

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC BASES OF PARTY AFFILIATION:  
A SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS**

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**Abstract**

This study explores the basis on which voters affiliate themselves with political parties in Pakistan. The study is based on primary data consisting of a sample of 929 students enrolled in Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. It uses a multinomial logistic regression model to find different socio-economic and demographic correlates of intended party support. The empirical result shows that gender, region, perceived government performance, and media exposure play important roles in the formation of political preferences towards a specific political party. Moreover, different political parties enjoy certain advantages over the competing parties such as concentrated vote banks in specific regions based on ethnicity and media coverage. Furthermore, the study also finds that PML(N) has certain advantages in media handling and projection of its performance because of vast experience in previous governments. On the other hand, PTI has an advantage in some demographic aspects and it is a preferred choice of educated, young, urban and female voters.

**JEL Classifications:** D71, D72, J11

**Key Words:** Socio-economic, demographic, political, affiliation, multinomial logistic regression

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## **1 Introduction**

Political economists have studied different socio-economic and demographic factors that determine voters' political behaviour and party affiliation. Research on this area has caught the great attention of researchers as the affiliation of voters with a specific political party has become a major issue in almost all the countries around the world. In this regard, the factors that determine voters' party affiliation include ethnicity, religiosity, socio-economic status, education level, media, electoral campaigns, the personality of the party leader, etc.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the main objective of this study is to explore the main socio-economic predictors that shape voters' political preferences and party affiliation in Pakistan. The affiliation of the voter with a specific political party is a celebrated issue across the globe. Political parties intend to mimic the voters' behaviour in their mandates and election campaigns and select popular and suitable candidates keeping in view the needs and requirements of a constituency. These measures also provide the reasons for voters' aspirations, hopes, and emotional attachment towards a particular polity. The study of party affiliation becomes particularly useful in times of elections when a tough competition between potential winners can be eased out with available statistics. People, who keenly anticipate the election outcomes to determine the winners and losers, have a fair analysis at hand to depict the chances of success and failure of political parties, and the voters' inclination towards a particular party or parties.

The study of political preferences and party affiliation becomes even more important when it is focused on a developing country like Pakistan, a country that was created through

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<sup>2</sup> For further details on the determinants of political behavior and party affiliation, see literature review in section 2.

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political struggle but afterwards became a playground between democratic and dictatorial forms of governments. Democracy is restored several times through the political movement of the public and voters. The most recent prominent movement for the restoration of free judiciary and democracy was the Lawyers' Movement, which ultimately succeeded in restoring democracy in 2008. Similarly, the political structure in Pakistan is plagued by dynasties, ethnicity, and regional politics. In this context, it is important to know what determines party support, especially among educated youth. This study is useful in the sense that it provides an idea about the correlates of political support about one year before the general elections. The analysis is based on survey data collected from the Quaid-i-Azam University's (QAU) students in Islamabad. The main advantage of the QAU campus is that it represents students from all the regions of Pakistan. The admissions in QAU are based on the regional quota system which is allocated to all the provinces and regions based on population. Thus, the sample is heterogeneous enough to represent the whole of Pakistan. The study is novel as it analyzes the correlates of party support and affiliation one year before the general election of 2018 in Pakistan. Furthermore, the study is unique as it utilizes the actual outcome of the said general elections to construct categories of the intended party support. Therefore, it helps analyze the strengths and weaknesses of major political parties and the predictors of voters' preferences for different parties and their ideologies.

The economy of Pakistan has a key role in determining socioeconomic dynamics in the region of South Asia. A deeper understanding of the roots of terrorism in this region requires an understanding of the political preferences of people in Pakistan. Here the question arises, as to what explains the political preferences and party affiliation of voters in Pakistan? Surprisingly, such an important question has been virtually ignored in the case of Pakistan.

The political preferences of voters in the case of Pakistan are fundamental for understanding the political destination of the country, which has experienced mixed forms of political regimes. The journey of democracy has been directly interrupted by dictators three times from 1947 to 2016. A deeper understanding of the mixed political regimes requires an analysis of the factors that shape the political preferences and party affiliation of the voters. To this end, in this study, we provide an empirical analysis of factors that explain the political preferences of voters. This study is useful in many ways. First, an empirical analysis of socioeconomic and other factors of party affiliation will help political parties to reshape their political agendas and performance to address the interests of the masses (voters). Second, the study is important as it explores the role of age structure in determining political affiliations. The future of Pakistan largely depends on the preferences of new voters as their share in the total population is becoming larger over time. Third, the study is useful for regional and international organizations that have a socio-economic and political interest in the region of South Asia. Fourth, the study will help political integration and treaties which are used to counter terrorism because the political economy and terrorist activities share common links.

The rest of the study is organized as follows. A literature review on the correlates of party affiliation and support is discussed in section 2, Section 3 presents the theoretical framework. Data and econometric methodology are explained in section 4. Results are explained in section 5 while the conclusion is presented in section 6.

## **2 Related Literature**

### **2.1 Theoretical Literature**

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Many studies have tried to understand the idea of voters' affiliation with one or more political parties. They have tested quite interesting hypotheses over the years that have contributed significantly to the literature. Each study has attempted to disclose one or multiple reasons to explain the inclination of a voter towards a party. These reasons are seen knitted in the social fabric of the respective polity understudy and have grown to develop the political culture of the perused countries. The causes highlighted by studies can be classified in the stratified subtitles: political factors, economic factors, and miscellaneous factors to get a clear outlay of the theoretical underpinnings studied by researchers and to understand the voters' affiliation with political parties.

The political factors affecting an individual's choice are discussed by various researchers in their works across the globe, but the most profound work is done in the USA. Saenger (1945) link political party affiliation to political awareness and propaganda which manifest an influence over the voting patterns and strong interest of an individual towards a party. Gerber *et al.* (2009) and Olsen (1976) propound that media exposure and media consumption by individuals is also seen as a significant part of the propaganda techniques to manipulate the party selection choices. In this whole picture, media emerges as an important player because every party markets its manifesto through the media to create more and more support among the masses. Investigating the impact of political information on voting behaviour by using Swedish individual survey data on preferences of both the politicians and voters, Nordin (2014) finds that informed voters are more likely to vote for politicians with similar preferences for local public services. It also concludes that informed voters do vote in line

with their policy preferences.<sup>3</sup> Ethnicity is an important factor in determining the political party affiliation of voters especially in African countries where democratic values have been nurtured based on ethnic lines and individual identification is amalgamated with the respective tribe or ethnic group (Erdmann, 2007). Other social features like clientelism, nepotism, and the attitudes and behaviour of individuals and society as a whole; endogenous policy issues like geographical location, age, and parental particularly maternal influences are also identified as important factors in determining political partisanship or inclination towards a specific political party (Gerber *et al.*, 2010; Kay, 1964; Cohen and Kapsis, 1977). Besides, the presence of social groups also contributes to the formation of individual psychological alliances with the political parties (Saenger, 1945; Hennessey, 1969; Zipp *et al.*, 1982). Even societal religious preferences have contributed to deciding voters' behaviour. Turner *et al.* (1963) and Cohen and Kapsis (1977) have explored the fascinating degree of religiosity involved in votes' preference towards a political party. Similarly, economic reasons such as socio-economic status as measured by income, education, and occupation are discussed as prime sources gaining a voter's allegiance towards a political party. Janowitz and Segal (1967), Olsen (1976), Zipp *et al.* (1982), Knoke (1973), Murphy and Morris (1961), and Segal *et al.* (1973) have thoroughly underscored the relevance of such factors for party partisanship. Even economic beliefs have played a significant role in deciding the fate of election turnout (Allen *et al.*, 2000).

## **2.2 Empirical Literature**

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<sup>3</sup>Nevertheless, there may exist problem of asymmetric information as media houses and anchors/analysts may have their own preferences for specific parties.

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Willick (1970) has studied the impact of foreign policy determination in the mandate of a political party on the choice of voters in West Germany, Britain, France, Japan, and Italy. The study finds that the differences in individuals' inclinations towards parties are based on the political parties' stances/positions for Cold War. It concludes that cleavage is found in nations where issues of social class are a source of political party conflict and differences of opinion regarding the Cold War lead to political conflicts. Similarly, Zipp *et al.* (1982) attempted to find out the reasons for less participation of the lower class in the politics of the USA and observes that programs and recruitment strategies of major political parties are important sources of lower status, and people's political disinterest and non-participation. The study also notices that an increase in the degree of contact by the candidates or political party leads to an increase in the likelihood of political participation in activities of low-status people. Similarly, high-status people remain intact with activities around them irrespective of whether they are contacted by the parties or not. The study claims that overall, lower-status people can be mobilized into political action if approached cordially by the political party representatives. Furthermore, Cohen and Kapsis (1977) analyzed the effect of religiosity, ethnicity, and parental party affiliation on party identification in the US using pooled data collected by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan in 1968, 1970, and 1972. They observe that besides political influence and social class, religious group membership also influences party affiliation. Similarly, Zipp *et al.* (1982) explored the impact of race, gender, and age on the participation of different economic classes in the political system in the US. Its key finding is that social status is a vital force in determining the voting behaviour of people. According to Saenger (1945), societal groups are more important than party platforms and are not bothered by the propaganda about political parties

in the US. Furthermore, people having little political awareness are more likely to change the parties. The attitudinal behaviour also differs across various age groups. Hennessey (1969) concludes that the attitudinal development of Italian youth for a political party can be associated with social and psychological identification processes.

While analyzing the phenomenon of social cleavage and party affiliation in West Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, Janowitz and Segal (1967) conclude that socio-economic status has a great impact on political party affiliations and differences in them could lead to polarization in the voters' behaviour. The impact of occupations and socioeconomic status (education and income) of voters on political party affiliation is also investigated by Murphy and Morris (1961). The study finds that the middle-class affiliates more with Republican Party in the US. Segal *et al.* (1973) conclude that holding the labor force entry constant, occupation mobility changes voters' partisanship in the US. A comprehensive study by Olsen (1976) analyzed three stages of party involvement. Firstly, the full scale of party activities, secondly rates of party participation and thirdly an overall process by which an individual becomes involved in party affairs. The study analyzes the roles of demographic factors, political socialization, education level, socio-economic status, communication, social participation, and civic orientation in party participation. The study concludes that the participants' age and parents' activities have some direct effects on party participation. The study also finds that people with a low level of education, low-status jobs, and low incomes are more likely to become involved in party activities. Media exposure, partisan contracts, and party identification have less significant effects on party participation, whereas participation in the association and political interest have somehow considerable effects on political affiliation. Similarly, Knoke (1973) finds that occupational mobility can



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affect political party association. Cain *et al.* (1991) examine the acquisition of partisanship by immigrants and their forthcoming generations in the US and observe that political partisanship and identification depend on how long the immigrants stay in the US. A few research studies have been carried out on political support and its correlates in the South Asian region. One such study is by Malik (1982) for India and another one is by Hasnain (2008) for Pakistan. The former observes that there is enough reason to believe that modern India is identifying itself politically active with the influence of modern lifestyle. The more an Indian is involved in modernization techniques, the more rapid will be an improvement in their political orientation. Similarly, the latter study concludes that the dearth of faith shown from politicians in service delivery to the poor, as opposed to political patronage, has significantly seeped into the political party structure of the country. It highlights the voters' behaviour to cast votes on ethnic lines, while the politicians have lost the incentive to provide public goods for all people and are prone to provide targeted benefits to their supporters only. According to Homana (2018) age is one of the key determinants of political participation as the participation ratio varied among different age groups. The low voting turnout was with the young people group, especially university students. Whereas, Pyeatt and Yanus (2018) concluded that the difference of regions within the same country and the ethnic or racial diversity affect voting in elections. Street protest, involvement in institutional policies, participation in social movements (Roth and Saunders, 2019, p. 572), and engagement in political debates are also important causes of political participation. Democracy is heavily dependent on the participation rate (Leigh, 2018, p. 7). Gender is another important dimension to understand participation as numerous studies found male voters' participation rate remained relatively higher as compared to the female {Atiyat (2017), Fitzgerald

(2013), Taft (2014), Roth and Saunders (2019)}. A study, Al-Mohammad, (2017) on Jordan evidence found the reluctance of young people, particularly university students to vote in the national and local elections.

### **2.3 The Role of Parties' Manifestoes on Voters' Preferences**

Voters can either affect or elect policies/manifestoes of the political parties. On one hand, competition for votes can move politicians from extreme right-left positions to the center to adjust their position in line with majority voters' preferences for a specific policy. On the other hand, voters cannot make a significant shift in the politicians' policy preferences as politicians tend to avoid making credible promises about future policies. These hypotheses have been empirically tested by Lee *et al.* (2004) for the US House. The study supports that voter only elect policies, that is, they do not pressurize politicians to adopt a specific policy.<sup>4</sup> Albouy (2011) tests the above two cases of voters' effect on politicians' choice for a policy through updated data and different sophisticated estimation techniques. The study finds empirical evidence in support of the second scenario, that is, voters make an insignificant impact on politicians' choice of policy; hence they can just elect policies/manifestoes. The above two studies provide the basis for the conceptual framework of our study.

### **2.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The political decision of a representative economic agent is slightly different from his/her normal choice where he/she chooses commodities to satisfy his/her wants. Selecting a political party may be a similar case to the choice of the best service provider among the

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<sup>4</sup> Bernard Cohen (2015) in his book "Press and foreign Policy" says while interviewing senior State Department employees in the 1960s "To hell with public opinion . . . We should lead, and not follow".

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available options. The service provider (political party) that can solve most of the concerns of its clients (voters) naturally becomes voters' top choice. Every political party wants to attract maximum individuals at least as voters (floating vote) though the best scenario would be to have ideological supporters (base vote) genuinely loyal to its ideology. Hence, a party works hard to have the best possible manifesto, which not only enlists core issues/problems but also their prudent solutions. In the short run (near to elections), voters can just elect a party that offers the best possible solution to their problems in its manifesto [Lee *et al.* (2004) and Albouy (2011)], whereas in the long run the parties may be compelled to revise their manifestoes in the light of emerging issues. The dependent variable in our study is the intended party support (IPS) of a potential voter for a specific party among the contesting political parties and the independent variables are some of its correlates as discussed in the next section in detail. In the light of the above literature, IPS may correlate to some socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the voters. These include household income, new voter, gender, urbanization, media exposure, perceived government performance, degree program of the respondent, and the province of residence. That is;

$$IPS = F(x_i) \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, k \quad (1.1)$$

### 3 Data and Econometric Methodology

In this section, we discuss data sources, variables construction, and econometric technique used in the empirical analysis. The data for the analysis are collected from Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), Islamabad, through a questionnaire-based survey of 929 university students selected by systematic sampling technique. For this purpose, the lists of registered

students in various semesters of different departments/programs are taken and every fifth student is interviewed to obtain information regarding his/her socio-economic and political preferences. The questionnaire is designed in such a way that it not only provides information regarding respondents and their parents' preferences but also their demography. It can be noted that the sample is not fully representative owing to the heterogeneity of voters in so many respects. Thus, our survey does not cover the preferences of all the different categories of voters. However, despite this limitation, the choice of QAU locale provides a reasonably representative sample of university-level students from all the provinces of Pakistan. Each province is well represented because of its respective quota in total seats for admissions in undergraduate and master's degree programs. The quota system in admission for different provinces enables us to collect heterogeneous information on ethnicity, social class, and exposure to media and political campaigns. Every province of Pakistan is socio-economically different from the others. They differ significantly in culture, traditions, economic development, security level, etc. Therefore, the sample is a fair representation of the whole country. Next, we discuss the variables used in the study. The dependent variable in the analysis is the intended support for any of the political parties that were supposed to participate in the 2013 elections. This information is collected through Question-9 of the questionnaire.<sup>5</sup> The question asked is, "*If you intend to vote, which party will you vote for in the 2013 General Elections?*" and the respondent had to choose among twelve available choices. Based on these responses and actual results of the 2013 general elections, the dependent variable has four categories, where Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz PML(N) is the first and base category, the second category is Pakistan People Party (PPP), the third

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<sup>5</sup> The questionnaire is available and can be provided to readers whenever demanded

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category is Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI), and the fourth category consists of the rest of the choices. Hence, our dependent variable is a categorical variable where each of the responses finally falls in one of the four choices.

The first explanatory variable is the new voter (Nvoter). Its value is equal to one if the respondent intends to vote for the first time in his/her life and zero otherwise. The second variable is the average monthly income of the respondents' household (Linc). The third variable is the gender of the head of the household which is a dummy variable where one is assigned to male and zero to female. The fourth variable is urban, and it is based on the area of residence of the household. It is equal to one if the respondent is an urban resident and zero otherwise. The fifth variable is the perceived performance of previous governments, at the federal (Fed\_Perf) or provincial (Pro\_Perf) levels. Besides these five variables, we also use three more variables to control for the impact of media, regions, and degree programs of respondents. For regions variable, there are six choices based on the district of domicile of individuals in four provinces, FATA, and federal capital Islamabad. The respondents are given four choices in the questionnaire about the degree program, but in our empirical estimation, we restrict them to three by adding the last two, i.e., Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) to one category besides the other two, undergraduate (B. S) and masters (M.Sc.). The summary statistics of the important control variables are given in Table 3.1 while the frequency distribution of the dependent variable "Intended party support" is reported in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.1: Summary Statistics**

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	Minimum	M
<b>Nvoter</b>	84%	0.36	0	

<b>Income</b>	37,000	26,500	10,000	100,000
<b>Gender</b>	0.49	0.51	0	1
<b>Urban</b>	0.40	0.67	0	1

Table 3.1 shows descriptive statistics of some important variables used in the study. Nvoters refers to the question of whether a given respondent is a new voter or not. It is found that 84 per cent of the respondents will cast their vote for the first time. The income variable is based on respondents' household income. The statistics show that the average income of respondents' households is 37 thousand while it ranges from 10,000 to 100,000. Gender is a categorical variable, and its value shows that 49 per cent of the respondents are male. Urban is another categorical variable based on the information about whether the household of a given respondent resides in an urban area or not. The statistics show that around 40 per cent of respondents' households live in urban areas.

Table 3.2 shows descriptive statistics of our dependent variable i.e., intended party support (IPS). The results demonstrate that almost half of the respondents showed their intent to support PTI in the coming elections. Others with 24 per cent has the second the greatest number of intended supports from respondents<sup>6</sup>. Likewise, 20 per cent of respondents showed their intended support for PML(N) while PPP ended up with the least support from respondents of the survey.

**Table 3.2: Frequency of Dependent Variable**

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**Intended Party Support Variable**

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<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Frequency</b>
PML(N)	181	20%	181
PPP	58	6%	239
PTI	467	50%	706

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<sup>6</sup> Here, others' mean intended support for all other political parties excluding PTI, PML(N) and PPP.

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Other	223	24%	929
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Coming to the econometric specification of the model, note that since the dependent variable is categorical, the ordinary linear regression model is not suitable. Furthermore, since the categories of choice do not have any natural order or sequence, we use a simple (unordered) multinomial logistic regression model. Assuming that there are  $J$  alternatives (categories) and the dependent variable in the multinomial logistic model is given by

$$y_j = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } y = j \\ 0 & \text{if } y \neq j \end{cases} \quad \text{where } j = 1, 2, \dots, m \quad (1.2)$$

Therefore, if the alternative  $j$  is the observed outcome and  $= 0$  otherwise. For each observation exactly one of them  $y_1, y_2, \dots, y_m$  will be equal to one. That is, if alternative  $j$  is the observed outcome, then the value of categorical variable  $y_j$  is set equal to one and the values of all the other variables  $y_k$  is set equal to zero. The multinomial density for one observation is given as:

$$f(y) = p_1^{y_1} \times \dots \times p_m^{y_m} = \prod_{j=1}^m p_j^{y_j} \quad (1.3)$$

and the probability that the observation  $i$  chooses the  $j^{\text{th}}$  alternative is given by:

$$p_{ij} = p(y_i = j) = F_j(x_i, \beta) \quad (1.4)$$

The functional form  $F_j$  should be selected so that the probabilities lie between 0 and 1 and sum over  $j$  to one. Different functional forms  $F_j$  lead to multinomial, conditional, mixed, and ordered logistic and Probit models. In this study, we have a categorical dependent variable, which has four categories, so  $j$  varies from 1 to 4. This is a generalization of the binary logistic model. The probabilities for choosing each alternative sum up to 1. This

model normalizes one set of coefficients (using it as the base model). Therefore, all other sets of coefficients are interpreted relative to this base model. So, we will have  $(J-1)$  sets of coefficients to interpret. The marginal effect of an increase of a regressor on the probability of selecting category  $j$  is given by:

$$\frac{\partial p_{ij}}{\partial x_i} = p_{ij}(\beta_j - \bar{\beta}_i) \quad (1.5)$$

Unlike the coefficients from regression of binary logistic model, in the multinomial logistic model, there would be as many marginal effects as there are categories considered.

## 5 Results and Discussion

In this section, we describe and discuss the regression results. As mentioned earlier the choice of political support cannot be described in terms of ordered choice, we carry out our analysis based on a multinomial logistic regression model. These results are presented in Tables 5.1 to 5.8. The multinomial logistic model provides estimated coefficients for all categories in comparison to a base category. The base category in our estimations is the “political preferences/support for PML(N).” In the 2008 general elections, a coalition government was formed at the federal level. Similarly, different political parties won the majority in different provinces. Thus, three out of five regions/provinces were ruled by parties different from the one that formed government at the federal level. Due to the heterogeneity of governance (different parties) at federal and provincial levels, we classified the results of the regressions based on the satisfaction of voters from the economic performance at the federal and provincial levels. That is, the respondents were asked to



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express their satisfaction level about the performances of federal and provincial governments of the incumbent party along with the political support of the incumbent party.<sup>7</sup>

### 5.1 Federal Government Performance and Voters' Preferences

We now present the results of correlates of intended party support while controlling for the federal government's performance in table 5.1. Table 5.1 reports regression results of political support given the performance of the federal government. The estimated regression coefficients only tell us about more or less the likelihood of the political support concerning the base category. Therefore, the marginal effects for each category are shown in the second block. The estimated marginal coefficient of the perceived federal government's performance is statistically significant only in the case of support for PPP. The result shows that satisfaction with the federal government's performance raises the political support for PPP by 13.5 percentage points. It also follows those the voters' perceptions about the federal government's performance does matter in the formation of political support for the incumbent party (that is PPP) but not for the other major contenders like PML(N) and PTI or smaller parties pooled in the 'others' category.

**Table 5.1: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

Variables	Coefficients			Marginal Effects		
	PPP	PTI	Others	PML(N)	PPP	PTI
<b>Nvoter</b>	-0.11	0.12	-0.16	-0.01	-0.005	0.048
	0.31	0.16	0.20	0.03	0.01	0.033
<b>Linc</b>	-0.20	0.10	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01	0.032
	0.20	0.11	0.13	0.02	0.007	0.022

<sup>7</sup>In 2008 general elections, a coalition government was formed at the federal level. Small local and nationalistic parties were in coalition with the government at both federal and provincial governance systems.

<b>Gender</b>	0.617*	0.03	0.55*	-0.04	0.018**	-0.06	0
	0.24	0.17	0.20	0.03	0.008	0.034	0
<b>Urban</b>	0.623***	0.329***	0.05	-0.05	0.016	0.065	-0
	0.33	0.18	0.21	0.03	0.011	0.036	0
<b>Fed_Perf</b>	2.166*	-0.02	0.26	-0.04	0.135*	-0.10	0
	0.34	0.19	0.23	0.03	0.023	0.037	0
<b>Constant</b>	-0.99	-0.62	-0.29				
	2.10	1.17	1.41				
Number of Obs. = 929			<b>Log Likelihood</b> -1052.64			LR chi2(18) = 89.20	
Prob> chi2 = 0.0000			Pseudo R2 = 0.0406				

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively. The marginal coefficients of the gender dummy are positive and statistically significant under the categories of political support for PPP and other (smaller) parties. This means that a male voter is more likely to vote in favour of PPP by a margin of 1.8 percentage points and favour of the smaller parties by a margin of 8.1 percentage points. Although the marginal coefficient for MPL(N) and PTI are statistically insignificant, their magnitudes are not entirely negligible. These results somewhat confirm the general perception that PTI had strong support in the female vote bank. The modern outlook of PTI and its entertaining campaigns had always attracted young and female citizens to its public meetings and processions. On the other hand, the almost similar support of female voters for the PML(N) seems somewhat surprising given that in the past this party and its variants have remained in power during the Marshall-Law regime of General Zia-Ul-Haq that had enacted controversial legislation against women. Similarly, the lack of women's support for PPP is also surprising given that this party has not only struggled hard for the rights of women but had also passed a bill for women's protection against workplace harassment. A plausible reason for the

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importance of these gender issues. The table shows that all the other variables like income, entry of new voters and rural-versus urban residence have no significant role to play in the voters' choices. Nevertheless, one can note that PTI, regarded as the party representing educated middle with a modern outlook, seems to have attracted substantial support among the youth, urban and female voters.

**5.2 Provincial Government Performance**

In addition to analyzing the role of federal government performance, we have also explored the role of provincial governments' performance in the voting decision. Table 5.2 presents these results. The intuition is that after the 2008 elections, different political parties ruled central and provincial administrations and the voting decisions may depend on the performance at provincial rather than federal level depending on the issues that the voters consider more important. All the estimated coefficients in table 5.2 are similar to those in table 5.1 except the coefficients of Pro\_Perf. In contrast to the previous result, we now find that the performance of the provincial government does affect respondents' political support. The marginal effects in Table 5.2 show that support for PPP and PML(N) is high among those respondents who are satisfied with their provincial government governance. It is positive for both PPP and base category PML(N) as both were ruling parties in their respective provinces. Similarly, it is negative and significant for PTI, as PTI had not contested the 2008 elections. The results show that satisfaction from Punjab and Sindh provincial governments tend to raise the political support of PML (N) and PPP on average by 11.6 and 2.9 percentage points respectively.

**Table 5.2: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

	Coefficients	Marginal Effects
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Variables	PPP	PTI	Others	PML(N)	PPP	PTI	O
<b>Nvoter</b>	-0.146	0.185	-0.068	-0.017	-0.013	0.057***	-0.017
	0.292	0.167	0.199	0.028	0.015	0.033	0.028
<b>Linc</b>	-0.197	0.093	-0.240***	-0.007	-0.014	0.032	-0.007
	0.196	0.112	0.135	0.019	0.01	0.022	0.019
<b>Gender</b>	0.645*	-0.023	0.559*	-0.032	0.031*	-0.081**	-0.032
	0.226	0.179	0.199	0.029	0.01	0.034	0.029
<b>Urban</b>	0.418	0.309**	0.019	-0.044	0.014	0.063***	-0.044
	0.320	0.179	0.214	0.031	0.016	0.036	0.031
<b>Pro_Perf</b>	0.002	-0.636*	-0.874*	0.116*	0.029**	-0.072**	0.116*
	0.247	0.162	0.201	0.027	0.013	0.033	0.027
<b>Constant</b>	0.197	-0.154	0.284				
	2.069	1.188	1.433				
Number of Obs. = 929			<b>Log Likelihood</b> -1066.69			LR chi2(18) = 61.09	
Prob> chi2 = 0.0000			Pseudo R2 = 0.0278				

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively.

### 5.3 Media and Party Affiliation

Besides other factors, media is also an important factor that can play a crucial role in shaping people's preferences towards different political parties in Pakistan. Since 2001, private news channels have been granted permission in Pakistan, which increased the number of TV news channels from 10 to 90 in 2013<sup>8</sup>. Besides, the regulatory authority has given substantial freedom to electronic media. It is not surprising therefore that media is now extensively used in election campaigns to gain political support from the people. Thus, our analysis also considers the role of media in the shaping of political preferences for a political party. Thus, in addition to the above results, we have also estimated the impact of media in determining

<sup>8</sup> Press information department, Ministry of Information.

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intended political support to different parties while controlling for the federal government and provincial government's performance. Tables 5.3 and 5.4 reports the results on the effect of media on intended party support.

Table 5.3 shows the role of media given the federal performance and other determinants of political behaviour. The media variable is constructed from the respondents' responses on "watching political shows and reading of newspapers." The marginal effects in Table 5.3 show that those who watch political shows and read newspapers have a relatively stronger preference for PML(N) and the marginal effect is 8.2 percentage points, which is statistically significant. On the other hand, the marginal effects of exposure to media for the other major parties PPP and PTI have been statistically insignificant and negligible in terms of magnitude, that is, 1.1 and 0.7 percentage points. It is not surprising therefore that the PML(N) has been the main beneficiary of growth and freedom of media and the gain has been at the cost of smaller political parties pooled in the "others" category. It shows that PML(N) gains more from media coverage and current affairs talk shows. Although PPP and PTI as the main opponents of PML(N) have been able to somewhat neutralize the media campaign their counter media strategies smaller parties had to bear losses due to their weak financial muscle. Besides the weak financial positions of these smaller parties, they are also large regional or very low vote share in other areas and due to their regional nature/scope, they could not afford to launch their campaigns on the mainstream media against their larger opponents.

Similar results are observed in Table 5.4 given current provincial government economic performance and other covariates of political behaviour. However, an important result of Table 5.4 is that the prevalence of media increases only the support of PML(N) by the same

magnitude as observed in Table 5.3 i.e., 8.4 percentage points while decreasing the support for small parties by 10.1%. It shows that media prevalence has a positive effect on PML(N) irrespective of its federal and provincial government performances.

**Table 5.3: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>			<i>Marginal Effects</i>			
	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>PML(N)</i>	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>
<i>Nvoter</i>	-0.112 0.307	0.114 0.164	-0.159 0.197	-0.006 0.028	-0.005 0.011	0.047 0.033	-0.037 0.026
<i>Linc</i>	-0.194 0.199	0.113 0.111	0.006 0.135	-0.013 0.019	-0.01 0.007	0.032 0.022	-0.009 0.018
<i>Gender</i>	0.619** 0.242	0.033 0.170	0.567* 0.201	-0.037 0.029	0.018** 0.008	-0.063*** 0.034	0.083* 0.025
<i>Urban</i>	0.625** 0.331	0.339*** 0.178	0.076 0.213	-0.053*** 0.032	0.015 0.011	0.065** 0.036	-0.028 0.029
<i>Fed_Perf</i>	2.164* 0.343	-0.008 0.193	0.303 0.227	-0.047 0.030	0.133* 0.023	-0.105* 0.037	0.019 0.029
<i>Media</i>	-0.093 0.535	-0.377 0.264	-0.816* 0.295	0.082** 0.037	0.011 0.015	0.007 0.049	-0.099** 0.044
<i>Constant</i>	-0.967 2.139	-0.397 1.186	0.131 1.429				
<i>Number of Obs. = 929</i>			<i>Log Likelihood -1048.42</i>		<i>LR chi2(18) = 97.63</i>		
<i>Prob &gt; chi2 = 0.0000</i>			<i>Pseudo R2 = 0.0445</i>				

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively.

**Table 5.4: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

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<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>			<i>Marginal Effects</i>			
	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>PML(N)</i>	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>
<b>Nvoter</b>	-153.000 0.293	0.181 0.168	-0.067 0.200	-0.017 0.028	-0.013 0.015	0.057*** 0.033	-0.027 0.025
<b>Linc</b>	-0.201 0.197	0.102 0.112	-0.002 0.136	-0.009 0.019	-0.014 0.009	0.032 0.022	-0.008 0.017
<b>Gender</b>	0.651* 0.227	-0.01 0.172	0.579* 0.201	-0.034 0.029	0.029* 0.009	-0.079** 0.034	0.084* 0.024
<b>Urban</b>	0.419 0.320	0.318** 0.179	0.039 0.215	-0.046 0.031	0.013 0.015	0.063*** 0.036	-0.031 0.028
<b>Pro_Perf</b>	0.003 0.249	-0.65* 0.162	-0.889* 0.202	0.117* 0.026	0.03** 0.013	-0.072** 0.033	-0.075* 0.026
<b>Media</b>	0.125 0.523	-0.44*** 0.268	-0.860* 0.301	0.084** 0.036	0.027 0.018	-0.009 0.048	-0.101** 0.043
<b>Constant</b>	0.117 2.102	0.137 1.203	0.774 1.450				
<i>Number of Obs. = 929</i>			<i>Log Likelihood -1061.66</i>		<i>LR chi2(18) = 71.15</i>		
<i>Prob&gt; chi2 = 0.0000</i>			<i>Pseudo R2 = 0.0324</i>				

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively

#### 5.4 Regions and Party Support

Leaders of political parties of Pakistan belong to different regions, which may affect the preferences of voters belonging to different regions for different parties. Nationalist parties play a significant role in the political landscape of provinces in Pakistan. Therefore, for empirical analysis, we have estimated the impact of the region on the political support of people to different parties while controlling for federal and provincial government's performance. For this purpose, we included provincial dummies in the regression. Tables 5.5

and 5.6 reports the results on the impact of region on intended party support respectively. The results in Tables 5.5 show that compared to Punjab, the marginal support of PML(N) has been lower in Sindh, KP, Baluchistan, FATA, and Islamabad by 18.3, 12.3, 12.9, 7.4 and 7.8 percentage points respectively. Thus, as expected, the results confirm that the political support of PML(N) is primarily concentrated in the province of Punjab, which makes the party much less visible in the rest of the regions of Pakistan. Similarly, the political support of PPP is limited to Sindh (11.2 percentage points higher relative to base category) where it has been ruling during the democratic regimes since the 1990s. The most interesting result is PTI. Apart from the province of Sindh, regional differences do not significantly affect the political support and preferences of PTI supporters. This result suggests that PTI is emerging as a national/federal level party and a choice for the people belonging to different cultures, ethnicities castes etc. Similar results are observed in Table 5.6 wherein we consider the performance of provincial governments as a predictor.

**Table 5.5: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>			<i>Marginal Effects</i>			
	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>PML(N)</i>	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>
<b>Nvoter</b>	-0.073	0.179	-0.036	-0.020	-0.005	0.049	-0.024
	0.329	0.170	0.205	0.029	0.009	0.034	0.027
<b>Linc</b>	0.036	0.139	0.063	-0.021	-0.002	0.027	-0.005
	0.210	0.113	0.139	0.019	0.006	0.023	0.018
<b>Gender</b>	0.417	-0.06	0.330	-0.011	0.012***	-0.058***	0.057**
	0.265	0.173	0.205	0.029	0.007	0.035	0.026
<b>Urban</b>	0.993*	0.445*	0.282	-0.078**	0.019**	0.066***	-0.007
	0.379	0.184	0.226	0.033	0.009	0.037	0.029
<b>Fed_Perf</b>	1.901*	-0.09	0.138	-0.019	0.096*	-0.087**	0.011



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	0.358	0.195	0.235	0.032	0.021	0.038	0.030
<b>Media</b>	-0.175	-0.38	-0.819*	0.081**	0.006	0.011	-0.098**
	0.555	0.265	0.302	0.037	0.013	0.048	0.044
<b>Sindh</b>	2.898*	0.995**	1.925*	-0.183*	0.112*	-0.110*	0.180*
	0.512	0.402	0.409	0.031	0.042	0.063	0.062
<b>KPK</b>	0.472	0.619**	1.243*	-0.123*	-0.005	-0.017	0.145*
	0.582	0.259	0.303	0.038	0.015	0.050	0.049
<b>Baluchistan</b>	-0.590	0.687***	1.456*	-0.129*	-0.026**	-0.035	0.190*
	1.090	0.374	0.409	0.043	0.011	0.069	0.068
<b>FATA</b>	-0.066	0.441	0.567	-0.074***	-0.011	0.042	0.044
	0.824	0.315	0.402	0.043	0.017	0.066	0.061
<b>Isb</b>	1.160**	0.342	0.701***	-0.078***	0.034	-0.026	0.070
	0.543	0.316	0.397	0.043	0.028	0.062	0.061
<b>Constant</b>	-4.015	-0.97	-1.099				
	2.320	1.215	1.487				
<i>Number of Obs. = 929</i>			<i>Log Likelihood -1009.98</i>		<i>LR chi2(18) = 174.51</i>		
<i>Prob&gt; chi2 = 0.0000</i>			<i>Pseudo R2 = 0.0795</i>				

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively.

**Table 5.6: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>			<i>Marginal Effects</i>			
	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>PML(N)</i>	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>
<b>Nvoter</b>	-0.065	0.239	0.031	-0.030	-0.008	0.058***	-0.019
	0.316	0.172	0.208	0.029	0.012	0.034	0.026
<b>Linc</b>	-0.016	0.130	0.061	-0.018	-0.004	0.026	-0.004
	0.204	0.114	0.139	0.019	0.008	0.022	0.018
<b>Gender</b>	0.448***	-0.095	0.334	-0.008	0.018**	-0.069*	0.059**
	0.243	0.175	0.208	0.029	0.008	0.035	0.026

<b>Urban</b>	0.783**	0.425**	0.244	-0.072**	0.020***	0.064***	-0.012
	0.360	0.185	0.227	0.033	0.012	0.037	0.029
<b>Pro_Perf</b>	0.170	-0.573*	-0.709*	0.099*	0.026*	-0.073**	-0.053**
	0.269	0.161	0.205	0.026	0.010	0.033	0.027
<b>Media</b>	0.095	-0.432	-0.864**	0.084	0.019	-0.002	-0.100**
	0.543	0.269	0.305	0.035	0.014	0.049	0.044
<b>Sindh</b>	3.271*	0.916**	1.847*	-0.183*	0.213*	-0.165*	0.134**
	0.491	0.402	0.428	0.029	0.057	0.059	0.058
<b>KPK</b>	0.535	0.506**	1.115*	-0.105*	-0.001	-0.026	0.133*
	0.573	0.263	0.306	0.033	0.022	0.051	0.048
<b>Baluchistan</b>	-0.262	0.533	1.274*	-0.108**	-0.027	-0.039	0.174**
	1.086	0.378	0.415	0.042	0.021	0.069	0.068
<b>FATA</b>	0.019	435.000	0.538	-0.070	-0.013	0.044	0.039
	0.811	323.000	0.410	0.043	0.025	0.066	0.059
<b>Isb</b>	1.270**	0.241	0.602	-0.068	0.061	-0.051	0.057
	0.529	0.318	0.400	0.043	0.040	0.063	0.059
<b>Constant</b>	-2.888	0.484	-0.575				
	2.228	1.235	1.510				
<i>Number of Obs. = 929</i>			<i>Log Likelihood -1018.51</i>		<i>LR chi2(18) = 157.47</i>		
<i>Prob&gt; chi2 = 0.0000</i>			<i>Pseudo R2 = 0.0718</i>				

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively.

### 5.5 Education and Party Affiliation

We have also estimated whether the education level of the respondents in the form of different degree programs, in which they are enrolled, has any effect on intended support while controlling for federal and provincial government's performance. For this purpose, we included dummies in the regression for BS/BBA., M.Sc. and M.Phil./Ph.D. Estimated results on education and intended part support are presented in Tables 5.7 and 5.8. The results show

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that there is no statistically significant effect of higher education on political preferences and support in Pakistan. In other words, political preferences are insensitive to higher education. The coefficients of the education variable are insignificant in both the regression specifications of tables 5.7 and 5.8.

**Table 5.7: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>			<i>Marginal Effects</i>			
	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>PML(N)</i>	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>
<b>Nvoter</b>	-0.038	0.167	-0.022	-0.019	-0.004	0.045	-0.021
	0.334	0.172	0.208	0.029	0.009	0.034	0.027
<b>Linc</b>	0.000	0.099	0.031	-0.014	-0.002	0.021	-0.006
	0.212	0.115	0.141	0.019	0.005	0.022	0.018
<b>Gender</b>	0.366	-0.11	0.285	-0.003	0.011	-0.063***	0.054**
	0.265	0.173	0.199	0.029	0.007	0.035	0.025
<b>Urban</b>	0.993*	0.463**	0.302	-0.081**	0.019**	0.068***	-0.006
	0.380	0.185	0.227	0.033	0.009	0.037	0.029
<b>Fed_Perf</b>	1.900*	-0.08	0.141	-0.019	0.095*	-0.085**	0.010
	0.359	0.196	0.236	0.031	0.021	0.038	0.030
<b>Media</b>	-0.139	-0.35	-0.782**	0.076**	0.007	0.011	-0.095**
	0.559	0.267	0.304	0.037	0.013	0.043	0.044
<b>BS/BBA</b>	-0.320	-0.42	-0.249	0.063	-0.001	-0.071	0.009
	0.542	0.295	0.368	0.045	0.015	0.055	0.045
<b>MSc</b>	-0.084	0.034	0.157	-0.011	-0.004	-0.008	0.023
	0.778	0.386	0.474	0.065	0.019	0.073	0.063
<b>MPhil/Phd</b>	0.690	-0.18	0.320	-0.004	0.03	-0.095	0.070
	1.059	0.615	0.689	0.103	0.053	0.112	0.101
<b>Sindh</b>	2.947*	1.027**	1.978*	-0.186*	0.113*	-0.113***	0.187*
	0.518	0.404	0.429	0.030	0.043	0.063	0.063
<b>KPK</b>	0.397	0.577**	1.186*	-0.116*	-0.006	-0.018	0.140*
	0.594	0.262	0.307	0.032	0.015	0.051	0.049
<b>Baluchistan</b>	-0.587	0.727***	1.485*	-0.133*	-0.026**	-0.031	0.190*
	1.095	0.375	0.410	0.037	0.011	0.069	0.069
<b>FATA</b>	-0.077	0.432	0.569	-0.073***	-0.012	0.039	0.045
	0.826	0.316	0.402	0.043	0.017	0.066	0.061
<b>Islamabad</b>	1.172**	0.327	0.708***	-0.077***	0.035	-0.031	0.073
	0.547	0.317	0.398	0.042	0.028	0.063	0.061
<b>Constant</b>	-343.000	-0.23	-0.629				
	2.388	1.291	1.578				

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<i>Number of Obs.</i> = 929	<i>Log Likelihood</i> -1007.02	<i>LR chi2(18)</i> = 180.44
<i>Prob &gt; chi2</i> = 0.0000	<i>Pseudo R2</i> = 0.0822	

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively

**Table 5.8: Multinomial Logit Regressions (Base Category PML(N))**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>			<i>Marginal Effects</i>			
	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>PML(N)</i>	<i>PPP</i>	<i>PTI</i>	<i>Others</i>
<b>Nvoter</b>	-0.025	0.224	0.040	-0.029	-0.006	0.052	-0.017
	0.320	0.174	0.211	0.029	0.012	0.034	0.027
<b>Linc</b>	-0.041	0.092	0.031	-0.012	-0.004	0.020	-0.004
	0.206	0.116	0.142	0.019	0.007	0.023	0.018
<b>Gender</b>	0.403***	-0.14	0.289	0.000	0.017**	-0.074**	0.057**
	0.242	0.176	0.206	0.029	0.008	0.036	0.026
<b>Urban</b>	0.799**	0.442**	0.263	-0.075*	0.019	0.066***	-0.010
	0.362	0.187	0.228	0.033	0.012	0.037	0.030
<b>Pro_Perf</b>	0.171	-0.58*	-0.708*	0.099*	0.026*	-0.073**	-0.053***
	0.269	0.161	0.228	0.026	0.010	0.033	0.030
<b>Media</b>	0.128	-0.41	-0.832*	0.080**	0.019	-0.002	-0.097**
	0.545	0.270	0.307	0.036	0.014	0.049	0.044
<b>BS/BBA</b>	-0.143	-0.42	-0.220	0.059	0.006	-0.078	0.012
	0.531	0.296	0.371	0.045	0.018	0.055	0.044
<b>MSc</b>	0.089	0.069	0.219	-0.019	0.000	-0.009	0.028
	0.775	0.389	0.478	0.063	0.029	0.073	0.063
<b>MPhil/Phd</b>	0.997	-0.26	0.239	0.000	0.071	-0.123	0.052
	1.023	0.618	0.691	0.103	0.089	0.111	0.096
<b>Sindh</b>	3.341*	0.954**	1.903*	-0.186*	0.216*	-0.168*	0.138**
	0.495	0.405	0.430	0.028	0.058	0.059	0.059
<b>KPK</b>	0.449	0.464***	1.060*	-0.099*	-0.003	-0.027	0.129*
	0.586	0.267	0.311	0.034	0.021	0.510	0.049
<b>Baluchistan</b>	-0.291	0.579	1.310*	-0.113*	-0.028	-0.034	0.175*
	1.090	0.379	0.410	0.041	0.020	0.069	0.068
<b>FATA</b>	0.034	0.422	0.535	-0.069	-0.120	0.041	0.040
	0.813	0.323	0.410	0.043	0.025	0.066	0.060

<b>Islamabad</b>	1.299**	0.230	0.615	-0.067	0.063	-0.056	0.060
	0.532	0.320	0.401	0.043	0.041	0.063	0.059
<b>Constant</b>	-2.602	0.249	-0.149				
	2.320	1.306	1.598				
<i>Number of Obs.</i> = 929			<i>Log Likelihood</i> -1015.13		<i>LR chi2(18)</i> = 164.21		
<i>Prob&gt; chi2</i> = 0.0000			<i>Pseudo R2</i> = 0.0748				

Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that the parameters are significant at the 1%, 5% or 10% level of significance respectively.

## 6 Conclusion

In the light of the above discussion, we may conclude that gender, region, government performance, and media do play an important role in the formation of political preferences towards a political party. One of the key factors is performance matter and this aspect needs to be brought up-front in political debates. Political parties need to learn that they can be successful by showing good performance. After the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan where many ministries and departments which directly affect the lives of ordinary citizens have been devolved to provinces. The performance of the provincial governments by their representatives must play a major role in determining the local infrastructure of the localities such as schools, hospitals, public parks, provision of safe drinking water, cleanliness, etc. The living style of the people at the local level is more concerned with provincial government performance. That is why voters give more weight to performance at the provincial level than to the performance at the federal level. Performance is an area where PML(N) is having an advantage over the rest of the parties. Its world view of development is based on the construction of physical infrastructure, preferably the construction of motorways, roads, flyovers, underpasses, etc. Most of its performance is

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visible which is reflected through physical infrastructure and on top of that its prudent and timely advertisements make it a salient feature and selling point for PML(N).

PTI's concept of development is quite different from PML(N) as the former puts more emphasis on human capital development than physical capital. It could be a plausible reason/explanation for the popularity of PTI in youth and an attraction for new voters at large. Other strongholds of PTI are its popularity in the female segment population as compared to its political rivals and its support in the urban middle class, having internet access and being most active on social media websites like *Twitter* and *Facebook*. Moreover, different political parties enjoy certain advantages over the competing parties. PML(N) is having an advantage in media management because of its vast experience and allocation of relatively large financial resources for media campaigns and advertisements. It not only runs huge media campaigns in terms of advertisements worth billions of rupees but also be able to influence the intended support of the people because of huge experience of media management through different strategies. Parties in power should not be allowed to use public money for their private gains. A few of the possible suggestions to mitigate this undue advantage can be to put an upper limit not only on expenditure but also the time allocation on the campaign by political parties. Another policy recommendation can be that the ruling parties should not be allowed to spend public money for advertising their achievements like *Kisaan* (Farmers) Package, Benazir Income Support Program, etc. All political parties irrespective of their size should be given equal time on Pakistan Television (PTV). Such policies will give smaller and newer parties realistic and fair opportunities to enter into politics.

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