



FACTORS EFFECTING THE WOMEN'S TURNOUT IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 2018 IN (NA-29) PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN

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Abstract:

Political participation is sine qua non of women's empowerment. Political participation has various dimensions, such as electoral participation; to participate in election as a voter and electoral representation; to participate in elections as a candidate. The proposed study is limited to the electoral participation of women as voters. This research includes the major findings of the study about the electoral participation of women in the urban and rural areas of NA-29 Peshawar111 constituency in the general elections of 2018. A Chi-square test is performed to check the association between various socio-cultural, economic, educational, and political factors on women's meagre electoral participation

Key Words: Women Electoral Participation, Socio- cultural, economic, political, education.

Introduction

No society can progress economically, socially, and politically without the equal participation of men and women in all the spheres of life. Women constitute half of the world's population yet they constitute a minor percentage in political decision-making and leadership. They not only take care of their families but also provide support and services to the society. Gender division is not confined to Western society; in fact, this is related to whole of the world (Doyle and Paludi, 1991). Though the nature and extent of gender division vary from culture to culture and from society to society, women are still viewed to be weak and subordinate, and it is



quite rare to find an example from the whole world whereby women have exclusive decision-making powers over the men (Naz and Chaudhry, 2011). The equal status of man and woman has been globally accepted by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. United Nations Charter in 1945, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted in 1995, have emphatically supported gender parity and discouraged all forms of discrimination against women in all walks of life including the domain of electoral politics (Charter of the United Nations, 1945; United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 2014).

Electoral participation is the vital sign of democracy through which citizens elect their representatives who then take part in legislation and its implementation. (Rauf and Shah 2008). It is a pre-requisite for the true democracy that all of its citizens, irrespective of gender segregation have equal opportunities in decision-making process. Indeed, electoral participation of both men and women in elections is the real essence of a genuine democracy (Weiss, 2003).

For the first time in human history, women got the right to vote in 1893 in New Zealand (Grimshaw, 2013). Right to vote has been regulated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in 1966 (American Sociological Review, 2005). Women in Pakistan have got the right to vote since country's inception and it was reaffirmed in the first constitution of Pakistan in 1956. Nevertheless, women in Pakistan were granted the suffrage since 1947 with quota of reserved seats in Parliament throughout the constitutional history but their participation in politics is still not satisfactory (Hamida, 2019).

The constitution of Pakistan assured full political participation of women as Article 51(2) guarantees the right to vote to the citizens of Pakistan irrespective of gender (The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 2017). However, Pakistan did not show development in the women electoral participation in elections. In the general elections of 2013, the women turnout was less than 1% in five constituencies of province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In NA-33 Upper Dir, only one woman casted her vote out of the total of the 138,910 registered women voters. In NA-34 Lower Dir, only 231 out of 206566 women voters had exercised their right to vote and the turnout is 0.11%. In NA- 37 Kurram Agency, 459 out of the total of 156,811 of the registered women voters or 0.29 percent women voters casted their ballots. In NA-31 Shangla, 4.59% of registered women voters casted their ballots. In NA-34 Bajaur Agency, women's turnout was less than 1% (The Daily Dawn, 2017).

To promote the electoral participation and representation of women in Pakistan the Elections Act of 2017 was enacted. The act ensured the women turnout by not less than 10% for a valid election (The Election Act of 2017, 2017). In the general elections of 2018, votes polled by men and women were counted separately. The situation of women electoral participation in the general elections of 2018 in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was not satisfactory as the



women turnout was only 32.96% against 51.77% male turnout. There were two constituencies for National Assembly in KP where the women voters' turnout was less than 10%. These constituencies were NA-10 Shangla where women turnout was 9.87 percent and NA-48 North Waziristan where women turnout was recorded as 9.9 percent (FAFEN, 2018, 4-6).

Methodology

The study has been conducted using quantitative methods for data collection and analysis.

Population of the Study

The registered women voters of NA-29 Peshawar III have been served as the population of the study. The number of women registered voters on NA-29 Peshawar III are 222021.

Universe of the study

NA-29 Peshawar III is the Universe of the present study.

Sampling Size:

The criteria for the number of respondents has been selected by using Yamane formula ($n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot e^2}$) where "n" is the sampling size and "e" is the margin of error, that is 0.05%.

Sampling Size of NA 29 Peshawar III

$$\begin{aligned}
 n &= \frac{222021}{1 + 222021 (0.05)^2} \\
 &= \frac{222021}{131006} \\
 n &= \frac{222021}{1 + 222021 (0.0025)} \\
 n &= \frac{222021}{1 + 555.05} \\
 n &= \frac{222021}{555.05} \\
 n &= 399.2 \text{ (400)}
 \end{aligned}$$

Data Collection

Data collection has been from the respondents through questionnaire. It has consisted of close-ended questions which are based on 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Data Analysis

For data analysis SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 25 has been used. Descriptive statistics includes presentation and analysis of the data frequency distribution, bar



charts and pie charts have made for presenting the data visually; mean, standard deviation and percentages has calculated for quantitative variables.

Dependent Variable

Electoral Participation of women in the General Elections of 2018

Table 1. Electoral Participation of the Respondents

| Variable | Response options | n | % |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----|-------|
| Electoral Participation | Yes | 161 | 40.25 |
| | No | 239 | 59.75 |
| | Total | 400 | 100 |

Table 1 shows that maximum number of respondents have not cast their votes. Out of total respondents from urban and rural areas of Peshawar, 161 (40.25%) had cast their votes whereas 239(59.75%) had not cast their votes in the General Elections of 2018.

Independent Variables

Socio-Cultural variable

Table 2. Responses about the socio-cultural variable of the total respondents (n=400)

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | No Opinion | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Women's right to vote is accepted by our society. | 7 1.8% | 53 13.3% | 41 10.3% | 213 53.3% | 86 21.5% |
| 2. Women are free to cast their vote. | 15 3.8% | 55 13.8% | 42 10.5% | 195 48.8% | 93 23.3% |
| 3. Women can easily go to polling stations even if it is far away. | 79 19.8% | 149 37.3% | 49 12.3% | 90 22.5% | 33 8.3% |
| 4. Women are allowed to cast vote to the candidate of their choice. | 17 4.3% | 81 20.3% | 43 10.8% | 193 48.3% | 66 16.5% |
| 5. Women can easily get their national identity card. | 5 1.3% | 44 11.0% | 41 10.3% | 233 58.3% | 77 19.3% |
| 6. Cultural pardah is a hurdle for women to go to polling station | 31 7.8% | 124 31.0% | 46 11.5% | 113 28.2% | 86 21.5% |
| 7. Women have the family support in casting vote. | 24 6.0% | 80 20.0% | 59 14.8% | 198 49.5% | 39 9.8% |
| 8. lack of time and domestic responsibilities are the main hurdle for women in the way of casting vote. | 8 2.0% | 68 17.0% | 53 13.3% | 152 38.0% | 119 29.8% |



| | | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| 9. Male security guards in polling stations is the main hurdle in the way of casting vote due to our pardah system. | 21 5.3% | 164 41.0% | 63 15.8% | 92 23.0% | 60 15.0% |
| 10. less polling stations in their localities is the main hurdle in way of casting vote for women. | 4 1.0% | 55 13.8% | 71 17.8% | 130 32..5% | 140 35.0% |

Table 2 shows the percentage of responses to each of the ten questions related to the socio-cultural variable. Of the total respondents, 74.8% agreed to the opinion that our society accepts women's right to vote. Out of the total respondents, 72.1% agreed to the statement that women are free to cast their vote. In response to question 3 (Women can easily go to polling stations even if it is far away), 30.3% agreed with mentioned statement. In response to question 4 (Women are allowed to cast a vote for the candidate of their choice), 64.8% agreed with mentioned statement. In response to question 5 (Women can easily get their national identity card), 77.6% agreed with mentioned statement. In response to question 6 (Cultural pardah is a hurdle for women to go to the polling station), 49.7% agreed with mentioned statement. In response to question 7 (Women have the family support in casting a vote), 59.3% agreed with mentioned statement. In response to question 8 (lack of time and domestic responsibilities are the main hurdles for women in the way of casting a vote), 67.8% agreed with mentioned statement. In response to question 9 (Male security guards in polling stations are the main hurdle in the way of casting a vote due to our pardah system), 38% agreed with mentioned statement. In response to question 10 (less polling stations in their localities is the main hurdle in casting a vote for women), 67.5% agreed with the mentioned statement.

Relationship between Socio-cultural variable and electoral participation

A point-biserial correlation is run to determine the relationship between the socio-cultural variable and electoral participation. The results are given below:

Correlations

| | | Electoral Participa tion | Socio- cultural |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Electoral Participation | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .059 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .241 |
| | N | 400 | 400 |
| Socio- cultural | Pearson Correlation | .059 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .241 | |
| | N | 400 | 400 |



There is a very weak positive correlation between socio-cultural variables and electoral participation which is statistically insignificant at $p=0.241$. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant correlation between socio-cultural variable and the decision to vote cast.

Economic variable

Table 3. Responses about the economic variable of the total respondents (n=400)

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | No Opinion | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Economically independent women are free to cast her vote. | 21 3.0% | 30 7.5% | 40 10.0% | 206 51.5% | 112 28.0% |
| 2. Economically independent women can easily go to polling stations even if it is far away | 15 3.8% | 71 17.8% | 44 11.0% | 174 43.5% | 96 24.0% |
| 3. Economically independent women are freely and independently cast their vote to the candidate of their choice. | 14 3.5% | 60 15.0% | 43 10.8% | 212 53.0% | 71 17.8% |
| 4. Economically independent women can easily come out of home for casting her vote. | 19 4.8% | 63 15.8% | 40 10.0% | 203 50.7% | 75 18.8% |
| 5. Pardah is not a hurdle for economically independent women's decision of casting vote. | 21 5.3% | 100 25.0% | 58 14.5% | 174 43.5% | 47 11.8% |
| 6. Domestic responsibilities of economically independent woman is not a hurdle in casting her vote. | 22 5.5% | 124 31.0% | 59 14.8% | 160 40.0% | 35 8.8% |
| 7. Economically independent woman can easily get her NADRA card without any hurdle. | 2 0.5% | 38 9.5% | 52 13.0% | 230 57.5% | 78 19.5% |
| 8. Economically independent women have the support in her family for casting her vote. | 1 0.3% | 37 9.3% | 58 14.5% | 223 55.8% | 81 20.3% |

Concerning literature, various economic factors influenced the electoral participation of women. Various responses have been received from respondents, such as in response to question no 1 (Economically independent women are free to cast her vote), 79.5 agreed with the statement. In response to question no 2 (Economically independent women can easily go to polling stations even if it is far away), 67.5 agreed with the statement. In response to question no 3 (Economically independent women freely and independently cast their vote for the candidate of their choice),



70.8 agreed with the statement. In response to question no 4 (Economically independent women can easily come out of the home to cast her vote), 69.5 agreed with the statement. In response to question no 5 (Pardah is not a hurdle for economically independent women's decision of casting a vote), 55.3 agreed with the statement. In response to question no 6 (Domestic responsibilities of an economically independent woman is not a hurdle in casting her vote), 48.8 agreed with the statement. In response to question no 7 (Economically independent woman can easily get her NADRA card without any hurdle), 77 agreed with the statement. In response to question no 8 (Economically independent women have the support in her family for casting her vote), 76.1% agreed with the statement.

Relationship between economic variable and Electoral Participation

A point-biserial correlation is run to determine the relationship between the economic variable and Electoral Participation. The results are given below:

| | | Electoral Participati on | Econom ic |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Electoral Participati on | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .042 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .241 |
| | N | 400 | 400 |
| Economic | Pearson Correlation | .042 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .241 | |

There is a no correlation between economic variables electoral participation which is statistically insignificant ($p=0.241$). Therefore, it is concluded that there is no linear correlation between an economic variable and electoral participation.

Education variable

Table 4. Responses about the education variable of the total respondents (n=400)

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | No Opinion | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|----------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. Educated woman can easily cast her vote. | 82 20.5% | 37 9.3% | 22 5.5% | 128 32.0% | 131 32.8% |
| 2. Educated woman is free to cast her vote to the candidate of her own choice. | 50 12.5% | 61 15.3% | 30 7.5% | 146 36.5% | 113 28.2% |



| | | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 3. Educated woman can easily raise her voice for her right to vote. | 35 8.8% | 80 20.0% | 34 8.5% | 123 30.8% | 128 32.0% |
| 4. Educated women can easily get her identity card without any hurdles. | 34 8.5% | 61 15.3% | 41 10.3% | 160 40.0% | 104 26.0% |
| 5. Educated women can easily move out of the house to go to polling station even if it is far away. | 34 8.5% | 107 26.8% | 51 12.8% | 129 32.3% | 79 19.8% |
| 6. Educated woman has the support in her family for casting her vote. | 21 5.3% | 73 18.3% | 53 13.3% | 156 39.0% | 97 24.3% |
| 7. Cultural pardah is not a hurdle for an educated woman to go to polling station to cast her vote even if polling station is far away. | 37 9.3% | 115 28.7% | 51 12.8% | 125 31.3% | 72 18.0% |
| 8. Domestic responsibilities and lack of time is not a hurdle for an educated woman to go to polling station for casting her vote. | 29 7.2% | 143 35.8% | 61 15.3% | 113 28.2% | 54 13.5% |

As discussed earlier, education plays a significant role in creating awareness of voting rights among individuals. In responses to education and its association with the voting decision by women of Kohat, various responses can be observed, such as in response to question no 1 (Educated women can easily cast her vote) 64.8% agreed. While in response to question 2 (Educated woman is free to cast her vote to the candidate of her own choice), 64.7 agreed. For question 3 (Educated woman can easily raise her voice for her right to vote), 62.8 agreed. Answering question 4 (Educated women can easily get her identity card without any hurdles), 66 agreed. In response to question 5 (Educated women can easily move out of the house to go to polling station even if it is far away) 52.1 agreed. For question 6 (Educated woman has the support in her family for casting her vote), 63.3 agreed. While for question 7 (Cultural pardah is not a hurdle for an educated woman to go to the polling station to cast her vote even if the polling station is far away), 49.3 agreed. In response to question 8 (Domestic responsibilities and lack of time is not a hurdle for an educated woman to go to a polling station to cast her vote), 41.7% agreed.

Relationship between education variable and electoral participation

A point-biserial correlation is run to determine the relationship between the education and electoral participation. The results are given below:



Correlations

| | | Education | Electoral |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| | | n | Participati |
| | | | on |
| Education | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .408** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 400 | 400 |
| Electoral | Pearson Correlation | .408** | 1 |
| Participati | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| on | | | |

There is a positive correlation between education variables and electoral participation which is statistically significant ($p=0.000$). Therefore, it is concluded that there is significant correlation between an education and electoral participation.

Political factor

Table 5. Responses about the political variable of the total respondents (n=400)

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | No Opinion | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Women should have the right to vote in general elections. | 26 6.5% | 38 9.5% | 28 7.0% | 131 32.8% | 177 44.3% |
| 2. It is the civic duty of every woman to cast her vote. | 26 6.5% | 37 9.3% | 33 8.3% | 130 32.5% | 174 43.5% |
| 3. Women should be supported on the day of election to cast her vote freely and independently. | 21 5.3% | 33 8.3% | 24 6.0% | 136 34.0% | 186 46.5% |
| 4. Women should take part in political activities. | 37 9.3% | 50 12.5% | 47 11.8% | 144 36.0% | 122 30.5% |
| 5. There should be a law to make it mandatory for every woman to cast her vote. | 29 7.2% | 44 11.0% | 37 9.3% | 147 36.8% | 143 35.8% |
| 6. Get the young women interested at an early age for voting. | 28 7.0% | 32 8.0% | 47 11.8% | 159 39.8% | 134 33.5% |
| 7. Women should motivate other women to take part in electoral process. | 28 7.0% | 19 4.8% | 38 9.5% | 176 44.0% | 139 34.8% |



| | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 8. Rivalry between two parties resulted into fights in polling booths greatly affected the voting process for women on the polling day. | 25 6.3% | 25 6.3% | 42 10.5% | 141 35.3% | 167 41.8% |
| 9. Fear of slander and verbal abuse or physical violence against women during or after the election by the opponent political party is the main reason for women for not casting her vote | 26 6.5% | 38 9.5% | 55 13.8% | 152 38.0% | 129 32.3% |
| 10. Political parties and government need to emphasize women to come out and vote. | 33 8.3% | 22 5.5% | 31 7.8% | 144 36.0% | 170 42.5% |

Political factors are one of the significant factors that influence the voting decisions of every individual, including women. The factor of political influence was determined by 10 questions for which the respondents provided various responses. Such as, in response to question no 1 (Women should have the right to vote in general elections), 77.1% agreed. However, in response to question 2 (It is the civic duty of every woman to cast her vote), 76 agreed. In response to question 3 (Women should be supported on the day of the election to cast her vote freely and independently), 80.5 agreed. For question 4 (Women should take part in political activities) 66.5 agreed. Likely, for question 5 (There should be a law to make it mandatory for every woman to cast her vote) 72.6 agreed. Whereas, in response to question 6 (Get the young women interested at an early age for voting), 73.3 % agreed. In response to question 7 (Women should motivate other women to take part in electoral process) 78.8 agreed. Moreover, in response to question 8 (Rivalry between two parties resulted into fights in polling booths greatly affected the voting process for women on the polling day) 77.1 agreed. Also in response to question 9 (Fear of slander and verbal abuse or physical violence against women during or after the election by the opponent political party is the main reason for women for not casting her vote) 70.3% agreed. Lastly in response to question 10 (Political parties and government need to emphasize women to come out and vote) 78.5% agreed.

Relationship between Political factors and electoral participation



Correlations

| | | Political | Electoral Participati on |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Political | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .226** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 400 | 400 |
| Electoral Participat ion | Pearson Correlation | .226** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |

Logistic Regression

Logistic regression is performed to ascertain the effects of socio-cultural, economic, education, and political factors on the likelihood of electoral participation.

$$\log\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4$$

- X_1 **socio-cultural**
- X_2 **economic**
- X_3 **education**
- X_4 **political**

Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients is used to test the model fit. If the Model is significant, this shows that there is a significant improvement in fit as compared to the null model, hence, the model is showing a good fit. The overall model is statistically significant, $\chi^2(4) = 84.383$, $p < .05$.

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

| | | Chi-square | df | Sig. |
|--------|-------|------------|----|------|
| Step 1 | Step | 84.383 | 4 | .000 |
| | Block | 84.383 | 4 | .000 |
| | Model | 84.383 | 4 | .000 |

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test



The Hosmer and Lemeshow test is also a test of Model fit. A non-significant chi-square indicates that the data fit the model well. The Hosmer-Lemeshow statistic indicates a poor fit if the significance value is less than 0.05. Here, the model adequately fits the data. Hence, there is no difference between the observed and predicted model. In this case, $\chi^2(4) = 13.772$, $p > 0.05$, suggesting that the model is a good fit.

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

| Step | Chi-square | df | Sig. |
|------|------------|----|------|
| 1 | 13.772 | 8 | .088 |

Variables in the Equation

| | | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|-------|--------|----|------|--------|
| Step 1 ^a | Socio-cultural | -.004 | .024 | .022 | 1 | .882 | .997 |
| | Economic | -.050 | .026 | 3.551 | 1 | .060 | .951 |
| | Education | .126 | .018 | 49.217 | 1 | .000 | 1.134 |
| | Political | .047 | .015 | 10.159 | 1 | .001 | 1.048 |
| | Constant | - | 1.018 | 17.054 | 1 | .000 | .015 |
| | | 4.203 | | | | | |

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: SC, E, Ed, P.

From these results, education ($p = .000$) and political factors ($p = .001$) added significantly to the model/prediction, but socio-cultural factor ($p = .882$) and economic ($p = 0.060$) did not add significantly to the model. Further, increasing education variable is associated with an increased likelihood of casting vote. Similarly, increasing political variable is also associated with an increased likelihood of casting vote.

Conclusion

The lack of women's empowerment is one of the issues that women face. According to this study lack of access to resources like education and financial freedom leads to a lack of empowerment. The majority of women's low income, because of illiteracy, was identified as a significant barrier to their effective voting participation. According to the report, the majority of housewives and illiterate women have no source of income and consequently few resources. Most of the respondents to the survey did not vote because of the polling place's distance from their homes and the high cost of renting transportation. Active electoral engagement is connected with significant expenditure. Fear of slander and rivalry between two opponents' political parties, resulting into insecurity in the polling stations are among the main hurdles. Through statistics analysis it is concluded that there is no significant correlation between socio-cultural and economic variable



and the decision to cast vote. The study reveals a positive correlation between education and political variable.



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