



**The Issue Voting as a Determinant in the Female Voting Behaviour in NA-34:
A Case Study of 2018 General Elections in Karak, Pakistan**

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Abstract:

This article investigates the issue voting as a determinant in the female voting behaviour in district Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The main question is whether the female of District Karak cast their votes on the basis of the election manifesto of a political party and its impact on the 2018 General Elections. To determine their behaviour, the researcher applied the theory of issue voting to the results of the 2018 general elections. A quantitative research method was used to determine the result and analysis of the data. A questionnaire was developed to gather the quantitative data. Four hundred respondents from the target area were selected for data collection. The stratified sampling was used to collect data from female registered voters of district Karak. After analysis, the accumulated data shows that 63.55% of respondents support the issue voting in district Karak. This research helps students, political parties, politicians, and researchers conduct further studies on this issue. It serves as a supporting document for the Election Commission and the government of Pakistan.

Keywords: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Karak, determinant of voting behaviour, female voting behaviour, issue voting, 2018 general election, election manifesto

INTRODUCTION

Election is a democratic process in which people freely express their opinions regarding personalities by casting their vote for a person or party of his/her choice. Election in a democratic world is also a class struggle in voting. Elections turn out, and outcomes broadly reveal the differences and priorities of different social groups, such as youth, literate persons, religious people

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and ethnic groups (Bashir & Khalid, 2020; Agbor, 2019). Voters cast votes for individuals or parties whom they consider the best and most suitable choice for their vote (Shah et al., 2019). Political behaviour is an essential field of study in political science. In this field, theories can be measured and tested in quite a systematic and qualitative way. Investigating the electoral behaviour of the electorate is an essential field of study of political science that brings the disciplines of sociology and political science closer to each other. This interaction of political science sub-field voting behaviour has a significant role in developing a new field named political sociology or sociological politics (Giné & Mansuri, 2018). Philosophically, human beings are rational by nature; however, in practice, it is observed that human beings are not very rational in the economic and political fields. The research findings on voting behaviour reveal that numerous irrational forces influence human political behaviour. Factors such as political parties, personalities, money and many other irrational forces encircle human beings. Therefore, humans perform politically irrational (Hazarak 2015, 22).

The interaction of various factors leads to the making of the voting decision. The primary purpose of this way of looking at voting decisions is to identify the factors that contribute to a complete picture of voting decisions (Anderson & Stephenson, 2010). It is essential to determine and link all factors that play a role in establishing an individual's political behaviour to the theory of issue voting. It helps to understand the fundamental nature of human beings' voting behaviour (Mahsud et al., 2021; Sharma & Pachori, 2017).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORIES

Spatial Theory of Issue Voting

The theory of spatial voting decisions significantly impacts how elections are perceived and studied. From the perspective of political economists, other formal paradigms have a limited application or influence on how people think about politics. (Maddens & Hajnal, 2001, p.319). Black and Anthony Downs presented the spatial theory of issue voting. This theory examines the electorate's voting behaviour with regard to spatial distances between the attitude of political parties or candidates and the voters on issues. This theory represents the voting behaviour of the electorate and political parties in a dimensional space. According to this theory, voters vote for a candidate or political party nearest to their issues. Candidates and political parties also formulate policies according to the voter's dimensional spaces. This theory is also called the proximity theory of voting behaviour as it is based on the idea that the issues of voters and political parties stay in a close-dimensional space. Elisabeth J. Zechmeister shows that political officeholders are chosen based on their political stance on issues. The elections in Mexico in 2000 are an example of this. He argues that Mexico is an emerging, multi-party democracy where voters are motivated primarily by proximity considerations. He adds that the modern voter is an insightful voter who compares the positions of political parties on issues and supports the one closest to his position in dimensional space (Furmanullah 2014, 20).

Theory of Rational Choice or Economic Theory of Issue Voting

Anthony Downs presented the rational choice theory. This rational choice theory was based on his research work and Kenneth Arrow's writings. This rational choice theory associates voting with political economy. The theory claims that the political field is like a free market where consumers (electorate) want maximum satisfaction of their needs and wishes. At the same time, the

corporations (political parties, candidates) try to provide maximum satisfaction to consumers in their own style. Both electorate and political parties need each other and try to coordinate by taking advantage of each other. The central theme of the rational choice theory is that both the electorate and political parties adopt rational approaches in their attitude and adopt the way they think can maximize their satisfaction. This rational choice theory consists of three fundamental arguments. First of all, the decisions of the electorate and political parties regarding voting behaviour are based on rationalism. Secondly, the element of coherence is attributed to the political system, which can assist in making predictions about the impact of electoral decisions on political parties, voters and candidates. Lastly, there remains uncertainty in a democratic system. Therefore, different election options are utilized (Bergson, 1958, 437; Farmanullah, 2014a).

Directional Theory of Issue Voting

The directional theory of issue voting suggests that voters tend to favour candidates aligned with their perspective, and the stronger the alignment, the more preferable the candidate becomes. A “side” in this context could refer to a politically significant group, such as a political party or a community sharing similar ideological principles (Lewis & King, 1999, p. 23). Farmanullah discussed the concept of issue voting by examining the direction and intensity of the stance taken on various issues. He suggests that voters desire a political party or candidate to adopt a specific stance on an issue, considering both the direction and intensity of its resolution (Farmanullah, 2020).

Munir (2019) examined the situation that shaped the political decisions of the voters and their participation in the elections and different factors which affected the electoral process regarding voting behaviour in Lahore and its surroundings. The writer also shed light on the national and provincial elections of 2008 and 2013. The researcher used three electoral models: the sociological, psychosocial and rational choice theory or economic voting model. However, this research study needed more literature about the determinants of female voting behaviour concerning the 2018 General Election in NA-34 District Karak.

Mirza (1969) showed social and educational conditions, political activities and brief biographical sketches of Muslim women leaders of Punjab and former NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) from the Mughals till independence. The author discussed the struggle for women's suffrage rights, and in this regard, a deputation demanded official recognition for the right of female suffrage in 1917. In 1918, All India Muslim League and Indian National Congress supported this demand, and after the 1919 act, a deputation of women headed by Sarojini Naidu demanded an extension of the franchise for women; resultantly, the right to cast a vote to women was granted in 1928. This research study lacks information about Pakistan's present constituencies and their current trends.

Farmanullah (2014b) elaborated on the theory of issue voting, which compelled people to make electoral decisions during General Elections. Political parties issue their manifestos on the eve of general elections. Apart from other things, the manifestos discuss social issues and their solutions before the prospective voters to attract them to vote for their respective party candidates in the election. The writer endeavoured to provide pragmatic arguments regarding the issue of voting effects on electoral patterns in the 2002 to 2013 elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The author concluded that older people, people with low income, and people with high literacy rates primarily

supported the issue of voting during the 2002, 2008 and 2013 elections. Further, it finds out that among numerous other problems, the issue voting performed its central role during the 2002, 2008, and 2013 elections. This research needs to include information about determinants of female voting behaviour, especially the 2018 General Election in the NA-34 district of Karak.

Haider (2014) detailed the 2013 General Election in Pakistan. The author discussed the election schedule, different parties, such as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League (N), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Pakistan People Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) manifestos, the process to conduct the election and the result of each constituency both winner and loser in detail. Province-wise election details have also been discussed. Determinants of female voting behaviour were not discussed regarding the 2018 General Elections.

Empirical data from Farmanullah (2020) shows that issue voting played a crucial role during the 2002-2013 period, comprising the 2002, 2008, and 2013 general elections. The statistical figure shows that 56.6% of respondents supported the theory of issue voting in the 2002 general elections. Similarly, 53.5% of respondents supported, in terms of the 2008 general election, the idea of issue voting. Militant attacks in KP, operations in KP, the provincial autonomy and the central government's exploitation of the Pakhtuns' resources (electricity) were the key factors that provided a base for operationalizing issue voting in KP electoral politics. Likewise, the statistical figure shows that 78.1% of respondents in the 2013 general elections supported the idea of issue voting.

The study aims to investigate the role of issue voting in describing the female voting behaviour in the 2018 General Election in District Karak. The theory of issue voting has been analysed and tested in the light of five questions. That is: (a) A vote should be given to a party based on its manifesto; (b) We should know about the party's manifesto before going to vote; (c) A vote should be given to a party on the assurance of a solution to corruption in its manifesto; (d) A vote was cast in the 2018 General Election based on a party's manifesto; and, (e) You are satisfied with the party's performance to whom you voted based on its manifesto.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article analysed the critical determinants of the election manifesto. A quantitative method of research was used. The population of the study was the registered female voters of NA-34 District Karak. In district Karak, the total number of women registered to cast votes was 17,8504. Women population in the Tehsil Karak area was 74765, while in Banda Daud Sha, the female population was 42088, while in Takht-e-Nasrati, it was 61651. Taro Yamane's Formula is used to determine the sample size of this mixed-method study. Taro Yamane's Formula (1973) is as follows:

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

Where,

“n” is the sample size

“N” is the total population of the study

"e" is the 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 is the total number of female voters of the District Councils of Karak, and N2 is the total number of female voters of the union council Banda Daud Shah. N3 is the total number of female voters in the union council Takht-e-Nasrati, Karak.

$$N=N1+N2+N3$$

$$N=74765+42088+61651$$

$$N=178504$$

The sample size for District Karak is calculated as follows:

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

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

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

$$n = 399.9977 \text{ or } 400$$

A stratified sampling technique was used to gather reliable data of proportionate sampling figures from the females registered to vote for the General Election 2018 in the Karak district. Therefore, the proportional allocation method of sampling, i.e. $n_1 = N1/Ni \times n$ (Bowley, 1920), is used to select the respondents according to the sample size.

A proportionate sample of female registered voters is calculated 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. The frequency and percentage 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. Person correlation was used to determine the relationship between several variables and the Election Manifesto. An Independent sample, T-test was used to determine the mean difference between several variables and the election manifesto.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the data collected and the analysis and findings are provided in the following section. Table 1 shows 133 respondents, which is 33.3%, belong to the first category of age consideration, which is from 18 to 30. In contrast, 134, 33.5% of respondents belong to the second category from 31 to 45 and 133(33.3) belong to the third category from 46 up to above. This table shows that 197 respondents, 49.4%, are on the job, while 203 respondents, 50.8%, are jobless. The table shows that 196 (49%) respondents are educated and 204 (51%) are uneducated. According to the data in the table, 200(50%) respondents are married, while 200(50%) are unmarried.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Demographic Data

	Age	Frequency	Percentages
Respondent 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
Respondent's occupation	on job	197	49.3
	Jobless	203	50.8
	Total	400	100.0
Respondent's education	Educated	196	49.0
	Uneducated	204	51.0
	Total	400	100.0
Respondent's Marital status	Married	200	50.0
	Unmarried	200	50.0
	Total	400	100.0

The election manifesto is an important determinant of voting behaviour. It plays a significant role in making electoral decisions for voters. So, five questions have been asked whether people cast their vote based on the election manifesto or not. Item 1 indicated that 60.6% of the respondents agreed that a vote should be given to a party based on its manifesto, 27.6% disagreed, and only 12.0% were neutral toward the statement. Item 2 indicated that 80.8% of the respondents agreed that we should know about the party's manifesto before voting for it, 13% disagreed, and only 6.3% were neutral toward the statement. Item 3 indicated that 66.1 % of the respondents agreed that a vote should be given to a party on the assurance of a solution to corruption in its manifesto, 26.8% disagreed, and only 7.0% were neutral toward the statement. Item 4 indicated that 36.3% of the respondents agreed that the vote cast in the 2018 General Election was based on a party's manifesto, 21.8% disagreed, and only 18.0% were neutral toward the statement. Item 5 indicated that 50.3 % of the respondents agreed that they were satisfied with the performance of the party they voted for based on its manifesto, and 39.8 % of respondents disagreed. Only 10.0% were neutral towards the statement. The second essential determinant is the Election Manifesto in NA-34. In the 2018 General Elections, 63.55% of Females voted based on the Election Manifesto. 25.75% disagree, while 10.65% are neutral.

Table 2: Do the People cast their vote based on Election Manifesto

Item	Statement	A	SA	DA	SDA	N
1.	A vote should be given to a party based on its manifesto	161 (40.3%)	81 (20.3%)	65 (16.3%)	45 (11.3%)	48 (12.0%)
2.	We should know about the party's manifesto before going to vote.	173 (43.3%)	150 (37.5%)	34 (8.5%)	18 (4.5%)	25 (6.3%)
3.	A vote should be given to a party	157	107	71	36	28

	on the assurance of a solution to corruption in its manifesto.	(39.3%)	(26.8%)	(17.8%)	(9.0%)	(7.0%)
4.	A vote was cast in the 2018 General Election based on a party's manifesto.	136 (34.0%)	105 (26.3%)	60 (15.0%)	27 (6.8%)	72 (18.0%)
5.	Are you satisfied with the performance of the party to whom you voted based on its manifesto?	112 (28.0%)	89 (22.3%)	81 (20.3%)	78 (19.5%)	40 (10.0%)

Table 2 used Pearson correlation to find the relationship between respondent age and election manifesto. $r = .120$ p-value is .016, which shows a positive and significant relationship between respondent age and election manifesto. Similarly, the Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between the respondent's occupation and the election manifesto. $r = .100$ p-value is .045, which explains a positive and significant relationship between the respondent's occupation and election manifesto. Moreover, the Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between marital status and the election manifesto. $r = -.099$ p-value is .048, which indicates a negative and significant relationship between marital status and Election manifesto. Finally, the Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between respondents' education and the election manifesto. $r = .102$ p-value is .042, which shows a positive and significant relationship between respondent's education and election manifesto.

Table 3: Pearson correlation

Relationship between Respondent Age and Election Manifesto		Respondent's Age	Election manifesto
Respondent's Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.120*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.016
	N	400	400
Election manifesto	Pearson Correlation	.120*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.016	
	N	400	400
Relationship between Respondent's Occupation and Election Manifesto		Respondents' Occupation	Election Manifesto
Respondent's occupation	Pearson Correlation	1	.100*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.045
	N	400	400
Election manifesto	Pearson Correlation	.100*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.045	
	N	400	400
Relationship between Marital status and Election manifesto		Respondent's Marital status	Election manifesto
Respondent's Marital status	Pearson Correlation	1	-.099*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.048
	N	400	400
Election manifesto	Pearson Correlation	-.099*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.048	

N		400	400
Relationship between Respondent Education and Election Manifesto		Respondent education	Election Manifesto
Respondent's education	Pearson Correlation	1	.102*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.042
	N	400	400
Election manifesto	Pearson Correlation	.102*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.042	
	N	400	400

An independent sample T-test was used to determine the mean difference between marital status and the election manifesto. In the election manifesto, the mean of married respondents is 2.41(.930). In contrast, unmarried respondents are 2.24 (.711), the T-value of the married and unmarried respondents is 1.982, and the significant value is significant, i.e., .048. Similarly, an independent sample T-test was used to determine the mean difference between occupation and election manifesto. In the election manifesto, the mean of on-job respondents is 2.24 (.715) and jobless 2.41 (.923), the T-value of on-job respondents is -2.010, and the unemployed respondents is -2.017. The significant value of job respondents is significant, i.e. .045, and of jobless respondents, i.e. .044, which is significant. Moreover, an independent sample T-test was used to determine the mean difference between the educational status of respondents and the election manifesto. In the election manifesto, the mean of educated respondents is 2.24 (.716) and uneducated 2.41 (.921), and the T-value of educated is .051 and uneducated respondents are .064 and the significant value of educated respondent is significant, i.e. .042 and of uneducated respondents i.e. .041 which is significant.

Table 4: Independent sample T-test to determine the mean difference with the election manifesto

Description		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Respondent's Marital status	Married	200	2.41	.930	1.982	.048
	Unmarried	200	2.24	.711	1.982	.048
Respondent's occupation	on job	197	2.24	.715	-2.010	.045
	Jobless	203	2.41	.923	-2.017	.044
Respondent's education	Educated	196	2.24	.716	.051	.042
	Uneducated	204	2.41	.921	.064	.041

CONCLUSION

The study's findings show that 60.6% of the respondents voted based on their manifesto. 80.8% of the respondents agreed they knew about the party's manifesto before voting. 66.1% of the respondents agreed that a vote should be given to a party on the assurance of a solution to corruption in its manifesto. 36.3% of the respondents agreed that the vote cast in the 2018 General Election was based on a party's manifesto. 50.3% of the respondents agreed that they were satisfied with the party's performance whom they voted for based on its manifesto. The most essential determinant is the election manifesto in NA-34. In the 2018 General Elections, 63.55% of females voted based on the election manifesto. 25.75% of the respondents disagree, while 10.65%

are neutral. To conclude, the theory of issue voting was applied in this study to the female voting behaviour of district Karak, and it was supported to a great extent, meaning that 63.55% of the female of district Karak cast their vote based on the election manifesto.

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