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## Generations at the Polls: The Past and Future of Women's Electoral Participation in Pakistan

Dr. Umbreen Javaid,

Professor, Lahore School of Economics, Lahore, Pakistan. Email:

[Umbreenj62@gmail.com](mailto:Umbreenj62@gmail.com)

Hiba Farooq Khan,

Research Assistant, Lahore School of Economics, Lahore, Pakistan.

Email: [hiba.farooq20@gmail.com](mailto:hiba.farooq20@gmail.com)

### Abstract

This article investigates electoral trends among women in Pakistan, specifically young urban women's evolving electoral and political participation. Historically, women's electoral dynamics in the country have been shaped by patriarchal norms, inconsistent state policies, and systematic barriers that have limited their agency in the country's electoral process. This article combines a historical analysis with contemporary field research- including surveys and focus group discussions- to explore how political awareness, socio-economic status, and gender norm influence young women's voting behavior. Drawing on primary data collected from university students and young professionals in Lahore, the research identifies key motivators and deterrents affecting women's participation in electoral politics. It highlights a growing shift among education, young women towards political engagement, disillusionment driven by social media, increased civic awareness, and dissatisfaction with traditional political structures. However, the findings also reveal persistent barriers, including family influence, voter registration issues, and distrust in political institutions. The article concludes by recommending policy interventions and grassroots strategies to foster inclusive political participation and to empower young women as active democratic agents in Pakistan's future political landscape.

**Keywords:** Women, Electoral Participation, Political Dynamics, Gender Gap.

### Introduction

Pakistan has officially hosted 16 national level general elections in its 78 years of existence. It has seen everything, from multiple by-elections to contest allegations of rigging by its political parties, to military dictatorships hosting democratic elections and coming to power not once, but three times. In 2024, 48% Pakistani citizens come out of their homes in February to elect its new national government (Gallup Pakistan, 2024) in the face of a constitutional crisis, systems in place they did not completely understand, and a very famous ex-premier who was no longer allowed to contest elections, nor his party. Though when compared to a 10-elections average, the 2024 voter turn-out did not show significant differences (Gallup Pakistan, 2024) the factors that contributed and the socio-political situation at play were very different and new.

Right now, Pakistan hosts a female population of around 117.23 million citizens, making up approximately 49% of the total population of a projected 255 million. (Worldometer, 2025). Comprised of multiple ethnicities, communal backgrounds, heritages, religions,

languages, and traditions, they are a diverse community within an already equally multifaceted population makeup. In the Pakistani political scene, where the National Assembly, the lower house of the Pakistani Parliament, sits 336 legislators, only 60 seats, by provincial division, are allotted for women. Currently, there are 342 such seat holders, with 50 being women (National Assembly of Pakistan, 2025). In the provincial assemblies, the situation is similar, where in Punjab, there is only 17.8% female representation (Provincial Assembly of Punjab, 2025), 17.3% in Sindh (Provincial Assembly of Sindh, 2025), 17.93% in

KPK (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government, 2025), 21.6% in Balochistan (Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, 2025), and 18% for Gilgit Baltistan (Government of Gilgit Baltistan, 2025). For a population half of which is comprised of women. Most of this mainly owes itself to traditionalist patriarchal electoral trends, party formation, and feudal interference in the democratic process. Only after numerous policy reforms, petitioning and countless years of struggle have women managed to achieve these numbers too, all the way from 10 seats in a 210-seat assembly in 1956 ([Wikipedia source find](#)).

Women's electoral and political participation and presence in the country has always under study. Under both the British Raj and the Independence times, women in the subcontinent have always taken the helm of democratic evolution. From the Muslim Personal Law of 1937, which allowed Muslim women's political participation to Fatima Jinnah and Ra'ana Liaquat, the women of Pakistan have always stood behind strong female political figures during its electoral times. Through means of social advocacy, protesting, academia, political NGO work, and officially in lawmaker and politician capacity, slowly but surely women have marked their paths in a field marked by traditionalist men. Articles 25, 26, 27, 32, 34, 51, and 106 of the Constitution firmly set apart women's right to contest and participate in the political system. Through the years 2013-24, reports have analyzed an increase in registered female voters of up to 27% through the Election Act 2017, narrowing the gender gap from 12.8% to 7.7% in 2024 through both efforts by the governments and NADRA (National Database and Registration Authority), but regional and gender-based disparities still continue, those of up to 9.9 million missing female voters between the age brackets of 18-25 and 26-35 (FAFEN 2024). In the 2024 elections, female turn out increased, but reform is still necessary to counter many of Pakistan's deep-trenched issues, as well as to understand the converging socio-economic trends among young women and how this impacts their politics.

The Gender and Social Inclusion Wing (GSI) by the ECP promotes the inclusion of women and minorities, and the Women Voter Registration Campaign aims to reduce voting gender gaps across both rural and urban constituencies, having achieved a 11.8% to 7.74% decrease, as well as the Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Framework (GMSIF) (ECP). Section 206 of the Elections Act 2017 requires political parties to allocate at least 5% of seat tickets. The ECP also has District Monitoring Officers to oversee compliance with gender-related provisions (PakVoter). Civic and international efforts include the Women In Elections (WIE) portal by the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CDPI) to

provide resources for women's electoral participation (PakVoter), the UN has launched Women

Empowerment and Political Participation Groups (WEPPGs) and Democracy Action Groups (DAGs), specifically in turbulent areas like Balochistan to increase CNIC registrations and voter enrollments (United Nations). The Aurat March is a mass-scale social effort conducted annually for all to protest for various social issues and crises, the crux of which happens to be women's empowerment.

Most recently, the current Generation Z women in Pakistan have seen improvement in educational opportunities, self-empowerment and financial independence, mobility, and increased social awareness never before experienced in the country. While urban-rural disparities remain, this exponential increase in women's autonomy in urban Pakistan has created new social conditions, which directly correlate to changing political dynamics for these young women. There is a need to study how these changing dynamics affect their political participation, because this has future repercussions for the masses of women their privilege impacts. In this article, we will try to discover how these trends affect each other and impact women's electoral choices.

### **Historical Overview**

From Pakistan's early years, the participation of women in its political formation and democratic processes has been crucial. From cementing their positions in the National Assembly early on, in 1947, there were 2 female legislators in the country out of 79, resulting in a 3% reserved quota for women. Through military hurdles and various constitutional crises, the election of women was temporarily suspended, a parallel to the social dominance of men in the emerging nation, but political participation through informal means was evident still (Gul, 2020). It was not until the 1970 general elections when the voice of women became truly evident. Where Z.A Bhutto and Nusrat Bhutto championed women's participation in the elections particularly the poorer women of Punjab and Sindh (Gul, 2020), and the necessary apparatus for their political participation had been developed through the tenure of Ayub Khan, resulting in sweeping and to this day, record high voting turn outs, where women played a crucial role, though there are data blocks here to report the exact statistics. Through the regime change post the 1971 Civil War in the appointment of military premier Zia Ul Haq, women's role in politics became very limited and obscure, as Islamisation as a legitimacy tool further limited their presence, and his Shariah laws, paired with the Hudood Ordinances 1979, further dampened their empowerment (Mumtaz & Shaheed, 1987:71).

This almost decade long status quo ended in 1988, after the sudden demise of Haq, when Benazir Bhutto, the daughter of the glorified martyr of the state ZA Bhutto returned home and elections were held in the October of 1988, marking a return back to democracy. The female vote turn-out was marked at a high, though data is unavailable, social accounts and reports testify the increase in female political involvement. Benazir Bhutto also became the first female Prime Minister of Pakistan, and it expected that she could prove to be a custodian

of women's rights and a liberal society, and would revise the policies that caused massive discrimination for women previously. Pakistan also became a signatory to the 'The Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women', and the country saw the appointment of female judges, the set-up of the first women's bank, and separate all-women police stations (FLSAW) (PILAT, 2004). Legislative presence also increased in comparison to 1977, where women gained 38 seats in the national and provincial assemblies. Upon the government change in 1990, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's 3-year government marked a downturn for female voters, where oligarchy dominating conservatism started. Legislative presence dwindled too as no more seats were reserved for women, and made up only 0.9% of a 217-member National Assembly.

The 1993 re-election of Bhutto marked a new wave for women's empowerment, where the judiciary worked vehemently to correct laws concerning women's issues: family laws, economic rights, criminal laws, the Laws of Evidence 1984, the Hudood Ordinances 1979, and violence against women's laws. This generally created an atmosphere of goodwill for the women of the nation, and this although limited, showed in the voter turn-outs that followed. The implementation of martial law yet again in 2000 by President Musharraf contributed positively to women's empowerment, where active efforts were made to include women in socio-political and economic spheres of life, inculcating in a political boom for women. His 2002 referendum sparked controversies, and that women tended to stay away from the polls because of the nature of the decision, keeping female participation low, as reported by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) (BBC). The political party reports from 2002 show proportionate male-female vote distribution, at differences of a maximum 4% among the leading 3 parties, but the social situation stated otherwise (Gallup Pakistan Elections 2002). The situation remained stale throughout Zardari's presidential term, where the election reports show a rosy picture for the three leading parties: a maximum of 8% gender disparity (Gallup Pakistan 2008) It was not until the 2013 general elections and the political career of former Prime Minister Imran Khan became more popular when the situation changed.

His 2013 electoral campaign saw the rebirth of women's electoral participation nationwide. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) placed immense importance on women's role in the political processes of the country, urban and rural, rich and poor, the empowered and the weak. His rallies and campaign were noted for its female attendance, and this reflected in the voter turn-out at election day, where it noted an equal distribution of male-female voter ratio of 17%, and gender-wise educated voter ratio was higher for women than men, at 23-24%. Even though the PML-N won the elections, the wave of political motivation and awareness among women was the product of PTI's campaigning, as seen in the post-election rigging allegations and the consequent government formation by PTI after the 2018 general election win, where men and women equally voted for the party, at 32%, and a 43% educated female count (Gallup Pakistan 2018).

The constitutional crisis in 2022 and the following dissolution of the government saw many protests by women and men alike, as seen in the post- April 9<sup>th</sup> online protesting and opinionated takes. The 2024 general elections also saw the general rise in female voters,

where many women came to vote as a means of political protest and a show of affiliations, though fewer than in the 2018 elections by as much as 10 million voters (KCL 2024).

### **Research Objectives**

Given the changing socio-dynamics of the country, it is imperative to both quantitatively and qualitatively assess political perceptions among a sample of young urban women, as well as understand the underlying factors that motivate or demotivate their political participation through elections. The aims of the research conducted include understanding current political opinions of the female youth. How recent national events have impacted their decisions, and how crucial factors such as socio-economic independence levels, mobility, independence of thinking affect political independence, and how this establishes future predictions and trends for a very important and impactful demographic in the Pakistani female population. It will also navigate gender specific challenges and hurdles, the influence of digital media consumption, political priorities and areas of particular importance when choosing representatives, and the extent of political participation and awareness. Through it, analysis will be made between different variables (income and electoral participation etc.) to see what relationships are more impactful. A focus group analysis will help better understand individual experiences, perceptions, and decisions and how these relate to wider community-level opinions.

### **Methodology**

A survey of 19 participants was conducted in the urban areas of Lahore, creating a simple random sample, composed majorly of young university students in the age brackets between 18-44 and older, anonymously respectively (please see the Appendix for questionnaire). The survey was sent out via social media to as many participants as possible within relevant online group chats. The questions ranged from close-ended to open-ended questions, some with 1-4 scaling to look at where focuses laid. Areas of personal details, educational background, questions of political choices and decisions, the role of the media and perceptions of politicians were among some of the ideas participants were questioned on. Consent was obtained to use respondents' answers. To analyze responders' answers statistically, observations were made, notably between political awareness and the level of the respondent's education and between social media use and political/electoral opinions. Basic statistical information was also reported to provide a foundational understanding of the respondent profile.

Secondly, a focus group was conducted, also focused on the same demographic, online, where 6 respondents, their identities hidden upon request. Respondents were asked for consent before publishing their answers. Their discussion focused on their perceptions of independence, the media's role and contributions, political participation, female representation in Pakistani politics, and political issues close to them (Please see the Appendix for focus group questions). For this, thematic analysis was conducted to identify and interpret recurring themes and patterns in responses. This was by content analysis to quantify the presence of certain words concepts, as well as discourse analysis to see where the responses' language and narratives fall in terms of current ideological framework and

social contexts. Finally, narrative analysis was used to explore to how participants construct their stories and experiences, to observe how individual narratives and accounts are situated within the general socio-political context of their communities.

## Findings

### Survey

Key findings from the survey conducted gave way to the following results from 19 responses: all of the participants were in the 18-26 bracket, with 89.5% belonging to Punjab, and 1 participant belonging to Azad Kashmir (5.3 %) and 1 to Balochistan (5.3%). While the majority originally hail from Lahore, some moved from other cities for educational purposes. Most of them were university students (78.9%), while 2 participants (10.5%) were unemployed, and 2 were working (10.5%). For education levels, 73.7% were undergraduate students, while 15.8% were at the graduate level, and 10.5% at the high school level. The majority also did not have children to support. 94.7% resided in urban communities, and only one participant (5.3%) in a rural area. 31.6% reported that they considered themselves politically aware, while 36.8% agreed that they were politically aware, and 31.6% considered themselves neutral. 52.6% said all participated equally in political discussions at home, while 31.6% chose the stronger male participation option, 1 said female member, and one choose the elderly. Whether women could go out to vote alone with men, the majority said they could (70.5%), while 29.5% said they couldn't, and one pointed out sexual harassment issues as well.

All agreed that it was important for women in their families to vote. 31.6% agreed that male political opinion affected women's electoral participation, 31.6% somewhat agreed, 21.1% were neutral, 5.3% mildly disagreed, 10.5% strongly disagreed. 5.6% agreed that the media is an accurate political information source, while 27.8% somewhat agreed, 38.9% were neutral, 22.2% mildly disagreed, and 5.6% strongly disagreed. 10.5% strongly agreed on personal use of social media affecting electoral choices, where 57.9% somewhat agreed, 26.3% were neutral, and 5.3% strongly disagreed. 11.1% strongly agreed to income levels directly affecting electoral participation, 38.9% somewhat agreed, 22.2% were neutral, 11.1% mildly disagreed, and 16.7% strongly disagreed. 15.8% strongly agreed that their independence in life has led to more independent political decisions, 42.1% somewhat agreed, 36.8% were neutral, and 5.3% strongly disagreed. (See Appendix for survey questions and responses).

The quantitative analysis from the focus group produced relationships and key observations. Notably, between participant's level of education and their rating of their level of political participation, a negative trend was noticed, where the higher the education level, the lesser the respondent considered themselves 'aware'. Secondly, relatively polarizing trends were observed between social media use and electoral choices among respondents. The majority (7) chose 'Neutral' to assess the validity of political/electoral information on social media, but when asked whether social media content affected their electoral choices, 11 respondents chose 'Somewhat Agree'. This was a polarizing finding. For financial means and

income levels affecting political participation, the majority (7) chose ‘Somewhat Agree’, showing how financial resources are a major inhibitor/propagator to electoral choices in the country for the masses. These that show several key factors play a foundational role in electoral participation for young women in particular.

### **Focus Group**

The focus group was analyzed to focus on thematic, content, and discourse analyses to gain a deeper understanding of women’s political, electoral dynamics, and factors that influence them. All participants expressed known and individually experienced challenges to democratic processes related to distrust in the system, corruption, lack of change, and impacts of the April 9<sup>th</sup> 2023 incident. They also expressed disillusionment with national politics and questioned the effectiveness of voting. The importance of rights and representations were also recorded, where participants acknowledged male political dominance, lack of adequate female representation in high positions, and female voters not being taken seriously. They also called for genuine empowerment and representation. Role and impact of social media was another prevalent theme, where it was recognized as a powerful tool for accessing information and raising political awareness, and concern was noted for its validity. Factors influencing political engagement was another theme, where varying levels of interest ranging from perceived honesty and politicians’ ability to address Pakistan’s actual problems were taken into account. Participants expressed a range of predominantly socioeconomic concerns as issues vital to decision-making for them, such as healthcare, education, and women’s rights. They also expressed the interconnectivity of issues. Participants also had very nuanced understanding of independence, encompassing civil liberties and personal autonomy. Content analysis quantifies key concepts across all responses. Individual words expressing core ideas include politics/political systems: 27 times, women in politics: 17 times, rights/liberties: 14 times. Social media: 7 times, socioeconomic issues: 13 times, distrust/disillusionment: 9 times, voting/participation: 13 times, and leadership/governance: 7 times. This indicates a strong focus on the workings of the Pakistani political landscape, a very thorough emphasis on the participants’ perception of gender representation and challenges women face. Concerns were also demonstrated about women’s fundamental freedoms, social and economic development, and how the electoral process is perceived. Social media and governance questions and importance are also prevalent among participants. Discourse analysis focused on how participants navigate their own choices and narratives in certain ideological and social frameworks. Participants were Pakistani citizens, young women navigating the complex, liberal-traditionalist social and political setting, laced with religious element and the obscured perception of women. There was a focus on systemic issues, rather than individual shortcomings, such as corruption, lack of accountability, and male centric perspectives. There is a strong sense of disenfranchisement, where participants felt that theirs and the voices of the women around them are not heard by political institutions, revealing frustration with a lack of meaningful representation and the slow pace of change. The responses reveal struggle for agency, particularly for women, and the challenges they face in participating to their fullest. Hope and disillusionment are oscillating, where frustrations with the current system and its failures, yet hope for progress in the future are in tandem.

Gendered discourse was also observed, where participants reveal the gendered nature of Pakistani politics, and the many challenges that are in place because of it, especially the female voting demographic not being taken seriously by leading politicians, especially the likes of Imran Khan, someone the women of the country had high expectations from. Access to information is seen as crucial for informed citizenship and political engagement, but it has challenges and new threats of its own.

### **Discussion**

The findings from the survey have led to the estimations that the current demographic of young women in Lahore take their political identity, awareness, and their participations in the elections to be of utmost importance. The majority has only seen a single election where they have cast their votes, however their responses to media consumption, and awareness of family political participation shows concrete opinion formation. They are affirmative of their ability to mobilize as necessary, and the concerns they expressed mean active social improvement and independence can guarantee greater mobility, as this is a necessary correction going forward (IGC 2024). Their political/electoral opinions are to a large degree a formulation of the male perception around them as well as their families, but their growing sense of independence and awareness can potentially lead to autonomous political decisions, as highlighted by responses to the last question. Increasing access to education is also contributing to greater political awareness (Khan 2009), proving to be a major source of empowerment. Lack to education accessibility and freedom for girls as an urban-rural divide issue is a major problem where the urban scene provides an improved picture (Zaheer, Durrani 2021). Income levels do play a significant role, however a democratization wave where this is not a barrier is on the rise. While society and information reporting still continue to be led by male perceptions, it is leading to a greater number of women participating in the electoral process, paving the future for greater numbers led by women. Access to mass media technologies have also contributed to how women perceive party politics in the country, where female digital independence directly affects the numbers at the polls for various parties, opening up interesting avenues for the future in terms of party performance and how they market to the young female electoral population. Improving mobility access for voting women is another necessary improvement, where the right policy implements to improve female voter security can shift the dynamic (Ali, Javed, Sherazi; 2025)

The observations analysed in the survey responses give way to a handful of factors being key in determining voter choices. In this modern day and age, where mass media technologies have opened global access to information, political information and content is a highly important and controversial topic. Where there is access to necessary electoral information and governance issues, there is also the problem of gatekeeping, misinformation, and the creation of online hysteria (Bano, Noreen 2022). Where in the past direct political presences and electoral campaigning were key elements in deciding voter turnout, social media has made everything constant, global, and essentially surpassed in all previously existing limitations. In Pakistan as well, the problem of questioning social media validity, yet being dependent on it as a vital source of informational decision-making is on the rise. From



the 2016 US Presidential Elections, where the Cambridge Scandal was exposed, to the 2019 Indian General Elections, where the reach of social media in a tech-literate India were fully utilize, to regime protests in Eastern Europe and Myanmar, and even post-Imran Khan political activities in Pakistan, social media's power is tangible, but questioned by the Pakistani youth. These gaps need to be acknowledged, and actively improved to help voter confidence. While generally resource-based limitations to electoral involvement have lessened per the survey responses, women's involvement is still constricted due to financial means (Ghafoor, Haider; 2018), potentially resulting in political underrepresentation, even a lack of political unawareness for impoverished women, and social conservatism for their choices, where the male individuals might be prompted instead only to participate. Such barriers also need to be acknowledged in the future. While there is still a rise in women's awareness of their civic identity through powerful connectivity means, socioeconomic gaps and institutional issues still need be understood and improved, to give way to an independent, educated, empowered generation of women whose contribution to Pakistan's political continuation is vital (Rubab, Mustafa, Nawaz 2020).

The findings of the focus group detail a complex and realistic understanding of independence, politics, and social issues among the participants. Once again, there is a stark comparison with the young women of the previous generation, who while were politically active and aware, were very different from the young women of today. Today's young generation of women place high emphasis on the institutional and realistic empowerment of women, who are willing to challenge the norm, go against preconceived notions to protest for their political wants. A growing awareness of civil liberties, the need to guarantee their rights as citizens and as women, ensure financial and professional independence shows the shifting dynamics of women generationally in the country, and this impacts their political and electoral choices. Feelings of disillusionment and disenfranchisement are also high among young urban women, who feel like gendered gaps in the political process through inadequate representation, the female demographic not being taken seriously by dominant political leaders (Naseer, Kalsoom 2019), the systematic subjugation of women has now become blatant, and future electoral choices will depend heavily on how political parties and leaders navigate through these shifts. Social media is foundational to both present-day and future developments in politics in the country, playing a vital role in forming not only the information bank, but acting as a major persuasive tool in establishing political perceptions and essentially, a basic sense of identity in these young women. Going forward, if politicians do not actually address rooted social problems and gaps, the aforementioned feeling of disillusionment will only exacerbate. This evolution and pragmatic approach to politics, where young women want to vote for honest, reliable, and result bearing politicians (Zakar, Zakar, Hamid 2018) comes from a variety of factors, including but not limited to higher education levels, digital tools that have developed their analytical skills, growing understanding of their position and actual power within society, increased social and economic mobility and digital resources that have instilled a global sense of how countries

and nations operate in different parts of the world. Girls' growing focuses away from largely traditional roles and expectations have also led to growing intellectual enrichment and greater autonomy, leading to very different electoral trends than the country has seen in the past among women (Siddique, Saadat 2024). Leaders and parties need to bridge gaps and evolve in tandem with changing situations to ensure the political processes of the nation continue.

### Limitations

One very core limitation for the research conducted was the sample being limited to just urban Lahore, not focusing on young women from other urban cities in Pakistan, causing geographic limitations. Secondly, the sample size itself was very small, consisting of university students from urban Lahore, which might not be completely representative of larger pools of urban women. There were also several data gaps when accessing electoral reports for female turn-out statistics.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Women's evolving role within Pakistani politics bases itself on a number of factors, including better access to education and social media, as well as cultural freedom (Shehzad, M., et al. 2021). Through these evolving social dynamics, their political and electoral perceptions have transformed, leading to well-informed, pragmatic and disillusioned notions and wants out of the Pakistani political systems, something that affects general election turn outs now and will increasingly in the future, the repercussions very importantly dependent on young women in the country, especially young urban women. Younger women want greater, more transparent and equitable leadership, who work for issues negatively entrenched in society. This is an underexplored research topic in Pakistan, and future research for different geographical locations and social demographics will enrich results and provide greater theoretical framework for electoral studies in the country for various areas and regions. This area also requires the increased participation and professional inclusion of women too, to boost their sociopolitical status (IGC 2024). The Election Commission of Pakistan should regularly monitor trends and compile analyses focused on women's political dynamics. Collaborations between governments and various research organizations can become a focal point of disseminating this underexplored aspect of Pakistan's electoral participation, creating original opportunities for both political organizations and the citizens alike, creating greater collaboration, dialogue, collusion, and mutuality between leaders and their people (Oxfam 2020).

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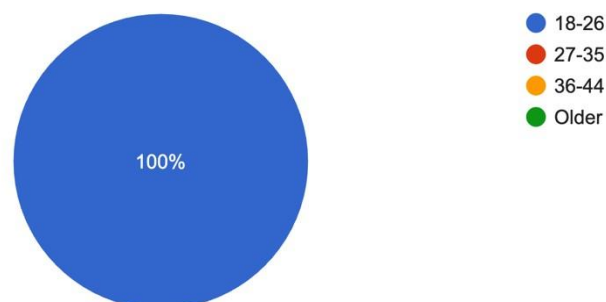
## Appendix

### Survey Questions and Responses

(Survey conducted via Google Forms).

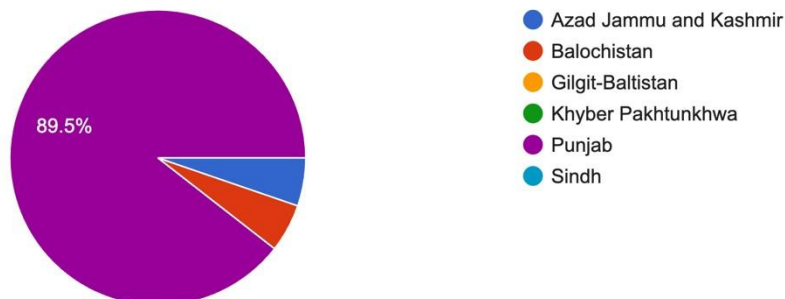
What is your age?

19 responses



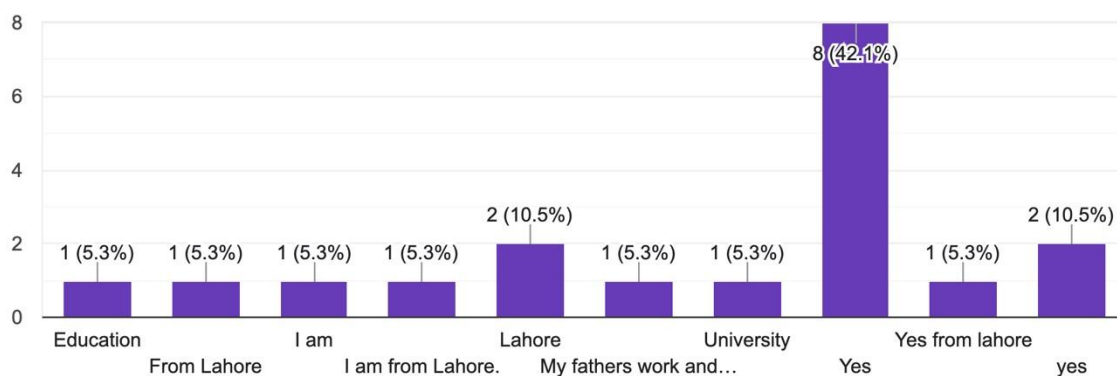
What province/region do you belong to?

19 responses



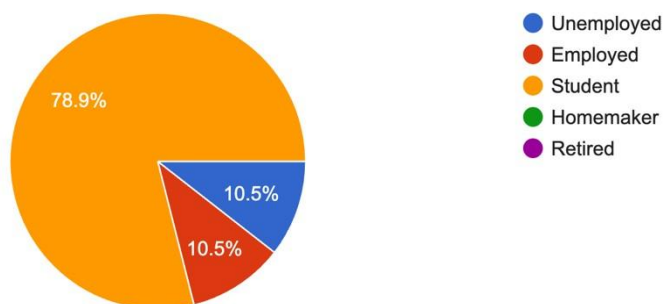
Are you from Lahore? If not, what purpose did you move here for?

19 responses



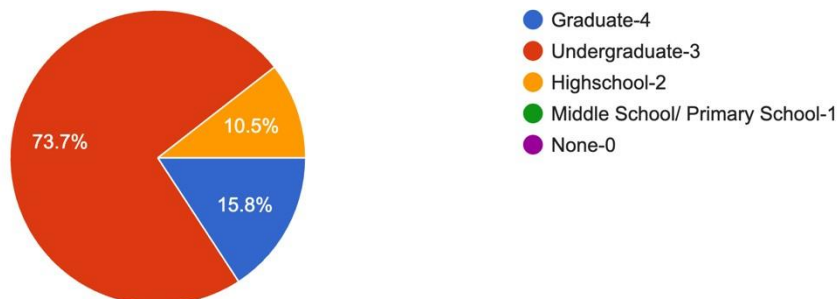
What is your current employment status?

19 responses



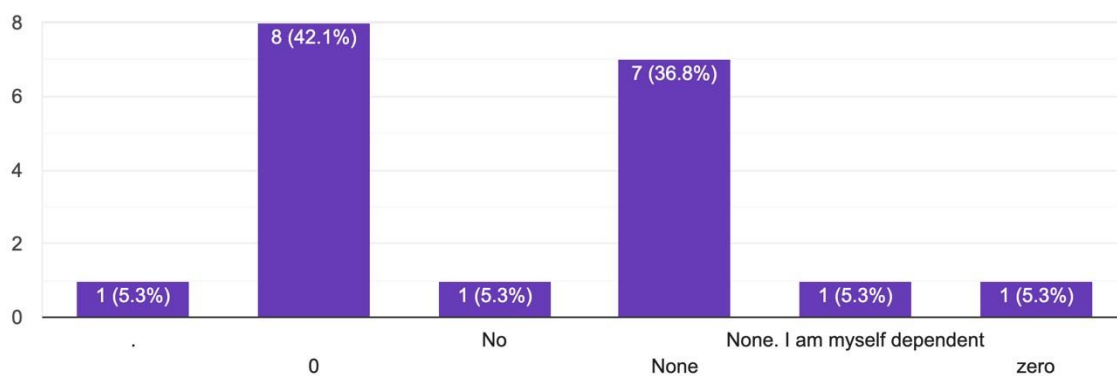
What is your highest level of education?

19 responses



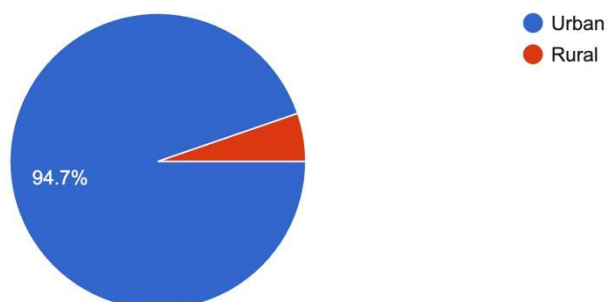
How many children do you have/number of dependents?

19 responses



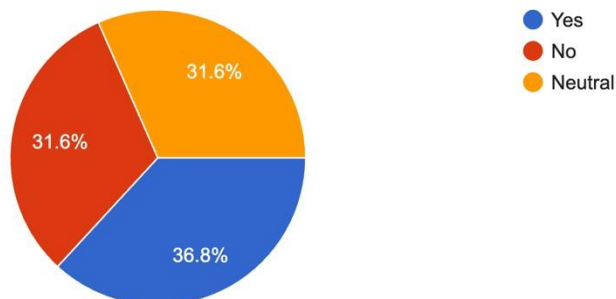
Do you currently reside in an urban area or rural community?

19 responses



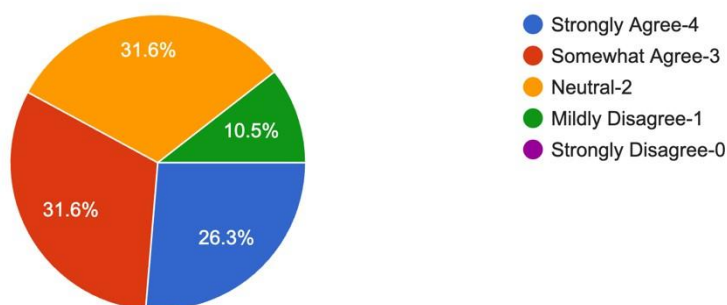
Do you consider yourself politically aware?

19 responses



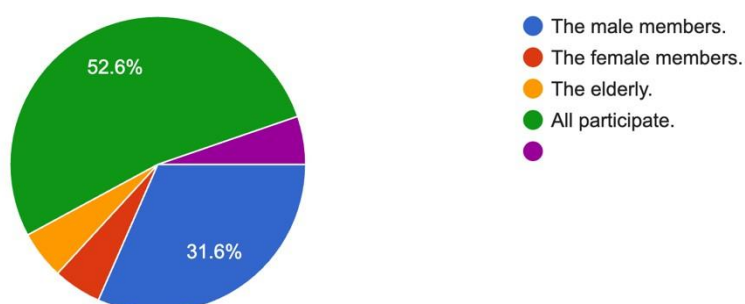
Would you agree that the formal education of your family members has raised your political awareness?

19 responses



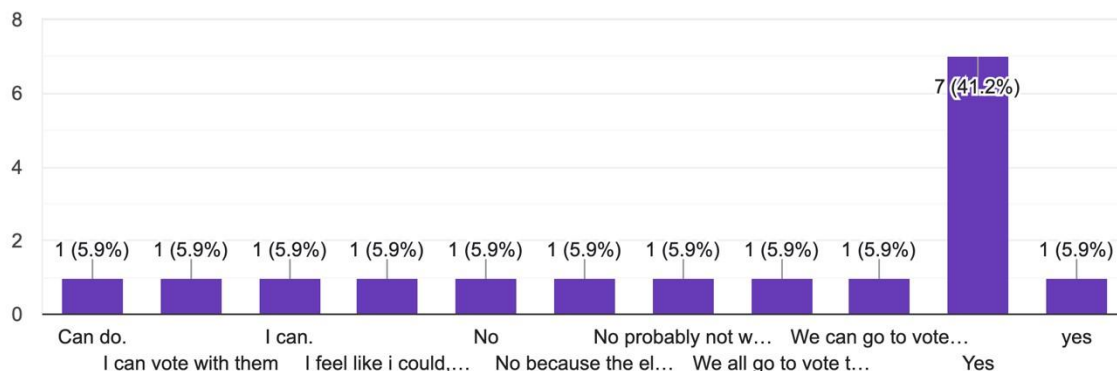
Are there political discussions in your home? (If yes, who participates most?)

19 responses



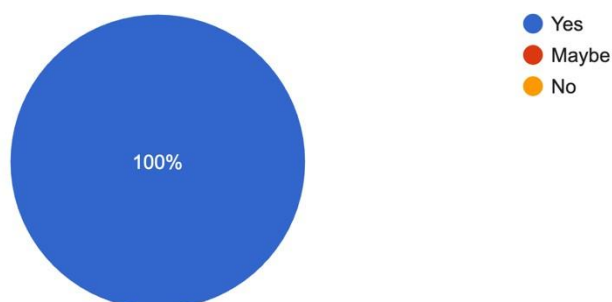
Can you go to vote without a male family member? If not, why so?

17 responses



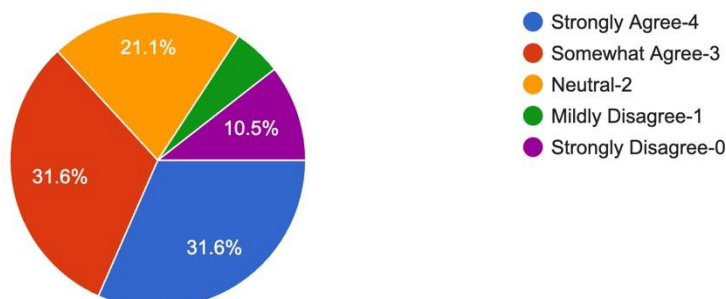
Do you think it is important for women in your family to vote?

19 responses



Do you think women's electoral participation is affected by male political opinions of those around them?

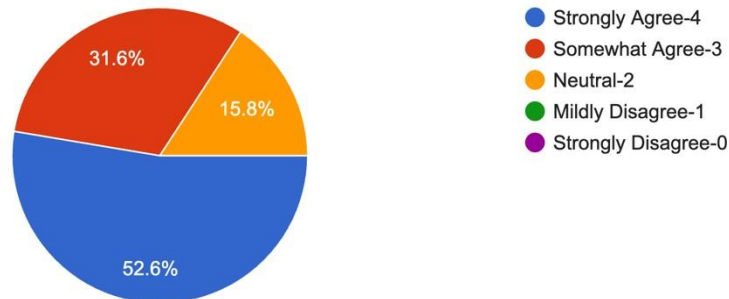
19 responses





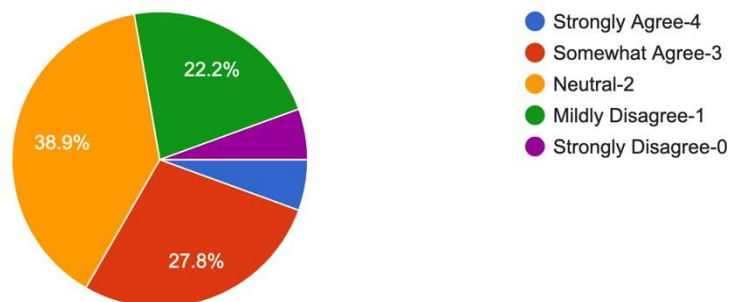
Do you agree that new mass media technologies have played an important role in the current perception held by political parties?

19 responses



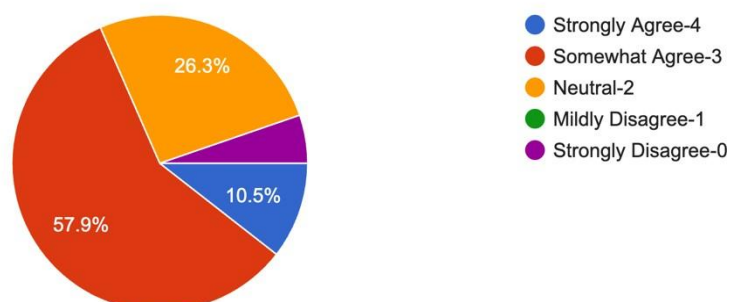
Do you think social/mass media technologies are an accurate source of political/electoral information?

18 responses



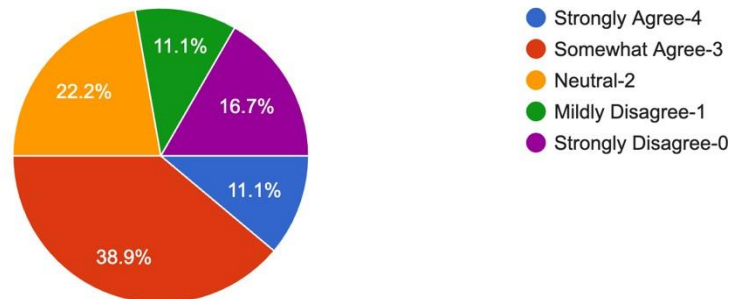
Do you think that your personal use of social media has affected your electoral choices in the recent elections?

19 responses



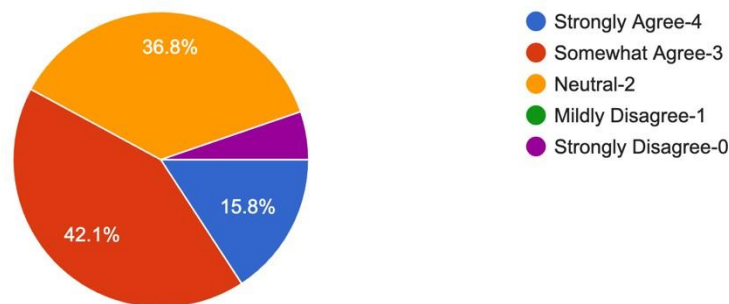
Do you think your income levels have played a direct role in your political participation?

18 responses



Do you think your general level of independence in life has led to more autonomous political decisions?

19 responses



### Focus Group Questions

1. What does independence mean to you in this day and age in Pakistan?
2. How do you think social media has changed your access to news and political content recently?
3. How interested are you in politics and political discussions?What factors do you consider the most important when choosing a candidate or political party?
- 4.

4. How accessible do you think voting is in your constituency? (ease in ballot casting, mobility, access to centres etc.)
5. Do you participate in local elections as much as national elections?
- 0.What do you think about the representation of women in Pakistani politics?
- 0.Do you think women politicians address the issues that matter to women voters?
- 0.Do you think male politicians/electoral candidates don't take their female voters as seriously as male voters?
- 0.What issues matter most to you in electoral mandates? (e.g education, healthcare, inflation, women's rights, etc.)
- 0.Do incidents like the April 9th incident affect your trust in the democratic processes in Pakistan? How does such an incident shape your opinion on whether voting can bring meaningful change?