

**Media, Education and Voting Behaviour: A Comparative Study  
of Communication Channels' Impact on Voters having  
Elementary, Secondary and Higher Education in Punjab,  
Pakistan**

Muhammad Shabbir Sarwar\*, Waqar Ul Haq\*\*, Mudassir Mukhtar\*\*\*, and  
Khuram Shahzad\*\*\*\*

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**Abstract**

This study examines the relationship between education, media and voting behaviour with special focus on elementary education. The quantitative research method of survey (n=1704) was applied to gather data using multi-stage cluster sampling technique from the registered voters in all 10 divisions of Punjab province. Factor analysis and logistic regression were performed for data analysis. The study results revealed that there was a significant association between education and voting behaviour as  $\chi^2(8) = 54.631, p < .0005$ . Similarly, the strength of association, the value of Cramer's V = 0.191 was also significant. Moreover, the respondents having the master's degree or higher education were more likely to cast vote with a proportion of 88.1% as compared to the voters having elementary and secondary education. Furthermore, the voters having elementary education were influenced more from the interpersonal communication as compared to the voters having higher education. The study recommends that the government must focus on education in general and the elementary education in particular for establishing true democratic norms in the country. It is recommended that awareness on democracy and political participation especially importance of vote casting should be included in the curricula of elementary education.

**Keywords:** Voters education, democracy, Pakistan general elections, Punjab, voting behaviour, elementary education, communication channels

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\*Assistant Professor, Institute of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Pakistan  
Email: drsarwar@ymail.com

\*\*Assistant Professor, Institute of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Pakistan

\*\*\*Assistant Professor at the Department of Mass Communication, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan

\*\*\*\*Public Relations Officer, PR Department, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan

## 1. Background and Introduction

Education and democracy have strong relationship as the countries where literacy rate is higher are experiencing better democracies because people exercise their right to vote in selecting able leadership. Across countries, education multiplies the benefits of civic engagement and political participation raising the required support for democracy. Education also increases the likelihood of democratic revolutions against dictatorial regimes (Glaeser, Ponzetto, & Shleifer, 2007).

Education promotes democracy in two ways as it enables a “culture of democracy” and it leads to greater prosperity, which ultimately brings political development. This argument is supported by the Modernization Theory, popularized by Seymour Martin Lipset (1959), which emphasizes the role of education as well as economic growth in promoting political development in general and democracy in particular (Acemoglu, Johnson, Robinson & Yared 2005).

According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan (2019), our country has the lowest literacy in the whole and more importantly only 68 percent student remain able to complete their elementary education. Although the literacy rate of Punjab province increased from 61.9% to 64.7% but due to COVID 19 it is expected to decrease in 2020.

Rule (2014) said that voting behaviours were certain actions of the citizens regarding participation in local, regional and national elections, while counting their voting behaviour either in support of parties or candidates or not voting and remaining away for the election process as an effect to the quality of their life in the form of good and bad choices as per their perceptions. However, Zaller (1992) said that people adopt certain behaviour or attitude on the basis of the information and ideas they are exposed to.

Media is an important mediator which along education complements the process of political participation educate the citizens regarding their vote decisions. In 2013 there were 121 TV channels including six state owned PTV channels, 89 private channels and 26 foreign TV channels with landing rights; 138 commercial FM radio channels; 64 Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) stations, and 34 PBC-owned FM channels. In print media there are over 500 dailies and over 800 periodicals out of which 10 are largely circulated daily newspapers, while according to ABC and the Press Information Department there are 1500 regular dailies (PEMRA & APNS, 2016).

According to the Gallup Pakistan (2017) estimated number of TV viewers aged 10 and above reached to 86 million in 2009 from 63 million in 2004. In 2008 overall 79% men and 75% women used to watch TV, while this was 37% and 21% for radio, 42% and 13% for newspaper and 7% and 1% for Internet. In the year 2008 number of television sets were 3,100,000 whereas radio sets were 13,500,000 (Sarwar, 2018).

The main objective of this research was to analyse the relationship between media, education and voting behaviour of the registered voters of Punjab, Pakistan.

### 1.1. Research Questions

Following Research Questions guided this paper:

RQ1: Whether there is any relationship between Education, Media and voting behaviours in Punjab, Pakistan

RQ2: How media and other communication channels impacted voters having elementary education during General Election 2013

### 2. Method

This is a quantitative survey research and data was collected through a purpose built questionnaire comprised of 42 items from the 18 districts representing all 10 divisions of the largest populated Punjab province of Pakistan within two months after General Election 2013. According to the National Census of Pakistan 2017, the Punjab province's population was 110 million (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017). The Election Commission of Pakistan had registered 4,99,27,112 voters in General Election 2013 (57% of Pakistan's total votes) in the province out of which 28,064,284 (56.21%) were male and 21,862,830 (43.78%) were female (ECP, 2013).

Multistage cluster sampling technique was applied to collect data from respondents (n= 1704), the registered voters belonging to 18 districts of the province. Since the core idea this study was to measure impact of education and communication channels on voting behaviour of people in Punjab, the media and communication channels were operationally defined as:

- I. Electronic Media (EM): Television news channels, radio and Internet
- II. Print Media (PM): Newspapers and magazines
- III. Interpersonal Communication (IPC): Voters communication with their family members, friends, community fellows, political workers and candidates was termed as Interpersonal Communication
- IV. Outdoor Media (ODM): Election campaign through posters, banners, hoardings, pamphlets and advertisements on vehicles.

### 3. Data Analysis and Discussion

By using the technique of factor analysis the data was compressed to draw factors merging related variables. Factor comprised electronic media, print media, interpersonal communication and outdoor media. Later, logistic regression was performed to get the

study results. Also, chi-square tests were applied to measure the significance of association or impact.

**Table 1**  
*Crosstab Education \* Voting*

		Voting		Total	
		No	Yes		
Education	Uneducated	Count	39	143	182
		% within Education	21.4%	78.6%	100.0%
	Madrassa Edu.	Count	33	37	70
		% within Education	47.1%	52.9%	100.0%
	Professional Certificate	Count	3	22	25
		% within Education	12.0%	88.0%	100.0%
	Elementary Education	Count	12	51	63
		% within Education	19.0%	81.0%	100.0%
	Middle (Secondary)	Count	24	103	127
		% within Education	18.9%	81.1%	100.0%
	Matriculation	Count	50	189	239
		% within Education	20.9%	79.1%	100.0%
	Intermediate	Count	82	202	284
		% within Education	28.9%	71.1%	100.0%
	Graduation	Count	51	261	312
		% within Education	16.3%	83.7%	100.0%
	Masters or Higher	Count	23	171	194
		% within Education	11.9%	88.1%	100.0%
	Total	Count	317	1179	1496
% within Education		21.2%	78.8%	100.0%	

**Table 2**  
*Chi-Square Tests*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	54.631 <sup>a</sup>	8	.000
Likelihood Ratio	50.795	8	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.800	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	1496		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.30.

**Table 3**  
*Symmetric Measures*

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.191	.000
	Cramer's V	.191	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.188	.000
N of Valid Cases		1496	

This table depicted that there was a significant association between education and voting behavior as  $\chi^2(8) = 54.631, p < .0005$ . Similarly, the strength of association, the value of Cramer's V = 0.191 which was also significant. Moreover, the Masters or higher education respondents were more likely to cast vote with a proportion of 88.1%.

**Table 4**  
*Education and Impact of Communication channels on Voting (Variables in the Equation)*

Education		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	
Uneducated	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	EM_Mean_.	.042	.413	.010	1	.919	1.043
		IPC_Mean_.	1.736	.357	23.576	1	.000	5.673
		OM_Mean_.	-.561	.288	3.785	1	.052	.571
		PM_Mean_.	-.908	.356	6.523	1	.011	.403
		Constant	.712	1.368	.271	1	.603	2.038
Madrasa Education	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	EM_Mean_.	-2.527	.823	9.421	1	.002	.080
		IPC_Mean_.	.262	.354	.548	1	.459	1.300
		OM_Mean_.	.065	.313	.044	1	.835	1.068
		PM_Mean_.	.832	.421	3.913	1	.048	2.299
		Constant	5.080	2.555	3.955	1	.047	160.798
Professional Certificate	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	EM_Mean_.	-2.793	1.953	2.045	1	.153	.061
		IPC_Mean_.	3.119	3.360	.862	1	.353	22.63
		OM_Mean_.	-3.073	2.741	1.257	1	.262	.046
		PM_Mean_.	-.132	1.025	.017	1	.898	.877
		Constant	11.048	6.676	2.739	1	.098	62845.61
Elementary Education	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	EM_Mean_.	-.359	.596	.364	1	.546	.698
		IPC_Mean_.	.331	.469	.497	1	.481	1.392
		OM_Mean_.	.211	.430	.240	1	.624	1.235
		PM_Mean_.	-.994	.524	3.593	1	.058	.370
		Constant	3.187	2.572	1.536	1	.215	24.223
Middle School	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	EM_Mean_.	.453	.448	1.024	1	.312	1.573
		IPC_Mean_.	1.179	.330	12.743	1	.000	3.253

		OM_Mean_.	-.689	.300	5.273	1	.022	.502
		PM_Mean_.	-1.035	.402	6.631	1	.010	.355
		Constant	1.320	1.894	.486	1	.486	3.744
		EM_Mean_.	-.243	.314	.596	1	.440	.784
		IPC_Mean_.	.333	.189	3.087	1	.079	1.395
Matric	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	OM_Mean_.	-.159	.160	.992	1	.319	.853
		PM_Mean_.	-.479	.235	4.148	1	.042	.619
		Constant	2.683	1.205	4.962	1	.026	14.634
		EM_Mean_.	.105	.255	.170	1	.680	1.111
		IPC_Mean_.	.606	.172	12.368	1	.000	1.833
Intermediate	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	OM_Mean_.	.084	.150	.314	1	.576	1.088
		PM_Mean_.	-.421	.171	6.053	1	.014	.656
		Constant	-.423	.839	.254	1	.614	.655
		EM_Mean_.	-.899	.297	9.194	1	.002	.407
		IPC_Mean_.	.391	.193	4.099	1	.043	1.478
Graduation	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	OM_Mean_.	.351	.170	4.264	1	.039	1.421
		PM_Mean_.	-.272	.211	1.659	1	.198	.762
		Constant	2.659	1.004	7.015	1	.008	14.277
		EM_Mean_.	.097	.435	.050	1	.823	1.102
		IPC_Mean_.	.816	.351	5.421	1	.020	2.262
Masters Higher	or Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	OM_Mean_.	-.229	.289	.625	1	.429	.796
		PM_Mean_.	-.123	.315	.152	1	.697	.885
		Constant	.722	1.538	.221	1	.639	2.059

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: EM\_Mean\_., IPC\_Mean\_., OM\_Mean\_., PM\_Mean\_..

This table reflects that uneducated voters were positively influenced by interpersonal communication ( $B=1.736$ ,  $p<.0005$ ) with an odd ratio of 5.673 while negatively by print media ( $B=-.908$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with an odd ratio of .403. Madrassa educated voters were positively influenced by print media ( $B=.83$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with an odd ratio of 2.30 while electronic media negatively influenced ( $B=-2.53$ ,  $p<.005$ ) with an odd ratio of .080. The voters having elementary education were positively influenced by the interpersonal communication while there was no strong relationship between electronic media, outdoor media or print media. The voters having only elementary education casted their vote in General Election 2013 after consultation/discussions with their family elders, family members, community fellows and work place colleagues, political works, and candidates. Secondary school educated voters were positively influenced by IPC ( $B=1.179$ ,  $p<.0005$ ) with an odd ratio of 3.25 and negatively influenced by outdoor media ( $B=-.159$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with an odd ratio of .502 and print media ( $B=-.1035$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with odd ratio .355.

Matriculation pass voters were significantly negatively influenced by print media ( $B=-.479$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with an odd ratio of .619. Intermediate degree qualified voters were positively influenced by IPC ( $B=.606$ ,  $p<.0005$ ) with an odd ratio of 1.09. and negatively influenced

print media ( $B=-.421$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with an odd ratio of 0.66. Bachelor's degree holder or Graduate voters were significantly positively influenced by IPC and outdoor media ( $B=.391$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with odd ratio 1.48 ( $B=.351$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with an odd ratio 1.42 respectively. Master's degree holder and higher qualified were only significantly positively influenced by the IPC ( $B=.816$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with an odd ratio of 2.26. Voters who were certified in various professions or who acquired education up to primary school education (class 5) level, they were not significantly influenced by any channel of communication in their vote decision in General Election 2013.

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study results reveal a significant relationship between citizens' education, their media exposure and vote decisions during general elections in Punjab, Pakistan. The voters with higher education were more independent of the influence of various media and communication channels during General Election 2013 as compared to the voters with lower education. Those who acquired elementary education and voted in general election in Punjab had a positive significant relationship with interpersonal communication i.e. communication with family, friends, locality and work fellows as well as political workers and election candidates. However, voters with elementary education had no significant impact of electronic media, print media, outdoor media and entertainment media. The study also found that people with low education mostly depends on the people around them during election for their vote decision.

The study recommends increasing literacy rate and education level of voters to implement democracy in true sense in the country as indicated from the study results that people with elementary education only could not decide for their vote at their own and they mostly remain dependent on other influential people around them. It is recommended that awareness on democracy and political participation especially importance of vote casting should be included in the curricula of elementary education.

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