

NATIONAL NARRATIVE BUILDING: ROLE OF ACADEMIA, THINK TANKS AND MEDIA

Sheikh Ghulam Jilani*

Abstract

National Narrative is reflective of the national aspirations both at grand strategic level and operational level. It provides a framework from the state to the public to perform towards national goals. It comprises the strategic choices made by the individuals at helm of affairs and these choices lead the nation in a particular direction. As narrative building follows constructivism, it is a crafted world view which is presented to the nation to visualize and pursue. World over intelligentsia, academia, think tanks and media are very closely knit with the state machinery to propagate a narrative. However, a close examination reveals that in Pakistan, this serious exercise is not formalized. The role of academia, think tanks and media, which can be called 'knowledge holders' of society, is yet not actualized in Pakistan owing to short comings both at policy and execution level. The state alone which is the 'power holder' is not able to craft and propagate the national narrative. The article analyses and identifies certain deficiencies in the role of academia, think tanks and media in narrative building exercise and suggests some measures to improve their capabilities. Only a well thought out collaborative effort of 'power holders' and 'knowledge holders' would be able to provide the nation with a national narrative that is acceptable and workable.

Keywords: Narrative, Think Tanks, Media, Academia, Constructivism

Introduction

National Narrative to some appears only as a buzzword, to some it is another cliché and to some it is a political slogan, yet in its essence it is a deep thought, based on which the national leadership endeavours to do 'something'. As a matter of fact, all national narratives focus on the societal aspects both inland and outland. Based on the underlying themes, at times, these are termed as 'social narratives', being embraced by a group, while at times, these are termed as 'national narratives', which form the basis of a nation's socio-cultural growth. The existing literature conflates or overlaps the positions of national narratives, culture, identities and values.¹ National narratives, which may change with the passage of time, are not merely an account of a nation's history; rather they refer to the future of the nation either implicitly or explicitly and serve as a reason for the citizens to support the policies and directions given by the government.² The argument of changeable

* Sheikh Ghulam Jilani is an M.Phil Scholar at Strategic Studies Department, Faculty of Contemporary Studies, National Defence University Islamabad, Pakistan.

narrative is attributed to the fact that what defines us as a nation isn't an absolute fact, but merely a public narrative shaped and formulated by stories and perceptions. There is an amazing collection of such perceptions and stories, which have shaped and shifted the narratives over time and the inherent flexibility of the words such as 'liberty' and 'unity', allow building a variety of 'strategic narratives', which can be noticeably seen in case of USA. The national narratives can be changed, formed or forgotten, as and when a nation alters its demographic make-up, society and interaction with other nations. In nutshell, the national identity supports formation of national narrative and offers awareness of common values and characteristics to the citizens, which helps a nation to survive, grow, progress and strive to become the best among other nations. Narrative-building is a continuous process, which has been evolutionary in nature and remained essentially dependent upon the domains of time and space.³ The narrative building has been rudimentary during the agricultural ages until the 1200s and gained importance after the 'scientific revolution' when the phenomena of 'strategic' narrative-building commenced.⁴ As of now, it has gained such a prominence that governments, establishments, and even business community and entrepreneurs are involved in the strategic narrative building. It can also be safely concluded that narrative and humans are inseparable in essence and utility. It is more formal at state level and even its informal presence is felt in the basic unit of any society – a single family. The traditions, values, ethos, aims, desires and objectives of family, tribe and nation form the basis of all narratives and there are numerous aspects affecting the process – the most important of which is the human being in various roles – the Makers of National Narratives. This brings us to the conclusion that making narrative is a heuristic exercise which involves individuals who are influential and who want to share their understanding with society.⁵

C.F. Feldman argues that National narratives can be established according to a common construction and are usually highly patterned, which can be very dominant and mostly remain the same even if changes occur in the specific stories.⁶ Other contemporary scholars, like Yadgar, discuss complexity of national narratives, which are created from myths, secondary narratives, symbols, metaphors and images.⁷ It is also largely believed that the international and domestic vision of a state, which continuously evolves also helps making of a National Narrative and the notions of identity, ideology, history, culture, geography and foreign policy play a vital role in formulation of a national narrative.⁸ It is the narrative, which gives birth to various policy guidelines to all elements of the national power. It is the same narrative, which is manifested by the state in its functioning both internally and externally. Narrative as form of expressions is universal. It is present in every age, place and society – it is rooted in the history of mankind and is omnipresent.⁹

Narratives and subsequent policies are made, established and pursued based upon the need to make choices, being the function of bounded rationality, as those at the helm of affairs can only possess limited information and are needed to make choices under pressures of time and political constraints.¹⁰ This predicament compels them to balance cognition and emotion, or rational and irrational shortcuts and therefore they exercise power to frame issues, to focus the attention of their audience to specific information and ways to interpret issues. They make people see what they want them to see, which is actually a limitation of constructivism.¹¹ Creation of audience's perception through a Narrative Policy Framework, therefore, assumes importance to give credence to their adopted policy options. Empirical studies confirm that creation/formulation of a specific narrative is effective, when the policy/decision maker uses or targets the fundamental beliefs of an audience, in order to connect individual stories to an understandable 'grand narrative'. Hitler's strategic narrative of a 'Grand German Empire' or recent Chinese strategic narrative based on Belt Road Initiative are classical examples where policies are based on a narrative. A comprehensive Narrative Policy Framework is, therefore, important to construct/frame a narrative, which is accepted nation-wide and helps in synergizing the efforts of all the stakeholders for attainment of one common goal. An effective Narrative Policy Framework contains following four elements:¹² one, settings, relates to the context of policy making including the socio-economic and institutional factors, two, characters, containing at least one actor, who can be either a hero or a villain, the one who leads the narrative (Quaid-i-Azam or Nelson Mandela or Osama Bin Laden), three, a plot, a common story arc wherein a hero faces troubles from villain resulting into victims suffering or facing a tragedy. Other states, intra state entities (individuals/institutions) assume the roles of heroes and villains in the strategic narrative building, four, moral, related to the take-home point described by the cause of and solution to the policy problem.

Pakistan was carved out on the world map, based on a strategic narrative predicated on feelings, sufferings and aspirations, which was ideally acceptable to the people in all strata of life. Competing narratives were at play, yet the superior narrative, backed by persistent actions succeeded and Pakistan emerged on the world map. Since then there is a constant competition between the narratives of Pakistan and enemies of Pakistan domestically and internationally. Pakistan, owing to its inherent diversity of identity, culture, geography and oscillating foreign policy, has always been in search of a grand national narrative to propel its state and society forward.¹³ Some fissures and detractors have always posed challenges for Pakistan to build a national narrative, which can unite the various segments and bring about the much desired and needed internal stability. Feeble governance, largely impudent and self-cantered political leadership, internally weak political parties and rampant

corruption proved to be stumbling blocks in Pakistan in creating an all-inclusive national narrative for its social edifice and state machinery. Pakistan is a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic federation which can easily be misguided by short lived elites for their vested agendas. The rapidly changing internal governance behaviours are also attributed to absence of a robust national narrative, resulting into abrupt shift from democratic to military rule, and the regional and international economic and security situation of cooperation and conflict. Since long, the national narratives have focused on political point scoring and short-term motives. Political slogans, short lived temporary rhetoric, emotive and incident-based narratives are widely prevalent in the nook and cranny of Pakistan. A host of actors, players and contributors, who took upon themselves to build the narrative, remained short sighted and promoters of factors mentioned above. However, owing to a perpetual change in regional and international environment and the emerging shifts in the international liberal order, which have now been further compounded by the latest offset of a new technology i.e. Artificial Intelligence, the need for a correctly framed national narrative is quintessential. Once we club it with the new global dimensions of corona pandemic, the situation further seems complex and hazy. Pakistan needs a new strategic narrative, aiming at safeguarding its national interests to ensure economic prosperity and security. The new national narrative must have long term strategic aims to address existing schisms with regard to national identity, resources distribution, political discourse, economic development, governance issues, civil-military relations, regional and international vision.¹⁴ To address these vitally important questions, all the stakeholders must play their role in building the new narrative. The question however remains that how a National Narrative can be constructed for Pakistan and who can play the role in construction of a National narrative; a narrative that could help citizens to overcome internal vulnerabilities of state and also acquire and retain a venerable place in the comity of nations. This paper seeks to answer these questions, focusing on the role of intelligentsia, media and think tanks, which can provide significant assistance in formulation of a National Narrative.

Narrative-building in Pakistan

No nation displays agreement to a single story, rather, it is always a polyphony of voices which overlap, crisscross at times oppose as well as affirm a plethora of views.¹⁵ This assertion is confirmed by the work of George Lakoff, who analysed narratives of various countries and found contradictions within. As per Lakoff, US narratives of conservatives and liberals are fundamentally different, yet claim to profess the same meanings. Swedes endeavour for technical and managerial progress, despite claiming to connect with nature. Brazilians emphasize on mixing of three races for the national cause, but also apprehend images of body corruption due to such mixing¹⁶. Pakistan, therefore,

is no exception, where a lot of differences exist, when it comes to framing of a unified national narrative. The role of intelligentsia cannot be over emphasized, in order to bring unanimity and harmony in the already divergent narratives and policy formulation circles.

In order to drive the state and society, Pakistan is in search of a grand national narrative since independence, and it is generally agreed upon that Pakistan's existing narratives have been found wanting in construction of a resilient society. After independence Pakistan tried to embrace conflicting and overlapping paradigms labelled as Liberal-modernist, Islamist and Socialists – the conflicting nature of these paradigms affected the national security and the need for a new strong narrative is essential in order to compete with the ever changing geo-political and economic vicissitudes. Hence the elite of Pakistan, holding the levers of power, centred the Pakistani narrative in a narrow construct mostly revolving around the centrality and security paradigm. This approach caused schisms in the society and the diversity of Pakistani culture was ignored.¹⁷ Such narratives proved insufficient to satisfy the needs of ethnicities like Bengalis, Balochs, Pashtuns, Sindhis and Muhajirs and failed to satiate the needs of the people of different regions.¹⁸ Absence of a narrative and an articulated response to the hostile narrative(s) has further added fissures in Pakistani society for long. Media, intelligentsia, think tanks and academia are believed to be the first line of defence of ideological boundaries of any state. These defenders of ideological boundaries remained entrapped inadvertently in the peripheral issues, thus, giving way to enemies to further their agenda against Pakistan to damage it from within and outside.

Pakistan is one of those few countries which were created on the basis of a narrative, an ideological state. 'Two Nation Theory' was a strong actionable narrative, which helped rally the Muslims of the subcontinent under the banner of Muslim League. This original narrative was crafted by Allama Iqbal and the founding father of nation Mr Muhammad Ali Jinnah with the strong support of other leaders of All India Muslim League. The letters and speeches of Iqbal and Jinnah exhibit the deeper understanding of the narrative and its applicability and acceptability. Iqbal states that:

*The truth is that Islam is not a Church. It is a State conceived as a contractual organism long before Rousseau ever thought of such a thing, and animated by an ethical ideal which regards man not as an earth-rooted creature, defined by this or that portion of the earth, but as a spiritual being understood in terms of a social mechanism, and possessing rights and duties as a living factor in that mechanism.*¹⁹

Subsequently there was an academic contest between those who believed in Islam as a way of life and those who wanted Pakistan to be a progressive Muslim state. 'Objectives Resolution, 1949', which is now a substantial part of the

Constitution of Pakistan, represents the confluence of these differing views, thus, paving the way for making Pakistan an 'Islamic Republic'. Barring initial 2-3 years, subsequent history of Pakistan reflects fluctuating ideological moorings, accentuated by the contemporary international and regional geo-political currents. Pakistan also remained gripped in a *regionalist narrative* which arose among the political elite with strong roots in the provinces. The first strong challenge came from East Bengal, where the political elite challenged a strong central government vis-à-vis provincial governments. The provincial elite termed the centralist tendency as a continuation of the colonial attitude and method of governing and federal-provincial re-definition of the six-point system in 1966 was the subsequent most blunt display of provincial rights and interests. General Ayub Khan adopted a *modernist narrative* with the introduction of system of basic democracy, promoted power at the Centre and discouraged provincialism to strengthen nationalism in the country. Pakistan's economy started evolving but the competition between capitalism and socialism contributed toward political discontentment. Subsequently a wave of *Islamic Socialism* became the new narrative and based on the same a new Constitution of Pakistan, that declared Islam as a state religion, was made. However, the narrative was a political party's internal practice and lacked national level manifestation thus ended in authoritarianism during the period 1972-1977. Then the narrative of *Islamization* emerged which naturally put emphasis on Islamic teachings and Pakistan grappled with the transactional use of religion and it ultimately entrapped Pakistan into extremism and sectarianism. Subsequently, a new narrative *enlightened moderation* was crafted in order to address the challenges faced by Pakistan – used as a panacea for a state plagued with confrontational despondencies. Dream of a progressive society and concept of enlightened moderation remained the major line of action. Amongst these there were other narratives as well which were crafted for addressing the challenges and inspiration of the masses like *Jinnah's Pakistan*, *Naya Pakistan*, and *Muslim Welfare State*.

With the advent of new geo-political realities, and dawn of an 'Asian Century', national stability of Pakistan is passing through a critical time, which warrants a strong bonding to stand together. A new normal, post pandemic, which is shrouded in mystery calls for a global re-orientation, where the international theories of realism, populism, multilateralism and liberalism have all become question marks.²⁰ In such chaos, nationalism emerges as the prime ideal, around which other elements of society and state can rally, leaving behind all the biases.²¹ To achieve these ends, an unbiased political system augmented by robust governance is necessary to integrate the marginalized quarters of society. Good governance, sustainable democratic culture, re-definition of National Identity and a culture of positive debates and discussion is needed to bring all the stakeholders on board.²² Intelligentsia and think tanks, therefore,

assume importance in framing/construction of new narratives, as they have the capability to undertake research and propose viable options independent of any political or institutional biases.

The Think Tanks

It is quite challenging to precisely define and explain the characteristic of think tanks, owing to their fluid and idiosyncratic nature given by the contemporary politico-cultural and historic environment.²³ Think tanks to a certain degree are also subjective due to the lack of qualifying criteria at the academic level.²⁴ James McGann, Ken Weaver and Donald Abelson define think tank as “*an independent organization, dedicated to general interests, having a defined research team, which lays focus on research for putting across innovative proposals/public policies available through freely accessible communication resources for dissemination of information to a broad audience.*”²⁵ It will not be an over-statement to term think tank as a ‘*weapon in the war of ideas*’. Think tanks also serve their purpose in the modern typical wars, by facilitating reflection and competencies and encouraging technological innovation and strategies. Just as an army assures the physical defence of a state, a think tank defends the essence of it.²⁶ Importance of think tanks is not ascertained by the right, left or the liberal orientation, but by the fact that how they push through change or ideas and narratives through evidence-based discussions. Their ability to foster an imagination, based upon a political milieu, stimulates public debate to offer practical and creative solutions, to address the world’s most tenacious complications. Historically, think tanks have made such contributions in the past where a Brookings Institution expert named Leo Pasvolsky was actively involved in rendering apt recommendations that helped formulate Marshall Plan. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace played an essential role in passage of the UN anti-Genocide Convention by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948, and creation of the G20 leaders’ group in light of Centre for International Governance Innovation’s (CIGI) proposals for innovation during the 2008 financial crisis.²⁷ Great Britain is regarded as the pioneer in the think tanks, where Royal United Service Institute (RUSI) was founded in 1831, while the Fabian Society in Britain was established in 1884.²⁸ In the US, think tanks were founded in 1914-39, whereas, RAND Corporation was set up in 1948.²⁹ The think tank boom started in 1980 in the world, presently there are around 8200 Think Tanks in the world, with their largest share in US, followed by Europe, while Asia only holds 22% of the total share.³⁰ In Pakistan, the first think tank ‘Pakistan Institute of International Affairs (PIIA)’ was established in 1947 with its affiliation to London based Royal Institute of International Affairs.³¹

As of today, Pakistan has approximately 93 think tanks, out of which 25 are listed internationally.³² As it is a well-known fact that think tanks do play a critical role, by acting as a bridge between scholars, researchers and academia

(the knowledge) and executives, practitioners and users (the power).³³ This makes them very important and responsible. It is felt that in Pakistan think tanks' output is comparatively inhibited and at times rudimentary. There are very few think tanks of international acclaim and gradually the output of the think tanks has reduced. This on one hand is attributed to lack of resources and funding and, on the other, lack of knowledge and commitment, because of unclear research agendas, which most of the times are set by donors or are picked up from the popular topics, thus, hampering the formulation of short, medium and long-term policy options.³⁴ It seems that the concerned quarters appear to be ignorant of the fact that investment in thinking is indispensable amidst knowledge-based economies. Coherent, focused and objective research work is scant, as every think tank being independent in its function chooses to undertake research at their own discretion (mostly as per the prevalent trends/topics) which often results in duplication of effort. Some of the active think tanks are functioning on the direction and requirement of their sponsors and donors (which is a universal trend) and offering policy inputs to the power corridors. Monitoring of the output by the think tanks and their policy level interaction is also scant. Further to this, researcher to the best of his efforts was not able to find any academic related criteria laid by the state for registration of a think tank. Specialized academic qualifications as a must and relevant past experience as a desirable attribute is not amply and aptly reflective in the current assembly of think tanks, rather only experience(s) and past appointments are taken as the basic criteria for joining these important forums in the war of ideas.

Academia

A society becomes angry, frustrated and alienated and is ultimately pushed into a psycho-political state, if the natural robustness of a nation is kept contained, due to an incorrect narrative or a misread ideology for too long. It is this scenario in which role of academia and universities gets pronounced.³⁵ Universities, which act as contact points between nation and state, facilitate mutual understanding between youth representing the former and institutions representing the latter. The true potential of universities needs actualization to utilize the mental faculties of humanists, scientists and social scientists by developing indigenous inter-disciplinary narratives.³⁶ The universities in Pakistan unfortunately lack in this aspect of imagination and are devoid of specific disciplinary narratives. This deficiency makes their academic engagement in defining and discussing the national issues merely ritualistic and stripped of their national effect. Contribution in the formulation of national narrative is possible once a comprehensive and futuristic inter-disciplinary story is created to agitate the mental faculties of students and researchers as being practiced in the West.³⁷ The universities hardly serve the purpose, when they

fail to create and later align their micro-narratives to the national aspirations. De-polarization and de-politicization of educational institutions would be a welcome step, however, role of youth under a fecund milieu of guided journey of self-actualization is an acme of academic journey, which incidentally is not present in our institutions. The existing sterility in academic productivity can partially be attributed to Higher Education of Pakistan, for its inability to create enabling environment for promoting higher learning skills. It can also be attributed to absence of public-private and state-owned institution-led research, both in social and applied sciences. Academia badly suffers from quality issues and state sponsorship. New researchers are badly hit by fluctuating policies, especially related to funding and sponsorships, as compared to international trends of Fulbright scholarships. For example, only 11991 researchers completed their doctoral degrees in last 10 years domestically and 2160 from foreign universities,³⁸ which is not a very healthy state, once we compare it with India, where 24000 doctoral degrees are completed on yearly basis.³⁹

Media

Media (print, electronic and social media) is vital and crucial in informing people about the important happenings, when the audience does not have direct knowledge or experience of the same.⁴⁰ It not only serves as a source of information but also shapes the opinions of people. Media on one hand serves as a mouth-piece of government and, on the other, projects the popular sentiments of the nation, thereby, increasing the transparency. It is, therefore, safe to assume that the information provided to people through media can facilitate change at collective level and also legitimise the actions of state, resulting into a wider social change.⁴¹ As of today the distinction of print media, social media and electronic media does not exist. Media in all its forms and manifestations is now a single platform with cross linkages of screens and information. Power of media was explicitly observed in the 'Arab Spring' and its manipulative power in the Gulf War. The social media had played a central role in shaping up the political framework in the Arab Spring,⁴² while electronic media was amply used for projection of US version of the Gulf War.⁴³ Smart power and Sharp power⁴⁴ aptly use the media to influence.

In Pakistan, media greatly influences people's perceptions on various national issues, which is based on non-investigated assumptions.⁴⁵ The recent mushrooming of media outlets from 1999 onwards,⁴⁶ after they were granted 'freedom of press', were found wanting in articulating their responses maturely. Politicization of media outlets and absence of legitimate checks and balances have caused various media channels to drift away from what was actually desired from them. Media as the fourth pillar of state has assumed added importance and its role in perception management and consensus building at national level is very important. Mushrooming of social media as an influencer

and maker of 'narrative' is posing a challenge to the state at various levels. In Pakistan use of 'facebook' is almost 100%, while other applications are well below 5%,⁴⁷ yet the virulent effects of fake news and cross linkages with electronic media and ease to access smart phones are fully exploitable. Hence, it serves as a ready-made tool to spread the narrative of any kind, be it state narrative or an anti-state narrative. Recent state narrative of 'smart lock down' during fight against Corona Virus (COVID-19) is an apt example of reach of media and its effects, also visible globally. Sino-Indian border conflict - 2020 at Gulwam and its media projection by both India and China is also reflective of the power and reach of media and the effects it can cause.

The Way Forward

There is a need to identify, appreciate and validate the roles of all the makers of strategic narratives, especially at the state level. While focussing on the knowledge holders only, a comprehensive framework is necessary for their organization, roles, registration and monitoring. The role of think tanks must be re-invented by moving them away from the self-referential bubbles, engaging critically with power, and re-thinking their responsibilities towards society at large. Think tanks must have mandatory specialist academic qualification (2-3 PhDs, 3-4 MPhils) and relevant expertise to ensure quality input and enable them to contribute constructively. Having appropriate expertise, think tanks must undertake research on issues pertaining to policy, governance and defence related aspects, so as to help government and the concerned quarters in gaining up-to-date information, relevance of actions and quality of input/output.⁴⁸ Think tanks should be freed from restrictive legislations, censorship, and smear campaigns and arguments, which portray them as research tools used by elites.⁴⁹ This will help in bringing out rational and neutral research, which even if contradicting the national/governance orientation, is likely to help understand the opposing narrative, thereby, assisting in formulation of a narrative acceptable to all. Think tanks, which at the moment are lacking in framing micro-narratives of different knowledge streams, must widen the horizon of researchers through trans-disciplinary study, so as to bring out a research product acceptable to all the stakeholders. There is also a need that think tanks should assert the dignity and relevance of policy research, while finding innovative ways to bring diversity in their organisational structures by re-designing the research methodologies, capable of responding to the policy needs of today's complex world. This will help in building networks, having more representation from the society and a broader outreach. The think tanks must play a role in formulating policy agendas, by mobilising expertise and putting forward evidence to bring innovative change for nurturing and spread of narratives. This new role will help shunning the group think syndrome and conformational biases. In order to streamline and de-conflict the research

activities of various think tanks, an apex governing body may be formulated, which can de-conflict the duplicity of effort having minimal interference in the research itself. Think tanks may be organised/segregated to undertake research on specified areas like defence, foreign policy, governance and economy etc. Mutual interaction/joint research of subject specific think tanks can later be organised through the apex body to generate an all-encompassing response on any policy issue. Influence of think tanks can be extended beyond borders and mutual interaction of think tanks of other countries is likely to present Pakistani national narrative in a scholarly manner, having more acceptability and outreach. Academia and scholars can, thus, become ambassadors to spread a well-articulated national narrative.

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, which desires that the researchers should have maximum international publications, must take measures to liberate itself from too much dependence, as more emphasis on publishing in international journals systematically dissuades the researchers away from their own local issues, because they would try to undertake research on international issues, having negligible national concerns.⁵⁰ Universities must understand their crucial role in building the micro-narratives. Abundance of intelligentsia at their disposal must be utilized to conceive respective micro-narratives, which can later be dove-tailed with the grand national narratives. The independent and un-biased research habits developed in the students will also accrue dividends in future, as the same students are likely to assume important pivotal positions in various sectors. State should go for public-private research-based solutions in applied sciences and social sciences alike. There is a need to invest in the Higher Education and enhance our Human Development Indices. Universities and educational institutes are the nurseries of the future leadership. There is a need to guard our future by providing them the right catalyst so as to produce quality input in the nation building. Cognitive development in social sciences and scientific development in applied sciences always adds to the comprehensive national security and would back the national narrative by solid actions.

Media be motivated and steered to play a positive role in the nation-building. Their outreach, acceptance and ingress in the society must be utilized as a two-way stream of professing a national narrative and receiving feedback on some specified issues. Consensus building at national level on certain issues can be undertaken by generating apolitical and unbiased discussions. Media regulatory authorities must be mandated and empowered to keep a check on media houses, which are deliberately going tangent to the national narrative on the pretext of freedom of speech. The notion of freedom of speech in no way should contradict the mutually agreed upon national orientation. Self-actualization of the media by correct policies, apt handling and national spirit

would assist Pakistan manifold. Pros and cons of the latest technologies must be correctly appreciated and relevant expertise be acquired both in terms of infrastructure and human resource.

Conclusion

National narrative building is a serious academic and policy-making exercise. Long term narratives reflect the ideological and philosophical outlook of a nation, while short term narratives are about policy issues. As of now the concept of national security has also enlarged and the comprehensive security is predicated on economic stability, social bonding, political harmony and kinetic considerations. Thus a hybrid nature of security milieu is existing which warrants a serious effort in narrative building and adoption. Narrative building responsibility is with two entities i.e. Knowledge Bearers and Power Holders. A synergetic union of both the entities is quintessential in the emerging geopolitical scenario, where post pandemic uncertainties regarding economic security and human security are abundantly changing the positions on the international platform. Other simmering regional, global, religious, ethnic, and transactional issues would need a strong narrative by the state of Pakistan, which also needs to be fully backed by action(s) on ground. The makers of narratives have a duty to this nation, to its people, to their own selves. Undoubtedly, it is a challenging duty, but it is very sacred – only if we are able to actualize it.

Endnotes

-
- ¹ Elizabeth L. Malone et al, "Stories about Ourselves: How National Narratives Influence the Diffusion of Large-Scale Energy Technologies," *Energy Research & Social Science* 31, (2017): 70-76.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Adnan Ahmed, "The War of Narratives and the Role of Social Media," *Voice of Balochistan*, August 8, 2019, accessed June 3, 2020, <https://voiceofbalochistan.pk/opinions-and-articles/global-arena/the-war-of-narratives-and-the-role-of-social-media>.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Andrew Heywood, *Global Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 71-72.
- ⁶ Carol Fleisher Feldman, "Narratives of National Identity as Group Narratives: Patterns of Interpretive Cognition," in *Narrative and Identity: Studies in Autobiography, Self and Culture*, eds. J. Brockmeier, and D. Carbaugh, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2001), 130.
- ⁷ Y. Yadgar, "From the Particularistic to the Universalistic: National Narratives in Israel's Mainstream Press," *Nations and Nationalism* 8, no.1 (2002): 55-72.
- ⁸ Qamar Abbas Cheema and Taimur Shamil, "21st Century and Pakistan's New Narrative for National Stability," *Strategic Studies* 37, no. 4 (2017): 133-148.
- ⁹ Paul Hazel, "Introduction to Narrative," *Scribd*, accessed May 29, 2020, <https://www.scribd.com/document/72229116/Introduction-to-Narrative>.
- ¹⁰ Paul Cairney, "Policy in 500 Words: The Narrative Policy Framework," *Politics & Public Policy*, January 28, 2019, accessed <https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2019/01/28/policy-in-500-words-the-narrative-policy-framework>.
- ¹¹ Hoyoon Jung, "The Evolution of Social Constructivism in Political Science: Past to Present," *Sage Open* 9, no.1 (2019): 1-10.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Cheema, *Narrative*, 133-48.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Malone, *Narratives*, 70-76.
- ¹⁶ George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 49.
- ¹⁷ Salman Tarik Kureshi, "National Narrative," *Friday Times*, February 20, 2015, <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/national-narrative>.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Presidential Address to the 25th Session of the All-India Muslim League, Allahabad, December 29, 1930 available at www.columbia.edu.
- ²⁰ Marwan Bishara, "What would and should a post-pandemic world look like?" *Aljazeera*, April 19, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/post-pandemic-world-200419121617150.html>
- ²¹ Cheema, *Narrative*, 133-48.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ For further reference see, Oliveira Urrutia, "The Role of Think Tanks in the Definition and Application of Defence Policies and Strategies," *Revista del Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos*, no 2 (2013).
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ James G McGann and R. Kent Weaver, eds., *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalysts for Ideas and Action* (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 49.
- ²⁶ Oliveira, *Role of Think Tanks*.
- ²⁷ John de Boer, "What are Think Tanks Good for?" *United Nations University Centre of Policy Research*, March 17, 2015, <https://cpr.unu.edu/what-are-think-tanks-good-for.html>.

- ²⁸ Ahmed Rahid Malik, *Directory of Think Tanks: A Guide to Research Organizations and Social Sciences in Pakistan*, (Islamabad: Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, 2015), 81.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ James G. McGann and L. Whelan, *Global Think Tanks*, (London: Routledge, 2020), 45.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² James G. McGann, "Global Go To Think Tank Index Report, University of Pennsylvania," January 27, 2019, https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=think_tanks.
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Asma Hyder, "Dying Hope for Think Tanks in Pakistan: something is not right," *Daily Times*, November 28, 2019, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/508615/dying-hope-for-think-tanks-in-pakistan-something-is-not-right>.
- ³⁵ Shahzeb Khan, "In Search of True National Narrative," *The News on Sunday*, January 8, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/562465-true-national-narrative>.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ "Pakistan Produces Around 14000 PhD Scholars During Last Ten Years," *Urdu Point*, June 19, 2019, <https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/pakistan-produces-around-14000-phd-scholars-d-648809.html>
- ³⁹ Indulekha Arakkal, "India Ranks 4th Among Number of Doctoral Graduates," *Deccan Chronicle*, April 2, 2018, <https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/020418/india-ranks-4th-among-number-of-doctoral-graduates.html>
- ⁴⁰ Catherine Happer and Greg Philo, "The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change," *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 1 no. 1, (2013): 321-336.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Catherine O'Donnell, "New Study Quantifies Use of Social Media in Arab Spring," September 12, 2011, <https://www.washington.edu/news/2011/09/12/new-study-quantifies-use-of-social-media-in-arab-spring>.
- ⁴³ Barbara Allen et.al, "The Media and the Gulf War: Framing, Priming, and the Spiral of Silence," *Polity* 27, no. 2 (1994): 254-85.
- ⁴⁴ Samia Parveen and Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, "Freedom of Expression and Media Censorship in Pakistan: A Historical Study," *Journal of Historical Studies* 4, no. 2 (2018): 1-21.
- ⁴⁵ "Role And Ethics Of Pakistani Media," *UK Essays*. <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/media/role-and-ethics-of-pakistani-media-media-essay.php?vref=1>.
- ⁴⁶ Parveen, *Freedom*, 1-21.
- ⁴⁷ "Social Media Stats Pakistan: March 19 - March 20," *Stat Counter*. <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/pakistan>.
- ⁴⁸ Rosa Balfour, "Reinventing the Role of Think Tanks," *On Think Tanks*, January 29, 2018, <https://onthinktanks.org/articles/reinventing-the-role-of-think-tanks>.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Shahzeb Khan, "In Search of True National Narrative," *The News on Sunday*, January 8, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/562465-true-national-narrative>.