

## Analysing the voting cluster of political parties: A case study of district Lahore, Pakistan (1970-2013)

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### Abstract

A voting cluster is a connotation that denotes party loyalty rather than ethnic and social cleavages. The theory of voting cluster surfaces when the units of analysis are characterized by political parties and the voter instead of their nomenclatures. This makes this study significant and different given that it highlights the value of shifting the primary focus away from the nomenclature. With the nomenclature changing in every election, it is likely that political parties, their features, and trajectories are misconstrued. Thus, looking at the voting cluster of each political party and analysing of these clusters data, gathered from different surveys and reports, provide a deeper and accurate understanding of voting patterns. This approach of voting cluster provides us an additional platform for analysis along with the conventional focus on nomenclatures of political parties. Focus of the study is to evaluate the changing pattern of voting clusters and their shift from one party to another. The qualitative content analysis research method has been used to understand the cluster pattern and why a voting cluster make or break from one party to other. The study maintains that there is no standalone factor that helps a political party to sustain a voting cluster.

**Keywords:** socio-economic, voting cluster, trajectory, power politics, nomenclature, group cleavages, polity, party identification, dominant ideology.

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## 1. Introduction

Political parties appeal to socio-economic cleavages to achieve their political objectives but understanding the voting behaviour in the presence of power politics or group cleavages is difficult in the national polity of Pakistan. It fails to explain the patterns of voting and why a person vote. Since 1970, in the electoral politics of Lahore, three main clusters of voting i.e. PPP voting cluster, the Muslim Leagues' (factions of Muslim League) cluster and religious parties' cluster have emerged. The past electoral behaviour reflects that around 75% to 80% of votes are claimed by MLs and PPP and the remaining distributed among the religious parties, independent and miscellaneous. In the 2008 election, this pattern was repeated with the PPP and MLs (PML-N & PML-Q) getting 80% of the total vote. The rest was divided among smaller parties and independent candidates (Congressional Research Service, 2008). In the 2013 election, the old pattern of voting broke and PTI sneaked in and got 85% of votes along with PML-N while the rest was divided between PPP and independent candidates (Election Commission of Pakistan, 2016).

According to a Gallup survey, the voting loyalties in Pakistani elections have been consistent. The voter seems to conceive their loyalties within one of the three clusters. Despite the illusory losses in the political influences of political parties from one election to another, the shift from one voting cluster to another is but gradual. The voting cluster is not restricted to one party except PPP. Subsequently, the electoral results make more connotations by investigating the internal dynamics of the cluster rather than the nomenclature of its constituent political parties from election to election that elucidate the short-term behaviour. The long-term or persistent electoral behaviour can be understood by noticing the biting changes that take place in the size of each cluster vis-à-vis the other clusters through the 10-year framework (Gallup Pakistan, 2018). The analytical history of Lahore highlights the behaviour of political agents and political parties in one election to another on the one hand, and unscrupulous building and breaking political alliances, which happens in every election on the other. Due to these growing alliances, it is difficult to compile a coherent history of electoral competition in Lahore. This makes it even more difficult to retrace the evocative pattern in the unpredictable political support for local parties.

The literature reviewed for the study shows that no single factor is largely responsible in shaping the voting cluster in Lahore. Different factors are instrumental in determining voter decision i.e., adherence to a particular ideology, affiliation to a particular party, Lahorism or love for particular family or development euphoria, etc. The literature reviewed for this research indicates that there lies difference of opinion related to what largely determines a voter's behaviour. The scholars had conducted studies on rural urban voting pattern, Biradari system (Ahmed, 2008; (Mohmand, 2014), Karachi Lahore comparison, Punjab politics and voting pattern (Wilder, 1995) but there is no study which solely deals with determinants or issues which had impact the decision of a Lahore voter. Some scholars have emphasized the importance of groups, while others have maintained the role of the youth and recently the role of media had been highlighted (Hussain *et al.*, 2018). Some have highlighted the role of socio-economic changes while others have stressed the role of local power structure. The studies previously conducted on voting behaviour in Pakistan had consensus that social and political determinants of voting behaviour are largely responsible of shaping the voter behaviour. Instead, the ongoing study argued that economic determinant such as development in urban areas had largely come into play its part in recent time.

The focus of the study is Lahore, the cultural, political, and economic centre of Punjab. The importance of Lahore is undeniable: an event that takes place in Lahore has far-reaching consequences for the politics in Punjab as well as Pakistan. The political leader who gets immense popularity in Lahore gets the momentum throughout the country. Bhutto enjoyed this momentum in 1977 and later by Nawaz Sharif in 1993, 1999 & 2013. Historically, Lahore has played host to successful anti-government movements. The importance of Lahore can be gauged by Benazir's decisions to choose Lahore to return to after years in exile. Despite the importance of Lahore in the country's polity, there is no single detailed study on the electoral politics of Lahore. Previous studies focused on a select group of political parties and the political cleavages parties claim to resonate with (Gethin *et al.*, 2020). They explained the voting behaviour by analysing the socio-economic and ethnic cleavages depending upon the location and analytical lens of the observer (Wilder, 1999).

The polity of Pakistan, divided along ethnic lines, seeks to explain voters which are further divided by ethnic markers i.e., language, heritage, etc. Some voters are divided on ideological lines i.e., left & right, socialist, liberals and Islamic and class conflict with the affluent or upper class feels distinct from the working class. At the local level (village, small town) electoral politics grounded on sectarian interests, as voting behaviour is the outcome of local interest played out by political actors using different jargon in every election. The grandiloquence adopted by political leaders and political parties appears to place electoral politics as a struggle for power between different state institutions. Voters in this struggle between state institutions (military, bureaucracy, political parties) appear to be a tributary, in which everyone manipulates to pacify the voter to their institutional tilts.

The study helps in understanding voting behaviour of voters in Punjab, especially central Punjab. The study reconnoitres the election, electoral politics, and electoral dynamics for voters, non-voters and political parties. This research work helps the political parties, politicians, and the Election Commission to work for the dissemination of political awareness. The study helps in strengthening democracy and transparency of electoral process. The already published work on electoral politics and voting behaviour focuses on national level or on Punjab thus this research is an important contribution to the literature.

## **2. The models and theoretical approaches of voting behaviour**

### **2.1. Models of electoral behaviour**

The dominant research models, through which scientific studies on voting behaviour are conducted, are the Columbia model, dominant ideology model, Michigan school, and the rational choice and identification model (Alvares, 2013). In this research, the author uses these to investigate the voting clusters of different political parties from Lahore city.

#### **2.1.1. Columbia model (sociological) voting behaviour**

This model highlights the social alignment, reflecting the inner formation of the society regarding voting behaviour. The division of society is normally based on class, gender, ethnicity, religion, and region. Peoples or group interests may shape the voting behaviour. In elections, voters adopt a pattern that reflect the economic and social position of the group to which they belong rather than psychological attachment to a party on the basis of social alignment, reflecting the various divisions and tensions within the society (Antunes, 2010).

Middle class voters may vote for right-wing party. Working class and business class vote for left wing party for their economic interests.

### **2.1.2 Dominant ideology model**

According to this model, the social position of the individuals as the determinate of their party preference is under the influence of media and education in such a way in which the media manipulate and cover all previous political loyalties built on family or doctrinal interests.

### **2.1.3 Michigan model of voting behaviour**

To Michigan school, the party identification is a long-term persistent process and once you identify a party, you may cross the line and vote for it in an election. It is persistent and needs long changes. These long-term changes depend sometimes on mass movement for example dislocation of race. There is change in your own psychological make-up, you shift your loyalty. There are three types of definitive attitudes associated with how people identify and evaluate a particular party (voter evaluate people on three fronts): a) the evaluation of party candidate; b) the evaluation of the issue of the day; c) assessing the performance of the party in the past.

This is how one's psychological make-up shapes their political behaviour while analysing the election campaign. Party identification gives us direction and sense of how intense our political affiliation with a political party is. The Jiyalas of PPP, ready to burn themselves by patrolling with kerosene oil, is a strong example of party identification. This is the strength of party identification, and indicative of the fidelity of the voters. This also explains how this psychological construct orients itself. People are of the opinion that the socialization starts in the pre adulthood age, with parents playing a greater role in that regard. What parents are discussing at home? Which party they are going to vote? What their orientations are all about? These questions are critical to shaping a person's affinity towards a political party. This is similar to how children follow their parents in observing religion. You see your parents offering prayer five times a day, you start following them. Similarly, party identification starts at home.

### **2.1.4. Identity and partisanship theory**

We all need redefinition of our own identity, there are out-groups and in-groups (e.g., Biradari). We want to remain associated with our in-group formation and do not want to jump into out-group. According to the partisan theory, people gauge through two things, one is instrumental and the second is expressive. Instrumental means everyday politics: collect the data of practices of political parties daily. How these practices correspond to your psychological frame? This question also forms part of the instrumental partisan identity. The second is expressive: behave in the same way as your party does. It makes sense that if someone wants the Islamic system in Pakistan. Their behaviour should be in line with a party that promises to bring in an Islamic system, if and when elected.

### **2.1.5. The party identification model**

In this model, party identification and loyalty is based on psychological attachment and other factors like policies, leaders, perceptions about group and personal relations. Even events are interrupted to fit with pre-existing loyalties and attachments. It creates continuity in the habitual pattern of loyalty (Fakhr-ul-Islam, 2014). In Sindh, voters of PPP have adopted this model. In

Pakistan, party affiliation is one of the voting determinants but not the major and only one which overshadows other determinants of voting behaviour. Wilder, in his study of the 1993 election, considers party identification as the most important determinant in urban Punjab.

### **2.1.6. The rational choice theory**

The theoretical framework for an economic elucidation of voting behaviour has been provided by Anthony Downs in “An Economic Theory of Democracy”. The theory is commonly called the rational choice theory. In this model, electors decide their party preferences on the basis of personal interests. A voter evaluates the performance of party in power, calculates self-interest, and then votes for a particular party. It establishes an analogy between voters and consumers on the one hand and between political parties and enterprises on the other. The companies seek to maximize the profits as political parties act to maximize their electoral gains. The voters seek to maximize the utility of their votes as consumers as to maximize the utility. The decisions of the voters and political parties are rational i.e., steered by self-interest and in accordance with the principle of maximization of action’s utility.

## **3. Research methodology**

The qualitative content analysis research method has been used to understand the cluster pattern and why a voting cluster make or break from one party to other. Qualitative content analysis is a method for systematically describing the meaning of qualitative data (Vieira & De-Queiroz, 2017). The data collected from previous election results, Gallup Pakistan and PILDAT has been utilized to interpret the voting cluster. The research used both secondary as well as primary data so as to create a framework that allows one to compare and contrast the findings and ultimately discuss them in the course of the research.

### **3.1. Secondary data**

Books and articles constitute secondary sources of data collection for this research. They have been used to gather historical details of events related to elections. Governmental reports and reports published by private organization on electoral results have been consulted for this research. The data available at Election Commission’s website has been of great help.

### **3.2. Primary data**

As the elections have been chosen for research and their results are available on the Election Commission website. The data available on the website is a qualitative source of research. The poll surveys conducted by different organizations have also been consulted.

### **3.3. Research questions**

The peculiarities of each election gradually diminish to engender continuous patterns of voting behaviour. In such a situation, the study aims to investigate the following questions: a) is there any specific pattern of voting behaviour? b) Can one categorize voting clusters?

## **4. The voting clusters: An analysis**

In this section, the analysis of voting clusters associated with different parties will enable us to

uncover voting trends more easily than merely looking at social cleavages or nomenclatures of political parties. The study of the voting cluster will allow us to study the evolution of voting patterns in Lahore over the years. This research aims at producing an in-depth analysis about the dynamics of Lahore politics and voting trends in that city. It is pertinent to understand the importance of electoral politics in Lahore due to its important positions as political, economic hub/centre pre and post-independence.

#### **4.1. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) voting cluster**

Pakistan People's Party is a liberal, social-democratic political party whose political ideology in Pakistan's political continuum is considered centre-left. It had become a leading mainstream political party since its founding by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1967. Its leadership remains in the Bhutto family, and after Benazir's assassination, his widower, Asif Ali Zardari leads the Party along with his son. The voting cluster of PPP developed with its rise as Pakistan's first socialist party. The party raised the expectations of the people, attracting them from all segments of the society across Pakistan. Its centre of gravity lies in the southern province of Sindh.

The PPP has got access to the corridors of power in 1970, 1977, 1988, 1993, and 2008 since its formation. The party which once was considered to be one of the leading parties and representative of all four provinces, has been reduced to its centre of gravity i.e., Sind. The party performed badly in the 2013 election, failed to secure even a single constituency from KP, tribal belt, and Balochistan. The 2013 election was the worst after the 1997 election; the party secured only 33 seats from Sindh. The party, which was launched in Punjab's political hub Lahore, has fared poorly to a point where it once failed to secure even a single seat.

The former members of the Pakistan socialist party who were banned by then Prime Minister Liaqat Ail Khan established the PPP. The democratic leaning towards socialism gathered at Lahore on 30th November 1967 at Mubashar Hassan's house and formed PPP. In the same meeting, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto has been selected as Chairman of the newly formed party. The party's manifesto was a reflection of the party ideology which was entitled, "Islam is our Religion, Democracy is our Politics, and Socialism is our economy; Power lies with the People. The manifesto was drafted by J.A. Rahim, a Bengali communist, and the first draft was published on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1967.

The factors which include urbanization, the rise of literacy, emergence of new interest (social-economic) groups, the fallout of the 1965 war, economic stress that affected the political and social identities: diluted the parochial ties and these all were well-capitalized by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to win over the masses by appealing to their aspirations. These factors helped in forging new loyalties to PPP. The famous slogan of PPP, "Roti, Kapra or Makan" was coined to win over the marginalized segments of the society, dispossessed renters and farmers.

These socio-political segments later became the core voting cluster of PPP but the cluster was not only restricted to these groups. Historically, as per the exit poll surveys conducted since 1988, PPP had enjoyed an edge in winning the voters from the above-mentioned segments. The party successfully consolidated its support base and become the political party with broad base support in all parts of Pakistan with a sizeable voting cluster. The voter's support of PPP traversed different regional, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups but the core support lies in party loyalty. This is how sits voting cluster was formed. The PPP had also introduced second-tier peripheral political leaders from rural areas which were earlier dominated by the rural landlord.

#### **4.1.1. Altering taxonomy, irrepressible voting cluster**

The PPP cluster was formed in 1970 (Burki & Baxter, 1975) and, despite the period of disenchantment from 1972-77; its cluster remained loyal to the party. The cluster didn't switch, despite the problems faced by the party during Zia's regime, including the hanging of its founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The PPP fairly succeeded in keeping intact the party loyalty despite the fact that factors which paved the way to power for PPP in the 1960s locally and globally were no longer present in the 1980s. A new form of nationalism that was associated with identity politics and for guidance recourse to religion replaced the western liberal ideas and secular nationalism. Benazir Bhutto failed to identify these emerging socio-political trends and was, therefore, unable to integrate it into her political campaign. This was echoed in many issues of that time such as a growing sentiment against American hegemonic policy and Islamization. Benazir's political decisions, even though she followed the grandiloquence of Muslim nationalism of her father, were drastically different due to the significant changes in the socio-political landscape of the country. These facts impacted the size of the PPP cluster. From 1970 to 1993, PPP managed a fairly robust vote bank of approximately 40% of the electorate but was unable to sustain it. If we look at the voting cluster of the PPP it constantly declining in Lahore.

In 1988-90, PPP government shifted its reliance to the west particularly the US, by moving away from its traditionalist anti-colonial and socialist political ideology. These factors created disappointment among the PPP cluster. Ironically, by 1997, the cluster of PPP electorate had shrunk and reduced to 19% in Lahore from where it gained 59% votes in 1970. The PPP has completed 50 years of its existence and is still among the three leading political parties. But its voting cluster and core support base shrunk and is now limited to rural Sindh.

In 2007, ending her self-imposed exile, Benazir returned to Pakistan and toured KP, Balochistan, and Punjab but faced disappointing turnouts, including in her last rally at Liaquat Bagh Rawalpindi. The fervent support she received in 1986 in Lahore on her return from exile was a thing of the past. The absence of a strong political narrative on major political issues such as judicial crisis, NRO, and Musharraf dictatorial regime was instead marked by a jaded sense of pragmatism which led to low enthusiasm and turned the voters away from the party. The party's historical trajectory, with the trials and tribulations it faced and the circumstances surrounding it, had led to a party culture and leadership that was not committed to any particular ideology. This provided the base to raucous protest against the party which was reflected in the judicial movement. The silence by BB on critical political issues and her cracking a foreign-sponsored NRO deal with Musharraf disillusioned the PPP voter.

Many dedicated voters of the party openly criticized these policies of PPP but the shift of the PPP cluster to other clusters, especially the MLs' clusters cannot be analysed in the 2008 election because of the sudden death of BB in a terrorist attack. The assassination of BB resulted in a fairly sizeable sympathy vote for the party in the 2008 general election. But the party failed to win back its previous average voting cluster of 40% votes polled. However, it managed to grab 31% of the votes polled in Pakistan and only 26% in the political capital of Pakistan i.e., Lahore. Despite the sympathy wave, PPP only won two seats out of 13 in Lahore which had been the home turf and strong support base of the party during the 70s.

Despite the favourable political environment, PPP failed to convert sympathy into votes in the city which is indicative of PPP's decline in the city. In the 2008 election' PPP voting cluster

becoming fidgety and started reducing. The cross-cluster migration continued in the next election and a new entrant in PTI secured 31% votes by mostly cutting the PPP vote bank. The PPP's voting cluster touched its lowest with 4% of the total vote polled in Lahore with no seats. PPPs journey started from a clean sweep in 1970 to a dismal performance in 2013 in Lahore.

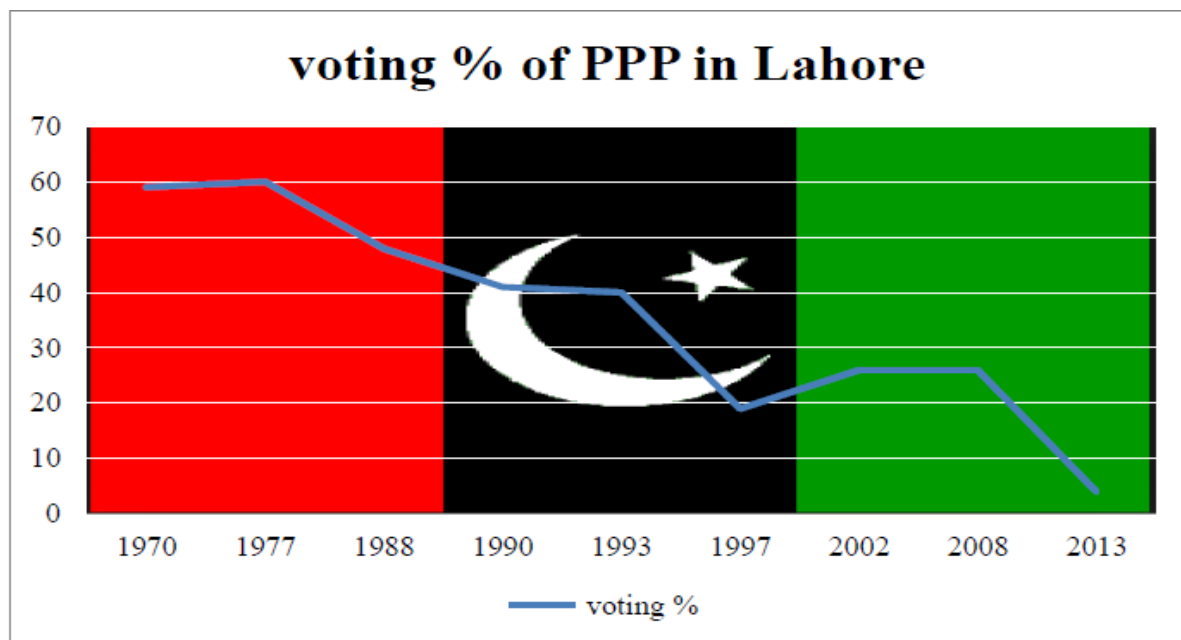
Table-1: Percentage of total vote polled in National Assembly Election

1970	59%
1977	60% Approx.
1988	47.90%
1990	41%
1993	40%
1997	19%
2002	26%
2008	26%
2013	04%

Source: National Assembly Elections in Pakistan 1970-2008 A compendium of elections related facts and statistics. (2010). Karachi: Church World Service-Pakistan/Afghanistan

#### 4.1.2. The PPP voting cluster

The electoral support of PPP in the urban areas, particularly Lahore has continually eroded but remains intact in small towns, villages, and cities of Sindh, south Punjab and in some parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa since the 1990s. Share of votes scored by PPP or PPP led Alliances During 1988-2013 (Lahore) During 1988-2013 (Lahore) is as follows:



Source: compile with the help of Data available at Election Commission Reports & <http://fafen.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Compendium-National-Assembly-Elections-1970-2008-Pakistan.pdf>

#### 4.2. The cluster of Muslim League

The Muslim League (ML) cluster is the most unpredictable among the other clusters, not in terms of its size but in terms of voters. The ML trajectory began before partition, and it emerged

sole spokesperson of the Indian Muslim seeking a separate homeland. Pre-Independence, it was fighting for a nationalistic cause as a legitimate representative political party. Post-Independence, it was used as a fractionalization tool by military dictators to legitimize their coups. The first fraction that surfaced in ML was Awami Muslim League (AML) in 1949 which later changed into Awami League (AL) in 1955 (Afzal, 1998). The ALS began its successful political journey in erstwhile East Pakistan. The second splinter that emerged from ML was the National Awami Party (NAP) later known as Awami National Party (ANP) in 1986 led by Wali Khan. The splinter retained the label of ML for its marketability among voters except for ANP who followed a different path from the succeeding factions.

#### **4.2.1. MLs cluster 1958-1980**

Two factions had emerged in the Ayub Khan era. The first was dominated by pro-martial law politicians, known as ML Convention (MLC) led by Ayub Khan, and the second group was dominated by anti-martial law politicians, known as ML Council, and led by Fatima Jinnah. Ayub Khan used the ML to acquire legitimacy for their government. These two parties were major contending parties in the presidential election of 1965 and other smaller parties allied themselves with the ML Council. However, Ayub Khan was already a President and successfully used it to make his party win under its design system of Basic Democracies; In Lahore, MLC got 819 voters whereas Fatima Jinnah's MLC received 317 votes. The ML, for the next twenty years, became the face of the establishment and lost the popular support base. The two newly emerged parties in both wings of Pakistan replaced ML, AL in East Pakistan, and PPP in West Pakistan. During the 1970's election Lahore's political scene was broadly divided into three main clusters: a) the newly-established PPP; b) the ML and its factions; c) the religious-political parties.

During Bhutto's regime media was silenced, political rivals were crushed, something which led to the formation of an anti-Bhutto alliance called the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). The alliance was led by ML as it represented the biggest voting cluster after PPP. Despite having a big voting cluster, ML was structurally weak due to the factionalism and vacuum it created was filled by religious parties on the one side. On the other side, there was a synchronized change in the ideology of left-wing parties and a shift towards regional issues. This shift blurred the boundaries between left and right-wing parties. Subsequently, in the 1977 election, the clusters of political parties in Lahore included: a) religious parties (small); b) Anti-Bhutto voting cluster (Which turned towards ML); c) PPP; and d) left-leaning regional Parties.

The ML was a right-leaning party that went further to the right as this was the only political space open at that time. The anti-Bhutto sentiment was at its peak during the 1977 election which PNA attempted to capitalize on. The alliance was vivacious and inclusive with the inclusion of right-wing ML, regional and religious voting clusters. The military, due to the historical closeness with ML, established close contact with it which further gave the impression that it is an establishment party that supports the status quo. Despite the support of the establishment, PNA didn't win a single seat in Lahore and the voting cluster of the PPP remained sturdily intact.

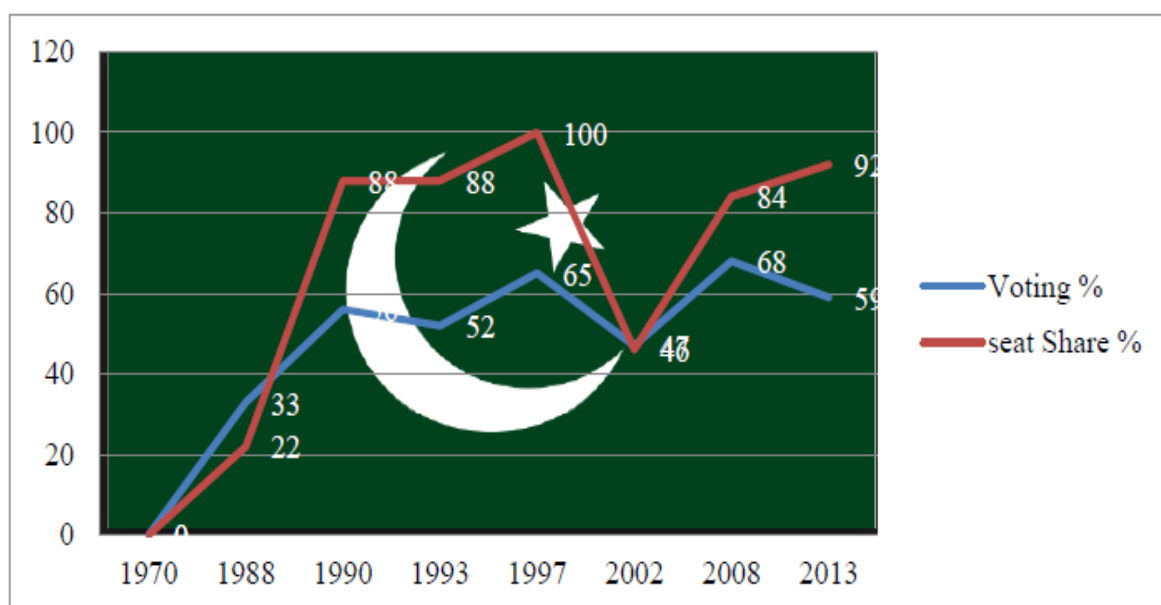
#### **4.2.2. MLs cluster 1980-1988**

General Zia-ul-Haq, during the first seven years of his rule, banned political parties but used the anti-Bhutto political leaders. In 1985, General Zia announced that the general election will

be held in February 1985 on a non-party basis. He nominated Muhammad Khan Junejo as the Parliamentary leader of ML which marked the beginning of a new era for the ML, a turn from the king's party to a populous party. The contending ideas within the broader spectrum of ML distinguish themselves and bifurcated into different parties. The right-wing ideology is not in the favour of drastic restructuring of the socio-economic status quo which also includes land distribution. Consequently, it didn't appeal to the masses of poor countries but in Pakistan, it proved otherwise. The ML proved itself as a populous party with broad-based popular support in 1988 elections was prompted by a steady swing in the structural and ideological features of the party. The ML cluster gained 32% in the whole country and 33% in Lahore city. The PPP voting cluster gained 47% of the vote polled in Lahore. The voting cluster supporting ML and PPP had different characteristics which gradually decreased in subsequent elections and was eventually wiped out in 2013.

In the 1990 election, ML got votes from voters of different socio-economic backgrounds like PPP. Finally, in the 1993 election, ML moved away from its conservative, right-wing pro-establishment approach by adopting a broader centrist positioning. ML voting cluster captured 52% of the electorate while the PPP voting cluster gained 42% of the vote polled. The PPP cluster decreased 5% while there was a 19% increase in the ML cluster. In these years, ML's popularity and support expanded from its base as well as its identity and orientation. However, political analyst remained cagey about rise of the ML as a party with a loyal support base. The voting trends continued in the 1997 election where voters finally migrate from PPP to the ML.

There was a shift in party loyalty in the 1997 election as the PPP cluster that remained restive throughout the 90s shifts its loyalties towards ML. The ML cluster in 1997 grew to include 65% of the electorate in Lahore, 46% in Pakistan. The PPP cluster shrunk to 19% in Lahore and 22% in Pakistan. Since 1997, ML has established its strong support base and despite severe persecution by the establishment, the ML cluster remained intact. This will rule out the political game of picking and choose of parties against each other by the military establishment. In the recent past, ML refused to be the ally of the establishment and firmed up to remain an independent entity.



Source: Compiled with the help of data available at Election Commission

### **4.2.3. The emergence of PML-N**

Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) is one of the largest political parties in Pakistan and happens to be the umpteenth faction of ML since 1947. The ML which was the founding party of Pakistan split into multiple factions after the creation of Pakistan. Most of the factions dissolved gradually but PML-N managed to survive and become a formidable electoral machine among all of ML's factions. PML-N remains the largest ML faction, but its ideological compass has been moving back towards the centre. It supports infrastructural development, economic liberalization, and democracy.

### **4.2.4. Historical overview of PML-N**

In 1977, PPP swept the election which was not accepted by PNA and accused PPP of rigging (Afzal, 2002). The PNA started a protest which often violent agitation against Bhutto's regime. The nucleus of the protest was Lahore and youth from the urban bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie sections were leading the protests, the section which was affected by Bhutto socialist policy. By the 80s ML split into various factions. Zia ul Haq after being elected as a President of Pakistan through a dubious referendum in 1984 encouraged the formation of the united ML to legitimize its rule.

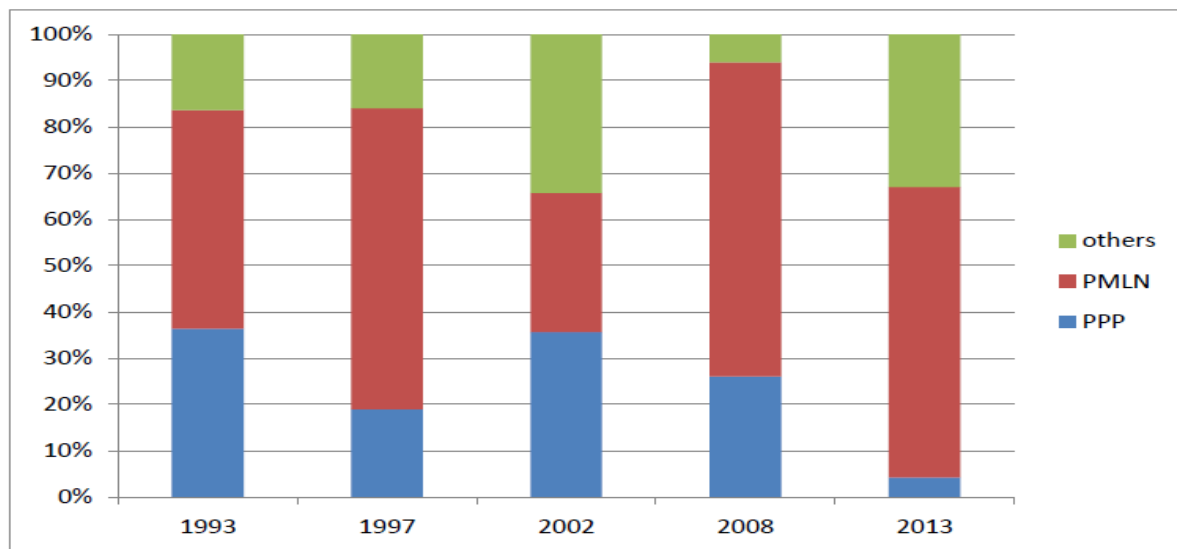
The two groups of ML, one headed by Nawaz Sharif and the other by Junejo were urged by the establishment to be united. The electoral alliance was created to push back the tidal victory of PPP in the 1988 elections. However, PPP managed to grab more seats in Parliament than IJI which secured the second position in the parliament. BB become the first female prime minister but was inexperienced to address economic, social (corruption, ethnic and sectarian violence), and political problems in the country (Taylor, 2008).

The 1990 election was won by IJI which brought Nawaz Sharif into the corridor of power as the country's PM. The election was massively engineered and the unity of the two factions didn't last long. The Sharif group managed to prevail due to its closeness with the establishment. In 1997, PML-N became the largest faction by sweeping the elections. This was the period when PML-N peaked as a staunchly right-wing-quasi-Islamist party. Nawaz tried to amend the constitution to become all-powerful but failed due to a clash with the judiciary, Parliament, and armed forces. His government was overthrown by Musharraf in 1999.

President Musharraf followed the footsteps of his predecessors by uniting the faction of ML for the legitimization of his rule. He gathered the leading PML-N luminaries and formed PML-Q. PML-Q won the largest number of seats in the 2002 elections and PML-N won a handful of seats. During the Musharraf era, PPP and PML-N mended their fences with each other in exile. By 2007, PML-N had reinvented itself as a moderate conservative democratic party whose focus was on achieving economic growth through ingenious economic policies and initiating dialogue with neighbouring countries for sustainable peace. The PML-N managed to secure second position in the 2008 election which was won by PPP. In the 2013 election, PMLN emerged as the largest political party. Even though it is no more Zia's party but still it is alleged to have ties with certain controversial outfits to win elections in certain clusters within Punjab. It also got into a cold war with the military establishment over the Musharraf trial.

Lahore, that was the centre of left-wing politics till the 1980s, had shifted towards right-wing

political parties such as PML-N and PTI. This was because the economic policies of Zia and his followers greatly benefited the city’s bourgeoisie, petty-bourgeoisie, and business classes.



Source: Data compiled with the help of election commission results available on website

At the time of writing this research, the PML-N stronghold is not being challenged by any leftist party but another right-wing party started to penetrate the city i.e. PTI. The above graph reflects that the voting cluster of PML-N remains intact and loyal to the party since its formation. Lahore has been the epicentre of PML-N over the years. In 2002, the voters of PML-N temporarily switched but to another faction of ML, created from within PML-N by Musharraf, and again switched to PML-N in 2008. In 2013, PTI emerged as second-largest party in Lahore by replacing PPP and hence PPP voter moved to PTI & PML-N, simultaneously

### 4.3. The religious parties cluster

The religious parties cluster performed relatively well in 1970 by capturing 21% of the national vote. The cluster disintegrated gradually during 1970-2008, a period that is recognized as a rapid resurrection of Islamization. This shows that a religious party’s cluster is not a good measuring tool of religiosity in Pakistan. In 2008, the religious parties under the umbrella of MMA grabbed 11% of the national electorate. What are the factors behind the apparent rise in Islamization and fall of religious political parties cluster during 1970-2008? The answer requires a detailed analysis of religious parties’ characteristics.

#### 4.3.1. Historical overview of religious parties cluster

The voting cluster of religious parties refers to the voters who are religious-minded and vote for parties headed by religious scholars. In the 1970 election, three political parties were headed by religious scholars: Jamiat-i-Islami (JI) led by Syed Maududi, Jamiat-i-Ulema Pakistan (JUP), and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI). The JI takes the form of a political organization instead of deriving its strength from traditional Islamic institutions i.e., madrassa, mosque, and shrines. Its major strength is concentrated in the urban centres of Pakistan, particularly Lahore and Karachi. Its members belong to middle and lower-middle urban classes, and are detached from traditional madrassas and shrines.

On the other hand, both JUI and JUP run madrassas representing their schools of thought which are conflicting with each other. JUP is inclined to Sufi shrines and JUI opposes them. Both parties draw their strength from the mosques and madrasas. The administration of madrassas is, however, kept distinct from day-to-day politics. There was an inimitable political environment from 1968 until the 1970 election. The movement against the military dictator, unrest in East Pakistan, and different parts of West Pakistan for regional autonomy, growing socio-economic polarization and the election made these years very eventful, to say the least. These three parties belonged to the Sunni school of thought).

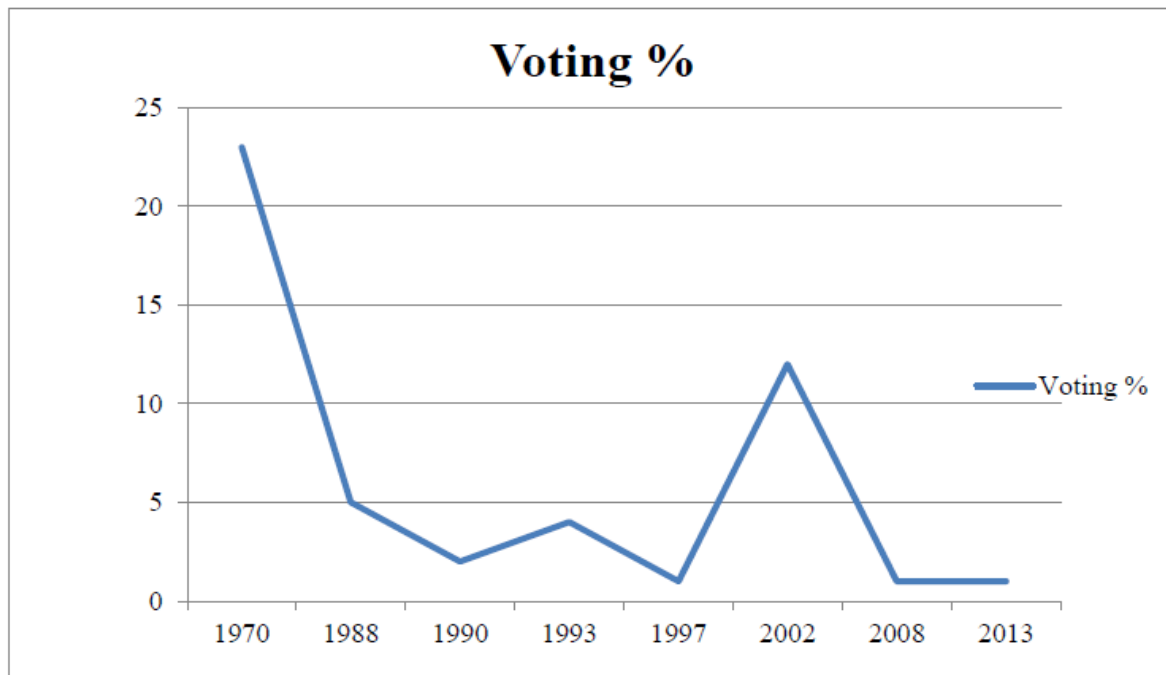
Only after Khomeini's revolution in Iran, several Shia organizations emerged on the political landscape of Pakistan. Tehrik-e-Jafria Pakistan was one of those parties that joined Mutahida Majlis e Amal (MMA) to prevaricate the Shia-Sunni conflict which later turned into an electoral alliance under which the election was contested in 2002. Afterward, these parties joined the alliance contested election by allying with two mainstream political parties i.e., PPP and ML. The JI and JUP mostly allied themselves with anti-Bhutto forces and JUI joined the PPP-led coalition.

#### **4.3.2. The size of religious parties cluster**

In 1970, the religious voting cluster gathered 23% votes of the electorate in contrast to the PPP's 59% of votes polled in Lahore. The religious parties ended up in this election as a runner-up at the national level but failed to translate into a seat at the National Assembly. Their proportion of votes was very lower in comparison to PPP. The voter that voted for religious parties in Lahore was shocked and spontaneously grasped the reality of Lahore's electoral system. The voting to smaller parties was considered a strategic mistake.

The religiously inclined voters found the alternate cluster in 1988 & 1990 in the shape of IJI (ML-led coalition), 1993-1997 PML-N, and 2002 PML-N, and PML-Q, and again in 2008-2013 opted for PML-N. The ML cluster gained more votes in 1988 than in 1970 due to religious clusters that turned away from religious parties. The quasi-religious political alliance of 11 political parties captured three seats in Lahore in the 2002 elections. It gives the idea that voters are less bound by deliberations than the logic of electoral success, unlike the leaders of the religious parties.

The religious voters switch their loyalties, despite the fact that the organizational structure of religious parties is the same as it was in 1970. These parties had street power due to the institutions they run and the community services they render, but their electoral success is minimal. The voters respect these parties due to adherence to religious beliefs they hold but are not willing to give the vote. The electoral data reflects that the voting cluster has been small and stable with no significant achievement in Lahore except in 2002 election when 132446 votes polled were secured by MMA and PAT. The MMA and PAT secured four seats in Lahore. The reason for the rise of the MMA cluster was that religious parties cluster contested election under an alliance and secondly a PMLN vote cluster switched to MMA temporarily because of Nawaz Sharif's exile and hostility faced by the party during the Musharraf era. MMA made a seat arrangement with PML-N in Lahore which helped it bag three seats, one seat was won by PAT. The atypical nature of the 2002 election can be understood while analysing the 2008 election. With the arrival of Nawaz Sharif, voters who shifted towards religious parties returned back to PML-N.



## 5. Discussion and findings

### 5.1. Unique calculus of Lahore

The election results of Pakistan's electoral landscape are different in four provinces, Urban-Rural areas. In Lahore, the most populous city of Punjab, the contest is bi-polar whether it is PPP and MLs from 1970 to 2008 or the election of 2013 where PTI replaced the PPP from the electoral landscape of Lahore. The two parties dominated in the voting cluster and shared an average of more than 80% of votes during all elections. The bipolarity diluted in the 1997 election and changed into unipolarity. The ML, which was completely a PMLN vote bank, became more than twice as high with 65% and PPP 19%. In 2002, the bi-polarity turned into tri-polarity with the emergence of a new faction in PML-N known PML-Q. That was engineered and not organic development in the political process and was due to the influence of the establishment. In 2008, the tri-polarity remained in the system but PML-N alone scored twice as much as PPP. The sympathy for PPP, generated due to the assassination of BB, was not pervasive as expected, with PPP only managing to win two seats out of 13 in Lahore.

### 5.2. The swing factor in Lahore

The ML cluster was in a close contest with PPP in 1988, but it start picking up and eventually in 1997, it was ahead of PPP with 65% and PPP with 19%. The margin between ML and PPP continues as the PPP cluster is 26%, the ML cluster is 60% and the rest is divided between independent and religious parties. The split between MLs factions created a close contest between two factions of ML and PPP. In the next elections of 2008 and 2013, the shifting loyalties between PMLN and PMLQ or bloc rallying of votes from the smaller parties in favour of the leading party can bring a swing in its favour. The swing factor is important in Lahore as small/religious parties have thin voting cluster but spread throughout Lahore, and, hence, can affect competition between leading parties in Lahore. In the 2013 election, the actors of tri-polarity changed from PML-N, PPP, and PML-Q to PML-N, PPP, and PTI.

Table-2: Swing factor in Lahore

Year	All Pakistan winner in National Assembly	Voting Ratio: PPP and ML in Lahore	Edge of national assembly seats in Lahore
1970	PPP (Winner gets 39% vote nationally)	PPP ahead 43% (59)	PPP ahead by 52 seats (62:10) seats for MLs
1988	PPP (Winner gets 39% vote nationally)	PPP ahead 15% (47.90)	PPP ahead by 8 seats (53:45) seats for MLs
1990	ML (Winner gets 37% vote nationally)	ML ahead 15% (56%)	ML ahead by 78 seats (92:14) seats for MLs
1993	PPP (Winner gets 38% vote nationally)	ML ahead 13%	ML ahead by 5 seats (52:47) seats for MLs
1997	ML (Winner gets 46% vote nationally)	ML ahead 19%	PPP ahead by 109 seats (109:0) seats
2002	No clear Winner: PPP 26%, PMLQ 24%, PMLN 11%	ML ahead 21	MLs ahead by 47 seats PML-Q (67) PML-N (16) PPP (36)
2008	PPP (Winner gets 31% vote nationally)	ML 42	MLs ahead by 47 seats PML-Q (67) PML-N (28) PPP (45)
2013	ML (Winner gets 32% vote nationally)	ML ahead 55%	PML-N ahead by

Theories of retrospective voting view voters as having policy interests and a policy result in orientation, and interpret swing voters as voters who change their votes based on rational political decisions (Fiorina & Morris, 1966, as cited in Allison, 2013).

### 5.3. Factors behind the formation of voting cluster

The evolution of the political character of Lahore's trajectory, as visible through the electoral data from 1970 to 2013, is marked by a rise of one party and the fall of the other. This is an exemplar of the nature and place of the city in national politics. Pakistan's first general election was held in 1970 on an adult franchise basis. PPP secured an absolute majority in the populous sub-units of West Pakistan i.e., Punjab and Sindh. PPP swept urban Punjab including Lahore. The wave was a corollary of the fresh approach to politics of the very party's stalwarts.

The average victory gap between PPP candidate and the runner-up was approximately around 35,000 votes. The PPP was a left-of-centre party and politically better organized in Lahore than any other party. The 1988 election results indicate the gradual change of the electorate in Lahore. The PPP maintained its stronghold in Lahore by winning 6 seats out of 9. Benazir chose Lahore for her return after an exile and received a historical reception at Lahore. On the day of her arrival, Nawaz Sharif was attending a Jalsa in the walled city of Lahore which marked the beginning of the first Punjabi leader at the national level. The centre-right coalition of Islami Jamhoori Itihad (IJI) comprising faction of Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Forward Bloc) JI, JUI(D) Markazi Jamiat Ahle-Hadith, Nizam-e-Mustafa group, Jamiah Masheikh, Hizbeh Jihad, Azad group, and Khaksar Party.

By the election of 1990, the swing factor completely changed the voting cluster for PPP in Lahore. The centre right-wing parties' coalition under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif defeated

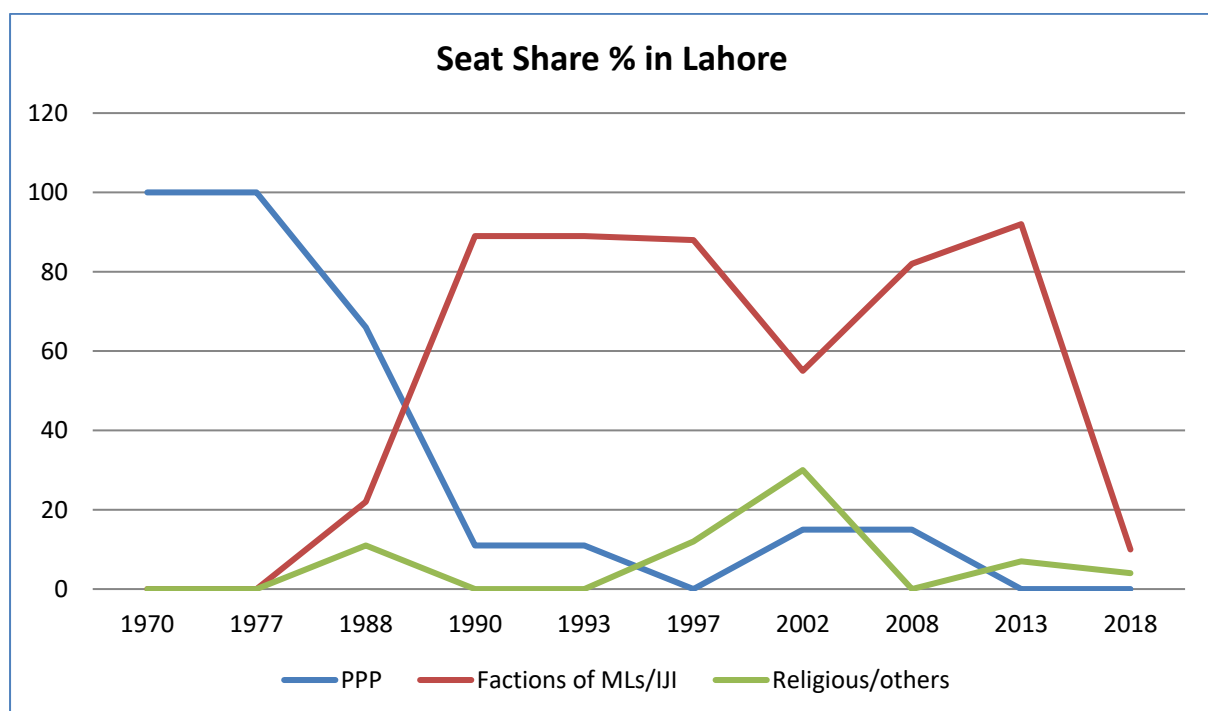
the PPP in the city which was facilitated by the rejection of PPP support base comprising working middle class and rural population. The voting cluster changed preferences in favour of the ML faction which was occupied by the socially conservative businessman.

Table-3: The shift in the voting cluster was possibly the outcome of three factors

First Factor	Shift from the left of centre ideology to the centre had been witnessed during Zia’s era and PPP’s victory in 1988 owing to the arrival of BB.
Second Factor	There were allegations that in the election of 1990 PPP’s was denied a level-playing field through rigging.
Third Factor	18th month at the federal government was used to dissuade Lahore’s voter from voting PPP over IJI.

In the election of 2002, despite the coup and splintering of PML-N candidates, Party gets more seats in Lahore than any other Party. The party bagged 4 out of 13 seats in Lahore city. PML-N had made the seat adjustment with three candidates who were contesting under the umbrella of MMA. The PPP ménage to wins three seats, its best haul in the city after a decade and Musharraf kings Party won only two seats in the city.

In the 2013 election, PPPP was completely routed and replaced by PTI in Lahore which secured a 30% share of the total vote polled. PTI contested the 2002 election but failed to make any significant impact on the electoral landscape of Lahore. The PTI refused to participate in the 2008 election, leaving the city open for other political parties. However, the 2013 election was a two-party contest between PML-N and PTI, with the return of the latter to the fray. PTI has got political momentum in the electoral process of Pakistan through its famous power show that, incidentally, was also held in Minar-e-Pakistan. PTI ran an exhaustive campaign throughout the country and, despite Imran Khan falling from the stage in the last part of the campaign, did well in Lahore. PTI managed to cement itself as a viable alternative to PML-N and over the years continuously grew its voting cluster. The PTI, with its growing support, can challenge PML-N in future elections and can drive results in its favour.



From 1970 until 1988, Lahore, dominated by a left-of-centre party, switched to a right-of-centre political party. The electoral data reflects the firming up of these electoral over the last few electoral cycle trends. These will likely continue in the coming elections. Even if the PTI makes headway in Lahore, it would do so by utilizing middle -tier of politicians grown up in the nurseries of centre right-wing political parties in Punjab, and by tapping into the electoral preferences of Lahore’s conservative population.

Table-4: Voting Cluster from 1970-2018

Years	Voting Cluster
1970-1988	A left-of-centre party switched to a right-of-centre political party.
1988-2002	Firming up the right-of-centre political party
2002-2018	Firmly aligned with centre-right party

## 6. Conclusion

The electoral trends in Lahore reflect that central and northern Punjab is inclined towards conservative right-wing political parties. The PML-N constituency is now being attracted by another right-wing player. However, that factor did not matter much in PML-N’s stronghold i.e., Lahore. In the 2018 election, PML-N again swept Lahore and secured 11 seats out of 14. The statistical analysis of Lahore reflects that PML-N is still strong in Punjab. The non-committed and floating voter of Lahore also goes in favour of the party or the alliance that is likely to succeed.

The socio-economic and psychological factors that act as determinants in the formation of voting cluster in Lahore include: a) Social Demographic profile of the voter (The social structure Model); b) The socialization process start at home, what parents discussed about politics do impact voter decision. The social structure model includes family, occupation, education, ethnic, race, class are factors that might influence a voter’s decision. Allegiance to Party/Candidate (Party Identification); c) The allegiance to a party or a candidate is a dominant factor which influences voter decision. Performance of the Previous Party; d) The performance of the candidate/Party is a dominant factor in determining voting behaviour. Issue of the day: Voters vote for parties on the basis of their manifesto and their ability to resolve the national issues. The voter’s image of candidate: The charisma of a leader and candidate is one of the leading factors in shaping the voters’ decision.

The party loyalty has been a dominant factor in the continuation of voting clusters in the provincial capital. But socio-economic groups and new trends which include urbanization, advent of social media, and increasing levels of literacy can affect the political and social identities which we have witnessed in the past. The political parties need to identify the emerging socio-political trends, with a view to integrating them into their political campaigns to win elections in Lahore.

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