UOS Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (UOSJSSH)
ISSN (P) 2224-2341, ISSN (E) 2310-0249
Volume: 7, (1) 2023, Pages (55-64)
Journal Homepage: https://uosjssh.su.edu.pk/

The Development of National Integration and Politics in England under Thatcherism (1979-1990)

Gohar Ali Iftikhar
Ph.D. Scholar, Department of History & Civilization Studies, BZU, Multan

Dr. Muhammad Shafique
Professor/Chairman, Department of History & Civilization Studies, BZU, Multan

Abstract

The paper aims to unfold the development of National Integration under Margaret Thatcher's leadership. National Integration has been considered a buttress of nationalism. It is a prerequisite for peace, political stability, and economic prosperity. National integration played a pivotal part in the progression of nation-building. However, it is a complex phenomenon and is always influenced and driven by indigenous cultural realities in every country or region. The present paper analyzes the key components of National Integration and their relation with the emergency of Thatcherism. Basically, it focuses on two components—first, the consolidation of nationalism, and second, political integration. The study explores to what extent these components lead to National Integration. It also emphasizes political actions, political policies, and intra-party policies, which channelized the Conservative Party's electoral success under Margaret Thatcher's leadership. Moreover, it ponders upon the bold critical decision taken by Ms Thatcher and the aftermaths of these decisions on the process of national integration. The study primarily necessitates an approach that is both descriptive and analytical, with a specific emphasis on the interpretation aspect. Therefore, to effectively convey the information, a methodology that combines description and analysis is employed to provide a comprehensive account.

Key Words: National Integration, Thatcherism, Political Integration, Nationalism

Defining National Integration

In today's world, societies are characterized by diversity, pluralism, and heterogeneity, making it difficult to establish unity and harmony among different population segments. The multiplicity of any population is determined by various factors such as caste, colour, language, religion, race, culture, and ethnicity. National integration has become a complex issue due to political developments and changing aspects of modernity, including the shift from traditional to modern patterns of nationalism, as well as socio-economic transformation. Various authors defined National Integration as:

Karl Deutsch (1953) defined it as “Shared experiences" can form the basis of establishing a feeling of common nationality and community. Pye (1972) is of the opinion that the developed institutions express the shared objectives of the society and uphold the harmony and shared

values. This is the method through which individuals shift their dedication and allegiance from smaller groups, such as tribes or clans, to a larger centralized political structure. Emerson (1970) argued that the concept of integration involves a series of steps taken by a society that is made up of diverse groups with varying languages, customs, values, and cultures. The goal is to merge these differences into a single national culture by removing any narrow-minded loyalties. National integration specifically pertains to the challenge of establishing a sense of territorial identity that takes precedence over or eliminates any lesser loyalties based on local customs or traditions. Further he added that "It is a process leading to political cohesion and sentiments of loyalty toward a central political authority and institutions by individuals belonging to different social groups or political units." The building of nation-state out of disparate social, economic, religious, ethnic and geographical elements" (Iyanda Ahmed, 2016)

National integration refers to the continual efforts made to strike a balance between the various socio-political and economic demands of all sections of the population. In simple terms, it aims to bring together the different parts of a country in order to foster a strong sense of unity, mutual understanding, and patriotism. The ultimate goal is to establish a peaceful coexistence that will pave the way for the development and growth of the nation.

Literature Review

National integration has been crucial in comparative politics and political development research. The popularity of national integration in these disciplines stems from the fact that most analysts agree that national integration is an essential aspect of political development. (Weiner M. , 1965) Since the concept of development is so heavily focused on creating modern nation-states, the prominence of national integration in the development literature is not unexpected. There is usually an increasing concentration of political allegiance at the national level due to several factors, including the expansion of mass literacy and communications. (Deutsch, 1961) As a result, there is a corresponding decrease in the importance of local and regional allegiances.

The following analysis will use the terms "national integration" and "nationalization" interchangeably. It should be noted that national integration does not imply the homogenization of the relevant populations since other cleavages, such as race and social rank, are typically present in nationally integrated societies. National integration occurs when citizens' spatial or geographical placement in society does not predict their political preferences and actions. When this transpires, sectionalism (i.e., behavior based on sub-national affiliations) becomes politically insignificant. In accordance with the literature on national integration, these sub-national affiliations are gradually replaced by national orientations as time passes.

According to Robert Scott, one of the most critical reasons behind inefficient public policy development in Latin America is the absence of integrating and nationalizing political parties. According to him, one of the most important reasons is that the lack of nationalized and integrated political parties within most party systems is a significant factor hindering public policy formation. This absence prevents the presence of auxiliary political structures that can effectively unite and coordinate the functioning of a growing political entity (Weiner & Myron, 1966)In other words, he believes that some political structure must perform the integrating job, and parties may be the most suitable structure to do so during political development. LaPalombara and Weiner concur that single parties and competitive party systems may play an important role and further "formulate policies which will amalgamate parochial and national interests". (Weiner & Myron, 1966)

Some analysts contend that nationalization processes have continued in Western industrialized societies in the twentieth century. These same social forces are seen as critical in Western societies. For example, literacy rates have increased in Western societies during the twentieth century, as have communication and transportation networks. In addition to other factors, geographic mobility is believed by many to have fostered national integration by fostering new national orientations at the expense of more local or regional ties. (Alford, 1964) Political parties can make national appeals because of the social changes that political parties articulate. Parties articulate such social changes, which allow national appeals to be transmitted throughout the state by claiming new political issues. In his study of American state politics, V. O. Key noted that presidential election results were being nationalized over time, with the decline of sectional groupings leading to new political issues. (Key, 1983) According to Schattschneider (1958) American politics became nationalized in the twentieth century, with the New Deal having a crucial role in this process. The New Deal's combination of new governmental responsibility for overall public policy management was what made it so important.

In the opinion of Key (1983) and Schattschneider (1958), the 1930s elections in the United States witnessed a nationalization of politics, which took place in all regions except the South. They suggested that nationalizing politics would result in more competitive party politics, as parties would be more accountable for their alternative programs. Similarly, Stokes has found that local and sectional electoral forces have fallen dramatically in Britain and the United States since the beginning of the twentieth century. (Stokes, 1975) Nationalization of party voting and turnout occurred at the same time.

According to Stokes (1975), one of the most significant results of these alterations in both nations is representation. Even though national forces are more potent in Britain than in the United States, nationalization will proceed to greater levels in both countries. In addition to being more nationalized, British MPs and American members of Congress will adhere to their party affiliations more closely and become more concerned with the public's reaction to national programs and leaders. At the same time, legislative parties are more cohesive in Britain than in the United States. It is interesting to note that Stokes' argument parallels the claims of many analysts that Western legislatures are losing ground to political executives and that the centralization of the latter enhances their national impact. (Jones, 1969)

Analyses of Canadian politics in the late 1980s and early 1990s emphasized the importance of national political integration and political parties for two primary reasons. First and foremost, many writers considered that Canada was still far from being a cohesive national unit and suffered from an acute national identity problem. According to this line of thought, the primary barrier to national integration was the continuing strength of Quebec's ethnic, linguistic, and religious identities, which kept it separate from the rest of Canada. According to the second interpretation, partisan participation has been and should be a significant element in Canada's national identity. Political parties play a critical role in establishing national identities in countries where politics is underdeveloped and institutions supporting it are lacking, argues John Meisel. (Meisel, 1967)

Methodology

In the present study, the descriptive and analytical methodology is adopted. Further, qualitative methods are also used to support the argument. Primarily, it is a library and archival research. Both primary and secondary sources are used to improve the quality of work and to highlight the different dimensions. According to the research requirement, books, articles, newspapers, and online sources are being utilized. Furthermore, the empirical and statistical data dealing with general election results from (1979-1990) is incorporated for the logical explanation and analysis.

Conceptual Framework of National Integration

i. Political Integration and National Integration

The distinction was made between Political Integration and National Integration. The belief is that the transfer of problems to a newly established center of power is Political Integration. It was contended that National Integration is more significant and valuable than Political Integration. It was also elaborated that stability between the national and "communal" identities can be achieved through the consent of minorities, various groups, and the majority. (Shakir, 1982) In addition, he mentioned that national unity is essential for both economic and political development. The writer referred to the concept of communal identity in relation to the obstacles faced in achieving national integration in India. The main focus was on the importance of promoting mutual understanding among the majority, minority, and ethno-linguistic groups to strike a balance between communal and national identity. This approach is believed to be instrumental in fostering national integration.

ii. Objective and Subjective Feathers of National Integration

Bukari (2017) distinguishes between objective and subjective features. Objective features are those based on geography and national symbols, while subjective features are related to social and cultural aspects such as historical memories, awareness of uniqueness, and shared destiny. He emphasizes the importance of both these types of features in promoting national integration. The author examined the various aspects of National Integration, specifically focusing on its two classifications: Vertical and Horizontal. The former pertains to the social structure of different classes in society, while the latter refers to the challenges associated with integrating diverse ethnic groups.

iii. Nationalism and Integration

In case of England the emergence of nationalism paved the way for the process of integration. Hans Kohn argued that In England, there was a significant rise in nationalism that united the entire population. Religion was no longer a political matter, and religious tolerance and establishing parliamentary supremacy over the king were introduced. These changes set the stage for a new era, blending critical elements of the Renaissance and Reformation. This era's influence would only spread across the continent in the 18th century, marking a significant turning point. (Kohn, 1946) Kohn contended that the French Revolution and the Enlightenment's influence on it led to the rise of nationalism, which became the foundation of national unity. This resulted in nationalism becoming a means of integration in European society. National integration is an ongoing process that is influenced by various factors such as geo-economics, nation building, ethnic groups, social classes, regional histories, political order, and institutional framework. Emerson

believes that the process and patterns of national integration cannot be generalized since they differ from country to country, society to society, and nation to nation due to deep-rooted identities and complex histories.

iv. Unfolding Thatcherism

Many authors understand and define Thatcherism in various ways. Broadly speaking, Thatcherism was defined in three significant contexts.

- In the line of politics and elections
- The economic angle and economic policies
- Thatcherism as an Ideology

Gamble (1988) interpreted Thatcherism can as: "A set of intellectual doctrines, as a popular political movement, as a style of leadership, as a bloc of interests and as a programme of policy" He further explained the core of Thatcherism that in order to revive the political fortunes of the Conservative Party, reestablish market liberalism as the prevailing public ideology, and foster an environment conducive to a free economy, it is essential to curtail the state's influence while simultaneously reinstating its ability to take action. David Marsh and Raw Roads defined Thatcherism as: "Not so much an identifiable political outlook, [but] as a bundle of attributes, held together by time and place" (Letwin, 1992). Marsh (1995) in his article seeks to analyze "Thatcherism" and to what extent it developed the 'Thatcherite' Policies. He explained Thatcherism by discussing following authors: A. King emphasized that it is more about "role of Mrs Thatcher". Kavanagh (1990) argued that it was "reaction to 'ungovernability', failure of Heath Government and' Winter of Discontent". Bulpitt (1986) explained it as the "need to establish image of governing competence in order to achieve electoral success". A. Gamble (1988) interpreted as "the Conservatives' pursuit of 'statecraft'. Sees New Right ideology as a tool and identifies economic and political crisis as the context within which the Conservatives took strategic electoral and political decisions." Hence, after analyzing the about above-mentioned works on Thatcherism, it can be interpreted as

a) Margaret Thatcher own self

b) Emergency of new leadership

c) The progress of ideas in politico-economic policies

So, Thatcherism was crafted by three components: Margaret Thatcher's own self, the emergence of leadership, and the progress of ideas. The process of national integration under Thatcherism was a blend of nationalism and political integration. The factors which led to and consolidated nationalism were the political, economic, and foreign policy of Ms Thatcher. *Political integration* can be defined as a balance between political realities and electoral politics. There is a divided opinion on Margaret Thatcher's premiership. One perspective is that she converted the economy of Britain and overturned post-war decline.

On the other hand, her critics accuse that her policies proved worst for public spending and led to privatization of the economy. The aftermaths of these policies were unemployment and a downfall in the production of the coal and steel industry. Ms Thatcher's free market economy policy was designed to grow the middle class, but the

gulf between poor and rich had increased. However, her journey of electoral success portrayed an entirely different picture.

a) Margaret Thatcher Own Self

There is an ongoing discourse in history about to what extent an individual plays a role in any historical event or whether there are only trends based on anthropocentric reasons responsible for the occurrence of any event. Both factors cannot be negated. To be more specific, it is always two-way traffic. It means both individual and indigenous development instigate an event. Surely Margaret Thatcher as an individual played an essential role in developing Thatcherism. Margaret Thatcher was the first woman British Prime Minister. She is considered the only British Prime Minister with an -ism with her name. She came from a middle-class background and, contrary to those conservative leaders from the privileged class. So, her background made her unique, and simultaneously, she was an outsider at the party. She talked about traditional social morality, hard work, and self-reliance. She firmly believed and was convinced to give new policies to the government apparatus.

b) Emergency of New Leadership

Margaret Thatcher blamed opposition union paymasters for a strike deliberately with a clear intent was to damage the economy. On the contrary, the opponents clearly state that all the problems result from the Government's incompetent policy decision. The interruption in essential public services cannot be put on the trade unions. Rather merely, it is the failure of Leadership. In these crucial political circumstances, Prime Minister Edward Heath (1970-1974) opted to negotiate with trade unions to formulate some consensus way out. PM reasoned that we should act as arbitrators, not as antagonists. Ms Thatcher took a harsh and bold position against the decision of PM Heath. She believed the miners' leader involved the army to support strikes, which was the wrong time for reconciliation. As the cabinet minister, she took a firm stance to deal with the issue of a strike, opposite to the PM's decision. It indicates her iron hand policy, especially when dealing with miners and trade unions. As a PM, she materialized her stance in the form of zero tolerance for strikes. The faction of the right in a parliamentary party had reservations about Prime Minister Edward Heath's policies and his failure. They were keen to bring some radical change. In that scenario, Thatcher was the top choice who believed in the change of policies. As a result, she became the leader of the Conservatives. Later on, she became the prime minister. As a prime minister, she was aware of the optics in politics and knew there was a need to create balance within the party structure. Therefore, in her first tenure, the number of members in the cabinet were same who had also served under ex-prime Minister Heath.

c) The Progress of Ideas in Politico-Economic Policies

Margaret Thatcher came up with the notion of privatization, a free market economy under the umbrella of Right Reformist Neo-Liberal policies. The New Rights drove politics and economics. They were convinced that politics and the economy were interdependent on each other. So, the implications of economic policies were the yardstick for estimating political realities and gaining electoral success. The

economic policy was mainly interventionist, meant to emphasize the actions taken in the domestic economy.

Table: 1 Party Wise Position in three General Elections

Elections	**1979** (Guardian.co.uk, 2022)**,**	**1983** (Guardian, 2022)	**1987** (BBC, Politics 97, 2022)
Turnout	76%	72.7%	75.3%
ConservativeParty	335	397	376
LabourParty	269	209	229
LiberalParty	11	23	22
Others	16	21	23

Table: 2 Polled Votes top three Parties in the General Elections

Elections	**Conservative Party**	**Labour Party**	**Liberal Party**
1979 (BBC, Politics 97, 2022)	13697923	11532218	4313804
1983 (BBC, Politics 97, 2022)	13,012,316	8456934	7,780,949
Difference	685607 Decrease	2985284 Increase	3467145 Increase
1987 (BBC, Politics 97, 2022)	13,760,935	10,029,270	7,341,651
Difference	694619 Increase	1572336 Increase	439298 Decrease

[1]

Comparative Analysis on the Success of the Conservative Party in 1979, 1983 and 1987 General Elections

In 1979, general elections were held. This election was important because it was considered a political breakpoint in British politics. Prior to this, the politics of the British was termed a "Consensus" way of policies. The leading political parties had a consensus on some fundamental issues, including public spending on education and health, the idea of a mixed economy, trade unions, and income policy. There was a dramatic change in the policies, as mentioned above. Margaret Thatcher stood for victories with new ideas and policies.

The conservative party won a land-sliding victory in the 1983 general elections. The increase in the number of winning seats was 58. On the side, the number of winning seats for the Labour

[1] Calculations were done from the results of General Elections.

Party reduced to 209, and in comparison, to the 1979 elections, the difference was 60.[2] Other than reforms in trade unions and the privatization of British Telecom and British Steel, a few other events became the pertinent reason for the conservative party's victory. First was that opposition parties were divided, so the divided vote gave an advantage to the conservative party. The second important reason was the Falklands War in 1982. (Britannica, 2022)Thatcher's bold and brave decision to regain the territory from Argentina gave the world a clear message to reinstate England's sovereignty. Although it was a tough call for Thatcher, in the end, she proved an in-time decision. It had an emotional and positive impact on the masses regarding the prestige and pride of Great Britain. It was also reflected in the elections that despite the wave of employment and strikes by trade unions, the conservation party still managed to succeed in elections. Who emerged as the saviour of the Nation? Margaret Thatcher. In real politics, there are no good or bad decisions. The worth of any decision is to achieve the purpose, which was accomplished through electoral success.

The conservative party won a land-sliding victory in the 1983 general elections. 1n 1987, Margaret Thatcher became the first to win three consecutive terms of Prime Minister. Compared to the last election, winning seats were reduced by 21.[3] The increase in the number of winning seats was 58. On the side, the number of winning seats for the Labour Party reduced to 209, and in comparison, to the 1979 elections, the difference was 60 seats. However, it was interesting to note that compared to the last elections, the number of polled votes for the Conservative party had increased by 694619.[4]

Further important factors for the success of the conservative party were the divided votes and split mandate of the Labour Party and Liberal Party.[5] Although the Conservative party had won, there was an intra-party tussle. It was seen in the year before the election when in 1986, cabinet ministers Leon Brittan and Michael Heseltine resigned. (Hennessy, 1986) This internal rift in the party did not affect the electoral success, but in 1990 it paved the way for the change of leadership in the Conservative Party.

Conclusion

The decade of the 1950s and 1960s can be considered a good time for the middle class. The inequality was decreasing. Like many significant chunks of the middle class, they joined universities for the first time in their family. By 1979, Thatcherism began to be implemented, the chances of social mobility had reduced, and the class system was entrenched in the society. Over and above that, there is a divided and extreme view about Margaret Thatcher’s prime ministership. The first viewpoint is that she reshaped the British economy and reversed the country’s post-war decline. The other perspective of her opponents blamed compromised the public interests by applying the privatisation model in the country. As a result, unemployment and a massive decrease in. the production of the coal and steel industry took place. The main objective of her economic policy was to foster the growth of the middle class. However, as a

[2] See table 1.

[3] See Table 1

[4] See Table 2

[5] See Table 1 and 2

result, the wealthy population experienced a significant increase in prosperity, while the less fortunate individuals faced a worsening financial situation. The legacy of Thatcherism that prevailed in the 1990s was that the political difference between two leading political parties on different policies and issues was reduced. In the long-term implication, the Labour Party under the leadership of Tony Blair did not remain genuinely a social democratic party. Most of their policies were inclined towards centralist policies, and more specifically, their foreign policy became rightist policy. It was even reflected in the last general elections when Jeremy Corbyn attempted to bring change in the Labour Party that was attempted to restore the legacy of left-wing, populist values of the Labour Party. Furthermore, this would be an effective strategy to break the hold of the conservative party because if there was no notable difference between the policies, this difference could not be made. The election campaign would be more person-centric and driven by personality cults rather than manifestos or ideologies.

References

Alford, R. R. (1964). *Party and Society: The Anglo-American Democracies.* London: Murray.
Andrew Gamble, .. (1988). *The Free Economy and the Strong State.* London: Macmillan.
Bakari, S. (2017.). National Integration in Humanities and Development: The Way Forward. *UJAH Special Edition* , 358-374.
BBC. (2022, December 19). *Politics 97*. Retrieved from BBC.co.uk: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/background/pastelec/ge87.shtml
BBC. (2022, December 15). *Politics 97*. Retrieved from BBC.co.uk: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/background/pastelec/ge79.shtml
BBC. (2022, December 13). *Politics 97*. Retrieved from BBC.co.uk: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/background/pastelec/ge83.shtml
Britannica, E. E. (2022, December 23). *Falkland Islands War*. Retrieved from Britannica: https://www.britannica.com/event/Falkland-Islands-War
Bulpitt, J. (1986). The discipline of the new democracy: Mrs Thatcher‘s domestic statecraft. *Political Studies* , 19-39.
Deutsch, K. W. (1953). *Nationalism and Social Communication; An Inquiry into the Foundation of Nationality.* New York: The Technological Press and John Wiley.
Deutsch, K. W. (1961). Social Mobilization and Political Development. *The American Political Science Review,* , 493-514.
Emerson, R. (1970). *From Empire to Nation.* Calcutta: Scientific Book Agency.
Gamble, A. (1988). *The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism* . London: Macmillan.
Guardian. (2022, December 18). *Politics Special Report*. Retrieved from Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/electionspast/page/0,,1450576,00.html
Guardian.co.uk. (2022, December 12). *Politics Special Report* . Retrieved from The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/politicspast/page/0,9067,1207192,00.html
Hennessy, P. (1986). Journal of Law and Society. *Helicopter Crashes into Cabinet: Prime Minister and Constitution Hurt* , 423-432.
Iyanda Ahmed, B. D. (2016). Federalism and National Integration: The Nigerian Experience. *Historical Research Letter* , 8-13.

Jones, G. W. (1969). *"The Prime Minister's Power," in Policy-Making in Britain,.* (R. Rose, Ed.) New York: New York.
Kavanagh, D. (1990). *Thatcherism and British Politics* . Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Key, V. 0. (1983). *American State Politics: An Introduction.* New York: : Greenwood Press.
Kohn, H. (1946). *The Idea of Nationalism : A Study in its Origins and Background.* New York: The Macmillan Company.
Letwin, S. R. (1992). *The Anatomy of Thatcherism.* New York: Routledge.
Marsh, D. (1995). Explaining 'Thatcherite' Policies: Beyond Uni-dimensional Explanation. *Political Studies* , 595-613.
Meisel, J. (1967). *"Recent Changes in Canadian Parties," in Party Politics in Canada.* (H. G. Thorburn, Ed.) Scarborough.
Pye, L. W. (1972). *Aspects of Political Development.* New Delhi: Amerind Publishing Company.
Schattschneider, E. E. (1958). *United States: The Functional Approach to Party Government.* New York: Rinehart.
Shakir, M. (1982). On National Integration. *Social Scientist* , 36-45.
Stokes, D. E. (1975). *"Parties and the Nationalization of Electoral Forces," in The American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development.* (W. N. Burnham, Ed.) Oxford: (Oxford University Press,.
Weiner, J. L., & Myron. (1966). *Political Parties and Political Development.* Princeton: 1966: Princeton University Press.
Weiner, M. (1965). Political Integration and Political Development. *The Annals* , 52-64.