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DETERMINANTS OF VOTING BEHAVIOUR: A CASE STUDY OF 2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN MALAKAND DIVISION

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the complex nature of voting behavior in the Malakand Division of Pakistan, focusing on the 2018 general elections. It utilizes a multi-dimensional framework to examine how a variety of factors socio-cultural, political, economic, psychological, and religious influence electoral choices. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates both quantitative and qualitative analyses, based on the Funnel and Causality Model, to offer a thorough understanding of voter behaviour in the region. The study collects insights from various segments of the electorate, taking into account variables such as gender, age, education, profession, region, and income type. The findings indicate that voting behavior in Malakand Division is shaped by a blend of influences rather than a single cause. While socio-cultural factors exert a lasting impact, political determinants like leadership affiliation also play a significant role. Election campaigns and emerging issues have a notable short-term impact on individual voters. These elements are interconnected and mutually dependent, shaping how voters form political preferences and make their voting decisions. Among these factors, political influences tend to play a more dominant role in determining voting choices, often surpassing socio-cultural considerations. Overall, this study deepens the comprehension of electoral dynamics in the Malakand Division and provides a valuable foundation for future research in the areas of voting behaviour and political science.

Keywords: Voting behaviour, Malakand, Determinant, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Electoral Politics, Electoral behaviour

Introduction

The Malakand Division, located in the northern part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province, presents a multifaceted socio-political environment influenced by socio-cultural and economic disparities, as well as religious factors. Despite its importance, the voting behavior in this region has received limited attention in academic research. This lack of focused studies on the electoral dynamics of the Malakand Division has resulted in a gap in understanding the distinctive elements that shape voter preferences and election outcomes in the area. This research addresses the critical issue of insufficient empirical knowledge regarding the determinants of voting

behavior in the Malakand Division. It highlights the need for an in-depth investigation into how socio-cultural, political, and religious factors impact voter preferences and decisions. Gaining insights into these influences is key to understanding broader electoral trends in KPK and developing effective political strategies for the region. This research seeks to examine both the shifting patterns and the key determinants of voting behavior in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), with a particular focus on the Malakand Division during the 2018 general election. Two key areas emerge for exploration: the impact of long-term factors, such as ethnicity, religion, age, gender, and education, as well as short-term factors, like regional affiliation, profession, and socio-cultural and political influences. Understanding how these variables shape voter behavior, especially in this specific region, is crucial.

On one hand, the study highlights how long-term factors deeply rooted in an individual's identity and socio-economic background, like ethnicity and religion, play a pivotal role in shaping voting behavior over time. These factors often provide a stable, consistent influence on voter preferences, making them predictable in certain contexts. On the other hand, short-term factors such as political campaigns, regional affiliations, or recent events may introduce temporary shifts in voter choices. These factors can disrupt the more deeply ingrained influences, leading to unexpected outcomes in elections. Casting a vote represents a crucial component of the democratic system, where decisions made at the grassroots level have the potential to shift the political power structure. As Kaur (2018) emphasizes, voting serves as a fundamental way for citizens to engage in the decision-making process, highlighting its importance as a cornerstone of democracy. Thus, understanding both long-term and short-term influences on voter behavior becomes essential for grasping the dynamics of democratic participation in this region. Voting behavior refers to the study of how individuals decide whom to vote for and the various factors influencing their electoral choices. It explores why people vote in certain ways, considering social, psychological, and economic influences that shape their decisions. Through this analysis, the preferences of the electorate can be understood, reflecting how voters wish to shape their governance. In democratic states, this allows citizens to actively participate in decision-making processes. In Pakistan, citizens aged 18 and older are eligible to register as voters (HRCP, 2008).

The 2013 general elections marked a historic moment for Pakistan, as it was the first time one civilian government transitioned to another through democratic means. During these elections, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) successfully formed the government at the federal level (Baalen, 2024). A key feature of the 2013 general election was the significant participation of young voters, along with the emergence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) under Imran Khan as a major political force. By the 2018 general elections, PTI made history by forming the government for the first time. This election was marked not only by widespread allegations of rigging and controversies but also by the growing influence of social media on voter behavior (Masood, 2023). Before the 2018 general elections, various surveys predicted that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) would remain the most popular party, with

PTI expected to secure the second position. However, certain developments unfolded that hindered the ruling party's performance, preventing it from maintaining its dominance in the elections. The Dawn Leaks incident strained the relationship between the PML-N and the powerful military establishment, further complicating the party's standing. However, the turning point for the ruling party came with the Panama Papers scandal, which led to the disqualification of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif by the Supreme Court. On July 28, 2017, the Supreme Court removed him from office (Saiful Islam, 2019).

Several other factors also contributed to unexpected outcomes in the 2018 general elections. These included the push for the creation of a southern Punjab province, the growing influence of social media, increased women's participation, and PTI's slogan of "change." These developments particularly resonated with younger voters and women, leading to higher participation. Notably, women from traditionally conservative areas such as District Dir and the tribal Bajaur region not only voted with enthusiasm but also ran for office (Saiful Islam, 2019). The Pakistan People's Party (PPP), still reeling from a significant defeat in previous elections, played a largely marginal role in the 2018 general elections. In contrast, Imran Khan, leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), gained considerable support from the youth, women, and the middle class with his message of "change," promising to tackle corruption and end the dominance of family dynasties in politics.

After Nawaz Sharif's disqualification, PML-N mounted a campaign opposing the judicial ruling and rallied its supporters in defiance. In February 2018, the Supreme Court further ruled that Nawaz Sharif was ineligible to remain the head of the party. In response, PML-N appointed Shehbaz Sharif as its new president (Corsi, 2018). The elections for both the National and Provincial Assemblies were held simultaneously. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) introduced a new Result Transmission System (RTS) for reporting election results. However, the RTS malfunctioned, leading to significant delays in compiling and releasing the results. It took the ECP over 56 hours to announce preliminary results (PILDAT, 2018). Voter turnout in the 2018 elections was 51.85%, a slight decline from the 54% recorded in the previous election. PTI emerged as the largest party in the National Assembly, winning 116 out of 272 seats. PML-N secured the second-largest number of seats, while PPP came in third (Behera, 2018).

Research Questions

How do socio-cultural factors influence voting behaviour in Malakand Division?

How do political factors influence voting behaviour in Malakand Division?

Literature Review

In his book "N.W.F.P. Elections of 1970: An Analysis" (1973), Javed Kamran Bashir provides a designated study of the 1970 general elections, the first in Pakistan's history. His analysis focuses on the economic and social characteristics of various constituencies within the province. However, Bashir's work overlooks several important factors that shape voting behavior in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Bashir, 1973). In contrast, Imdad Ali Khan (1986) examined the non-party-based general elections of 1985, held

under General Zia-ul-Haq's military regime. His study aimed to assess the perspectives of Provincial Assembly members on local councils, the objectives of voters, and their role in decision-making processes, including the implementation of development projects within the province. In his 1986 research, Imdad Ali Khan conducted interviews with Assembly members, where they briefly discussed the political and social reasons influencing voting behavior (Khan, 1986).

In his article "Perspective in Rural Power Structure in West Pakistan", Inayatullah explored how social structures significantly shape voting behavior, particularly in present-day Punjab. He highlighted the importance of groups such as tribes, clans, baradaris, and families in determining electoral preferences. However, his findings are confined to certain areas within the province, limiting the broader applicability of his conclusions (Inayatullah, 1963). Saghir Ahmad (1977) and Hamza Alvi (1996) noted in their paper that class dynamics play a more significant role than traditional kinship ties in shaping voting behavior in Pakistan. They argue that financially dependent voters tend to support candidates who can provide economic assistance, while independent voters—who are financially secure—are more likely to base their voting decisions on kinship and caste affiliations (Alvi, 1972).

In his book "Democratization in Pakistan: A Study of the 2002 Elections" (2006), Muhammad Waseem offers a theoretical framework for analyzing electoral politics in Pakistan. He provides insightful research and a comprehensive analysis of the country's electoral dynamics. However, his focus primarily centers on national-level politics, with limited consideration of the specific electoral context in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Muhammad Shakeel Ahmad's PhD dissertation provides a detailed analysis of electoral politics in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, focusing on the general elections held between 1988 and 1997. The study challenges the dominant perspective that social factors are the primary drivers of voting behavior. Ahmad argues that in urban areas of the province, political determinants—such as the influence of political parties and the charisma of leadership during election campaigns—play a more significant role in shaping electoral behavior. Conversely, in rural areas, support networks are more influential in determining voting patterns (Ahmad, 2010).

Najib Khan, in his article "A Sociological Analysis of Party Leadership Influence on Voting Behaviour in Traditional Communities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa District Dir Upper," investigates how voting behavior is influenced by a combination of social, psychological, and attitudinal factors. His research highlights the complexities of voting behavior in traditional communities, emphasizing the interplay between these various influences. Each dimension plays a crucial role in a voter's decision-making process during elections. This study emphasizes the importance of local leadership and past performance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. It reflects broader trends observed in democratic societies, where improvements in education are advocated to promote informed voting and enhance electoral integrity (Najib Khan, 2021).

In their paper, Taseer Ullah and colleagues examine how electoral politics and voting behavior vary significantly across Pakistan due to diverse social, economic, and political factors. Their analysis of the general elections in 2002, 2008, and 2013 in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa reveals a shift in voter preferences: initially driven by religion and party loyalty, voters progressively began to focus more on party manifestos by the 2013 elections. The observed trend indicates shifting political dynamics and growing dissatisfaction with previous political parties. In contrast, the voting patterns in Balochistan are predominantly influenced by the Sardari system, with nationalist leaders facing significant challenges from state repression (Taseer Ullah, 2024).

In their article, Lal Badshah and colleagues explore the complex electoral behavior in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, focusing on the impact of social factors. Their study finds that while family ties and biradari affiliations remain significant, their influence has waned over time due to increasing education levels and heightened political awareness. Although religion's impact was most pronounced during the 2002 elections, it has since declined. Nevertheless, personal connections and local issue orientations continue to be strong determinants of electoral behavior in the region (Lal Badshah, 2019).

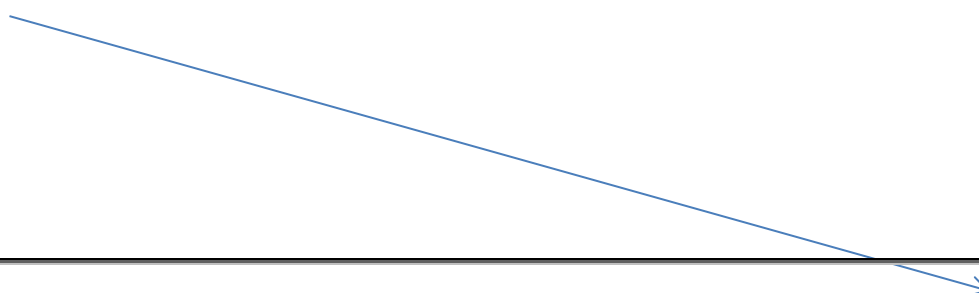
Theoretical Framework

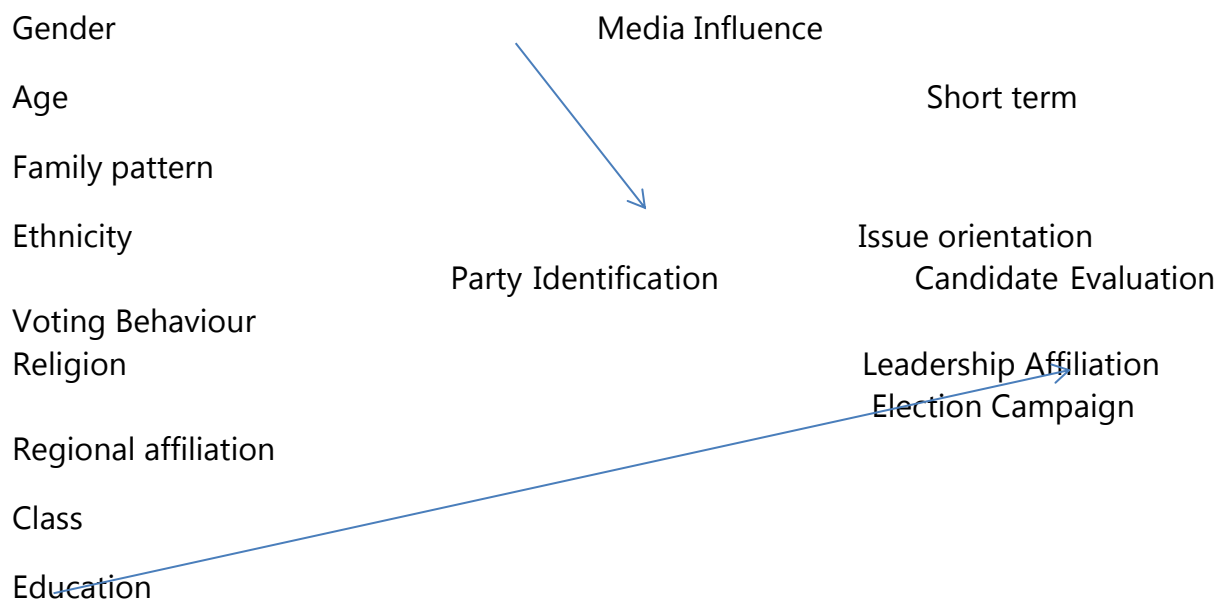
The framework used to understand the relationships between various factors that shape electoral behavior is known as the funnel of causality (Antunes, 2010). Developed in the 1960s by political scientists at the University of Michigan, this approach built upon previous research and established that electoral behavior results from a combination of socio-psychological influences. Key findings included the importance of party attachment, a concept that is widely accepted today.

The funnel of causality framework considers a range of sociological and psychological factors, evolving through the years (Jason Gainous, 2005, p. 9). This model explains electoral behavior by illustrating a sequence of influences on voting decisions. It begins with broad socioeconomic and historical factors and progressively narrows down to more immediate elements, such as candidates, election campaigns, and specific issue orientations. The University of Michigan School posits that factors such as socio-demographics play a crucial role in determining voter party allegiance (Thomassen & Rosema, 2009). The funnel model conceptualizes voting behavior as a filtering process, wherein various factors interact to shape voting decisions. This approach aids in analyzing how both broad and specific influences converge to affect voting outcomes. Scholars have developed a multistage model, known as the bloc-recursive approach, which is significantly influenced by the Michigan model (see Blais et al. 2002; Gidengil et al. 2012 for Canada, and Bélanger and Nadeau 2009; Nadeau and Bélanger 2013 for Québec). While the fundamental idea of the funnel of causality remains intact, the stages or blocks within this model have evolved over time (Jean François Daoust, 2020). In our study, we adopt this approach. The following proposed model Funnel of Causality covers most of the characteristics of voting behaviour in Malakand Division.

Figure-2.1: Funnel of Causality

Long term





The combination of long term and short-term variables interacts to determine both the overall political alignment and specific choices of the voters.

Research Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was employed in this study, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a thorough analysis of electoral behavior in the Malakand Division. Stratified sampling was utilized as a form of probability sampling to ensure representation across essential demographic variables, including gender, education, age, profession, regions or districts, and monthly income. A total of 1,378 surveys were completed across all districts within the Malakand Division, confirming that the saturation point necessary for reliable and valid results was achieved.

The population for this study consisted of all voters registered by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in the voters' list throughout the division. Additionally, qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews with various segments of the population in the division, enhancing the richness of the analysis. The data collected then analyzed through descriptive, analytical, and comparative methods was used to compare the different socio-cultural and political variables (Field, 2013). Statistical analysis was performed using software such as SPSS.

Results and Discussions

The 2018 General Election in Pakistan represented a pivotal moment in the country's electoral history. The rise of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) marked a new chapter in Pakistan's political narrative, as the party campaigned under the slogans of change and accountability. PTI emerged as the largest party in the election, securing 116 out of 272 contested seats in the National Assembly. This victory significantly transformed Pakistan's political landscape, leading to Imran Khan's ascension to the position of Prime Minister.

Understanding these dynamics is crucial for gaining insights into the evolving political environment of Pakistan and the factors influencing electoral behavior. The following

table presents the distribution of voting data among the political parties that participated in the 2018 elections general elections.

Table-6.7: Which party did you vote for in the 2018 general election?

Political Name	Party	Frequency	Percentage of Male Votes	Percentage of Female Votes	Percentage of e	Cumulative Percentage
PTI	(Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf)	574	47.6%	40.6%	41.7%	41.7%
ANP	(Awami National Party)	220	11.4%	16.8%	16.0%	57.7%
JI	(Jamaat-e-Islami)	132	10.3%	5.7%	9.6%	67.3%
JUI-F	(Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam)	138	10.5%	9.9%	10.0%	77.3%
PML-N	(Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz)	126	9.2%	8.6%	9.1%	86.4%
PPP	(Pakistan People's Party)	82	6.7%	5.8%	6.0%	92.4%
QWP	(Qaumi Watan Party)	18	1.2%	1.9%	1.3%	93.7%
Independent/Other		88	4.3%	6.7%	7.6%	100.0%
Total		1378	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

In the 2018 general elections, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) garnered 41.7% of the votes from male voters and 47.6% from female voters, making it the party with the highest overall support, particularly among male voters. The Awami National Party (ANP) received 16.8% of the votes, with a notable amount of support coming from male voters compared to females. The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) achieved 9.6% of the total votes, similarly showing that the majority of its backing was from male voters. The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) captured 10% of the total respondents, with a significant portion of support coming from female voters relative to other parties. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) secured 9.2% of votes from males and 8.6% from females among the total respondents. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) received significant support from female voters compared to male voters. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) garnered 6.7% of the votes from males and 5.8% from females. The Awami Workers Party (WP) achieved a total of 6% of the votes, while the Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) received 1.2% from males and 1.9% from females among the total respondents. Independent and other candidates garnered 4.3% of the votes from males and 6.7% from females. In conclusion, there are notable variations in the distribution of votes among different parties and between male and female voters. However, PTI emerged

as the party with the highest overall vote share, followed by ANP, JUI-F, JI, PML-N, PPP, and QWP.

In terms of age-wise analysis, PTI attracted the highest level of support across all age groups. The highest percentage of votes in the 2018 elections came from the 31-40 age group, while the lowest was recorded in the 51-60 age group. The Awami National Party (ANP) gained notable support across all age demographics, with its highest backing from the above 60 age group, followed by the 18-30 age group. The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) also exhibited relatively stronger support among older age groups, particularly in the 51-60 and above 60 categories. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had lower support levels compared to PTI across all age groups. In conclusion, PTI and ANP appear to maintain their strong positions in both past elections and current voting intentions.

In the district-wise analysis, PTI consistently emerged as a dominant party throughout all districts, securing the highest percentage of votes in the Malakand Division. The Awami National Party (ANP) also maintained a significant presence in several districts, particularly in Buner, Malakand, and Swat. The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) demonstrated varying levels of support across the districts, with JUI-F showing particular strength in Swat and JI gaining traction in Lower Dir and Upper Dir. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had fluctuating support across districts but remained relatively strong in District Shangla. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) exhibited varying levels of support, with higher backing in District Lower Chitral and District Malakand. Overall, the findings indicate that while PTI enjoyed widespread support across all districts in the Malakand Division, other parties like ANP, JUI-F, and JI highlight the diverse political landscape within the region. In the income-based analysis of the 2018 general elections, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) received the highest percentage of votes in the income group of over 80,000, garnering 31.2% of the votes. The Awami National Party (ANP) followed with 24.7%, while the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) received 14.3%, the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) received 11.7%, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) garnered 6.5%, and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) received 5.2%.

Similarly, PTI emerged as the most popular party in the income group of 60,000 to 80,000, again leading with 31.2% of the votes, followed by ANP at 16.6%, JI at 11.8%, JUI-F at 11.8%, PML-N at 10.9%, and PPP at 7.3%. In the 40,000 to 60,000 income group, PTI maintained its leading position with 40.1% of the votes, achieving a slightly higher percentage compared to the higher income group. ANP also demonstrated a significant presence in this income bracket, receiving 16.1% of the votes, followed by JUI-F at 13.6%, PML-N at 11.0%, JI at 5.9%, and PPP at 5.1%.

Overall, PTI consistently showcased strong support across various income groups, highlighting its appeal to a broad segment of the electorate. In the 2018 general elections, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demonstrated significant appeal among individuals with moderate incomes, receiving the highest percentage of votes in the 20,000-40,000 income group at 31.2%. The Awami National Party (ANP) followed with

14.4%, while the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) garnered 11.8%, the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) received 9.2%, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) obtained 8.3%, and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) collected 6.6%. While these parties enjoyed noticeable support, their percentages were notably lower compared to PTI and ANP. PTI also maintained its lead in the income group of up to 20,000, receiving 41.7% of the votes, indicating a strong preference among lower-income voters. The other political parties exhibited similar trends in this income bracket as they did in the higher income classes. To gain further insights into voter motivations, respondents were asked about their reasons for voting for a particular candidate in the general elections. The following table presents the various reasons chosen by the respondents.

Table-6.8: Why did you vote for this particular candidate in the General Election 2018?

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
To ensure that the other Candidate loses	32	2.3%	2.3%
Our community decided in his favour	48	3.5%	5.8%
Is a Pious and Religious person	138	10.0%	15.8%
Is a candidate of our favourite party	156	11.3%	27.1%
Honest and Sincere	496	36.3%	63.4%
Helps people	424	30.7%	94.1%
N/A	28	2.0%	96.1%
Don't Know	56	4.0%	100.0%
Total	1378	100.0%	100.0%

The above table shows that honesty and Sincerity appeared as significant reasons constituted 36.4% of the total respondents, which indicates the essential quality of the candidate by their voters. Helping people emerged as the second most important reason received 30.7% of the total respondents. This highlights the ability of the candidate to assist with everyday issues of the voters and provide support in various matters. The reason "Affiliation with a favourite party" received 11.3% of the total respondents remained less dominant on voters' decisions in the Malakand division. The next reason Pious and Religious candidates received only 10.0% of the total respondents, indicated that personality and morals have a limited place in the minds of the people. The findings indicate that honesty and sincerity are paramount reasons influencing electoral behavior across all age groups, comprising 36.0% of the total respondents. Among the age groups, those aged 18-30 showed the highest preference for these qualities, with 38.1% selecting honesty and sincerity as a key factor in their voting decision. This was closely followed by the 31-40 age group at 35.9%. In contrast, support for this criterion diminished among older age groups, with 29.5% of the 41-50 age group, 51.0% of the 51-60 age group, and only 9.1% among those above 60 citing it as a significant reason for their vote. This trend suggests that while

personal integrity remains crucial across the board, younger voters might place a stronger emphasis on these traits compared to older voters.

Overall, the study reinforces the importance of perceived honesty and sincerity in candidates, reflecting a clear expectation from voters for integrity and community-oriented values in their political representatives. The analysis reveals a strong preference among voters for candidates perceived as honest and sincere, reflecting the significance of personal integrity in electoral decisions. Helping people or providing services emerged as the second most important reason, garnering 33.8% of the total responses. This factor was predominantly emphasized by the above-60 age group, while it appeared to have a minimal impact on the 18-30 age group. This trend suggests that older voters place considerable importance on a candidate's ability to assist the public in various matters.

Party affiliation, while important, accounted for only 11.3% of the total votes. Notably, this reason was highlighted by the 51-60 age group, where it received 45.5% of the votes. This indicates that while party loyalty plays a role in voters' choices, it remains a secondary reason compared to the qualities of honesty and the candidate's service orientation.

Additionally, the personal quality of the candidate's piety and religious standing influenced 10.0% of the total voters, underscoring the relevance of moral values and religious alignment in the electoral process, albeit to a lesser extent than the other factors mentioned. The study indicates that personal values and religious traits still hold some significance for a segment of voters in the Malakand division. In the district-wise analysis, honesty and sincerity emerge as the most important reasons for voting across the division. Lower Chitral leads with 52.0% of respondents highlighting these qualities, followed by Upper Chitral at 47.2%, lower Dir at 41.7%, Shangla at 40.4%, Malakand District at 40.3%, Bajaur at 34.6%, Upper Dir at 33.8%, Buner at 30.4%, and Swat at 25.5%.

Party affiliation also plays a crucial role in influencing voter decisions, particularly in districts like Buner and Upper Chitral, where being affiliated with a candidate from the voters' favorite party is significant. In Buner, this attribute was prioritized by 30.1% of respondents, while it was less influential in lower Dir, receiving only 8.0%, and in Malakand, where it garnered just 3.0% of the votes. This variation highlights the diverse electoral dynamics within the Malakand division, where personal qualities and party affiliation interact differently across districts. The analysis highlights that religion and community play significant roles in many districts of the Malakand division, reflecting the influence of local social dynamics and religious values on electoral behavior. In District Bajaur, religious attributes were prioritized by 21.1% of voters, while in District Chitral, these attributes received a low rating of 3.5%. Practical considerations, such as assistance with utilities and legal matters, were also important, with the Malakand division noting a 20.9% emphasis on these factors. However, this was rated lower in Buner, where only 10.5% of respondents highlighted these practical needs.

Overall, the analysis indicates that honesty and sincerity are universally valued across all districts in the Malakand division. In contrast, the significance of other factors,

including party affiliation, religious attributes, and community influence, varies from one district to another within the region. This demonstrates the complexity of electoral behavior in the Malakand division and the need to consider local contexts when analyzing voter preferences. In the qualification-based analysis, honesty and sincerity emerged as the most important reasons for voting across all educational qualifications. This quality held the highest significance among MPhil/PhD holders at 51.2% and Master's degree holders at 44.9%. However, the importance of this attribute decreased with lower educational qualifications, with only 20.0% of individuals who never attended school citing it as a key factor.

Practical considerations were particularly important for voters with lower educational qualifications. Among those who never went to school, 24.4% highlighted practical assistance as a significant reason for their voting choice, while this factor was less emphasized by highly educated individuals, who rated it at only 14.1%.

Religious attributes showed fairly consistent importance among Master's degree holders (10.9%) and individuals with Matric/Intermediate qualifications (10.0%), but were less significant for those with higher educational qualifications, such as MPhil/PhD holders, where the importance dropped to 7.3%.

The influence of community decisions was minimal, with slight significance noted among voters with primary/elementary education (3.0%) and Bachelor's degree holders (2.5%). This analysis indicates that while honesty and sincerity are universally valued, practical considerations and community influences vary significantly based on educational qualifications. The study shows that there is a noticeable trend that more educated voters prioritize personal traits like honesty and sincerity; whereas less educated voters give more priority to practical benefits and party affiliation.

In this regard question was asked from the respondents regarding the 2018 general election that do you satisfied with the party in which you voted in general elections. The following table shows the satisfaction level of the votes.

Table-6.9: Were you satisfied with the party for which you voted in the 2018 General elections?

Level	Male Votes	Female Votes	Total Votes	Percentage	Cumulative %
To some extent	454	92	546	39.6%	39.6%
To a large extent	396	64	460	33.4%	73.0%
Not at all	192	24	216	15.7%	88.7%
Don't Know	126	30	156	11.3%	100.0%
Total	1168	210	1378	100.0%	

The above table shows that the majority of respondents stated they are satisfied with their voted party "to some extent" (39.6%). The satisfaction level is somewhat higher among female respondents (43.8%) than among male respondents (38.9%). A notable segment of the respondents, making up 33.4% of the total, reported feeling satisfied "to a large extent," with a slightly greater percentage of males (33.9%) expressing this

sentiment compared to females (30.5%). Only 15.7% of respondents indicated dissatisfaction, with males (16.4%) showing a higher level of discontent than females (11.4%). Additionally, 10.4% of the respondents were uncertain about their choice, with a larger proportion of females (13.3%) being indecisive compared to males (9.9%). Overall, the findings suggest that a significant majority of respondents felt at least somewhat satisfied with the party they supported in the 2018 General Elections. However, there is a noticeable portion (15.7%) that expresses no satisfaction at all, suggesting areas of discontent that could be addressed by political parties.

Conclusion

In the Malakand Division, voting behavior is significantly influenced by socio-demographic, socio-cultural, and political factors. The study reveals a strong link between voting behavior and family influence, suggesting that a voter's family plays a crucial role in shaping their electoral choices. Younger voters tend to rely less on familial influence compared to their older counterparts. The findings indicate that older voters, who often prioritize established traditional and moral values, are more inclined to support religious parties. In contrast, younger voters show a greater preference for candidates and parties that offer economic opportunities. Voters in the Malakand Division are not heavily swayed by ethnicity or social class, as their electoral preferences are typically not grounded in these factors. Electoral behavior in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa shows considerable variation from one election to another, underscoring the critical role of floating voters in determining electoral outcomes. There is a notable connection between electoral behavior and leadership style, with charisma being a key element of this relationship. The impact of charismatic leaders on voter preferences and their participation in political events emphasizes the importance of charisma in shaping electoral behavior. Furthermore, populism has significantly influenced Pakistani politics, particularly during the general elections 2013 and 2018.

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