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The Role of FBOs (Faith-Based Organisations) in Combating Social Exclusion for Religious-Minorities: The Case-Study from Pakistan.

Author: Syeda Sidra Idrees

Affiliation: University of Glasgow

Acknowledgement for support & guidance: Dr. Charlotte Pearson (University of Glasgow).

Contact: syedasidraidrees@gmail.com; 00923365369823

Abstract

The organisations rooted in faith have played a dominant role over the years to bring about societal change in several parts of the world. The later-half of the 20th century has seen a revival of research on Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs,) which based on their religious affiliations, have performed various welfare activities for the distressed of their community. However, despite the substantial efforts put in by these organisations for social welfare, little is known about the role they played especially in the context of Pakistan to protect the rights of religious minorities. Since Pakistan is a state engrained in faith, these organisations belonging to distinct faiths must be studied to understand their impact to ensure social inclusion in the otherwise religiously radicalised society of Pakistan. Moreover, the challenges these organisations face while carrying-out these activities is also studied. Semi-structured interviews from the representatives of FBOs have been conducted to understand the role and challenges FBOs in Pakistan face while making attempts for the social inclusion of religious minorities. Advocacy, endeavours for social justice and community building have been identified as the key roles performed by these organisations. Whereas, the challenges identified are on political, institutional and social spectrums.

Key words: Faith-based organisations, welfare activities, challenges, conflict, religion

Introduction

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as the name indicates has religion entrenched in its very foundations. Kirmani (2012), rightly defines Pakistan as a state which has religion embedded in its social and political landscape. However, the blurring of the state and religion has created a condition of political turmoil for the religious minorities who face various acts of violence and have little or no representation at the state level. Following the recent religious clashes of 2011 and 2012 in Pakistan, the international organisations like UN have endeavoured to protect the rights of religious minorities in Pakistan by asking the government to abide by the charter of Human Rights and to protect their “right of freedom of belief and expression”. However, it must be noticed that UN being an international body cannot exert a legal pressure on signatories to abide them by the rules since it would be considered as meddling with the sovereignty of the state. In the last two decades, however, the FBOs (Faith-based Organisations) emerged as alternate ‘in-state’ actors in Pakistan to advocate justice for the oppressed and thus playing a major role for humanitarian aid. Bano (2011), with special reference to these organisations, formulates that although these organisations have emerged as extensive service providers since the last two decades; *little is known about the nature and functions of these organisations and about the significant contributions that they make to address the developmental and social challenges in Pakistan since independence.*

Clarke (2007) in his article ‘Agents of Transformation? Donors, faith-based organisations and international development’ elaborates on the scarcity of literature in the domain of religion and faith and its role in protecting and improving the lives of vulnerable communities in the developing world. The limitation of literature in this realm has been attributed to the influence of “secularization theory”, which regard religious institutions, ideas and actions as “outdated” in the context of the evolving ‘modern society’. The academics in the domain of developmental studies, along with the policy makers around the world, have associated little significance to religion because they felt that religion was counter to modern-development and hence stressed the importance of legal separation of church and the state for liberal democracies (Clarke, 2007, pp. 70).

In the recent years however, FBOs have become important since they have started to involve themselves with the community development interventions. Moreover, the social scientists have realised that with 80% of the world’s population confessing in revealed religions, the concept of faith and the institutions associated with in cannot be ignored (Clarke, 2015, pp. 39). However, in the context of Pakistan, FBOs are even more significant because being an ‘Islamic Republic’, the state could never liberate itself from the “church”, which in the context of Pakistan would be ‘mosque’ since it is a sacred institute for Muslims and hence could be held synonymous to ‘church’. This re-emerging importance of religion on the global horizons, the failure of state in several developing countries and the entrenchment of religion at state-level of Pakistan have redirected the attention of social scientists to probe deeper in the institutions which have religion affiliations and have evolved to help the community with social issues; which in the context of this paper would be social exclusion of the religious minorities.

As guided by the above discussion, it can be formulated that the emergence of FBOs as alternate bodies and their role in promoting social cohesion in Pakistan has made them an interesting case study and therefore the focus of the dissertation would be to understand the role the FBOs play in protecting the minority rights in Pakistan. The study would specifically attempt to address the challenges these organisations face while executing their welfare activities and would understand the role and hence the challenges the FBOs play to protect

the minorities rights in Pakistan and the impact they have in representing the minorities at the state-level, the study would ask the following questions:

- 1- What is the role that FBOs in Pakistan play to promote social inclusion at the state level in Pakistan?
- 2- What are the political and institutional challenges that they face while combating social exclusion for religiously diverse community?

The *significance* of this study stems from the fact that the data on the FBOs and the challenges they face while carry-out their welfare activities is scarce and more concrete information is needed to understand the role they can play to provide protection to the discriminated minorities of the Pakistan. Though there are some studies explaining the nature of FBOs in Pakistan, none of those studies discuss the challenges these FBOs encounter to execute welfare activities in Pakistan and therefore the purpose of this study is to explore this area.

The *nature of the study* is qualitative and is guided by semi-structured interviews. The interviews are carried out from the representatives of the 8 chosen FBOs. The analysis has been carried out by using the postulated of thematic coding to organise the data under categories for better analysis. The limitation of the study stems from the fact that religion is a sensitive issue and is highly politically charged phenomenon in Pakistan; therefore, care has been taken to ask questions revolving around the activities of the FBOs and not about the personal belief-set of the participants.

Literature Review

Before defining the terms “FBOs” and “social exclusion” in the context of Pakistan, it is vital to understand the religious demography of Pakistan. Malik (2012), in his report on “Religious minorities in Pakistan”, defines Pakistan as a massively plural country which can be signified by its sectarian, ethno-linguistic and religious diversity. The diversity on the religious front, though existential, is overwhelmingly Muslim with more than 90% of the 192 million inhabitants adhering to the postulates of Islam (Malik, 2016). The table below shows the population by religion of Pakistan based on the recent population consensus of 2017 in the country.

Population by Religion (Pakistan)

Percentage Representation

2017

<i>Administrative Unit</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Christian</i>	<i>Hindu (Jati)</i>	<i>Qadiani (Ahmadi)</i>	<i>Scheduled Castes</i>	<i>Others</i>
<i>Pakistan</i>	96.28	1.59	1.60	0.22	0.25	0.07
Rural	96.49	1.1	1.8	0.18	0.34	0.08
Urban	95.84	2.59	1.16	0.29	0.06	0.06
<i>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</i>	99.44	0.21	0.03	0.24	*	0.08
Rural	99.65	0.03	*	0.22	*	0.08
Urban	98.42	1.06	0.11	0.31	0.01	0.09
<i>F A T A</i>	99.6	0.07	0.03	0.21	0.03	0.07
Rural	99.63	0.04	0.03	0.21	0.03	0.06
Urban	98.16	1.17	0.32	0.1	0.007	0.23
<i>Punjab</i>	97.21	2.31	0.13	0.25	0.03	0.07
Rural	97.66	1.87	0.15	0.19	0.05	0.08
Urban	96.25	3.27	0.06	0.37	0.02	0.03
<i>Sindh</i>	91.31	0.97	6.51	0.14	0.99	0.08
Rural	88.12	0.14	9.77	0.12	1.79	0.06
Urban	94.67	1.84	3.08	0.17	0.14	0.1
<i>Balochistan</i>	98.75	0.4	0.49	0.15	0.1	0.1
Rural	99.42	0.06	0.15	0.14	0.12	0.1
Urban	96.61	1.49	1.58	0.16	0.05	0.1
<i>Islamabad</i>	95.53	4.07	0.02	0.34	*	0.03
Rural	98.8	0.94	*	0.23	*	0.03

Urban	93.83	5.7	0.03	0.4	*	0.03
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* Refers to a very small proportion.

Source: *Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017.*

The Muslims of the country are sub-divided into two divisions, known as Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims, with Shia Muslims being in minority to the Sunnis and hence facing discrimination in the hands of majority Sunnis. However, as shown by the table above, they fall in the inclusive category of “Muslims”. For the Qadiani/Ahmadis, on the other hand, a separate category of ‘non-Muslims’ have been created. This is a crucial point here, since Ahmadis consider themselves as Muslims but have been labelled by the state as a non-Muslim minority following the constitutional amendment of the constitution in 1974 (Malik, 2012). This category was created considering the recommendation from Shariat Court ‘Religious court’, that since Ahmadis do not believe in the annulment of Prophethood, they must be expelled from the domain of religion.

The other non-Muslim denominations include Christians, Hindus and the other scheduled castes. During this discussion of the demography of religious minorities in Pakistan, it is vital to refer to the work of Rais. Rais (2014, pp. 447) in his paper on “Islamic Radicalism and Minorities in Pakistan” refers to the religious pluralism in Pakistan as a polarizing ground for an otherwise unified society. His claim has been true since the incidences of discrimination and violence against the religious minorities of Pakistan has been growing in the last three decades and therefore FBOs have emerged as the saviour grounds for the religious minorities in Pakistan. However, as discussed earlier, the literature on the role of FBOs in the contemporary world is limited; therefore, this literature makes attempts to first describe the FBOs and their typology which has been discussed below;

FBOS in the context of social exclusion: Definition, Typology, difference from the NGOs

Definition

The review of literature on Faith-Based Organisations (Johnsen, 2014; Clarke, 2015; Leurs, 2012) reveals that a precise or a mutually-agreed-upon definition of the concept is yet non-existent in the literature of developmental studies. The absence of a comprehensive and concise definition can be attributed to the fact that the term is relatively recent and therefore researchers and policy-makers alike fail to adequately capture the ways religious organisations engage in the welfare and developing activities of their communities (Leurs, 2012). Moreover, Clarke (2015, pp. 415) attributes the perplexity to the inability of the audience to understand the breadth of the faith traditions and their incapacity to understand that faith-based and secular welfare program initiatives can co-exist.

Amid all these conceptual confusions, some social scientists like Jennings and Clarke (2008) have made attempts to describe an FBO. According to them, “*an FBO is an organisation which takes inspiration for its activities from the principles and teachings of religion*”. In this definition, it must be noted that the authors highlight that FBOs are organisations which although grounded in faith are not essentially involved in the activities which are explicitly religious. Therefore Johnsen (2014) suggests that while explaining the ‘faith’ in the FBO one must be careful since because of its affiliation with this word, it is easier to conflate FBOs with religious congregation. He insists that congregation is just the community of practicing believers, whereas FBOs are institutions which are engaged in activities to provide information, services or advocacy to the less needy or to the marginalised group of their faith.

Building onto this discussion, Birmingham (2011) provides a rather unified definition of FBOs by contending that *FBOs are often called religious NGOs since they are involved with at least one developmental activity, specify themselves as faith-based and carryout religious services*. In this definition, it must be noted that the author has made attempts to highlight the three key attributes of the FBOs. One, they must be engaged with the developmental activities to be recognised as *religious NGOs*; second, they must unanimously specify themselves as a religion affiliated body; third, they must provide services for a religious group. Although this definition does a decent job to capture the crux of the concept; the purpose of this study is not to understand the religious affiliation of the FBOs since a study to understand the religious terrain of FBOs has already been taken up by Iqbal (2008) in the context of Pakistan. As the current study is more focused on the role the role of FBOs to combat social exclusion for religious minorities in Pakistan, a definition highlighting the charitable and hence the advocating services of the FBOs would be more appropriate here.

The best definition in the context of the current study has been provided by Beamont and Cloke (2012), in their book on "*Faith-based organisations and exclusion in the European cities*". The authors comment on the emergency and social service provision of FBOs and are more interested to explore the international development efforts and humanitarian aid services of the FBOs. Therefore, the definition they provide is sufficiently broad and highlights the crucial functions of the FBOs. According to them, FBOs are "*any organisation which may directly or indirectly refer to either religion or the religious values, and that the FBOs are welfare providers and or the political actors and the advocates*". As already stated, in the context of the current study, the second part of the definition which highlights the welfare and advocacy role of the FBOs is more important. Since the social exclusion of minorities in Pakistan has become a major issue, it is important to understand that FBOs in Pakistan are no more the mere mosques or churches, instead they have become para-religious associations to extend social services, lobbying facilities and participation activities to the socially excluded community. Since social exclusion is another core concept being discussed in the study, it would be essential to define the concept with a substantial definition provided by Davelaar (2011).

Typology of FBOs

The literature on the FBOs reveals that the FBOs vary considerably from each other based on their coupling to the religion and by the type of activities they carry out. Based on these principles, Cnann et al (1999) proposed six categories of the FBOs for consideration in developmental studies. These are 1) local congregation or the houses of worship, 2) inter-faith agencies, 3) region wide or city-wide sectarian agencies 4) national projects or organisations under religious auspices, 5) relief or para-denominational organisations; and 6) religiously affiliated international organisations (Ferris, 2005). Although these categories presented by Cnann (1999) are useful to draw attention towards the vast-scale social functions carried out by these organisations, the typology misses to comment on the faith-dimension of the NGOs. Building onto this typology and to address the gap left by this categorization, the Working Group researching on Human Needs and Faith-Based and Community initiative (Pipes, 2002) developed an alternate and a comprehensive typology for FBOs to address the contributions by the 'f'-word. This typology addresses six organisational categories of the faith-based organisations and refers to them as faith-saturated, faith-centred, faith-background, faith-related, faith-secular partnership and secular organisations (Vodo, 2016). This typology is widely adopted in the literature because as per Johnsen (2014), it helps differentiate the FBOs on the bases of influence the faith has on the operations and mission of an organisation. On the bases of this framework, the faith-saturated organisations

have staff that share the commitment to the faith and the programmes and activities carried-out by these organisations are strictly rooted in faith. In comparison to this, faith-related programmes do represent religious symbols but do not require religious staff, and their programmes and activities do not necessarily have religious affiliation, but they do provide religious support to the people who reach out to them to seek it.

Comparing FBOs and NGOs

According to Clarke (2015) and in the light of the discussion above, it would not be wrong to say that the FBOs are two sides of a same coin. They can be classified as NGOs because of the community advocacy activities they engage into; they are regarded as faith-based, because of their religious affiliation. This *intersection* is the bases of this research and has been demonstrated below inspired by the work of Clarke (2015) which is ‘*Understanding FBOs: How FBOs are contrasted with NGOs in international development literature?*’



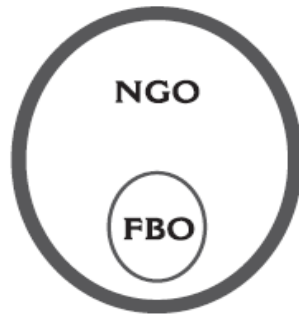
Intersection (Clarke, 2015)

Though the similarity in the welfare activities render NGOs and FBOs as somewhat similar organisations, what renders them completely *distinctive* is the element of religiosity entrenched in the DNA of FBOs (James, 2009).



Distinct (Clarke, 2015)

Another understanding of FBOs and NGOs which helps to comprehend the difference between them is to consider FBOs as a subset of NGOs. According to the literature on the subject, FBOs can be termed as a *subunit* of NGOs because NGOs is a wholistic term, which includes several activities and an array of organisations. Since FBOs are also non-government organisation, carrying out welfare activities for a religion-specified group, they can be termed as subset of NGOs since they are specific in their objectives, yet execute the similar nature of activities.



Subset (Clarke, 2015)

Though the discussion above demonstrates FBOs as sum of a whole, ‘whole’ being the FBOs; Zaag (2013) puts FBOs at equal footing with the NGOs. According to Zaag (2013), FBOs and NGOs co-exist in the civil society with equal weightage as equal stakeholders who have comparable power to influence the market and the state. This means that FBOs are no longer to be considered a subunit of NGOs but should have equal legitimate rights to claim resources and existence as NGOs. As per this degree of importance associated with FBOs, they have been declared as a significant part of future civil-society by Clarke (2015).



Co-existence (Clarke, 2015)

The discussion here, though makes attempts to demonstrate the institutional and functional comparison between the FBOs and NGOs, a *constitutive* approach presented by Clarke (2015, pp. 45) demonstrate an interesting understanding of this concept. He contends that it is not vital to distinguish these organisations from NGOs, instead these organisations are so diverse in their nature that claim relationship or heritage to NGOs, civil society, religion and communities and community-building. This ‘Frankenstein’ nature, as put by Clarke (2015), would allow FBOs to appear distinct as they share element with all the aforementioned societal elements. They are like NGOs in the welfare activities they perform for the society but are distinct because of their highly proliferated nature which makes them share similarities with community and civil society. This constitutive nature of the FBOs have been diagrammed below for the sake of clarity. This explanation by Clarke (2015) is comprehensive and frequently has been referred in the literature in the post 2015 period. It has also opened grounds for research to understand the complicated, interchangeable nature of FBOs.



Constitutive Nature (Clarke, 2015)

This section has made sufficient attempts to understand the nature, definition and typology of FBOs. The next section, therefore, attempts to understand the importance of FBOs in the context of Pakistan, referring to the subservient inability of the INGOs to extend support to vulnerable religious minorities of Pakistan, the extremist laws against religious minorities thus making the need for FBOs more pressing and the failure of the government to extend support to the minorities hence making State-FBOs relationship vital in the contemporary political dynamics of Pakistan.

The Need for FBOs in the contemporary Society: The significance of FBOs in the context of Pakistan

Before shedding light on the need of FBOs in the contemporary society of Pakistan, it is vital to understand the history of Pakistan which side-lined the minorities of the country. The need for protection is rooted in the biased laws of the country which almost suspended the existence of minorities in the country.

History leading to religious discrimination

Pakistan that emerged on the map of the world on August 14th, 1947 was envisioned as a democratic, progressive country with a tolerant society. It was envisaged that the country would retain the Muslim majority, while providing equal rights to the non-Muslims of the region (Malik, 2002). In support of this claim, it is vital to quote the speech of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of the country. Jinnah, along with his modernist Muslim colleagues believed in a secular Pakistan and it has also been reconfirmed in his first speech to the Constituent Assembly of the country. Jinnah, while addressing the minorities of the region explicitly established that:

‘You are free, you are free to attend your temples, you are free to go to the mosques or any other place of worship in the State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste and it has nothing to do with the business of the State. You are equal citizens of Pakistan. Today, Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims and all would strive for the common welfare of the State.’ (Muhammad Ali Jinnah, 1947).

This presidential address by Jinnah stipulates the role of religion and state and lays the foundation of religion-neutral country with equal rights for all the people regardless of their religious affiliations. However, over the following decades, especially during the infamous 1970s and 1980s; the State of Pakistan did not only fail to protect the rights of religious minorities, but even started to inspire obscurantist forces against the religious minorities of the country (PIPS, 2014). Though this claim of PIPS (2014) is legitimate; it is significant to understand the deviation from the Jinnah's vision and to understand the reasons as to why the well-thought separation of religion and the State could not be carried-out by the successors of Jinnah.

The Discriminatory laws of Pakistan

Malik (2002), contends that the undoing of Jinnah's vision started with his death by the then Prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan, who introduced Objective Resolution as the basis of Constitution. The review of literature on Pakistan reveals that Objective Resolution was the first malicious documents that ensued all the problems for the country. In support of this claim, Rais (2014) contends that the Objective Resolution did this by proposing that the rules and regulations in Pakistan should be in accordance to Islam. This was done to appease *ulema* (*religious clerics*) of the country and to gain popular support for Khan's rule. However, this backfired when the newly empowered *ulemas* started to demand a Constitution for Pakistan which must be rooted in the teachings of religion and should declare Ahmadis as non-Muslim minority of Pakistan. The blurring of state and religion was finally formulated in the 1973's constitution of Pakistan, which declared Pakistan as an Islamic Republic and paid no heed to the Jinnah's vision of separation of state and religion.

The Constitution of Pakistan was rooted in the infamous Objective Resolution and made attempts to please the *ulemas* of the country. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan and the secular graduate of Oxford's Christ Church understood the fact that the street power in Pakistan belonged to *ulema*. If he must remain in power, the Constitution must have clauses to pacify these masses. Therefore, the Constitution of Pakistan restricted the offices of President and Prime Minister to the Muslims only (Shaikh, 2010). This meant that the non-Muslims are the second-class citizens of the country. Moreover, the Article 260 of the Constitution openly declared Ahmadis as the non-Muslim minority in Pakistan, taking away the right of them to be associated with the other fellow Muslims. Alternatively, along with these religion-entrenched laws, the Constitution makes attempts to protect the rights of the minorities through Article 20 and 33, *which allow freedom of religion and expression and makes state responsible for the protection of the minority rights respectively. It also gives right to all citizens of the country to practice, profess and propagate their religion. Every denomination and sect can perform religious customs and manage its all religious institutions* (Shaikh, 2012, pp.10).

Though the later mentioned laws do exist in Pakistan, the state has failed to implement them and hence has failed to protect the rights of minorities in Pakistan. It is because of this that the role of alternating institutions like INGOs and FBOs have become important in the Islamic Republic.

The instances of Mistreatment of religious minorities

The Christian community in Pakistan, being the largest minority of Pakistan, has seen various instances of extremism in the country. The violence activities against Christians have seen a sharp incline since the year 2012 and hence has become an issue of major concern by the government of Pakistan (LEAD, 2012). The instances of violence include the burning of the Churches and the looting of the places of worship. Joseph colony, a Christian establishment in Lahore was burnt in 2012 by the enraged mob blaming the residents of the blasphemy.

Christian girls are sometimes forced to convert to Islam and marry Muslim men (Malik, 2012).

Perhaps the most brutal case of religious intolerance was the assassination of Salman Taseer, the governor of Punjab by his own bodyguard. Taseer, in his support for Asia Bibi who has been unjustly convicted of blasphemy regarded blasphemy law as a 'black-blind law' and demanded the revision of it (Rais, 2014). Such is the power of religious extortion in the country that the masses can be mobilised to execute acts of complete ferociousness and hence in the context of this analysis, it would not be wrong to say that Karl Marx rightly regarded religion as the '*opium for masses*'.

Hindu minorities in the country have also faced the problem of forced conversion to religion. Here it must be noticed that these barbaric acts of violence are completely against the constitution of Pakistan which under Article 20 grants the right to execute religious activities in the religious institutions and commands the state to protect the minorities. The failure of the state to execute the law makes FBOs important since they can work at the grass-root level for the welfare of the vulnerable communities and can force the government to pay attention to the denied, yet legally existent minority rights.

FBOs for legitimacy

As stated in the introduction of this research, it is important to note that Pakistan, although being the signatory member of United Nations and the Charter of Human Rights, has failed to protect the rights of minorities within its boundaries. This can be supported by the stats presented by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), which reported the death of 687 people from various religious minorities and above 200 attacks in the year 2013 (Omer, 2014). Following these attacks, the UN expressed concerns and urged the government of Pakistan to ensure that the right of freedom of belief and religion is executed as per the Charter of Human Rights. Here it must be noted that although these international bodies can urge the government to take immediate action, these international bodies cannot use coercion against a sovereign state and Pakistan being a sovereign state cannot be forced to abide by the terms and conditions and hence must ensure the implementation itself. Krasner (1999) describes sovereignty as the authority of the state to be governed without outside interference and hence there is a need for 'in-house' legitimate bodies which work in collaboration with the government and minority to eradicate the menace of violence from the country. World Bank (1999) contends that the FBOs in the present era seem to enjoy more legitimacy than the secular NGOs or INGOs. This is especially true in the case of Pakistan where the bodies like UN and DFID are deemed as foreign actors. Religion in the religion-bound state, however, has more legitimacy and the FBOs has wider population support since they operate closer to the communities. This factor of legitimacy associated with FBOs and the mistrust of people of Pakistan in foreign human-rights defenders has made FBOs an important area of research in Pakistan. In support of the claims made above, Clarke (2015) articulates that this significance of FBOs have been noticed by the UN general assembly and therefore, with the proposal of MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), the UN assembly started to visualise FBOs as an important vehicle of development, not only in Pakistan but in around the globe. MDGs strive for poverty eradication, social exclusion and minority empowerment. FBOs can invite moral commitment for these goals since they are rooted in the postulates of faith. This would mobilise the community and would help Pakistan meet the MDG goals.

Research Methodology

Qualitative research methodology is used for the data collection of this study. The semi-structured interviews are a relevant method here since this enabled the researcher to obtain more personalised data than the structured interviews. Since this method allows to extract qualitative data by addressing thematic questionnaire only, which does not follow a strict schedule like close-ended structured interviews; the discussion follows the pattern of conversation where the respondents can provide as much in-depth information as possible.

Snowball sampling has been used to guide this study. Following the snowball sampling technique, the researcher gets help of the sampled participants of the study to propose other participants who would be relevant to the research (Honig, 2004). According to University of Surrey (2014), this is a relevant method if the aim of the study is principally qualitative, exploratory or descriptive. Moreover, it is a method to reach a target population which is otherwise difficult to recruit. These reasons stand true in the setting of the current study and therefore this is a relevant sampling method. The representatives from the FBOs are difficult to locate and recruit because of the scarce amount of data available on the registered FBOs in Pakistan. Besides, some of the representatives are important Public figures because of the services they have rendered for the society and therefore, they can only be contacted via a personal connection or by the participants who already know the niche of FBOs and therefore snowball sampling is a viable way to conduct this research.

Discussion and Analysis

Role of FBOs in combating social exclusion for religious minorities

To understand the role that the FBOs play to create an inclusive society for the religious minorities in Pakistan, sub-themes of objectives, activities, collaboration and achievements of these organisations have been developed. These sub-themes have further been divided into three major themes using the *constitutive model of Clarke* (2015) which has already been produced in the literature review section (Figure-5). This division would help understand the role of FBOs at three broad levels which is role of FBOs in community-building, role of FBOs as NGOs and role of FBOs as civil society. However, before commenting on the role of the FBOs with reference to minorities, it is vital to understand the nature of the FBOs interviewed in this research to set grounds for further discussion.

The Nature of FBOs

The organisations interviewed have been divided into *faith-background organisations and faith-based programmes*. This division has been done on the bases of the typological characteristics observed from the data collected about the objectives and activities of the FBOs and was guided by the scholarly work presented in the literature review. CSJ, NCA, FRF and MSDO have been identified as faith-background organisations because although they have religious connections to Christian, Ahmadi and Hindu Communities respectively, the programs they carry-out do not always have any religious affiliations and are intended for the common good of all the religious minorities. Moreover, they have an organisational structure and clearly laid-down objectives. These claims can be supported by the objectives quoted by the participants and the activities they perform to protect religious minorities. Participant D, the representative of NCA and MSDO makes the following claims about the secularity of the objectives of his organisation.

'NCA is a faith-based research Organization working in Pakistan for promoting peace and justice – its objective is to promote peace and justice in Pakistan of all minorities, though it is primarily Christian organisation. NCA tries to engage with other organisations in Pakistan to ensure betterment of the minorities. The other one is my own faith-based start-up which also works for the minority rights and promoting in Pakistan. It is known as Minority Social Development Organisation which works primarily for Hindus but generally for all minorities' (Participant D, 2017).

The above claims by the Participant D justify the fact that NCA and MSDO are faith-background organisations, which although have stronger connection with Christian and Hindu-minorities of the region respectively; they also strive for social-justice of all the minorities at state-level in general. CSJ and FRF are other examples of faith-background typology since though they have connection with a certain faith i.e. Christianity and Ahmadi respectively. They also strive for to *'provide a secure and safe place for minorities'* (Participant A, 2017) of the country.

On the contrary to the faith-background organisations, *faith-based programs* also do not represent any specific religious symbolism but do provide support to religious people who seek out to them. Moreover, unlike faith-based organisations, they do not have a specific organisational structure or clearly defined objectives; instead, the programs follow a general agenda which in the case of this research is to ensure inter-faith harmony and to work for the peaceful co-existence of the minorities and majorities. NLD fits well on all aspects of the definition of faith-based programs because as per the quotation of its representative, the group has all attributes that fit this concept. According to participant B from NLD;

'This group primarily works to bring social-justice at the legislative level for the minority Hindus in the country and other minorities, especially those who get in touch with us due to religious oppression' (Participant B, 2017).

With reference to the above quotation, NLD being primarily a Hindu-minority protection groups extends support to minorities, particularly those who seek it in the name of religious oppression. Furthermore, the participant refers to his venture as a *group* which upholds the definition of faith-based programmes as they do not have specific organisational structure, which is essential for *faith-background organisations*. DSP and DP also fall under the same typology of faith-based programmes since also identify themselves as 'transmedia campaigns' and 'peace-building group' respectively, though their affiliation to religion and their advocacy and welfare activities make them fall under the broader category of FBOs, as it has been formulated in the definition of the FBOs in the literature review section.

In the light of the above discussion, it is important to understand that the objectives of the FBOs along with their typology have been discussed to understand the orientation of these organisations, which would help answer the first question of the research. Moreover, the typological discussion is important to understand the *constitutive nature* of FBOs projected by Clarke (2015). As already discussed, Clarke's observation about the nature of the FBOs along with the data-collected from the representatives about the activities performed for the welfare of the community would help understand the multifaceted role that FBOs play for the welfare of religious minorities in Pakistan.

Role of FBOs in community-building

According to Clarke's *constitutive model*, FBOs are a part of community and play a major role in community-building. The analysis of the data based on the interviews re-affirmed Clarke's claims and shows that all participants organisations were keen on developing a well-integrated community in Pakistan which co-exists with peace and harmony. This can be shown by the comments of the participants; specifically, Participant A who has religious tolerance, freedom of expression and belief embedded in the very objectives of his organisation. He contends that;

'The prime objective of our organization is we are working for religious tolerance, expression and peace in Pakistan' (Participant A, 2017).

Participant C makes the similar claims, according to him;

'One of the objective is to convey the sense of equality among the citizens. Through our faith-associated transmedia campaign, we want to convey that religious minorities must be entitled to similar rights as most of the country' (Participant C, 2017).

In the light of the above quotations, it can be formulated that the FBOs in Pakistan are striving to set-up a community which co-exists with peace and in which the minorities must have equal rights of freedom of religion and expression. These endeavours of FBOs are also aligned with the Article 20 and Article 33 of the Constitution of Pakistan which has also been discussed in the literature review section. The articles command freedom of expression and religion though this right has been snatched away from the minorities due to the political motives of the rulers of the country. FBOs, however, are striving to restore this right for the religious minorities and hence are participant in setting up a tolerant society. Moreover, some of these FBOs are working for the recognition of unrecognised religious communities in the country which have not yet been identified or recognised by the State. An example in this regard has been provided by participant C. According to him;

*'In Pakistan, the most commonly known minorities are Sikhs, Hindus, Christians. However, we identified and gave recognition to another group of minorities in Pakistan. **They are known as Bahai's.** The people in Pakistan were shocked to know that even this minority exists in Pakistan. I think our endeavour is creating an impact since people get to know about other faiths. With this awareness comes eventual tolerance and later the recognition of rights in the society.*

*We believe that even **lack of information can also be the reason behind extremism. Awareness is the first step towards acceptance**' (Participant C, 2017).*

Participant C makes an important point with reference to the rights of minorities. As per him, lack of information and in-turn the lack of awareness sets grounds for the extremism in the country and therefore, his transmedia faith-oriented campaign highlighting the issues of '*radicalisation and marginalisation*' (Participant C, 2017) is important to create this awareness among the ignorant masses and hence in-turn make the society accepting of diversity in the region. The identification of the Bahai'I religious minority is the first step towards the eventual recognition of them by the state eventually. This example reveals that these FBOs have the mechanism to manifest the interests of the ignored citizens of the society and hence this steers the discussion towards the role that FBOs play as civil society in Pakistan.

Role of FBOs as NGOs

As affirmed by the literature review section, it would not be an over-exaggeration to call FBOs and NGOs as the different sides of the same coin. Clarke (2015) confirms that the advocacy activities that the FBOs engage into make them stand in the queue of NGOs. The analysis of the interviews has helped to identify two types of NGO related activities that the FBOs perform; they are advocacy for the rights of the religious minorities and the support extended by the NGOs to the minority faith-related communities. Participants from all the FBOs have engaged in advocacy activities in one way or the other, however, the material support in form of the goods of sustenance have substantially been provided and mentioned by participant organisations A and D. The evidence from the interviews has been produced below to support this prerogative;

'We are producing 100+ videos which break the myths and working on perceptions and mindset which you know break the violent extremism in Pakistan' (Participant A, 2017).

Participant C, with reference to his advocacy campaigns affirms;

'We wanted to target the conservative mindset in Pakistan that the minorities festivals should not be celebrated openly. Through several videos and media campaigns we have succeeded in breaking the conservative mindset and now people celebrate Christmas, Diwali and Rakhsa Bandhi with our Christians and Hindu brothers. The social construct has been challenged' (Participant C, 2017).

With reference to the interview material quoted, it must be noted that the participant from the organisations have advocated against the conservative mindset against the religious minorities in Pakistan and through their transmedia campaigns are spreading awareness among people. These campaigns are important since they would train and educate people about the need to celebrate diversity and would foster brotherhood among the religiously diverse communities. The participant's C claim that his organisation's campaigns have succeeded in challenging the stereotypes about minorities' festivals and hence these advocacy campaigns can be regarded as a positive game-changer in Pakistan.

About the support activities, participant A and D provided an account of them in their capacity;

'In Easter days, last Easter, we provided 80+ children educational stuff just like a school bag, notebooks a in kind support, so that's again a supportive step towards Christian minorities, so we are working for them' (Participant A, 2017).

'So, we started to provide Hindu-minorities food as well in times of drought actually Tharparkar and Umarmkot came to face recurrent droughts and people has to internally displaced from their home village to other areas where they can feed their other animals and livestock. In time of hunger period we provided them food items as well as non-food items and in times of flood we provided them medicine and we have to shift from water flooded/water logged areas to safe places' (Participant D, 2017).

With reference to the above quotations, it can be observed that FBOs while acting as NGOs have extended material support to the minorities communities in form of educational support, as well as food and shelter. Participant D, being the representative of MSDO, a Hindu-faith oriented FBOs talks more specifically about UmarKot and Tharparkar since these areas are predominantly occupied by Hindu-minority and hence the key support by his organisation is in this region.

In the literature review section, Clarke (2015) also contends that just like NGOs, FBOs must also be entitled to claim resources for their existence. The review of the data collected reveals that the government of Pakistan does not extend any substantial financial support to these FBOs in the country; however, the foreign donors do support them in their initiatives. Few of the interviewed FBOs have formed strong collaborative relationships with a few international donors. According to participants C and E;

'We collaborate with all kinds of welfare institutes. Let them be NGOs, INGOs, Youth welfare organisations, Women protection organisations' (Participant C, 2017)

'We are working with DFID directly' (Participant E, 2017).

Here it must be noticed that the collaboration with these NGOs and international donors serve two purposes for these FBOs; One, it provides them the required resources for funding their activities which otherwise are not financially supported by the government; Two, as mentioned in the chapter 2 of this study, international organisations cannot force Pakistan to abide by Human charter and via FBOs, which have operational legitimacy in Pakistan, they can support the minority rights' protection initiatives.

This section concluded the role the FBOs play with combating social exclusion in Pakistan at three levels, the next section would answer the second question of the research and would explore the challenges that the FBOs face while carrying out the welfare activities in Pakistan.

Challenges FBOs face while carrying-out their welfare activities

The analysis of the data has helped to divide the challenges faced by FBOs in Pakistan into three broad categories. These are political challenges, institutional challenges and societal/social challenges. These challenges have been discussed below with reference to the data-collected.

Political Challenges for the FBOs

Though all participants had a fair-share of challenges which they faced while carrying out their minorities-oriented welfare activities, perhaps the most extensive account of them has been provided by the participant E from CSJ. The detail account provided by him can be attributed to his vast experience working with various human rights organisations in Pakistan since 1988 and now as the co-founder and the Executive Director of his FBO. One of the major political challenge quoted by participants E, A and B has been the policy chaos that the country has endured due to the pendulum shift of civil and military rule. However, Zia's policies have been quoted as anti-minority and as the major wrath-bringer for the religious factions of the country. With reference to this, Participant E claims that;

'The policy chaos that we are in following Zia's rule is not allowing NGOs/FBOs the space they need to be and ready to function' (Participant E, 2017).

Zia's rule has been discussed as the major culprit for the societal radicalisation in the literature review section where Malik (2012), Rais (2014) and other scholars discussing the turmoil of the Islamic Republic following the Islamization policies of Zia, meant to win legitimacy for his dictatorship. The policy chaos he introduced in the country has been discussed with specific examples by Participant A and has been produced below;

'Curriculum developed by the government and especially in the era of Zia ul Haq, that was a very you know criminal part of that era. What happened he has actually you know spread the Islamization and what happened with the curriculum that they added the chapter, the hated and you know against minorities in Pakistan, against you know other, we talk about the minorities, it is not about the only Christians or Hindu, Sikhs, the Shias and the other smaller sectors also are minority' (Participant A, 2017).

'In Madrasas Imam was saying the things against minorities' (Participant A, 2017).

Most of the incident, if you look at the statistics, research since 2009 -16/17 or such incidents happened in Lahore, in Pakistan, in Punjab in Noon League so the fraction has political motives as well (Participant A, 2017).

In Zia's era media was also censored and the TV shows in which any reference was made to Hindu Gods were banned (Participant A, 2017).

The examples quoted by Participant A provide a thoughtful awakening of the discriminatory policies which drove the country on the verge of religious intolerance as it is today. The participant mentions a flawed educational policy where the hate material against minorities is a norm and the students who attend the schools start breeding hatred for the religiously diverse people since the very young age. Moreover, the censorship of media shows a conservative approach towards religious minorities where the difference of opinion and belief would not be celebrated. Here it must be noted that it is complete reversal to the Jinnah's vision, which as mentioned by literature review wanted a country which would celebrate religious differences. Moreover, the hate speech at Madrasa by Islamic clerics create an intolerant society and it started since the Zia's rule. Participant A makes another important point which has also emerged from discussion in the literature review section i.e. the subjugation against minorities

is rooted in the political agenda of the government. He affirms that it increased during Muslim league Noon's era and as per literature, these incidents keep on happening whenever the leaders wanted political support from the religious clerics of the country, who unfortunately have massive street power in Pakistan. These policies and the political motives yielded a society which became highly radicalised as shown by the incidents of violence quoted in Chapter 2. The fractionalisation of society has made the work of FBOs very hard in a country where religion is held sacred than the lives of people. The difficulties emerging from these policies have been summarized by participant B in the following words;

'In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, it is difficult to raise voice against some stressful topics, like blasphemy law, which has caused a lot of ordeal to the minorities. We cannot express openly our concerns about the hatred material in curriculum against minorities. We cannot lobby against Article 2, which does not give a right to a non-Muslim to be the President or Prime-Minister of the country' (Participant B, 2017)

This claim reveals that the impact of post-Zia's Islamisation policies has been so profound that it has hampered the machinery of FBOs towards working for welfare of the minorities. Zia's introduced blasphemy law which has been discussed in chapter 2 and commands blatant death or imprisonment of people talking against Prophet Muhammad has been misused and the religious minorities have become a target of it. But this law is held so sacred in Pakistan that as quoted by the participant B, it is almost impossible to raise a voice against its reversal.

So, to sum it up, it can be formulated that the major political challenge that the FBOs face in carrying out their activities is rooted in the orthodox policies, political motives and conservative state laws of Pakistan and going beyond that has yet not been possible for them. The next section explores the institutional challenges rooted in these policies that the FBOs endure while carrying out the welfare activities for the religious minorities of the country.

Institutional Challenges for FBOs

Participants E, B and D identify a very pressing institutional challenge which hinders their activities, discourages the foreign donors and makes it difficult for them to operate in Pakistan. It has been quoted as the '*hostility of state machinery*' by participant E. Following this hostility, it has become extremely difficult for the FBOs to register or to carry-out their welfare activities in Pakistan. Moreover, the government extends little or no support to the initiatives of the FBOs while are then funded by the foreign donors. However, even when the FBOs receive funding from the International organisations, they must go through a long procedure before the government allows these FBOs to use this funding. This horrendous process to get the grant approved and the hostility of the state machinery has been explained in the following words by participant E;

'Following the new National Action plan 2014, it seems like the state machine has nurtured a kind of bias against all FBOs/NGOs so any organization which has received International funding becomes susceptible to survey and visits, cancellation of documents then new procedures and new requirements being added, even to open bank accounts has become difficult. I mean these days if you are engaging in a new project, organizations are advised they open separate accounts for each project for transparency. This scepticism and long procedure drives foreign donors away' (Participant E, 2017).

Participant D also mentions the difficulty to obtain NOC (No Objection Certificate) by the Ministry of Interior and states that the '*Government has been really harsh on us and is recently limiting the scope of FBOs and NGOs in the country*' (Participant D, 2017).

The regimental rules against the FBOs carrying out welfare activities and the state hostility against the organisations which only aim to bring the religious minorities together was incomprehensible and therefore participant D was asked to elaborate on the reasons behind this hostility. He presented a very interesting account of the events which can be affirmed considering the strict security policy of the country. According to Participant D;

‘Government follows the security policy introduced recently in National Action Plan. So, they are trying to push out those organizations and those elements which are anti-state. You might have heard about the incident about Dr. Afridi that incident took the mainstream media where Osama bin Laden was killed in the attack. The government was claiming that the doctor was working with Save the Children NGO as a fake lead and he was actually spying for US—it was statement of the government. So, they say that the attack by US was done on his findings, what we can say, on his linkages, and so they put these restrictions on the NGOs and FBOs they are strictly following their funding sources’ (Participant D, 2017).

This is an interesting observation by Participant D which is rooted in the National Security Policy and the need to safeguard the sovereignty of the country. As established in the chapter 2, sovereign states do not encourage the invasion or interference of other state factors in their country. According to the participant, the infamous raid of US to find Osama bin Laden in Pakistan was based on the findings of a spy doctor by US working in the name of the Organisation named ‘Save the Children’. It was following this incident that the mistrust of the government on the NGOs and FBOs funded by foreign donors started. Though the strict policies of the government may seem like a necessary evil, following the non-consensual invasion in the territory of Pakistan in the post-Osama bin Laden’s death event; these policies have hindered a lot of good work and the FBOs must strive for their existence at sometimes.

Other institutional challenges identified by the participants are the *weak rule of law* and *incapability of the state to implement orders by the court* which are intended for the protection of the religious minorities. The participants quote the Supreme Court order of 19th July 2014, following which the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered to set-up a task force at provincial level to protect religious minorities and expanded on the human rights jurisdiction in accordance to the Human Rights Charter. However, the enforcement of the law has still not been done completely due to weak rule of law and incapable state machinery and as per Participant E;

‘Even after 3 years of the order, only 32% of the work has been done’ (Participant E, 2017).

Participant B explains the inefficiency of the state machinery to enforce law as;

‘First, we must strive for the passing of the bill and then make attempts for enforcement, which shows lags in the institutional machinery of Pakistan’ (Participant B, 2017).

This hostility of the state machinery towards FBOs stemming from the strict security policy, the weak rule of law and poor enforcement mechanism reveals the havoc that the FBOs must go through while working for the minority rights. Though the objectives of these organisations are completely noble and in good faith of the people, the culture of scepticism and uncertainty and the difficult course of history has created a morbid situation for these organisations where they find it difficult to function or flourish. The challenges with the societal scepticism have been discussed in the following section.

Social Challenges for FBOs

The hostility against the FBOs is not only restricted at the state level. Following the security breach by US in the aforementioned Osama bin Laden incident, the state spread a propaganda

against the FBOs, NGOs or any other organisation funded by foreign donors, as a result of which the general public stopped supporting and funding the welfare initiatives by these organisations. In support of this claim, Participant D formulates that;

‘Due to the propaganda by the government, using the Print, Social and Electronic Media, a negative image of FBOs, NGOs and any other internally funded organisation has been painted’ (Participant D, 2017).

Participant E highlights the grievance associated with this growing scepticism against the foreign donors and formulates that;

‘The scepticism by the government and the society is driving the donors like DFID away’ (Participant E, 2017)

In the light of the above discussion, it can be established that a substantial degree of harm has been done to the FBOs following the societal scepticism which is bred by the government which in-turn guilelessly associates it as a necessary evil to keep foreign meddling away from the sovereign state of Pakistan. Though these inferences may seem complex and intense; they are rooted in the perplexing history of Pakistan and can lay bases for further research.

Findings and Results

The analysis of the data, guided by literature review has helped to answer the research questions of the study and therefore the following results can be draw;

- 1- The term 'Faith-Based Organisations' does not capture the diverse set of operations that these organisations play in protecting or representing religious minorities in Pakistan. Moreover, the analysis of the literature and the data-collected reveals that it is difficult to draw a line between FBOs and NGOs and the only difference between the two is the affiliation of FBOs with faith-based fractions of the society. Otherwise, the activities carried-out are based on welfare provision just like the NGOs. Although it must be noticed that differentiating FBOs and NGOs is not the focus of the study, it is just vital to understand the unique role of FBOs with reference to welfare provision.
- 2- The *constitutive model* of Clarke has helped to sort the data in understanding the role that FBOs play in ensuring social inclusion for the minorities. The analysis of the bases of this model presents a more secular aspect of the FBOs which they play to represent religious minorities. As per the analysis based on the model, FBOs play a multifaceted role in the society where they act as NGOs, civil-society and as reformists to build the community. While playing these roles, these FBOs act as the advocates for the social and human rights, they extend material support to the less-fortunate and strive hard to represent the religious minorities at the state level. Two key milestones which have been quoted as an achievement of the efforts of FBOs are the passage of the Hindu-marriage Bill and the Supreme Court's order of 2014 to set-up a task committee to protect minorities at each provincial level. These achievements were the result of the proactive role that the FBOs have been playing to represent the rights of religious minorities in Pakistan.
- 3- The challenges that these FBOs face in carrying-out the welfare activities for the minorities have been identified at three levels i.e. political, institutional and social. The analysis reveals that religion is a highly politicised tool in Pakistan and therefore, the policies rooted in them has although facilitated the leaders of the state; they have hampered the functions of FBOs and NGOs. Moreover, the updated National Action Plan (NAP) of Pakistan has limited the scope of foreign-funded entities including some participant FBOs since this Plan is rooted in a strict security policy. The new state policies following the NAP has driven away foreign donors since they state and the Public sees them as foreign agents spying on the country and perceive them as a threat to the state's sovereignty. The institutional challenges identified are rooted in the failure of the state mechanism to enforce laws passed by the Supreme Court for the protection of minorities. The analysis reveals that these challenges have not only hampered but threatened the existence of FBOs in the country.
- 4- The analysis reveals a thought-provoking correlation between the recent challenges faced by the FBOs and its link with the National Security Policy of the country. The review of literature reveals that Pakistan has an intricate history which is rooted in its partition, its geographic location and the intercession that this region faces by foreign players like India and US. These factors have made self-defence and hence the need for a proactive Security Policy integral for Pakistan. Though following the recent raid of US without the consent of the country has activated a strict Security Policy which has limited the scope of foreign funded organisations, it has been a hard-blow for the FBOs and hence the distressed minorities of the country.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Considering the fact that the FBOs have become increasingly important in the developmental sector of the contemporary world and understanding the notion that Pakistan is a state rooted in religion; this study is carried-out to understand the role that FBOs play in ensuring social inclusion for the religious minorities and to understand the challenges that they face while carrying-out the welfare activities for these minorities. The review of the scholarly work on the concept of FBOs revealed the problem scarcity of data on the concept, specifically with respect to the FBOs in Pakistan and hence the study made attempts to understand the dynamics of FBOs in Pakistan by conducting interviews with representatives of the few FBOs. The results reveal that FBOs have played a multifaceted role to ensure social inclusion for religious minorities in Pakistan. These FBOs have been engaged in advocacy campaigns, have provided material support to the distressed religious minorities and have strived for social justice and legal rights of these communities. This variety of endeavours have helped to associate the FBOs with the civil society, social-reformists and NGO segments of the society and this categorization is driven by *Clarke's constitutive model*. This model has helped to pin-point a secular side of these otherwise assumedly religious entities and reveals how these organisations are rooted to help all the religious minorities regardless of their religious affiliations.

The challenges that these FBOs face are divided into the broader categories of political, institutional and social challenges. These challenges however stem from the complex political history, the condescending laws against minorities and as the findings reveal from the National security policy of the country; they have dramatically limited the scope of FBOs in Pakistan. In the light of the current study, it would not be wrong to say that Pakistan is a state which has seen a long history of politicization of religion where the magical cane of religion has been used to bend to population to oblige by the most sinister rules and customs. In support of this claim, the findings reveal that this politicization has yielded laws like blasphemy law and inadequate educational and employment laws against the religious minorities and hence opened a Pandora box of problems for the minorities. Though FBOs have made substantial progress in addressing these problems, the recent Security Policy of Pakistan has limited the scope of these FBOs. This finding is interesting since it shows that security policy and hence a state's sovereignty is so important in the developing world, that it can have an impact on the other policy areas of the country. Therefore, the future research can be conducted to understand the impact that the Security Policy of a country could have on its FBOs or NGOs. This research would be more valid in the case of Pakistan since Pakistan is a state rooted in faith and has a culture of scepticism against the foreign funded organisations like these FBOs.

With reference to the challenges faced by these FBOs although it is evident that there is a need for a more efficient state machinery which can enforce minority protection laws and orders and that the government must be more supportive of their activities; the limitation of this study is that it does not address these challenges in detail and hence a future research on as to how to deal with the challenges is required. Clearly more research is required to understand the dynamics of FBOs in the world in general and in the highly politicised Pakistan in particular.

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