

Reading of Pakistan's 2002 And 2008 Elections: A Descriptive Analysis

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Abstract:

Political process is frequently obsessed with different ideals which could only be realized if they are complimented with peoples' will. Peoples' will is the mainstay of democracy and it could be translated by the process of elections. The legitimate transfer of government is actuated through elections which provide the litmus to gauge that how far people have confidence and hope in the political process. Democratic history of Pakistan is tumultuous one which passed through different phases of democratic and autocratic rule but try to retain the semblance of governance as being practiced in modern polities. The comparative analysis of elections 2002 and 2008 of Pakistan has transpired the attitudinal change in peoples' preferences. The judgmental level of people's choice is reflected in political values while preferring to favour those political parties which were in proximity to their choice. People were seemingly inclined to those figures that were able to deliver something and rejected which were outmaneuvered.

Keywords: Rational choice, Political maturity, proximity to ideals, governance and incumbency

I. Introduction

It is generally believed that consent and consensus carries their weight behind the structure or the leadership which implies the character of institutionalization if it works as a trustee and serve the trust whenever it is expected. So many perceptions regarding the responsible government of subcontinent, developed by the patronage of the colonial power, made the political forces of the sub-continent more aware of their strength and the use of the ideological abstractions and political rhetoric for the impressive following of the public as a political weight for the achievements of their desired goals. This political gaining worked as counter productive of the system by transforming the social and mental

construction of the people and let loose their passion to be materialized through the regulated process of the system. It was the paradoxical state in which subcontinent had been plunged into by the British rule. Ayesha Jalal noted that ‘... British effort to stretch the ambit of imperial control through rule bound institutions based on western concepts of contractual law and impersonalized sovereignty rather than on the personal patronage of rulers was without historical precedence in the subcontinent....’ (Ayesha Jalal, p.10). The political system in the subcontinent one way or the other, formation of the political parties was inevitable for the interest articulation and their aggregation in the system. Establishment of democratic setup in subcontinent could not bridge the gulf between the personalized society and an impersonalized colonial state apparatus. This widening gap had further set the tone of scramble for power and resources along religious, caste and regional lines.

Democracy as a norm and as a system was adopted after independence that provided legitimacy to the state to strengthen the bond between the elected representatives and the public. This research theme will try to extrapolate about the nature of the political system of Pakistan by observing the general trends of political behavior in the elections 2002 and 2008. Had the democracy ever been reflected in the political acts of the people of Pakistan? This research article will also try to notice that how far the primordial and instrumental linkages had their effects on the psyche of the voters in determine their future. This article will shed the light on the legitimating role of elections in the polity of Pakistan in transferring the authority, and worked as a conduit to make the ordinary person as part of the state system.

II. Theoretical Underpinnings

The study of elections is not as old as they seem. Elections are primarily examined through the prism of voters and parties. What does and does not influence voters is ascertained by comparing the behaviour of voters through either the survey based electoral research and interviewing as close to polling day as possible or search for the causation with its social-psychological paraphernalia. A nationally representative population eligible to vote responds the popular appeal and vote for the party closest to them on the issues they consider important. Parties and the leaders issue appeals, rhetoric and their manifestos to get the support of the masses on the day of the polling. Yet it is difficult to seek correlation between party identification which influences the vote or whether it is voter’s choice that seeks party identification. But it is recognizable as a strategic voting which identified with the voter’s choice of a party that is closest to his or her interests (Samuel Merrill & Bernard Groffman, 1999, p.4). Voters’ behaviour sometimes becomes volatile but this does not mean that they have no trust on the parties, leadership or the system.

The underlying frameworks will facilitate to know the nature of the socio-political forces which determine the direction of political process in Pakistan. A first one approach developed by the ‘Columbia School’ which identified that people’s social neighborhood and membership of other groups determine their voting behavior and voting decision is essentially a group decision (William Cotty, 1991, pp.64-65). This paradigm overrules the significance of dynamic but short-term individual responses to external stimuli such as election campaign in favor of relatively passive and long-term group identities. The correlation of age or education with the voting’s turnout tends to be meaningless without the availability of attitudinal change analysis such as the study of political socialization.

The social-psychological approach to voting behaviour led by the ‘Michigan School’ focuses on the individual as the primary voting unit into the analysis of electors’ choice. This school prefers to focus on individuals’ attitudes to political parties, candidates’ images and issues’ positions (William Cotty,1991). In this model, it is the voter’s self-image in terms of partisan identity, which explains his choice. A voter generally considers himself committed to one party, or at least finds himself closer to it than to others for political decision making. It is argued that party identification is less of an integral part of an individual’s self-image than a cognitive ledger for residual images of the past political experiences.

Finally, there is the ‘Rationalist School’ led by Anthony Downs, conceives voters, being prone to weighing the cost and benefit of voting in economic terms. These voters employ a voting calculus to maximize utility just as candidates employ their own calculus to maximize the number of their voters by dishing out such promises and policy commitments which are financially bearable and politically rewarding (Samuel Merrill&Bernard Groffman,1999).

III. Methodology

Research mode is qualitative in nature, and has focused upon one of the aspect of politics to judge people’s political preferences. Elections have been studied by relying upon the electoral reviews of different authors, electoral data and other related information of secondary nature.

A. Comparative Analysis of Elections 2002 and 2008

Under the considerations of these approaches, a comparative analysis of elections could be provided on the bases of electoral traits of Pakistani voters. Voters in Pakistan have always played their due role in the electoral activity to legitimize it as a just course to change the incumbents. Their participation level has also determined that how far they had been mature in their political behavior to support the party base agenda rather than to follow the individual cause of the contenders. People of Pakistan always supported the political parties which had supported their cause and interest. It is basically issue adjustment strategy of the voters with the candidature and political parties and vice versa that unfolded the nature of synthetic values of Pakistan’s political system. From 1988 to 2008 more than fifty political parties contested the elections but less than half of them could manage a place at the score sheet of national elections. In 1988 ten parties, in 1990 nine parties, in 1993 sixteen parties, in 1997 nine parties, in 2002 seventeen parties and in 2008 ten political parties were declared successful to get their tally of seats in national elections (Akhtar, 2012; Election Commission of Pakistan, 2002; 2008).

Table 1: Turn out Comparison in National Elections

Turn out	1988	1990	1993	1997	2002	2008
Baluchistan	25.7%	28.7%	24.9%	23.17%	29.67%	31.32%
Sindh	39.7%	42.1%	32.5%	31.31%	38.17%	44.16%
Punjab	46.49%	49.61%	47.07%	39.81%	46.03%	48.01%
NWFP	33.92%	35.74%	34.59%	27.75%	35.09%	33.54%
Pakistan	43.07%	45.46%	40.28%	35.42%	41.68%	44.11%

Source: *General Elections Report 1988,1990,1993 & 1997, Vol.ii*, Election Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad,1997, page, iv;*General Elections Report 2002,Vol.ii*, Election Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad,page.v;*General Elections Report 2008,Vol.ii*, Election Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad,page.viii.

The question of legitimacy is best reflected by their rate of participation in the elections. Pakistani voter is very much conscious of the requirements of the time and their participation in the elections is measured through the turn out of the elections which is more than 40% from 1988 to 2002 except the elections of 1997 when it was 35% (Mohammad Waseem, 2006, ch.6)

The interplay of different forces in the arena of politics is partly endorsing the argument of voters' sense of maturity by their level of participation and their preference for political parties. It is also reflecting their level of judgment that only electoral turn could best represent their interests by electing their new political representation. Sharief-al-Mujahid in one of his articles 'Pakistan: First General Elections' gave similar version which has been cited above. He said that "...[The] elections have proved beyond doubt that the people are mature enough politically to participate in the democratic process thereby refuting the dictum that democracy is not suited to the particular genius of Pakistan (Sharief al Mujahid, 1971, p.171). Shahid Javed Burki and Craig Baxter in their research article 'Socio-Economic Indicators of the People's Party Vote in the Punjab: A Study at the Tehsil Level' sought the effects of gini-coefficients on the voters' voting decision and with this approach they analyzed the impact of socio-economic development over the voter's psyche at the unit of tehsil. They visualized that higher the level of development of socio-economic indicators there is more tendency of voters' inclination toward political party. In their opinion political objects played the positive role in mobilizing the masses. They noticed that issues of public concern projected by the political parties enticed the masses (W.H. Wriggins, 1975, p.157). Andrew Wilder in his research while analyzing the Provincial and National Assembly Elections (1988-1990-1993) demonstrated convincingly that "voters vote for those candidates or the parties which pledge to provide with the tangible benefits. They also provide the sense of realization by their electioneering that after assuming the charge of the government, they will try their level best to deliver the material benefits rather than cushioning the people with empty slogans" (Andrew Wilder, 1995, p.393). Mohammad Waseem in one of his research also concluded that "people of Pakistan participate actively in electoral activity due to their increasing sense of knowing the importance of the delivery system. He judged the importance of political mobilization due to rapid transformation of society, and gave his explanatory details regarding the formation and functioning of the government in the wake of election" (Mohammad Waseem, 1994, pp.1-3). These generalizations provide the perception of politics of elections in Pakistan, and as well as lay down the criterion of judging the voters psyche by which they take their voting decisions.

B. Elections 2002

After taking power in October 1999, Musharaff traded with the institutions of the state to get his rule firm by providing the assurance to conduct the local bodies, provincial and national elections. It was not unusual for the military regime to tread the same path which the predecessors did in the name of peoples' democracy to justify and legitimize military presence in politics. Petitions were filed under Article 184(3) of the constitution in the Supreme Court to challenge the legality of referendum order No.12 of 2002 which was issued by Pervaiz Musharaff as chief executive, seeking people's mandate to serve the nation as president of Pakistan for a period of five years. Supreme Court in Zafar Ali Shah case validated the extra constitutional step of the military dictator and gave him a power to amend the constitution to execute the envisaged agenda except the fundamentals of the constitution. Court also stated that elections to National and Provincial Assemblies and

the Senate of Pakistan would be held in October 2002 (Craig Baxter, 2005, p.67). Musharaff made the strategy to displace the enemies and to make them disappear from the political scene prior the election through the rule of qualification for membership of both houses of parliament and Provincial Assembly with added list of other reforms to disqualify the person to hold the office of prime minister for the third term (Saeed Shafaq, 2007, p.285). Pervaiz Musharaff as a military dictator projected his image as progenitor of real and peoples' democracy by giving the sense of genuine representation at the level of union council through devolution plan. He thought that by this kind of representation he has increased the participation of the people and revolutionized the traditional setup. His design of peoples' democracy could not materialize due to diminishing capacity of supportive institutions. Samuel P. Huntington mentioned to this state of affairs that in the traditional society success of the monarch's reforms then produces groups sympathetic to modernization and anxious to participate in politics but lacking the institutional means for doing so (Samuel P. Huntington, 1977, p.168).

The description of general patterns and trends of election 2002 has provided the true meaning of democracy in Pakistan and as well as the nature of Pakistan's people political behavior. Their standing with the political values and participation along with them in the poll provide legitimacy to it. More than seventy million voters had their name registered in the voting rolls and hundreds of contestants campaigned through the length and breadth of the country. Dozens of political parties formed strategies, alliances and seat adjustment to compete for the electoral gains. A large number of new faces walked into the assemblies with their degree of graduation. The remarkable performance was that of MMA (Muttahida Majlis Amil), an alliance of Islamic parties sprang a total surprise on the political stage of Pakistan, as it formed the government in NWFP and became a coalition partner in Baluchistan also. MMA was an electoral alliance of six religious parties—Jamaat-i-Islami, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Islam (Fazlur Rehman), Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Islam (Sami-ul-Haq), Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Pakistan (Noorani), Jamiat-i-Ahle-i-Hadith and the Tehrik-i-Islami (Craig Baxter, 2005, p.113).

The two major parties like PPP and PML-N which controlled the executive political offices alternatively from 1988 to onward now suffered through the shenanigans of the military government. PML-N in its stint of power from 1997 to 1999 suffered more in the elections 2002 by getting only 15 seats at national level. A smear campaign was launched against it which caused a defection in its rank that later emerged as a new party in the incarnation of PML-Q (PML-Q was activated by the apparent and latent support of the military establishment). This kind of trend in Pakistan's politics was not a new one. Muslim League had always a tendency to split into different factions at the time of military intrusion into politics. Corruption charges at the previous regimes instituted through the establishment of National Accountability Bureau further debilitated their electoral standing. The leadership of PPP had been already implicated in the different corruption cases in the last government of Nawaz Sharief. Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari had been sentenced to a joint term of five years and a fine of pound Sterling 5.3 million along with disqualification from public office and partial confiscation of their property (KM deSilva, et al, 2002, pp.151-52).

The unexpected feature of election 2002 was the meteoric rise of MMA (Muttahida Majlis Amal, a combination of six religious parties) which secured 45 seats with 10.61% of polled votes. Its presence in NWFP was unprecedented. It got 29

seats out of 35 allocated for national assembly and secured 46.6% of the polled vote of NWFP. Resultantly it also got a big share of provincial seats which numbered 48 out of total 99 and aimed at formed the government. MMA won a clout in the politics of Pakistan due to its rightist unified agenda across the sectarian divide and as well the displeasure at the presence of USA across the border in Afghanistan and its overawed influence in Pakistan's policy circles. Mohammad Waseem also indicated to this state that cataclysmic changes after 9/11 shocked the whole community out of its complacency whereby it sought to shape its destiny along the newer Islamic Identity-based agenda (Mohammad Waseem, 2006, p. 168). The other factors which influenced the voters' preference to MMA, one was the gradual and slow transformation of Pukhtoon society towards political Islam. MMA had also the capacity of street power which further added a fillip to its effort of mobilization of voters, culminated with an increase of 6.92% more vote as compared to previous one. In Baluchistan MMA secured six seats out of 14 with 16% of the polled votes. Here is the consistent pattern of voting for the parties which had their ability to get tangible share in the provincial assembly. This trend reflected the mood of the people of Baluchistan that they are no more interested in remote legislation and are concerned with their local issues. MMA won three seats in Punjab from the urban centres. It made good on the PML-N split. Its influence was not very impressive even in some of rural constituencies which are considered more pliant to get the cascading effects of emotional charged ideology. So seemingly it only got the share of spoil of PML-N. MMA made inroads in the urban politics of Sindh where voting was primarily dominated by civic and law and order issues. In Karachi election results manifested a surprising change by getting 5 seats out of 20 to give the blow to MQM dominance. It remained a close runner-up in the remaining 15 constituencies. On the other hand, MQM won only 12 seats in 2002, 12 of the 13 in 1988 while 11 in both 1990 and 1997. In 1993 it boycotted the national election but retained its dominance in provincial election which reflected in the low voter turnout (*Herald*, Nov, 2002, pp. 48-49). MMA's anti US strategy played a seminal role in wooing the voters elsewhere in the country was less effective in its strategy in Karachi. Here their campaign centered on issues like education, health and other civic concerns. By this strategy MMA managed to penetrate into those constituencies which were once considered a stronghold of MQM. For instance, in N.A-246, MQM got merely 53,000 votes in 2002 while it got 111,000 and 93,000 in 1988 and 1990 respectively. MQM's had to face different challenges which turned into causes of its diminishing tally. Party had not been organized properly due to the indirect role of exiled leadership. People might not be satisfied from its performance in spite of having the control of authority of Karachi and Hyderabad since 1988, and also be the part of different coalition governments in the centre and province of Sindh. Further MQM's transformation from an ethnic party to a national party by using the denomination of Muttahida Qaumi Movement instead of Muhajir Qaumi Movement seemingly appeared to have back fired. It was also observed that Haqiqi faction hinged on criticizing MQM for fielding Sindhi candidate from Karachi. Haqiqi faction harped on the fact that MQM had withdrawn the word Muhajir from their party name but had also sold out to those who were responsible for incidents such as Pacca Qila where scores of MQM supporters were massacred.

The another interesting feature emerged with reference to MMA, was that of its alliance with PPP. Both of the groups were seemingly at odd ends in respect of their ideological orientation. PPP was oriented towards a liberal democracy from the time of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto while religious parties always clung to an idealistic perspective that was more monolithic and unidirectional and less adaptive to others. This showed that

how the strange bedfellows tried to gain the political advantage in the election. PPP Sherpaogot only two seats in National Assembly Polls and gave space to MMA by not putting its candidates against it for contesting the election. While it focused its attention upon provincial polls in which it got 9 seats with 9.8% vote (Craig Baxter, 2005, p.117).

It was the paradoxical nature of military rule that made the farce of its claims to ward off the corrupt elements to be the part of clean democracy. For its advantage, it relaxed the corruption charges against Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao and brought him back from London to curb and diminish the influence of PPP in NWFP. It tried to carve out a niche of power in NWFP but proved counter-productive. Military claimant of honesty and integrity, stepped into politics unlawfully, and seemingly compromised its legitimate character by cajoling the different political groups without any mandate. In August 2002, 24 PPP and 33 PML-N politicians were being investigated and tried by NAB (National Accountability Bureau), while no PML-Q politician was on trial. One such example of partiality was that former PPP National Assembly Speaker, Yousuf Raza Gillani was convicted on charges similar to those leveled against Riaz Fatiana and Wasim Sajjad, i.e., illegal appointments, misuse of official car and telephone facilities (Mohammed Waseem, 2006, p.59).

Another interesting feature of this election was that of no electoral gains for ANP in NWFP in National election, while it saved itself from complete debase at provincial polls by getting 8 seats with 11.1% vote (Craig Baxter, 2005, p.120). This trend showed that MMA sidelined the regional politics of ANP and galvanized the Pukhtoonelement into its fold. It showed that ethnic element was not robust in NWFP. The politics of welfare, development and access to service delivery apparatus worked in favour of those parties and candidates who had the capacity to do so. In the previous election ANP had a capacity to do so which paid it back with the support of people. The given table depicted the well-off position of ANP in the previous elections.

Table 2: National Tally of ANP and Vote Percentage of Winning Seats

Party(Seats)	1988	1990	1993	1997	2002
ANP	2	6	3	9	0
Party(Vote)	1988	1990	1993	1997	2002
ANP	10.79%	11.58%	5.43%	17.63%	0%

Table 3: Vote Percentage of all Contesting Seats of National Assembly:

Party(Vote)	1988	1990	1993	1997	2002
ANP	18.40%	15.00%	14.19%	19.12%	9.39%

Source: Muhammad Javaid Akhtar, *Dilemma of Political Culture: Case Study of Pakistan 1988-1997*, unpublished PhD thesis., Ch.4; General Elections 2002 Report, Vol.ii, *Election Commission of Pakistan*.

Table 4: Provincial Tally and Percentage of Vote of Winning Seats out of Total Vote Cast (Total Seats-80; 99 in 2002)

Party	1988	1990	1993	1997	2002
ANP(Seats)	13	23	21	30	8
ANP(Vote)	6.12%	12.05%	9.62%	33.58%	2.57%

Source: Vote counted by the Researcher

Table 5: Vote Percentage of all Contesting Provincial Seats out of Total Vote Cast:

ANP(Vote)	14.67%	14.58%	14.77%	21.17%	11.09%
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Source: Muhammad Javaid Akhtar, *Dilemma of Political Culture: Case Study of Pakistan 1988-1997*, unpublished PhD thesis., Ch.4; Vote of 2002 election had been counted by the Researcher

In the below given table parties' electoral gains across the board highlighted that a few major parties had clinched their electoral clout along with electoral alliances of different smaller groups or parties. This kind of trend in the realm of elections is seemingly not very unusual from the previous practice. PML-Q emerged as king's party which had an assemblage of candidates who had been parted away from either PML-N or PPP. It was the result of political machination of ruling military junta to get its hold firm over the political system. It had been observed that People always supported those parties and candidates which had been the part of the system and retained their political legacy. So on the chess board of politics PPP-P, PML-Q and PML-N and NA marked their presence with their winning seats. PML-N showed not very impressive appearance due to number of factors which had been caused in the decline of its vote. It secured only 11.3 of the polled vote with 15 seats. Its leadership had been exiled and there was low dive spirit among the rest of the cadre of PML-N leadership. Its powerful faction was being controlled by the Chaudhris of Gujrat who by the back of the military support organized the PML-Q. So it badly affected the performance of PML-N in the election 2002. On the other hand, PPP-P got the advantage of the split vote of Muslim Leagues and its polled vote was 25.9%, higher than PML-Q which stood at 25.6%. In spite of better scoring in term of vote it could not get the majority of seats in the National Assembly. It scored 62 seats while PML-Q had 77 seats (Craig Baxter, 2005, p.118). PPP from 1988 to 1993 retained its voting strength around more than 35% while in 1997 it secured only 21% of the polled vote.

Table 6: Election Result: National Assembly 2002

Party	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Baluchistan	FATA	Islamabad	Total
General Seats	148	61	35	14	12	2	272
PML-Q	68	4	4	2			78
MMA	3	6	29	6		1	45
PPP-P	35	27		1		1	63
PML-N	14			1			15
MQM		13					13
NA	7	5		1			13
PML-F		4					4
PML-J	2						2
PPP-S			2				2
BNP				1			1
PTI	1						1
PML-Z	1						1
MQM-H		1					1
JWP				1			1
PPP-SB	1						1
PAT	1						1
PKMAP				1			1
Independents	15	1		1		12	29

Source: Compiled from ECP

In the election 2002 former president Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari led a group of pro-establishment people or the parties to coalesce them into an alliance known as National Alliance. It was the alliance of six relatively insignificant parties which had an electoral adjustment with PML-Q. Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari did not face any PML-Q candidate in its stronghold of D.G.Khan and Rajanpur Districts. In its tally of 13 seats, 5 seats were from Sindh due to the effective role of one of its component Sindh Democratic Alliance (SDA). Here the anti PPP-P front in Sindh comprising the PML-Q, the NA and

PML-F did not allow its candidates to compete with contestants from its components parties on any Sindh constituency (Mohammed Waseem, 2006, p.160). NA along with seats secured 4.26% vote. This vote gaining strength of NA was not based on its any ideological underpinnings but was the outcome of its candidature previous record and legacy of their family.

Table 7: Vote Effectiveness of 2002 National Election

Parties	Contesting Candidates	Returned Candidates	Vote Secured	%of Polled Vote
PPP-P	232	63	7361523	24.56%
PML-Q	197	78	6898587	23.01%
PML-N	171	15	3292659	10.96%
MMA	183	45	3181483	10.61%
NA	75	13	1269268	4.26%
MQM	60	13	920381	03.0%
ANP	26	0	300587	9.39%

Source: Mohammad Waseem, *Democratization in Pakistan: A Study of 2002 Elections*, p.165; General Elections Report 2002, Vol.ii, Election Commission of Pakistan.

C. Election 2008

It was historic day for the people of Pakistan when they got the sense of relief from the oppression of the past regime and it was the historical continuity which with it causation produced what was ingrained in the committed events of the past. In the elections of 2008 so many speculations were aired that turn out may be less than that of the past elections in the history of Pakistan but it happened to the contrary. In the elections of 2008, people of Pakistan gave their rebuke to the pro Musharraf party-PML(Q)-which got only 38 of the total seat 272 in the National Assembly and routed in the Sindh and NWFP Assembly. The last blow given by the people of Pakistan to the vestiges of Musharraf, and people of Pakistan with their sense of maturity rejected the agenda and claims of the going government. They came out enthusiastically and participated in the election which is endorsed by the turn out that touched the 45.67% as compared the last election of 2002 when it was 42% (*Express* (Multan), February 20, 2008). So people swayed by the cause of democracy and democratic values for which leadership of the PPP-Benazir Bhutto-sacrificed her life. She said that “democracy is the biggest revenge” (*The Herald*, January 2008). The results of the election 2008 shows that issues are always in the top priority of the people and the parties, but importance of the issue varies party to party and people to people due to the different political considerations of both. Parties position in the given chart give the indication that parties of national stature has had the major onerous of government making in which they would have to sacrifice some of their narrow agenda. They tried to get the consensus on the issues of national importance and gave the impression to the regionalist parties that their rights and their due claims will be given the primacy in the coming setup of the government, and more latitude will be given in the formation of the government of the provinces where they are in majority like the right of ANP in the province of NWFP and of PML-N in the Punjab. Awami National Party got 31 seats in KPK assembly and PML-N got 103 seats in Punjab assembly and both were the first bidders in the process of government making.

Table 8

Parties	National Assembly	Punjab Assembly	Sindh Assembly	Baluchistan Assembly	NWFP(KPK)
PPP-P	87	78	68	7	17
PML(N)	67	103	0	0	5
PML(Q)	38	66	9	18	6
MQM	20	0	38	0	0
ANP	10	0	2	1	31
PML(F)	4	3	7	0	0
BNA(AW AMI)	1	0	0	5	0
PPP(SH ERPAO)	1	0	0	0	5
NPP	2	0	3	0	0
INDEPE NDEPT	27	35	1	10	18
GETTIN G TOTAL	260	287	128	47	91
TOTAL SEATS	272	297	130	51	99

Source: *Daily Express* (Multan), February 20, 2008; *Dawn* (Lahore), Election 2008, February 18, 2008.

Before the elections there were visible reasons of speculations in which insecurity has become the source of high concern for the public after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto in December 27, 2007 who returned to country after eight years of self imposed exile. It was generally said that Pervaiz Mushraff for his leniency towards his political opponents through the National Reconciliation Ordinance, created a space for himself in furtherance of his rule by getting the political concessions from those parties or the groups which are likely to form the government. After the launching of the war of terror by the America in Iraq and Afghanistan, the dynamics of political events around Pakistan influenced the priorities of the government of Pakistan. Pakistan became its partner in combating the terrorism and again assumed the status of front line state in the war against terrorism. Pakistan Peoples Party a moderate party in Pakistan clearly mentioned in her manifesto that Pakistan Peoples Party will eliminate the extremism in the country and will assist the international powers in their efforts to wipe out the terrorists after assuming the charge of government. Pakistan with this primacy involved in the efforts of containing the activities of terrorists groups. Internationally it was repeatedly asked that Pakistan's nuclear assets are not in safe hands and the extremists can debase the institutional infrastructure of the government due to their role in the religious affairs of the people of Pakistan. After the elections 2002 they had formed their government in the province of NWFP. MMA always pursued its interest on the basis of its outward posture of reforming the society by the implementation of scriptural Islam. It introduced the Mahsba Bill in NWFP(KPK) which reflected its ideological leanings. Mutahidda Majlis-i-Amal was not successful in convincing the people of NWFP(KPK) in 2008 election. It lost more than 3/4th of its voters and 40 of the 45 seats it had won in 2002 election. It has been fallen from grace as it rose to its meteoric rise (*Dawn*, 16th April, 2013).

The event of Lal Masjid and Jamia Hafsa more alarmed the international concerns about Pakistan nuclear assets. Regular or the paramilitary troops were engaged in this struggle to curtail the activities of the terrorists or the extremists in the areas of tribal agencies. Pakistan got the material and technical assistance from the America which acted as an artificial booster in the economy of Pakistan in spite of the government claims that

economy has been generated due to its policies and provision of infrastructure to the productive sectors of the country. But on the other side it was contrary to the government claims when there was shortage of flour(atta) and eight hours' load shedding of electricity and cut of gas supply in the country. So the security and the provision of necessities of life remained the main concern of the incumbents of the government and of those who were in the arena of political wrestling. Due to the death of the Benazir Bhutto, election date was extended from January 8 to February 18, 2008, and activities of the elections remained less impressive. Security personnel and political leadership became the target of the extremist groups, and the province of NWFP was at high alert when militants encroached upon the established part – Swat – of the province. Sense of insecurity and high uncertainty ditched the efforts of political leadership of mobilizing the public for their political agenda. Before ending the election campaign in the area of Parachinar, a bomb exploded in the rally of PPP which claimed the lives of forty people (Dawn, February 17, 2008). Another provincial candidate of Nawaz League from Lahore was shot dead at the last moment of closing the election campaign (*Daily Express* (Multan), 18th February, 2008). Security, sectarian issues engulfed many parts of the NWFP. The Kurram tribal region, some 250 kms west of Peshawar had suffered the worst sectarian clash in 2007 in which more than 600 people were killed (Dawn, 17th February, 2008). Election Commission Office postponed the election for three National Assembly seats in – NA- 207, NA-19 and in NA-37 (*Daily Jang* (Multan), 18th February, 2008).

Pakistan's main political parties participated in the spoil game of election 2008 and its outcome fizzled out the shibboleth and shenanigans of analysts that Pakistan's politics revolves around the stalwarts, and party programmes do not hold sway with the electorate. In this election each party gave her own manifesto which was comprised on the agenda of social development to the stability of the state but the agenda of the PML(N) was clear on the issue of restoration of judiciary before the Nov 3, 2007 when Pervez Musharraf did the second coup against his own government by suspending the constitution and clamped the emergency in Pakistan. He issued the second PCO to give the indemnity to his entire acts which he did during the period of emergency in the country and the one of which was the removal of Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Choudhry from the office of the Chief Justice of Pakistan. Apparently he presented the excuse of imposition of the emergency that extremism and terrorism had been let loose in the country but covertly it was designed to tame the judiciary. Some of the other judges who did not take oath through the PCO were not only rusticated from their posts but also confined in their homes and their number was 50 (*Daily Jang* (Multan), February 21, 2008). Civil society roared a lot over the immorality of the executive orders and resultantly Supreme Court bar President Aitzaz Ahsan, Ali Muhammad Kurd and others were put into jail along with their other companions. Judiciary before the November 3, 2007 challenged the electoral candidature for the President ship of the Pervez Musharraf and ordered the election commission that it will not issue the order of the Pervez Musharraf as the newly elected president of Pakistan. So there was great confusion happened in the institutions of the country due to the constitutional crisis and of the deteriorating law and order situation in the country. Amending articles of the constitution and putting mind boggling clauses in Articles like 270AA, distorted the real sense of the constitution and the spirit of the law. Musharraf also suggested by his loyalists to amend the article 209 for giving the president the freedom to remove the judges of the Supreme Court and its Chief Justice (*Dawn*, 18th December, 2007). Writ of the state was challenged in the Sind after the murder of Benazir Bhutto by the terrorist, in Baluchistan after the killing of Akbar Bugti by the state security agencies and in the NWFP

a lot of killings occurred due to the involvement of Pakistani security agencies in combating the alleged terrorism. Lawyers, civil society and the ordinary personnel actively engaged with the critical issue of judicial revival due to its activism which created the light of hope in the hearts of the public that authoritarian will be debased in the country forever. Nawaz Sharief after the exile came back to Pakistan on 25th of November 2007 when Iftikhar Chaudhry gave the decision that all political leadership should come back to country and they should be tried in the country according to the laws. After landing in Pakistan he was again sent back to Saudi Arabia on the plea that he had made agreement with the Pervez Musharraf that he will remain outside the country for ten years but why he has come back before that date. Judicial courage to give the bold decisions happened only after when judicial higher controlling person, Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Choudhry was disgraced by the president to remove him from his office on the plea that he has used his office unconstitutionally to support his son in getting deputation in FIA (Federal Investigation Agency). Later matter of Chief Justice was referred to the Supreme Judicial Council, headed by the Justice Baghwan Dass and decision was delivered in favour of Iftikhar Muhammad Choudhry that his removal was unconstitutional and without any sound legal argument and unproven with evidential proof. This was the context in which PML(N) and other parties which became the part of ARD (Alliance for Restoration of Democracy) and APDM (All Parties Democratic Movement) took the cause of judiciary and approached the houses of the justices who had been confined in their homes but were barred by the security personal to have contact with the justices. The vote which brought a change in the configuration of the power brokers was divided in the different parties. Total vote cast was 2 crore 71 lakh, 40 thousand and 67. Election on four seats was postponed and the ratio of the vote was as follows: PPP got the one crore 55 thousand, 491 vote and its ratio was 37%; PML(N) got 62 lakh 40 thousand, 343 vote and its ratio was 23%; PML(Q) and its allies-MQM, PPP(S), PML (F) got One crore, 8 lakh, 44 thousand, 233 vote and its ratio was 40%. If there is separate calculation for MQM then it got 25 lakh, 20 thousand 32 vote and its share was 9% and rest of the 31% go to PML(Q) and its allies. Pakistan economic condition was also very depressing in spite of the claim of the past government of PML(Q). Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves started to deplete and its graph lowered from \$16b and \$40 crore to \$14b and \$40 crore in 2007. Pakistan's trade deficit touched the figure of \$11b in 2007 and its foreign indebtedness increased to \$43b that was \$40b in the fiscal year 2006-07 (*Daily Jang* (Multan), 21st February, 2008).

In this election, another element of significance appeared in the province of NWFP (KPK) which was the appearance of PPP-Sherpao group that damaged the vote of Pakistan Peoples Party. In this province, polled valid vote was 32.69% (3383683) which had been shared all the major parties through different voting and electoral strategies. Voting strength of PPP-P (Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians) was not exceptional. It could not gain more votes than the previously polled vote in spite of having expectations that sympathetic vote of Benazir murder will be materialized in favour of it. In this province PPP-P got 9 seats and its strength of total polled vote which was around 674798 (19.94%). PPP-P had to suffer some shocks which had been caused by the PPP Sherpao. It worked as a spoiling factor for PPP-P in some of the constituencies like NA-6 Nowshera-ii, in which combined vote of PPP-P and of PPP-Sherpao was (20358+27951= 48309), but it lost seat to ANP which alone got 36835 vote. In NA-10 Mardan-ii, PPP Sherpao damaged the vote of PPP-P and it lost a seat to MMA by the more or less same margin which had been cast in favour of PPP Sherpao. PPP-P's vote was 23138 and of PPP Sherpao was 6012 which could not get the victory against MMA's candidate who got 29279 vote. Same had also

happened in NA-13 Swabi-ii, in which PPP-P's vote was 19418 and of PPP Sherpao was 10695 which could not get the victory stand in opposition to ANP's candidate who got 26603 vote. In NA-28 Buner, PPP-P's vote was 19418, and due to the PPP Sherpao's vote of 17241, it could not get the victory stand in opposition to ANP's candidate who got 26603 vote. In NA-29 Swat-I, PPP-P's vote was 12774, and due to the PPP Sherpao's vote of 9184, it could not get the victory stand in opposition to ANP's candidate who got 19850 vote. PPP Sherpao only secured 1 seat in National poll and its voting strength was 140998(4.16%) of polled vote.

The other interesting feature that emerged, was the factor of seat adjustment between ANP and PML and vice versa to maintain their influence in the constituencies which had been remained as their bastion in the previous elections. Both ANP and PML maneuvered to capture the vote with their best possible efforts to minimize the influence of PPP-P and PML-N. They tried to trounce their rivals which might have the ability to regain their voting strength in their traditional areas of influence. In NA-1, NA-2, NA-6, NA-8, NA-11, NA-12, NA-13, NA-14 and NA-16, PML remained absent or either could not fully supported its candidate and gave the benefit of her absence to ANP which secured 6 seats in these adjusted constituencies. While in the constituencies of NA-17, NA-18, NA-19, NA-20, NA-22, NA-23, NA-24, NA-25, ANP remained absent and gave her support to PML. Out of these constituencies, PML secured only 2 seats. Most of these areas in which ANP had seat adjustment with PML were non-Pukhtoon and in the previous all elections from 1988 to 2002, it remained weak in this particular area. In overall performance, PML got 538348 of polled vote which is around 15.9% and having 5 winning seats. It got its' partake in the electoral cake and showed that factions in Muslim League provided benefits to other parties. This division of vote of Muslim League caused a damage to the electoral gains to PML-N in respect to PPP-P. So both the Leagues had cut their own axis. PML-N secured only 4 seats. It polled vote was 463392 which was around 13.69% of polled vote of the province. In this province domineering influence of MMA had been deflated by the recapturing efforts of national and regional parties. MMA's monolithic appeal was seemingly less effective now as it was at the time of 2002 election. Its performance in the provincial government was not very effective. It could not bracket the rights vote in its fold, and resultantly got only 4 seats along with 14.19% polled vote(480149 vote). Elections 2008 were effective in a way that a change in governance also shifted as supremacy of civilian authority restored. Coupled with it judicial restoration movement further charged the political environment and people were mobilized for the upholding of democratic cause. Forces of conservatism were atrophied and liberal forces were right back saddled into governance.

IV. Conclusion

This analysis has represented the calculus of elections and it's underneath working considerations of people who take part in this activity in the hope for change of their lot. The concerns of people are articulated at different levels of political activities in which role of local leadership and of political parties are important. In Pakistan's politics some of the factors are beyond the capacity of political leadership to ward-off them due their intriguing role in politics for the protection of their vested interests. This aspect of personalized politics made them subservient to the forces of establishment which always took advantage of the political rivalries of parties' leadership and created among them cronies for their new political set-up. In the election 2002, military by its dominance generated a cautionary passion among the people that politics is being refined to meet the ends of peoples' welfare.

So they have to make their choice in favour of regime's supported political party PML-Q and it was emerged as majority party. Political exclusion of leadership of PML-N and of PPP helped in the gains of PML-Q. Rationality of peoples' choice is determined by their immediate concerns which are always taken up by the local leadership. They vote on the behest of local leadership and not avoid taking part in electoral activity. Demise of PPP leadership was not deterrence but it worked in contrary and converted into sympathetic factor in PPP-P victory in the election 2008. In both the elections of Pakistan people preferably voted for those political parties which were in proximity to their concerns. Their sharing of views on the integrity of leadership further led them to rivet their hopes in the functionality of the system by which they have had deliverance. They discarded those which were not popular or having no prospects of winning the office of incumbency. This reflects well the maturity of their understanding and of political culture.

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