

Settlement of Yemen Crisis through Consociationalism: Possibilities and Challenges

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Abstract

The international arena is marked by struggle for power and in the struggle for power, conflicts are inevitable. While conflict refers to an interaction of friction and discord brought on by contrasting, unbridgeable interests, crisis refers to the pinnacle of a conflict. Lying at the nexus between peace and war, crisis reveals most clearly and intensely the distinguishing feature of international politics and the logical starting point for theorizing about it. The nation has a long history of ethnic, regional, and religious differences and is currently dealing with a complicated combination of political, social, and economic issues. Moreover, Yemen's immense geopolitical importance in the Gulf region makes the crisis more turbulent. In this ongoing crisis, can consociationalism be a solution? is the prime question of this article. Consociationalism is a political arrangement that seeks to manage conflict and power-sharing between different ethnic, religious, or linguistic groups in a society. This article tries to analyze how consociationalism can be helpful to address the issues of marginalization, exclusion and promote inclusiveness and cooperation between different groups. However, implementing consociational democracy in a country like Yemen is not without its challenges. There are several factors that can hinder the success of consociationalism in Yemen, such as a lack of trust and cooperation between different groups, the absence of effective institutions, and the presence of external actors with conflicting interests. So, this paper will also address the challenges of implementing consociational democracy in a deeply divided society, i.e., Yemen.

Key words: Yemen Crisis, Consociationalism, Conflict resolution, Power-sharing, Political accommodation, Socio-political stability.

Introduction

Consociational democracy is a type of power-sharing democracy that has been implemented in many countries around the world with varying degrees of success. It is based on the idea of inclusive governance, where different ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups are represented in the government to promote stability and prevent conflicts¹. Consociationalism, a political theory and practice, has gained attention in many post-conflict countries around the world as a potential solution to deep divisions and ethnic tensions². Consociationalism emphasizes community building, accommodation, and the removal of the roots of conflict in divided societies. This theory

¹ Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics* 21, no.2 (1969): 207-25.

² Trying Again: Power-Sharing in Post-Civil War Lebanon, Hudson 1997.

was first outlined by Arendt Lijphart in 1968 and has since been widely discussed³. Critics of consociationalism argue that it has a low rate of adoption, often resulting in political immobilism and further entrenching divisions⁴. However, supporters of consociationalism argue that it holds significant promise for building democratic states in divided societies after conflict, and there is substantial conceptual and empirical evidence to support this claim. Furthermore, consociationalism has been applied in various contexts, including Northern Ireland, where it has led to significant social change through the implementation of consociational policies in local government, education, employment, and the voluntary sector⁵. Consociationalism, a political theory and practice, has gained attention in many post-conflict countries around the world as a potential solution to deep divisions and ethnic tensions⁶. Consociationalism recognizes the existence of deep cleavages within a society and seeks to manage these divisions through inclusive decision-making processes and power-sharing mechanisms. This approach has been successful in other conflict-ridden regions such as Northern Ireland and Lebanon⁷. These experiences highlight the potential of consociationalism to address the root causes of conflict and promote stability. However, it is important to acknowledge the challenges and limitations of consociationalism in the context of Yemen. In Yemen, the implementation of consociationalism would require significant changes to the current political system⁸. In order to settle the Yemen crisis through consociationalism, it is crucial to consider the possibilities and challenges that arise with this approach. Consociationalism has been proposed as a potential strategy for resolving the crisis in Yemen, which has been marked by immense suffering and displacement. Consociationalism, as a form of power-sharing, aims to accommodate diverse and divided societies by promoting inclusive decision-making processes and sharing power among different ethnic and political groups⁹. This approach has been successfully implemented in other conflict-ridden regions, such as Northern Ireland and Lebanon, where it has helped to address the root causes of the conflicts and promote stability. In Northern Ireland, the historic Belfast Agreement of 1998 provided a consociational framework that enabled a transition from war to peace¹⁰. Additionally, research conducted by Adeney highlights the significance of handling demands that arise from heterogeneity in a constructive manner, rather than allowing them to fuel conflict. In the context of Yemen, the adoption of consociationalism would require significant changes to the current political system and may face resistance from those who benefit from the status quo. However, the benefits of consociationalism in Yemen cannot be overlooked. Consociationalism offers the opportunity for all stakeholders to have a voice in decision-making processes and to address the deep sectarian divisions within Yemeni society. One of the main possibilities of using consociationalism to settle the Yemen crisis is its ability to accommodate the diverse identities and interests present in the country. Furthermore, consociationalism could help to create a more inclusive and representative government that can address the root causes of the crisis in Yemen. In order to successfully settle

³ [The politics of accommodation, social change and conflict resolution in Northern Ireland](#) Neville Douglas, 1998

⁴ [Trying Again: Power-Sharing in Post-Civil War Lebanon](#), Hudson 1997.

⁵ [The politics of accommodation, social change and conflict resolution in Northern Ireland](#) Neville Douglas, 1998

⁶ [Consociational Theory: McGarry and O'Leary and the Northern Ireland](#), Rupert Taylor 2011.

⁷ [Power-sharing after the Arab Spring? Insights from Lebanon's Political Transition](#) Tamirace Fakhoury, *Taylor & Francis*, 2019.

⁸ [Can Consociationalism Save Yemen?](#), Joseph Cozza 2016.

⁹ [The choice of coalition governments for promotion of national unity in Africa: Does the model work for unity and political stability?](#), Kananelo M. Sekatle, M. P. Sebola, 2020

¹⁰ [Consociational Theory: McGarry and O'Leary and the Northern Ireland](#) Rupert Taylor, 2011.

the Yemen crisis through consociationalism, it is important to acknowledge and address the challenges that may arise¹¹. The first challenge is the need to address the root causes of the crisis, rather than simply managing its consequences. A comprehensive approach that tackles the political and economic grievances underlying the conflict is essential for long-term stability¹². Another challenge is the resistance from powerful actors who benefit from the current power dynamics. These actors may be reluctant to relinquish their power and may attempt to undermine or sabotage the consociational process. The second challenge is the implementation of consociationalism in a country with deep sectarian divisions. This poses the risk of further entrenching sectarian divisions rather than promoting inclusivity. To overcome these challenges, the international community must play a crucial role in supporting and facilitating the consociational process. The article examines various sources to explore the possibilities and challenges of settling the Yemen crisis through consociationalism. The Yemen crisis has been ongoing for years, causing immense damage and suffering to the country and its civilian population.

Yemen has a long history of social, cultural, and political division, which has contributed to the current conflict. The country is home to a diverse range of ethnic and religious groups, including Sunni and Shia Muslims, as well as various tribal groups. These divisions have sometimes been exploited by political leaders for their own gain, leading to tensions and conflicts between different groups¹³. One of the key divisions in Yemen is the division between the north and the south of the country. The north was a separate state, the Yemen Arab Republic, until reunification with the south, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1990. This division has resulted in a sense of separateness and mistrust between the two regions, which has contributed to the current conflict. Another important division in Yemen is between the Houthi (Houthi group who consider themselves as revolutionaries while other Yemeni parties as well as the GCC countries as rebels) in the north and the government-aligned forces in the south. The Houthis are a Zaidi Shia Muslim group that has historically felt marginalized by the central government. This sense of marginalization has fuelled their rebellion and their desire for greater autonomy. Tribal divisions are also a significant factor in Yemeni society. Yemen is home to many tribes, each with their own leaders and power structures. These tribes often have conflicting interests and rivalries, which can escalate into violence. In addition to these historical divisions, the ongoing conflict since 2014, Yemen has contributed to the further fragmentation of society. The violence and instability have led to increased sectarianism, with different groups increasingly defining themselves in opposition to one another. The conflict can be traced back to the 2011 Arab Spring, which saw widespread protests and uprisings across the Arab world, including Yemen. In Yemen, these protests led to the resignation of long-time President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ruled the country for over 33 years. His replacement, President Hadi, faced a number of challenges, including economic instability, political fragmentation, and a growing Houthi insurgency in the north. In 2014, the Houthis took control of the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, and forced President Hadi to flee the country. The following year, a coalition of Arab states led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates intervened in the conflict on behalf of President Hadi, launching a military campaign against the Houthis. The conflict has since escalated into a full-scale war, with widespread violence and suffering, particularly in northern Yemen. The war has had a devastating impact on the Yemeni people, with millions facing food and medical shortages, and the country on the brink of famine. The conflict has also been marked by widespread human rights violations and the use of indiscriminate force by all sides, including the use of airstrikes, which have resulted in thousands of civilian deaths. The war in Yemen continues to this day,

¹¹ [Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention](#), Jeremy M. Sharp, 2019.

¹² [Building an Enduring Peace in Yemen](#), Daniel Egel, Trevor Johnston, Ashley L. Rhoades, Eric Robinson, 2021.

¹³ Nadwa Al-Dawsari, "The Roots of Yemen's War," <https://tcf.org/content/report/fantasies-state-power-cannot-solve-yemens-war/>.

with no clear resolution in sight. The ongoing crisis in Yemen has become one of the most pressing humanitarian and geopolitical issues in the world today¹⁴.

The long history of ethnic, regional, and religious differences has created deep-seated mistrust, making it difficult for different groups to work together towards a common goal. In addition, the absence of effective institutions also poses a challenge to the implementation of consociationalism in Yemen. Without strong institutions in place, it becomes difficult to enforce power-sharing arrangements and to ensure that the rights and interests of different groups are protected. Furthermore, the presence of external actors with conflicting interests only adds to the complexity of the situation in Yemen. The involvement of international actors, such as the United States, Saudi Arabia, Iran as well as UAE, has only intensified the conflict and made it more difficult to find a solution. These external actors often have conflicting interests, making it difficult to reach a consensus on how to address the crisis in Yemen. While consociationalism holds the potential to be a solution to the crisis in Yemen, its implementation is not without its challenges. Several challenges need to be addressed for consociationalism to effectively settle the Yemen crisis. The first challenge is the need to address the root causes of the crisis, rather than simply managing its consequences. One of the root causes of the crisis in Yemen is the deep sectarian divisions within the society¹⁵. To overcome these challenges, a commitment to dialogue, cooperation, and the creation of strong institutions is necessary¹⁶. Only through a collaborative effort between different groups, the government, and the international community can a lasting solution to the crisis in Yemen be found.

Purpose of the Study

The article offers a comprehensive analysis about how Yemen crisis can be settled through consociational democracy. This research can be conducted within the constitutional arrangement as the executive powers can be shared in such a way that each major community - Zaidi Shias, Sunnis, and Hadhramis - have a guaranteed share. The aim of this research is to explore the possibilities of resolving the crisis in Yemen through consociational democracy and also through power sharing mechanism and to investigate the challenges that may affect the carrying out of consociational democracy in Yemen. The research will also propose the best way the consociational democracy can be implemented in Yemen as well as the future prospects and challenges of settling Yemen crisis through consociational democracy in Yemen. The other purpose of this research is to investigate which of the theories can be used as a tool in analyzing and resolving the Yemen crisis. It is expected that the findings of this research would help future mediators on Yemen crisis on the best approach to use in the process of coming up with a peaceful resolution. Also, it is a unique research that has been undertaken by the researchers in Yemen and that is an academic contribution to the existing abundant literature on the Yemen crisis and the political transition. The study also examines the implementation of the National Dialogue Conference resolution and the federal state solution arrived at. It is expected that the research findings would contribute to the empirical knowledge on implementation of power sharing agreement arrived at through national dialogue conference. It would also assess whether the power sharing agreement would be effective in resolving the Yemen crisis and whether the solution arrived at through National Dialogue Conference and that is the formation of a federal state can be implemented in providing a lasting solution in Yemen.

Historical Context of the Yemen Crisis

Before diving into the possibilities of settling the Yemen crisis through consociationalism, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the historical context and factors that have contributed to the current crisis. Yemen has a long history of political instability, economic challenges, and sectarian tensions. The country's history is marked

¹⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Yemen Crisis Overview,

¹⁵ [Power-sharing after the Arab Spring? Insights from Lebanon's Political Transition](#)
Tamirace Fakhoury, 2019

¹⁶ Shadi Hamid and Osama Al-Qasabi, "Can Consociationalism Work in the Arab World?" *Journal of Democracy* 23, no. 2 (2012): 122-136.

by various tribal, religious, and regional divisions that have often resulted in conflicts. These divisions became more pronounced in 1990 when North Yemen and South Yemen merged to form the Republic of Yemen. Following the merger, power struggles and grievances emerged between different groups, leading to a series of conflicts and political instability.

Yemen is located at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula and has a rich history that dates back to ancient times. It was known as Arabia Felix, or "Happy Arabia," due to its fertile land and abundant resources¹⁷. In the seventh century, Yemen was one of the earliest regions to convert to Islam, and as a result, the country played an important part in the propagation of the religion across the Arabian Peninsula and even further afield¹⁸. Yemen has been ruled by a number of distinct dynasties and empires over the course of its history. Some of these dynasties and empires include the Himyarites, the Sabaeans, the Abbasids, and the Ottomans¹⁹. In the 19th century, Yemen was divided into two separate states: the kingdom of Yemen in the north and the state of Aden in the south. The state of Aden was under the control of the British²⁰. Even after North and South Yemen were brought together to form what is now known as the Republic of Yemen in 1990, the country continued to be plagued by political tensions and regional divisions²¹. In 2011, as part of the Arab Spring, there were demonstrations in Yemen calling for the removal of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had been in power for a very long time. In the end, Saleh resigned as president, but his resignation did not stop the escalation of violence across the country as various groups fought for control²². In 2014, a group known as the Houthis, which is composed primarily of Shia Muslims, overran the capital city of Sanaa as well as other parts of the country. This ultimately resulted in a military intervention by a coalition led by Saudi Arabia, which in turn led to a protracted conflict that has resulted in the deaths of thousands of Yemenis and the displacement of millions more²³. The Yemeni context is characterized by a complex array of political, social, and economic challenges, which have contributed to a protracted and devastating conflict that has ravaged the country since 2015. It is a country with a complex history and a diverse population, characterized by deep regional, tribal, and sectarian cleavages²⁴. Yemen is confronted with a diverse array of political, economic, and humanitarian challenges that endanger the country's state of stability as well as its prospects for the future. The prolonged conflict that has been going on since 2014, which has pitted different factions against one another and has resulted in widespread violence, displacement, and suffering, is at the core of these challenges²⁵. The struggle for political power and representation is one of the most important challenges Yemen is currently facing. For a very long time, the nation has been fractured along regional and sectarian lines, and numerous factions have competed with one another for control of the central government and the institutions it oversees²⁶. The precarious state of the nation's economy is yet another significant obstacle to overcome. Yemen

¹⁷ Yemen Country Profile," BBC News, last updated February 12, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14704951>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "Yemen," Encyclopaedia Britannica, last updated March 2, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Yemen>.

²⁰ "Yemen Country Profile," BBC News.

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Yemen: A Timeline of the Crisis," Al Jazeera, last updated February 5, 2021,.

²³ "Yemen Crisis: Why is There a War?" BBC News, last updated March 27, 2022.

²⁴ Noel Brehony(2011) Yemen Divided: The Story of a Failed State in South Arabia.

²⁵ **Yemen: Why is the war there getting more violent?**
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29319423>

²⁶ Elisabeth Kendall, "The Roots of Conflict in Yemen," Council on Foreign Relations, October 16, 2018, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/roots-conflict-yemen>

is one of the least developed countries in the Arab world, characterized by exceptionally high rates of poverty, unemployment, and social disparity.²⁷ These issues have been exacerbated by the conflict, which has caused significant damage to the country's infrastructure, disrupted trade and investment, and exacerbated food and fuel shortages²⁸. The conflict's humanitarian consequences have also been severe. Millions of Yemenis require humanitarian aid, with many suffering from food insecurity, displacement, and disease outbreaks²⁹. Significant human rights violations have also occurred as a result of the conflict, including the use of child soldiers, extrajudicial killings, and restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly³⁰. Addressing these challenges will necessitate a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that includes political, economic, and humanitarian components. Key steps could include encouraging political dialogue and reconciliation, establishing more inclusive governance structures, investing in critical infrastructure, and increasing support for humanitarian relief efforts³¹.

Overview of the concept of consociational democracy.

Consociational democracy is a type of political system that seeks to accommodate the diverse interests and identities of a society by promoting power-sharing and decision-making among different groups³². It is frequently used in contexts where deep social or ethnic cleavages make establishing a stable and inclusive democratic system difficult³³. Arend Lijphart is widely recognized for his significant contributions to the concept of consociationalism³⁴. His pioneering article published in 1969, titled "Consociational Democracy," laid the foundation for understanding and analyzing power-sharing arrangements in deeply divided societies. Lijphart's work focused on the idea that in ethnically or religiously diverse societies, power-sharing arrangements based on principles of group representation and consensus-building can help manage and mitigate conflicts. Lijphart argued that consociationalism can be a viable and effective approach for addressing the challenges of divided societies, particularly in terms of reducing ethnic or religious tensions and promoting stability and democracy. Consociationalism has had a significant impact on the field of comparative politics and has been applied to various cases around the world, including the European Union, the Indian Union, and the United States. One of the key contributions of Lijphart's concept of consociationalism is its interpretive power, allowing for the examination of major politics and their political dynamics. Lijphart's work has been instrumental in understanding the persistence

1.1 ²⁷ "Yemen | United Nations Development programme."

<https://www.undp.org/yemen>

²⁸ "Yemen: Humanitarian Crisis," International Crisis Group.

<https://www.crisisgroup>

²⁹ "Yemen Crisis: What You Need to Know," UNICEF, last updated February 15, 2022,

<https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/yemen-crisis>.

³⁰ "Yemen 2020," Amnesty International, accessed April 5, 2023,

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/yemen/report-yemen/>.

³¹ "Yemen: A Way Forward," International Crisis Group, last updated March 30, 2022,

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/yemen-way-forward>.

³² Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

³³ Andreas Wimmer: *Democracy and Ethno-Religious Conflict in Iraq* (2003)

³⁴ *Consociation in the Present*, Brendan O'Leary, 2019.

or decay of consociationalism in different countries³⁵. Lijphart's concept of consociationalism has been particularly influential in examining case studies such as Belgium and Switzerland, where consociational arrangements have demonstrated longevity and success, as well as contrasting cases such as Austria and the Netherlands, where consociationalism has faced challenges or dissolution. Another important aspect of Lijphart's contribution to the concept of consociationalism is the examination of whether consociational arrangements reward ethnic extremism or contribute to its mitigation³⁶. One of the key contributions of Arend Lijphart to the concept of consociationalism is his emphasis on power-sharing arrangements based on group representation and consensus-building in divided societies. These arrangements, according to Lijphart, can help reduce tensions and conflicts by allowing different ethnic or religious groups to have a voice and representation in the power structure, thus promoting inclusivity and ensuring that the diverse interests of all groups are taken into account³⁷.

Consociational democracy is distinguished by a focus on inclusive representation, decision-making by consensus or mutual agreement, and the protection of minority rights. This frequently entails the establishment of formal power-sharing mechanisms or institutions, such as proportional representation, quota systems, or grand coalitions³⁸. A number of countries, including Belgium, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, have examples of consociational democracies. To manage their diverse populations and maintain political stability, these countries have implemented various forms of power-sharing and minority representation³⁹. Instead of promoting a shared sense of citizenship, critics of consociational democracy argue that it can entrench divisions and reinforce identity-based politics. They also note that it can be difficult to implement in situations where there is deep mistrust or hostility between different groups, or where power imbalances make genuine consensus difficult to achieve⁴⁰.

The political landscape in Yemen

Yemen's political landscape is complex and fractured, with various entities fighting for power and influence in the midst of a long and brutal civil war. The internationally recognised government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, backed by a Saudi-led coalition, controls majority of the country's southern and eastern regions, while Houthis rebels associated with Iran hold the north and parts of the west. In addition to these two main factions, Yemen is home to a variety of smaller armed groups and political actors, including separatist movements in the south, tribal militias, and jihadist organisations such as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Islamic State (ISIS)⁴¹. The Houthis remain a prominent actor in the conflict, holding much of the country's north and launching strikes on government forces and civilian targets on a regular basis. They have also built their own institutions of governance, including a parallel government in Sana'a. Nevertheless, the Hadi government is based in the southern port city of Aden but has failed to consolidate control over the rest of the country. It has also been chastised for failing to handle the country's humanitarian catastrophe and for human rights violations committed by its own personnel. Peace talks have so far failed to resolve the issue, with both parties accusing each other of poor faith and refusing to make compromises. Yemen's civilian population has also suffered greatly as a result of the conflict, with millions displaced, thousands murdered, and extensive humanitarian hardship⁴². The international community has voiced worry over Yemen's plight, calling for a political solution and additional humanitarian aid. The United Nations has been participating in peace discussions and cease-fire initiatives, but progress has been slow and sporadic. Notwithstanding these difficulties, several recent advances provide a ray of

³⁵ Bogaards, M., L. Helms and A. Lijphart (2019). The Importance of Consociationalism for Twenty-first Century Politics and Political Science. *Swiss Political Science Review* 25(4): 341–356

³⁶ Bogaards, (2006), Democracy and power-sharing in multinational states: thematic introduction.

³⁷ Bernadaux, C. (2020, December 31). The Relative Success of Consociational Institutions in Deeply Divided Societies. <https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.47.4>.

³⁸ John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary, "Introduction: The Macro-Political Regulation of Ethnic Conflict," in *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation: Case Studies of Protracted Ethnic Conflicts*, ed. John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary (London: Routledge, 1993), 7-9.

³⁹ Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies, 177-181

⁴⁰ 2 Federalism and Democracy: A Critical Reassessment by Thomas o. hueglin

⁴¹ Yemen," Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED).

⁴² Yemen Crisis: Why is the war there getting more violent?" BBC News, March 22, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29319423>.

hope for Yemen's future. The Hadi government and the separatist organisation Southern Transitional Council (STC) struck a power-sharing deal in November 2021, potentially paving the way for a more stable and cohesive government.

The role of sectarian divisions in the conflict

The conflict in Yemen has been ongoing for several years, resulting in a devastating humanitarian crisis and political instability. One significant factor that has contributed to the conflict is sectarian divisions. Sectarian divisions refer to the divisions and conflicts based on religious sects, particularly between Sunni and Shia Muslims. These divisions have deep historical roots and have been exacerbated by various factors over the years. One factor that has contributed to the sectarian divisions in Yemen is the impact of the Arab Spring⁴³. The Arab Spring, a wave of pro-democracy uprisings that swept across the Middle East in 2011, had a profound impact on Yemen, particularly in reshaping Sunni-Shiite relationships and exacerbating inter-religious tensions among communities⁴⁴. According to a study by Al-Zaidi and Buhr, the Arab Spring played a significant role in reshaping Sunni-Shiite relationships in Yemen. The study highlights the rise in inter-religious tensions among Sunni and Shiite communities across the region following the Arab Spring⁴⁵. The role of sectarian divisions in the conflict of Yemen cannot be underestimated. Sectarian divisions have played a fundamental role in shaping the conflict in Yemen⁴⁶.

The Houthis, who are Zaidi Shia Muslims, have clashed with Sunni factions in Yemen, particularly the Islamist Islah party, which is affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood⁴⁷. The Houthis have also accused the Hadi government of marginalising and discriminating against the Zaidi population in employment and other sectors. This has led to a sectarian dimension to the conflict, with different groups competing for power and resources along sectarian lines. This impression of persecution has generated sympathy for the Houthis among some Zaidi community members, contributing to their ability to mobilise militarily⁴⁸. The sectarian dimension to the conflict has been further fuelled by the involvement of external actors, particularly Iran, which has been accused of providing support to the Houthi. Saudi Arabia, which sees the Houthi as an Iranian proxy, has led a military intervention in Yemen since 2015 in an attempt to restore the Hadi administration. Yemen's sectarianism has also resulted in violence against religious minorities, particularly Baha'is, who are viewed with distrust by both Sunni and Shia Muslims. For many years, Baha'is in Yemen have endured persecution and prejudice, with some members of the community imprisoned and subjected to other forms of torture⁴⁹.

The sectarian nature of the conflict has made reaching a political solution to the situation more difficult. Attempts to bring disparate factions to the negotiating table have frequently been impeded by strong mistrust and antagonism. Resolving sectarian tensions is critical to any efforts to end the conflict and build a stable and peaceful Yemen. This would include addressing the legitimate grievances of the country's various religious communities,

⁴³ [Is the New Middle East Stuck in Its Sectarian Past? The Unspoken Dimension of the "Arab Spring"](#)
Yoel Guzansky, Benedetta Berti, 2013

⁴⁴ [Resurgence of Geopolitical Rivalry in the MENA after the 'Arab Spring'](#)
Mohammad Reza Dehshiri, Hossein Shahmoradi 2020

⁴⁵ [Is the New Middle East Stuck in Its Sectarian Past? The Unspoken Dimension of the "Arab Spring"](#)
Yoel Guzansky, Benedetta Berti, 2013

⁴⁶ A proper application of Arab Spring-The Republic of Yemen, by Hiroshi Sato.

⁴⁷ Laurent Bonnefoy, "Yemen's Zaidi Revival," Carnegie Middle East Center

⁴⁸ [Who Are Yemen's Houthis? | Council on Foreign](#)
<https://www.cfr.org/interview/who-are-yemens-houthis>.

⁴⁹ [UN report decries "criminalisation" and persecution of Baha'is ...](#)
<https://www.bic.org/news/un-report-decries-criminalisation-and...>

as well as promoting discussion and healing between different groups⁵⁰. One more sectarian conflict is Houthi – Salafi conflict that started when the Houthis, a Zaydi-led group that controls the Sa'dah Governorate, began the siege of Dammaj in October 2011 when they accused Salafis loyal to the Yemeni government of smuggling weapons into their religious centre in Dammaj and demanded they hand over their weapons and military posts in the town⁵¹. After seizing control of the capital, Sana'a, and several governorates in northern Yemen in late 2014, the Houthi group consolidated its grip and began to extend to territories in the south, eventually seizing control of all governorates, including Taiz, Al-Bayda, Al-Dhale, Lahj, Aden, and Abyan. In certain governorates, a public resistance to the Houthis was developed. The level of the resistance's engagement in the war against the Houthi militia varies by governorate; the majority of them are Salafis who fought alongside the Houthis in Dammaj⁵². Moreover, the Yemeni conflict is a multi-faceted conflict that involves a range of local, regional, and international actors.

The Regional and International actors in the conflict.

Yemen's conflict, which began in 2014, has been characterised by the participation of numerous regional countries seeking to advance their strategic interests in the country. The regional powers' roles in the conflict have been numerous and complex, with each actor pursuing its own set of goals and deploying a variety of methods and techniques.. Yemen has historically been divided along regional lines, with separate political, economic, and cultural identities in the north and south of the country. South Yemen was previously a separate state that was independent until it joined with North Yemen in 1990. The merger of the two countries was not without conflict, and many in the south believe that the northern-dominated government has ignored them. Saudi Arabia is one of the major regional powers engaging in the Yemeni crisis. Saudi Arabia spearheaded a coalition of predominantly Sunni Arab governments that intervened militarily in Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of restoring President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's internationally recognised government. The fundamental goal of Saudi Arabia in the fight is to prevent the threat of Iranian involvement in Yemen, which it sees as a destabilising factor in the region. The Saudi-led coalition has offered military and logistical support to Yemen's government, as well as a prolonged bombing campaign against Houthi rebels thought to be supported by Iran⁵³. Iran, another significant regional power, has been accused of providing arms and training to the Houthi rebels, despite its denial of direct military involvement in the conflict. Iran's engagement in the Yemeni crisis stems from a desire to enhance its regional influence and challenge Saudi Arabia's control⁵⁴. Iran sees the conflict in Yemen as part of a broader struggle for influence in the Middle East, in which it is competing with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony⁵⁵. Iran sees the Yemen crisis as part of a larger struggle for Middle Eastern power, in which it competes with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony. Another regional power involved in Yemen's conflict is the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE has concentrated on opposing the spread of Islamist groups in Yemen, and has backed a number of factions that share this purpose. The UAE has also supplied military and logistical support to the Yemeni government, though its engagement has decreased in recent years⁵⁶. Qatar is another regional power that has been

⁵⁰ "Yemen: Religious Persecution," United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, 2021, <https://www.uscifr.gov/countries/yemen>.

⁵¹ Yemen Times Sectarian conflict looms in Sa'ada 2011-11-13 at the Wayback Machine, October 30, 2011

⁵² Salafism in Yemen and War Challenges - Abaad Studies
<https://abaadstudies.org/news-59885.htm>

⁵³ Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention - EveryCRSReport
https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/2021-03-12_R43960_df5fc78b

⁵⁴ UAE deeply involved in Yemen despite claims of ...
<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news>

⁵⁵ Iran's involvement in Yemen," Al Jazeera, 4 March 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/4/irans-involvement-in-yemen>.

⁵⁶ "United Arab Emirates (UAE) - Yemen," GlobalSecurity.org, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/uae-yemen.htm>.

involved in the Yemeni crisis. Saudi Arabia and its allies have accused Qatar of providing financial and material support to Houthi rebels, which Qatar denies. Qatar's engagement in the war stems from a desire to show its influence in the area and challenge Saudi Arabia's control⁵⁷. Another regional force involved in the Yemeni war is Turkey. Turkey has donated humanitarian help to the Yemeni government and has also attempted to mediate the crisis. Turkey's engagement in the Yemeni war stems from a desire to expand its Middle Eastern influence and challenge Saudi Arabia's supremacy⁵⁸. The engagement of regional powers in the Yemeni conflict has had a crucial influence in prolonging the conflict and increasing the country's humanitarian situation. While these actors may have different goals and strategies, their involvement has deepened divisions and heightened tensions, making a long-term peace agreement more difficult to achieve. The international world has urged a peaceful end to the crisis, and efforts to bring the parties to the negotiating table have been made, but progress has been slow. As long as regional powers continue to back their proxies in Yemen, the conflict will rage on, with disastrous implications for the Yemeni people.

The Role of International Power in Yemeni conflict

The Yemeni conflict has piqued the interest of several international powers outside of the region. These powers have played a variety of roles in the conflict, including diplomatic support, humanitarian assistance, and military assistance to the parties involved. The United States is one of the most powerful international powers involved in the Yemeni conflict. Since the beginning of the conflict, the United States has provided military assistance to the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthi rebels, including intelligence sharing, mid-air refuelling, and the sale of weapons and ammunition. The US has also been involved in airstrikes against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which has expanded its operations in Yemen as a result of the chaos⁵⁹. However, the US has faced criticism for its involvement in the conflict, particularly for the civilian casualties resulting from coalition airstrikes. Another international power interested in Yemen's crisis is the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom has provided military assistance to the Saudi-led coalition, including the sale of weapons and ammunition, as well as training and advising to coalition forces. However, the UK has come under fire for its engagement in the fight, particularly for its role in the blockade of Yemen, which has exacerbated the country's humanitarian situation. Another international power interested in Yemen's crisis is the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom has provided military assistance to the Saudi-led coalition, including the sale of weapons and ammunition, as well as training and advising to coalition forces⁶⁰.

However, the UK has come under fire for its engagement in the fight, particularly for its role in the blockade of Yemen, which has exacerbated the country's humanitarian situation. France is also involved in the Yemen conflict, largely by selling armaments to the Saudi-led coalition. Despite worries over their use in the conflict, the French government has provided Saudi Arabia with military weapons, including fighter jets. A French court found in 2019 that France had not broken international law by providing guns to Saudi Arabia, but the ruling is being appealed.⁶¹

The United Nations has been involved in the Yemeni conflict since its inception, and its role in organising peace talks between the parties involved has been essential. The UN has also been sending humanitarian aid to Yemen, which has helped to mitigate the consequences of the conflict on people. However, the UN has had difficulties in delivering its relief programmes as a result of the Saudi-led coalition's blockade of Yemen⁶². To summarise, various international powers have had a part in the Yemeni conflict, and their engagement has had important repercussions for the conflict's outcome and the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen. The involvement of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the United Nations underscores the complexities of settling disputes involving various groups and international entities.

Consociational Democracy as a Solution for the Yemeni War

⁵⁷ Qatar's support for Houthi rebels in Yemen," Al Jazeera, 6 June 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/6/6/qatars-support-for-houthi-rebels-in-yemen>.

⁵⁸ Turkey offers to mediate in Yemen conflict," Al Jazeera, 14 May 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/5/14/turkey-offers-to-mediate-in-yemen-conflict>

⁵⁹ US Involvement in Yemen", Council on Foreign Relations, August 14, 2019.

⁶⁰ UK risks being complicit in Yemen's humanitarian crisis", Amnesty International, April 16, 2018.

⁶¹ French court acquits arms companies of complicity in Yemen war crimes", The Guardian, April 30, 2021.

⁶² Yemen: How the Saudi-led coalition is worsening the country's humanitarian crisis", Amnesty International, November 22, 2017.

Consociational democracy, a concept introduced by political scientist Arend Lijphart, is particularly relevant in deeply divided societies like Yemen. In the context of the Yemeni War, where ethnic, tribal, and sectarian tensions have fueled conflict, consociationalism offers a path toward stability. This model emphasizes power-sharing arrangements among different ethnic or religious groups, aiming to prevent domination by any single faction. By ensuring representation for all major groups, consociational democracy seeks to mitigate tensions and foster cooperation. The ongoing Yemeni War has caused immense human suffering and political instability, leading to a need for a sustainable solution. This paper argues that consociational democracy can serve as a viable solution to the Yemeni War. Consociational democracy is a system of power-sharing among different groups in society, which allows for the peaceful coexistence of diverse communities.

How Consociational Democracy works?

Consociational democracy is a political system that aims to balance the interests of various social groupings through power-sharing mechanisms. Four key features define the system: grand coalition government, proportional representation, minority veto, and segmental autonomy.

A grand coalition government is one in which members from all major political organisations in society form a government. The goal is to ensure that all groups are represented in government and that no single organisation has a monopoly on the political arena.⁶³ Another crucial aspect of consociational democracy is proportional representation. This means that political representation is determined by the proportion of votes cast for each political party. This ensures that all groups have a say in the political process and that minorities are not marginalised⁶⁴. The minority veto is a tool that permits minority groups to prevent decisions that are not in their best interests from being made. This process ensures that the interests of all groups are considered and that the majority does not dominate decision-making⁶⁵. Finally, segmental autonomy entails the acknowledgement and safeguarding of various groups' cultural and linguistic rights in society. This guarantees that all groups can express their identity and culture without fear of prejudice or persecution⁶⁶.

The strengths of Consociational Democracy

Consociational democracy has several strengths that make it a viable solution for the Yemeni War. For starters, it encourages peaceful cohabitation among varied communities by guaranteeing that all groups have a voice in the democratic process. This aids in the reduction of tensions and disputes between various groups⁶⁷. Second, consociational democracy provides a means for peacefully settling problems and issues. For example, the minority veto guarantees that minority groups have a role in decision-making and can prevent actions that are not in their best interests⁶⁸. Third, consociational democracy promotes citizen ownership and engagement. People are more inclined to be invested in their country's prosperity when they believe their views are heard and they have a stake in the political process⁶⁹. Finally, by establishing a system of checks and balances, consociational democracy supports stability. The involvement of all major political parties in government guarantees that power is not

⁶³ Lijphart, A. (1969). Consociational Democracy. *World Politics*, 21(2), 207-225.

⁶⁴ Reilly, B. (2001). *Democracy in Divided Societies: Electoral Engineering for Conflict Management*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁶⁵ Wolff, S. (2013). *Power-Sharing: Empirical and Normative Challenges*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁶⁶ McGarry, J., & O'Leary, B. (2007). *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation: Case Studies of Protracted Ethnic Conflicts*. London: Routledge.

⁶⁷ Horowitz, D. L. (1985). *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁶⁸ Cons, J. (2007). The Minorities' Veto Power in Consociational Democracies. *Ethnopolitics*, 6(2), 223-241.

⁶⁹ Stepan, A. (1999). *Democratizing Brazil: Problems of Transition and Consolidation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

concentrated in the hands of a few individuals, lowering the risk of authoritarianism and political instability⁷⁰. In the end, consociational democracy can be a realistic solution to the Yemeni war. Consociational democracy offers a way forward for Yemen by promoting peaceful coexistence of many people, providing a forum for conflict resolution, developing a sense of ownership and participation, and promoting stability. However, the implementation of consociational democracy necessitates a commitment to power-sharing principles and the respect of the rights of various groups in society. It is hoped that the Yemeni administration and all major political parties will work together to investigate the potential of consociational democracy as a method of establishing peace and stability in Yemen.

The limitations of Consociational Democracy in Yemen

Consociational democracy is frequently regarded as a feasible alternative to conflict resolution in split countries. However, due to the complexities of the Yemeni conflict, the implementation of consociational democracy in Yemen may confront various constraints. One of the most significant constraints is the lack of trust between Yemen's various factions. The long history of battles and wars in the country, as well as the involvement of external actors in the fight, have deepened mistrust and suspicion among the various factions. As a result, reaching an agreement and establishing a power-sharing system that meets the needs of all parties concerned may be difficult. Another constraint is the presence of non-state players and extremist groups that are not part of the formal political system. These organisations may refuse to participate in a power-sharing arrangement and instead resort to violence and sabotage. This condition may jeopardise the effectiveness of consociational democracy in achieving Yemeni stability and peace⁷¹. Furthermore, Yemen's absence of a functioning state complicates the implementation of consociational democracy. The country has been battling a serious economic crisis, social unrest, and poor governance. These factors have aided the state's disintegration and the formation of competing power centres. This fragmentation may make the construction of a consociational democracy based on a centralised power-sharing arrangement more difficult⁷².

Subsequently the question of inclusion may complicate Yemen's adoption of consociational democracy. Yemen is a multicultural country with several ethnic and religious groupings. Any power-sharing agreement must include and represent all of these parties. Some groups, however, may feel marginalised and alienated from the political process, leading to anger and additional conflict. Finally, when presenting this solution to the Yemeni issue, the constraints of Yemeni consociational democracy must be acknowledged. While consociational democracy has been successful in resolving conflicts in other split societies, its implementation in Yemen may encounter various hurdles, including a lack of trust among factions, the presence of extremist organisations and non-state actors, the absence of a functioning state, and the absence of a functioning state.

How Consociational Democracy can be applied to the Yemeni crisis

As a solution to the ongoing crisis in Yemen, consociational democracy can be adopted. The first step towards instituting consociational democracy in Yemen is to reach an agreement on power-sharing based on the premise of proportional representation. This agreement should encompass all of the conflicting factions and give them with a fair share of power and resources. The power-sharing pact should also include safeguards for minority groups such as the Zaydis in the north and Southerners in the south. These steps could include establishing a federal system of government in which regions have some autonomy in governance and decision-making⁷³. Furthermore, the formation of a truth and reconciliation commission could aid in addressing the underlying roots of the war and promoting national healing and reconciliation. This commission could look into previous human rights violations and grant amnesty to anyone who come forward and admit to their misdeeds. Furthermore, the

⁷⁰ Lijphart, A. (2012). *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

⁷¹ Power-Sharing Empirical and Normative Challenges By [Allison McCulloch](#), [John McGarry](#) Copyright 2017

⁷² Stepan, A. (1999). *Democratizing Brazil: Problems of Transition and Consolidation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁷³ The Challenge of Ethnic **Conflict: Democracy** in Divided Societies. Donald L. Horowitz. Issue Date October 1993. Volume 4. Issue 4. Page Numbers 18-38.

formation of a truth and reconciliation commission could aid in addressing the underlying roots of the war and promoting national healing and reconciliation. This commission could look into previous human rights violations and grant amnesty to anyone who come forward and admit to their misdeeds. In addition, the formation of an independent and unbiased electoral commission could contribute to free and fair elections that reflect the will of the people. This body should be politically neutral and have the authority to oversee the electoral process and handle any anomalies⁷⁴. Finally, as a solution to the ongoing crisis in Yemen, Consociational Democracy can be adopted. Consociational democracy in Yemen would necessitate a negotiated power-sharing agreement based on proportional representation, the protection of minority rights, the formation of a truth and reconciliation commission, and the formation of a neutral and impartial electoral commission.

The Challenges in Implementing Consociational Democracy in Yemen

Implementing consociational democracy in Yemen is not a straightforward process. The country is facing numerous challenges, both political and socio-economic, that make it difficult to establish a sustainable power-sharing agreement between the various factions.

Political Challenges

Yemen has been plagued by insecurity and political fragmentation, with many factions competing for power and control over various sections of the country. The political challenges that may hinder the implementation of consociational democracy in Yemen.

Firstly, the lack of trust between the different factions is a major obstacle to implementing consociational democracy in Yemen. Mistrust is deeply ingrained, stemming from a history of political, economic, and social marginalisation and persecution. For example, the Houthi movement, which controls vast portions of Yemen, has long been marginalised and discriminated against by the central government and other Yemeni factions. Because of this marginalisation, there is distrust and resentment towards other factions, particularly those linked with the central authority. Similarly, southern separatist parties, such as the Southern Transitional Council, accuse the central government and northern-based forces of monopolising authority and resources. The distrust between these various factions makes it difficult to reach an agreement on power-sharing that is acceptable to all sides.

Secondly, the polarization of the political landscape in Yemen poses a significant challenge to the implementation of consociational democracy. The conflict has produced profound differences among the various factions, which have grown more entrenched over time. Because of these disagreements, the political realm has fragmented and several centres of power have emerged, making it difficult to build a unified government that represents all of the diverse groups. The Southern Transitional Council, for example, wants to build an independent state in southern Yemen, whilst the Houthi movement wants greater autonomy and political representation for its supporters. The polarisation of the political landscape makes reaching a power-sharing arrangement that addresses the needs and aspirations of all factions difficult⁷⁵.

Thirdly, the absence of strong and independent state institutions is a significant obstacle to implementing consociational democracy in Yemen. Years of conflict, corruption, and mismanagement have damaged the country's governmental institutions, undermining its legitimacy and capacity to implement the rule of law. As a result, official institutions are frequently unable to resolve conflicts or enforce the terms of a power-sharing agreement. For example, the Yemeni judiciary has been chastised for lacking independence and impartiality, making it impossible to settle disputes between opposing factions. The absence of robust state institutions may weaken the effectiveness of the power-sharing agreement, leading to the reemergence of conflict and violence⁷⁶. Another political challenge in Yemen is the risk of entrenching sectarian divides. Consociational democracy is based on the concept of power sharing among various religious or ethnic communities. However, if the power-sharing agreement is not carefully structured, it has the potential to entrench sectarianism and worsen tensions between different groups rather than promote unity. Yemen also features a complicated sectarian terrain, with

⁷⁴ Transitional Justice. By Ruti G. Teitel. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

⁷⁵ Kamrava, M. (2019). Understanding the Yemen Catastrophe: The War, the Players, and the Prospects. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 118-119.

⁷⁶ International Crisis Group. (2019). Yemen's Southern and Eastern Militias: A Complex Mosaic. Crisis Group Middle East and North Africa Briefing No. 76. Brussels: International Crisis Group, 5-7.

many religious groups and tribes competing for control. To avoid damaging the peace process, any power-sharing agreement would have to carefully straddle these sectarian tensions⁷⁷.

Lastly, the involvement of external actors in the Yemeni conflict presents a challenge to the implementation of consociational democracy. These foreign actors, including regional powers and international organisations, have their own agendas and interests, which may or may not coincide with those of the Yemeni people. For example, Saudi Arabia and Iran have been accused of supporting rival sides in Yemen's conflict, complicating the bargaining process and making reaching a power-sharing arrangement difficult. Similarly, international organisations such as the United Nations have been chastised for being biased and favouring certain groups over others. The participation of these other entities may complicate the negotiation process and weaken the validity of the power-sharing agreement⁷⁸. Finally, the implementation of consociational democracy in Yemen faces a number of political challenges, including a lack of trust between factions, polarisation of the political landscape, a lack of strong state institutions, and the involvement of external actors in the conflict. These issues must be resolved through a comprehensive and inclusive negotiating process that addresses the needs and aspirations of all of the conflicting factions.

Socio-economic Challenges

One of the main challenges is the country's complex socio-economic situation. Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the Middle East, with high levels of poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment⁷⁹. This presents a difficult climate for Consociational Democracy implementation, as economic inequality and social exclusion can increase ethnic and religious tensions, leading to more conflict⁸⁰. Furthermore, Yemen is confronting a humanitarian crisis as a result of the ongoing war, which has resulted in massive displacement and suffering. The humanitarian crisis has seriously harmed the country's infrastructure, especially its education and healthcare institutions, making the establishment of a functioning Consociational Democracy even more difficult. The lack of essential services and resources undermines any government's legitimacy and makes it difficult to build confidence amongst diverse factions.

Furthermore, Yemen's protracted conflict has produced a security vacuum, with several armed groups fighting for control of the country's territory. The security situation makes it difficult to hold free and fair elections and to form a neutral and impartial electoral commission, all of which are required for Consociational Democracy to succeed⁸¹. To summarise, Yemen's implementation of Consociational Democracy faces enormous socioeconomic hurdles, including poverty, underdevelopment, and a humanitarian crisis. Corruption and security are other obstacles to the formation of Consociational Democracy. Addressing these difficulties would necessitate a multifaceted approach that involves addressing the underlying causes of poverty, fostering good governance, and creating a stable and secure environment.

Religious and cultural challenges

The implementation of consociational democracy in Yemen faces several challenges, particularly in the religious and cultural spheres. Yemen is a country deeply divided along religious and sectarian lines, with the Zaydi Shia community in the north and the Sunni community dominating in the south. This religious difference has played a crucial role in Yemen's continuous conflict, and any attempt to create a consociational democracy must include these religious and cultural issues.

One of the most difficult obstacles in adopting consociational democracy in Yemen is reconciling the country's various religious communities. The Zaydi Shia group has long felt marginalised and excluded from power, while the Sunni community has frequently regarded them with distrust. To put in place a consociational democracy, there must be acceptance of minority rights and a willingness to negotiate a power-sharing arrangement that reflects the

⁷⁷ Yemen Peace Monitor. (2020). Conflict Dynamics Report. Sana'a: Yemen Peace Monitor

⁷⁸ International Crisis Group. (2019). Yemen's Southern and Eastern Militias: A Complex Mosaic. Crisis Group Middle East and North Africa

⁷⁹ World Bank (2022). Yemen Overview. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/yemen/overview>.

⁸⁰ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2022). Yemen: Humanitarian Response Plan 2022.

⁸¹ Transparency International (2021). Corruption Perceptions Index 2021.

country's demographic realities and meeting the concerns and ambitions of all parties involved in the conflict⁸². Another challenge in implementing consociational democracy in Yemen is the cultural divide between the north and south. The cultural split between the north and south of Yemen is another barrier to implementing consociational democracy. Yemen's southern regions have long been marginalised and excluded from authority, resulting in feelings of alienation and animosity. To solve this issue, any power-sharing deal must consider Yemen's cultural and regional variety, with an emphasis on increasing inclusivity and representation at all levels of government⁸³.

In addition to these obstacles, the implementation of consociational democracy in Yemen is hampered by the country's persistent violence and instability. The conflict has led in widespread violence and displacement, making it impossible to create the necessary conditions for a successful democratic transition. Any attempt to adopt consociational democracy in Yemen must include the necessity for peace and security, as well as the problems of resolving the core causes of the conflict⁸⁴. To summarise, Yemen's implementation of consociational democracy confronts major hurdles, particularly in the religious and cultural realms. To solve these issues, any power-sharing agreement must acknowledge minority groups' rights and promote diversity and representation at all levels of government. Yemen's prolonged violence and insecurity offer substantial difficulties to the implementation of consociational democracy, emphasising the importance of stability and security in any democratic transition.

Security challenges

The ongoing conflict and violence in Yemen has created a deeply polarized society, making it difficult to build trust and cooperation among the different factions and implement a power-sharing agreement. The presence of non-state armed groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is one of the biggest security challenges confronting Yemen's implementations of Consociational Democracy. These groups operate independently of the Yemeni government and pose a substantial danger to the country's stability⁸⁵. Another security problem is the growing proliferation of weaponry in Yemen as a result of the conflict. This has made establishing a monopoly on the use of force difficult, which is required for the implementation of any political accord. Furthermore, the regional and international interests involved in the Yemeni crisis exacerbate the security concerns. The presence of Saudi Arabia and Iran, among other regional actors, has exacerbated the situation and made reaching a political settlement more difficult.

Aside from security issues, Yemen's adoption of Consociational Democracy confronts a number of other hurdles. These include a lack of trust amongst factions, the absence of a vibrant civil society, and the state's limited capacity. These considerations have contributed to a lack of agreement in Yemen on the structure of a future political system⁸⁶.

In conclusion, implementing Consociational Democracy in Yemen faces a range of challenges, including security threats, a lack of consensus among factions, a weak civil society, limited state capacity, external interference, and economic difficulties. Addressing these challenges will require a coordinated effort by the international community and the Yemeni government to create a stable and secure environment for political negotiations and the establishment of the necessary institutions for Consociational Democracy.

Findings of the study

The study revealed that consociationalism can be an effective tool for addressing the deep-rooted divisions and conflicts in Yemen. The consociational model can provide a framework for inclusive governance, where all stakeholders have a say in the decision-making process. The report examined several power-sharing methods, such as proportional representation, veto rights, and grand coalitions, and how they can be adjusted to the Yemeni

⁸² Yemen: Revolution, Civil War and Unification by Uzi Rabi.

⁸³ Lackner, H. (2014). *Yemen in Crisis: Autocracy, Neo-Liberalism and the Disintegration of a State*. London: Saqi Books.

⁸⁴ ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: COMPARING STV AND AV SYSTEMS Benjamin Reilly.

⁸⁵ Crisis in Yemen: Causes and Implications BY Muhammad Tehsin, Asif Ali and Ghulam Qumber.

⁸⁶ Al-Ali, N., & Al-Naggar, Y. (2017). *Yemen in Crisis: Autocracy, Neo-Liberalism and the Disintegration of a State*. London: Saqi Books..

context to foster peace and stability. The report also explored the role of external actors, such as regional and international organisations, in promoting consociationalism in Yemen.

According to the study, the consociationalism has various challenges in Yemen. First, a lack of trust among different groups, as well as a lack of a shared vision for the country's future, are important impediments to the implementation of the consociational model. Second, the involvement of other players and their competing interests can jeopardise consociationalism's success. Third, the Yemeni state's fragility and the proliferation of armed organisations make it difficult to intervene.

Recommendations for Further Research:

This paper provides a starting point for further research on consociationalism and its potential application in Yemen. However, there are still several areas that require further investigation. First, future research should explore the role of civil society, women, and youth in promoting consociationalism in Yemen. Second, future studies should examine the impact of external actors on the implementation of consociationalism in Yemen. Third, research should investigate the role of traditional tribal structures in promoting consociationalism in Yemen.

Additionally, future studies should examine the effectiveness of different consociational mechanisms in addressing the Yemeni crisis. For instance, further research should investigate the effectiveness of veto rights and grand coalition in promoting stability and inclusivity in Yemen. Finally, future studies should examine the challenges of implementing consociationalism in other conflict-affected countries in the Middle East and North Africa region. groups make it challenging to establish a functional consociational system

Conclusion

In conclusion, Yemen has been in crisis for over a decade, with political instability, violence, and humanitarian suffering affecting millions of people. Despite several international efforts to resolve the crisis, the underlying causes of the conflict, such as deep-seated social divisions and political exclusion, have persisted. This paper has argued that consociationalism, as a form of power-sharing, can offer a potential solution to the Yemeni crisis. To begin, the study established the conceptual framework of consociationalism, including its principles, models, and benefits. It has also examined the difficulties and criticisms of consociationalism, particularly in Yemen.

Second, the article examined the Yemeni situation from a historical, social, and political standpoint. It has recognised Yemeni society's key divisions and conflicts, including as ethnic, religious, and regional divisions, and how these have led to the crisis. Third, based on the theoretical framework and the Yemeni environment, the article explored the opportunities and problems of implementing consociationalism to Yemen. It has been proposed that consociationalism can help Yemen reconcile its various interests and identities, encourage inclusion and participation, and prevent the repeat of violence and instability. It has, however, acknowledged the limitations and difficulties of adopting consociationalism, such as the requirement for political will, institutional competence, and external support. Overall, this article has shown that consociationalism can be used to address the Yemeni issue, but it requires a thorough and collaborative approach that includes all stakeholders, both local and international. It has also emphasised the importance of more study and analysis to refine and adapt consociationalism to the Yemeni environment, as well as to address the potential hazards and trade-offs of this approach. The desire and commitment of all parties concerned to engage in a genuine and sustained process of power-sharing and reconciliation will ultimately determine the outcome of the Yemeni issue.