamental principles (Loomba, 2019). It is this theory that accompanies and forms the ideology of Pakistan.

Ahmad Khan explained that Islam, in all its ways of life, is separate from Hinduism so that they (Indian Muslims) live in a sub-continent or a completely different world (Qasmi, 2018), then developed into a need for Muslims to have their own country outside India so that their rights do not continue to be taken away. That thought was then spawned in the birth of the state of Pakistan with the assertion that Muslims in India have a different

history and civilization. They, as a minority, finally adhere to the identity of Pakistani (Pakistani Muslims) as differentiation from Hindu India (Kamran, 2018).

## **Finding and Discussion**

### **Construction of Pakistan's Self-Identity**

To describe the self-image built by Pakistan, we must first examine how the differences in identity occurred between Indian Hindus and Indian Muslims before Pakistan existed. Hindu and Muslim societies in India have different life foundations in law, philosophy, culture, and social structure. These two contrasting societies live in the same place but never form a peaceful meeting point for coexistence, as if a cultural gulf is challenging to bridge (Burki, 1991).

First, sociologically, Hindu society has been divided into caste levels: Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. The highest caste group, Brahmins, considers people who do not adhere to Hinduism to be included in the Sudra group, including Muslims. This made Muslims the victims of arbitrariness from higher castes. The application of this caste system is inversely proportional to what Islam teaches, which wants to form a society where all have the same degree regardless of race, color, ethnicity, and language of the community members (Ruslan, 2012). The conflict between Hindus and Muslims became increasingly intense when the British took control of India. The British used Hindus to make them ridicule the beliefs of Muslims. This relates to the second very striking cultural difference, namely the difference in the treatment of Hindus and Muslims towards cows. From the Hindu side, the cow is an incarnation of Lord Shiva that must be worshipped and made a holy symbol. While for Muslims, cows are animals that are commonly used as *qurban* on Eid al-Adha. This difference made the situation between the two communities even worse. Hindu leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, were very hostile to Muslims and demanded that Muslims not make cows as *qurban*. Under the pretext of fighting for independence, Gandhi said the cows slaughtered by Muslims were the reason for the emerging difficulties that Hindus faced in gaining independence (Esposito & Voll, 1996). This example of a very striking difference is a vital factor in how social conflicts between Muslims and Hindus in India occur. As a result, Islamic leaders and communities in India desire to achieve freedom and justice for Muslims. From this point, the impulse to separate themselves from India and form their sovereign state was born.

After Pakistan was formed, the construction of Pakistani identity can be studied from the development of Islam in Pakistan itself. Muslims in Pakistan are predominantly Sunni, and only about 10% of Pakistanis are Shia (Ahmad, 1992). Furthermore, Pakistan has a reasonably dynamic struggle between traditional Islamic groups, fundamentalists, and

modernists. Traditional groups are Muslims who live a normative religious life and do not interfere in politics. Fundamentalist groups are hardliners who dare to counter-action against all government policies that are incompatible with the Qur'an and Sunnah. While Modernists are those, who provide an actual understanding of how Islamic teachings can go hand in hand with Western scientific traditions (Asriyah, 2017).

In actual social life, Muslims in Pakistan are not as easy to unite as in the issue of family planning and bank interest. The Family Planning Program, which had funds allocated in 1960, was finally launched and actualized in 1965, and even then, it still received a contra vote from Abu A'la al-Maududi (a Pakistani orthodox Islamic figure) and his congregation (Asriyah, 2017). Meanwhile, in the issue of bank interest, the application of light bank interest as halal and double bank interest as haram is also controversial between traditional and fundamentalist scholars against modernist scholars (Amal, 1989). In addition to the conflict between traditionalists and modernists, the dynamics of Pakistan's Muslims were also enlivened by the presence of the Tablighi Jamaat, a group founded by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas with a Sufism background who wanted to embody the teachings of Sheikh Waliyullah and Ahmad Syahid. One of the characteristics of this group is that they do sermons using *khillah* or *khuruj*, namely preaching by forming groups of 6-12 people and moving from place to place (Asriyah, 2017). The thought and social phenomena in religious nuances in Pakistan provide an understanding of how strong the people's expectations and the government's spirit to create a new Islamic civilization formula which also shows that Pakistan is not oriented towards Western or Eastern only but can practice Islamic values as the political identity of its country.

### **Zia-ul Haq and Islam Orthodox**

Zia-ul Haq was the sixth President of Pakistan who served from 1978 until he died in 1988. Zia-ul Haq is believed by many to be the figure responsible for transforming Pakistan with extremist Islamic politics that made Pakistan a center of Islamization for Asian countries, especially Asia. South. DW also wrote the same thing in an interview with one of the journalists based in Karachi, Pakistan by the name of Majid Siddiqui, who revealed that Zia-ul Haq used religion as a tool to strengthen his power and also exploited the international agenda against communism for his benefit and carried out a government that undemocratic for eleven years. Siddiqui added that Zia-ul Haq's ideology, considered 'destructive,' is alive in Pakistan even though Haq himself had died in a plane crash (Shams, 2016). So it can be said that present-day Pakistan reflects Zia-ul Haq's policies, and because its ideology is still very alive, it is not easy to eliminate it. Abdul Hai, a human rights activist from Karachi, also said that the Islamic extremist policies issued by General Zia-ul Haq in the 1980s, which were used against the Soviets in Afghanistan today, are considered disastrous for his country.

Muhammad Zia-ul Haq's Islamization program was evident from the development of laws against insults and the introduction of Hudud regulations which contained the use of rules and punishments from the Koran, such as adultery, drinking alcohol, and theft with new punishments, namely caning, amputation, and stoning (Haq, 2010). 2017). The state and the elected government will be punished with humiliation, thus making the Islamization contribute to the integrity of the country with the slogan "*siyast naiih, riyasat bachao*," which means "protecting the country, not politics," so that corrupt politicians and arbitrarily rampant. The media and the press are also encouraged to reflect orthodox Islamic values because some cultural activities such as dances, women's sports, and women who appear on stage are intimidated. Even female TV presenters were ordered to cover their heads (Mohammadi, 2018). In addition, the Zia-ul Haq government changed its education system and curriculum according to Islamic teachings and created its university for women. This Islamization was quite successful because Pakistan received assistance from the United States and succeeded in cooperating with jihad activities in Afghanistan and the destruction of Russia (Shah, 2016).

However, Pakistan's interior has become chaotic due to the lifting of martial law regulations coinciding with conflicts between ethnic communities (Britannica, 2021). The conflict between the original ethnic Sindhis and Muslim immigrants from India began with the formation of the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) party in the mid-1980s. In addition, violence also occurred when Pashtuns from Afghanistan moved to Karachi, where there was a conflict between Muhajir and Sindhis, who complained that Muhajir enjoyed an economic and political monopoly in Karachi. In May 1988, Zia-ul Haq, who continued to be depressed due to ethnic conflict and economic difficulties, finally froze Junejo's government as Pakistan's prime minister, promised national elections, and restored a clean government in November. However, Zia-ul Haq and several Pakistani generals were killed in a plane crash on August 17, 1988.

### **Pakistan's Identity Relevance**

Identity is increasingly being questioned about the benefits, especially seeing that the world is increasingly connected and differences can hinder this connection. Pakistan, as a distinct identity from India, must stay away from globalization to gain nationalism or, in this case, recognition of its own identity. Judging from the historical construction that built their nationalism, it is clear that Pakistan's identity is necessary but not necessarily relevant. This fundamentalist identity is essential because it contributed to the birth of independence and the building of the country that became the home of the first Muslim republic. However, its relevance is still being studied because the state's goal in this modern world is to win over other identities and realize other ideals.

From the tracking of civilizations, it is undeniable that Pakistan is progressing in science. Not only is it the place of origin of great scientists like Muhammad Iqbal, but Pakistan is also still one of the centers for studying Islamic science and Eastern philosophy; this is, of course, because the previous sultans had more attention to science. Even in defense, Pakistan is a country that is getting stronger, so it is called the "Islamic Bomb" by the United States because of its nuclear weapons (Aisyah, 2014). Pakistan was the first Islamic country to possess nuclear weapons.

Pakistan always sees that the opposing party is superior in its conflict with India; this then gave birth to a prolonged conflict ranging from Pakistan's involvement in the nuclear conflict between 1990, 2000, and 2001 to the war in Kashmir, which is still ongoing today. If viewed through rational-choice theory, this tends to be confusing because the decisions taken by Pakistan and India tend to deviate. They hold wars in places that tend to be random; even Pakistan, which is indeed weaker than India in conventional weapons (other than nuclear), has lost several times but continues to attack again; this makes the relevance of identity enforcement must be examined according to the nationalism Pakistan constructed during the separation of the two (Wynbrandt & Gerges, 2009).

The influence of orthodox Islam through the thought of Zia-ul Haq is still the direction of Pakistan's politics today; this means that Pakistan must protect itself from the influence of Indian ideology and defend its territory. The two-state theory that places Pakistan and India as completely different identities is also the basis for continuing conflict in the hope of maintaining Pakistan's national unity and stability (Shafique, 2011). The historical construction of Pakistan, which used to be nothing more than minorities whose rights as Muslims were prevented from asserting by the majority; therefore, they fought to create a sovereign and equal Islamic identity state in response to the threat to India's seniority.

## **Conclusion**

No one knows how long Pakistan can survive with its identity. However, the direction of globalization tends to be liberal-democratic; Pakistan still has to stabilize conditions in its own country before becoming an alternative ideological option for other countries. Science, including nuclear development to the war involving Pakistan, is a necessity that they are fighting for within the framework of nationalism based on the historical construction they believe. Even though nuclear weapons and war are unwanted, the prolonged conflict in Kashmir is like a testing ground for ideological foundations that require legitimacy from the outside world. The war becomes Pakistan's need to maintain the integrity of the defense and security meaning according to the ontology, which must be far from the arbitrariness of Indian seniority. Therefore, Pakistan's conflict and political stance, which upholds its identity in this modern era, is still very relevant, given its

geopolitical conditions, which are more or less likely to intersect with India. Meanwhile, answering the relevance of the steps taken by Pakistan to the international world, it is relevant as an effort to find a liberal-democratic alternative but is irrelevant from the point of view of establishing cooperation between countries and between identities; this made Pakistan a susceptible proxy war area for the significant powers countries. If continuously trapped, Pakistan will undoubtedly find it difficult to fulfill its national goals, which can evoke domestic identity conflicts and result in political coups and a split in the unity of Pakistan's Muslim identity.

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