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Illegal Measures Influencing Voting Behavior in Traditional Communities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa District Dir Upper

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Abstract: *The present study aimed to probe the illegal measures influencing voting behavior (VB) in traditional communities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan. To obtain study objectives, a sample size of 317 respondents (212 males and 105 females) were picked from 12 randomly selected villages belonging to 06 selected union councils (UC) of 06 tehsils in District Upper Dir, KP. A conceptual framework comprised of illegal measures (independent variable) and voting behavior (dependent variable). Data was collected through a pre-tested interview schedule; chi-square and Fisher exact tests were applied to get the results. Based on chi-square test statistics, the association between VB and illegal measures attributes was found significant as dismantled as the use of legal and illegal means in an election ($P=0.026$); made wealth especially ($P=0.008$); converted the overall politics into money politics ($P=0.007$); to coax poor voters deny their role in the decision-making process ($P=0.037$) respectively. At the multivariate level, results dismantled the associations between illegal measures, and VB was non-spurious for both males and females (while controlling the gender of the respondents). Corrupt electoral practices, raising campaign funds by making promises of illegal benefits, provoking agents of influencing VB negatively in order to conduct elections in a very free and fair manner, effective policies along with the implementation of court verdicts along with some moral values in the code of conduct against illegal measures are the needs of the day in light of the present study.*

Key Words: Illegal Measures, Voting Behavior, Gender, Chi-square, Multivariate

Introduction

Elections are the principal instruments that force or encourage policy-makers to pay attention to citizens while making social policies (Powell, 2000). Election is an essential and integral political phenomenon that influences voting behavior both in long and short terms. Voting behavior in this regard is also one of the key concepts in democratic countries. This, in fact, determines why electorates vote and how they make their voting decisions during elections. Sociologists mainly focus on socio-economic issues such as support for political parties, ethnic background, gender equality, and connection between classes, age, and voting process (Lednum, 2006). Voting is the most common and effective system in politics, where voters have the opportunity to participate in the electoral process for the support of the candidates they like (Sides et al., 2011). The “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” calls voting one of the fundamental rights of all persons who are at least eighteen or more than eighteen years of age (HRCP, 2008).

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan has a multi-political party system, where several political parties contest elections against each other at general and local levels. The general elections in Pakistan since 1970 have been held in specific settings and situations. For this purpose, different electoral campaigns were planned, but one way or the other, they lacked the true spirit of democracy and the dominance of citizens in society. The major factors that influenced the political process included military role, rigging,

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government intervention, massive usage of money, other illegal measures, political monopolies of a few families, pressure groups, and political parties (Election Commission of Pakistan, 2007). The military interference since independence directly affected the progress and political environment in the country as a whole. Persistent amendments in the electoral process have been some other factors influencing the voting behavior of the masses (Gallup Pakistan, 2008).

Influencing voters through illegal means has been a common phenomenon in democratic politics. The trend of vote purchasing and selling has always been a general expression in elections, where politicians are blamed for influencing the electoral results in their favor (Kitschelt & Wilkinson, 2007). Money politics is a term in the electoral process where competitors try to get the desired results through the use of money. For that, they involve their agents to influence the voters according to their desired electoral results (Ovwasa, 2013). Political parties generally give tickets to those candidates and agents who have the capability to get votes through any means and source (Stokes et al., 2013). This made money a central point in the electoral process in Nigeria and many countries of Africa, and consequently, money in politics converted politics into money politics. Such illegal measures are also common in many countries of the world, where incompetent people get key elected positions (Davies, 2006; Ovwasa, 2014). The present study has been carried out under the umbrella of the following objectives;

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the influence of illegal measures on voting behavior.
2. To measure the association between illegal measures and voting behavior.

Methods

A cross-sectional study was carried out in the district of Upper Dir, KP, Pakistan. Being the major area, Upper Dir has a number of characteristics and features regarding voting behavior. It is one of the regions of KP which is traditional in many ways, particularly in connection with voting behavior. The topography of the district, the following of *Pakhtunwali* (unwritten codes of life), and deep religious connection make a strong impact on voting behavior in the study area. A very large majority of the people belong to a single tribe, namely Yousaf Zai, followed by Maliks, Khans, Sahaibzadas, Gujars, Mians, Vardaghs, Roghanies, sheiks katanies etc. Biradarim and dynastic politics were also common features of the area. Religion, political socialization, and the existence of political parties also play important roles (Khan Y et al., 2018a; 2018b). District Upper Dir consisted of 120228 households. It comprised six (06) tehsils, namely, Dir, Wari, Barawal, Sheringal, Kalkot, and Larjam, with a total number of thirty-two (32) union councils (GOP, 2018). Presently, the political leadership belongs to all the tehsils in the district. In order to get the overall picture of the community's perception of VB, one union council from every tehsil was selected randomly. Union councils named Qulandai, Kotkay, Sundrawal, Sawnai, Doog Dara, and Bibyaware, respectively. Furthermore, two villages each selected randomly from each of the sampled union councils to get the community's perception of voting behavior at the village level. For more detail, see Table (1), which describes the total households and sample size as well. A sample size of 317 Households was selected based on Sekeran's (2003) criteria. Furthermore, the sample size is proportionally allocated to each union council and respective villages. (See table 1). Data was collected from both genders; however, due to the prevalence of sociocultural norms, females were first briefed, and the data was collected from female respondents. In addition, a conceptual framework was devised, as shown in Table 2.

Table 1

Proportional allocation of sample size in various villages of selected UCs in the study area

S. No	Tehsil	UC	Villages within UC	Households	Sample size
1	Dir	Qulandai	Panakot Payeen	134	24
			Nargah	90	16
2	Wari	Kotkay	Mira No. 1	134	24
			Kasono	98	17
3	Barawal	Sundrawal	Tanai	105	18
			Topikarkot	194	34



S. No	Tehsil	UC	Villages within UC	Households	Sample size
4	Sheringal	Sawnai	Achar payeen	279	49
			Jatkool	103	18
5	Kalkot	Doog Dara	Batawar	114	20
			Pitaw Kateer	152	27
6	Larjam	Bibyawar	A look Nar	273	48
			Loi BABA	127	22
Total				1803	317

Source: (Bureau of Statistics Pakistan, 2018)

Likert Scale

Likert scale method was applied, which measured various variables of the research study. It is a method used to collect data about the attitudes and perceptions of the respondents (Nachmias and David, 1992). For the present study, a number of statements with reference to dependent and independent variables had been designed on the basis of a literature review, discussion with the community members, experts, and personal experience of the researcher. A three-scale measurement level, i.e., Yes, No, and Uncertain, was adopted with an allocation of a score for each of the responses to the statement (P.V. Young, 1988).

Table 2

Conceptual framework of the study

Control variable	Independent variables	Dependent variable
Gender	Illegal Measures	Voting Behavior

Data Analysis

The dependent variable was indexed and cross-tabulated with the independent variable through the application of chi-square test statistics as outlined by Tai (1978), as well as Fisher exact test was applied (used when the frequencies in the contingency table were less than 05). In addition, multivariate analysis was assumed to examine whether the variation in VB caused by the independent variable (illegal measures) is described by the control variable or not. The independent variables that were found fit for indexation on Cornbrash's alpha coefficient criteria were indexed and cross-tabulated at a multivariate level while controlling the gender of the respondents. The frequency distribution and percentages obtained from the cross-tabulation were given across the independent variables and compared to the dependent variable. For the measurement of the association between variables, the Chi-Square test was applied.

Results and Discussions

Socio-economic Characteristics of the Universe

Table 3 relates the tehsil, union council, and village-wise distribution of the sampled respondents, which reports that 12.6 percent of the sampled respondents belonged to tehsil *Dir*, union council *Qulandai*, whereas 7.6 percent belonged to village *Panakot* and 5.0 percent respondents belonged to village *Nargah*. Another 12.9 percent of the sampled respondents were the residents of tehsil *Wari*, Union Council *Kotkay*. Among the sampled respondents, 7.6 percent were from village *Mira No. 01*, and 5.4 percent were from *Kasono*. This table further explores that 16.4 percent of the sampled respondents were dwellers of tehsil *Barawal*, union council *Sundrawal*, whereas 5.7 percent were from village *Tanai* and 10.5 percent were from village *Topikarkot*. Table 3 also indicates that 21.1 percent of the sampled respondents were the inhabitants of tehsil *Sheringal*, Union Council *Sawnai*, 15.5 percent were from village *Achar Payeen* and 5.7 were from village *Jatkool*. Tehsil *Kalkot*, Union Council *Doog Dara* had 14.8 percent sampled respondents. Among them, 6.3 percent were from the village of *Batawar*, and 8.5 percent were from the village of *Pitaw Kateer*. The table also reveals that 22.1 percent of sampled respondents were living in tehsil *Larjam*, Union Council *Bibyawar*. Among them, 15.1 percent were living in the village of *Amloknar*, and 6.9 percent were living in the village of *Loi BABA*.

The table as a whole represents the diverse picture of the selected research area. Where majority of the respondents belonged to villages Amlook Nar and Loi BABA, union council Bibyawar included in tehsil Larjam.

Table 3

Tehsil, union council, and village-wise distribution of the sampled respondents

S. NO	Socioeconomic Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage %
1.	Name of tehsil	Name of union council in each tehsil		
	Dir	Qulandai	40	12.6
	Wari	Kotkay	41	12.9
	Barawal	Sundrawal	52	16.4
	Sheringal	Sawnai	67	21.1
	Kalkot	Doog Dara	47	14.8
	Larjam	Bibyawar	70	22.1
	Total		317	100.0
2.	Name of union council	Name of two (02) villages in each union council		
	Qulandai	Panakot Payeen	24	7.6
		Nargah	16	5.0
	Kotkay	Mira No.1	24	7.6
		Kasono	17	5.4
	Sundrawal	Tanai	18	5.7
		Topikarkot	34	10.7
	Sawnai	Achar payeen	49	15.5
		Jatkool	18	5.7
	Doog Dara	Batawar	20	6.3
		Pitaw Kateer	27	8.5
	Bibyawar	Amlook Nar	48	15.1
		Loi BABA	22	6.9
	Total		317	100.0

Association between Dependent and Independent Variable

The voting behavior and electoral decisions are greatly influenced by illegal measures or illegal interference. Vote buying, vote selling, election manipulation, election fraud, and vote rigging are common practices in electoral politics. These factors suffer the spirit of free, fair, and transparent elections and, consequently, lead to the violation of the principles of democracy.

Table 4 disclosed a significant association between voting behavior and a statement that influencing voting behavior through illegal means is a common practice in the electoral process (P=0.031). Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007) in this regard stated that influencing voters and getting votes through illegal means has been a common phenomenon. The trend of vote buying and selling has always been a general expression in elections, where politicians are blamed for influencing the voting behavior in their favor. Table again shows a significant association between voting behavior and a statement that some candidates of political parties try to convince the voters by using all legal and illegal means in your area (P=0.026). Leary (1962) described that in Victorian Britain, political candidates used a lot of resources to influence voters through bribing, giving foodstuff and drinking materials, and making an entertaining environment for them with the help of party agents and workers.

Consistent with the above, a significant association was found again between voting behavior and a statement that money is counted as the central point of influencing voting behavior in many constituencies (P=0.008). Lacey (2002), in this regard, described that during elections in Kenya, the use of money is a very common practice. In an interview with a New York Times correspondent before the elections of 2002, one voter stated: “I was stopped by A NARC agent at a bus stop and asked me who I was voting for. When I told him about KANU, he presented me 500 shillings, which is equal to about 6 U.S. dollars for my vote.” One more Kenyan voter told his vote-buying story before Election Day: “A man came to me in Naivasha at



a bar and questioned me what party I am from. He said he was the agent KANU and would buy my vote for 700 shillings.

In addition, a significant association was found with a statement that the regular use of money for influencing voting choices converted overall politics into money politics ($P=0.007$). Similarly, Davies (2006) described that many political parties and their candidates make logical political choices, worthless political slogans, and demagogic and troublemaking political speeches. All those underestimate or overestimate the political opinion, perception, and awareness of the voters. It generates political distrust in voters about politics as fraud with the public. Political candidates and their parties spend money to organize and mobilize voters for their support, and many of the voters sell their votes to bidders who pay the highest money. The table further identifies a significant association with another statement that the use of illegal measures in politics influences free, fair, and transparent elections ($P=0.009$). This has been verified by Vicente (2014), who argued that nowadays, the bourgeois of the state try to get control of key elected positions. Hence, politicians and their agents try to take control of the national setup and, in turn, confidently make a decision about who becomes what, when, and how. The use of money plays a vital role in this type of political phenomenon in several countries of Africa and Nigeria specifically. The study further reports that the use of money plays a basic role in both the political and electoral processes. The use of money in the electoral process stigmatized the free, fair, and transparent elections. In the Philippines, vote-buying is a common trend, with almost each and every candidate involved in this practice, from the level of council to the level of Congress candidates.

Likewise, a significant association was further found between voting behavior and a statement that due to the use of illegal means in elections, the dream of the right man for the right job has not been achieved ($P=0.007$). These results are endorsed by Saliu and Lipade (2008), who stated that it is quite unfortunate that we have money-based politics and vote-purchasing in Nigeria. Most persons with sufficient political understanding are continuously deprived of the opportunities to take part and compete in elections because there is always a leading position of money and other material inspirations. They further noted that a huge part of the population is disconnected from political processes and practices due to several established social, cultural, and economic restrictions. For example, the stress on specialized education and achievement of assets and properties clearly places the elite class in higher status to control and influence the majority of the voters in the political environment. The table further indicates a significant association between voting behavior and the statement that poor voters are usually targeted through illegal measures during the electoral process ($P=0.019$). Stokes (2004) found that political candidates use illegal means for vote buying in Argentina, where the poor and low-income people are targeted by giving them material gifts and cash to increase their vote bank. Kramon (2009) similarly found that in Kenya, low-income voters are easily targeted by politicians to influence and mobilize them by giving money and material gifts.

Table (4) dismantled a significant association between voting behavior and the illegal measures leading toward immoral situations in the electoral process ($P=0.031$). The same is found by Milbrath (1965), who stated that political candidates with rich economic incomes enter into public offices, and hence, the dishonest and immoral exercise of money is used to buy votes. In addition, a significant association was found between a dependent variable (voting behavior) and a statement that due to the use of illegal measures, the majority of the poor, proficient voters cannot become part of the policy-making process ($P=0.037$). Findings are supported by Stokes et al. (2004), who stated that vote buying deprived the poor people of becoming part of the policy-making process. Selling and purchasing votes surrender the struggle, talent, and capabilities of both voters and political parties, especially their plans and strategies to benefit people.

Table 4
Association between illegal measures and voting behavior

Statement	Voting behavior			Total	Chi-square P= value
	Yes	No	Uncertain		
Influencing voting behavior through illegal means is a common practice in the electoral process.					
Yes	193 (60.9%)	64 (20.2%)	13 (4.1%)	270 (85.2%)	

Statement	Voting behavior			Total	Chi-square P= value
	Yes	No	Uncertain		
Influencing voting behavior through illegal means is a common practice in the electoral process.					
No	32 (10.1%)	9 (2.8%)	2 (0.6%)	43 (13.6%)	$\chi^2 = 10.636$ (0.031)
Uncertain	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.9%)	1 (0.3%)	4 (1.3%)	
Some candidates of political parties try to convince the voters by using all legal and illegal means in your area.					
Yes	199 (62.8%)	58 (18.3%)	12 (3.8%)	269 (84.9%)	$\chi^2 = 11.043$ (0.026)
No	23 (9.1%)	18 (5.4%)	4 (0.6%)	45 (15.1%)	
Uncertain	3 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.9%)	
Money is counted as the central point of influencing voting behavior in many constituencies.					
Yes	198 (62.5%)	55 (17.4%)	11 (3.5%)	264 (83.3%)	$\chi^2 = 13.839$ (0.008)
No	25 (7.9%)	19 (6.0%)	4 (1.3%)	48 (15.1%)	
Uncertain	2 (0.6%)	2 (0.6%)	1 (0.3%)	5 (1.6%)	
The regular use of money for influencing voting choices converted overall politics into money politics.					
Yes	196 (61.8%)	55 (17.4%)	12 (3.8%)	263 (83.0%)	$\chi^2 = 13.992$ (0.007)
No	25 (7.9%)	21 (6.6%)	4 (1.3%)	50 (15.8%)	
Uncertain	4 (1.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.3%)	
The use of illegal measures in politics badly influences free, fair, and transparent elections.					
Yes	205 (64.7%)	64 (20.2%)	10 (3.2%)	279 (88.0%)	$\chi^2 = 13.499$ (0.009)
No	15 (4.7%)	10 (3.2%)	5 (1.6%)	30 (9.5%)	
Uncertain	5 (1.6%)	2 (0.6%)	1 (0.3%)	8 (2.5%)	

Multivariate Analysis

Association between Illegal Measures and Voting Behavior (Controlling Gender of the Respondents)

Results pertaining to the study variables, table 5 reveals perception regarding males where a highly significant association was found between illegal measures and voting behavior (P=0.000) and a significant association of illegal measures with voting behavior (P=0.092) regarding females. Based on the above associations, the relationship between illegal measures and voting behavior was non-spurious for both males and females. According to Kramon (2009), most political parties, their candidates, and agents distribute gifts and aid among voters to purchase their votes and try their level best to increase political strength in the electoral process.

Table 5

Association between illegal measures and voting behavior (controlling gender)

Gender	Independent variable	Dependent variable			Statistics Chi-Square (P-Value)
		Voting behavior			
	Illegal measures	Yes	No	Total	
Male	Yes	143 (75.7%)	46 (24.3%)	189 (100.0%)	$\chi^2 = 13.485$ (0.000)
	No	9 (39.1%)	14 (60.9%)	23 (100.0%)	
Female	Yes	59 (73.8%)	21 (26.3%)	80 (100.0%)	$\chi^2 = 2.832$ (0.092)
	No	14 (56.0%)	11 (44.0%)	100.0%	

Conclusion and Recommendations

VB has always been a major concern of the people in democratic societies. It becomes more important when one observes it in traditional societies and communities where democratic norms have been introduced recently. The real purpose of the existing research study was to explore the perceptions of the people about illegal measures influencing voting behavior in District Dir upper KP. The study concludes with uni-variate, bi-variate, and multi-variate level findings. In the universe of the study, a large number of the sampled respondents belonged to the union council Bibyawar of tehsil Larjam, with mainly male respondents due



to the socio-cultural impediments. The study concluded that corrupt electoral practices, raising campaign funds by making promises of illegal benefits, provoking agents to influence VB negatively. To foster credible elections, corrupt electoral practices include the sale and purchase of votes; raising campaign funds by making promises of illegal benefits should strongly be discouraged. To create, maintain, and promote credible elections, effective policies should be formulated and implemented against the illegal means used in the electoral process and implementing court verdicts of cancellation of election results, wherever evidence of the use of illegal measures in the voting process are recognized although it is not an easy to control unfair voting practices by law, there may be some moral values in code of conduct. Such values may be developed for electoral officials, political parties, and election observers, and therefore, all undemocratic and unfair means like manipulating and rigging need to be avoided.

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