



**Ethnicity in Female Voting Behaviour:
A Case Study of 2018 General Elections in NA-34, District Karak, Pakistan**

Rifat Nazir,¹ Ashfaq U. Rehman,² & Muneeb Ur Rehman³

Abstract:

This article analyses the female voting behaviour regarding family affiliations as voting determinants in the NA-34 in the 2018 General Elections. The study tested the theory of ethnicity and used a quantitative research method to collect data. Four hundred respondents registered as female voters in the 2018 General Elections were selected as a study population for the questionnaire. Taro Yamane's formula was used to find the sample size most appropriate for this quantitative study. Through Taro Yamane's Formula, the sample size is obtained by selecting 400 respondents out of 178504 female registered voters for the 2018 General Elections of District Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. A stratified sampling technique was used for sampling the respondents. Data was analysed through SPSS software, and a T-test was applied. It had been analysed that (61.65%) of females could not cast their votes based on their family affiliations, which means the female constituency of NA-34 in Karak did not support the theory of ethnicity.

Keywords: Pakistan, Karak, General Elections 2018, female voters, electoral behaviour, ethnic voting

INTRODUCTION

Democracy was introduced in the world of politics centuries ago, and it evolved. Democratic reforms and principles were continuously changed over time as significant contributions to a democratic system. A fair and free electoral system is a key to democracy. Some factors affect the voting behaviour of electorates. These include political, cultural, religious, economic and ethnic. The

¹ Visiting Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST), Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Email: rifatnazir@gmail.com

² Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Women University Swabi, Swabi, Pakistan. *Corresponding author email: ashfaq@wus.edu.pk

³ Lecturer, Department of Pakistan Studies, Women University Swabi, Swabi, Pakistan. Email: muneeburrehman312@yahoo.com

voting behaviour of electorates varies from country to country over time, even from district to district within a County. It depends on factors that mould or change the voting decisions of electorates. In Pakistan, the voting behaviour of electorates is different from one district to another (Mahsud et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2019).

Casting votes is an essential political process in any democratic country, and citizens' political right to participate in government formation (Sharma & Pachori 2017, 67; Munir, 2019). The involvement of common people in the electoral system determines the democratic development of a society (Bano & Noureen 2022, 173; Bashir & Khalid, 2020). Various elements impact citizens' voting decisions, such as religion, caste, community, language, financial consideration, ideological alignment, and prevailing political sentiments. Political parties strategically use these aspects to secure electoral victories, shaping and influencing the choices of voters (Lamani & Naik 2023; Agbor, 2019). Half of the world's population comprises women, and their involvement in politics is equally significant as that of men (Gine & Mansuri 2018, 207).

According to the theory of ethnicity, it is a Greek word 'ethnos', which means 'people', 'tribe', 'race', or 'nation'. 'It discusses the people living and collaborating in a way we can apply to a people or nation. Ethnicity is based on culture, language, ancestry notions, historical stories, position, physical attributes and religion. Ethnicity classifies and organises individuals into various groups or strata. Each stratum has its distinctive structures. It has its observations, and its members are similar to each other but different from other ethnic groups. There are two fundamental opinions regarding the existence of ethnicity in the society. According to one school of thought, it is argued that ethnicity has a natural existence; it is based on natural fact and is a reality. This means that people do not socially construct it; it is a natural fact. This means that in Pakistan, there are multiple ethnic groups like *Pashtun*, *Baloch*, and *Sindhi*. There are many inside Pakistan ethnic groups. According to this point of view, these groups have natural character. So, these natural characteristics cannot be denied. The second view of the theory regarding ethnicity is that it does not exist in reality, but society and the people have created it, and the reason for this is the social, political and economic conditions (Farmanullah, 2014; Farmanullah & Khan, 2020).

Ahmad (2010) analysed the electoral politics and voting behaviour in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (former NWFP). He discussed the social factors such as family affiliation, faction, clan, or tribe that affected voting decisions and results of the national and provincial assemblies of 1988, 1990, 1993, and 1997 elections. The writer shed light on the situations that led to the voting determinations, political association, and participation of the masses and their challenges. All these factors deeply affected electoral politics and voting behaviour in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This research needs to include information about recent elections, especially the 2018 General Elections in District Karak.

Haider and Ali (2020) explain the impact of caste and the Baradari system on voting behaviour in the 2018 General Elections in the Hafizabad District of Punjab. According to their findings, although caste and Baradari system have played a pivoted role in the elections ever since Pakistan came into existence, mainly in the Punjab region and even after reforms in the electoral system and the introduction of a democratic stereotypical system of casting a ballot on caste and baradari basis is deeply entrenched in our society. Even the election candidates join the politics, looking to their casts and baradari votes. The political parties have also given them tickets looking to their voting strength, no matter if the candidates contested the previous election from the opposite side.

Moreover, voters neglect the candidates' party change and vote according to their close affiliation. This study is limited to the impact of caste and the Baradari system on the voting behaviour of the 2018 general elections in the Hafizabad District of Punjab.

Shah and Bakht (2019) studied and analysed the impact of caste and Baradari on the electoral system and voting behaviour of rural and urban Punjab District Bahawalpur with particular reference to the 2013 General Elections. This research showed that caste and baradari systems have more impact on rural areas than urban ones. 78% of voters in rural areas and 48% in urban areas of District Bahawalpur supported caste and Baradari in the 2013 General Elections.

Rahman and Said (2021) investigated the male voting decisions of voters in District Buner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in the 2013 General Elections. The authors discussed the importance of democracy and the electoral system worldwide, especially in Pakistan, and that it should be more active and regular to provide a robust system for state affairs. Fair and free elections are necessary for any democratic state. Some political factors give a candidate an essential position in politics. Family affiliation is one of them. A quantitative method of research was used to collect data. The data analysed through SPSS software showed that 119 voters declined to follow their family voting decision, and 80 out of 306 supported their family decision. Different variables, such as age, education, and profession, impact voting decisions. People of less age, high education and senior professions make their voting decision independently without family influence, while those less educated or illiterate, old age and low-paid workers like Riksha drivers etc. cast their votes under family influence.

Karak is a significant constituency of Pakistan regarding natural resources like natural gas, uranium, oil, and salt. Moreover, it has a highly educated population. Investigating female voting behaviour in an educated and affluent natural resources area is essential and will contribute to the existing literature.

The research objectives of this study include: To determine the role of family affiliation in female voting behaviour in the 2018 General Election in District Karak, and; to determine the impact of ethnicity (family affiliation) on female voting behaviour in the 2018 General Election in District Karak. Moreover, the research questions include: What is family affiliation, and what is the role of ethnicity (family affiliation) in describing the female voting behaviour in the 2018 General Election in District Karak?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this article, quantitative method research was used to analyse the critical factor, which is family affiliation. The population of the study was the registered female voters of NA-34 in District Karak. The total number of women registered to cast their votes in the constituency of NA-34 was 17,8504. There are three tehsils in District Karak. The registered female population in Tehsil Karak was 74765, while in Tehsil Banda Daud Sha, it was 42088, and in Tehsil Takht-e-Nasrati, there were 61651. Taro Yamane's Formula (1973) was used to determine the sample size of this quantitative study, which is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

“n” = sample size

“N” = total population of the study

“e” = margin of error, i.e. equal to (.05)

Here, the sampling error is 5%, while the confidence level is 95% based on Yamane Formula.

N1 = total number of female voters selected from tehsil Karak,

N2 = total number of female voters selected from Banda Baud Shah and

N3 = total number of female voters selected from Takht-e-Nasrati. So,

$N=N1+N2+N3$

$N=74765+42088+61651$

$N=178504$

The sample size for District Karak is calculated as follows:

$n = 178504 / (1 + 178504(.05)^2)$

$n = 178504 / (1 + 178504(0.0025))$

$n = 399.9977$ or 400

A stratified sampling technique was used to gather reliable data of proportionate sampling figures from the female registered vote for the General Election 2018 in District Karak. Therefore, the proportional allocation method of sampling, i.e., $n1=N1/Ni \times ni$ (Bowley, 1920) is used to select the respondents according to the sample size.

A proportionate sample of female registered voters is as follows:

$n = n_1 + n_2 + n_3$

$n = 168 + 94 + 138$

$n = 400$

The empirical data collected through questionnaires from the registered female voters of NA-34 District Karak was analysed through SPSS software. Frequencies and percentages of five questions have been calculated in the light of several variables, including age, marital status, education and occupation in District Karak and its impact on the 2018 General Election. Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between several variables and the election manifesto. Independent sample T-test was used to determine the mean difference between several variables and family affiliation.

Some of the hurdles in collecting the data were that most of the women were not giving me correct information; they thought that I was an agent of some organisations/institutions and was taking personal information from them, i.e., political information. Many women do not have political knowledge; they fill out the questionnaire by looking at the positive things and completing the formalities. Many women did not even respond when the researchers were collecting data. They shared that we do not go to the polling station in today's political environment because we are afraid.

RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The theory of ethnicity has been analysed and tested female voter behaviour in the 2018 General Elections in District Karak in the light of five points as follows:

- The vote should be given based on your household wishes.
- The vote should be given to a candidate who belongs to your family.
- The vote should be given based on family relationships.
- A vote should be given to a candidate who always joins the joys and sorrows of your family.
- A vote should be given to a candidate based on personal relationships.

The table-1 shows that 133(33.3%) respondents belong to the first category of age consideration that is from 18-30, while 134, 33.5% of respondents belong to the second category that is from 31 to 45 and 133(33.3%) belong to the third category which is from 46 up to above. The results further show that 197 respondents, i.e., 49.4% are on the job, while 203 respondents, 50.8% are jobless. The results indicate that 196(49%) respondents are educated and 204(51%) are uneducated. The table shows that 200(50%) respondents are married, while 200(50%) are unmarried.

Table 1: Demographic Details of Respondents

Description	Category	Frequency	Percentages
Age	18 up to 30	133	33.3
	31 up to 45	134	33.5
	45 up to above	133	33.3
	Total	400	100.0
Occupation/job	on job	197	49.3
	Jobless	203	50.8
	Total	400	100.0
Education	Educated	196	49.0
	Uneducated	204	51.0
	Total	400	100.0
Marital status	Married	200	50.0
	Unmarried	200	50.0
	Total	400	100.0

Family affiliation is an important determinant. It plays a significant role in the electoral process. Table 2 shows that five questions were asked about family affiliation. Item 1 indicated that 35.3% of the respondents agreed that a vote should be given based on your household wishes, 58.3 % disagreed, and 6.5 % were neutral toward the statement. Item 2 indicated that 30% of the respondents agreed that a Vote should be given to a candidate who belongs to your family, 61.3% disagreed, and only 8.8% were neutral toward the statement. Item 3 indicated that 25.3% of the respondents agreed that a vote should be given based on family relationships, 68.8% disagreed, and 5.8% neutralised the statement. Item 4 indicated that 45.1% of the respondents agreed that a vote should be given to a candidate who always joins the joys and sorrow of your family, 49.8% of respondents disagreed, and only 5.3% were neutral toward the statement. Item 5 indicated that 26.3% of the respondents agreed that a vote should be given to a candidate based on a personal relationship, 67.8% disagreed, and only 6.0% were neutral toward the statement. Family affiliation is a determinant in District Karak because 32.35% of females cast their vote because of family affiliation, 61.65% of Females did not vote on this ground, while 6.45% were neutral in the 2018 General Elections.

Table 2: Family Affiliation

Item	Statement	A	SA	DA	SDA	N
1	The vote should be given based on your household wishes.	69 (17.3%)	72 (18.0%)	123 (30.8%)	110 (27.5%)	26 (6.5%)
2	The vote should be given to a candidate who belongs to your family.	74 (18.5%)	46 (11.5%)	169 (42.3%)	76 (19.0%)	35 (8.8%)
3	The vote should be given based on family relationships.	51 (12.8%)	50 (12.5%)	166 (41.5%)	109 (27.3%)	23 (5.8%)
4	A vote should be given to a candidate who always joins the joys and sorrows of your family.	103 (25.8%)	77 (19.3%)	119 (29.8%)	80 (20.0%)	21 (5.3%)
5	A vote should be given to a candidate based on personal relationships.	61 (15.3%)	44 (11.0%)	138 (34.5%)	133 (33.3%)	24 (6.0%)

The table-3 shows that the Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between respondent age and family affiliation. $r = -.187$ p-value is .000, which expresses that there is a negative and significant relationship between respondent age and family affiliation.

Table 3: Relationship between Respondent Age and Family Affiliation

		Respondent Age	Family Affiliation
Respondent Age	Pearson Correlation	1	-.187**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Family Affiliation	Pearson Correlation	-.187**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

As given in table 4, Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between respondents' occupation and family affiliation. $r = -.089$ p-value is .074, which explains that there is a negative and significant relationship between the respondents' occupation and family affiliation.

Table 4: Relationship between respondents' occupation and Family Affiliation

		Respondents Occupation	Family Affiliation
Respondents Occupation	Pearson Correlation	1	-.089
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.074
	N	400	400
Family Affiliation	Pearson Correlation	-.089	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.074	
	N	400	400

The table-5 data shows that Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between marital status and family affiliation. $r = .105$ p-value is .036, highlighting a positive and significant relationship between marital status and family affiliation.

Table 5: Relationship between marital status and Family Affiliation

		Marital Status	Family Affiliation
Marital status	Pearson Correlation	1	.105*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.036
	N	400	400
Family	Pearson Correlation	.105*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	
	N	400	400

As given in table 6, Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between respondents' education and family affiliation. $r = -.090$ p-value is .072, which enlightens us that there is a negative and insignificant relationship between respondents' education and family affiliation.

Table 6: Relationship between Respondent Education and Family Affiliation

		Respondent Education	Family Affiliation
respondent education	Pearson Correlation	1	-.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.072
	N	400	400
Family Affiliation	Pearson Correlation	-.090	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.072	
	N	400	400

Table 7 shows that an independent sample T-test was used to determine the mean difference between marital status and family affiliation. In family affiliation, the mean of married respondents is 2.7910(.89472). On the other hand, the mean of unmarried is 2.9670(.77752), the t-value of married and unmarried respondents is 2.100, and the significant value is significant, i.e., .036.

Table 7: Group Statistics (marital status with determinants)

	Marital status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Family Affiliation	Married	200	2.7910	.89472	-2.100	.036
	Unmarried	200	2.9670	.77752	-2.100	.036

The data in Table 8 shows that an independent sample T-test was used to determine the mean difference between marital status and family affiliation. In family affiliation, the mean of on-job respondents is 2.9553 (.78379), the jobless is 2.8049 (.89009), the t-value of on-job respondents is 1.792, and the jobless respondents are 1.795, and the significant value is insignificant job respondent i-e .074 and jobless respondents i-e .073 which is insignificant.

Table 8: Group Statistics (occupation with determinant)

	Respondent occupation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Family affiliation	On job	197	2.9553	.78379	1.792	.074
	Jobless	203	2.8049	.89009	1.795	.073

The data in Table 9 indicate that an independent sample T-test was used to determine the mean difference between educational status and family affiliation. In Family Affiliation, the mean of

educated respondents is 2.9561 (.78571), the uneducated is 2.8049 (.88789), the t-value of educated respondents is .05612, and the uneducated respondents are .06216, and the significant value is insignificant for educated and uneducated respondents, i.e., 0.072 which is insignificant.

Table 9: Group Statistics (respondents' education with determinants)

	Respondent education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Family Affiliation	Educated	196	2.9561	.78571	.05612	.072
	Uneducated	204	2.8049	.88789	.06216	.072

The findings of this study show that 58.3 % of the respondents disagreed with casting votes on the wishes of their households. 61.3% of the voters did not vote for the candidate who belongs to their family. 68.8% of the respondents disagreed with casting their votes for the candidate based on family relationships. 49.8% disagreed that they did not cast their votes for a candidate who always joins the joys and sorrow of their family if he/she did nothing for the development of their region. 67.8% of respondents disagreed that a candidate should not be given a vote based on personal relationships. So, it means that family affiliation was not a determinant in District Karak because 32.35% of females cast their vote because of family affiliation, 61.65% of females did not vote on this ground, and 6.45% were neutral in the 2018 General Elections.

The findings align with Shah and Bakht (2019), who studied and analysed the caste and baradari system supported in the district of Bahawalpur, Punjab, in the 2013 General Elections. 78% of electorates in rural areas and 48% in urban areas of District Bahawalpur support the theory of ethnicity. Haider and Ali's (2020) results were the same as Shah and Bakht (2019) in the Hafizabad District of Punjab in the 2018 General Elections, where candidates get into politics looking for their voting strength through family affiliations and the voting behaviour of people affected by the family affiliations. They cast their votes due to family affiliations. The theory of ethnicity applies to the above district of Pakistan. However, in the male population's voting behaviour in the study by Rahman and Said (2021) in District Buner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the majority of youth, highly educated and people of high professions did not support the family influences in electoral decisions.

CONCLUSION

Regarding applying the theory of ethnicity to voting, it is concluded that ethnicity is not applicable in the female electoral politics of NA-34, District Karak. In the 2018 General Elections, most women voted for PTI (voted based on election manifesto and religion) because of their assurance of jobs, elimination of corruption, and Islamic System. 61.65% of females did not cast their vote based on family affiliation. They cast their vote on developmental works and the election manifesto. The empirical data also support the argument that ethnic voting is not crucial in the electoral politics of District Karak. Family affiliation is not a determinant in District Karak because females do not vote on family affiliation. The variables like age, marital status, occupation and education do not impact this factor. Regarding the study's suggestions, it is concluded that there is a great need to spread political education among women. The polling station should have a free and fair electoral environment so that people can vote without fear or danger. R Governments and NGOs should use social media to increase voter political awareness and provide facilities for disabled and older people.

References:

- Agbor, U. J. (2019). Religion as a determinant of voter behaviour: An analysis of the relation between religious inclination and voting pattern in cross river state, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences Research*, 14, 45-100.
- Ahmad, M., S. (2010). *Electoral politics in NWFP 1988-1999* (PhD Dissertation, National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad).
- Bano, S., & Noureen, A. (2022). Female voting behaviour: Role of electronic online media in the elections of Pakistan. *Global Digital and Print Media Review*, 2, 173-82.
- Bashir, U., & Khalid, P. D. I. (2020). Religion and electoral politics in Punjab: A case study of 2018 general elections. *Research Journal of South Asian Studies*, 34, 7-24.
- Farmanullah. (2014). Operationalising the Theory of Party Identification in the electoral politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A case study of General Elections 2002. *Journal of Research Society of Pakistan*, 51, 87-105.
- Farmanullah. (2014). *Voting behaviour in Pakistan: A case study of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2008 General Elections* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, Pakistan).
- Farmanullah & Khan, S. (2020). Quality of General Elections 2018: An appraisal in the light of national and international election observers' reports. *Pakistan*, 56, 282-303.
- Giné, X., & Mansuri, G. (2018). Together we will: Experimental evidence on female voting behaviour in Pakistan. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 10(1), 207-35.
- Haider, K., & Ali, M. A. (2020). Cast and baradri system and voting behaviour in Pakistan (Elections 2018): A case study of Hafizabad District. *Pakistan Vision*, 21, 104-16.
- Lamani, R., & Naik, S., (2014). Electoral behavior among women voters of North Goa: A case study. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 10(6), 157-69.
- Mahsud, N. H. K., Wasai, & Hussain, M. (2021). An analysis of students' attitude toward electoral politics in 2018 general elections: A case study of Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)*, 5(1), 279-300.
- Munir, K. (2019). *Electoral politics of Lahore City: Voting behaviour analysis of general elections 2008-2013* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Punjab, Pakistan).
- Rahman, A. U., Said, M. G., Ahmad, I., Kashif, M., & Hassan, M. (2021). Family as a voting determinant in 2013 general elections. *Elementary Education Online*, 20, 2790-802.
- Shah, H., Rehman, A. U., & Mehmood, W. (2019). Operationalisation of the floating voters hypothesis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)*, 3(1), 43-60.
- Shah, N. H., & Bakht, N. (2019). Impact of caste and biradari system on voting behaviour: Comparative study of rural and urban Southern Punjab (District Bahawalpur). *Pakistan Vision*, 20, 11-20.
- Sharma, S., & Pachori, S. (2017). Electoral behaviour and voting pattern of women in Ajmir Tehsil: A geographical analysis. *IOSR-Journals of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 22, 67-71.

Date of Publication

November 10, 2023