

## Religion as a Voting Determinant in the Electoral Politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A Comparative Study of 2002, 2008 and 2013 General Elections

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### Abstract

*This article explores the determinant of religious voting in the electoral politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) with reference to 2002, 2008 and 2013 General Elections. The study asserts that the theory of religious voting is applicable to some extent (55.1%) in the electoral politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This claim is based on the primary data collected through questionnaire from a sample size of 800 respondents, selected through multistage random and systematic sampling from the voter list in NA-2 Peshawar. With regard to 2002 general elections, the data reveals that more than fifty percent respondents (72.6%) supported religious voting. Similarly, with reference to 2008 general polls, the data shows that less than fifty percent of the respondents (47%) favoured religious determinant of voting behaviour. Likewise, with respect to 2013 general elections, the data demonstrated that less than fifty percent of the voters (45.7%) based their electoral preferences on religious voting. The chi-square test, p-value, frequency distribution and percentage method have been used in making statistical analysis.*

**Keywords:** Religious Voting, General Elections 2002, 2008 and 2013, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Electoral behaviour, Electoral Politics, Voting Behaviour.

### Introduction

Religion is one of the most important determinants of voting behaviour. Religion affects the human behaviour both at individual and community levels. Religion as a voting determinant has mostly existed in those societies where the society is conservative and there is less influence of secularism. The religious political parties manipulate religious issues for securing electoral preferences. It cannot vanish even in the most developed societies. USA is a developed country but still the role of religion cannot be ignored in electoral preferences (Botterman & Hooghe, 2009, 2-4). Religion has also remained a major factor in American politics. The election and re-election of George W. Bush in America in 2000 and 2004 was due to his belief in religious conservatism. He showed himself as the main champion in defending the Christian faith against the fundamentalist Islamists (Wald & Brown, 2007, 1-3). Similarly, religious democratic parties are also playing an important role in electoral studies

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in European parliament including countries like Belgium, Germany, Austria, Netherlands and Switzerland etc. (Botterman & Hooghe, 2009, 5).

According to Seymour Martinipset and Stein Rokkan religious and social cleavages play an important role in determining voting behaviour in a country. They discuss these two determinants by explaining the voting behaviour in Western European countries. They give due importance to social cleavages with less emphasis on religious divides. They point out that in countries where secularization is more dominant, the intensity of religion as a voting behaviour is less. Despite the fact, that secularization is more in Western countries, the influence of religion on voting behaviour cannot vanish away completely. Political parties are mainly formed due to cleavages in the society. The religious cleavages lead to the formation of religious political parties and the social cleavages lead to the establishment of political parties based on various strata (Raymond, 2011, 126). Richard Rose and Derek Urwin found that religious voting is more important than class voting. They base their argument on the basis of comparative study of religious voting in fourteen Western countries (Lijphart, 1979, 443). Arend Lijphart posits that religious voting has stronger impact on linguistic and class voting. He determines the impact of these three variables by conducting the comparative study on the electoral preferences in Canada, Switzerland, Belgium and South Africa (Lijphart, 1979, 442). He concludes that 'religion turns out to be victorious, language is a strong runner-up, and class finishes a distant third' (Madeley, 2002, 40). Layman divides voting preferences on the basis of religious and secular voting. The conservative voters favour the religious parties and the progressive voters support the secular parties. The religious and secular preferences are mostly common in the context of the Great Britain, Germany and United States (Raymond, 2001, 125-26). Wouter Van Der Brug and his colleagues determine the status of religion in terms of European electoral politics from 1989 to 2004. They depict that the value of religion as a voting determinant has increased these days. Voting has taken place on the basis of religious issues. They further add that religion is playing a pivotal role in the segmented societies. The generational changes should decrease the impact of religion, but in spite of this fact, religion has emerged as strong force in electoral choice (Brug, Hobolt & Vreese, 2009, 1266).

Religion has also played a vital role in Pakistan. It was the religion that provided a common base for the Muslims of the subcontinent to struggle jointly for a separate homeland for the projection of their rights. However, no one was sure about the Islamic character of the new state. As a result controversies started among the various sections of the society more particularly among the Western educated intelligentsia and the *Ulema*. Consequently, various political parties were formed for getting electoral support of the people on the nature of polity. Keeping in this backdrop religious political parties emerged so that to propagate their own brand of ideas regarding state (Binder, 1963, 4-5). The electoral history shows that the religious parties did not get an overwhelming majority in the elections before 2002. In 2002 elections religious parties under the banner of MMA<sup>1</sup> got majority in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (52 seats) and in Balochistan (14 seats).

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<sup>1</sup> It stands for Muttahidah Majlis-e-Amal (United Action Front). It was a religio-political alliance of six religious parties including Jamat-e-Islami (JI), Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (F), Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (S),

MMA also got 59 seats in the National Assembly which is an overwhelming majority as compared to their past performance (Wilder, 2005, 116-21; ECP 2002). The success of MMA is attributed to the America's military intervention in Afghanistan after 9/11 event in America. This attack of America on Afghanistan was highly resented by the people of Pakistan in general and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan in particular. As a result anti-Americanism thrived among the people. This feeling was capitalized by MMA in the sense that it issued such a manifesto in which *Shariah* or Islamism was largely highlighted.<sup>2</sup> The issue of implementation of *shariah* mainly attracted by the people therefore, the voters voted for MMA.

Regarding the application of religious voting, it is argued that religious voting is applicable to some extent in the electoral politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The comparative study of 2002, 2008 and 2013 elections also support the argument that religious voting is important to some extent. In 2002 elections the voters voted to MMA on the basis of religious voting, because more than 50% of the respondents supported religious preferences. In 2008 elections, less than 50% voters voted to MMA. In 2013 elections the support for religious parties was also less than 50%. The empirical data clearly support the argument that religious voting is important to some extent in the electoral politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## Hypothesis

Religious voting is important to some extent in the electoral politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## Methodology

This is an empirical and applied nature of research based on quantitative and analytical methods. The respondents have been selected from the voter list through multistage random and systematic sampling. The data obtained through questionnaires have been classified, arranged and analyzed in various tables. Secondary, data in from of journals and books have been studied and used for understanding the theoretical framework regarding the theory of religious voting.

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Jamiat-ullema-Pakistan (JUP), Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith Pakistan and Islami Tehrik-i-Pakistan (formerly known as Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Fiqh-i-Jafriya)

<sup>2</sup> Other factors also led to the success of MMA. Firstly, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan are the two bordering provinces with Afghanistan which have similar ethnic affiliation with people in Afghanistan. Secondly, most of the people in these two provinces are religious minded, therefore, their religious sentiments could be exploited easily. Thirdly, six religious political parties have been combined which increased their electoral strength. Lastly, the then military government of General Pervez Musharraf also wanted to succeed MMA, because by this way he would be able to create a hung parliament or controlled democracy. The nexus between Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and MMA also led to the electoral success of MMA. For details see Mohammad Waseem, *Democratization in Pakistan: A Study of the 2002 Elections* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp.216-19.

### **Criterion for Operational Measurement of Electoral Variable**

Keeping in view the hypothesis and research questions, the study has been confined to the operational measurement of the variable of religious voting. Regarding the application of this variable, three questions have been asked. Each question has been analysed with the help of chi-square test, p-value and percentage method. In order to comprehend the extent of the application of theory of religious voting, the average percentage of these questions, has been calculated. The following criterion has been followed for measuring the extent of application of variable of religious voting.

- The average percentage which is 40% and below has been termed as “Limited Extent.”
- The average percentage which is 60% and below has been termed as “Some Extent.”
- The average percentage which is above 60% has been termed as “Great Extent.”

### **Justification for the Selection of Universe**

The research is confined to the urban and rural areas of NA-2 in Peshawar. The following studies provide justification for the selection of the universe.

- Andrew R. Wilder in his work, *The Pakistani Voter: Electoral Politics and Voting Behaviour in the Punjab* determines the political and social determinants of voting behaviour in urban and rural areas by undertaking the case study of NA-97 in Lahore.
- Muhammad Shakeel Ahmad in his Ph.D dissertation, *Electoral Politics in NWFP: 1988-1999* describes the political and social determinants of voting behaviour in urban and rural areas by undertaking the case study of NA-1 in Peshawar.

### **Sampling Method and Size**

NA-2 Peshawar is the universe of the study which includes the registered voters in this constituency. The total number of the registered voters in 2007-08 was 314904 in which 192693 were male and 122211 female. There are twenty union councils in NA.2 constituency in which four councils are rural and sixteen are urban. A representative sampling was obtained through random and systematic sampling.

In order to get a representative sample size, an over 800 voters were selected on the basis of a multi stages sample techniques given below.

**Stage 1:** There are four national level constituencies in Peshawar i.e. NA-1, NA-2, NA-3 and NA-4. The constituency of NA-2 was randomly selected in this stage.

**Stage 2:** There are 20 Union Councils in NA-2 in all. In this stage, an overall 20% Union Councils were selected out of a 20 total which means 04 Union Councils in which 02

were from urban and 02 were from rural areas. These Union Councils were randomly selected. The names of the urban Union Councils are Shaheen Town and Tehkal Payan-2 and that of the rural Union Councils are Regi and Sufaid Dheri.

**Stage 3:** In this stage, 200 voters were randomly selected from each selected Union Council on equal basis. So the overall sample size comes to 800 respondents. These respondents were selected from each selected Union Council through voters' lists on the basis of random and systematic techniques. At first, one voter was randomly selected and then every 4<sup>th</sup> voter was selected till 200 respondents completed.

Out of 800 respondents, 400 were selected from urban and 400 from rural areas. A considerable number of the voters did not return the questionnaires. Among these respondents the prominent were females, aged, illiterate and rural respondents. There are many reasons which can be referred in this connection. Firstly, our society is not pro-research-oriented. Secondly, people usually frighten in giving data in black and white. People usually avoid to fill the questionnaire because they think that it waste their time. Out of a total 800 questionnaire administered, the researcher could get only 613 duly filled and returned.

### **Religious Voting and its Operational Measurement**

This study aims at testing the theory of religious voting in light of the empirical data collected in NA-2 Peshawar. The theory has been analysed and assessed in the light of various open and close ended questions. Religious voting has been measured quantitatively by asking the following set of questions.

- To what extent you voted on the assurance of promulgation of Islamic System in the 2002 elections?
- To what extent you voted on the assurance of promulgation of Islamic System in the 2008 elections?
- To what extent would you vote on the basis of assuring promulgation of Islamic System in the 2013 elections?

Frequencies and percentages for each question have been calculated. All these questions have been further analysed in the light of several variables including, urban/rural divisions, gender, age, profession, monthly income and literacy. Chi-square test and p-value has been determined for making analysis and conclusion.

### **Religion and Islamic System as an Electoral Choice in 2002 Elections**

The electoral preference for promulgation of Islamic system is one of the important indicators of religion as a voting determinant in 2002 elections. It is, therefore, important to measure religion in terms of preferring the promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections. In this connection, responses were collected with regard to the question, "To what extent you voted on the assurance of promulgation of Islamic System in the 2002

elections?” The question has been asked for knowing the general perception of the voters regarding religion as voting determinant in 2002 elections. This question has been analysed in the light of several variables including, urban/rural divisions, gender, age, profession, monthly income and literacy.

It is pertinent to note that in 2002 elections the electoral preference for religion was not based on the reason that voters voted on the basis of their strong attachment with religion. But the voters had favoured the religion due to issue voting. Religion was presented in the form of issue voting. It was due to issue voting that the voters cast their votes for religion in 2002 elections. In informal discussion with the respondents, it was also confirmed that the voters had voted to religious parties in 2002 elections because they had presented religion as an electoral issue.

### **Urban / Rural Consideration**

In 2002 elections almost an equal support came from both the urban and rural areas for the religious parties.

**Table 1**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Urban	241 (72.4%)	48 (14.4%)	9 (2.7%)	35 (10.5%)	333 (100.0%)
Rural	204 (72.9%)	35 (12.5%)	21 (7.5%)	20 (7.1%)	280 (100.0%)
Total	445 (72.6%)	83 (13.5%)	30 (4.9%)	55 (9.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 9.492, P-value = 0.023

Almost an equal number of both the urban (72.4%) and rural respondents (72.9%) maintained that they voted on the basis of assurance for promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections. This shows that both types of respondents strongly supported the promulgation of Islamic system.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the urban/rural stratification and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections.

### **Gender Consideration**

Keeping in view the gender consideration, it was discovered that in 2002 elections religious parties have been mostly backed by the female voters.

**Table 2**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	256 (70.3%)	40 (11.0%)	25 (6.9%)	43 (11.8%)	364 (100.0%)
Female	189 (75.9%)	43 (17.3%)	5 (2.0%)	12 (4.8%)	249 (100.0%)
Total	445 (72.6%)	83 (13.5%)	30 (4.9%)	55 (9.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 20.137, P-value = 0.000

In terms of gender, a maximum number of the female respondents (75.9%), followed by male respondents (70.3%), asserted that they voted on the basis of assurance for promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections. This shows that the female respondents are more inclined towards religion in making electoral preferences.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between gender and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections.

### Age Consideration

In 2002 elections religious parties have been strongly supported by the elderly respondents.

**Table 3**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
18-40	264 (68.6%)	61 (15.8%)	23 (6.0%)	37 (9.6%)	385 (100.0%)
Above 40	181 (79.4%)	22 (9.6%)	7 (3.1%)	18 (7.9%)	228 (100.0%)
Total	445 (72.6%)	83 (13.5%)	30 (4.9%)	55 (9.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 9.303, P-value = 0.026

Majority of the respondents whose age is above 40 years (79.4%), followed by respondents whose age is 18—40 years (68.6%), said that they voted on the basis of assurance by the candidates for promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections. This

shows that the older respondents are more religious than the younger respondents in making electoral choices.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between age and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections.

### **Professional Consideration**

In 2002 elections religious parties have been chiefly supported by the housewives in shaping their electoral choices.

**Table 4**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Govt. Servant	77 (70.0%)	12 (10.9%)	7 (6.4%)	14 (12.7%)	110 (100.0%)
Non-Govt. Servant	58 (68.2%)	8 (9.4%)	5 (5.9%)	14 (16.5%)	85 (100.0%)
Businessman & Shopkeeper	48 (65.8%)	11 (15.1%)	4 (5.5%)	10 (13.7%)	73 (100.0%)
Others	94 (72.3%)	18 (13.8%)	9 (6.9%)	9 (6.9%)	130 (100.0%)
House Wife	168 (78.1%)	34 (15.8%)	5 (2.3%)	8 (3.7%)	215 (100.0%)
Total	445 (72.6%)	83 (13.5%)	30 (4.9%)	55 (9.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 25.083, P-value = 0.014

In terms of profession, a maximum number of the housewives (78.1%), followed by the respondent hailing from the category of 'others' (72.3%), maintained that they voted on the basis of assurance for promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections. This shows that the housewives are more religious than any other category of professions in terms of electoral decisions. The category of 'others' includes students, retired persons, the unemployed, farmers and skilled and unskilled labourers.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between profession and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections.



### Income Group Consideration

In 2002 elections religious parties received strong supported from the respondents with high monthly income.

**Table 5**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
20000 & Below	183 (68.5%)	33 (12.4%)	21 (7.9%)	30 (11.2%)	267 (100.0%)
Above 20000	32 (71.1%)	6 (13.3%)	0 (.0%)	7 (15.6%)	45 (100.0%)
Sorry	230 (76.4%)	44 (14.6%)	9 (3.0%)	18 (6.0%)	301 (100.0%)
Total	445 (72.6%)	83 (13.5%)	30 (4.9%)	55 (9.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 17.708, P-value = 0.007

A significant number of the respondents who have not mentioned their monthly income (76.4%), followed by the respondents whose monthly income is above Rs. 20000 (71.1%), maintained that they voted on the basis of assurance for promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections. This shows that religiosity increases with the increase in monthly income.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between monthly income and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections.

### Literacy-based Consideration

In 2002 elections, the illiterate people supported religious parties to a greater extent.

**Table 6**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Literate	265 (71.0%)	45 (12.1%)	21 (5.6%)	42 (11.3%)	373 (100.0%)
Illiterate	180 (75.0%)	38 (15.8%)	9 (3.8%)	13 (5.4%)	240 (100.0%)
Total	445 (72.6%)	83 (13.5%)	30 (4.9%)	55 (9.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 8.459, P-value = 0.037

A large number of the illiterate respondents (75.0%), followed by the literate respondents (71.0%), maintained that they voted on the basis of assurance by their respective candidates for promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections. This shows that the illiterate respondents are more religious in making voting preferences.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between literacy and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2002 elections.

In the end, it is found that most of the respondents favoured religious voting by supporting the promulgation of Islamic system in making electoral preferences in 2002 elections. In this connection, strong support came from the respondents belonging to the rural areas, female respondents, aged people, housewives, respondents with higher monthly income and the illiterates.

### **Religion and Islamic System as an Electoral Choice in 2008 Elections**

The electoral preference for promulgation of Islamic system is one of the important indicators of religion as a voting determinant in 2008 elections. It is, therefore, important to measure religion in terms of preferring the promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. So, responses were collected with regard to the question, "To what extent you voted on the assurance of promulgation of Islamic System in the 2008 elections?" It has been asked for knowing the general perception of the voters regarding religion as a voting determinant in 2008 elections. This question has been analysed in the light of different variables including, urban/rural divisions, gender, age, profession, monthly income and literacy.

### **Urban / Rural Consideration**

Both the urban and rural respondents rejected religion as a voting determinant in 2008 elections. In this regard the urban respondents have taken the lead.

**Table 7**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Urban	57 (17.1%)	44 (13.2%)	49 (14.7%)	183 (55.0%)	333 (100.0%)
Rural	80 (28.6%)	34 (12.1%)	24 (8.6%)	142 (50.7%)	280 (100.0%)
Total	137 (22.3%)	78 (12.7%)	73 (11.9%)	325 (53.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 14.403, P-value = 0.002

A large number of the urban respondents (55.0%), followed by rural respondents (50.7%) maintained that they did not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. This shows that the urban respondents mostly disowned the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. This also implies that religiosity is more in the rural areas so far as making of electoral preference is concerned. The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the urban / rural stratification and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections.

### Gender Consideration

Both the male and female respondents rejected religion as a voting determinant in 2008 elections. In this regard the males are ahead from the females.

**Table 8**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	69 (19.0%)	44 (12.1%)	52 (14.3%)	199 (54.7%)	364 (100.0%)
Female	68 (27.3%)	34 (13.7%)	21 (8.4%)	126 (50.6%)	249 (100.0%)
Total	137 (22.3%)	78 (12.7%)	73 (11.9%)	325 (53.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 9.615, P-value = 0.022

A large number of the male respondents (54.7%), followed by female respondents (50.6%) maintained that they did not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. This shows that majority of the male respondents did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in these elections. This also implies that the females are more religious than males in deciding voting choices.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the gender and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections.

### Age Consideration

In 2008 elections all the age groups rejected religion as a voting determinant. However, the elderly respondents mostly discarded religion as a voting determinant.

**Table 9**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
18-40	95 (24.7%)	55 (14.3%)	38 (9.9%)	197 (51.2%)	385 (100.0%)
Above 40	42 (18.4%)	23 (10.1%)	35 (15.4%)	128 (56.1%)	228 (100.0%)
Total	137 (22.3%)	78 (12.7%)	73 (11.9%)	325 (53.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 8.769, P-value = 0.033

In terms of age, a large number of the respondents whose age is above 40 years (56.1%), followed by respondents whose age is 18-40 years (51.2%) maintained that they did not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. This shows that majority of the elderly respondents did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. This also implies that they are more religious than the youngsters in making electoral decisions.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the age and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections.

### **Professional Consideration**

In terms of profession, most of the government servants mostly rejected religion as a voting determinant in 2008 elections.

**Table 10**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Govt. Servant	20 (18.2%)	14 (12.7%)	10 (9.1%)	66 (60.0%)	110 (100.0%)
Non-Govt. Servant	15 (17.6%)	12 (14.1%)	14 (16.5%)	44 (51.8%)	85 (100.0%)
Businessman & Shopkeeper	16 (21.9%)	5 (6.8%)	9 (12.3%)	43 (58.9%)	73 (100.0%)
Others	26 (20.0%)	17 (13.1%)	23 (17.7%)	64 (49.2%)	130 (100.0%)
House Wife	60 (27.9%)	30 (14.0%)	17 (7.9%)	108 (50.2%)	215 (100.0%)
<b>Total</b>	137 (22.3%)	78 (12.7%)	73 (11.9%)	325 (53.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 18.324, P-value = 0.106

As far as the profession is concerned, a large number of the government servants (60.0%), followed by businessmen and shopkeepers (58.9%) maintained that they did not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. This shows that majority of the government servants did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in these elections.

The Chi-square test provides insignificant p-value. The p-value  $< 0.05$  shows that there is no association between profession and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections.

### Income Group Consideration

All kinds of monthly groups did not support religion as a voting determinant in 2008 elections. The respondents with higher monthly income strongly rejected the religion as a voting determinant.

**Table 11**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
20000 & Below	54 (20.2%)	31 (11.6%)	48 (18.0%)	134 (50.2%)	267 (100.0%)
Above 20000	10 (22.2%)	8 (17.8%)	2 (4.4%)	25 (55.6%)	45 (100.0%)
Sorry	73 (24.3%)	39 (13.0%)	23 (7.6%)	166 (55.1%)	301 (100.0%)
Total	137 (22.3%)	78 (12.7%)	73 (11.9%)	325 (53.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 17.886, P-value = 0.007

As far as the monthly income is concerned, a large number of the respondents whose monthly income is above Rs. 20000 (55.6%), followed by the respondents who have not mentioned their monthly income (55.1%) maintained that they did not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in the 2008 elections. This shows that majority of the respondents with higher monthly income did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value  $< 0.05$  shows that there is an association between the monthly income and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections.

### Literacy-based Consideration

Both the literate and illiterate respondents rejected religion as a voting determinant in 2008 elections. In this regard the lead has been taken by the literate respondents.

**Table 12**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Literate	85 (22.8%)	55 (14.7%)	32 (8.6%)	201 (53.9%)	373 (100.0%)
Illiterate	52 (21.7%)	23 (9.6%)	41 (17.1%)	124 (51.7%)	240 (100.0%)
Total	137 (22.3%)	78 (12.7%)	73 (11.9%)	325 (53.0%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 12.145, P-value = 0.007

In terms of literacy, a maximum number of the literate respondents (53.9%), followed by the illiterate (51.7%) maintained that they did not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections. This shows that majority of the literate respondents did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in these elections.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the literacy and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2008 elections.

To conclude, it is found that most of the respondents avoided religious voting by rejecting the promulgation of Islamic system in making electoral preferences in 2008 elections. In this connection, strong opposition came from the respondents belonging to the urban areas, male respondents, elderly respondents, government servants, respondents with higher monthly income and literate respondents.

### **Religion and Islamic System as an Electoral Choice in the 2013 Elections**

The electoral preference for promulgation of Islamic system is one of the important indicators of religion as a voting determinant in the 2013 elections. It is, therefore, important to measure religion in terms of preferring the promulgation of Islamic system in these elections. In this connection, responses were collected with regard to the question, "To what extent would you vote on the basis of assuring promulgation of Islamic System in the 2013 elections?" It has been asked for knowing the general perception of the voters regarding religion as voting determinant in 2013 elections. This question has been analysed in the light of several variables including, urban/rural divisions, gender, age, profession, monthly income and literacy.

### **Urban / Rural Consideration**

Both the urban and rural respondents rejected religion as a voting determinant in 2013 elections. In this regard the lead has been taken by the urban respondents

**Table 13**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Urban	59 (17.7%)	54 (16.2%)	32 (9.6%)	188 (56.5%)	333 (100.0%)
Rural	77 (27.5%)	44 (15.7%)	14 (5.0%)	145 (51.8%)	280 (100.0%)
Total	136 (22.2%)	98 (16.0%)	46 (7.5%)	333 (54.3%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 11.502, P-value = 0.009

A maximum number of the urban respondents (56.5%), followed by rural respondents (51.8%) maintained that they will not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections. This shows that the urban respondents clearly disowned the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in these elections.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the urban / rural stratification and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections.

### **Gender Consideration**

Both the male and female respondents rejected religion as a voting determinant in 2013 elections. In this regard the lead has been taken by the male respondents.

**Table 14**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	94 (25.8%)	48 (13.2%)	19 (5.2%)	203 (55.8%)	364 (100.0%)
Female	42 (16.9%)	50 (20.1%)	27 (10.8%)	130 (52.2%)	249 (100.0%)
Total	136 (22.2%)	98 (16.0%)	46 (7.5%)	333 (54.3%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 16.318, P-value = 0.001

A large number of the male respondents (55.8%), followed by female respondents (52.2%) maintained that they will not vote on the basis of assurance of

promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections. This shows that majority of the male respondents did not support this version.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the gender and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections.

### **Age Consideration**

In the pre-poll survey for 2013 elections all age groups rejected religion as a voting determinant. However, the younger respondents largely discarded religion as a voting determinant.

**Table 15**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
18-40	78 (20.3%)	52 (13.5%)	37 (9.6%)	218 (56.6%)	385 (100.0%)
Above 40	58 (25.4%)	46 (20.2%)	9 (3.9%)	115 (50.4%)	228 (100.0%)
Total	136 (22.2%)	98 (16.0%)	46 (7.5%)	333 (54.3%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 12.843, P-value = 0.005

In terms of age, a large number of the respondents whose age is 18-40 years (56.6%), followed by respondents whose age is above 40 years (50.4%) maintained that they will not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections. This shows that majority of the younger respondents did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between the age and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections.

### **Professional Consideration**

In terms of profession, businessmen and shopkeepers totally rejected religion as a voting determinant in the 2013 elections.



**Table 16**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Govt. Servant	34 (30.9%)	12 (10.9%)	5 (4.5%)	59 (53.6%)	110 (100.0%)
Non-Govt. Servant	15 (17.6%)	18 (21.2%)	8 (9.4%)	44 (51.8%)	85 (100.0%)
Businessman & Shopkeeper	16 (21.9%)	7 (9.6%)	3 (4.1%)	47 (64.4%)	73 (100.0%)
Others	33 (25.4%)	18 (13.8%)	8 (6.2%)	71 (54.6%)	130 (100.0%)
House Wife	38 (17.7%)	43 (20.0%)	22 (10.2%)	112 (52.1%)	215 (100.0%)
Total	136 (22.2%)	98 (16.0%)	46 (7.5%)	333 (54.3%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 21.686, P-value = 0.041

As far as the profession is concerned, a large number of the businessmen and shopkeepers (64.4%), followed by the category of 'others' (54.6%) maintained that they will not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections. This shows that majority of the businessmen and shopkeepers did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in these elections. The category of 'others' includes students, retired persons, the unemployed, farmers and skilled and unskilled labourers.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is an association between profession and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections.

### **Income Group Consideration**

All kinds of monthly income groups did not support religion as a voting determinant in 2013 elections. The respondents with low monthly income strongly rejected the religion as a voting determinant.

**Table 17**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
20000 & Below	62 (23.2%)	41 (15.4%)	18 (6.7%)	146 (54.7%)	267 (100.0%)
Above 20000	13 (28.9%)	6 (13.3%)	2 (4.4%)	24 (53.3%)	45 (100.0%)
Sorry	61 (20.3%)	51 (16.9%)	26 (8.6%)	163 (54.2%)	301 (100.0%)
Total	136 (22.2%)	98 (16.0%)	46 (7.5%)	333 (54.3%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 3.277, P-value = 0.773

As far as the monthly income is concerned, a large number of the respondents whose monthly income is Rs. 20000 and below (54.7%), followed by the respondents who have not mentioned their monthly income (54.2%) maintained that they will not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections. This shows that majority of the respondents with low monthly income did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in these elections. The Chi-square test provides insignificant p-value. The p-value < 0.05 shows that there is no association between the monthly income and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections.

### **Literacy-based Consideration**

Both the literate and illiterate respondents rejected religion as a voting determinant in 2013 elections. In this regard the illiterate respondents are in lead from literate.

**Table 18**

	<b>To a Greater Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Limited Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
Literate	99 (26.5%)	50 (13.4%)	24 (6.4%)	200 (53.6%)	373 (100.0%)
Illiterate	37 (15.4%)	48 (20.0%)	22 (9.2%)	133 (55.4%)	240 (100.0%)
Total	136 (22.2%)	98 (16.0%)	46 (7.5%)	333 (54.3%)	613 (100.0%)

Chi-Square Value = 13.660, P-value = 0.003

In terms of literacy, a maximum number of the illiterate respondents (55.4%), followed by the literate respondents (53.6%) maintained that they will not vote on the basis of assurance of promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections. This shows that majority of the illiterate respondents did not support the preference of promulgation of Islamic system in these elections.

The Chi-square test provides significant p-value. The p-value  $< 0.05$  shows that there is an association between the literacy and the promulgation of Islamic system in 2013 elections.

To conclude, it is found that most of the respondents negated religious voting by rejecting the promulgation of Islamic system in making electoral preferences in 2013 elections. In this connection, strong opposition came from the respondents belonging to the urban areas, male respondents, youngsters, businessmen and shopkeepers, respondents with low monthly income and the illiterate.

## Conclusion

Religious voting is one of the determinants of voting behaviour in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, it is not as important as the issue voting and clientelism. The empirical data collected regarding religious voting, also support this argument of the study that religious voting is secondary in importance as compared to issue voting and clientelism. It means that the theory of religious voting is applicable to some extent (55.1%) in the electoral study of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The application of the theory of religious voting has been determined with regard to 2002, 2008 and 2013 elections. In 2002 elections it has been established that majority of the people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa voted on the basis of religion. Because the electoral support for religion was more than fifty percent (72.6%). In 2008 elections, the voters did not vote on the basis of religion. Because the religious preferences of the respondents were less than fifty percent (47%) in 2008 elections. In a pre-poll survey regarding 2013 elections, the voters did not support religion in making electoral choice. Because less than fifty percent (45.7%) of the respondents favoured religious voting in 2013 elections.

Religious voting is also important to be understood in terms of variables, including, urban/rural divisions, gender, age, profession, monthly income and literacy. In terms of urban/rural stratification, the religious preferences can be seen more among the rural respondents. As far as the gender is concerned, the female respondents showed more support for religious voting. The elderly people showed strong inclination towards religion-based politics. In terms of profession, a large number of the housewives favoured issue voting in elections. Similarly, the respondents with low monthly income also showed keen interest in supporting religious politics. In terms of literacy, most of the illiterate respondents preferred religious voting in the electoral politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

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