II. PREFACE

As part of the Energy Conservation Plan, Pakistan tried experimenting once more with the daylight saving time (DST) in 2008. The move was aimed at cutting energy cost by taking advantage of longer summer days. It was implemented first in 2002 on an experimental basis but abandoned soon after. This time around, however, it continued into the next year and since then never been tried again. It was a “monumental failure” the first time, writes the editorial of the national daily the Dawn.\(^1\) An article in another daily, the News, questions whether the government achieved in its plan of saving 400 megawatts of electricity through DST when in 2008 “most of the people, especially those living in rural areas, reportedly paid no heed to it.”\(^2\) In an editorial in the daily News, the paper recounts that “Daylight saving time seems to have resulted only in people delaying dining or sleeping times, rather defeating the whole purpose of the exercise.”\(^3\) Another editorial in the daily News dubs the whole experience as “a mere cosmetic measure that has been tried before and has always failed…in the pretence that the government is trying to do something.”\(^4\) The editorial in the daily Dawn writes in similar lines, “if the government didn’t do anything it would be accused of sitting idle as the energy crunch became more debilitating by the day.” Three years later in 2012 at the National Energy Conference, the government conceded the failure of its policy and decided to “no longer be experimenting with daylight savings time and instead simply

change summer office timings to save energy.” In a country where majority of the population lives in rural areas, has high illiteracy and low levels of education and outdoor activities in summer mostly taking place after nightfall, such measures were non-starter from the very beginning.

In 2010, the Punjab Assembly passed a resolution unanimously calling for an all-out ban on late-night packages offered by telecommunication companies. These packages offered significantly reduced tariffs as a marketing strategy targeting young customers for increasing network usage during periods of low traffic. The resolutions stated, “Because of such mobile packages ... the young generation, particularly students, remain busy texting and talking over the phone the entire night, without caring for their studies, health and sleep ... these packages ... [are not in line with] social and moral values and customs ... a ban should be imposed on all such packages.” The resolution recommended, “the federal government that instructions to the mobile companies be issued that they should not promote the tendency of cheap rate late night packages for changing tendencies in society.”

MurtazaAli Jafri, writing for the Dawn, asks whether this resolution should be called “politics or parenting.” Mocking the resolution he writes, “Forget terrorism, the energy crisis, a weakened government, and water shortages - apparently boys and girls texting and calling each other past their bed time has become a matter of national concern.” A month later the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly passed a similar resolution and, in addition to late night packages, demanded the ban on text messages bundles as well. The matter finally comes to the notice of the Senate’s Standing

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Committee on Information Technology and Telecom, which asked the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to issue directives for bringing an end to all late night packages and chat room services. PTA, following instructions of the Standing Committee, issued a directive in the same effect. All five telecommunication companies operating in Pakistan together challenged the directive immediately in the Islamabad High Court only to withdraw their application and filing a review petition in the Supreme Court.\(^8\) Jamal Shahid writes in the Dawn, “Technically, there exists no law that would allow that [stop late night mobile packages].”\(^9\) In about a month’s time, the operators, reports Dawn, “simply started offering the services under different names.”\(^10\) In its editorial, the Dawn writes, “intermingling of young men and women is not a matter that should concern the state which has nothing to gain except opprobrium by acting as self-appointed guardian of society’s morals.”\(^11\) The subject since then has not resurfaced while the late night packages and bundles are still being offered.

In 2014, upon the recommendation of the World Health Organization, Pakistan made it mandatory for all the travellers going abroad to carry a polio vaccination certificate as a proof that they have received at least one dose of polio vaccine. Pakistan is among a handful of countries where poliovirus is not only persisting but being exported to other countries too. In May 2014, the International Health Regulation, which represent an agreement between 196 countries and coordinated by the World Health Organization to work together for global health security including specific measures at ports, airports and ground crossings to limit the

spread of health risks to neighbouring countries, issued a ‘temporary recommendation’ that residents or long-term visitors from Pakistan should receive a documented polio vaccine between 4 weeks and 12 months before leaving the country. The travel restriction was applied from June 1, 2014 for all travellers. Soon after the emergency measures were put in place, it confounded into, what the daily Dawn dubs, a “real mess.” Emergency anti-polio counters setup at the airports were flooded with passengers, though the facility was only for urgent travellers. Many did not receive any information and others had no idea where to go to receive polio vaccinations. At the government hospitals, where the polio counters were setup for this purpose, hundreds of people lined up to receive the vaccination. Vaccination arranged for 10 days ran out in only two days along with the other essential supplies, i.e. stationery. This was already expected for about 30,000 Pakistanis travelling abroad every day for which the vaccination was not available at the first place. Within days, fake certificates were available from photocopier shops in only US$ 2. A rift between the Federal Investigation Authority and the Polio Cell on why the polio workers are issuing vaccination certificates instead the airport doctor resulted into polio vaccination being halted at the airports altogether. In November 2014, the World Health Organization issued another statement on the third meeting of the International Health Regulation extending the temporary recommendation for a further three months. The statement asked Pakistan to “restrict at the point of departure the international travel of any resident lacking

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14 Ibid


documentation of appropriate polio vaccination,” and in case “existing and additional
Temporary Recommendations…cannot be fully implemented by the time the Committee next
meets, the Committee will consider additional measures such as entry screening to reduce the
risk of international spread.” The statement further asked Pakistan to “maintain these
measures until at least 6 months have passed without new exportations” and “there is
documentation of full application of high quality eradication activities in all infected and
high risk areas; in the absence of such documentation these measures should be maintained
until at least 12 months have passed without new exportations.” Six months latter in March
2015, the World Health Organization extended restrictions once more for another three
months.18 By that time, the steam had long run out and virtually nowhere at border
checkpoints the vaccination card was demanded from travellers.

In 2009, the Local Government in Lahore decided to fix the price of ‘samosa,’ a baked pastry
with savoury filling, at rupees 6 a piece. When an action was taken against a few backers
selling samosas at higher prices, the Punjab Bakers and Sweet Federation decided to file a
petition in the Lahore High Court, which was turned down. They then went into the appeal in
the Supreme Court, which decided in favour of the backers and ruled that it is not in the
purview of the government to fix prices of ‘samosa.’ While samosas were already sold in
different range of prices, some higher than rupees 6, Dawn questions, “Was it the court’s best
use of time at this stage?”19 In another article in Dawn, Shyema Sajjad take both the
decisions to control the prices of samosa and the verdict by the Supreme Court to strike the
same sarcastically, “The Punjab Government’s creativity and wisdom has tackled some great
issues recently – some quite crucial too; the samosa…” and “Now why would the Supreme

18 Ikram Junaidi, “WHO extends travel restricts for Pakistan after poliovirus export,” Dawn, March 5,
on September 16, 2015
Court actually take the time out for the samosa ruling is anybody’s guess. Was the Supreme Court worried about Punjab’s nutrition?”

Habib calling it a “populist directive” on which “the two honourable superior courts thus took three years to settle or rather unsettle the spat over samosa prices that during this span had already doubled, spurning the six-rupee strictures slapped on them,”

Tausif Kamal writes in Pakistan Today of country’s senior judiciary at the time, “no matter how strong populist pressures are or how tempting or craven judicial intervention might seem to be. If not, then not only the rule of law would be in serious danger of being compromised but it would concomitantly trigger debilitating damages to the nation’s stability and economy.”

The abovementioned cases are just a few from a large section of administrative, judicial and executive policy decisions taken during the tenure of the last civilian government [2008 – 2013] in Pakistan. With policy decisions like implementing daylight saving time when it was already tried twice and failed miserably, calling for imposing a ban on late night call packages with no legal backing, making polio vaccine certification mandatory for all international travellers without having the required apparatus in place and setting the price of samosas by senior judiciary in the backdrop of its populist outlook the question whether these are effective policy measures or will they be yielding results or not become secondary. Perhaps, the more meaningful quest is then to find out the motives behind such decisions. Such a quest may also reveal the likely effectiveness of these decisions.

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This research entitled “Public Policy and Ideation: A Case of a Grey-Zone Country – Pakistan,” aims at studying the underlying motivations and the role of ideation in policymaking by taking the case of Pakistan. This research is not concerned with how effective the policymaking process is or how impactful its results might be; rather it is an exploration of those factors that become basis for policy actors, whether inside or outside the decision making circles, for making certain policy choices over others. In other words, the research is aimed at producing knowledge of the policy process, that is how and why of policymaking, rather than knowledge in the policy process which is referred to analysis and evaluation of policies.\textsuperscript{23} It is at the heart of public policy to know why and how particular decisions are made.\textsuperscript{24}