

**THE RELATIONSHIP OF POLITICAL INTEREST AND
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF EDUCATED WOMEN
IN PAKISTAN: THE MODERATING ROLE OF SOCIO-
CULTURAL FACTORS**

BY

AMBER FERDOOS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between political interest and political participation of educated women in Pakistan and the moderating role of socio-cultural factors. Specifically, this study aims to investigate the political participation of educated women in urban Pakistan, explore the association between their political interest and political participation, and examine the socio-cultural factors that moderate their political participation of women. A mixed methods approach was utilized, which included a survey from four universities with 400 students and 30 in-depth interviews with educated working women. The study merged rational choice theory and socio-cultural theory, to explain the relationship between the independent variable, political interest, the dependent variable, political participation, and moderating variables, such as conventional gender roles, patriarchy in politics and family, and gender socialization. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS for the survey and thematic analysis for the in-depth interviews. The study found that despite a 78.1% voter registration rate, only 13% participate in party membership, 18% in political demonstrations, and 17.1% in petition circulation, revealing lower political participation despite political interest. Rational choice theory attributes this to calculated decisions based on perceived costs and benefits in political activities. Security concerns among women in political demonstrations align with rational choice theory, emphasizing the consideration of potential risks and costs before participation. Educated women, despite cultural expectations, approach political engagement more strategically. The study challenges cultural theory by detailing the nuanced impact of factors such as education, economic independence, mobility, and rural/urban settings on women's political participation. The study confirms that the political system in Pakistan prefers male involvement, supporting cultural theory's idea that patriarchal norms shape societal structures. Women's experiences offer real-life examples supporting cultural theory's views on gender dynamics in politics.

ملخص البحث

تقوم هذه الدراسة بفحص العلاقة بين الاهتمام السياسي والمشاركة السياسية للنساء المثقفات في باكستان، ودور العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية المنظمة . تهدف هذه الدراسة بشكل خاص إلى التحقيق في المشاركة السياسية للنساء المثقفات في المناطق الحضرية في باكستان، واستكشاف الارتباط بين اهتمامهن السياسي ومشاركتهن السياسية، وفحص العوامل الثقافية والاجتماعية التي تنظم مشاركتهن السياسية. تم استخدام منهج الأساليب المختلطة، والذي شمل استطلاعاً من أربع جامعات يشمل 400 طالبة، و30 مقابلة عميقة مع نساء عاملات مثقفات . دجت الدراسة نظريتين، نظرية الاختيار الرشيد ونظرية العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية، لشرح العلاقة بين المتغير الفعلي الذي هو الاهتمام السياسي، والمتغير التابع، المشاركة السياسية، والمتغيرات المعتدلة، مثل الأدوار الجنسية التقليدية، والسيادة السياسية والأسرية، واجتماع النوع الاجتماعي. تم إجراء تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج SPSS للاستطلاع والتحليل الموضوعي للمقابلات العميقة. أظهرت الدراسة أنه على الرغم من نسبة تسجيل الناخبين البالغة 78.1٪، إلا أن 13٪ فقط يشاركون في عضوية الأحزاب، و18٪ في التظاهرات السياسية، و17.1٪ في توزيع العرائض، مما يكشف عن انخراط سياسي أقل على الرغم من وجود اهتمام سياسي. تعزو نظرية الاختيار الرشيد ذلك إلى قرارات حسابية تستند إلى التكاليف والفوائد المدركة في الأنشطة السياسية. تتناسب مخاوف الأمان بين النساء في التظاهرات السياسية مع نظرية الاختيار الرشيد، مؤكدة على النظر في المخاطر والتكاليف المحتملة قبل المشاركة. على الرغم من التوقعات الثقافية، تقرب النساء المثقفات من المشاركة السياسية بشكل أكثر استراتيجية. تتحدى الدراسة نظرية الثقافة من خلال توضيح التأثير المعقد لعوامل مثل التعليم والاستقلال الاقتصادي والتنقل والإعداد الحضري/الريفي على مشاركة النساء السياسية. تؤكد الدراسة أن النظام السياسي في باكستان يفضل المشاركة الذكورية، مدعمةً فكرةً نظرية الثقافة بأن هياكل المجتمع تتشكل وفقاً للأعراف البطرية.

APPROVAL PAGE

The thesis of Amber Ferdoos has been approved by the following:



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rabi'ah Aminudin
Department of Political Science
AHAS Kuliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge
and Human Sciences
International Islamic University Malaysia

Assoc. Prof Dr Rabi'ah Binti Aminudin
Supervisor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Syaza Farhana Binti Mohamad Shukri
Internal Examiner

Assoc. Prof Dr Ummu Atiyah Ahmad Zakuan
External Examiner

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Naqib Eishan Jan
Chairman

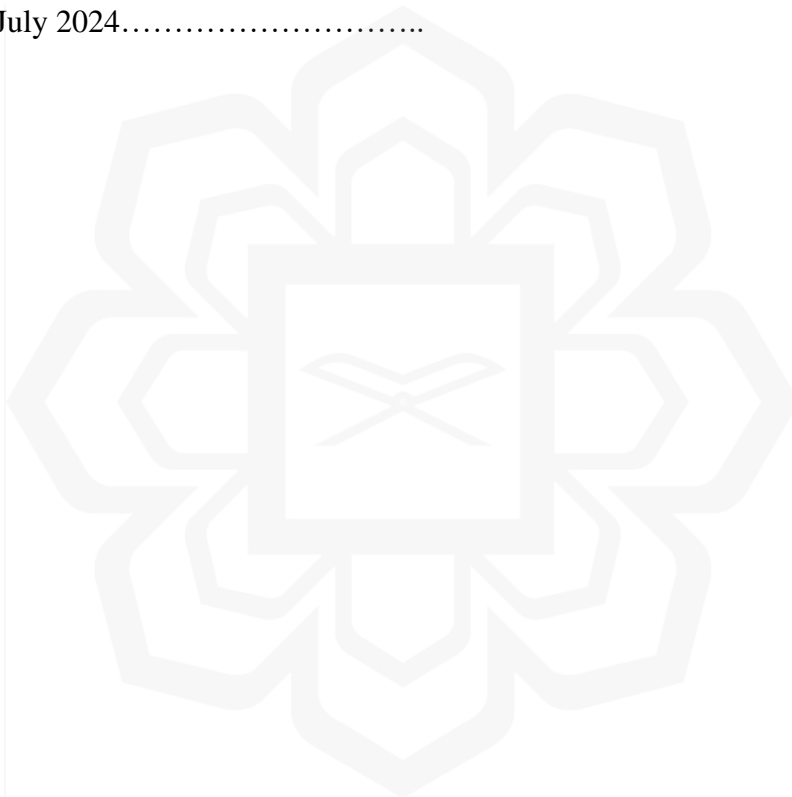
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Amber Ferdoos

Signature 

Date ...July 2024.....



I dedicate all my efforts to my family.

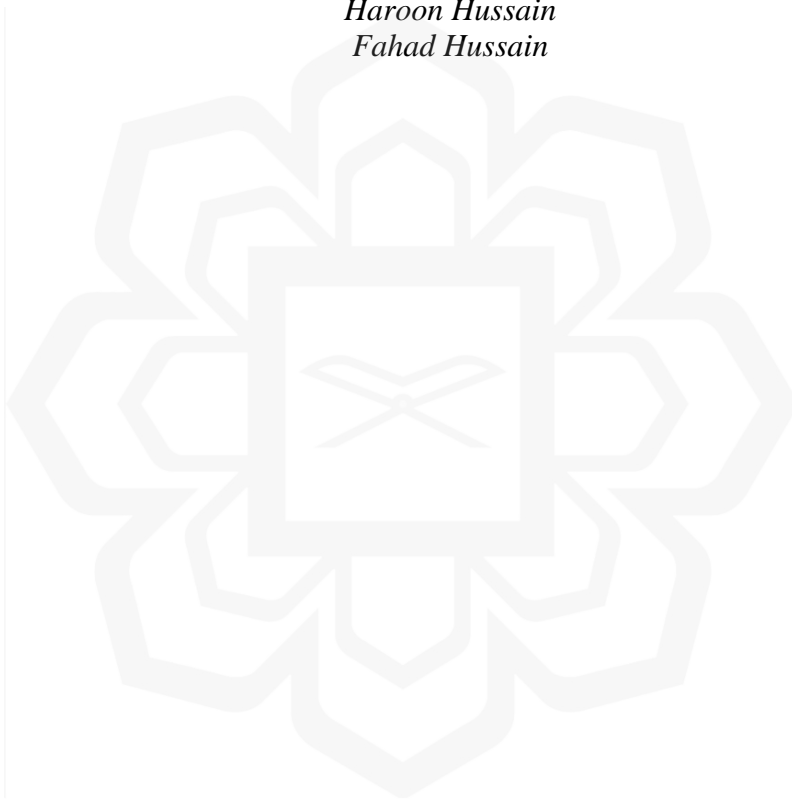
Dr. Zakir Hussain

Maham Hussain

Hadiya Hussain

Haroon Hussain

Fahad Hussain



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I delve into the global landscape of women's political participation, explicitly focusing on Pakistan's situation. The introductory section explores the inherent interest of women in politics and seeks to shed light on the factors that motivate their engagement in the political sphere. Additionally, I navigate the intricate web of challenges and barriers that hinder women's political participation in Pakistan. By addressing these multifaceted aspects, I aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics surrounding women's involvement in politics on both a global scale and within the unique socio-political landscape of Pakistan.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Women's political participation has significantly increased in many Western developed countries, including the United States of America and the United Kingdom (Currell, 2005; Burns, 2007; Paxton, Kunovich, & Hugh, 2007; Coffé & Bolzendahl, 2010). Further, from a global perspective, as far as women's political participation is concerned, they hold just 15.2 percent of seats in parliaments worldwide. Similarly, in the United States, little change has occurred in politics; in the 2002 national elections, only six of the fifty state governors were women, a meager ratio. Globally, women are underrepresented in Parliament and ignored in decision-making at every socio-political level. The Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations 2019 mentioned that equal participation of women in political activities and decision-making is part of their fundamental rights, which is also essential for gender equality and empowerment of women. However, strategies to enhance the participation of women in politics and gender mainstreaming have been developed through conferences, conventions, and international treaties. However, these strategies are not yet functional in attaining gender-equal opportunities at the executive level of government (Morobane, 2014). Although half the global population comprises women, women only hold 23% of all seats in parliaments and senates internationally (Radu, 2018; Chalaby, 2017). The U.N

(2011) corresponds and asserts that " worldwide women continue to be largely disregarded from the political domain, due to inequitable rules, gender stereotypes, low levels of education and lack of health care facilities." (United Nations, General assembly 66th session , 2011).

1.2 INTRODUCTION

The effective participation of women in politics is an issue of human rights, gender development, and sustainable development (OECD, 2018a). Women's perspectives and experiences in decision-making are essential for developing democracy and peace in society. There is great significance in women's participation in political spheres. Participation of women in politics is a matter of women's right to equal opportunities and access to fundamental rights. There are several societal benefits of women's political leadership, such as inequality reduction (World Economic Forum (WEF), Global Gender Gap Report, 2017), better cooperation across party and ethnic lines, and amplified arrangements of societal problems, like health, education, parental leave, and pensions (Susan, 2013). Women's political participation has been exhibited to be specifically influential to women in their communities. The existence of women in decision-making positions across the public and private sectors is positively associated with factors such as female voter turnout, female political participation, and public service responsiveness (Nancy, Scholzman, & Sidney, 2001).

However, women encounter many barriers to political participation worldwide during the twenty-first century (Kumar, 2017). These factors hamper women's political participation, including socioeconomic development, geography, culture, and the type of political system in the country. In different countries, the involvement of women in political activities varies due to these factors (Alzuabi, 2016; Shvedova, 2005). The political participation of women also depends on the political environment. Most of the time, the political climate and conditions are not friendly, and often, these conditions are even hostile to women (Shvedova, 2005). Many research studies have discovered various conditions influencing women's political participation worldwide (Alzuabi, 2016; Bari, 2005; Blattman, 2009; Fleschenberg & Bari, 2015; Book, 2017).

These conditions are classified as "socioeconomic, political, institutional, and ideological" (Kumar, 2017). Women contribute to public life in several distinctive ways, which can be classified into three major domains (Domingo et al., 2015).

The first is the political domain, the second is the social domain, and the third is the economic domain. In the political realm, women are involved with conventional political organizations as voters and affiliates with political parties. Women can be engaged in formal/elected government decision-making through participation in official/selected political institutions. These institutions are the mediums through which powerholders negotiate, determine, and perform the "formal and informal rules of the game" about who gains which privileges and resources (Lasswell, 1936). Formal political institutions include central and local government, the legislature (including political parties and women's conventions), oversight bodies (e.g., the judiciary), the civil service (including street-level bureaucrats and service providers as well as central ministries), and arms-length state bodies (e.g., ombudspersons and other regulators). Formal political processes include elections, constitutional reform, and peace (Domingo et al., 2015). In the social domain, women are involved in civil society by contributing to community organizations and social movements and performing jointly in alliance with the government and other political institutions based on mutual concerns. Women also affect the judgments and behaviour of power holders through their engagement outside of the Government and state. "Civic associations include grassroots groups and movements, more formalized community-based organizations, professionalized non-government organizations, trade unions, and professional associations" (Domingo et al., 2015). In the economic domain, women are involved in economic society through domestic activities (paid and unpaid), public activities, including participating in the formal labour market and unpaid activities outside the home, and through ownership and control of assets (Domingo et al., 2015).

1.2.1 Political Participation

Political participation enables people to engage in political spheres. It is a platform for the people to express their standpoint and exercise pressure "on the state and non-state institutions" (Becker & Jean-Aimé, 2008). Thus, political participation is primarily

defined as citizens' activities influencing political decision-making (Van Deth, 2001). Additionally, political participation can be specified as deep-seated values of citizens and how these values serve as social welfare. The fundamental objective of political participation is to help citizens to express their opinions in a democratic state. Political participation includes all the activities that citizens aspire to influence government policies of the t (Milbrath & Goel, 1978). Political participation comprises all the activities carried out by the people to select public officials and observe their decisions (Kaase & Marsh, 1979). The purpose of political activities is to "affect the systematic patterns of social behaviour" (Norris, 1997).

Political participation is a very crucial element of democratic societies. There is a wide range of activities that are included in political participation. Voting in elections, protesting or attending any demonstration, donating money to political candidates or for a social cause, becoming a party member, circulating petitions or writing letters to public officials, and discussing political issues with friends and family are all forms of political participation. "During the 1950s, the right to vote was the central focus of political participation but later and later extended to conventional and unconventional participation" (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999) (Almond & Verba, 1989). Voting represents a conventional and widely accepted way to interact with the government, is considered the least vigorous activity, and makes limited demands on individuals (Verba, 2000). Voting is regarded as a conventional activity according to the democratic principles of states. Traditional political participation signifies activities recognized by the prevailing political culture (Hussain, 2022).

Conversely, attending demonstrations or protesting, participating in boycott campaigns, and rejecting the laws are unconventional activities. Most unconventional political activities are less accepted and considered illegitimate. However, from the historical point of view, different nations and individuals participated in both political activities (Logan, 2017) (Hussain, 2022).

1.2.2 Political Participation and Democracy

A democratic state requires the active participation of all men and women (Becker & Jean-Aimé, 2008). Political participation and democracy are deeply associated: "Political participation is central to the concept of a democratic state" (Kaase & Marsh, 1979, p. 28). Democracy is a type of government in which the people exercise authority and which comes from the people. The main objective of democracy is to address the personal interests of people (Becker & Aimé, 2008, p.4). The Democratic political system strongly advocates the equal participation and freedom of every individual in the state. Mature democracies practice gender equality and support the equal participation of men and women in the political system (Bettio, 2015). Generally, citizens of democratic states communicate with political institutions, criticize public policy, and are associated with selecting public officers. The smooth performance of a democratic political system is associated with the active participation of people (Division for the Advancement of Women, 2005)¹. Political participation in terms of democracy refers to those voluntary activities of people through which they can directly or indirectly influence the formation of public policy and the selection of rulers/public officials (McClosky, 1968, p. 252).

In a democratic state, the active participation of people in political activities ensures the accountability of rulers' performance. When rulers realized that the general public could demonstrate active political involvement, they were likely to be more vigilant toward their performance and decision-making (Milbrath & Goel, 1978) (Almond & Verba, 1989).

1.2.3 Political Participation of Women Across Europe

Gender equality is primarily considered a highly significant value, a fundamental human right, and a moral commitment of the European Union. Gender equality is also entrenched in the treaty on the Functioning of the E.U. as follows, "the E.U. shall eliminate gender disparities from all its endeavours, and promote equality between men

¹ <https://search.archives.un.org/social-matters-division-for-advancement-of-women-2048>

and women." (Article 8)². This treaty laid the foundations for enhancing equality between men and women. Promoting gender equality is addressed in several ways and includes strategic plans for succeeding in gender equality across Europe. "This Gender Equality Strategy seeks to bring about 'A Europe where women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are equal.'" The very focus of this strategy is to involve men and women equally in the governance of society. The strategy's vision and objective are to enhance women's participation as voters and encourage them to come forward and contest the 2024 European elections and become representatives of their community and country. More attention has been given to the importance of women's "leadership in economic life" across Europe. Over the last two decades, many efforts have been made to enhance women's participation in politics and decision-making. "Although 40% of European Parliament members (MEPs) are women, and European Commissioner roles are equally shared between women and men, at a national, local and regional level"³. There are candidate gender quota laws in ten E.U. member countries and eight other European countries⁴. According to these laws, 30% to 40% of candidates in national parliamentary elections should be women. However, there is an equal quota of 50% for parliamentary seats in France and Belgium. Women's participation and representation in Parliament have increased from 18% in 2004 to 34% today in those European countries with a legislated quota for women⁵. The situation of developed European countries is also encouraging, like in "Denmark (40% female M.Ps), Finland (46% female M.Ps), Sweden (47% female M.Ps) and the European Economic Area country of Norway (44% female M.Ps) deliver gender-balanced parliaments without the need for quota laws"⁶. The active participation of women in European politics is due to the culture of gender equality and acceptance of gender-equal norms by political parties embedded in most developed European countries. One significant reason for women's equal participation in politics is the regular rotation of men and women on electoral lists of political parties, contributing to the "gender balance political representation" (Galligan, 2021). Countries like Spain, Belgium, France, Portugal, and Austria have achieved gender-balanced representation in Parliament

²https://eurosocial.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GALLIGAN-Yvonne_Promoting-the-political-participation-of-women-in-the-European-Union-ENGLISH.pdf

³ *ibid*

⁴ ³ <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas/database> [accessed 13 January 2022]

⁵ Promoting the political participation of women in the European Union Policy Brief, Yvonne Galligan, Technological University Dublin 2021.

⁶ <https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking?month=1&year=2021> [accessed 13 January 2022]

(Galligan, 2021). The primary reason for the higher political participation of women in Europe is the legitimate gender quota system for women. The structure of legal quotas is supported by procedures and endeavours that encourage women to participate in the country's political activities. There are publicity campaigns through media across Europe that highlight the significance of the participation of women in politics and promote gender balance in European.

Parliaments⁷. Local Governments across Europe support these campaigns and activities; additionally, different organizations working for women, political parties, and gender specialists have also participated in these campaigns (Galligan, 2021).

In Germany, the Helene Weber College at the University of Bonn organized conferences on all aspects of women and politics. The primary objective of these conferences is to embrace more women in Parliament. The Helene Weber College ranked summer schools, arranged workshops on women's empowerment, and granted outstanding female local government politicians a prize (usually government-sponsored)⁸. In Malta, the Maltese Labour Party takes initiatives to enhance the participation and representation of women in politics⁹. In the Netherlands, different organizations and groups of women uphold the rights of women and encourage women to take part in elections¹⁰. In Portugal, women obtained legitimate equality with men, as mandated by Portugal's constitution of 1976. This legal equality in Portugal urged women to participate in politics¹¹.

⁷ <https://charter-equality.eu/news/power2her-our-campaign-for-womens-political-empowerment.html>.

⁸ <https://www.frauen-macht-politik.de/en/helene-weber-college/the-helene-weber-college>.

⁹ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/good-practices/malta/party-strategy-increase-womens-politicalrepresentation>

¹⁰ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/good-practices/netherlands/advocacy-right-stand-election>

¹¹ "Portugal-Women (data as of 1993)". Mongabay.com. Retrieved 3 November 2013.

In France, the Calvez Report (2020) on women made 26 recommendations to enhance and consolidate gender equality¹². Many other European examples have taken initiatives to empower women socially and politically and tried to eliminate gender imbalances from political decision-making.

1.2.4 Political Participation of Women in Developing Countries

Although half the global population comprises women, they only hold 23% of all seats in parliaments and senates internationally (Radu, 2018) (Chalaby, 2017). The U.N. corresponds and asserts "that all around the developing world unfair rules, and lack of access to education and health care facilities are the cause of women's marginalization from the political sphere" (United Nations, General assembly 66th session, 2011). Literature shows that various factors hamper women's political participation, including socioeconomic development, geography, culture, and the type of political system in the country. In different countries, the involvement of women in political activities varies due to these factors (Alzuabi, 2016) (Shvedova, 2005). Women's political participation and empowerment depend on a country's political environment. Most of the time, the political atmosphere and conditions are not friendly, and often, these conditions are even hostile to women (Shvedova, 2005).

1.2.5 Political Participation of Women in Pakistan

Pakistani society is not homogenous. Uneven socioeconomic development causes variation in the status of women along class, regional and urban-rural divisions. Moreover, gender is the central organizing principle in Pakistani society. The influential patriarchal culture assumes that women are unsuitable for politics (Bari, Women in Pakistan: Country Briefing Paper, 2000). Various discrepancies exist on spiritual, racial, ideological, social, and economic issues for women in politics (Rubab, Mustafa, & Nawaz, 2020). In Pakistan's male-dominated society, women encounter numerous obstacles when engaging in politics. While those with political backgrounds may secure

¹²<http://traduction.culture.gouv.fr/url/Result.aspx?to=en&url=https://www.culture.gouv.fr/Espacedocumentation/Rapports/Rapport-sur-la-place-des-femmes-dans-les-medias-en-temps-de-crise>

representation in Parliament, ordinary women often face challenges. Cultural norms emphasizing domestic roles, limited educational opportunities, and discrimination hinder their political participation. Additionally, the prevalence of harassment and the financial demands of political campaigns further limit the chances for ordinary women to contribute to the political landscape actively.

The involvement of women in income-generating activities and ownership of assets (such as "land, property, finance") can change the status of women within the household and possibly influence their civic and political activities outside the home. In contrast, women's economic participation in developing countries can stipulate a podium for decision-making at the national and community level (Domingo et al., 2015). Women engage in economic activities through earning, skill development, and controlling the ownership of finances and assets. Different societies have different approaches toward the political participation of women. However, women's political participation at all levels is insignificant in Pakistan. Education is also one of the crucial factors which affect the political participation of women.

1.2.6 Barriers to Political Participation of Women in Pakistan

In Pakistan, women are facing many problems concerning their political participation. The socioeconomic factors are considered barriers to their political advancement (Zaheer, 2014). Many other socio-cultural and economic barriers restrict women's participation in Pakistani politics. In rural Pakistan, women face the challenges of sex segregation, illiteracy, and a lack of awareness of their political rights. Moreover, socio-cultural values in rural areas accord women a socially inferior position. These factors collectively hinder women's political Participation (Awan, 2016). Pakistan is a male-dominated patriarchal society where the idea prevails that "a woman's place is still in the home and political life is for men." "Women's primary duty and tasks are to work in the home, and there is a strongly held belief that women should be working in the home rather than be active in politics." Many other socio-cultural and economic barriers restrict women's participation in the political system of Pakistan. Women's lack of representative involvement in legislative bodies is a significant factor that obstructs women's political participation in Pakistan (Bano, 2009). Generally, women's mobility,

career, and life choices are controlled mainly by the family, tribe, *baradari*¹³, and local customs. Women do not experience a personal and independent life; they primarily depend on following the family and society's expectations. Women do not participate in the electoral processes as individual voters to select the candidate of their choice (Bari, 2005).

Pakistani society is not homogenous; uneven socioeconomic development causes variation in the status of women along with class, regional, and urban-rural division. Moreover, gender is the central organizing principle in Pakistani society. The patriarchal culture assumes women are unsuitable for politics (Bari, 2000). Various discrepancies exist in spiritual, racial, ideological, social, and economic issues for women participating in politics (Rubab, Mustafa, & Nawaz, 2020). Women of Pakistan have to face many hurdles while participating in politics in a male-dominated society. Women of political backgrounds mainly get a chance to have representation in Parliament.

1.2.7 Causes of Women's Underrepresentation in Politics

Several reasons are offered for the underrepresentation of women in politics. Women's position in political parties is also not very specified as most are from feudal families with specific cultures. Prevalent causes of women's underrepresentation in political parties and activities are our society's steering of women away from political activities, security issues, and the notion that political decision-making and public responsibilities are "a man's topic" about which women are assumed to have neither interest nor expertise (Zaheruddin, Kalthum, & Hassan, 2016). Women can be deemed to have achieved political empowerment when they are given full representation in Central and provincial parliaments.

¹³ Extended family and caste

Women can be more politically empowered when society gives them the liberty to decide their issues (Sohail, 2014). Women encounter hurdles worldwide when they attempt to participate in political activity. Women who desire to participate in politics are suppressed and deprived due to the traditional notion that women are weak, require the support of the male person, and are therefore unsuitable for the demands of political work (Latif, Usman, Kataria, & Abdullah, 2015). However, Social and cultural values and economic dependency make women inferior citizens and discourage them from participating in politics (Naz & Ahmad, 2012).

In male-dominated Pakistani society, Women's position in political parties is also not very specified as most are from feudal families with a specific culture. Any woman who has made headway in Pakistani politics has done so only because of her relation to powerful male politicians who have decided her political involvement (Latif, Usman, Kataria, & Abdullah, 2015). Political parties in Pakistan are weak entities with a less democratic organizational structure, negatively affecting women's political representation. As an organization, political parties show a highly traditional, male-dominated, and dynastic political culture that blocks women's formal entrance into the political processes (Bari, 2005). The structure of political parties severely restricts women's substantive representation in Pakistan's political processes (Fleschenberg & Bari, 2015). Under such circumstances, women experience a passive political environment, and most of the time, many women psychologically internalize that perhaps the public sphere (politics) is not for them (Bilal, 2006). All attempts to improve society would be futile if women were not politically empowered and not provided adequate representation in politics (Naz & Ahmad, 2012).

Various reasons are offered for the underrepresentation of women in politics. Women can be deemed to have achieved political participation when they are fully represented in central and provincial parliaments. Women can be more politically empowered when society gives them the liberty to decide their issues (Sohail, 2014). Women encounter hurdles globally when they attempt to participate in political activities. Women who desire to participate in politics are suppressed and deprived due to the traditional notion that women are weak and require the support of the male person and are unsuitable for the political work demands (Latif, Usman, Kataria, & Abdullah, 2015).

However, socio-cultural values and economic dependency make women inferior citizens, discouraging them from participating in politics (Naz & Ahmad, 2012). Different factors responsible for less political participation and violence against women include flaws in the execution of legal procedures, inadequate help from law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, and the bleak socioeconomic condition of women in Pakistan. In contrast, a male-dominated society's religious setup and power structure can never be overlooked when studying women's political participation (Right Vision News, 2014; Fleschenberg, 2012). The strict customs and traditions are a hurdle in women's political participation in Pakistan (Rematullah, 2002).

1.3 POLITICAL INTEREST

Political interest is one of the most important determinants of political participation. A higher level of political interest is associated with higher voting behaviour and political participation. (Luskin, 1990) (Prior, 2010). Political interest enhances the ability of people to influence the political system. The association between political interest and voter turnout is significant at 85%. (Smets & Van Ham, 2013). Political interest is a constant and permanent behaviour (Prior, 2010). Political interest is considered an incentive for political involvement (Robinson, 2017) (Blais & Daoust, 2020). There is a positive association between political interest and political participation, which is also one of the most consistent findings of political participation research (Blais, 2007). Citizens who are more interested in politics are likely to vote. But those people who have less or no interest are inclined to abstain. Advocates of the resource model emphasize the importance of socioeconomic status, education, income, and skills for political participation. They also acknowledge the significance of political interest for voting behaviour and political participation and claim that for voting behaviour, political interest is more important than socioeconomic resources (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995). For political involvement and going to polling stations, civic orientation, especially political interest, matters more than material resources (Verba et al. 1995, p. 361).

Numerous factors influence the political interest of women in Pakistan. Pakistan is a developing country where the gender gap dominates in every realm of life. There is a prominent gender gap in every field of life, including education, finance, healthcare, and politics. Pakistani society is based on patriarchal culture and male dominance, which play a role in escalating gender disparities against women. Women in Pakistan are struggling for equal opportunities and rights. The barbarism of rape and honour killing is still a gloomy picture of women in Pakistani society. Women in Pakistan are prohibited from exercising their political rights; consequently, they show less political interest and consider politics to be men's domain (Kayser, 2013). Despite their interest in politics, many women restrict themselves from participating due to security issues, male dominance in politics, and lack of support from the system. The higher level of political interest of educated women does not ensure higher political participation. Instead, political participation is moderated by household responsibilities, patriarchy, and gender socialization.

1.4 PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PAKISTANI POLITICS

Despite several challenges, many women leaders have endured political participation in the history of Pakistan and are considered influential political leaders. The prominent names of female political leaders are Fatima Jinnah, Benazir Bhutto, Kulsoom Nawaz, and Nusrat Bhutto.

Benazir Bhutto was elected for two terms, from 1988-1990 and 1993-96. In 2008, Fahmida Mirza became the first female speaker in the Muslim world. She was appointed the first female speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan (Usman, Kataria, & Abdullah, 2015) (Hussain, 2022).

Additionally, during the rule of Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan signed the "Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)" and attended the Beijing Conference in 1996. Article 7 of CEDAW focused on women's

fundamental rights and equal political participation in political activities and voter registration. Pakistan also signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 2008. The main objective of this covenant was to focus on free and fair elections under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Hussain, 2022).

1.5 VOTERS REGISTRATION IN PAKITAN

All sensible citizens not diagnosed with psychological disorders of 18 years of age and above can register as voters, and only registered voters can cast their vote in the election (Gallup Pakistan, 2012). "The Election Commission of Pakistan is responsible for conducting the general elections for the National Assembly, four Provincial Assemblies, and local governments. Pakistan's electoral system largely follows the Westminster first-past-the-post system, meaning that the candidate with the plurality of votes is the winner. The losing candidate wins no representation " (Hussain, 2022).

"According to the Election Commission of Pakistan, the total number of registered voters for the 2018 General Election was 105.96 million. Of these registered voters, 59.22% were males, and 46.73% were females. There was a prominent gender gap between the male and female voters, approximating almost 12.5m. Currently, 64% of the population in Pakistan is younger than 30 years, and 29% is aged between 15 to 29 years (an age group defined as youth). With these percentages mentioned above, Pakistan is currently experiencing a youth bulge. At this point, Pakistan has more young people than ever, which is forecasted to continue to increase until at least 2050" (Hussain, 2022)¹⁴¹⁵.

1.6 VOTING BEHAVIOUR OF WOMEN IN GENERAL ELECTIONS

Voting is a powerful and fundamental tool for becoming a proactive member of democratic societies. The last general elections were held in July 2020, whereas only a

¹⁴ <https://www.ecp.gov.pk/>

¹⁵ <https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/449863-Election-2018-results-complete-winners-list-Pakistan-PTI-PMLN-PPP>

second democratic government of the Pakistan Peoples Party succeeded in completing its five-year term. The previous census in Pakistan was held in 2017, 19 years after the 1998 census conducted by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. The 2017 census estimated the population of Pakistan to be 207,774,520, with the number of men standing at 106,449,322 (51%) and women at 101,314,780 (48.76%). The gender ratio is 105.7 (Statistics Bureau of Pakistan, 2017). The last three elections in Pakistan show a steady change in female voters' turnout. In 2018, female voters' turnout was 46.64%; in 2013, it was 48.79%; and in 2008, it was 37.05% (Dastageer, Zaidi, & Safdar, 2018) (Hussain, 2022). However, the population ratio of men and women in Pakistan is almost the same, with 101.314.780 women and 106.449.322 men. At the same time, there is a considerable gap in male and female voter registration. "In 2017, the Election Commission of Pakistan endeavoured to decrease this gap by initiating a voter registration campaign across 70 districts. However, the number of women willing to register their vote was relatively low. Even the head of the family men was very reluctant to register the vote of their females. However, this campaign was successful in registering 4,307,533 women voters. The female turnout in the 2012 general elections was less than 10% across 17 constituencies. Still, in contrast, in 2018, female turnout was relatively better, and only two constituencies faced the issue of insignificant female turnout (Hussain, 2022).

1.7 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The relationship between education and political participation has been widely explored. Two types of literature explain the relationship between education and political participation. The first type presents evidence that educational attainment increases political Participation (Converse, 1972; Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980; Filer, Kenny, & Morton, 1993; Sondheimer & Green, 2010). The second type of literature argues that educational growth does not enhance political participation; other factors moderate the relationship between political participation. For example, a family's socioeconomic background, gender, time, age, locality (rural/urban), political culture, and voting laws all moderate the relationship between education and political Participation (Brody, 1978; Miller, 1992; Miller, Shanks, & Shapiro, 1996; Putnam, 2000; Merrifield, 2003; Tenn, 2007).

In Pakistan, gender inequality has persisted in political participation and continued in the higher education sector due to various socio-cultural and economic factors. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, Pakistan is ranked 144th out of 156 countries in educational attainment. The report shows Pakistan's entire education system has a 13% gender disparity in enrollment¹⁶.

The overall literacy rate in Pakistan's metropolitan cities is 70%. However, the statistics show higher literacy rates among males compared to females in rural and urban areas of Pakistan. The overall literacy rate among females is 70%, whereas the literacy rate among males is 81% in Pakistan. The males succeed in literacy trends and political participation in Pakistan's rural and urban areas¹⁷. In Pakistan, the literacy rate is inversely proportional to the political participation rate. In Pakistan, the literacy rate of women in 2018 was 57.01%.

Meanwhile, female turnout in the general election of 2018 was 47%. Female participation in political events remains infrequent, superficial, and often dependent on male members of the family (Rai, Shah, & Ayaz, 2007; Cheema, Khan, Khan Mohmand, & Liaqat, 2019a). Only 8 out of 272 parliamentarians elected are women. According to the report, Pakistan's rank is relatively higher for political participation, ranking 98th out of 156 countries. Pakistan is one of the top 33 countries globally with a female head of state. However, women's representation among parliamentarians (20.2%) and ministers (10.7%) remains low. Pakistan is a multi-party democracy, and the country has many political parties; in the major political parties of Pakistan, women's participation is the following: PPP has a total of 176 candidates, with 12 (6.8%) being women. The PTI has nominated 244 candidates, 14 of which are women (5.7 percent), while the formerly ruling PML-N has fielded 125 candidates, five of whom are women (4 percent). Pakistan's People's Party is honoured to be chaired by the first Muslim women leader Benazir Bhutto. She was Pakistan's first female prime minister and the youngest elected female leader in the Islamic World. She chaired the (PPP) Pakistan People's Party from the early 1980s until her assassination in 2007. (Election Commission Of Pakistan, 2022) (National Assembly of Pakistan, 2021).

¹⁶ <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2022/02/27/gender-inequality-in-education/>

¹⁷ <https://ilm.com.pk/pakistan/pakistan-information/male-and-female-literacy-rate-in-pakistan/>

According to the interparliamentary union ranking, Pakistan ranks 100th in the list of 190 countries in terms of political representation of women. In Pakistan, the political parties nominated 3.5% of women candidates, and 96.5% were men. In 2018, Pakistan showed an overall literacy trend of 71%. Data show a higher literacy trend among females, which is 56%. However, higher literacy levels did not strengthen women's political participation. Education (56%) and political participation (47%) are inversely proportional, which shows that in Pakistan, Political participation is associated with higher education and other moderating factors that affect women's political participation. A study by Naz and Ahmad (2012) concluded that various moderating factors, such as societal norms, culture, and economic factors, affect women's political participation. They also associated a lack of education and political interest with rural women's political participation in Pakistan (Naz & Ahmad, 2012).

The executive director of WISE¹⁸ stated that Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka have all been ruled by women leaders in the past. However, the representation of women in political activities is still meager compared to men. Various studies conducted in Pakistan also concluded that lack of education is a cause of less political participation of women in rural areas. My study will add new information to the existing literature on gender and politics. The association between the political interest of educated women and their political participation is explored in my research. I have explored the socio-cultural factors as moderating variables. This study's target population is young, educated women living in urban areas. At the same time, previous research was generally focused on women from rural areas who are either uneducated or less educated.

¹⁸ (Women in Struggle for Empowerment)

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The active participation of women in political activities is crucial because it is directly associated with women's social status (Book, 2017; Fleschenberg & Bari, 2015). This study is significant because it has explored the factors that hamper the participation of educated women in political activities. However, active participation can only be achieved when the obstacles faced by women in political participation are identified and resolved. My study made three significant contributions. I have identified the factors affecting the political participation of educated women through a mixed-method approach, which is a methodological contribution. I have explored the worth of gender balance political participation, which is a prerequisite for the political development of Pakistan; this is an empirical contribution. My study added a theoretical contribution to the existing literature on gender and politics as I am converging two different theories. This study also broadens the knowledge by investigating gender and politics in South Asia. Various studies are available from Europe and America based on their own experiences. However, the present research discusses gender and politics in Pakistani/South Asian backgrounds. The study will contribute to the research on women and politics by focusing on urban educated women, which was missing in the literature.

1.9 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan.
2. To investigate the association between educated women's political interest and political participation.
3. To explore the socio-cultural factors that moderate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan.

1.10 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How are educated women participating in political activities?
2. What is the association between political interest and the political participation of educated women in Pakistan?

3. How do patriarchy in family and politics, conventional gender roles, and gender socialization moderate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan?

1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

Chapter 2 discusses a detailed review of the literature. The first section of Chapter 2 discusses the concept of political participation and its various associated factors. The chapter analyses academic research from different scholars, discussing the different dimensions of political participation, such as voting, protesting, donating money to a political candidate, and other forms of unconventional participation. The chapter also discusses factors influencing political participation, such as socioeconomic status, education level, gender, and age.

In particular, the chapter focuses on the political participation of women around the globe, highlighting the various challenges and obstacles women face in accessing and participating in politics. The chapter also discusses women's political participation in Pakistan, examining how women have been historically excluded from political life.

Section 2: The second section of Chapter 2 focuses on the concept of political interest and the various factors that influence it. The chapter discusses the different academic research and information from different books on the factors influencing political interest, including age, education level, gender, and political efficacy. In particular, the chapter examines women's political interests, highlighting the unique challenges women face in accessing political information and developing political interests. The chapter discusses how gender norms and societal expectations can impact women's political interests and the role of education and empowerment in fostering women's political engagement.

Section 3: The third section of Chapter 2 elaborates on the socio-cultural factors that moderate women's political participation, both generally and specifically in Pakistan.

The chapter discusses the societal and cultural norms that can impact women's access to political participation, such as patriarchal gender roles and cultural expectations of women's behaviour. The chapter also discusses how societal and cultural factors impact women's political participation in Pakistan, explicitly highlighting women's challenges in accessing political education and resources. The chapter examines the impact of socialization and patriarchy on women's political participation and the role of family and community structures in shaping women's political engagement. Overall, Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the different factors that influence political participation and political interest, focusing on women's experiences around the globe and in Pakistan specifically. The last section of the chapter elaborates on the theoretical framework.

Chapter 3 briefly discusses research paradigms, which refer to the overarching philosophical frameworks that guide research. The research paradigms adopted in this study combined interpretivism and positivism, reflecting the mixed-methods approach used in the research. The chapter explains the rationale for adopting a mixed-methods research design, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. This approach was chosen because it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the complex issues surrounding women's political participation and interest by collecting subjective and objective data. The chapter explains the sampling methods used in the study, which involved selecting a specific population of female respondents in Pakistan. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which involves selecting participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The chapter outlines the different data sources used in the study, including in-depth interviews and quantitative surveys with women. The chapter explains how these various data sources were used to understand the research questions comprehensively. The chapter provides a detailed account of the data collection methods used in the study, including the procedures followed during the in-depth interviews and the quantitative surveys. The chapter explains the methods used to analyze the qualitative and quantitative data collected during the study. A thematic analysis approach was used for the qualitative data, which involves identifying and analyzing patterns and themes in the data. For the quantitative data, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The chapter discusses the issues of reliability, validity, and generalization that are important to consider in a qualitative research framework. Overall, Chapter 3 provides

a detailed account of the methodological process adopted for the study, including the research objectives, research questions, research paradigms, sampling, data collection, and data analysis methods used.

Chapter 4 begins by providing descriptive statistics that summarize the socio-economic and demographic information of the research respondents, including information such as age, education level, marital status, and area of residence. The chapter then describes the use of correlational analysis to examine the relationship between political interest and political participation. In this case, the two variables examined are political interest and political participation. The chapter then explains the use of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the validity of the research instrument. CFA is a statistical technique to assess the fit between the observed data and a theoretical model. In this case, the research instrument being tested is the survey used to measure political interest and political participation. CFA ensures that the study accurately measures the constructs it is designed to measure. The chapter then describes regression analysis to examine the relationship between political interest and political participation. Finally, the chapter discusses moderation analysis to examine how socio-cultural factors moderate the relationship between political interest and political participation. Overall, Chapter 4 provides a detailed account of the quantitative data analysis methods used in the study, including descriptive statistics, correlational analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, regression analysis, and moderation analysis.

Chapter 5 focuses on the relationship between political interest and political participation. The results indicate a positive and significant correlation between political interest and political participation. The chapter then discusses the influence of various sociocultural factors on the relationship between political interest and political participation.

Chapter 6 includes a moderation analysis, which examines whether the relationship between political interest and political participation varies depending on sociocultural factors such as conventional gender roles, patriarchy, and gender socialization. The chapter also includes a section on regression analyses. Overall, Chapters 4,5 and 6 provide a detailed account of the significant findings of the quantitative data analysis, including the relationships between political interest,

political participation, and sociocultural factors. By examining these relationships, the chapter provides valuable insights into the factors influencing women's political participation.

Chapter 7 focuses on the results of the in-depth interviews conducted as part of the qualitative research. The chapter is divided into sections, each focusing on a specific political participation and interest concept and the moderating variables that shape these concepts. The first section of the chapter focuses on political participation and includes a thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews. This section examines the different forms of political participation of women. The next section of the chapter focuses on political interest and includes a thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews. This section explores the factors that shape women's political interests, including their values, beliefs, and life experiences. The next section of the chapter focuses on the moderating variables that shape women's political participation and interest. These include gender roles, patriarchy, and gender socialization. The section on gender roles explores how traditional gender roles and expectations can limit women's political engagement and how women challenge and resist these roles. The section on patriarchy examines how patriarchal structures and norms can limit women's political participation and how women navigate these obstacles. The section on gender socialization explores how gendered socialization processes shape women's political participation and how women resist and challenge these processes. Overall, Chapter 6 provides a detailed thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted as part of the research, highlighting the diverse and complex factors that shape women's political participation.

Chapter 8 presents the mixed-methods analysis, combining qualitative and quantitative findings. The chapter 8 begins by summarizing the key findings of the qualitative and quantitative analyses separately and then discusses how these findings are integrated and analyzed. The mixed-methods analysis uses a triangulation design, which involves comparing and contrasting the qualitative and quantitative results to identify patterns and themes across the data. The chapter explains the process of triangulation, which involves comparing the results from the two methods, identifying areas of agreement and disagreement, and exploring the reasons for these discrepancies. The research questions organize the analysis, and the data is then analyzed to determine patterns, themes, and relationships across the data. The chapter presents the mixed-

methods results for each research question and discusses the key findings from the integrated analysis. Overall, Chapter 8 presents a detailed and integrated analysis of the qualitative and quantitative findings, using a triangulation and matrix approach to identify patterns and themes across the data. The mixed-methods approach provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research topic, highlighting the complex and interrelated factors that shape women's political participation and interest.

Chapter 9 provides a detailed of the study findings and is divided into five sections, each of which summarizes the main findings of the research. The first section of the chapter summarizes the findings related to political participation. The second section of the chapter summarizes the findings related to political interest. The third section of the chapter summarizes the findings related to socio-cultural factors, including gender roles, patriarchy, and gender socialization. The study found that these factors play a significant role in shaping women's political participation and interest. This chapter also discusses the study's implications for policy and practice. The study highlights the need for policies and programs that address the structural and cultural barriers to women's political participation and interest. Overall, Chapter 9 provides a detailed and comprehensive summary of the study's key findings, highlighting the importance of addressing the structural and cultural barriers to women's political participation and interest.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review in this chapter serves as a critical exploration of various research studies centered on women's political participation and interest in political activities. This section offers a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge on the subject. Specifically, the chapter synthesizes insights from diverse research endeavors illuminating the intricate dynamics of women's political involvement. Moreover, it scrutinizes the moderating role of socio-cultural factors, as discerned through the lens of different research studies. By synthesizing these findings, we aim to provide a nuanced and informed foundation for the subsequent chapters, fostering a deeper comprehension of the complex interplay between women, politics, and the socio-cultural context.

The review of literature conducted for this chapter serves a dual purpose: not only does it offer an insightful overview of the existing research on women's political participation and interest, but it also plays a crucial role in identifying gaps in the current body of knowledge. By systematically examining a diverse range of scholarly works, the review highlights areas lacking research or inconsistencies, and inconclusive findings exist. This process of critical evaluation aids in pinpointing the limitations of current studies and provides a foundation for justifying the need for the present research. Therefore, the literature review is not merely a summary of past works; it serves as a strategic tool for shaping the focus and contribution of the subsequent chapters, ultimately helping to advance our understanding of women's engagement in politics.

Recent studies in global politics have shown that women's low representation in politics stems from various factors, including political, socioeconomic, and cultural (Shvedova, 2005) (Inglehart & Norris, P, 2003) (Chant, 2006) (Pearce, 1978) (Waylen, 2007) (Shvedova, 2005) (Bari, 2005) (Lawless & Fox, 2010) (Shvedova, 1998). Many research studies have discovered various factors that influence women's political participation worldwide (Alzuabi, 2016) (Bari, 2005) (Blattman, 2009) (Fleschenberg & Bari, 2015).

This chapter presents a relevant literature review on academic research about women's political participation.

2.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPAION

Various researchers have explored and conceptualized political Participation (Aggestam & True, 2021) (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999). According to different research studies, political process means active participation and engagement in political activities that influence their lives (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999). Active participation includes voting in elections, becoming a member of a political party, or taking part in the political campaigns of the political parties. Political participation also includes standing for office and influencing the decision-making process through public debates, joining a petition, participating in demonstrations and boycotts, writing letters to public officials/circulating petitions, or joining blogs through social media (Sahu & Yadav, 2018) (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999). According to Igwee, political activities include all the activities related to voting, campaigning, attending meetings, protesting, and contesting elections (Igwee, 2002). According to Verba and Brady, "there are many ways to participate in politics involving varying skills, time, and resources. People can work in an election campaign, contact public officials, circulate a petition, join a political organization, and donate money to a candidate or a cause. Serving on a local governing or school board, volunteering in the community, and running for office are forms of participation that require significant time and energy. The activities such as organizing demonstrations, protesting, and even rioting are also forms of participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999). "People can participate in support activities, which are more passive forms of political involvement. According to Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), political participation includes attending concerts or sporting events related to social causes, such as the "race for the cure of breast cancer." Support activities can lead to active participation because people can learn about social issues through these activities and decide to participate in politics (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999) (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993)". There are many other options to engage people in politics. People can write letters to members of parliament/public officials or involve themselves in the movement of civil disobedience. Some political activities, like boycotts and protest movements, require the collective demonstration of people to

attract the attention of public officials (Verba, Scholzman, & Brady, 1999) (Burns, Scholzman, & Verba, 2001).

Recent trends in political involvement among young individuals suggest an increasing inclination towards political action, albeit constrained by inadequate support and opportunities. As per a survey conducted in 2022, heightened youth engagement in activities such as volunteering for political campaigns, making financial contributions, attending protests, or participating in boycotts has been observed. Many young individuals perceive politics as integral to their identity. Nonetheless, a notable proportion of the youth is not actively participating in these political pursuits. Notably, individuals from historically marginalized groups face challenges in obtaining the requisite support and opportunities to partake in civic and political activities (Booth, 2023).

2.2 DIFFERENT FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Several factors affect women's political participation and voting decisions in local elections. Studies show that various social and demographic characteristics affect women's voting decisions. In Britain, there is a prominent gender gap in the political participation of men and women. Studies show that women lack political interest in elections and casting votes compared to men; men show more interest in politics and elections, and their turnout rates are higher than women in the UK. The primary reason for less turnout of women in an election is their belief that they cannot bring any political change or at least influence social change (Childs, 2004). However, the political participation of women has increased in Sweden. Women participated more in demonstrations and protests, and a significant increase in women in the public sector has been observed. A study shows that "The percentage of women participating in protests in Sweden is higher as 5.5% as compared to 1.9% in the UK". In the UK, women have high unemployment rates, making them hesitant to vote in the elections (Roth & Saunders, 2019).

Studies also show a gender gap in political participation in the USA. The research studied the association between involvement in electoral politics and gender and showed how participation in electoral politics is gendered. The electoral procedure of the USA influences the participation of women in politics.

The study concluded that women in American society are less involved in politics than men (Fitzgerald, 2013). A study has correlated social attributes such as gender, nationality, ideology, and political behaviour with political participation (Beauregard, 2014). A study in Australia correlated political involvement with different age groups, such as adolescents, grown-ups, and the oldest people (Homana, 2018). A study explored the effects of education on political participation, correlated education level with political participation and concluded that education is positively associated with political participation (Kurtbas, 2015). Previous studies have shown an association between family income and women's voting behaviour.

Increased income levels can improve people's interest in political activities. On the other hand, studies show that people with low-income levels take less interest in politics and elections and feel reluctant to vote (Solt, 2008) (Hines & Napier, 2009). The study by Slot 2008 finds that people with a higher income level show more interest in voting and elections. Studies also confirm political participation is higher in those countries where social benefits are provided to the people. Ethnicity is also associated with political participation, and the study concluded that ethnic groups feel marginalized and reluctant to participate in politics (Nguyen, Tran, & Bryant, 2015).

Recent research on women's involvement in political processes and their voting behavior in local elections has revealed significant insights. These studies indicate that women's voting decisions are influenced by their social and demographic characteristics, contributing to a discernible gender gap in political participation between men and women across several countries, including the UK and the USA.

Moreover, there has been a noteworthy surge in women's political engagement in Sweden, marked by increased participation in demonstrations and protests and a substantial rise in women's representation within the public sector.

The research further underscores that augmenting women's involvement in political affairs results in heightened investments in social issues that benefit society, fostering a more balanced gender representation in the political landscape. Notably, implementing gender quotas has proven effective in elevating women to positions of political authority. These quotas have also successfully promoted more inclusive outreach efforts, ensuring equitable engagement with male and female voters during election campaigns.

2.3 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

The present research focuses on the political participation of young, educated women in the urban areas of Pakistan. The participation of women in politics is very significant for promoting democracy in any country. The process of democracy can be successful with the equal participation of women in policy and decision-making. Scholars of politics and gender usually recognize that the presence of individual women in politics leads to attitudinal changes in society (Clayton, 2015). Kassa (2014) stated that equal participation of women in politics is compulsory to bring change and justice to the community (Kassa, 2014). Equal participation and political representation are good indicators of women's empowerment and its impact on the democratic spirit (Lovenduski, 2005). The primary focus of political participation is to give women the power to be involved in the labour force and support economic growth. Duflo (2011) studied the association between the financial involvement of women and political participation and found a positive link (Duflo 2011). On the other hand, Chakraborty (2017) stated that political participation and economic privileges are indirectly associated (Chakraborty, 2017).

Thus, political participation enables women to actively indulge in the political domain by providing them a platform. Political participation also helps women to acknowledge their value as agents of change and development at the national and international levels (Sharma, 2020). The political participation of women indicates the freedom of women to vote and actively participate in elections.

Likewise, political participation signifies the extent to which individuals are involved in political activities (Igwe, 2002). Political activities include all the activities that are related to voting, campaigning, attending meetings, protesting, and contesting elections (Igwe, 2002).

Kabeer, Charmes, and Wieringa (2003) explain that women's empowerment is a process of development from "awareness to the agency," which is also dependent on the education of people, available resources and means, and political conditions of society. Means, resources, education and awareness level of people, and political structure of the country are three prerequisites of women's political empowerment. Independent features impact peoples' perceptions, choices, awareness, and consciousness (Charmes & Wieringa, 2003). Women's empowerment signifies societal changes and describes the alternate resources through which women acquire authority and determine their societal position. There are several ways through which women can be empowered. Still, the most significant circumstances are socioeconomic policy measures, constitutional and legitimate modifications, and transformations in cultural norms and attitudes of people (O'Neil, Domingo, & Valters, 2014). Kapur (2001) stated that empowerment extensively concerns decentralizing authority or power and control. The fundamental objective of empowerment is to include marginalized people in the decision-making process (Kapur, 2001).

Women's empowerment suggests creating an atmosphere where policies of government and organizations are formulated to favour women (Patricia & Mulvaney, 2003). Empowerment is generally concerned with gender equality in every field of society, such as social, economic, political, and educational (Srivastava, 2001) (Shiva, 2001). According to Elliot (2008), economic empowerment requires changing the dependent status of women, equally involving them in the labour force to earn a decent wage and raise their standard of living (Elliott, 2008). Economic empowerment is associated with political empowerment. Political empowerment refers to equally involving women in politics and policy-making and promoting women's political interests (Tiwari, 2001). According to Pandey (2002), political empowerment is the capability of women to make effective decisions (Pandey, 2002).

Economic empowerment is closely intertwined with political empowerment, illustrating the intricate relationship between these two dimensions. Political empowerment, as defined in this context, pertains to the equal inclusion of women in political processes, policymaking, and the promotion of their political interests. It signifies an active engagement of women in political arenas, ensuring their participation in decision-making and fostering an environment where women possess the capability to make effective and influential choices within the political landscape. Incorporating economic empowerment into this framework underscores the pivotal role of financial independence and opportunities in bolstering women's political agency. This recognition of the interdependence between economic and political aspects contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of women's empowerment, acknowledging the mutual influence of these factors in shaping women's overall empowerment (Pathak & Tomar, 2012).

2.4 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

Numerous studies delve into the challenges impeding women's engagement in Pakistani politics, including social, economic, and religious barriers, which collectively contribute to their limited participation (Acker, 1992; Fleschenberg, 2012; Chant, 2006; Fleschenberg & Bari, 2015). Fleschenberg (2012) notes that the dominant role of male family members often sidelines female household members, restricting their involvement in managing family affairs within Pakistan.

Fleschenberg indicated different factors responsible for less political participation and violence against women include flaws in the execution of legal procedures, inadequate help from law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, and the bleak socioeconomic condition of women in Pakistan. In contrast, a male-dominated society's religious setup and power structure can never be overlooked in studying women's political participation (Fleschenberg, 2012). Another study stated that strict customs and traditions hinder women's political participation in Pakistan (Rematullah, 2002).

According to the survey by Rubab, Mustafa, and Nawaz, different factors hindering women's political involvement include the unequal distribution of resources between males and females and our patriarchal and male-dominated society. Religious dogmas also become a hurdle for women to participate in politics. In the tribal areas of Pakistan, women are not allowed to participate in elections due to their cultural traditions (Rubab, Mustafa, & Nawaz, 2020). According to Khan, social structure and norms in traditional societies are responsible for the gender gap in politics. Women's mobility is always controlled, and their choices are shaped by society's culture, where men and women have different preferences (Khan, 2017).

Various reasons are offered for the underrepresentation of women in politics. Women can be deemed to have achieved political participation when they are fully represented in central and provincial parliaments. Women can be more politically empowered when society gives them the liberty to decide their issues (Sohail, 2014). Women encounter hurdles globally when they attempt to participate in political activities. A study conducted in rural Pakistan stated that women who desire to participate in politics are suppressed and deprived due to the traditional notion that women are weak, require the support of the male person, and are unsuitable for the political work demands (Latif, Usman, Kataria, & Abdullah, 2015).

However, Naz and Ahmed 2012, concluded that sociocultural values and economic dependency make women inferior citizens, discouraging them from participating in politics (Naz & Ahmad, 2012). A research study mentioned that in a male-dominated Pakistani society, women's position in political parties is also not very specified as most are from feudal families with a specific culture. Any woman who has made headway in Pakistani politics has done so only because of her relation to powerful male politicians who have decided her political involvement (Latif, Usman, Kataria, & Abdullah, 2015). Bari 2005 stated in her research study that political parties in Pakistan are weak entities with a less democratic organizational structure, negatively affecting women's political representation.

As an organization, political parties show a highly traditional, male-dominated and dynastic political culture that blocks women's formal entrance into the political processes (Bari, 2005). According to Bari and Fleschenberg 2015, the structure of political parties severely restricts women's substantive representation in the political processes in Pakistan (Fleschenberg & Bari, 2015). Under such circumstances, women experience a passive political environment, and most of the time, many women psychologically internalize that perhaps the public sphere (politics) is not for them (Bilal, 2006). All attempts to improve society would be futile if women were not equally involved in politics and not provided adequate representation in politics (Naz & Ahmad, 2012).

2.5 POLITICAL INTEREST

Political interest is defined as people's interest in political events, campaigns, political parties, elections, and general interest in activities of Government (Berinsky, 2006) (Converse, 2000). It also indicates the inclination to participate politically because, without political interest, effective civic participation is not possible (Galston, 2004).

Political interest is a central feature of political involvement in the democratic process. Thus, political interest is a crucial prerequisite for the anticipated qualities of a sensible and independent citizen (Dalton & Klingemann, 2007). According to the study conducted by Armingeon (2014), they investigated the relationship between conventional and unconventional political activities with political interest. They concluded that political interest is positively associated with political activities. They further explained that people with more political interests are more involved in traditional and progressive political activities (Armingeon, 2014) (Quintelier & Van Deth, 2014). A comparative study comprising five countries and twenty-four elections on the national and regional level endorses that political interest is effectively associated with turnout (Blais & Daoust, 2020).

Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba (2015) explained political interest as people's responsiveness towards government and political affairs. Public understanding has been investigated by Almond and Verba (2015) by adopting two profound indicators: (1) the general interest of people towards political and governmental activities and (2) the involvement of the public in major political activities such as demonstrations and campaigns. I have adopted the definition of Almond and Verba 2015 for the present research.

The following description of political interest has been selected, "political interest is defined as the individual level of interest in government and political activities, such as voting behaviour, election campaigns, demonstrations as well as interest in political parties and their performance and how much people discuss political issues with friends and family" (Almond & Verba, 2015).

The present research study investigated the political interests of educated women. The literature indicates that more educated people are more interested in public and political affairs than less educated or uneducated people (Claes & Hooghe, 2017) (Hillygus, 2005). Education improves the probability of individuals' participation in politics because education endows the required skills, knowledge, understanding, and interest necessary for political involvement. Rosenstone and Hansen argue that education is an essential skill and knowledge needed for every individual in society. The knowledge imparted by education allows a citizen to understand the abstract subject of politics and to follow political campaigns. Highly educated people have a good understanding of the different societal issues. They can also assess the political candidates' performance and judge their behaviour (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993).

A study by Sondheimer and Green (2010) concluded that high educational achievements help people develop social networking skills and participate in community and political activities. A higher educational background ensures greater awareness, political understanding, and interest.

A higher level of awareness and knowledge about political issues ensures more involvement in political activities; political campaigns pay more attention to educated people and try to find their cooperation (Rolfe, 2004). Therefore, the level of education transforms people's perspectives and modifies social and political engagement (Sondheimer & Green, 2010).

2.6 LACK OF INTEREST OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL ISSUES

A baseline survey conducted by the Commonwealth Foundation in 2014 indicated that a lack of interest in political rights and opportunities leads to lower participation of women in the political processes in Pakistan. Most women have no interest in or access to information about political issues, civil society, and electoral processes. Women's lack of interest in political matters leads to fewer possibilities for political participation (Commonwealth Foundation, 2014). There are various reasons for women's lack of interest in political issues. However, the most profound sense investigated by the commonwealth foundation was the opinion of both men and women that participation of women in politics is an un-Islamic act. The survey respondents believed leadership in societies is men's job per their religion, and women should stay at home and look after the household and children. They believed women's participation in politics and public life would destroy family life (Commonwealth Foundation 2014). The survey further explored through a focus group discussion that sexual harassment is another reason for women's lack of interest in political activities. Respondents mentioned during the focus group discussion that sexual harassment in a male-dominated culture challenges women's political interest and participation. Participants further informed that the lack of protection mechanisms for women within political parties is one of the reasons for non-participation and lack of interest of women in political activities.

The survey concluded that most women were not interested in politics because of traditional gender roles, lack of knowledge about the political processes of their communities, and security issues (Commonwealth Foundation 2014).

2.7 LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

The focus of the present research is highly educated women. Studies suggest that the "increase in education has prompted more women to enter the labour force and has improved labour market opportunities for them" (Heath & Jayachandran, 2016). Higher education enables women to participate in the labour force and political activities. The existing literature supports the positive correlation between women's level of education and their political participation, in which highly educated women show more interest in political activities. A high level of education enables women to discuss political issues and empowers them to be involved in political activities outside the home compared to women with less education (Lovenduski & Hills, 2018). There is a strong association between formal education and the political participation of women and men. Based on their research, American sociologists Burns, Schlozman, and Verba emphasize that education influences women's political participation in society (Burns, Nancy, Schlozman, & Verba, 2001). They explored the direct and indirect aspects of formal education influencing women's political participation. Acquisition of knowledge and communication skills are the immediate effects of education, which are helpful for public debate. Additionally, knowledge and communication skills are essential for training in political discourses.

There are various indirect effects of education on political participation, including voluntary engagement in school, clubs, sports, and school newspapers; these engagements provide young people with early training for political activities and a good chance to employ leadership skills. Further, young students can develop and improve civic collaboration, arbitration, and bureaucratic and organizational skills that benefit political participation. Higher education enhances access to high-income employment, which provides the resources for political involvement. People can join non-political organizations such as charitable organizations or any religious movement, which can be a recruitment ground for political participation (Burns, Nancy, Schlozman & Verba, 2001). Education improves the probability of individuals' participation in politics because it endows the required skills and knowledge that are mandatory for political awareness.

Rosenstone and Hansen argue that education is the essential skill and knowledge required by every individual in society. The knowledge imparted by education allows a citizen to understand the abstract subject of politics and to follow political campaigns. High educational achievements help people develop social networking skills and participate in community and political activities.

Higher educational background ensures a higher level of awareness and more involvement in political activities; political campaigns pay more attention to educated people and try to find their cooperation (Rolfe, 2004). Therefore, the level of education transforms people's perspectives and modifies social and political engagement (Sondheimer & Green, 2010). The European Social Survey conducted in 2002 confirms that individuals' education level is correlated with their participation in elections; highly educated people are more likely to participate in elections and voting behaviour than those with less education or primary education.

However, this correlation does not prove that higher education ensures higher political participation (Brade, Raphael, Piopiunik, & Marc, 2016). Two education models correlate the level of education with political participation; the first is the "absolute education model," which examines education as a cause. This model brings about the idea that the cognitive ability of individuals can be enhanced with the level of education, which ultimately escalates the "civic skills" and political interest. Educated people can develop the required knowledge for political participation. Moreover, different training on politics, elections, and citizenship in high school may positively affect the student's voting behaviour. The second "pre-adult socialization model" does not consider education as a direct cause of political participation. Instead, this model is based on the notion that education is correlated with additional fundamental aspects, for example, the income level of the family, "political socialization as a child," and individual personality traits such as inherent intellectual capability. These factors influence the level of education and aptitude for political participation of individuals. This model emphasizes that education does not directly affect political participation (Brade, Raphael, Piopiunik & Marc, 2016). Research shows that different countries have different associations with education and political participation.

Pelkonen (2012) studied the effects of educational reforms in Norway and found that education has no significant impact on different types of political participation (Pelkonen, 2012). Siedler (2010) analyzed the educational reforms in Germany and stated that there is less evidence of the relationship between education and political participation (Siedler, 2010). Berinsky and Lenz (2011) similarly find that education has no association with political involvement (Berinsky, 2006) (Berinsky & Lenz, 2011).

Moretti and Oreopoulos (2004) find a positive cause-and-effect relationship between education and political participation in the United States. Still, for the United Kingdom, the situation is contrary (Milligan, Moretti, & Oreopoulos, 2004). Although many studies confirm that education has no association with voting behaviour (Pelkonen, 2012) (Siedler, 2010). However, studies confirm that knowledge acquisition positively correlates with political awareness and interest (Milligan, Moretti & Oreopoulos, 2004). Pyeatt and Yanus (2018), Dolan (2011), and Fox (2011) explored ways to minimize the gender gap in voting during elections. They determined that the sociopolitical awareness of young women should be increased to enhance their political participation; they also concluded that education could positively affect females' political participation. Education stipulates women's awareness and knowledge that political fields are directly related to their lives. If they desire to bring changes in their lives, they should be involved in politics equally to men (Dolan, 2011) (Fox, 2011) (Pyeatt & Yanus, 2018). Many studies explored that in Pakistan, women remain away from political activities due to less education and a lack of interest in political issues (Naz & Ahmad, 2012).

A study by Khan et al. (2021) in rural Pakistan explored that women's education is a significant factor in political participation, and educated women have more political knowledge than uneducated women. They also stated that the minor involvement of women in political activities is due to less education, and political participation can be enhanced with a higher level of education (Khan, Jawad, Sarir, & Shafi, 2021).

2.8 SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Several studies discuss the obstacles that hinder women's participation in politics, e.g., social, cultural & religious barriers that contribute to their less Participation (Acker, 1992) (Fleschenberg & Bari, 2015) (Chant, 2006). Kunovich and Paxton point out that cultural factors, women's education levels, and their involvement in the labour force (economic independence) shape some structural factors that affect their political participation.

Their structural explanations suggest that women need intellectual and financial resources (education and job experience) to participate in politics (Kunovich & Paxton, 2005). "Therefore, they also support other ideological arguments and suggest that cultural ideologies can hinder women's representation even in the presence of favourable political systems and socioeconomic conditions" (Kunovich & Paxton, 2005) (Rule & Zimmerman, 1994). "To some scholars such as Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox in *It Still Takes a Candidate*, the traditional factors contributing to women's underrepresentation can be categorized into three main aspects. These sociocultural, institutional, and psychological" factors affect women's political participation (Lawless & Fox, 2010). Rule (1994) stated that structural constraints exist and influence women's political representation worldwide (Rule & Zimmerman, 1994). Various reasons are offered for the underrepresentation of women in politics. Kabeer (1994) explained the obstacles faced by women in political participation. Kabeer described the social and cultural factors associated with women's insignificant political participation.

Women's primary obstacle is male dominance (patriarchy) in politics and household responsibilities (conventional gender roles). Kabeer emphasizes that changes in one institution (for example, the educational status of women) lead to changes in other institutions like family, attitude (patriarchy) towards women, gender roles, and political participation (Kabeer N, 1994). Another study stated that in male-dominated societies like Pakistan, the prevalent cause of women's underrepresentation in political parties and activities is society's steering of women away from political activities.

In Pakistan, security issues and the belief that political decision-making and public responsibilities are a man's job in which women are assumed to have neither interest nor expertise (Zaheruddin, Kalthum, & Hassan, 2016). According to George (2019), women's active participation in political activities, both within and beyond the voting process, is significantly influenced by societal norms embedded in broader social structures. A pivotal factor contributing to the challenges women encounter is the deeply rooted patriarchal system, where males predominantly hold familial control and decision-making authority. The division of labor remains distinctly gendered, with prevailing social norms making it more challenging for women to transition from traditional domestic roles to public roles outside the home (Kangas et al., 2015).

2.8.1 Male Dominance in Politics (Patriarchy)

Various cultural factors influence the political participation of women. In patriarchal societies, political activities and political issues are considered male-dominated fields. Due to male dominance, the political involvement of women is not appreciated. Thus, women are expected to avoid political domains (Cole & Sabik, 2010). Several studies show that people consider politics masculine and do not intend to include women in this domain (Romer, (Romer, 1990)1990) (Rudman & Fairchild, 2007). Smith et al. (2007) explained that generally, people prefer to select male representatives to run political departments, and politics is considered a profession of males.

In contrast, women contestants confront discriminatory attitudes of people if they intend to enter this profession (Connell, 2005) (Heldman, Carroll & Olson, 2005). Though culture affects women's ability to participate in politics across the globe, cultural beliefs towards women in politics vary among countries. Culture often influences people's thinking; people conceptualize things around them according to their culture.

"Culture plays a role in how women understand and perceive the concept of politics and their abilities to participate effectively in politics." According to Fox and Lawless, "the most potent explanation for the gender gap in political ambition is that women are less likely than men to view themselves as qualified to enter the electoral arena" (Lawless & Fox, 2010). Shvedova also finds that women often perceive politics as a "dirty game" they wish not to be associated with (Shvedova, 2005). According to Kunovich and Paxton, electoral systems can hinder or promote women's representation, and the political system has different demands for women participants (Kunovich & Paxton, 2005).

Additionally, people think that politicians and political leaders should have masculine attributes because masculine personalities are more appropriate for running political executive offices (McGinley, 2009). Patriarchal structures influence people's perspectives and bring many changes, consequently affecting women candidates' political ambitions and confidence (Norris & Lovenduski, 1995). Gender biases in male-dominated societies are another primary reason that excludes women from the political scenario and stigmatizes them as an inexperienced and unpopular choice for people to run for political office. Strong patriarchies do not allow women to qualify as potential candidates and fully participate in political activities (Krook, Lovenduski, & Squires, 2009). It is evident from survey research (PEW Research Center, 2012) that nearly half of the world's population (both men and women) believe men are more appropriate to be solid political leaders than women.

Pakistan is one of the first three countries where gender discrimination and bias against women are very high; mostly, people believe in Pakistan that women cannot be successful political leaders. Nevertheless, in Western societies, the behaviour of people towards the political participation of women swiftly fluctuates as compared to underdeveloped Asian communities. However, the older citizens in developed societies still believe that women cannot be sound political leaders and that males should look after political affairs. However, the younger generation's perception is entirely different, as they consider women's political participation indispensable for developing a country (Norris & Lovenduski, 1995).

According to radical feminists, patriarchy is the primary determinant of women's discrimination. Gender discrimination is a global issue. United Nations surveyed 75 countries, which comprise about 80% of the world's population. They stated that almost 90% of both men and women hold prejudice against women that obstructs equal participation of women in politics, employment, and education. The survey further stated that there was no evidence of complete gender equality in any country (United Nations Development Programme, 2020). Women work in many sectors of the Government, and most sectors function under men's leadership.

In the present research, patriarchy is a significant moderating factor that weakens women's political participation in Pakistan. One of the most influential scholars who theorizes patriarchy is Sylvia Walby. Sylvia Walby describes "patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men control the choices as well mobility of women, dominate her thoughts and exploit her" (Walby, 1990, p. 20; Walby, 1989, p. 227). Walby argues that politics is traditionally considered the public sphere, and women are expected to remain in the private sphere of household and family. Male dominance can be observed throughout the political structure of traditional societies. Walby has divided patriarchy into two spheres: one is the public sphere, and the second is the private sphere. Politics is considered a public sphere, which traditionally is not a place for women who are expected to be a part of the private sphere, namely household and family. However, public patriarchy does not prevent women's political participation but rather subordinates women in every field of public or politics (Walby, 1990, p. 228) (Walby, 1989, p. 227).

2.8.2 Conventional Gender Roles

Conventional roles restrict women's inclusion in the labour market and politics; additionally, women's socioeconomic status determines their involvement in political activities (Kangas & Rostgaard, 2007). Women's socioeconomic situation is crucial to women's participation in political decision-making (Kassa, 2015). Gender norms are also contributing factors that affect the political participation of women.

In patriarchal societies, these norms restrict women from participating in political activities equally to men (Tagoe & Abakah, 2015). According to Munemo 2017, participating in demonstrations, running a campaign, and actively participating in political activities are male-dominated. However, the traditional societies do not acknowledge the involvement of women in such activities where the intermingling of men and women is considered cultural upheavals" (Munemo, 2017). Historically, participation in political activities has always been associated with males, and politics has been considered a men's domain. Butler concluded that patriarchy hampers the involvement of women in political activities and compels women to look after households and children (Butler, 1999) (UN Women, 2012).

In traditional societies, gender roles are defined by the culture where women are expected to be involved in the household, and men are considered breadwinners. These gender roles also influence women's political participation (UN WOMEN, 2012). A study by Kangas and Rostgaard (2007) concluded that conventional roles performed by women restrict their inclusion in the labour market and politics; additionally, women's socioeconomic status also determines their involvement in political activities (Kangas & Rostgaard, 2007). Stacey and Price (1981) associated sociocultural factors' influence on women's political participation and suggested that more obstacles lead to less political participation. They stated that the involvement of women in household and family responsibilities restricts their participation in politics. Carole Pateman argued in her book *The Sexual Contract* that "hierarchical divisions of labour" at the household level place the husband in the topmost position, and the husband is considered the "representative of the whole family." "The sexual contract" of marriage underscores the presence and involvement of women in domestic activities and discounts them from participating in politics. Pateman argued that family is best comprehended as a "contract before social contract."

This social contract of marriage was built on the foundation of the exploitation of women and the domination of men who control her mobility and standpoint (Patemen, 1990).

Global findings on gender differences in political participation show that men participate in political activities more than women (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). However, other scholars argue that women's involvement in political activities differs from that of men (Coffé & Bolzendahl, 2010).

2.8.3 Gender Socialisation

Studies on women and gender socialization show that women are socialized to be more passive, caring, and sensitive. On the other hand, men are trained to be more authoritative, self-reliant, and leadership-oriented. Coffe and Bolzendahl (2010) argue that most obstacles to women's participation in politics are embedded in the gender socialization process (Coffe & Bolzendahl, 2010). The different socialization of men and women is a significant obstacle that hampers women's involvement in political activities (Kibanja, 2006). Extra socialization is the cause of different political behaviour of men and women. Coffe and Bolzendahl (2010) studied gender differences in politics. They concluded that most obstacles that moderate women's political participation are embedded in the gender socialization process (Coffe & Bolzendahl, 2010).

The different socialization of men and women is a significant obstacle that hampers the involvement of women in political activities (Kibanja, 2006). Extra socialization is the cause of the diverse political behaviour of men and women. Stacey and Price argue that women's barriers to contemporary political achievement are internalized and exist in the social structure. They also consider that gendered socialization restricts women from actively participating in politics (Stacey & Price, 1981). People learn the cultural system of society, specific norms, and values through socialization (Lonner & Malpass, 1994). In every culture, men and women have different social roles. They are expected to behave according to society's normative pattern, taught through socialization.

Differences in the political behaviours of men and women are related to the socialization process, which conventionally designates different gender roles for men and women (Kibanja & Munene, 2015). Schwartz's (1994) cultural values theory explains differences in political participation. The theory suggests that cultural values are a universal organization of human motivations and considers that individuals learn the values through socialization (Schwartz, 2006). This process of socialization influences people's actions.

In Pakistani society, the socialization process of men and women in terms of political participation is different. Men are socialized to be more confident and remain in public spaces (politics), and women are associated with being passive and dependent and staying in private areas (household) (Bari, 2000). According to the study, different factors hindering women's political involvement include the unequal distribution of resources between males and females and our patriarchal and male-dominated society. Religious dogmas also become a hurdle for women to participate in politics.

In the tribal areas of Pakistan, women are not allowed to participate in elections due to their cultural traditions (Rubab, Mustafa, & Nawaz, 2020). According to Khan, traditional societies' Social structure and norms are responsible for the gender gap in politics. Women's mobility is always controlled, and their choices are shaped by society's culture, where men and women have different preferences (Khan, 2017).

Research has shown that gender socialization plays a significant role in shaping political interest and participation in Pakistan. A study conducted by Javeed and Yousuf (2019) found that gender socialization has a substantial impact on women's political engagement in Pakistan.

The study found that women with greater exposure to gender-equal attitudes and behaviours were likely to participate in political activities and express interest in politics (Javeed & Yousuf, 2019). Another study by Sabri and Bano (2017) found that gender socialization influenced women's attitudes toward political participation in Pakistan.

The study found that women exposed to more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours were more likely to view political participation as a means of promoting gender equality and were more likely to express interest in political activities (Sabri & Bano, 2017).

2.9 POLITICS AS DETERRING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN

The vicious nature of political affairs within South Asia often discourages women from participating in political activities. Violence is a usual factor in South Asian politics. Female candidates and their families often face harassment and violence during elections. Politics is considered a highly male-dominated sphere in India and Pakistan. Women in Pakistan are usually prohibited from entering the male-dominated political sphere¹⁹. "Violence against women in politics (VAWIP) is violence that occurs within the political sphere but that specifically targets women" (UN Women, 2014). Such violence restricts women's mobility and hampers their participation in politics. VAWIP has been defined as "The connotation of any act of aggression that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women politicians, as well as the risk of such acts, oppression or illogical deprivation of freedom in public or private life."

A study that included three countries, Pakistan, India, and Nepal, concluded that there is a connection between violence and discrimination against women and political participation (UN Women, 2014). Women representatives faced violence during political demonstrations and protests, preventing women from entering politics. Women representatives are also excluded from the decision-making process despite being elected members²⁰. UN women report 2014 confirms that women politicians in

Pakistan faced the issues of character assassination and verbal violence. Prominent women politicians such as Nilofar Bakhtyar, Hina Rabbani Khar, and Sherry

¹⁹ www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/VAW/PDF

²⁰ Institute of Social Sciences. Panchayat Update: February 2012. Available from: www.issin.org/PRUWEnglishWFebruaryW2012.

Rehman have faced scandals of character assassination. Their political parties have released no official statement to support them and condemn violence. The report confirms that in Pakistan, the assassination of women politicians is observed as a more significant threat that discourages women from participating in politics (UN Women, 2012).

2.9.1 Restricted Mobility of Women as a Barrier to Political Participation

In Patriarchal societies, men act as "gatekeepers" within the household, and the involvement of women in the public sphere (political participation) is dependent on the will and attitude of their men (Thomson, 2015). A study by Jayachandran 2015 indicated that restrictions on women's mobility are correlated with reduced female schooling and career opportunities. Ultimately, these restrictions would also constrain women's political participation (Jayachandran, 2015). Apparent limits on women's freedom of movement and mobility are standard in many developing countries.

Hanmer and Klugman 2016 studied the causes of women's mobility in 29 developing countries and reported that their husbands control women's mobility. Women were not allowed to visit their female friends or contact their relatives. Their spouses insisted on informing the whereabouts of friends or relatives before leaving home (Hanmer & Klugman, 2016). A study conducted by Cheema et al., 2022 showed that in Pakistan, women's mobility is controlled by men because most of the time, women do not own a means of personal transportation. Men usually control the crucial means of transport required for political participation (Cheema, Khan, Liaqat, & Khan, 2022). The involvement of women in political activities may depend on the willingness of men to share their resources. In India and Pakistan, women cannot even visit public spaces without the company of men due to security issues (Jayachandran, 2015) (Cheema, Khan, Liaqat, & Khan, 2022).

2.9.2 The Attitude of Political Parties Toward Females

Another significant obstacle that hampers women's political participation is the attitude of political parties. Political parties prefer male over female candidates due to the extensive choice of voters and consider men the most suitable and potential candidates due to predetermined gender roles. Although females are motivated to participate in politics, they are still facing the global stereotype challenges of "politics as men's domain" (Chafetz & Dworkin, 1987) (Innocent, Anthony, & Nwaoha, 2014)

The ideology of political parties affects the political participation of women. Different political parties have different behaviour regarding the involvement of women in political activities. Conventionally, political parties that belong to the conservative and rightist ideologies hold more patriarchal views and restrict the representation of women in the high-ranking levels of these parties. A "religion-conservative gender climate" ideology has emerged recently. This gender climate has related the family and motherhood with religion, traditions, and customs and argues that the prime responsibility of women is household and reproduction (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün, 2017). This emerging gender climate ideology supports patriarchal values and excludes women from politics. This religio-conservative ideology is also related to Wallby's framework, in which she explains that women are expected to remain in the private (household) sphere, and men should be actively involved in the public (politics) sphere. Most of Pakistan's political parties are conservative and follow the rightist ideology. Patriarchal structure and male dominance are very prominent among the political parties of Pakistan.

These parties do not consider women appropriate for politics, and parties prefer males over females while nominations are made. Political parties nominated 96.5% of men, and the share of women was 3.5% (UNDP, 2007) (Yusuf, 2013). However, political parties ensure the participation and inclusion of women in public gatherings, political meetings, and during election campaigns. However, women were only considered idle vote banks, and their nomination for a political representative was not given due importance (Zakar, 2014).

Such attitude toward political participation declares intense gender discrimination and shows the critical factor that political parties are not interested in addressing women's issues (Yusuf, 2013). A baseline survey conducted in Pakistan by the Commonwealth Foundation (2014) concluded that the attitude of political parties towards women is not friendly. They do not involve women in political campaigns. Men dominate the leadership of political parties, and they are very reluctant to talk about women's rights (Commonwealth Foundation, 2014).

2.10 DIFFICULT ELECTORAL PROCEDURE REGISTRATION/CASTE OF VOTE

According to Kunovich and Paxton, the complex electoral procedure and voting registration are significant obstacles to women's political participation. Registration of votes and participation in elections are essential elements of women's political involvement compared to other activities (Kunovich & Paxton, 2005).

Pakistan's male-dominated and patriarchal political culture opposes, excludes, and always restrains women from registration as voters. People in Pakistan consider politics to be an exclusive sphere of men. There are several reasons for the low percentage of women as voters. First and foremost, the low registration of women voters is caused by the negligence of political parties. Political parties have never paid serious attention to the issue of women's vote registration (National Commission on the Status of Women, 2009). Most political parties overlooked their female workers and women in administrative positions while composing party manifestos. A few civil society groups and organizations observed the 2008 elections. In contrast, a few other organizations investigated the manifestoes of political parties concerning their program and commitments on the issue of women's participation in elections.

The survey centered on women's concerns. According to gender critique of manifestos of seven major political parties, there were no precise approaches or plans for women's political participation.

Manifestos of all political parties were perfect on paper but were not practically implemented. Participation of women in political activities was never a focus of political parties because women have been continuously ignored in decision-making in most party affairs (National Commission on the Status of Women, 2009). A study by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) on the 2008 elections showed a severe decrease in female voters in Pakistan, especially in FATA²¹. According to the report, the number decreased by around 45% in NWFP. A reduction of 96% in voters was observed due to the military operations in FATA after the 9/11 attacks in the US. The report indicated that Female voters decreased by 39% compared to male voters by 18% all over Pakistan due to security issues. There were 40% of women voters in 2002, dropping to 30% in the 2008 elections. The significant reason for women's low turnout is confusion among women voters. Their votes were not appropriately registered, and they could not seek guidance to resolve this issue.

Further, household responsibilities and sociocultural constraints are other significant factors in women's low turnout. Due to far-off polling stations and the lack of segregated polling stations for women, women found it difficult to go out in the public domain to vote (National Commission on the Status of Women, 2009).

2.11 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Modern theories have discussed young women's political participation (Chou, 2017; Pickard, 2019). I have selected the Rational Choice Theory to investigate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. Adam Smith is the originator of the Rational Choice Theory. "His essay "An Inquiry into Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" from 1776 proposed human nature's tendency toward self-interest resulted in prosperity". Rational Choice theory is widely used in different disciplines of social sciences such as economics, sociology, psychology, and political science.

²¹ Federally Administered Tribal Areas

The rational choice theory asserts that individuals have agency over their decisions. Irrational instincts, societal norms, or environmental factors do not influence them. Instead, they weigh their actions' potential benefits and consequences based on logical considerations. In my study, I have examined how educated women use their capacity for rational decision-making to engage in political participation. Rational choice theory is commonly applied to explain voting behaviour, the actions of politicians, and the handling of political issues. The theory links an individual's political interest with their personal choice. It suggests that people choose the most advantageous options based on self-interest. Rational choice theory can shed light on voting behaviour and political interest by focusing on individual actions. Specifically, it proposes that individuals participate in political demonstrations and campaigns when the perceived benefits outweigh the costs. In my research, I have drawn upon rational choice theory to explore the relationship between educated women's political interests and political participation.

Various sociocultural factors moderate the political participation of educated women. I have studied the moderating effect of sociocultural factors. I have also used the framework of "sociocultural factors which are associated with the low political participation of women by Currell and Kirkpatrick 1974. Educated women are my target population. Political interest of educated women is the independent variable, social and cultural factors are the moderator variables, and political participation is the dependent variable.

The third objective of my study is to explore sociocultural factors that moderate educated women's political participation. I have related my third objective to the framework of Currell and Kirkpatrick 1974. Currell's "Political Woman" (1974) is a study examining women's political participation. Currell is a leading British analyst, and she described the sociocultural factors associated with women's low political participation. Her study also highlights the challenges and initiatives related to women's political participation in different contexts. She explained that the insignificant participation of women in politics is due to women's reproductive roles and household responsibilities.

She also emphasized that the socialization of women and male dominance (patriarchy) are significant factors that hamper their participation in politics. Girls are socialized to be more passive and submissive than boys (Currell M., 1974).

Kirkpatrick's "Political Woman" (1974) study explores the careers of women who have achieved significant political power and the obstacles they faced. Kirkpatrick's standpoint emphasizes the importance of women's political participation and the need to understand the challenges they face in their careers to promote gender equality in politics. The standpoint of Kirkpatrick (1974) is relevant to my moderating variables that the most significant obstacles to women's political participation are conventional gender roles/ household responsibilities, patriarchy, and gender socialization. (Kirkpatrick, 1974; Currell, 1974).

In my research, I have found that the standpoint of Currell and Kirkpatrick, which posits that conventional gender roles, patriarchy, and gender socialization are significant obstacles to women's political participation, is not entirely applicable. My detailed analysis of mixed methods data suggests that women have found ways to challenge and overcome these obstacles. Further information on this is provided in Chapter 4 of my dissertation.

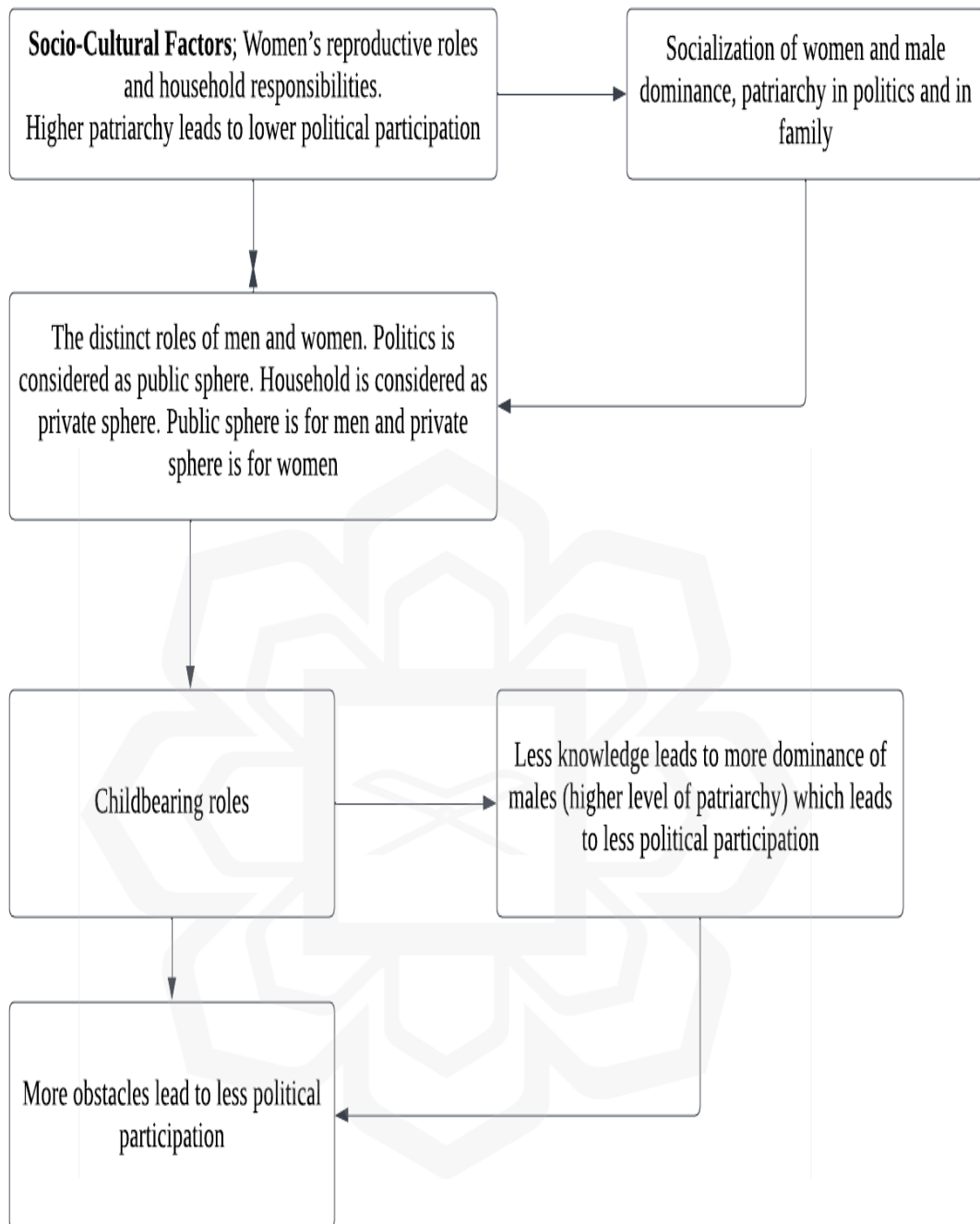


Figure 2.1 The moderating role of social-cultural factors which are associated with the low political participation of women by Currell and Kirkpatrick (1974)

Source: Model created from the theory of Currell M., 1974 and Kirkpatrick, 1974.

I have investigated the role of sociocultural factors that moderate (strengthen) the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. My study specifically explained how sociocultural factors such as patriarchy, conventional gender roles, and gender socialization moderate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. I have developed the following model where I merged two theories, the theory of Rational Choice (Adam Smith, 1776) and the theory of sociocultural factors (Currell M., 1974 and Kirkpatrick, 1974).

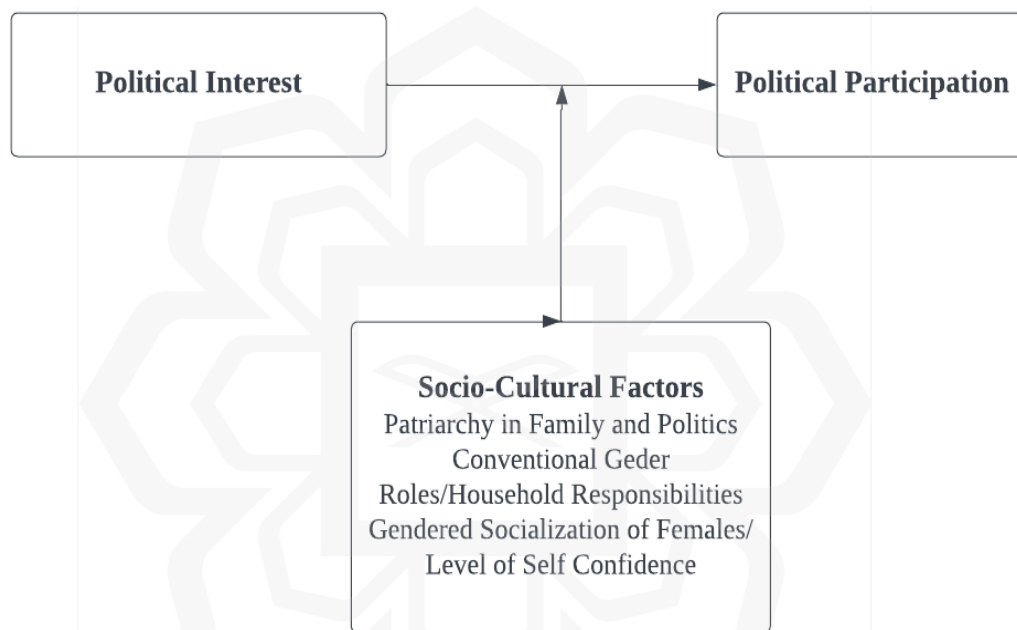


Figure 2.2 Political participation of educated women: moderating role of sociocultural factors.

Source: Created by the researcher based on the theory of “Rational Choice and Sociocultural theory”.

I have prepared the following hypothesis.

- H1: There is a correlation between political interest and political participation of educated women.
- H2: There is an association between conventional gender roles and the political participation of educated women.
- H3: There is an association between patriarchy in the family and educated women's political participation.
- H4: There is an association between patriarchy in politics and the political participation of educated women.
- H5: There is an association between gender socialisation and the political participation of educated women.

2.12 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES

2.12.1 *Political Participation*

In the context of the present study, following definition of political participation has been selected. “Political participation encompasses a spectrum of activities through which individuals engage in the democratic process and contribute to shaping the governance of their society. It involves actions such as registering to vote, casting ballots in elections, affiliating with political parties, actively participating in political campaigns, joining demonstrations or protests, making financial contributions to political candidates, and supporting civic initiatives like circulating petitions. Essentially, political participation reflects the extent to which individuals involve themselves in the various facets of the political landscape, exerting their influence and contributing to the functioning of a democratic society (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999)”. This definition serves as a guiding principle, facilitating a thorough exploration of political engagement within the specific parameters of the research objectives.

For the present study, I have selected eight indicators of political participation. By using these indicators, I have developed the political participation scale.

The political participation indicators are as follows: 1) Have you registered your vote? 2) Cast the vote in the last election of 2018. 3) Have you Cast a vote for the political party of your choice 4) Are you a member of a political party? 5) Have you taken part in a political campaign? 6) Have you ever organized/participated in a demonstration/protest? 7) Have you ever donated money to a political candidate? 8) Have you ever circulated a petition?

2.12.2 Political Interest

Almond and Verba (2015) defined political interest by adopting the two philosophical indicators. One is the general political interest of people in political affairs and Government, and the second is the participation of people in major political activities such as campaigns and protests. For the present study, the chosen definition of political interest aligns with the research objectives, emphasizing a dual philosophical approach.

The first indicator, centered on the general political interest of individuals in political affairs and government, serves as a foundational measure of passive engagement and awareness. This aligns with the study's aim to gauge participants' baseline level of interest. The second indicator, focusing on active participation in major political activities such as campaigns and protests, reflects the study's interest in understanding more dynamic and participatory dimensions of political interest. By adopting this comprehensive definition, the study seeks to capture a holistic understanding of political interest, considering both passive and active forms of engagement among participants within the specific context and scope of the research (Almond & Verba, 2015).

The following indicators are selected for the political interest of educated women. 1) General interest in politics/governmental activities. 2) Interest in election campaigns. 3) Interest in demonstrations. 4) Interest in political parties and their performance. 5) Discuss political issues with friends/family.

2.12.3 Convectional Gender Roles

For the current study, the selected definition of conventional gender roles centers around the notion that the involvement of women in household chores and family responsibilities is perceived as a traditional gender role. This definition is foundational for investigating societal expectations and perceptions regarding gendered responsibilities within the family context.. The study adopts a lens that considers how such expectations influence women's political participation (UN WOMEN, 2012).

I have selected the following indicators of conventional gender roles for my study. 1) Household chores: 2) Taking care of my family members/their needs. 3) Taking care of the children/ siblings (family members). 4) Educated women are more concerned with home-related matters than political issues. 5) Home should be the ultimate place for educated women.6) Educated women are least concerned about political happenings outside the home.

2.12.4 Gender Socialisation

In Pakistani society, the socialization process of men and women in terms of political participation is different. In Pakistan, men are socialized to be more confident and remain in public spaces (politics), and women are socialized to be passive and dependent and stay in private areas (households). Women are subordinate to the will of their husbands, who represent their standpoint in public and control their mobility (Bari, 2000). For the current research study, this definition has been deliberately adopted to investigate the nexus between gender socialization and political participation among women. The study seeks to understand how ingrained societal expectations and norms impact women's political engagement as outlined in the definition. By adopting this definition, the study aims to explore whether and how gender socialization influences women's confidence and agency in participating in public spaces, particularly in the political domain. The focus on the dichotomy between public and private spheres aligns with the study's objective of unraveling how traditional gender roles might hinder or facilitate women's political participation.

This definition serves as a theoretical framework to analyze the interplay between gender socialization, societal expectations, and women's engagement in the political sphere, offering insights into the broader dynamics shaping women's roles in public life. I have selected the following indicators for gender socialization. 1) Women are more submissive compared to male family members. 2) Women's submissive nature restricts them from participating in political activities. 3) Women's shy nature restricts them from participating in political activities. 4) Women feel confident participating in political activities 5) Gender (mix) political gatherings are inappropriate for women.

2.12.5 Patriarchy

"Patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women." Politics is traditionally considered the public sphere, and women are expected to remain in the private sphere of household and family (Walby, 1990, p. 20; Walby, 1989, p. 227).

By selecting this definition for the present study, the research aims to investigate the impact of patriarchal structures on women's political participation. This definition serves as a foundational concept for understanding the power dynamics and societal expectations that shape women's roles in both public and private domains. In the context of the study's objective, which is examining women's political participation, the adoption of this definition implies an exploration of how patriarchal structures act as barriers or facilitators to women's engagement in political activities. The delineation of politics as a traditionally male-dominated public sphere and the expectation for women to remain confined to the private sphere sets the stage for investigating how these dynamics influence women's agency, opportunities, and involvement in political processes.

I have selected the following indicators of patriarchy in the family. 1) Male members of the family control women's mobility regarding political activities. 2) Male members influence the political choices of women. 3)

Male members of the family discuss political issues with women. 4) Subordination of women (to male family members) is a hurdle to women's political participation. I have further selected the indicators of patriarchy in politics. 1) Males have more dominance in politics than females. 2) Men are more appropriate to participate in political activities than women. 3) Pakistan's political system supports male involvement in politics compared to female involvement. 4) Men can run a political campaign in a better way. 5) Complex political procedure (Registration of vote and casting of the vote) restricts women from participating in political activities.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter, the researcher outlines the methodology employed in the present study, which embraces a mixed methods approach to investigate the intricacies of educated women's political participation. A mixed methods design combines both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The chapter begins by introducing the convergent parallel mixed methods design, elucidating its rationale for simultaneously collecting and analyzing both types of data. The researcher highlights the use of open-ended, semi-structured interviews for qualitative data and closed-ended surveys for quantitative data, emphasizing the distinct analytical processes for each. The section also underscores the importance of comparing findings from both types of data to ensure a robust and reliable interpretation of results.

In the present study, the researcher has employed a mixed methods approach. Mixed methods combine qualitative and quantitative research and data in a research study. In this design, the qualitative data tended to be open-ended (structured), and responses were not predetermined. Quantitative data usually includes closed-ended answers already determined by questionnaires (Creswell, 2014).

"Convergent parallel mixed methods design in which the researcher combines quantitative and qualitative data and comprehensively analyses the research problem (Creswell, 2014). The researcher has collected both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. The researcher has collected qualitative data through structured, in-depth interviews and quantitative data through surveys. Both types of data were analyzed separately. The researcher has compared the results to check whether the findings confirm or contradict each other.

Through mixed methods design, the researcher has collected diverse data types, which have provided a thorough understanding of present research objectives.

Researcher assumed that quantitative or qualitative data cannot answer the research questions of present study separately. Therefore, study began with a quantitative survey.

Results have been generalized to a study population which are educated women of urban areas of Pakistan. The study's second phase focused on in-depth qualitative interviews to collect detailed understandings of educated women regarding their political participation. The following section provides details of the quantitative and qualitative methodology.

3.1 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Social researchers consider political participation a significant research area. Political participation is investigated globally by applying a positivistic approach, and in studying political participation, most researchers used a quantitative approach. Likewise, positivist philosophy researchers also utilized a quantitative research approach in exploring the underlying relationship between political interest and political participation (Aggestam & True, 2021) (Almond & Verba, 2015) (Awan, 2016) (Bimber, Cantijoch, Copeland, & Gibson, 2015) (Blais & Daoust, 2020). A quantitative research approach was employed to investigate the relationship between political interest and political participation of Pakistani university female students—the present study used a cross-sectional survey research method by following the quantitative research approach. Self-administrated questionnaires were provided to female university students at their campuses.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Philosophical assumptions are fundamental in social science research because they influence the practice of research (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, philosophical views help the researcher see the world explicitly and create questions from the social world. “This practice helps him to explain the selection of particular methods for his research project (Mahmood, 2017) ” There are different terminologies used for the philosophical view,

such as “world view,” “paradigm,” “epistemologies” and “ontologies” (Creswell, 2014). Creswell (2014) indicated this practice in research as a worldview.

The worldview is “*a basic set of beliefs that guide action*” (Guba, 1990, p. 19). Whereas other scholars used the term “paradigm,” the paradigm has been used in social science research over the last few decades. Hughes (2001) defined paradigm as the researcher’s point of view regarding the social world that assists him in selecting a research problem (Hughes & Hans, 2001). Fraser and Robinson (2004) extended the explanation of paradigm as a “set of beliefs about how particular problems exist and a set of agreements on how the researchers investigate such problems” (Mahmood, 2017, p. 59). Therefore, paradigm selection is essential in social science research as it affects the methodology (Mahmood, 2017). For quantitative methods, positivism is considered one of the appropriate paradigms that help to structure the foundation of social science research. “Hughes (2001) describes positivism as a paradigm that sees the world as being based on unchanging universal laws.” Schultz and Hatch (1996) define positivism as a paradigm that views the world through an objective lens. For the scientific investigation of an objective world, systematic observation and record of events and phenomena around us are crucial (Schultz & Hatch, 1996). Hence, positivism contends to study factual happenings analytically and underlines its rational justification (Mahmood, 2017). “Therefore, positivist researchers believe in scientific methodology and position themselves in quantitative methodology. They collect numerical data using structured questionnaires or interview schedules through surveys to test the relationship among different variables (Mahmood, 2017, p. 79).”

In the present research, both positivism and interpretivism paradigms were used. Interpretive philosophy, often associated with interpretivism, is a philosophical approach that emphasizes the importance of understanding and interpreting human behavior, experiences, and phenomena in their natural context. This perspective is commonly applied in social sciences, humanities, and qualitative research. Interpretivism asserts that reality is subjective and socially constructed. It recognizes that individuals interpret the world based on their unique perspectives, experiences, and cultural backgrounds (Creswell 2014).

This study aligns with an interpretive philosophy; in-depth interviews were employed as a methodological approach to unravel the intricate dimensions of women's political participation. The focus on political interests, participation, and the hurdles encountered by women provided a nuanced understanding of their experiences within the broader sociocultural context. Through a qualitative lens, the research aimed to grasp the subjective meanings attributed to political involvement by women. Contextual exploration allowed a deep dive into the multifaceted factors influencing their political interests. The inductive reasoning inherent in the interpretive approach facilitated the organic emergence of themes from the narratives shared by the participants. By embracing the interpretive philosophy, this research contributes a comprehensive and holistic portrayal of women's political participation, unveiling the diversity of perspectives and the complex interplay of factors that shape women's engagement in the political sphere.

“Previously, a few authors investigated crucial questions of youth political participation and how young people comprehend politics. They administered tools to investigate youths' understanding of politics. “ (Weiss, 2020). Moreover, many current research studies have investigated youth political participation using a cross-national comparative design combined with a mixed methods approach (Weiss, 2020). In the present study, the researcher has selected the positivist paradigm and quantitative method to investigate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan.

3.3 STUDY SETTINGS

The researcher conducted this study in two cities, Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Four Universities were selected from both cities. For the present study, the area/universe comprised four Universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from the International Islamic University Islamabad, National University of Sciences and Technology Islamabad, PMAS Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, and Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad. Quantitate data was collected through a questionnaire.

3.4 POPULATION FRAME

This study's population comprises university students in the various universities located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Islamabad and Rawalpindi are neighboring cities in Pakistan. Specifically, four universities in this region are included in the study. The term "university students" refers to individuals currently enrolled in an academic program at the tertiary level pursuing higher education. The focus is on students attending institutions of higher learning that offer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. In the context of this study, the inclusion criteria are limited to students studying in the four universities within Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

The research objectives focus on exploring educated women's political participation and interest in politics. By selecting university students from the four universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, the study aims to investigate and gain insights into this specific demographic group's political behaviors and interests. The rationale behind choosing university students is likely tied to the assumption that this group represents a relevant and influential population segment, providing a valuable perspective on political participation among young, educated individuals. University students are often seen as a dynamic and informed demographic with the potential to shape societal attitudes and contribute to political discourse. Their experiences, perspectives, and levels of political interest may offer valuable insights into the factors influencing political participation among women in this region.

Additionally, by focusing on university students, the research may aim to understand how higher education, knowledge, and exposure to diverse ideas impact women's political engagement. This targeted approach allows for a more in-depth exploration of the relationship between education, political interest, and women's participation in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The questionnaires were distributed to female students pursuing BS, MS, or Ph.D. degrees, assigning each questionnaire a unique number. All the questionnaire forms were collected after completion from students. The study included a sample of 400 female students selected through simple random sampling from a pool of BS, MS, and Ph.D. registrants.

3.4.1 Sampling

Including students in the survey provides insights into the experiences and perspectives of individuals who are in the process of pursuing their education. Their responses might reflect the challenges and aspirations of women at different stages of their educational journey. Including students offers a broader range of responses and allows for generalizations to the larger population of educated women.

The research utilized Solvin's formula to determine the sample size, considering the estimated total female student population across the four universities to be approximately 20,000.

$$n = N / (1+N*e^2)$$

Here, n is the sample size, and N is the population size. The population of the study was full-time registered students at the universities. In this case, N is 20000, and e is the margin of error, which is 5% (0.05).

$$n = 20,000 / (1+20,000*0.05^2)$$

$$n = 400$$

The Krejcie and Morgan table (1970)¹ have been consulted to determine the sample size. The known population of the study is 20,000. For 20,000, the table recommends a sample of 377 respondents. A sample of 400 women were selected, 100 from each University.

¹ <http://www.kenpro.org/sample-size-determination-using-krejcie-and-morgan-table/>

3.5 ACCESS TO THE UNIVERSITIES FOR DATA COLLECTION

It was mandatory to get approval from the university administration to distribute questionnaires among students. The researcher personally visited each University and met with the concerned authorities. The researcher explained the research objectives and clarified that the visit had a purpose only. The researcher showed the ID card provided by the IIUM to the university officials. The researcher assured the authorities that the researcher would not misuse students' official records and that all the information provided by the students would be used only for research purposes.

The researcher personally visited each university and distributed questionnaires among female students. The data collection took place from April 2023 to June 2023, during which the responses have been gathered from each participants.

3.6 DATA HANDLING PROCESS

This research was conducted at three universities in Islamabad and one in Rawalpindi. The questionnaires were distributed among female students, and at the time of data collection, the researcher counted the collected questionnaires from the respondents and checked the questionnaires' responses.

The researcher requested them to answer the missing questions in case of missing responses. Female students showed their interest in participating in the study and found the topic very interesting. The researcher got a 100% response from the students and found no questionnaire unfilled.

3.7 DATA ENTRY PROCESS

“In social sciences research, various computer applications are utilized for statistical data analysis. Among these applications, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is a widely used software by social scientists. SPSS allows the researchers to present data both in tabular and graphical form. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed the data at three levels: univariate, bivariate, and multivariate (Mahmood, 2017). The researcher used SPSS 21 for data entry purposes. It took 15 days to enter the data.

To ensure accuracy in data entry, the researcher systematically checked the entered information in the SPSS sheet. For this purpose, the researcher randomly selected 100 questionnaires and verified the entered information from the SPSS sheet. The researcher did not find any contradictions between the entered data in SPSS and the answers specified by the respondents through questionnaires.

3.8 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT / TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION

The researcher used a self-administered questionnaire as a tool for data collection. “Self-administered questionnaires designed to be completed by a respondent without any intervention of the researchers (Wolf, 2008)”.

Researchers primarily distribute the self-administered questionnaire to many respondents in a short period. The tool can be distributed via mail, post, email, and in-person. However, the instrument demands more vigilance in designing questions for the respondents. “Furthermore, a self-administered questionnaire is preferred to be used in survey research when the researchers deal with literate populations, e.g., students’ opinion survey (Wolf, 2008) (Babbie, 2010)”. Language is also a critical criterion for using a self-administered questionnaire. The respondent must know the language in which the questionnaire is developed (Mahmood, 2017). In the following research, the researcher developed a self-administered questionnaire in English because English is a formal, instructional, and curriculum language at Pakistan's graduate and post-graduate levels.

This study's research instrument, a self-administered questionnaire, consisted of three parts. The first part of the research instrument measured the study's independent variable, political interest, and the second part measured the study's independent variable, political participation. The third part measured the moderating variables of the study. Each part is discussed below in detail.

3.8.1 Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile

The researcher measured the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study. The researcher asked questions about the age, university degree in which the respondents enrolled (BS or MS,) area of residence, and marital status. Adult age is a significant factor for political participation, as socialization theory recommends that adolescence is a vital position during which political judgments develop from initial emotional commitments to firm rational commitments (Rebenstorf, 2004)

3.8.2 Political Interest Scale

Political interest is the main component of political motivation essential for political participation. Thus, political interest is a requirement for the preferred attributes of a responsible and democratic citizen: crucial trustworthiness, capability, and willingness for political participation (Rebenstorf, 2004). Political interest is the independent variable of this study. The scale developed for this study measured the political interest of educated women. The scale has five normative statements regarding respondents' interest in politics. The scale is a 4-point Likert scale where the respondents show their degree of disagreement to their degree of agreement. Score 1 points to strong disagreement, while score 4 shows strong agreement. The reliability test of Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.804, demonstrating a high-reliability level.

3.8.3 Political Participation Scale

Political participation of the educated women/respondents was a dependent variable of this study. The scale developed for this study measured the political participation of women. The scale adopted the definition of Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1999 to determine the indicators for political participation (Verba, Scholzman, & Brady, 1999). The selected scale covered both conventional and non-conventional political participation. The scale has eight normative statements regarding respondents' involvement in political activities. The scale is 4-point Likert scale where the respondents show their degree of disagreement to their degree of agreement. Score 1 points to strong disagreement, while score 4 shows strong agreement. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.752, demonstrating the high reliability level of this scale.

3.8.4 Gender Roles Scale

The gender role is the moderator variable of this study. A gender role scale for this study measured the conventional gender roles restricting the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. The scale has six normative statements regarding women's roles at the household level. The scale is a 4-point Likert scale where the respondents show their degree of disagreement to their degree of agreement. Score 1 points to strong disagreement, while score 4 shows strong agreement. The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was 0.688, demonstrating high reliability in using this scale in the Pakistani context.

3.8.4.1 Patriarchy in the Family Scale

Patriarchy in the family scale developed for this study measured the male dominance that restricts women's political participation in Pakistani society. The scale has eight normative statements regarding the control of males over the mobility of females. The scale is 4-point Likert scale where the respondents show their degree of disagreement to their degree of agreement. Score 1 points to strong disagreement, while score 4 shows strong agreement.

The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.793, demonstrating high reliability and authenticating its use for the present study.

3.8.4.2 Patriarchal Political Culture Scale

A patriarchal political culture scale was developed for this study to measure the masculine political culture in Pakistani. The scale has ten normative statements regarding the suitability of males for politics.

The scale is a 4-point Likert scale where the respondents show their degree of disagreement to their degree of agreement. Score 1 points to strong disagreement, while score 4 shows strong agreement. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.706, demonstrating high reliability and authenticating its use for the present study.

3.8.4.3 Gender Socialization Scale

A gender socialization scale was developed for this study to investigate how different gender socialization hurdles the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. The scale has six normative statements regarding the different socialization of women in Pakistan. The scale is a 4-point Likert scale where the respondents show their degree of disagreement to their degree of agreement. A score of 1 point out strong disagreement, while 4 is strong agreement. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.565, demonstrating high reliability and authenticating its use for the present study.

3.8.4.4 Pre-testing of Questionnaire

The self-administered questionnaire was pre-tested before the final data collection. Pretesting was done in non-sampled areas to check the reliability of the tool. Forty students from different universities were selected for pretesting. However, these students were not included in the study's final sample.

Students found some questions very ambiguous, which were simplified. Students also recommended adding a few questions considered appropriate for the research and included minor amendments. The tool for data collection was finalized after pretesting, and data was collected with the help of a final questionnaire.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The researcher conducted the present research with transparency and integrity and cited all references honestly and without bias. Primary data was collected through in-depth face-to-face interviews where the aims and objectives of the study were explained to the informants before conducting the interviews. Complete secrecy and privacy of the information provided by respondents were maintained. Each respondent was shown as “anonymous,” and their original identity was not disclosed at any stage. Additionally, the researcher has refrained from physically or emotionally harming any respondent during the data collection. The researcher shared the tool for data collection with some experienced academicians and quantitative data experts to check the reliability and validity of the instrument. They suggested a few modifications to the scale, and the researcher incorporated the amendments accordingly. The reliability of the scales was also statistically checked.

Furthermore, the researcher obtained respondents' prior consent before providing the tool. The respondents were free to withdraw the questionnaire at any stage. Respondents were given substantial time to review and fill out the questionnaire. The names mentioned in the thematic analysis chapter are not the participants' original names but pseudonyms created for this analysis. This deviation was made carefully considering ethical implications, and steps were taken to protect participants' identities.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

The analysis of this quantitative research includes three stages. The first stage draws on descriptive analysis. The second stage derives its formulations from the bivariate analysis. The final step shows the making of moderation models (Mahmood, 2017). The discussion about each section lies in the following.

3.10.1.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is a statistical technique used to summarize and define the prominent features of a dataset. Descriptive analysis aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the data, including its distribution, central tendency variability, and other essential elements. Descriptive analysis is used in various fields, including business economics, psychology, sociology, and political science. Descriptive analysis primarily aims to summarize and present the data in an easily understandable format, such as tables, graphs, and charts. This type of analysis is often the first step in any data analysis process, providing a foundation for further analysis and interpretation. Examples of descriptive analysis techniques include procedures of central tendency, such as the mean, median, and mode, and measures of variability, such as the range, standard deviation, and variance. Descriptive analysis can also involve using graphs and charts, such as histograms and box plots, to represent the data visually². In conclusion, descriptive analysis is essential for summarizing and understanding large and complex datasets. By providing a clear and concise overview of the data, descriptive analysis helps to inform further analysis and decision-making processes (Mahmood, 2017).

3.11 BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

In the present study, the researcher has applied inferential statistics to execute a bivariate analysis. Inferential statistics are frequently applied to perform bivariate analysis. Bivariate analysis generally examines the relationship between two variables and is

² <https://www.perfectacademic.com/measures-of-central-tendency-and-variability-assessment/>

often used to determine the significant association between two variables. The first step in the bivariate analysis is calculating a measure of association between the two variables, such as correlation or regression coefficients.

Correlation coefficients measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables, while regression coefficients measure the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable. After calculating the measure of association, inferential statistics can be used to determine whether the observed relationship is statistically significant. The most common way to test for a significant association is to use a hypothesis test, such as a correlation or ANOVA for continuous variables or a chi-square test for categorical variables. The hypothesis test calculates a test statistic, such as a t-value or chi-square statistic. Suppose the test statistic exceeds the critical value (p-value, which should be less than 0.05). In that case, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis and concludes that there is a significant association between the two variables.

Inferential statistics help to construct confidence intervals for the measure of association, which provides a range of values that the valid population parameter is likely to fall within. Confidence intervals can help quantify the estimate's precision and provide a more nuanced understanding of the strength of the association between the two variables. Inferential statistics are essential for drawing meaningful conclusions from data and making evidence-based decisions in many fields, including medicine, psychology, economics, and social sciences (Mahmood, 2017).

In the current quantitative study, the researcher used two statistical methods to examine the relationship between the independent variable (IV) of political interest and the dependent variable (DV) of political participation.

First, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient, which measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. Correlation analysis allowed the researcher to determine the degree of association between political interest and political participation.

Second, the researcher conducted a regression analysis, a statistical method to model the relationship between a dependent and independent variable. The regression analysis allowed the researcher to estimate the effect of political interest on political participation. The regression analysis provided the researcher with an estimate of the strength and direction of the relationship between political interest and political participation and the statistical significance of the relationship.

3.12 MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS – MODERATION ANALYSIS

Multivariate analysis is a statistical technique used to analyze data that involves multiple variables. In other words, it analyzes more than one variable at a time, where the variables may be interdependent or independent. The multivariate analysis aims to understand the relationships between the variables and identify patterns or trends in the data. It is frequently applied in social sciences, business, and finance to study complex data sets and make predictions or decisions based on the results of the role of the independent variable or group of the variables that affect the dependent variable.

Moderation analysis is a statistical technique used to examine the effect of an independent variable (IV) on a dependent variable (DV) while considering the presence of another variable known as a moderator. A moderator is a variable that affects the strength or direction of the relationship between the IV and DV.

This analysis helps to identify the conditions under which the relationship between the IV and DV is stronger or weaker. Moderation analysis is used in various fields, including psychology, sociology, business, and education, to understand the complex relationships between variables better and inform interventions or strategies to improve outcomes. The researcher used moderation analysis with SPSS and PROCESS in the present study. PROCESS is a statistical software program developed by Andrew F. Hayes that is specifically designed to conduct moderation, mediation, and conditional process analysis³ (Jose, 2013).

³ <https://uedufy.com/how-to-install-process-macro-in-spss-pc-and-mac/>

In the current study, the association between political interest (IV) and political Participation (DV) of educated women is moderated by sociocultural factors (MV)⁴. Previous studies confirm that the political interest of educated women positively affects their political Participation (Persson M., 2012; Susan, 2013). However, social and cultural factors cannot be ignored in Pakistan. They strongly relate to women's political participation (Inglehart & Norris, P, 2003; Kabeer N.,1994). In the present study, the researcher has investigated how social-cultural factors moderate the political participation of educated women. The moderator analysis was done by SPSS/PROCESS using multiple regression.

3.13 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher has adopted a qualitative research methodology to examine the phenomenon of women's political interest and political participation in Pakistan. Empirical materials for this study have been collected in qualitative, in-depth interviews with highly educated women working in different Universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The reason for choosing qualitative research was to explore the detailed standpoint of women through in-depth interviews and how much they are interested in government activities, election campaigns, and demonstrations. How much are they interested in governmental actions? Despite their interest, what are the reasons that restrict their political participation, and how have their household chores hurdled them to participate in political activities actively? How do their husbands or any male family member control their mobility? And how patriarchy in politics and family restricts their political participation despite their higher interest in politics. The objective of qualitative interviews was to understand the political interest and political participation of women within the sociocultural context of a developing country.

Additionally, a qualitative approach facilitated gaining an in-depth view of the subjective experiences of educated working women living in the urban areas of Pakistan. The qualitative research method was appropriate as it allowed access to the gender-related experiences of educated women in urban areas of Pakistan. Hence, qualitative methodology helped to discover the fundamental issues, standpoints, and experiences of educated women's political participation in Pakistan.

3.14 EPISTEMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The qualitative section of the present study is established on the Feminist Standpoint Epistemology. Standpoint epistemology is considered among the most prominent and deliberated theories emerging from the second wave of feminism, which highlights the significance of feminist ways of thinking and recommends that feminist social sciences should be practiced from the perspective of women or groups of women (Collins, 2009). Various feminist scholars such as Dorothy Smith, Nancy Hartsock, Hilary Rose, Sandra Harding, Patricia Hill Collins, Alison

Jaggar and Donna Haraway have reinforced that women's experiences should be the beginning of feminist scientific research (Bowell, 2011). The fundamental notion of the Standpoint Epistemology theory reveals that the prospects of individuals are affected by their social and political experiences. Furthermore, the theory rejects the prescriptive connection of women with possible political subjectivity. The theory considers women as already facing the challenges of political marginalization. It argues against the discursive system of power to prioritize the voices and knowledge of marginalized women (Harding, 2004, p.7) (Hussain, 2022). Moreover, the Feminist Standpoint perspective assists in studying the issues from the standpoint of marginalized women and considers them knowledgeable. Its primary focus is on power relations that depend on cultural values; therefore, gender roles are assigned through these cultural values (Pandey B, 2016).

Standpoint Epistemology provides a theoretical baseline to the methodology of the current study for mainstreaming women's experiences and highlighting their restrictions and concerns for political participation. It helps to support the recent scientific inquiry into women's political participation in Pakistan by focusing on their lived experiences in politics. Hence, the challenges faced by women can be explored by understanding their social context and relevant preferences (Hussain, 2022). According to Standpoint theory, feminist movements worldwide believe that women's participation in decision-making is essential to see the world from a gender-balanced point of view (Butler, 1992). "The Standpoint theory helps to explore the knowledge of under-represented women in politics against the backdrop of geopolitical and sociocultural differences (Hussain, 2022) (Bent, 2019).

However, sociocultural norms embedded in patriarchal political systems restrict the participation and inclusion of women in politics. I have used the lens of the Standpoint perspective in the present study to view and explore the challenges women face to enter the political arena.

Moreover, it helped me to analyze the role of patriarchy, which moderated the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. Moreover, Standpoint theory provides a rational epistemological foundation for investigating women's political experiences and perspectives while further exploring the structural challenges restricting women's political participation (Hussain 2022). Institutional barriers and cultural challenges influence women's political participation; these cultural challenges can be studied with the help of the Feminist Standpoint perspective in Pakistan and how these women formulate strategies to overcome these challenges (Hussain 2022). The Standpoint perspective supported conducting in-depth interviews and other secondary data sources in the current research. It helped to generate in-depth, comprehensive data as participants explained their experiences, family support, and multiple challenges regarding political participation in detail. At the same time, most theories related to women are developed by men and serve men's interests (Walby, 2001) (Hussain, 2022).

The standpoint of women was accessible to understand the sociocultural challenges and experiences of women in politics; these standpoints and experiences were otherwise invisible from research data.

3.15 AREA OF RESEARCH

The area of research for the present study was the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The fieldwork for the current research was conducted in the three Universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

Two Universities⁵ from Islamabad and one from Rawalpindi have been selected based on convenient sampling, a non-probability sampling technique. Ten women have been chosen from each University. The researcher visited every university four to five times and recorded the interviews of women. Sufficient primary data were gathered from educated women to operationalize the findings within the context of women's political participation.

3.16 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The target population in the current study comprised educated women. The present research was focused on the political participation of educated women. All the respondents were highly educated women working in universities. They were best suited to explain women's political participation challenges in Pakistan because they all had subjective experiences. The total number of interview respondents was predetermined based on the response saturation. A total number of 30 women were selected for in-depth interviews. Selecting highly educated women working in universities, such as teachers or faculty, allows the researcher to tap into their expertise and experiences. Given their academic and professional backgrounds, these individuals likely have a deeper understanding of political issues and potential challenges.

⁵ The names of the Universities are mentioned in respondent's profile.

In the current research, purposive sampling was employed to select participants deliberately based on specific criteria relevant to the study's objectives. This method allows the researcher to target individuals with the characteristics or experiences essential for a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. In this context, purposive sampling helps ensure that participants have particular qualities related to the study's focus on political participation and interest among women in politics.

Additionally, the research utilized the snowball sampling technique, which involves initially selecting participants who meet the study's criteria and then relying on their referrals to identify additional eligible individuals. This approach is particularly suitable for small and dispersed populations, as Ritchie and Lewis (2003) acknowledged. The snowball technique proves effective when potential participants are challenging to access, as Audemard (2020) noted. By leveraging the social networks and connections of the initial participants, the snowball sampling method enables the inclusion of a broader and more diverse range of respondents in the study.

3.17 PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION: INTERVIEWS

Almost 35 visits were paid to all three universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Due to teachers' busy schedules, it was challenging to take time; only one interview was possible in one day. The primary aim was to investigate and explore women's subjective experiences regarding their political interests and the challenges restricting their interest and participation in political activities such as voting, protesting, circulating a petition, and becoming a political party member. The initial research process of data collection commenced at the University of Arid Agriculture in Rawalpindi city of Punjab province. It helped me gain insights into the political activities of educated women and made interaction possible with other women workers in the same university. During the visit, most women were busy with their daily activities. However, their contact details were taken, and a mutually convenient time was agreed upon to interview them.

3.18 TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION

The present research selected an inductive approach with the help of employing a structured interview guide. "Instead of a spontaneous exchange of views with the respondents, structured interviews allow for an in-depth examination of many topics during the interview (Adams, 2010) (Hussain, 2022)". In-depth interviews helped to explore educated women's perceptions of political participation (Miller & Glassner, 2016).

To analyze the detailed experiences of educated women regarding political participation. In-depth interviews were considered suitable for the present qualitative study. Women were hesitant to discuss patriarchy and male domination in the presence of other people. Therefore, individual interviews were conducted. "In-depth interviews were conducted with the help of a semi-structured interview guide designed to explore the views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations of individuals on the issue of the political participation of educated women in Pakistan (Creswell, 2012) (Hussain 2022)."

Major themes for in-depth interviews were extracted from the theoretical framework and previous literature on political participation. All the interviews were recorded in the national Urdu language "as emotions and perceptions can be best captured in one's mother tongue (Zhang & Guttormsen, 2016)". The interviews were recorded for 30 to 40 minutes, and the data were transcribed afterward. Transcribing recorded Urdu language interviews into English transcripts did not affect the essential points, as whenever there was unclarity, a few more questions were added to clarify the viewpoint of the respondents (Hussain 2022). The themes and questions were structured; however, respondents suggested including more themes regarding patriarchy and the political system for the first four interviews. Therefore, the themes were added to the respondents' suggestions, and all the interviews were captured with the help of a final interview guide (Ryan, Scapens, & Theobald, 2022). The interview transcripts contained the primary data for later thematic analysis.

The female respondents were asked to share their experiences regarding political participation. The detailed discussion assisted in detecting the sociocultural factors of patriarchy and gender roles that restrict political participation. Questions related to Pakistan's political interests, voting behaviour, and political procedure were also discussed during interviews. All the respondents were highly qualified women. However, a difference in experiences and opinions regarding political participation was observed. The experiences of educated women allowed an exploration of the challenges and the possible ways to confront them successfully.

These positions were then triangulated with the quantitative data from university students. This data triangulation helped to bring together multiple data sources from distinct sources (Mason, 2022). Moreover, they questioned how women could be more effectively included in political activities such as voting and demonstrations and the possible challenges women face in political participation.

3.19 INTERVIEWEE

A total of 30 educated women with at least an MS or Ph.D. from different Universities were interviewed To study the challenges of women's political participation in Pakistan. The triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data helped verify quantitative data and understand the true nature of facts and events, free of the personal biases of the respondents. Initial rapport-building was done with the respondents by paying them frequent visits. The unique and professional experiences of the researcher were shared with the participant to make the research sample comfortable during the interviews. "Rapport was developed while having tea or snacks with them. Moreover, the objectives and focus of the research were explained comprehensively to the interviewees (Hussain, 2022).

3.20 DATA ANALYSIS

"The analysis of data was done in three phases, namely data reduction, data display, and data interpretation (O'Dwyer, 2004) (Hussain, 2022)". As all the interviews were

recorded in Urdu, they were translated from Urdu to English for data analysis. All the interviews were transcribed from the recorded MP3 files to typed MS Word files. All the original names of the participants were changed to ensure the confidentiality of the information.

The qualitative data software Atlas has been used. Ti. Qualitative data analysis enabled researcher to manage, code, and display data thoroughly. All audio, visual, and written files were uploaded to the software. Because uploading all the written files was essential to arranging and managing data scientifically and effectively (Lewis, 2004). With the assistance of a variety of Atlas. Ti user-friendly functions, the data was organized and undertook literature reviews; it was easy to search important data/quotations and generate connections between them (Hussain, 2022). All the interviews were transcribed first and written in detail. Then, an analysis of all interviews was done in three stages. This is a standard method in qualitative research, as it allows the researcher to capture the richness and complexity of the participants' responses. Transcribing the interviews in detail involves creating a written record of everything said, including nonverbal cues, pauses, and tone of voice.

3.20.1.1 First Stage: Data Reduction

The data analysis started by reducing the data (O'Dwyer, 2004). In the first phase, a comprehensive overview of the interview transcripts, along with the notes and memos (which were taken at the time of the interviews), was completed. In this process, the relevant information was reduced from the collected interviews. For the present study, "deductive coding was applied, in which a codebook was used to direct the researcher through the coding process. The codebook was developed before data collection; codes were extracted from the theoretical framework and previous literature. However, new codes were added and developed from the interviews. The codes were identified through the participants' answers and explained by the researcher.

All the codes were based on the fundamental issues of women's political participation. Atlas highlighted significant sections of the interviews. Ti. Afterward, these highlighted sections were assigned codes based on the research objectives (O'Dwyer, 2004) (Hussain, 2022).

3.20.1.2 Second Stage: Data Display

In the second data analysis phase, all specific codes were identified, and Atlas. Ti helped to arrange similar codes clustered in relevant categories under family codes (themes). Themes were developed where two or more similar codes were combined coherently and meaningfully.

Similar codes were also merged, and irrelevant codes were eliminated. Repetitive themes were highlighted, which showed their importance in the data. "Atlas. Ti systematically structured the codes and made it easier to display quotations per code along with the distribution of codes per interview script". Multiple codes were related to each other with the help of Atlas. Ti, "and linking quotations were done to create networks. These networks highlighted the co-occurring. principles, which made it easier to recognize repetitive codes" (Hussain, 2022).

3.20.1.3 Third Stage: Data Interpretation

The process of selecting coding was completed at the third and final stage. All the codes were revisited, and themes were finally developed; data interpretation of the concepts was carried out (O'Dwyer, 2004) (Silver & Lewins, 2014) (Hussain, 2022). When linkages and patterns were created, lines of arguments with a practical explanation of the responses were implemented with the support of relevant literature. This final stage of data analysis helped to make sense of the data and understand the whole meaning of the collected data (Morse & Field, 1995) (Hussain, 202). "This process is called the operationalization of the analysis process."

The selection and explanation of relevant quotations were made in the final stage. Alongside this, the discussion and synthesizing of the write-up were done. During the analysis of interviews, a review of the literature (chapter 2), the historical background of politics in Pakistan, and the Political interest of women's theoretical framework (chapter 2) were kept in view throughout the research process. The findings were related to previous literature and theory within the collected data (Hussain, 2022).



CHAPTER FOUR

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

This analysis chapter focuses on unraveling the intricate relationships and dynamics surrounding the political engagement of educated women. The exploration encompasses three key dimensions: descriptive, bivariate, and moderation findings. The independent variable (IV) under scrutiny is women's political interest, while the dependent variable (DV) is the political participation of educated women. This chapter also investigates the potential moderating roles played by gender roles, gender socialization, political patriarchy, and familial patriarchy.

The descriptive analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the study variables, setting the stage for a nuanced understanding of the landscape of political involvement among educated women. Moving into the bivariate analysis, examining relationships between variables sheds light on potential correlations and patterns. Furthermore, the multivariate analysis explores the moderating influence of gender roles, gender socialization, political patriarchy, and familial patriarchy. By scrutinizing these moderating variables, the study aims to uncover how societal and family structures may impact the relationship between political interest and participation among educated women.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The demographic profile of the respondents corresponds to their age, education, place of residence, and marital status. This research examines demographic profile factors such as age, education, location of residence, and marital status. For research to be relevant to and meaningful to the group being investigated, it is imperative to understand the demographic features of a population or sample. In particular, the following justifies the importance of certain demographic factors:

Age: Due to its ability to affect various actions, attitudes, and results, age is a significant demographic variable. Age is a reliable indicator of political interest and political participation.

Describing a sample's age distribution helped the researcher identify patterns and trends relevant to the research question. Education: Due to its strong relationship to socioeconomic level and potential influence on a person's opportunities and outcomes in life, education is a crucial demographic characteristic. An education degree can impact political knowledge, interest, and political participation. Education is a control variable to examine the link between political interest and political participation.

Place of residence: The kind of residence—urban or rural—can impact political interest and participation. It can also affect beliefs and actions linked to politics, culture, and the environment. Place of residence is a control variable of the study.

Marital status: A person's marital status might reveal information about their social support system, family structure, and way of life. It may also affect how people feel and act regarding their interests and political participation. Researchers used marital status as a control variable to examine the connection between political interest and political participation. The control variables of the present research are age, education, marital status, and area of residence. The researcher included only educated women from different universities in Pakistan. Most were registered in the BS degree program, unmarried, and residing in the cities. These control variables have significant effects on the political participation of urban-educated women. A detailed description of control variables is presented in the following tables.

Table 4.1 Age of respondents (N=400)

Age of respondents (N=400)

Age	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
18-21	208	52
22-25	180	45
26-30	12	3
Total	400	100

Table 4.1 demonstrates the distribution of responders by age. Age groups are displayed in the first column in four-year intervals, ranging from 18 to 30. The frequency (f) of respondents in each age group, which denotes the number of people who fall within that age range, is displayed in the second column. The percentage (%) of respondents in each age group, representing the proportion of people in each age group out of the entire sample, is shown in the third column.

According to the table, most women were between 18 and 21 years, comprising 208 people and accounting for 52% of the sample. The second largest age group is 22-25, which contains 180 individuals, representing 45% of the total sample. The smallest age group is 26-30, with only 12 women representing 3% of the study sample. The total number of individuals in the study sample is 400, signified in the last row of the table. Overall, this table provides a clear and concise summary of the distribution of respondents by age in the sample. The table shows the relative size of each age group in terms of frequency and percentage.

Table 4.2 Marital status of respondents (N=400)

Marital status of respondents (N=400)

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	25	6.3
Unmarried	375	93.8
Total	400	100

This table demonstrates the marital status of 400 female university students. The two categories of marital status—married and single—are displayed in the first column. The frequency of responses in each group, which reflects the number of people who fit into that marital status category, is shown in the second column. The third column reflects the percentage of respondents in each category, representing the proportion of individuals in each marital status category out of the total sample. According to the table, most respondents are unmarried, with a frequency of 375, representing 93.8% of

The entire study sample. The remaining respondents are married, with a frequency of 25, representing 6.3% of the total sample. The total number of individuals in the study sample is 400, depicted in the table's last row. Overall, the table explains the distribution of respondents by marital status in the sample, showing the relative size of each marital status category in terms of frequency and percentage.

Table 4.3 Education of respondents (N=400)

Education of respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
BS	365	91.3
MS	35	8.8
Total	400	100

This table 43 illustrates the current enrollment status of 400 respondents in academic programs. The first column delineates the two program categories, BS (Bachelor of Science) and MS (Master of Science), reflecting the academic pursuits of the respondents. Meanwhile, the second column presents the frequency of respondents in each category, indicating the number of individuals currently registered in these academic programs. The third column shows the percentage of respondents in each category, which means the proportion of individuals in each educational category out of the total sample. According to the table, most respondents are registered in a BS degree program, with a frequency of 365, representing 91.3% of the whole study sample. The remaining respondents are registered in the MS degree program, with a frequency of 35, representing 8.8% of the total sample. 400 female students are included in the study sample described in the table's last row. Overall, this table stipulates a straightforward summary of the distribution of respondents by educational level in the sample, showing the relative size of each educational level category in terms of frequency and percentage.

4.3 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS OF VARIABLES

The researcher tested the variables' internal consistency and dependability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951). It provides the coefficient of item-to-item correlation. The Cronbach's Alpha value of .80 indicates a high level of internal consistency (Mahmood, 2017).

Table 4.4 Reliability analysis of variables

Scales	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Political Interest Scale	05	0.804
Political Participation Scale	08	0.752
Gender Roles Scale	06	0.688
Patriarchy in Family Scale	08	0.793
Patriarchal Political Cultural Scale	05	0.706
Gender Socialization Scale	06	0.711

Table 4.4 describes the reliability analysis of different scales used for this study. The political interest scale has five constructs with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.804; the political participation scale has eight items with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.752. The gender roles scale has six items with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.688. The patriarchy in the family has eight constructs with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.793.

The scale of patriarchy in politics has 05 items, with Cronbach's alpha internal consistency of 0.706. The gender socialization scale has 06 items with 0.711 internal consistency of Cronbach's alpha. All scales mentioned above had an acceptable range of values of Cronbach's alpha. Hence, all the scales can be termed reliable scales.

4.4 CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical technique used to test a hypothesized measurement model, which is a model that specifies the underlying relationships between observed variables and their underlying latent constructs. CFA aims to test the fit of the hypothesized measurement model to the data and to estimate the strength of the relationships between the observed variables and the underlying constructs.

CFA is typically used when researchers have a theory or hypothesis about the underlying constructs driving the observed variables and want to test whether the observed variables are a good fit for that theoretical framework. In this case, CFA tests the relationships between the observed variables and the underlying latent constructs and assesses the model's goodness of fit.

In the given results, CFA is performed on six variables related to political participation, political interest, gender roles, gender socialization/level of confidence, patriarchy in the family, and patriarchy in politics. The factor loadings and factor estimates show the strength of the relationship between each observed variable and the underlying latent construct. As well as the factor covariances show the estimated covariances among the latent constructs. The model fit measures show how well the

hypothesized model fits the observed data, including the test for an exact fit and fit measures like RMSEA, CFI, and TLI.

Table 4.5 Confirmatory factor analysis of variables

Factor Loadings

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	Z	p
Factor 1	MPI	0.305	0.0355	8.59	<.001
	MPP	0.258	0.0269	9.59	<.001
	MGR	0.340	0.0287	11.82	<.001
	MPiP	0.409	0.0310	13.20	<.001
	MGS	0.339	0.0258	13.12	<.001
	MPiF	0.505	0.0281	17.98	<.001

Factor Estimates

Factor Covariances

		Estimate	SE	Z	p
Factor 1	Factor 1	1.00	^a		

^a fixed parameter

Model Fit

Test for Exact Fit

χ^2	df	p
78.9	9	<.001

Test for Exact Fit

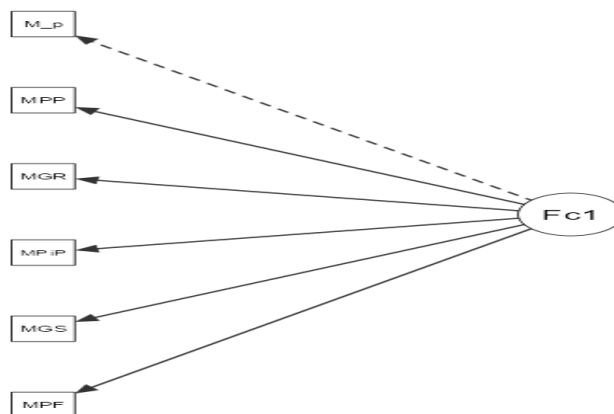
χ^2	df	p
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Fit Measures

CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	
			Lower	Upper
0.891	0.818	0.139	0.112	0.168

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) result suggests that the variables (Political Interest, Political Participation, Gender Roles, Patriarchy in Politics, Gender Socialization, and Patriarchy in Family) relate to the same underlying construct or factor: political participation. The factor loadings for each indicator are positive and statistically significant, indicating that they are good indicators of political participation. The model fit measures suggest that the model fits the data well, with a good fit for the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and comparative fit index (CFI). In simpler terms, the CFA result suggests that the six chosen variables all measure the same thing - political participation - and that the model fits the data well.

Path Diagram



The path diagram shows no paths between the observed variables themselves, indicating that they are not directly related to each other. Finally, the model includes a covariance between "Factor 1" and itself, represented by the curved arrow looping back to the same variable. This covariance indicates the degree of association between the latent variable of political participation and itself, which is assumed to be perfect in this model.

4.5 POLITICAL INTEREST OF WOMEN

Women's political interests include women's general interest in governmental activities, election campaigns and demonstrations, political parties and their performance, and women's general interest in political discussions.

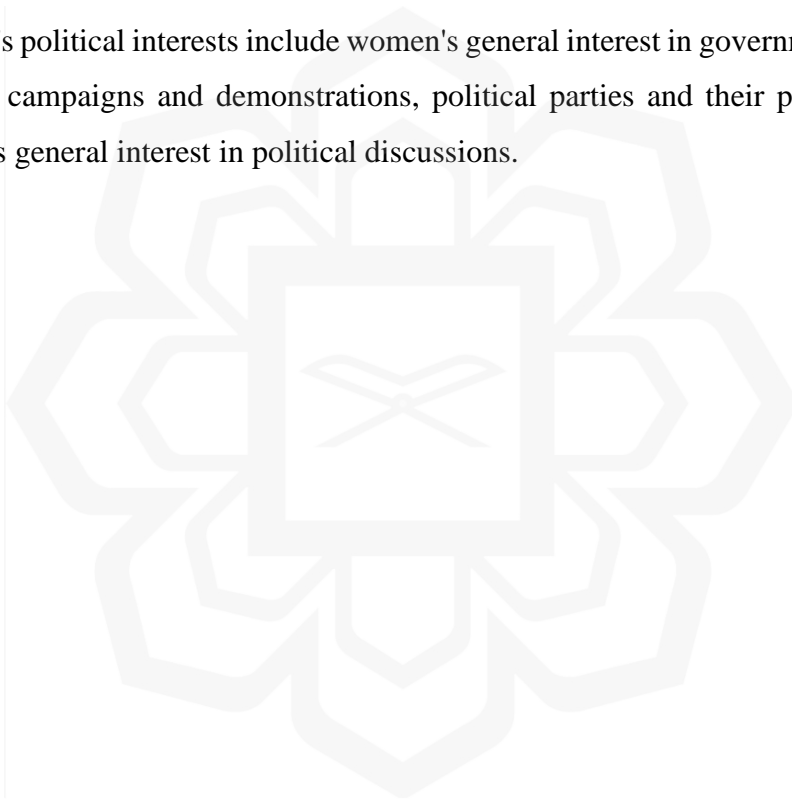


Table 4.6 Frequency distribution of women regarding political interest (N=400)

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Sd	Mode
	f	f	f	f			
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)			
I have a general interest in Governmental activities	77 (19.3)	153 (38.3)	136 (34.0)	34 (8.5)	2.68	0.88	3.00
I am interested in election Campaigns	57 (14.3)	136 (34.0)	153 (38.3)	54 (13.5)	2.49	0.89	2.00
I am interested in demonstrations	67 (16.8)	197 (49.3)	91 (22.8)	45 (11.3)	2.72	0.87	3.00
I am interested in political parties and their performance	65 (16.3)	172 (43.0)	107 (26.8)	56 (14.0)	2.62	0.91	3.00
I have a general interest in political discussions	86 (21.5)	176 (44.0)	86 (21.0)	52 (13.0)	2.74	0.94	3.00

Note f=number of female students, %=percentage

SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

The table presents the results of a survey on participants' level of interest in various aspects of politics, including governmental activities, election campaigns, demonstrations, political parties and their performance, and political discussions. The most commonly selected response for each statement was either "agree" or "strongly agree," indicating that participants were generally interested in politics and political activities.

"I have a general interest in Governmental activities." In this statement, 77 respondents (19.3%) strongly agreed, and 153 respondents (38.3%) agreed, giving a total of 230 respondents (57.6%) who have an interest in governmental activities. On the other hand, 136 respondents (34%) disagreed, and 34 respondents (8.5%) strongly disagreed, giving a total of 170 respondents (42.5%) who were not interested in governmental activities.

Overall, the table shows that most respondents were interested in political activities. The statement with the highest combined percentage of positive attitude (SA+A) is "I have a general interest in politics and political discussions," with 65.5%, followed closely by "I am interested in political parties and their performance," with 59.3%. The statement with the highest combined percentage of negative attitude (D+S.DA) is "I am interested in election campaigns" with 47.8%, followed by "I have a general interest in Governmental activities" with 42.5%.

The data shows that most respondents are generally interested in politics and political discussions. However, there are considerable differences in the level of interest among the participants for specific activities such as election campaigns, demonstrations, and political parties and their performance.

The findings indicate that most respondents in the study have a general interest in politics and political discussions. These findings align with previous research highlighting the importance of political interest as a driver of political participation and engagement.

Research has shown that political interest is crucial in determining individuals' political participation. Individuals with higher levels of political interest are more likely to engage in various political activities, such as voting, attending political meetings, and participating in campaigns (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady 1995).

The in-depth interviews highlight the specific areas of interest among the educated women participants in the study, particularly in governmental activities and policies. The women expressed interest in various domains directly related to their lives, including healthcare, education, social welfare, and government environmental policies. These findings are consistent with the notion that individuals with higher education levels tend to be more aware of and engaged in public affairs.

4.6 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF EDUCATED WOMEN

Political participation among educated women is a crucial aspect of democratic societies. Educated women often possess higher levels of political knowledge, critical thinking skills, and awareness of social issues, contributing to their active engagement in political processes. Educated women's political participation serves as a catalyst for empowering other women and challenging traditional gender roles, fostering a more inclusive and representative democracy.

The following table describes the quantitative data collected to measure the political participation of educated young women living in urban areas.

Table 4.7 Frequency distribution of respondents regarding political participation N=400

Statements	SA f (%)	A f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	Mean f (%)	Sd	Mod
I am registered as a voter	163 (40.8)	149 (37.3)	62 (15.5)	26 (6.5)	3.12	0.90	4.00
I cast a vote in the last election of 2018	46 (11.5)	40 (1.0)	191 (47.8)	123 (30.8)	2.02	0.93	2.00
Casting to a political party of my own choice is my constitutional right	231 (57.8)	122 (30.5)	31 (7.8)	16 (4.0)	3.42	0.80	4.00
I am a member of a political party	24 (6.0)	30 (7.5)	209 (52.3)	137 (34.3)	1.85	0.79	2.00
I take part in political campaign	28 (7.0)	45 (11.3)	201 (50.3)	126 (31.5)	1.94	0.84	2.00
I have organized/participated in any demonstration	29 (7.3)	58 (14.5)	192 (48.0)	121 (30.3)	1.99	0.86	2.00
I have donated money to a political candidate	36 (9.0)	54 (13.5)	187 (46.8)	123 (30.8)	2.01	0.89	2.00
I have circulated a petition	21 (5.3)	47 (11.8)	201 (50.3)	131 (32.8)	1.90	0.80	2.00

Note f=number of female students, %=percentage

SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

The table demonstrates that 78.1% of participants stated they were registered to vote, and 78.6% claimed they had not voted in the most recent 2018 election. Furthermore, the data depicts that 88.3% of respondents stated that it is their constitutional right to vote for the political party of their choice. However, 13.5% of interviewees indicated they were members of some political party, and 18.3% indicated they participated in political campaigns. Moreover, data shows that 21.8% of

participants point out that they have organized/participated in any demonstration, while 22.5% of participants stated that they had donated money to a political candidate. Only 17.1% of participants indicated that they had circulated a petition.

Overall, the results suggest that, although a significant majority of the respondents are registered voters and believe it is their constitutional right to vote for the political party of their choice. However, the level of conventional political participation among respondents is relatively low. A relatively low percentage of respondents indicated low conventional political participation. Very few respondents indicated that they are political party members, participated in political campaigns, organized/participated in demonstrations, donated money to a political candidate, or circulated a petition.

The findings from the survey, where few respondents indicated their involvement in political party membership, political campaigns, demonstrations, donations to candidates, or circulating petitions, suggest a lower level of active political participation among the educated women. These findings align with women's challenges and barriers in Pakistan's political landscape, as the qualitative study participants highlighted. The qualitative study reveals that security concerns significantly deter women from actively engaging in political activities. Given the prevalence of violence and harassment in politics, women fear for their safety and the safety of their families, leading them to refrain from joining political parties or participating in public demonstrations. The qualitative study participants mentioned male dominance within political parties as a discouraging factor. Patriarchal norms often marginalize women's voices and limit their opportunities for leadership positions and decision-making roles within political parties. This lack of representation and influence can deter women from seeking party membership. Another reason highlighted during in-depth interviews by the study participants is the scarcity of women in leadership positions within political parties. The underrepresentation of women in higher-ranking roles reinforces the perception that women's perspectives and concerns may not be adequately addressed within party structures. All the study participants expressed the importance of voter registration, and most interview participants cast votes in the last elections.

They emphasized their recognition of voting as a fundamental right and their active engagement in exercising it. It indicates a positive attitude toward political participation and the belief that individual votes can make a difference in shaping the democratic process (For further information, see Chapter 6).

4.7 GENDER ROLES HINDER POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Women often bear the primary responsibility for managing domestic work and caregiving. These gender roles and household responsibilities are closely associated with women's political participation. Conventional gender roles can limit their ability to engage in political activities and discourage participation in formal political institutions and processes (Krook, 2014).

Research has shown that gender inequality in the division of household labour is associated with lower levels of women's political participation. Women with greater responsibility for domestic work and childcare have less time and energy to devote to political activities and face more significant barriers to accessing political spaces and resources. (Burns and Schlozman, 2010) (Gallego and Oskarsson, 2017).

The following table presents the results of a survey regarding gender roles that restrict political participation

Table 4.8 Frequency distribution of respondents regarding gender roles restrict political participation N= 400

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S. Dev	Mode
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)			
Household chores restrict my political participation	49 (12.3)	112 (28.0)	169 (42.3)	70 (17.5)	2.35	0.90	2.00
Taking care of my family members restricts my political participation	40 (10.0)	118 (29.5)	155 (38.8)	87 (21.8)	2.28	0.91	2.00
Taking care of the children/siblings restricts my political participation.	39 (9.8)	112 (28.0)	152 (38.0)	97 (24.3)	2.23	0.92	2.00
I am expected to prefer political participation over household chores	106 (26.5)	175 (43.8)	77 (19.3)	42 (10.5)	2.86	0.92	3.00
I am concerned with home-related matters more than political participation	59 (14.8)	155 (38.8)	124 (31.0)	62 (15.5)	2.53	0.91	3.00
Women are expected to prioritize family responsibilities over political participation.	124 (31.0)	173 (43.3)	68 (17.0)	35 (8.8)	2.97	0.92	3.00

Note: f=number of female students, %=percentage SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

Table 4.8 presents the survey results regarding household chores and family responsibilities that hinder women's political participation.

The table includes six items, each representing a potential barrier to political participation, and the participants' responses are categorized into four options ranging

from strongly agree to disagree strongly. The table also includes the frequencies and percentages and the responses' mean, standard deviation, and mode.

The first item in the table suggests that household chores prevent some women from participating in politics. About 40% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, indicating that they perceive household chores as a barrier to political participation. On the other hand, about 60% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, suggesting that they do not consider household chores a significant hurdle to their political participation.

The second item highlights the role of caring for family members in hindering women's political participation. 39.5% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, indicating that family responsibilities and caregiving duties challenge their political participation. Meanwhile, 60.5% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

The third item is similar to the second item but focuses on caring for children and siblings. About 47.8% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, suggesting that caring for children and siblings is a significant barrier to political participation. However, more than half of the participants (52.2%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

The fourth item suggests that some women are expected to prioritize home-related matters over political issues. About 44% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, indicating they are expected to prioritize domestic matters over political activities. In contrast, about 56% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, suggesting they are not expected to prioritize home-related matters over political activities.

The fifth item focuses on concerns of women in home-related matters more than political participation. About 53.8% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, indicating they are not concerned with political participation beyond their gender roles. However, about 45% of the participants agreed or strongly

agreed with this statement, suggesting they prefer political participation over home-related matters.

The sixth and final item describes society's expectations about women's political participation. About 74.3% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement that women are expected to prioritize family responsibilities over political participation. However, about 25.7% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Most respondents in the survey (60%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements that household responsibilities restrict their political participation. The sampled women are young, educated, urban women who have not adhered to traditional gender roles and have greater access to resources and opportunities that enable them to balance their household responsibilities and political participation. The in-depth interviews revealed that women mentioned other reasons for remaining away from protests and demonstrations, such as study participants being very concerned about security issues and violence during political gatherings.

Some studies have found that women's traditional gender roles and household responsibilities can hinder their political participation (Burns and Schlozman, 2010) (Gallego and Oskarsson, 2017). Other studies have found that women's domestic work does not restrict their political participation (Gidron & Hall, 2019; Stetson & Mazur, 2018) (Gidron, N., & Hall, L. A. 2019). The present study's findings contradict the study of Burns and Schlozman, 2010, who concluded that household responsibilities are a significant barrier to women's political participation. They mentioned that women with greater responsibility for domestic work and childcare have less time and energy to participate in political activities. However, in the present study, the demographic characteristics and experiences of the sampled women may have contributed to the different findings that household responsibilities are not perceived as significant barriers to their political participation. Women who are young, educated, and living in urban areas have greater exposure to information and resources that facilitate their political participation and have greater support from their families and communities for their political participation. Additionally, these women are less constrained by

traditional gender roles and expectations, which can limit women's mobility and opportunities for political participation. (Tripp, 2015) (ASA, 2010) (Ahmed, 2018).

However, it is essential to note that these findings may not be generalizable to all women, particularly those who may face more significant barriers to political participation, such as women from rural areas, women from marginalized communities, and women with fewer resources and opportunities.

Most women still face systemic barriers to political representation and participation, such as gender bias, discrimination, and lack of access to resources and opportunities (Ahmed, 2018) (Armingeon, 2014). Therefore, policies and initiatives that address these structural barriers are crucial to promoting gender equity in politics.

4.8 PATRIARCHY IN FAMILY

The indicators of patriarchy in the family selected for the present study are related to the influence of male family members on women's political participation. They are:

1. "Male members of my family" control my mobility regarding political activities: This indicator measures the extent to which women feel that their mobility to participate in political activities is restricted or controlled by male members of their family. It reflects the patriarchal norms and attitudes that limit women's autonomy and agency in decision-making.
2. "Male members of my family influence my political choices": This indicator measures the degree to which women's political choices are influenced by male members of their family, such as their fathers, brothers, husbands, or other male relatives. It reflects the unequal power relations within the family and society, where men are often perceived as the primary decision-makers.
3. "Male members of my family control my standpoint regarding political participation": This indicator measures the extent to which women feel that their political viewpoints and opinions are shaped or controlled by male members of their family.

4. It reflects the patriarchal norms discouraging women from expressing their views and opinions openly and assertively.
5. "Male members of my family discuss political issues with me": This indicator measures the frequency and quality of political discussions and debates that women have with male members of their family. It reflects the degree to which women are encouraged to participate in political conversations and debates and whether their opinions and perspectives are taken seriously by male members of their families.
6. "Male members of my family have more liberty to participate in political activities than me": This indicator measures the gender gap in political participation, where men have more opportunities and freedom to engage in political activities than women. It reflects the patriarchal norms and institutional barriers that prevent women from accessing political power and decision-making.
7. "Male members of my family are best suited for politics": This indicator measures the extent to which women believe in the traditional gender roles and stereotypes that associate politics with men and masculinity. It reflects the patriarchal attitudes and values that exclude women from the political sphere and undermine their capabilities and potential as political leaders.
8. "The male relatives who are politicians or actively involved in political activities help me to enter the political arena":
This indicator measures the role of male family members in facilitating women's entry into politics. It reflects the potential of male allies in supporting and empowering women in their political aspirations and initiatives.
9. "Subordination of women (to male members of the family) is a hurdle to women's political participation" This indicator measures the impact of gender subordination and patriarchal norms on women's political participation. It reflects the recognition of the structural and cultural barriers that prevent women from fully engaging in political activities and decision-making. These indicators suggest that patriarchal attitudes and practices within their families hinder women's political participation and highlight the role of male family members in shaping women's political choices.

The table presents the results of a study on patriarchy in the family and its association with women's political participation. The table includes eight statements about the influence of male family members on women's political activities and the respondents' level of agreement with these statements. The respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement using a Likert scale that ranged from strongly agree to disagree strongly. The table highlights the influence of patriarchy in the family on women's political participation. Most respondents agreed that male family members control their mobility and standpoint regarding political participation and have more liberty to participate in political activities than they do. Respondents also agreed that the subordination of women to male family members is a hurdle to their political participation.

However, some respondents also agreed that male family members who are politicians or actively involved in political activities help women to enter the political arena. Overall, the table suggests that patriarchal attitudes and behaviours in the family can have a significant impact on women's political participation.

Table 4.9 Frequency distribution of respondents regarding patriarchy in the family

Patriarchy in family	SA f (%)	A f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	Mean	S. Dev	Mode
My mobility regarding political activities is controlled by male members of my family	79 (19.8)	147 (36.8)	112 (28.0)	62 (15.5)	2.61	0.97	3.00
Male members of my family influence my political choices	53 (13.3)	143 (35.8)	126 (31.5)	78 (19.5)	2.43	0.95	3.00
Male members of my family control my standpoint regarding political participation	60 (15.0)	114 (28.5)	141 (35.3)	85 (21.3)	2.37	0.98	2.00
Male members of my family discuss political issues with me	88 (22.0)	183 (45.8)	91 (22.8)	38 (9.5)	2.80	0.88	3.00
Male members of my family have more liberty to participate in political activities as compared to me	93 (23.3)	159 (39.8)	85 (21.3)	63 (15.8)	2.71	0.99	3.00

Male members of my family are best suited for politics	71 (17.8)	157 (39.3)	111 (27.8)	61 (15.3)	2.60	0.95	3.00
The male relatives who are politicians or actively involved in political activities helped me to enter the political arena	72 (18.0)	126 (31.5)	130 (32.5)	72 (18.0)	2.50	0.98	2.00
Subordination of women (to male members of the family) is a hurdle to the political participation of women	67 (16.8)	152 (38.0)	126 (31.5)	55 (13.8)	2.58	0.92	

Note: f=number of female students, %=percentage SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

Table 4.9 presents the results of a survey that explores the influence of patriarchy on women's political participation. Most female respondents (56.6%) agreed/strongly agreed that male family members limit their mobility to participate in political activities. Nearly half (49.1%) of female respondents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement that male family members influence their political choices. 43 % of female respondents agreed /strongly agreed that male members of their family dictate their stance on political participation.

However, 67% of respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed that their male family members (father, husband, or brothers) control their standpoint regarding political participation. Respondents of this study have higher levels of education and exposure to information, which helped them to develop independent thinking and opinions about politics. Access to higher education enables women to become more empowered and self-reliant and less likely to be influenced by the opinions and control of male family members (Htun & Weldon) (2012; Kabeer, 1999).

Educated women are more likely to have independent thoughts and ideas and are more likely to participate in discussions on various topics, including political issues. Their families value and respect their opinions (Kishor and Gupta, 2004). Most respondents (70.8%) agreed/strongly agreed that they discuss political issues with male family members. Furthermore, research has shown that involving women in political discussions can positively affect their political participation. When women are included

in political discussions and express their opinions, they are more likely to become interested in politics and participate in political activities. (Inglehart and Norris, 2003).

A significant majority of female respondents (63.1%) agreed/strongly agreed that male members of their family have greater freedom to participate in political activities than they do. The finding that male family members have more liberty to participate in political activities than women is consistent with the results of a study by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995), who found that women in developing countries face more obstacles to political participation than men, including cultural norms and family responsibilities that restrict their mobility and limit their ability to participate in political activities. More than half (57.1%) of female respondents agreed /strongly agreed that men are better suited for politics. The finding that most female respondents believe that men are better suited for politics is consistent with previous studies documenting gender biases in perceptions of political leadership (Rudman & Goodwin, 2004). Women are often viewed as less competent than men in leadership roles, including political leadership. Another study concluded that women are less likely than men to consider running for political office due to factors such as gender stereotypes and discrimination. (Fox & Lawless, 2014).

Nearly half (49.5%) of female respondents agreed/strongly agreed that male family members who are politically active can help them to enter the political arena. Research suggests that family support can be crucial in women's political participation, especially in societies where gender roles are strictly defined and women's mobility is restricted (Mukhopadhyay, 2002). In patriarchal societies, where male dominance is pervasive, female family members often rely on male family members to help them overcome barriers to political participation (Chowdhury, 2004).

Moreover, previous studies have shown that family networks, particularly those involving male family members, can give women access to resources, networks, and information to help them enter the political arena (Tripp & Kang, 2008; Siim & Skjeie, 2008). Most respondents (54.8%) agreed/strongly agreed that women's subordination to male family members is a barrier to their political participation. The finding is consistent with previous research on gender and politics. A study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2012 found that cultural and social norms, including

patriarchal attitudes and practices, can limit women's political participation (UNDP, 2012).

The survey results suggest patriarchal attitudes and practices are common in families and can negatively affect young women's political participation. While many women report discussing political issues with male family members, they also report feeling limited in their ability to participate in politics, having their political choices influenced by male family members, and believing that men are better suited for politics. These findings highlight the importance of addressing patriarchal attitudes and practices within families to promote women's political participation.

The study's findings showed that 67% of respondents disagreed that their male family members control their standpoint on political participation, while 37% acknowledged some level of influence. These percentages give us an overview of the overall patterns and trends in the data, providing a generalized understanding of women's perceptions regarding the influence of their male family members on their political stance.

The numerical data gained depth and context through the in-depth interviews, unveiling the reasons behind women's autonomy and independence in their decision-making processes. The participants of the interviews explained that educated women exercised autonomy, confidence, and critical thinking in forming their political preferences. They based their choices on their judgment rather than external influences. These qualitative findings provided a more nuanced understanding of the empowered and agency-driven decision-making process of educated women, highlighting their ability to think critically and form independent political opinions.

Combining survey findings and in-depth interviews gives the researcher a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the research topic. The findings of interviews provide detailed insights, context, and personal experiences that cannot be captured through numerical statistics alone. They complement the survey findings by adding depth and richness to the overall analysis and help the researcher interpret the quantitative findings more nuancedly.

4.9 PATRIARCHY IN POLITICS

Patriarchy in politics in Pakistan refers to a social system where men have greater power, privilege, and authority than women in the political domain. Patriarchy can manifest in various ways, including gender-based discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion of women from political leadership positions (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2017).

Table 10 demonstrates the results of a survey conducted to explore women's attitudes toward patriarchy in Pakistan's politics. The table presents women's responses to different statements related to the involvement of women in politics and the role of men in politics. The data is presented in frequencies and percentages for each response category.

Table 4.10 Frequency distribution of respondents regarding patriarchy in politics
N=400

Patriarchy in Politics	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S. Dev	Mode
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)			
Men have more dominance in politics than women.	158 (39.5)	158 (39.5)	56 (14.0)	28 (7.0)	3.12	0.89	3.00
The political system of Pakistan supports the involvement of males in politics as compared to females	134 (33.5)	174 (43.5)	66 (16.5)	26 (6.5)	3.04	0.87	3.00
Men can run a political campaign in a better way	95 (23.8)	166 (41.5)	92 (23)	47 (11.8)	2.77	0.94	3.00
Men are more appropriate to participate in political activities than women.	93 (23.3)	164 (41.0)	86 (21.5)	57 (14.3)	2.73	0.97	3.00
Complex political procedures (Registration of votes and casting of votes) restrict me from participating in political activities.	71 (17.8)	128 (32.0)	133 (33.3)	68 (17.0)	2.5	0.97	2.00

Note f=number of female students, %=percentage SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

The table shows the results of a survey on patriarchy in politics in Pakistan. The respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with five statements about men's dominance over women in politics. 78.9% of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed that men have more dominance in politics than females (39.5% strongly agreed and 39.5% agreed).

Only 21.1% of respondents disagreed/ strongly disagreed (14.0% disagreed, and 7.1% strongly disagreed). The findings indicate that the majority of respondents believe that men have more dominance in politics than females. This result is consistent with previous research that highlights the patriarchal nature of politics in Pakistan and the marginalization of women in the political domain. For instance, a study by Nadeem and Butt (2017) found that patriarchal attitudes and beliefs are deeply ingrained in Pakistani society and significantly impact women's political participation. Similarly, a study by Ahmed and Khalid (2019) revealed that the political system in Pakistan is heavily male-dominated, and women face numerous barriers to political participation. Therefore, the high percentage of respondents agreeing that men have more dominance in politics than females in the current study is consistent with previous research and suggests that patriarchal attitudes and gender-based discrimination continue to be significant barriers to women's political participation in Pakistan 77% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the political system of Pakistan supports the involvement of males in politics more than females (33.5% strongly agreed and 43.5% agreed). Only 23% of respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed (16.5% disagreed and 6.5% strongly disagreed). Previous studies have also reported similar findings regarding gender inequality in Pakistani politics. Women's political participation in Pakistan was limited due to social and cultural norms, lack of support from political parties, and the patriarchal nature of the political system. Pakistani women faced significant barriers to political participation, including cultural norms, socio-economic factors, and a lack of political will to address gender inequality (Ahmed, 2018). (Awan, 2016) (Bano, 2009). Therefore, the finding that the political system of Pakistan supports the involvement of males in politics more than females, as reported by 77% of the respondents, is consistent with the previous studies highlighting gender inequality in Pakistani politics 65.3% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that men could run a political campaign better (23.8% strongly agreed, and 41.5% agreed). Only 34.7% of respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed (23% disagreed, and 11.8% strongly disagreed). The finding that a significant

proportion of respondents (65.3%) agreed that men could run a political campaign better is consistent with previous research that has highlighted gender-based stereotypes and biases that affect women's political participation in Pakistan.

Previous studies confirm that women's political participation in Pakistan is hindered by gender-based stereotypes that portray women as weak and emotional and assume that men are better suited to leadership roles. Similarly, a report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on gender inequality in Pakistan highlights the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and practices that limit women's participation in politics (UNDP, 2007) (Bano, 2009) (Javeed & Yousuf, 2019)¹. 64.3% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that men are more appropriate to participate in political activities than women (23.3% strongly agreed and 41.0% agreed). This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting the prevalence of patriarchal attitudes and gender-based stereotypes in Pakistan. Patriarchal attitudes and gender-based stereotypes were among Pakistan's most significant barriers limiting women's political participation. (Khan & Raza, 2017) (Khattak, 2020). 49.8% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the complex political procedure (registration of vote and casting of the vote) restricts them from participating in political activities (17.8% strongly agreed and 32.0% agreed). This finding highlights the challenges the general public faces in accessing and participating in the political process in Pakistan. Previous research has also highlighted the challenges associated with voter registration and the complex voting process in Pakistan (Zaheruddin, Kalthum, & Hassan, 2016). A Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) report noted that voter registration remained a significant barrier to political participation in Pakistan, particularly for marginalized communities such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities. The report also highlighted the need for greater transparency and accessibility in voting to promote greater public participation (Free and Fair Election Network 2018).

In conclusion, most respondents in this survey agreed that men are more dominant in politics than women in Pakistan. They also agreed that the political system and complex political procedures favour men's political involvement. The respondents also believed that men are more appropriate and capable of participating in political

¹ <https://www.undp.org/pakistan/publications/pakistan-national-human-development-report-inequality>

activities than women. These findings suggest the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and gender-based discrimination in the political domain in Pakistan.

The quantitative findings offer statistical insights and highlight the overall trends and prevalence of patriarchal attitudes and barriers to women's political participation. The qualitative findings provide in-depth narratives and personal experiences that shed light on the lived realities. The qualitative findings reveal that women in Pakistan perceive the political system as male-dominated, with men holding positions of power and authority in all areas of life, including politics. This perception aligns with the quantitative findings, which indicate that a significant proportion of respondents agreed that men have more dominance in politics than women. The qualitative data further highlight that cultural norms and expectations assign specific gender roles to men and women, limiting women's opportunities to engage in politics and reinforcing traditional patriarchal values.

Additionally, the interviews shed light on women's specific challenges and risks, such as harassment and intimidation, in political gatherings. This information supplements the quantitative findings by providing a deeper understanding of the barriers that hinder women's active participation in political activities. The survey data provide statistical evidence of the prevalence of patriarchal attitudes and barriers. At the same time, the qualitative narratives offer personal insights into the lived experiences of women, their agency, and the challenges they face. This integrated approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between patriarchy, political participation, and women's experiences in the Pakistani context.

4.10 GENDER SOCIALIZATION

This table presents the results of a survey about gender socialization concerning political participation. The participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with six statements related to their socialization and willingness to participate in various political activities. The responses were measured on a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (SA) to disagree (SD) strongly.

Table 4.11 Frequency distribution of respondents regarding gender socialization and political participation N=400

Gender Socialization	SA f (%)	A f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	Mean	S.Dev	Mode
I am socialized to be confident to vote independently.	57 (14.3)	153 (38.3)	142 (35.5)	48 (12.0)	2.55	0.88	3.00
I am socialized to be confident to participate in election campaigns.	48 (12.0)	145 (36.3)	152 (38.0)	55 (13.8)	2.47	0.87	2.00
I am socialized to remain away from participating in political activities (demonstrations/election campaigns)	49 (12.3)	137 (34.3)	143 (35.8)	71 (17.8)	2.41	0.91	2.00
I am socialized to be confident in taking part in political discussions	50 (12.5)	127 (32.8)	152 (38.0)	71 (17.8)	2.39	0.91	2.00
I am socialized to be confident in participating in demonstrations	82 (20.5)	144 (36.0)	113 (28.3)	61 (15.3)	2.62	0.97	3.00
I am socialized to prefer gender mix political gatherings.	83 (20.8)	119 (29.8)	115 (28.8)	83 (20.8)	2.51	1.04	3.00

Note f=number of female students, %=percentage

SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

Most respondents, 52.6 %, agreed that they are socialized to be confident to vote independently. The finding aligns with the trend of increasing gender equality and women's empowerment in urban areas, particularly regarding access to education and political participation. In many urban areas, there has been an increase in educational opportunities for women, which may have contributed to the finding that many

respondents felt socialized to be confident about voting independently. Additionally, as more women get higher education, there may be greater chances for women to make their own political choices. (Kabeer, 1999) (Boserup, 1970). The qualitative findings also support the quantitative findings that educated women in urban areas are socialized in a way that promotes confidence and encourages them to participate in all areas of life.

The findings suggest a trend towards increasing gender equality and women's empowerment in urban areas, and this does not necessarily reflect the experiences of all sampled women. Almost 48% of female respondents disagreed with the statement, suggesting that many women in urban areas still face barriers to political participation and decision-making. Additionally, the study sample is selected from urban areas. However, many families have migrated from rural to urban areas and follow their traditional cultural practices. These practices can include beliefs and attitudes limiting women's political participation and decision-making opportunities. For example, some families may discourage their daughters from pursuing education or engaging in political activities, believing these activities are inappropriate for women. Such attitudes and beliefs can persist even when families move to urban areas (Takemoto, 2009).

48.3% of the respondents agreed, "I am socialized to be confident to participate in election campaigns," and 51.7% indicated disagreement. 46.6% of respondents agreed with the statement, "I am socialized to remain away from participating in political activities (demonstrations/election campaigns), " suggesting that women in urban areas may be socialized to avoid political activities. Cultural beliefs and practices discourage women's political participation or the perception that political activities are unsafe for women. The in-depth interviews also supported the quantitative findings that most female participants did not participate in demonstrations and election campaigns. Only a few women with influential political backgrounds participated in such gatherings. The qualitative study participants highlighted concerns about safety and security as reasons for not attending political demonstrations or rallies. The reservations expressed by their families regarding activities like attending demonstrations or going alone to polling stations to cast votes reflect the significant impact of security concerns on women's political engagement in Pakistan. Such security concerns and family

reservations can profoundly impact women's ability to exercise their political rights and actively participate in political events.

Previous research has also highlighted that cultural norms and gender roles often discourage women from participating in political activities, including voting and running for office. Women who did participate faced various challenges, including threats, violence, and harassment (Nasir et al., 2018) (Kumar, 2017). The finding that over half of the respondents (52.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are socialized to be confident in participating in political discussions indicates that many women in urban areas feel empowered to engage in political discussions. Qualitative interviews also support the findings, and previous studies have also shown a positive correlation between women's participation in political discussions and their political participation. For example, a study by Karami and Lavasani (2017) found that women more engaged in political discussions had higher levels of political efficacy, knowledge, and participation.

Similarly, a study by Lijphart and Waisman (2016) found that women's participation in political discussions was positively associated with their participation in other political activities, such as voting and contacting politicians. 50 % of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am socialized to prefer gender mix political gatherings," suggesting that there may be a cultural expectation or norm in their community that women should participate in mixed-gender political settings. This could be seen as an indicator of gender equality in political participation, as it suggests that women are being encouraged to participate in a broader range of political activities. The qualitative findings also support the quantitative findings; the interview participants explained that families allowed them to pursue higher education and participate in the labour force. They were also socialized to avoid mingling with men and attending gatherings where interaction with men was inevitable.

Furthermore, 50 % of women showed their preference for gender-mixed gatherings. As sampled, women are already studying in gender-mixed universities, which could contribute to their positive attitude towards gender-mixed political gatherings. The finding is also supported by 13 female participants of in-depth interviews who explained their reasons for preferring gender mix gatherings. They

explained that they prefer and encourage gender-mixed gatherings where the perspectives of both males and females can be heard and where males can listen to females' points of view.

Studies have shown that education can be crucial in empowering women to participate in politics and changing cultural norms (Inglehart & Norris, 2003) (Chen, 2017) (Sim & Mokre, 2013). The presence of women in mixed-gender political settings can positively impact their political efficacy and participation (Norris, 2004). In addition, gender-segregated political spaces can create barriers to women's political participation (Lijphart & Waisman, 2016).



CHAPTER FIVE

BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

5.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND RELATIONSHIP WITH POLITICAL INTEREST

This chapter focuses on unraveling the intricate relationship between political interest and political participation among women, employing bivariate analysis as the primary investigative tool. In this context, the independent variable (IV) is political interest, while the dependent variable (DV) is political participation. The researcher utilizes statistical tests, including correlation and regression analyses, to dissect the association between these two pivotal variables. Given that data for political participation and political interest is collected on a Likert scale, the Pearson correlation coefficient is applied to measure the strength and direction of their relationship. This coefficient ranges from -1 to +1, providing insights into the nature of correlation.

Furthermore, regression analysis estimates the linear relationship between political interest and political participation. This chapter lays the foundation for a nuanced exploration of the association between political interest and participation, utilizing rigorous statistical methods to uncover patterns and insights that contribute to a deeper understanding of women's engagement in the political sphere.

Bivariate analysis is a statistical method to explore the relationship between two variables². In this case, the independent variable (IV) is political interest, and the dependent variable (DV) is political participation. The researcher used statistical tests such as correlation analysis to analyse these two variables bivariate. The data is collected on a Likert scale for the Political Participation (DV) and Political Interest (IV) variables.

² <https://medium.com/@HeCanThink/bivariate-analysis-plotting-our-way-to-better-understanding-the-relationships-6fc705e571f>

Therefore, a correlation method such as the Pearson correlation coefficient would be appropriate to test the correlation between the variables. Because the Pearson correlation coefficient measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. (Myers & Well, 2003).

The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1, where a value of -1 indicates a negative correlation, +1 indicates a positive correlation, and 0 shows no correlation. Lastly, regression analysis was used to estimate the linear relationship between the two variables, where political interest is the independent variable, and political participation is the dependent variable. The regression model can help in predicting the level of political participation based on political interest. Bivariate analysis helps explore the relationship between political interest and political participation. A positive association between two variables means that as one variable's value increases, the other variable's value also tends to increase. In other words, there is a consistent trend that when one variable goes up, the other variable also tends to go up. A negative correlation refers to a statistical relationship between two variables in which an increase in one variable is associated with a decrease in the other variable and vice versa. In simpler terms, when one variable goes up, the other tends to go down; when one variable goes down, the other tends to go up. The strength of a negative correlation is measured by the correlation coefficient, which ranges from -1 to +1. A correlation coefficient close to -1 indicates a strong negative correlation, while a coefficient close to 0 suggests a weak or no correlation.

In the context of a positive correlation between an independent variable (IV) and a dependent variable (DV), it means that as the values of the independent variable increase, the dependent variable also tends to increase. Now, when we discuss the strength of the correlation, it's important to consider the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient quantifies the strength and direction of the relationship between variables. If the correlation coefficient is close to +1, it indicates a strong positive correlation. In this case, the independent variable is a robust predictor of the dependent variable.

On the other hand, if the correlation coefficient is positive but close to 0, it suggests a weak positive correlation. This weak correlation indicates that while there is

a positive relationship, the independent variable is not a strong predictor of the dependent variable. A positive correlation implies a positive relationship, and the correlation coefficient determines the strength of this relationship. A weak positive correlation suggests that the independent variable has some influence on the dependent variable, but the relationship is not particularly strong.

5.2 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN POLITICAL INTEREST AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Hypothesis 1: There is a correlation between political interest and political participation of educated women.

Table 5.1 Correlation matrix showing the relationship between two variables: "political interest" and "political participation"

Correlations

		PI	PP
Political Interest	Pearson Correlation	1	.499**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Political Participation	Pearson Correlation	.499**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation matrix shows a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.499$, $p < 0.01$) between political interest (PI) and political participation (PP). This suggests that as individuals' level of political interest increases, their political participation also tends to increase. The correlation coefficient 0.499 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables.

This correlation analysis suggests a moderate positive relationship between political Interest and political participation. This finding suggests that individuals with a higher political interest tend to be more politically active and engaged.

The relationship between women's political participation and interest is a subject of research in political science and gender studies. According to empirical studies, there is a significant correlation between political interest and political participation among women. Women who indicate greater political interest are more likely to participate in political activities such as voting, attending political meetings, and engaging in political conversations. Similarly, women who engage in political participation activities are more likely to have greater political interest than those who do not participate (Rebenstorf, 2004) (Campbell, 2003) (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

This significant correlation may be explained by the fact that women engaged in politics are more inclined to seek information about political issues, candidates, and parties. This activity develops their political awareness and strengthens their confidence to participate in political activities. Moreover, political interest and political participation can reinforce one another. When women join political activities, they may find these activities more fascinating, leading to a possible increase in their political participation. On the other side, more political interest may encourage women to seek out chances for political participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Table 5.2 Regression model: association between political interest and political participation.

Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R ²	Overall Model Test			
			F	df1	df2	p
1	0.513	0.263	28.2	5	394	< .001

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.111	5	5.622	28.180	.000 ^b
	Residual	78.607	394	.200		
	Total	106.719	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Political Participation

b. Predictor Political Interest

Model Coefficients – Political Participation

Predictor	Estimate	SE
Intercept	1.276	0.091
General Interest in Government Activities	0.077	0.033
Interest in Election Campaigns	0.104	0.031
Interest in Demonstration	-0.009	0.033
Interest in Political Parties and their Performance	0.100	0.031
Interest in Political Discussions	0.110	0.028

Dependent Variable Political Participation

The table presents the results of an ANOVA (analysis of variance) for a regression model that aims to predict political participation based on several predictors related to political interest. The ANOVA table provides information on the amount of variance in the dependent variable that the regression model can explain, the significance of the regression model, and the significance of each predictor variable. In addition, the Model Coefficients table provides information about each predictor variable's estimated coefficients (slopes), along with their standard errors, t-values, and p-values.

The Regression model has a sum of squares of 28.111 and 5 degrees of freedom, indicating that the model explains a significant amount of the variance in political participation. The Mean Square is 5.622, representing the average variance amount

defined by each predictor. The F-value of 28.180 is significant at $p < .001$, indicating that the regression model predicts political participation. The Total sum of squares is 106.719, indicating the total variance in political participation. The ANOVA table suggests that the regression model is a significant predictor of political participation ($F(5,394) = 28.180, p < .001$). This means that the predictors in the model explain a significant amount of the variability in Political Participation. The model explains 26.3% of the variance in Political Participation ($R\text{-squared} = .263$), which suggests that the model is moderately effective in explaining political participation. The R-value of 0.513 suggests a moderate positive linear relationship between political interest and political participation. A moderate positive linear relationship means that as one variable (in this case, political interest) increases, the other variable (political participation) also tends to increase relatively consistently and predictably.

Many previous studies have examined the relationship between political interest and political participation. Many of these studies have found similar results, suggesting a positive relationship between the two variables. However, the strength of the relationship can vary depending on the specific context and population being studied. For example, a study by Verba, Scholzman, and Brady (1995) found that people with a higher level of political interest were more likely to engage in political participation, including voting, attending public meetings, and contacting government officials. Similarly, a study by Delli

Carpini and Keeter (1996) found that people more interested in politics were more likely to engage in political activities such as joining political organizations, attending rallies, and signing petitions. The results of this study are consistent with previous research indicating a positive relationship between political interest and political participation. However, the strength of the relationship may vary depending on the specific population and context being studied.

The coefficients table indicates that all predictor variables except interest in the demonstration are significant predictors of political participation. Specifically, one unit increase in General Interest in Government Activities, Interest in Election Campaigns, Interest in Political Parties and their Performance, and Interest in Political Discussions is associated with increases in Political Participation by .077, .104, .100, and .110, respectively. These coefficients are all significant at $p < .05$, except for Interest in Demonstration, which is not a significant predictor of Political Participation.

The study findings suggest a positive relationship between political interest and political participation. For example, women are particularly interested in political parties and their performance and political discussions. The qualitative findings, on the other hand, suggest that participants were less interested in political demonstrations and election campaigns and that they viewed political parties as primarily interested in their self-interest rather than in representing the interests of the public.

The in-depth interviews provide a more nuanced understanding of why individuals are less interested in certain political activities, such as demonstrations or election campaigns. Participants felt that the performance of political parties was directly related to the lives of the common public, which explains the reason for more interest in the performance of political parties than in other activities such as demonstrations or election campaigns. Similarly, participants felt that political parties were not representative of the public interest; they organized protests or demonstrations in their self-interest.

This is a prominent reason for women's low interest in political demonstrations. Political participation is not simply a matter of individual interest or motivation but is also shaped by broader social and political factors (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) (Putnam, 2000). (Norris, 2002).

5.3 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN GENDER ROLES AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Hypothesis 2 There is an association between conventional gender roles and the political participation of educated women.

The table shows the correlation coefficients between two variables, gender roles and political participation, based on a sample of 400 respondents. The Pearson correlation coefficient between gender roles and political participation is 0.328, indicating a weak positive correlation between the two variables.

Table 5.3 Correlation matrix showing the relationship between two variables: "gender roles" and "political participation"

Correlations

		Gender Roles	Political Participation
Gender Roles	Pearson Correlation	1	.328**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Political Participation	Pearson Correlation	.328**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The positive correlation between the two variables suggests that variable traditional gender roles are not a strong predictor of political participation. There are multiple reasons for this weak relationship. First, most sampled women were unmarried young students living in urban areas who were not yet involved in household responsibilities. These young women did not consider that their traditional gender roles or household responsibilities restrict their political participation. In contrast, women who are married and have children or live in rural areas may face more constraints on their time and resources, making it harder for them to participate in politics (Ahmed, 2018).

The survey findings also support the interview findings that traditional gender roles may not necessarily restrict women's political participation. In in-depth interviews, most women reported that household responsibilities did not restrict their political participation. All the women interviewed were highly educated working women. These women have found ways to manage their domestic duties while still being able to engage in political activities. Educated working women are successfully managing their gender roles and responsibilities. They are eager to participate in political activities as they consider political participation significant for developing the country. (Dahlerup, 2006) (Porter & Botting 2010).

Participants reported that many other reasons cause their less participation in conventional political activities, such as political demonstrations, to turn into violent mobs, and their security could be threatened. However, they disagreed that traditional gender roles or children's responsibilities are the hurdles to their political participation.

The present study's findings are consistent with previous studies that have found that conventional gender roles may not necessarily restrict educated women's political participation. Women with higher education levels and full-time employment were more likely to participate in political activities (Barnes and Burchardt 2014) (Bursztyn and Cantoni 2017). A study by Kraaykamp and Ultee (2013) in the Netherlands found, that women's education level mediated the impact of gender roles on political participation. They concluded that highly educated women are less affected by traditional gender roles than less educated or uneducated women. Women's education and independent status can play a significant role in enabling women to participate in politics. Women with higher levels of education are more likely to possess the abilities, information, and self-assurance necessary to participate in politics and make wise choices on political matters. In addition, women are less likely to depend on males when they are financially independent and in control of their financial resources (Duflo, 2011).

5.4 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PATRIARCHY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Hypothesis 3: The higher the male dominance, the lower the political participation of educated women.

Patriarchy is a system of social organization in which men hold the primary power and authority, and women are often excluded from or marginalized within decision-making processes. In this study, the concept of patriarchy was measured at two levels: patriarchy in family and patriarchy in politics. Patriarchy in the family refers to how traditional gender roles and power dynamics are reinforced within the family unit. Generally, society expects women to prioritize caregiving and domestic responsibilities over career or political participation and believes that men should be the primary breadwinners and

decision-makers within the family. Patriarchy in politics, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which traditional gender roles and power dynamics are reinforced within political institutions and decision-making processes. Patriarchy can include biases against women in political leadership roles and systemic barriers to women's political participation, such as limited access to resources or discrimination in political campaigning (Lovenduski, 2005) (Norris & Lovenduski, 1995).

By measuring patriarchy at the family and political levels, the study captured how these two spheres may interact and reinforce one another in limiting women's political participation. Additionally, this approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the factors that may contribute to women's underrepresentation in politics and can help inform targeted interventions and policy changes to address these issues.

5.5 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PATRIARCHY IN FAMILY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

The present study assessed women's perceptions of patriarchy in their families and its potential effects on their political participation. The data shows that most women in this study agreed or strongly agreed that patriarchy exists in their families. However, it also seems that the level of agreement with patriarchy in the family did not necessarily restrict women's political participation. The mean score for women who strongly agreed with patriarchy was 2.50, the highest mean score across all groups, indicating that these women had the highest level of political participation. These findings suggest that despite perceiving patriarchy in their families, these educated women did not feel that male dominance necessarily limited their political engagement. To further explore the association of patriarchy in the family, it is correlated with political participation.

Hypothesis 3: There is an association between patriarchy in the family and educated women's political participation.

Table 5.4 Correlation between patriarchy in family and political participation

Correlation Matrix

		MPP		PiF
Political Participation	Pearson's r	—		
	p-value	—		
Patriarchy in Family	Pearson's r	0.400	***	—
	p-value	< .001		—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

This correlation matrix shows Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) and associated p-values between the two variables, political participation and patriarchy in the family. In this case, the correlation between political participation and patriarchy in the family is 0.400, indicating a weak positive correlation between the two variables. The p-value associated with this correlation coefficient is less than .001, indicating that this correlation is statistically significant at the .001 level. These findings suggest that the degree of patriarchy in the family is a weak predictor of political participation.

The low relationship between patriarchy and women's political participation in this sample could be due to several factors. First, the women in the sample are from urban areas where access to education and employment opportunities for women is relatively high, which could give them more independence and autonomy in decision-making, including political choices.

Second, the women in the sample reported that their male family members permitted them to pursue higher education, suggesting a level of support and empowerment within their families that may not be present in more patriarchal households. Finally, the women in the sample did not report feeling their mobility or political choices were entirely controlled by male members of their families, as most of the women stated that they could practice independent voting choices.

Previous studies have shown that the relationship between patriarchy and women's political participation can be complex and multifaceted. Patriarchal norms and beliefs may limit women's access to education, employment, and other resources necessary for political participation. Still, social and cultural changes can also challenge these norms and empower women to participate more actively in politics. In addition, women's perceptions of their agency and autonomy can also play a significant role in their political participation, as well as the support and encouragement of family members and other social networks (Inglehart & Norris, P, 2003) (Kabeer, 1999) (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999).

The findings suggest that cultural and social factors play an essential role in shaping women's political participation, including the level of education of male family members, family dynamics, and women's empowerment. The interview participants highlighted that their husbands or male family members were highly educated and supportive of their political activities. This support could be because educated men are more likely to have egalitarian attitudes toward gender roles and understand the importance of women's political participation. These male family members may also have greater access to resources and networks to facilitate their wives' political participation.

The interviews also suggest that women's education level and economic independence are essential in determining women's political participation. Women who are more educated and feel more empowered may be more likely to participate in politics as they have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to engage in political activities.

In addition, women with supportive family members and social networks may be more likely to participate in politics as they have the resources and encouragement necessary to do so (Budig & England, 2001).

5.6 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PATRIARCHY IN POLITICS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Patriarchy in politics is a significant challenge in Pakistan, where women face significant barriers to entering politics, accessing resources and support, and exercising their political rights. Addressing these barriers will require comprehensive and sustained efforts at the individual, societal, and institutional levels to promote gender equality, eliminate discrimination, and increase women's participation in politics (Kabeer N, 2001) (Mughal, 2015) (National Democratic Institute (NDI), 2018) (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2017).

Hypothesis 4: There is an association between patriarchy in politics and the political participation of educated women.

Table 5.5 Correlation between Patriarchy in Politics and Political Participation

Correlation Matrix

		MPP	PIP
Political Participation	Pearson's r	—	
	p-value	—	
Patriarchy in Politics	Pearson's r	0.215	—
	p-value	< .001	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The correlation between patriarchy in politics and political participation indicates a weak positive correlation between the two variables, with a Pearson's r value of 0.215 and a p -value of $< .001$. This means there is a slight tendency for higher levels of patriarchy in politics to be associated with higher political participation. The strength of the relationship is very weak.³

The results suggest that male political dominance may be slightly associated with women's political participation. The finding that male political dominance in politics may be slightly associated with women's political participation is consistent with previous studies that have found a negative relationship between patriarchy and women's political participation (Norris, 2000; Paxton, 2007).

Patriarchal norms, values, and institutions often limit women's access to political power, resources, and decision-making, leading to their under-representation and marginalization in political processes (Krook, 2010).

The women in the in-depth interviews explained that the political system in Pakistan supports greater male involvement in politics and that men hold more dominance in political decision-making. These findings are consistent with previous studies on women's barriers to political participation, particularly in patriarchal societies. Research has shown that gender norms and attitudes can hinder women's political participation, particularly in societies where patriarchal values are deeply ingrained (Kabeer, 1999) (Norris & Inglehart, 2011). Women may face a variety of obstacles to political participation, including a lack of access to resources required for political participation, societal expectations about gender roles, and support from political institutions that are dominated by men (Krook, 2010).

In Pakistan, women have faced several challenges to political participation, including violence, intimidation, and discrimination (Shabbir, 2020). Interview participants also explained that the political system of Pakistan is not only male-dominated but there are more risks of harassment and intimidation in political gatherings, restricting them from attending such gatherings actively. Participant women

³ Further moderation analysis is established to examine the relationship between the two variables.

explained that there are greater risks of harassment and intimidation in political meetings, an essential barrier to their political participation. Women feel unsafe or uncomfortable attending political gatherings where they may face harassment or violence, which can limit their ability to engage in political activities and exercise their right to participate in the political process.

This finding is consistent with previous research on women's barriers to political participation, particularly in contexts where gender-based violence and harassment are prevalent (Krook, 2017). In addition, women may face various obstacles to political participation, including lack of access to resources, cultural and social norms that discourage their participation, and violence and intimidation (Krook, 2010).

In conclusion, the fact that women face greater risks of harassment and intimidation in political gatherings is a significant barrier to their political participation. Addressing the issue of harassment and intimidation in political gatherings is essential for promoting women's political participation and ensuring that women can exercise their right to participate in the political process fully. Strategies to address this issue may include providing safe spaces for women to engage in political activities, promoting greater representation of women in political institutions, and implementing policies to address gender-based violence and harassment.

5.7 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN GENDER SOCIALIZATION/CONFIDENCE LEVEL AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Hypothesis 5: There is an association between gender socialisation and the political participation of educated women.

Gender socialization can also significantly affect women's confidence levels regarding political participation. Women are often socialized to believe that politics is a masculine domain and that they are less qualified or capable than men to participate in political activities, which lowers women's political ambition and confidence (Memon, 2016). Research has shown that gender socialization can negatively affect women's political participation and confidence. Lawless and Fox (2010) found that

women were less likely than men to participate in political activities, even with the same qualifications and experience. The authors suggest this may be due to gender socialization, which teaches women to be less self-promoting and submissive than men (Lawless & Fox 2010).

Table 5.6 Correlation between gender socialization and political participation

Correlation Matrix

		PP		GS
Political Participation	Pearson's r	—		
	p-value	—		
Gender Socialization	Pearson's r	-0.253	***	—
	p-value	< .001		—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The matrix shows the correlation coefficients between "gender socialization" and "political participation." Pearson's r values indicate the strength and direction of the correlation between these variables. According to the matrix, Pearson's r value between "gender socialization" and "political participation" is -0.253, which suggests a weak negative correlation between these variables.

The use of in-depth interviews in the study helped provide additional insights into the experiences and perspectives of educated women, which can help understand the cultural and social context in which political participation occurs. The mixed-method approach allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between gender socialization and political participation among young, educated women.

According to the qualitative part of the study, the in-depth interviews revealed that the women did not feel they were socialized to be submissive and passive compared

to males to participate in political activities. The findings of the qualitative study suggest that the relationship between gender socialization and political participation may vary based on the context and the demographic characteristics of the women in question.

In this case, the women who participated in the qualitative study were highly educated and independent. They did not feel they were socialized to be shy or submissive regarding their political participation. However, they explained that the political system of Pakistan is highly male-dominated and does not support women's involvement in politics. They are socialized to avoid political demonstrations and protests due to violence, intimidation, and security threats. In addition, they have been exposed to different socialization messages emphasizing the importance of education, empowerment, and gender equality. As a result, they may have felt more confident to vote independently. However, they are restricted from participating in non-conventional political activities such as demonstrations or campaigns.

The study findings are supported by previous research, which shows that women's political participation is often hindered by gender- socialization and cultural beliefs that women should remain away from political gatherings, specifically political demonstrations (Thomas and Winters 2019).

CHAPTER SIX

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

6.1 THE MODERATING ROLE OF SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS

This chapter focuses on unraveling the complex interplay between political interest and political participation among educated women, with a particular emphasis on the moderating influence of socio-cultural factors. The chapter employs moderation analysis to scrutinize the nuanced interactions among these variables. The statistical techniques, including regression models through PROCESS, provide a comprehensive examination of how gender roles, gender socialization, patriarchy in the family, and patriarchy in politics impact the relationship between political interest and political participation among educated women. The subsequent sections offer detailed insights into the results of moderation analyses, shedding light on the distinct roles each socio-cultural factor plays.

The moderating role of socio-cultural factors in the relationship between political interest and political participation has been the subject of research in recent years. These studies suggest that socio-cultural factors are essential in shaping the relationship between political interest and political participation. Understanding these factors is necessary for developing effective strategies to encourage women's political participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1999) (Alzuabi, 2016).

The present research studies the moderating role of sociocultural factors in the relationship between political interest and political participation. Several studies have examined the complex interaction between political interest and sociocultural factors in shaping political participation. Political interest is an essential predictor of political participation; its impact is strongly influenced by sociocultural factors such as education, gender socialization, and structural barriers such as patriarchy and gender roles (Verba and Nie, 1972) (Putnam, 2000) (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012).

6.2 MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS-MODERATION ANALYSIS

Multivariate analysis is a statistical technique used to analyze relationships between multiple variables. It involves examining the relationships between two or more variables while controlling for the effects of other variables. Moderation analysis is a multivariate analysis that explores the relationship between two variables affected by a third variable. Moderation analysis is a statistical technique used to investigate the effects of a third variable, a moderating variable, on the relationship between an independent and dependent variable. Specifically, moderation analysis examines whether the strength or direction of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable changes as a function of the level of the moderating variable. In other words, the moderating variable can either strengthen or weaken the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. By examining a variable's moderating effect, researchers can better understand the complex relationships between variables.

To conduct a moderation analysis, the researcher used a regression model through PROCESS that included four variables such as gender roles, patriarchy in the family, patriarchy in politics, and gender socialization. The control variables of the study were age, education level, marital status, and area of residence. Overall, multivariate analysis, including moderation analysis, is a powerful tool for examining complex relationships between multiple variables (Hayes., 2022).

6.3 MODERATION ANALYSIS

Table 6.1 Moderated analysis for the interactive effects of political interest and gender socialization on political participation

Moderation Estimates

	Estimate	SE	Z	p
(M)Political Interest	0.3636	0.0325	11.17	<.001
(M)Gender Socialization	-0.1410	0.0366	-3.85	<.001

Moderation Estimates

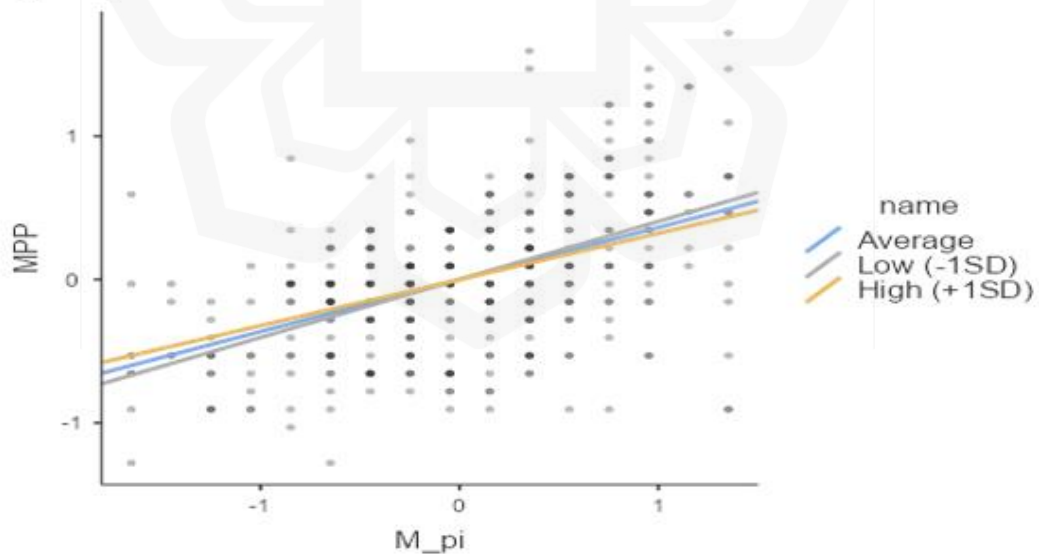
	Estimate	SE	Z	p
MPI * MGS	-0.0690	0.0464	-1.49	0.137

Simple Slope Estimates

	Estimate	SE	Z	p
Average	0.364	0.0326	11.15	< .001
Low (-1SD)	0.405	0.0446	9.08	< .001
High (+1SD)	0.322	0.0411	7.85	< .001

Note. Shows the effect of the predictor (mean political interest) on the dependent variable (mean political participation) at different levels of the moderator (mean gender socialization)

Simple Slope Plot



The moderation analysis examines whether the relationship between the independent variable (political interest) and the dependent variable (political

participation) changes depending on the level of the moderator variable (gender socialization).

The moderation analysis results indicate a significant main effect of political interest and gender socialization on political participation. Specifically, higher levels of political interest are associated with higher political participation. However, gender socialization is negatively associated with political participation. These effects are statistically significant, with p-values of less than .001.

In addition, the results suggest that the interaction between political interest and gender socialization is not statistically significant. The coefficient for the interaction term (MGS * MPI) is negative, which suggests that the relationship between political interest and political participation may be weakened by gender socialization. The results of the moderation analysis indicate that gender socialization weakens the relationship between political interest (the independent variable) and political participation (the dependent variable). The results of the study suggest that the relationship between political interest and political participation is negatively influenced by gender socialization.

The participants of in-depth interviews explained that if an individual has grown up in an environment where they are confident and encouraged to question gender roles and expectations, they may be more likely to have a stronger sense of political agency and a greater interest in politics. As a result, their political interest may be more likely to translate into actual political participation, such as voting or engaging in political activism. On the other hand, if an individual has grown up in an environment heavily influenced by traditional gender norms and expectations, they may be less likely to have a strong interest in politics or feel that their participation is insignificant. Therefore, their political interest may be less likely to translate into political participation.

The relationship between political interest, gender socialization, and political participation has been the subject of various studies. The present study's findings are consistent with Lawless and Fox's (2010) argument that gender socialization and individuals' confidence levels influence political participation.

The research conducted by Aarts et al. (2011). found that gender socialization is a significant predictor of political interest and that political interest positively affects political participation. They also found that gender socialization directly affects political participation, suggesting that individuals with higher confidence levels are more likely to participate in politics than those with lower confidence.

Another study that supports the present study's findings is research conducted by Caliendo and McIlwain (2006). Caliendo and McIlwain found that gender socialization is vital in shaping political attitudes and behaviours, particularly among women. They found that women who were socialized to be more politically engaged and confident were more likely to participate in political activities than those who were not.

Overall, the present study's findings align with previous research that highlights the role of gender socialization in shaping political behaviour, particularly among women. The present study adds to the existing literature by highlighting the interaction effects between gender socialization and political interest in political participation.

6.4 5MODERATION ANALYSIS FOR THE INTERACTIVE EFFECTS OF POLITICAL INTEREST AND GENDER ROLES ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Moderation analysis is a statistical method used to examine whether the relationship between two variables changes depending on the level of a third variable, known as the moderator. The present study found that gender roles moderate the relationship between political interest and political participation. The relationship between political interest (IV) and political participation (PP) is slightly moderated by conventional gender roles.

Table 6.2 Moderation analysis for the interactive effects of political interest and gender roles on political participation

Moderation Estimates

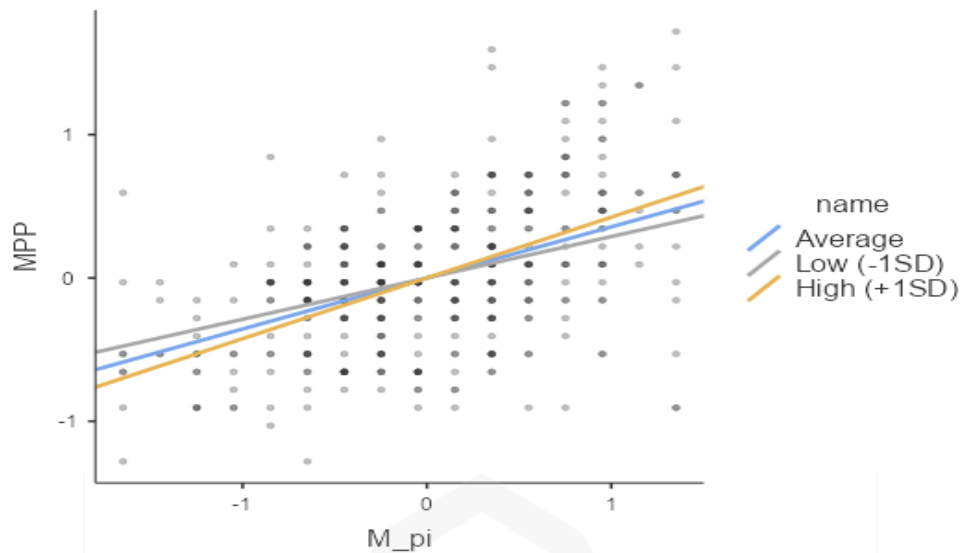
	Estimate	SE	Z	p
MPI	0.356	0.0320	11.13	< .001
MGR	0.197	0.0374	5.28	< .001
MPI * MGR	0.118	0.0455	2.59	0.009

Simple Slope Estimates

	Estimate	SE	Z	p
Average	0.356	0.0322	11.07	< .001
Low (-1SD)	0.289	0.0388	7.44	< .001
High (+1SD)	0.424	0.0441	9.62	< .001

Note. Shows the effect of the predictor (M_pi) on the dependent variable (MPP) at different levels of the moderator (MGR)

Simple Slope Plot



The table provides the results of a regression analysis that investigates the relationship between three variables: political interest (PI), gender roles (GR), and political participation (PP). The results indicate that both political interest (M_{pi}) and gender roles (MGR) have a significant effect on political participation (MPP). Specifically, the estimated coefficient for political interest (M_{pi}) is 0.356. The interaction term between political interest and gender roles ($M_{pi} * MGR$) is also significant ($p = 0.009$), indicating that gender roles slightly moderate the effect of political interest on political participation.

However, it is important to note that the value of this moderation effect is relatively small, as indicated by the modest increase in the standardized regression coefficient for the interaction term. This means that the presence of gender roles does not highly strengthen the relationship between political interest and political participation. Instead, gender roles play a small role in influencing the relationship.

The weak moderation effect of gender roles on the relationship between political interest and political participation can be attributed to the sample characteristics. Most of the sampled women were unmarried females who may not be involved in traditional gender roles such as bearing household and childcare responsibilities.

This suggests that gender roles may not be as salient for these women and may not strongly affect their political participation. In other words, because traditional gender roles do not strongly influence these women, the effect of political interest on their political participation may not be significantly affected by their gender roles.

Other factors such as socioeconomic status, education level, and cultural norms may also shape the relationship between political interest, gender roles, and political participation.

Several studies have examined the relationship between gender roles, political interest, and political participation. A study by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) found that women's gender roles significantly affected their political participation, with traditional gender roles being associated with lower levels of political participation. However, this study did not specifically examine the moderating effect of gender roles on the relationship between political interest and political participation. Another study by Pardos-Prado and Kritzinger (2014) found that gender roles significantly moderated the relationship between political interest and political participation, but only in specific contexts. Specifically, they found that traditional gender roles were associated with lower levels of political participation for women in conservative or rural societies but not in more liberal or urban societies.

The interview participants suggest that women's household or caring responsibilities may not necessarily hinder their political participation. Participants explained that being highly qualified and working can help them manage their responsibilities and find time to participate in political activities. In contrast, the quantitative findings suggest that traditional gender roles may slightly moderate the relationship between political interest and political participation. However, this effect is not particularly strong and may be more apparent among women who strongly adhere to traditional gender roles. Additionally, the quantitative study found that many sampled women were unmarried and not involved in conventional gender roles, which may explain the weak relationship between gender roles and political participation.

The participants also explained that their household or caring responsibilities do not necessarily hinder their political participation. They suggest motivation, resources, and support networks may significantly influence women's political participation. This study's finding is consistent with previous research that has found that socioeconomic status, education level, and cultural norms may influence women's political participation more strongly than gender roles (Pardos-Prado and Kritzinger 2014).

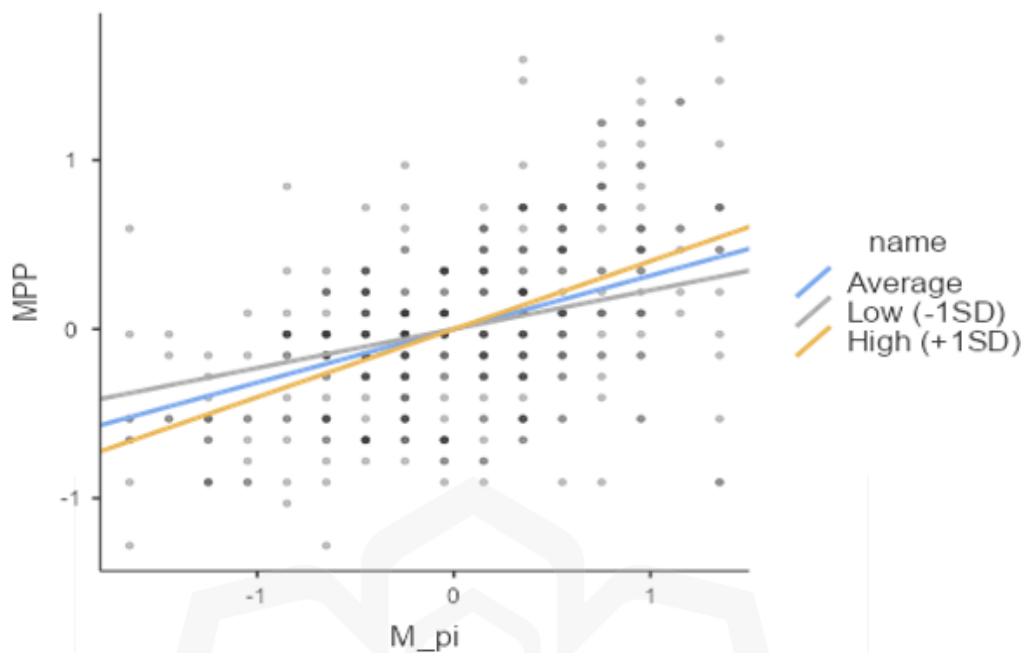
Table 6. 3 Moderation analysis for the interactive effects of political interest and patriarchy in family on political participation

Moderation Estimates				
	Estimate	SE	Z	p
MPI	0.316	0.0317	9.98	< .001
MPiF	0.209	0.0350	5.98	< .001
MPI* MPiF	0.141	0.0449	3.14	0.002

Simple Slope Estimates				
	Estimate	SE	Z	p
Average	0.316	0.0320	9.89	< .001
Low (-1SD)	0.230	0.0408	5.64	< .001
High (+1SD)	0.402	0.0436	9.23	< .001

Note. shows the effect of the predictor (M_pi) on the dependent variable (MPP) at different levels of the moderator (MPiF)

Simple Slope Plot



The table shows the results of a moderation analysis examining the relationship between political interest (M_{pi}) and political participation (MPP) and how this relationship is moderated by the level of patriarchy in the family (MPiF). The interaction term between political interest and patriarchy in the family ($M_{pi} * MPiF$) is significant ($p = 0.002$), but the magnitude of the coefficient is relatively small (0.141). Patriarchy in the family has a slight moderating effect on the relationship between political interest and political participation. When we look at the low level of PiF (-1SD), the estimate is 0.230, which is positive but slightly lower than the average estimate. Similarly, when we look at the high level of PiF (+1SD), the estimate is 0.402, which is higher than the average estimate but not by a large margin.

The strength of the relationship between political interest and political participation is and slightly affected by the level of patriarchy in the family. The quantitative study sample consisted of educated women empowered to get higher education and had more mobility than women in traditional or rural societies. Moreover, they are residents of urban areas where the culture is generally more liberal, and women are not expected to remain within the household. Due to these factors, the influence of

patriarchy in the family was insignificant in moderating the relationship between political interest and political participation. However, it is essential to note that this finding might not be generalizable to women in all cultures and contexts, as the influence of patriarchy on women's political participation can vary widely depending on factors such as socio-economic status, cultural norms, and political structures.

The quantitative findings and qualitative findings both support the notion that the level of patriarchy in the family has a slight effect on the relationship between political interest and political participation and that this effect is weak because of various factors such as the education and economic independence of women, their mobility, and the cultural context in which they live. Women in the study have higher education and work outside the home, which gives them a degree of independence and freedom to make their own decisions. The urban culture is also more liberal, which may have led to more liberal attitudes towards gender roles and less strict adherence to patriarchal norms (Kazi, 2018). These factors contribute to the perception that patriarchy has little to no effect on their political participation.

Overall, the current study's findings are consistent with previous research that has found that gender roles/patriarchy do not necessarily hinder women's political participation, particularly when women have higher education and economic independence (Alvares & DeMoor, 2015). However, the findings are also somewhat unique to the study's specific context, which focused on highly educated and empowered women living in urban areas.

Table 6.4 Moderation analysis for the interactive effects of political interest and patriarchy in politics on political participation.

Moderation Estimates

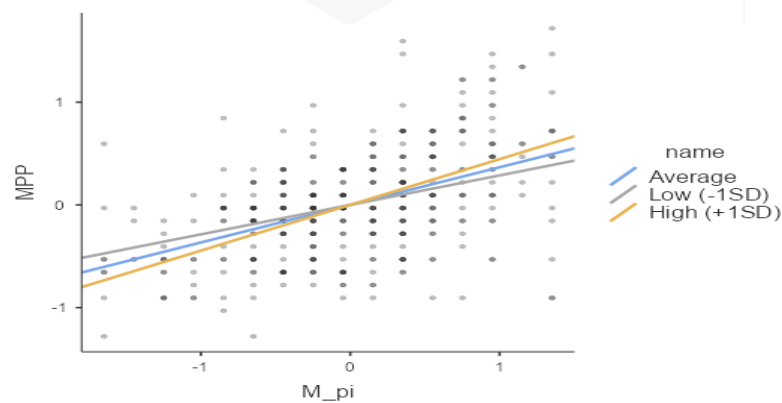
	Estimate	SE	Z	p
M_pi	0.3662	0.0325	11.26	< .001
MPiP	0.0935	0.0348	2.69	0.007
M_pi * MPiP	0.1254	0.0422	2.98	0.003

Simple Slope Estimates

	Estimate	SE	Z	p
Average	0.366	0.0328	11.18	< .001
Low (-1SD)	0.287	0.0417	6.88	< .001
High (+1SD)	0.445	0.0429	10.38	< .001

Note. Shows the effect of the predictor (M_pi) on the dependent variable (MPP) at different levels of the moderator (MPiP)

Simple Slope Plot



The table shows the results of a moderation analysis examining the relationship between political interest (PI) and political participation (PP) and how this relationship is moderated by the level of patriarchy in politics (PIP). The estimate for the main effect of political interest (PI) on political participation (PP) is 0.3662, indicating a significant positive relationship between the two variables. The estimate for the main effect of patriarchy in politics (PIP) on political participation (PP) is 0.0935, indicating a significant but weaker positive relationship between the two variables. This means that the patriarchy in politics slightly affects women's political participation. The estimate for the interaction term ($M_{pi} * MPiP$) is 0.1254, which is also significant, indicating that the relationship between political interest and political participation is slightly moderated by patriarchy in politics.

Although patriarchal political culture or male dominance in politics can restrict women's political participation (Inglehart & Norris 2003), the findings suggest that women who are highly educated and reside in urban areas may be less affected by these barriers. Despite the obstacles, they may have more opportunities to challenge patriarchal norms and participate in politics.

Several previous studies support the idea that education and urban residence can positively impact women's political participation, even in the presence of patriarchal barriers. A study by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) found that education is one of the most important factors in predicting political participation and that women who are highly educated are more likely to participate in politics. Similarly, a study by Celis and Childs (2012) found that women's education and employment opportunities can help to overcome gendered barriers to political participation.

Regarding the impact of urban residence, a study by Inglehart and Norris (2003) found that urbanization is associated with greater gender equality and political participation by women. Additionally, a study by Fox and Lawless (2010) found that women in urban areas are more likely to run for political office because they have greater access to networks of support and resources.

The in-depth interviews of participants also support the notion that patriarchal norms and male political dominance can restrict women's political participation. In-

depth interviews with women reveal that many women perceive men to hold more power and influence in political decision-making (Jalalzai, 2014). However, the qualitative findings also highlight that women are not passive victims of patriarchy. They can challenge these barriers through various means, such as mobilizing other women or running for political office themselves (Krook, 2017). Therefore, the qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that while patriarchal norms and male dominance in politics can be significant barriers to women's political participation, women's agency and access to resources such as education and urbanization can mitigate these barriers (Fox & Lawless 2020).



CHAPTER SEVEN

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

This chapter delves into a comprehensive examination of the factors contributing to the limited political participation of women. This chapter presents an in-depth analysis of the causes of the lack of political participation based on 30 interviews conducted using a structured interview guide. The interviews focused on exploring the reasons behind the lack of political participation and were conducted using a guide that comprised six sections. The sections covered various topics, including political interest, political participation, gender roles, patriarchy in family and politics, and gender socialization.

The interviews were conducted in a structured manner to ensure consistency and to allow for a comprehensive analysis of the data. The participants were selected based on their background and experience and were asked to share their opinions and experiences regarding political participation. The interviews provided valuable insights into the factors that discourage women from participating in politics, including social norms, gender roles, and the patriarchal nature of society.

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the data gathered from the interviews and presents a comprehensive overview of the issues hindering women's political participation. The chapter provides a detailed data analysis, focusing on the key themes from in-depth interviews. The analysis includes a discussion of the interest of women in politics, gender roles, and patriarchy in family and politics, and the impact of gender socialization on political participation. Overall, this chapter provides a valuable contribution to understanding the factors discouraging women from participating in politics. The in-depth interviews offer a unique perspective on the issue, and the findings can be used to develop strategies and policies to encourage greater political participation among women.

I will discuss each theme in detail and analyze the themes, which provides a deeper understanding of the issues and insights that inform policy and practice. When analyzing the interviews, looking for emerging patterns and themes is essential.

These themes can explain commonalities in the experiences and perspectives of the participants and identify areas of divergence. These patterns and themes can then be used to draw conclusions and develop recommendations. When discussing the interviews in detail, it is crucial to provide context for each participant, including their background, experience, and perspective, allowing a deeper understanding of the factors influencing their views and experiences.

Analysis of the data gathered from the interviews is systematic and thorough and involves looking for patterns and themes that emerge across the data. These patterns and themes were categorized to draw conclusions and develop recommendations. By being systematic and thorough in my analysis, I can draw meaningful conclusions and develop effective strategies for promoting political participation among women.

7.1 PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

This section outlines the socio-economic backgrounds of the 30 women, who were highly qualified women working in different universities in Islamabad. All were Ph.D. qualified and living in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. They were questioned, and information was obtained on their ages, education levels, marital status, and area of residence. The education and profession of their husbands and the number of children were also inquired.

7.2 AGE OF PARTICIPANTS

Age can significantly influence the political participation of educated women. According to research, mature women tend to be more politically active than younger women, partly because they have had more time to acquire political knowledge and experience and build social and political networks (Schlozman et al., 1994) (Desposato

& Norrander, 2009). Thirteen women were in their 30s, fifteen were in their 40s, and two were in their 50s.

7.3 MARITAL STATUS AND CHILDCARE RESPONSIBILITIES

Marital status, which involves a broad spectrum of duties, including childcare and unequal distribution of responsibilities, significantly impacts women's patterns of political participation (Campbell et al., 1960). The conventional family structure pushes women out of politics in one form or another. Household duties prevent women from entering political realms, limiting their access to resources, including time, money, political contacts, and expertise. However, cultural and societal contexts influence how families are organized (Desposato & Norrander, 2009). Thus, the researcher asked women who work in different universities about their political interests and experiences balancing political participation and family responsibilities. As existing studies explain that traditional family life in Pakistan is heavily predicated on unequal power dynamics (Saher et al., 2013). Despite existing literature highlighting unequal power dynamics within traditional family structures in Pakistan, the findings of this study present a contradicting view among the highly educated urban women who participated in the interviews. The participants, being university teachers with access to resources and education, do not perceive their family responsibilities as significant barriers to their political participation. Instead, they view their engagement in political activities as a matter of personal choice rather than being hindered by familial obligations. This perspective challenges conventional notions of gender roles and power dynamics within Pakistani families, suggesting that education and socioeconomic status can empower women to make autonomous decisions regarding their political engagement¹.

However, it's crucial to acknowledge that these findings may not be representative of all women in Pakistan. The participants in this study are a group of highly educated and privileged individuals, and their experiences may not reflect the realities faced by women from different socioeconomic backgrounds or those living in more traditional/rural family settings.

¹ For further information see chapter 7.20

7.4 LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Research has demonstrated that higher education positively correlates with political participation and women's interest in political activities. Education can enhance a woman's political knowledge, sense of efficacy, and ability to understand political systems, leading to increased participation. The study conducted by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) concluded that education is the most crucial factor in determining a person's participation in political activities. Similarly, Galston and Dahlgren (2008) discovered that education significantly affected political interest and participation and was more substantial for women than men (Galston & Dahlgren, 2008).

Another study by Schlozman, Verba, and Brady (2012) indicated that women with greater levels of education were more likely to participate in all forms of political action. These activities include voting, donating to campaigns, and attending political meetings. Education leads to a greater interest in politics and directly enhances practical participation in political processes. Women with higher levels of education had a greater likelihood of running for office, which suggests that education can potentially enhance their political ambition (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). The research suggests that education significantly raises women's political engagement and interest. Education has the potential to help break down barriers to political participation and empower women to play an active role in changing the communities in which they live by equipping women with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully navigate political systems (Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012). All the women selected for in-depth interviews were highly qualified; only two had MS degrees, and the other twenty-eight had Ph.D. degrees. All women are currently teaching in different departments of universities. Their husbands were also highly qualified.

7.5 AREA OF RESIDENCE

All the women in the present study were residents of urban areas. Eighteen women are living in Islamabad, and twelve are residents of Rawalpindi. Women from urban areas can be involved in politics in various ways. Here are some common ways women from urban areas engage in politics. Women from urban areas can be involved in politics

through multiple means, and their involvement can significantly impact policy decisions and the political landscape in their respective communities.

7.6 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

This section explores the perspectives of educated women residing in urban areas regarding their political participation. The first research question focuses on understanding how educated women participate in various political activities, including demonstrations, election campaigns, voter registration, and voting during the 2018 elections. By examining their viewpoints and experiences, the researcher gained valuable insights into the motivations and challenges they encounter as they participate in political processes.

7.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF EXERCISING THE RIGHT TO VOTE

Voting in elections is one of the fundamental ways to exercise political democracy. By casting a vote, women can contribute to selecting representatives who decide on their behalf. Women were asked about the registration of their vote. All the women were registered voters and expressed their views on the importance of voter registration. One of the most fundamental rights people enjoy in a democratic society is the ability to vote². It guarantees that citizens have a say in the political process, and they can contribute to shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

In the present study, eight of 30 women participants believed that when women register to vote, they convey to elected authorities that they are paying attention to the actions and decisions of those in power. Thirteen women explained that their vote conveys the message that political accountability is crucial to the citizens. Citizens' awareness can inspire elected officials to behave in the best interests of their constituents and promote accountability among those authorities, which helps to ensure

²<https://www.klobuchar.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2020/1/klobuchar-casey-introduce-bill-to-remove-barriers-to-voting-for-seniors-people-with-disabilities-native-americans-alaska-natives-and-those-with-limited-eng>

fair representation. Nine women cited that voter registration is required to guarantee that the electorate is appropriately represented in democratic decision-making.

Educated women can engage in the democratic process by taking steps such as registering to vote, countering discrimination in the workplace, and safeguarding their rights. If individuals are not registered to vote, it is possible that their opinions will not be considered in the political process and that their interests will not be taken into account (Rabia, personal interview, Jan 2023).

If women wish for their concerns to be addressed and their voices heard, they should register their vote. Registration to vote is essential for the democratic process, and all educated women should actively engage in the resignation of their votes (Aliya, personal interview, Jan 2013).

Voting sends a statement to elected officials that the people they represent are paying attention to their actions and decisions, so women must register to vote and cast their ballots in elections. In this way, the elected officials will be more likely to look out for the interests of their citizens, and accountability will increase (Huma, personal interview, Jan 2023).

A nation's democracy relies heavily on the participation of educated women, who play a crucial role in registering to vote and actively voting in elections. Educated women can help ensure that all citizens are fairly represented in the political process by encouraging them to register to vote. Women's perspectives and interests are more likely to be heard and considered in political decision-making when educated women register to vote and actively engage in elections (Hina, personal interview, Dec 2022).

The right to vote is a fundamental aspect of democracy, and highly educated women have a unique opportunity to shape the political landscape in their homes, states, and nations. 25 of my respondents voted in the last election of 2018. One woman was out of the country, so she could not vote. Two participants stated that their votes were registered in their hometown, which was very far from their residence, so they could not go for a day only to cast a vote. However, they transferred their votes from their hometowns to their area of residence and determined that they would vote in the next election. The statements made by the two women indicate their perception that their vote has no value due to the lack of women's representation in political arenas and the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles. They believed that the outcomes of elections were already predetermined and that their participation would be a waste of time and energy. These statements reflect a sense of frustration and disillusionment with

the existing political system, which they perceive as perpetuating gender inequality and marginalizing women's voices.

Although most women participants (25 out of 30) view voting as a civic duty and a means to hold elected officials accountable for their actions and policies, they explained that, by participating in elections, they could help elect representatives who prioritize issues that matter to them, including education, gender equality, and other social and economic concerns. Additionally, they believe that educated women are better equipped to make informed decisions and understand the implications of their vote.

They view education as a powerful tool that should be used to engage in the political process actively.

7.8 UNEQUAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN WITHIN POLITICAL PARTIES

All 30 women reportedly said "no" in response to a question about whether they were members of any political party. Interview participants women mentioned a few primary reasons for not joining the political party, such as security issues, male dominance in political parties, and lack of women in leadership positions and busy schedules, lack of support from families due to violence and harassment in politics.

I am not a member of any political party. Security concerns play a significant role in my decision. Politics in our region can be violent, and I don't want to risk my life and safety (Aliya Personal Interview March 2023).

Male dominance within political parties is a significant issue for me. I feel like my voice wouldn't be heard or taken seriously. I saw the lack of representation of women in prominent political parties, which discouraged me from joining any political party (Shazia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

One of the main reasons I haven't joined a political party is the scarcity of women in leadership positions. It's discouraging to see that women are

underrepresented in decision-making roles. I want to join a party that values and uplifts women's voices, and unfortunately, no political party includes women in leadership positions; instead, these political parties prefer men (Asia Personal Interview March 2023).

I have a busy schedule, juggling multiple responsibilities. Finding time to participate in party activities would be a challenge. It isn't easy to balance personal, professional, and political commitments simultaneously (Huma Personal Interview Feb 2023).

My family is concerned about the violence and harassment in politics. They worry about my safety and well-being, discouraging me from joining a political party. Their support is essential to me (Asia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Women perceive involvement in politics as posing security risks, especially if they live in regions where political activities are associated with violence or threats. Concerns about personal safety deter them from joining a political party.

The women perceive political parties as predominantly male-dominated. They feel marginalized or excluded from decision-making processes and leadership positions. This lack of representation and influence discourages them from becoming party members.

Women perceive a lack of female leaders in political parties and feel that their voices and perspectives are not adequately represented or valued. The absence of female role models and mentors within political parties could diminish their motivation to join.

The women have cited busy schedules as a reason for not joining a political party. Balancing personal and professional commitments alongside political engagement can be challenging.

They did not have the time or energy to participate in political party activities and already had demanding jobs and household responsibilities.

Participants have witnessed or experienced violence or harassment in the political sphere, and their families discourage their involvement due to concerns for

their safety and well-being. Negative experiences shape perceptions and hinder support from family members to join political parties.

Each woman had a unique combination of factors influencing her decision to become a political party member. Additionally, the specific cultural, social, and political context these women live in shapes their perspectives and choices regarding political party membership.

7.8.1.1 Gender-Based Harassment and Violence

The qualitative findings shed light on the significant concerns expressed by women regarding gender-based harassment and violence within political parties. 9 women cited gender-based harassment and violence as reasons for not joining a political party, reflecting their concerns and fear for personal safety: Women expressed a genuine fear for their safety, considering the prevalence of gender-based harassment and violence within political parties. They explained that they had witnessed harassment through social media and heard about instances where women party workers faced threats, intimidation, or physical harm, restraining them from joining any political party.

I have witnessed harassment on social media platforms, further intensifying my fears. The stories about women party workers facing threats, intimidation, and physical harm have profoundly impacted my decision not to join any political party (Fozia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Women may face harassment when they find themselves in situations where they are outnumbered by males, such as in political party settings with a predominantly male membership. This power imbalance can create an environment where women are more vulnerable to harassment, intimidation, and other mistreatment (Ayesha Personal Interview Jan 2023).

The information provided by women strongly suggests that security concerns play a significant role in shaping women's political participation. The fact that nine women cited gender-based harassment and violence as reasons for not joining a political party highlights their genuine fear and apprehension regarding their safety. These

concerns are further supported by their observations of harassment through social media and knowledge of instances where women party workers faced threats, intimidation, or physical harm.

Women's safety is a fundamental aspect that affects their ability and willingness to engage in conventional political activities. If women feel that their safety is at risk, they may be deterred from actively participating in political parties, ultimately leading to their underrepresentation in the political sphere. The fear of harassment and violence within political parties creates a barrier for women who may otherwise be interested in contributing to political discourse and decision-making.

7.8.1.2 Busy Schedules as a Reason For Not Becoming Members of Political Parties

The personal interviews with women reveal that busy schedules are a common barrier to their participation in political parties. 13 women cited their busy schedules as a reason for not becoming members of political parties.

Most respondents identified that they did not have the time to dedicate to political party membership as working women. On the other hand, some women suggested that those who were not working and whose husbands were involved in politics had more time to become members of political parties.

The perspective shared by the 13 women who mentioned their busy schedules as a barrier to joining political parties reflects their experiences and the challenges they face as working women. The division of time and responsibilities between work, family, and personal commitments can limit the availability of time and energy for engaging in political party membership. It is not uncommon for individuals with full-time jobs to find it challenging to dedicate extensive time to party activities.

My schedule is packed with work and other commitments, leaving me little time to spare. Being a working woman, I find it challenging to allocate the necessary time and energy to participate in a political party actively (Huma Personal Interview Feb 2023)

Balancing my job and family responsibilities is already quite demanding. I cannot add the additional commitment of political party membership to my already busy schedule (Madiha Personal Interview March 2023).

As a working woman, my days are filled with professional obligations and personal responsibilities. It's challenging to find the time to engage with a political party and fulfill membership requirements (Maria Personal Interview Dec 2022).

I've noticed that women who are not employed and have husbands involved in politics seem to have more availability to become party members. Their circumstances might allow for more time and flexibility than someone like me, juggling work and other commitments (Siara Personal Interview March 2023).

The observation that non-working women whose husbands are involved in political activities may have more availability and support to become party members does suggest a potential advantage for them in terms of participation. Their circumstances, including more flexible schedules or additional support systems, can give them the time and resources necessary to engage in political activities.

On the other hand, women already involved in household and job responsibilities often face significant time constraints. They struggle to balance their commitments, and juggling work and household responsibilities can limit the time and energy available for political engagement, making it more difficult for them to become members of any political party.

7.8.1.3 Male Dominance in Political Parties

The viewpoint expressed by women participants highlights their perception of gender bias within political parties. Specifically, they believe that political parties favor males for prominent representation, reinforcing traditional gender roles and resulting in systemic biases. This viewpoint sheds light on the experiences and observations of women who feel that political parties prioritize male leadership and representation, limiting opportunities for women in prominent positions within these organizations.

The viewpoint shared by the 16 women about political parties preferring males for prominent representation underscores their perception of a gender bias within political parties. One of my participants, Ayesha, explained that Political parties, like many other institutions, adhered to traditional gender roles prioritizing male leadership and representation, resulting in a systemic bias favouring males for prominent positions within political parties.

Some people think women are incapable or suitable for leadership roles and prefer men to hold important positions. These beliefs are influenced by society's expectation that women should avoid politics and focus on their household and children (Ayesha personal interview Jan 2023).

Society's expectations of women can affect the selection process within political parties. Some individuals may have stereotypes or biases that suggest women are not as capable or suitable for leadership roles and that they should focus on their primary responsibilities in the household. These perceptions and societal expectations can lead to a preference for men regarding prominent representation within political parties.

Societal norms and cultural beliefs that women should avoid politics influence party dynamics. Patriarchal attitudes, gender biases, and traditional power structures discourage women from seeking or being considered for prominent representation within political parties (Sonia personal interview Jan 2023).

Sonia emphasizes that societal norms and cultural beliefs play a role in shaping party dynamics. In many societies, traditional attitudes discourage women from participating in politics. Patriarchal attitudes, prioritizing male authority, gender biases, and existing power structures which is male dominating can act as barriers for women who want to engage in politics. These factors create a challenging environment for women and make it more difficult for them to seek or be considered for prominent positions within political parties.

The opinion of these women suggests that people's existing ideas about women's abilities and traditional gender roles can impact how political parties choose their leaders. Men are often preferred due to the perception that they are better suited for leadership roles. Additionally, societal expectations and traditional attitudes discourage

women from getting involved in politics and limit their opportunities to hold influential positions within political parties.

7.8.1.4 Lack of Interest in Becoming Members of Political Parties

Women's engagement in political parties is crucial in shaping inclusive and representative democracies. However, the qualitative findings reveal a lack of interest among the women participants when joining political parties.

These women prioritize their careers and household responsibilities, leading to disengagement from formal political party membership. Factors such as negative perceptions of politics, time constraints, and a lack of understanding contribute to their disinterest.

The lack of interest expressed by the 23 women in joining political parties reflects their disengagement from political activities and a preference to focus on their jobs and household responsibilities. They prioritize their careers and family commitments over becoming formal political party members. Negative perceptions of politics, time and energy constraints, and a lack of understanding or interest in party dynamics also contribute to their disinterest.

One significant reason for my reluctance to become a political party member is my lack of interest. While numerous other factors may contribute to my decision, the fundamental truth is that I do not find myself drawn toward party membership. If women are genuinely interested in engaging in political parties, they may be able to overlook and navigate through other challenges or concerns that could hinder their participation. Personal interest is vital in motivating women to involve themselves in any endeavour actively, and political party membership is no exception (Sadaf personal interview Feb 2023).

The disinterest expressed by the 23 women in joining political parties reveals their inclination toward prioritizing their professional and personal responsibilities over political participation. Their focus on their jobs and household responsibilities suggests a preference for dedicating their time and energy to areas they consider more meaningful and vital. These women lack interest in becoming members of political

parties, preferring unconventional participation such as voting or voter registration. One prominent reason for this reluctance is that becoming a political party member could threaten their security. Other political parties may target and harm female members and destroy their reputations.

The primary reason for the lack of interest in joining a political party is the political environment of Pakistan. Here, political parties, particularly those with opposing ideologies, view female members of opposing political parties as a threat and resort to acts of violence and intimidation. Female politicians are frequent targets of gender-based violence, such as sexual harassment and assault. There is inadequate support mechanism among political parties to address harassment and violence, discouraging women from joining or becoming a political party member (Sadia personal interview Feb 2023).

The insights shared in Sadia's interview highlight the significant barriers and challenges women face when participating in political parties in Pakistan. The political environment in the country is characterized by a perception of women from rival parties as threats, leading to acts of violence and intimidation against them. The lack of an effective support mechanism within political parties to address these issues further compounds the problem. The absence of adequate support discourages women from joining or actively engaging as members of political parties, as they fear for their safety and well-being.

These circumstances contribute to a lack of interest among women in becoming part of the political landscape, ultimately resulting in their underrepresentation in decision-making processes.

7.9 PRIMARY REASON FOR NOT ATTENDING DEMONSTRATIONS

Public safety and perception of law enforcement

The viewpoint shared by the 22 women regarding the primary reason for not attending demonstrations being the risk of arrest or violence from the police highlights their concerns about personal safety and potential repercussions. Here is an explanation of their views:

8 women perceived attending demonstrations as a risk to their freedom and safety due to potential arrests by law enforcement agencies. They were concerned about the consequences of participating in protests, such as being detained, facing legal charges, or having their personal information recorded.

I fear attending demonstrations due to the risk it poses to my freedom and safety. Law enforcement agencies often target protesters, and I worry about being arrested and detained (Maliha Personal Interview Feb 2023).

These women shared their genuine concerns about attending protests. They perceive it as a risk to their freedom and safety, worrying about potential arrests, legal charges, and the recording of their personal information."

10 women were concerned about violence from the police, indicating a lack of trust in law enforcement to ensure peaceful and non-violent gatherings during demonstrations. In the past, excessive force, brutality, or clashes between protestors and law enforcement contributed to their fear of physical harm or injury. These women cited that the risk of violence or unrest in the protest environment is the primary reason for not attending such activities. They prioritize their security and avoid situations they perceive as potentially dangerous, opting for safer alternatives to express their concerns only through social media.

The use of force by the police, such as shelling and tear gas, has become a significant reason for me and many others to avoid participating in demonstrations. The fear of being subjected to violent tactics by law enforcement is enough to keep us away (Aliya Personal Interview March 2023).

Instances of police violence, including the firing of tear gas and shelling, have created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation that prevents me from attending demonstrations. The potential harm and physical danger are too great to ignore (Maria Personal Interview March 2023).

The presence of police violence, often involving tactics like shelling and tear gas, is a primary concern that discourages me from joining demonstrations. The risk of being subjected to such violence outweighs the desire to exercise my right to protest (Huma Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Demonstrations can be violent and a significant threat to women's safety. Police can arrest people anytime. Women interested in attending a demonstration should participate with any male member (Asia personal interview Jan 2023).

These women highlighted the violence from the police, explicitly shelling and tear gas, as a significant reason for their reluctance to attend demonstrations. They cited the fear of physical harm and intimidation created by such actions as significant deterrents. The women have witnessed firsthand the use of tear gas and shelling by the police during recent political demonstrations in 2022 and 2023. These incidents have profoundly impacted their decision to avoid such protests, as they fear the potential harm and chaos from such aggressive police tactics. These concerns reflect the challenges and risks individuals face when participating in demonstrations, especially in contexts where dissent is not tolerated or where there is a risk of violence or harassment. Demonstrations can be risky for participants, as they may face arrest, harassment, or violence from authorities or other groups.

7.9.1 Scepticism About the Effectiveness of Demonstrations

The experiences shared by the 4 women highlight a recurring sentiment that political parties prioritize their interests rather than addressing the concerns of ordinary individuals. They believe that political parties often gather people for their benefit rather than genuinely addressing the needs and issues faced by ordinary citizens. As a result, these women choose not to attend any political demonstrations.

I have never attended any political demonstration because these demonstrations address the interests of political parties. Political parties have personal agendas for organizing demonstrations. These parties are not interested in the problems of ordinary people (Fozia personal interview Feb 2023).

I have chosen not to attend any political demonstrations because I believe they primarily serve the interests of political parties. These demonstrations are often organized with personal agendas rather than focusing on addressing the genuine problems ordinary people face (Saira Personal Interview March 2023).

I have observed that political parties' priorities' their agendas when organizing demonstrations. This leaves little room for addressing everyday people's concerns and issues. As a result, I feel that participating in such demonstrations would not effectively contribute to resolving the problems faced by ordinary citizens (Adeela Personal Interview March 2023)

I have consciously avoided attending political demonstrations because I have noticed that they predominantly revolve around the interests and objectives of political parties. Rather than genuinely addressing the issues ordinary individuals face, these demonstrations often serve as a platform for political parties to promote their agendas (Maham Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Women's concerns about the political system and lack of trust in political parties stem from a broader sentiment of discouragement. They perceive that political parties prioritize their interests and agendas over addressing ordinary citizens' genuine needs and concerns. This perception creates a sense of disillusionment and skepticism toward the political system. The observation that political parties are more focused on furthering their interests reinforces the notion that women's voices and issues are overlooked or undervalued. Women's concerns reflect a broader sense of discouragement with the political system and a lack of trust in political parties. Women feel that political parties are more interested in furthering their interests than addressing ordinary citizens' needs and concerns.

7.10 WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL DEMONSTRATIONS

Some participants emphasized the importance of women's presence in demonstrations, arguing that it can significantly influence the decisions of government and policymakers. Women's participation in political demonstrations can help raise awareness about their concerns. 8 women cited attending demonstrations. These participants emphasized that the presence of women in demonstrations can have significant effects on governments and policymakers.

Women's presence in demonstrations is crucial as it brings diverse perspectives, experiences, and voices to political movements. Women's protest participation helps create awareness about political happenings and shapes public opinion (Saira personal interview Jan 2023).

Women bring unique perspectives and expertise to demonstrations, expanding the range of issues considered by decision-makers and leading to more inclusive policy outcomes. Women's presence in demonstrations is significant as it can sway government decisions and influence policymakers (Alina Personal Interview March 2023).

I firmly believe that when women actively participate in demonstrations, it sends a strong message to those in power and demands their attention to address women's concerns (Humaira Personal Interview Dec 2022).

Women's presence in demonstrations challenges existing power structures and catalyzes policies promoting gender equality and women's rights (Sara Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Women's active participation in demonstrations creates immediate impact and inspires and empowers others to join the cause, fostering unity and collective action for social and political change (Asia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The viewpoint expressed by the eight participants underscores the significance of women's presence in demonstrations and its potential impact on government decisions and policymaking. These participants believe that when women actively participate in demonstrations, their collective voice and presence can bring about meaningful change and influence those in power.

Women's presence in demonstrations is seen as a way to challenge existing power structures and advocate for gender equality and women's rights. By actively voicing their concerns and demands, women can draw attention to issues that may be overlooked or marginalized. Their participation powerfully conveys to government officials and policymakers that these issues are important and require immediate attention.

Moreover, women's participation in demonstrations can inspire and empower others to join the cause, fostering a sense of unity and collective action. When women demonstrate their commitment to social and political change, it encourages others to engage in similar efforts, amplifying the impact of their advocacy and increasing the likelihood of achieving meaningful results.

In conclusion, the participants emphasize the importance of women's presence in demonstrations as a powerful tool for influencing government decisions and policymaking. Women's active participation brings attention to gender-related issues, broadens perspectives, and inspires collective action.

7.11 REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Respondents were asked about their participation in the election campaign. Most respondents (26) said they did not participate in election campaigns. The participants of the interviews explained a few principal reasons for not participating in the election campaign.

The extent to which women participate in political campaigns is based on different cultural and societal conventions. It has been observed that women do not participate in election campaigns due to their traditional gender roles and their emphasis on caregiver responsibilities, security threats, and lack of time and interest.

Women explained that they prefer to engage in activities like reading books or watching television with kids instead of going door to door to promote election candidates' messages, which can be time-consuming and demanding.

I prefer reading books or watching television with my kids instead of going door to door to promote election candidates' messages. It's very hectic and time-consuming to go door to door and convince people about voting and elections (Sofia personal interviews Feb 2023).

Going door to door to promote election candidates' messages can be incredibly hectic and time-consuming. It's a demanding task that requires a lot of effort to convince people about voting and elections. It does not align well with my priorities and personal preferences (Sadia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

While I recognize the importance of political activism and its role in a functioning democracy, I believe there are alternative ways for me to contribute. I can be involved in the democratic process by voting and discussing political issues in my home. It allows us to have meaningful conversations and instill a sense of civic responsibility (Aisha Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Going door to door for an election campaign is not the preferred method of political participation for most women participants, as it can be time-consuming and does not align with women's priorities or personal preferences. They can still contribute to the democratic process by voting and discussing political issues at home.

7.11.1 Multiple Responsibilities and Limited Time

Educated working women may find it challenging to participate in election campaigns. As mentioned by many study participants, they do not have enough time to participate in election campaigns due to their job responsibilities. Women who work full-time typically have limited time, which they may prefer to spend with their families or pursue their hobbies and interests.

I find it challenging to participate in election campaigns due to my job responsibilities. I often struggle to find enough time amidst my busy work schedule. It is tough for me to spare time for any election campaign (Hadia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I work full-time and prioritize spending time with my family or pursuing my hobbies and interests over participating in election campaigns. I do not have time to be involved in election campaigns (Fozia Personal Interview March 2023).

Elections are significant for the democratic process; however, I can't be involved in election campaigns due to time constraints. I prefer to utilize limited time for activities that are important to me, such as spending quality time with my family and pursuing personal interests like watching the news or reading books (Faiza Personal Interview Feb 2023)

Limited time availability is a common reason these women cite their inability to engage directly in campaign activities. Election campaigns can be very time-consuming, mainly if they involve going door-to-door to meet voters and promote a candidate's message. This activity can be particularly challenging for women who balance multiple responsibilities, such as caring for children or household tasks. The study participants emphasized that the demands of their professional lives make it challenging to participate in election campaigns actively. They prefer to spend their free

time with their families and be involved in some hobbies rather than in election campaigns.

The second primary reason for not participating in an election campaign, explained by many women participants, was participating in election campaigns can be very energy-intensive. Women who work full-time may already be exhausted from their daily responsibilities, making it difficult to muster the energy needed to participate in election campaigns.

Additionally, election campaigns can be emotionally draining, mainly if negativity and conflict are involved. The involvement of women in election campaigns can be particularly challenging for women who may already be dealing with stress and pressure in their personal and professional lives.

Election campaigns require time and energy; however, as a working woman, I struggle to balance my professional and household responsibilities. I find it challenging to allocate additional time and energy for political campaigning (Sofia personal interview Feb 2023).

Participating in election campaigns can be very energy-intensive, which is the reason for my non-involvement. Due to my full-time work, I feel exhausted from my daily responsibilities. I can't gather the necessary energy for campaign activities (Saira Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I feel that election campaigns can be emotionally draining, mainly when negativity and conflict exist. This emotional toll can be even more challenging for me when I already deal with stress and pressure in my personal and professional life (Sania Personal Interview March 2023).

The findings from interviews with educated working women shed light on the challenges they face when participating in election campaigns. These women struggle to balance their professional and household responsibilities, making it challenging to allocate additional time and energy for political campaigning. The primary reason for their non-involvement in campaigns is the energy-intensive nature of such activities. Exhausted from their daily responsibilities, working women find it challenging to muster the necessary energy for campaign activities. Dealing with stress and pressure in their personal and professional lives makes it more difficult to be involved in campaigns.

7.12 REASON FOR NOT CIRCULATING A PETITION

Lack of attention from officials: Circulating a petition is essential for individuals to participate in the political process and have their voices heard. Petitions are a way to gather support and demonstrate to policymakers and other officials that public interest and concern about a particular issue exists. Individuals can make their opinions known by signing or circulating a petition and contributing to shaping public policy. Most women (18) said they did not circulate any petition. The reason for not circulating a petition they mentioned was that some respondents felt that their petitions were not given due attention, which can be a frustrating experience and may discourage individuals from continuing to participate in the political process.

In Pakistan, public officials are not concerned about the issues the public faces; it does not matter if I complain about something. I have written a letter once to inform about the street vendors who block the traffic, but no one responded, and I did not receive any response. After that, I never complained about anything. Officials do not give public complaints due attention, so filing a petition wastes time and energy (Rashda personal interview Feb 2023).

I circulated a petition, but seeing that it didn't receive its deserved attention was disheartening. It felt like my efforts were in vain, making me question whether participating in the political process was worth it (Aliya Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I spent a lot of time and energy gathering signatures for a petition, hoping to bring about change, but it was frustrating to witness the lack of response. It made me feel like my concerns were ignored and discouraged me from further political involvement (Hafiza personal Interview March 2023).

The experience of circulating a petition and not receiving any significant attention was quite demoralizing. I felt like my voice wasn't being heard, making me doubt the effectiveness of this form of political participation (Madiaha Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I had high hopes when I circulated a petition, but the lack of attention it received was disappointing. It made me realize that the system may not prioritize the concerns of ordinary citizens like me, which was discouraging and made me hesitant to engage further (Aisha Personal Interview Feb 2023).

These statements reflect that women perceive that their petitions are not being taken seriously by government officials or that their concerns are being overlooked; it undermines their belief in the efficacy of petitioning as a means of initiating change, which can lead to a reluctance to invest time and energy in circulating petitions and participating in political activities. Based on the findings, the lack of attention from officials emerges as the primary reason for women's hesitation to circulate petitions and engage in political participation. When officials fail to acknowledge or respond to petitions, it undermines women's confidence in the political process, leaving them feeling ignored and powerless. This lack of attention discourages women from investing their time and energy in circulating petitions.

7.12.1.1 Significance of Circulating a Petition

12 Interview participants also mentioned why petitioning is essential for political participation. First, it can be a way to raise awareness about a particular issue. By collecting signatures and sharing information about the issue, women can educate others and build support for their cause. Second, raising concerns is particularly important for issues that may not receive much attention in the media or from policymakers. Third, circulating a petition can be a way to build momentum and pressure for change. When a petition gathers many signatures, it can demonstrate significant public support for the issue to policymakers. Policymakers cannot ignore or dismiss the problem, which may increase the likelihood that they will take action to address it.

The 12 interview participants demonstrated a strong commitment to political participation by raising their concerns and circulating petitions on various critical issues. They emphasized petition circulation's significance in raising awareness, addressing overlooked issues, and building momentum for change.

I raised my concerns and circulated a petition because I believe in the power of collective action. I must actively address the issues that affect our community (Adeela Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I took the initiative to circulate a petition to make our voices heard on the issue of gender equality. It's time for equal opportunities and fair treatment. (Hadiya Personal Interview March 2023).

The media does not highlight many issues so that specific issues can be reported by circulating petitions. As an educated woman, I am responsible for informing the officials about strange happenings or illegal activities around me. I have observed specific issues and written emails to public officials. I fulfill my civic responsibility. It is the state's responsibility to resolve reported issues (Saira personal interview Jan 2023).

These 12 women recognized that some issues might not receive sufficient attention in the media or from policymakers. It is crucial to raise concerns proactively through petitions. They believed in the power of collective action, viewing petitions as a way to mobilize public support and demonstrate the urgency of the issues. These women participants showcased their willingness to engage in the political process and raise concerns on critical issues through petition circulation.

7.13 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

All participants were hesitant to donate money to political candidates due to concerns about the impact of money in politics or doubts about the effectiveness of their donation. Participants reported donating money to causes they care about, such as natural disasters or charity.

Participants express hesitancy due to a lack of trust in politicians and their handling of campaign funds. Concerns about how their donations will be utilized and whether they will make a difference discourage them from contributing financially.

I have concerns about how political candidates use the donations they receive. There is a lack of transparency, and I fear my contribution could be misused or not used for the intended purposes (Saira Personal Interview March 2023).

I am very sceptical about how political candidates may use my donations. And I do not think my donations will impact the outcome of an election. So, I prefer donating money to charity organizations (Hadia personal interview Feb 2023).

All participants were hesitant to donate money to political candidates due to concerns about the impact of money in politics or doubts about the effectiveness of their donation. Participants express hesitancy due to a lack of trust in politicians and their handling of campaign funds. Concerns about how their donations will be utilized and whether they will make a difference discourage them from contributing financially. The participants provided a few reasons for hesitating to donate money to political candidates. Some of the key reasons mentioned include:

Twelve women believed their contributions would not significantly impact the outcome of an election. They feel their donation alone would not have enough influence to sway the results and bring about meaningful change.

I am hesitant to donate money to political candidates because I question the effectiveness of my donation. It feels like money plays a significant role in elections, and I wonder if my small contribution would genuinely make a difference in shaping the outcome (Shazia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I'm hesitant to donate money to political candidates because I don't feel confident that my donation would have a significant impact (Maham Personal Interview Feb 2023).

While I value participating in the political process, my small donation wouldn't significantly impact election outcomes. It's discouraging to think that my efforts may go unnoticed in the larger scheme of things (Fozia Personal Interview March 2023)

The women believed their contributions would not significantly impact the outcome of an election. They questioned the effectiveness of their donations, feeling that their contributions alone would not have enough influence to sway the election results and bring about meaningful change.

Sixteen women expressed scepticism about how political candidates use the donations they receive. They fear potential risks of corruption and worry that their contributions may not be used for the intended purposes or may be misappropriated.

I have concerns about how political candidates use the donations they receive. There is a lack of transparency, and I fear my contribution could

be misused or not used for the intended purposes (Saira Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I have doubts about the transparency and accountability of politicians when it comes to handling campaign funds. It's disheartening to think that my hard-earned money could end up in the wrong hands or be used for personal gain rather than for the betterment of society (Sara Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I want to support candidates who genuinely care about the issues, but the fear of corruption holds me back from donating. It's difficult to trust that my money will be used responsibly and for the greater good rather than for personal or unethical purposes (Huma Personal Interview Jan 2023).

The participants' skepticism about how political candidates use donations and their concerns about corruption contributed to their hesitation to donate money. Sixteen women expressed doubts about the transparency, accountability, and ethical practices surrounding the handling of campaign funds. They feared that their contributions might not be used for the intended purposes or could be misappropriated.

The participants highlighted a lack of trust in politicians and the potential risks of corruption in the political system. This lack of trust undermined their confidence in donating money to political candidates, as they questioned whether their contributions would genuinely be utilized for the betterment of society.

Preference for Donating to Social Causes: All participants preferred donating money to social causes instead of political candidates. They may believe that supporting social causes aligns with their values and has a more immediate and tangible impact on addressing societal issues.

I prefer to donate money to social causes where I can see the direct impact on the community. With political candidates, it feels like my donation gets lost in a sea of campaign funding, and I'm unsure if it will bring about the change I want to see (Hadia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Rather than donating to political candidates, I prefer to support grassroots organizations and initiatives that directly address the issues I care about. I believe my contribution can have a more immediate and tangible impact in these cases (Shazia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I prefer donating to social causes because I can see the immediate impact of my contribution. Whether helping those affected by natural disasters or supporting charities that address social issues, I feel satisfied knowing that my donation makes a tangible difference in people's lives (Maria Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The participants expressed a clear preference for donating money to social causes over contributing to political candidates. This preference can be attributed to a belief that supporting social causes aligns more closely with their values and has a more immediate and tangible impact on addressing societal issues.

By donating to social causes, participants feel they can directly contribute to positive change in natural disasters, charity, or other social issues they deeply care about. They perceive these causes as having a more direct and visible impact, allowing them to see the results of their contributions firsthand.

In contrast, donating to political candidates can be seen as a more indirect way of bringing about change. The participants feel their small donations may not significantly impact election outcomes or policy decisions. This belief and concern about money's influence in politics and the handling of campaign funds contribute to their preference for supporting social causes.

Furthermore, participants view social causes as addressing urgent and immediate societal needs. They feel a stronger connection to these causes and believe their donations can make a more tangible difference in the lives of those affected.

The participant's preference for donating money to social causes reflects their desire to have a more direct and visible impact on addressing societal issues. They believe supporting social causes aligns with their values and allows them to contribute to immediate needs and tangible outcomes.

7.14 INTEREST OF WOMEN IN POLITICS

The second research question explores the association between political interest and the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. In this section, the researcher examined women's perspectives regarding their political interests and analyzed their interest in certain political activities while highlighting the factors that may lead to a lack of interest in others.

7.15 INTEREST OF WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT POLICIES

In the current research, educated women were questioned about their interest in governmental activities, determining their interest in politics. All the 30 women interviewed expressed an interest in governmental activities and explained that government activities and policies significantly influence their lives. Women explained that they are interested in healthcare, education, social welfare, and government environmental policies.

I am interested in the government's healthcare policies because they directly impact our access to quality medical services. The government must prioritize affordable healthcare (Sarah Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Education policies are a top concern for me. I am interested in how the government invests in quality education that prepares our children for the future and ensures equal opportunities for all students (Fozia Personal Interview March 2023).

As a mother, social welfare policies are of utmost importance to me. I am interested in knowing how the government focuses on providing support and resources to vulnerable populations (Hadia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Environmental policies are something I'm deeply passionate about. The government plays a critical role in protecting our planet for future generations. We need stronger regulations and incentives for sustainable practices (Huma Personal Interview Jan 2022).

I'm particularly interested in government policies that address gender equality and women's rights. The government must take concrete steps towards achieving gender parity and empowering women in all aspects of society (Madiha Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I'm concerned about the government's approach to economic policies. We need policies that promote inclusive growth, create job opportunities, and bridge the wealth gap to ensure a fair and prosperous society (Maria Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I am deeply interested in the government's efforts to address mental health issues. I hope to see increased funding and improved accessibility to mental health services to support individuals and reduce mental health stigma (Hina Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The government's stance on social justice and equality is essential to me. I want to see policies that promote inclusivity, fight against discrimination, and ensure everyone has equal rights and opportunities (Humaira Personal Interview, March 2023).

All women interviewed expressed an interest in governmental activities and acknowledged the significant influence of government policies on their lives. Their specific areas of interest in government activities, such as healthcare, education, social welfare, and environmental policies, reflect a broad range of concerns that impact their well-being and the well-being of society as a whole.

13 women cited that they are more interested in the government's health policies and policies that address gender equality. These participants suggested that the government should provide accessible and affordable medical services to everyone in the country. While 12 women showed interest in education and economic policies and explained that the government should pay more attention to the quality of education and increase opportunities for higher education of women. 5 women mentioned that they are more interested in the government's social welfare and environmental protection programs. They emphasized that the government should make policies to support vulnerable populations, and their interest in environmental policies underscores the recognition of the importance of sustainability and protecting the natural world.

7.16 INTEREST IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS OF ELECTIONS

In democratic processes and elections, the perspectives of educated women hold significant value and provide valuable insights. Among the study participants, a notable trend emerged, as many educated women expressed a keen interest in actively engaging in the democratic process. These women, equipped with knowledge and understanding, demonstrated a strong desire to participate in shaping their political landscape through their involvement in elections. Their voices and perspectives contribute to a more inclusive and diverse democratic discourse, emphasizing the importance of considering their unique insights and experiences.

7.16.1.1 Interest in Candidates' Profile

23 of the 30 women interviewed expressed a keen interest in election campaigns and emphasized their vital role in the democratic process. These women recognized that political campaigns play a significant role in shaping the direction of governance and policies. They understood that elections allow citizens to exercise their voice and choose representatives who align with their values and priorities.

I firmly believe that election campaigns are the foundation of our democracy. They allow us to evaluate candidates and their platforms and make informed decisions that reflect our values (Sarah Personal Interview Feb 2023).Chloe:

I see election campaigns as a powerful tool for change. They allow us to advocate for the issues we care about, raise awareness, and mobilize others to join us in creating a positive impact through the democratic process (Fozia Personal Interview Feb 2023)

11 women who expressed interest in election campaigns were particularly keen on knowing about the profiles of candidates and the issues they prioritize in their campaigns. They recognized the importance of understanding a candidate's background, qualifications, and experience to assess their suitability for public office. Moreover, they were eager to learn about the issues that candidates emphasized during their campaigns. By showing interest in candidates' profiles and campaign focuses, these

women demonstrated their desire to make informed decisions when casting their votes. They recognized that electing individuals who genuinely care about the issues important to them can lead to effective representation and policies that align with their needs and aspirations.

Understanding a candidate's profile is essential because it gives insights into their values, experiences, and ability to address the challenges we face. By studying their backgrounds, we can assess their suitability for public office and make informed decisions (Asia Personal Interview Feb 2023)

I believe it's crucial to know what issues a candidate prioritizes in their campaign. It helps me gauge whether they align with my concerns and genuinely care about our community's well-being. I want to vote for someone who will actively work on the issues that matter to me (Maria Personal Inter Jan 2022).

Candidates' profiles provide valuable information about their qualifications and track records, which are essential for deciding whom to vote for. I want to elect individuals with the skills, experience, and commitment to represent our interests effectively (Maham Personal Interview Feb 2023).

One of the participants, Huma, highlighted the significance of attending campaign events, such as election rallies or debates, to directly engage with political candidates and better understand their positions on important issues.

Attending election rallies, listening to candidates' speeches, and engaging in debates, I can obtain valuable insights into the future policies and directions political candidates intend to pursue if elected (Huma personal interview Feb 2023).

Attending campaign events allows women like Huma to go beyond the information provided by campaign advertisements, media coverage, or secondary sources. By being present at these events, she can witness the candidates' demeanour, observe their body language, and evaluate their ability to articulate their ideas. This firsthand experience enables Huma to form a more comprehensive impression of the candidates and make a more informed decision when casting her vote.

The 11 women who expressed interest in election campaigns were committed to making informed decisions when casting their votes. They recognized the significance of understanding a candidate's profile, including their background, qualifications, and experiences, to assess their suitability for public office. By studying candidates' profiles, these women aimed to gain insights into their values, integrity, and dedication to public service.

Additionally, these women emphasized the importance of knowing the issues that candidates prioritize in their campaigns. They understood that by aligning with their concerns and actively addressing the issues that matter to them and their community, candidates could provide effective representation and work towards policies that align with their needs and aspirations.

Overall, these women's interest in candidates' profiles and campaign focuses reflected their desire for a democratic process that leads to the election of individuals who genuinely care about the issues important to them. Through their engagement in the electoral process, they aimed to contribute to effective representation and advancing policies that promote their well-being and the well-being of society as a whole.

7.16.1.2 Interest in Watching the News Instead of Attending Rallies

12 women cited that they never attended election rallies and campaigns. However, they are more interested in seeking information through other channels, such as watching news coverage of political campaigns and following their favourite political parties or candidates on social media. Social media enable them to receive updated campaign materials and discuss with individuals with similar interests. Following their favourite political figures on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram allows them to receive their messages directly, understand their priorities, and gauge their suitability as candidates.

I've never attended election rallies, but I stay informed through news coverage and social media. It allows me to receive campaign updates and understand the positions of different candidates and parties (Rabia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Attending rallies may not be my thing, but I rely on news coverage and social media platforms to gather information about political campaigns. It helps me stay engaged and make informed decisions regarding voting (Hina Personal Interview March 2023).

While I haven't attended election rallies, I use social media platforms to stay updated on campaign materials and connect with others who share my interests. It's a convenient way to engage in political discussions (Saira Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The 12 women who expressed their disinterest in attending election rallies and campaigns demonstrated alternative methods of gathering information about political campaigns. They highlighted their reliance on news coverage and social media platforms to stay informed about campaign updates, understand the positions of different candidates and parties, and engage in political discussions.

These women recognized the value of social media as a channel for receiving updated campaign materials and directly accessing the messages of their favourite political figures. By following candidates and parties on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram, they could gauge candidates' suitability, understand their priorities, and make informed decisions regarding voting.

These women showcased their proactive approach to seeking information through alternative channels. Their preference for news coverage and social media platforms demonstrated their desire to stay engaged, participate in discussions with like-minded individuals, and make informed decisions that align with their interests and values during election campaigns.

7.16.1.3 Disinterest in Election Campaign

It is worth noting that 7 of the women interviewed did not express an interest in election campaigns. They generally lack interest in politics due to a perception that their vote does not matter or a belief that candidates and campaigns are untrustworthy or unrepresentative of their values.

I feel disinterested in election campaigns because I often question whether my vote truly matters. There have been instances where promises were made during campaigns but not followed through, which has led to my scepticism about the effectiveness of the political process (Hoorain Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I lack interest in election campaigns because candidates and campaigns do not truly represent my values and concerns. It seems like the same issues are being recycled without significant progress, which dampens my enthusiasm (Hajra Personal Interview March 2023).

I lack interest in election campaigns because they are driven more by political strategies and image-building than authentic representation. It can be disheartening to witness the emphasis on tactics rather than substantive policy discussions (Faiza Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Among the women interviewed, it is noteworthy that 7 of them expressed a lack of interest in election campaigns. Their disinterest stems from various reasons, such as questioning the impact of their vote, perceiving candidates and campaigns as untrustworthy or unrepresentative of their values, and witnessing a lack of substantial progress on recurring issues.

These women expressed scepticism about the effectiveness of the political process, often due to instances where campaign promises were not fulfilled. They also highlighted a disconnect from the political system as they struggled to find candidates who genuinely represented their concerns and priorities. The emphasis on political strategies and image-building, rather than authentic representation, was another factor that contributed to their disinterest.

7.16.2 Varying Perspectives On the Demonstrations

7.16.2.1 Demonstrations as Catalysts for Change: Women's Belief in Effective Activism

13 women expressed an interest in demonstrations to raise awareness about important issues. These women believe that demonstrations can effectively draw attention to social or political issues that are not receiving adequate attention from the media or

government. They also feel that demonstrations can mobilize public support for a cause and create a sense of solidarity and community among participants.

I firmly believe that demonstrations are a powerful way to raise awareness about important issues. They can bring attention to matters not adequately covered by the media or addressed by the government. Demonstrations have the potential to mobilize public support and create a sense of unity among participants (Sarah Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I firmly believe in the effectiveness of demonstrations as a tool for raising awareness. They can potentially make a significant impact by capturing media attention and driving public discourse on crucial issues. Demonstrations can be transformative, fostering a sense of collective action and empowering participants (Aliya Personal Interview March 2023).

Demonstrations can draw the attention of the government and media immediately. Critical issues are raised in the demonstrations. Demonstrations promote a sense of solidarity as people get together for a common cause (Shazia personal interview Feb 2023).

The 13 women who expressed an interest in demonstrations to raise awareness about important issues showcased a strong belief in the effectiveness of this form of activism. They emphasized the ability of demonstrations to draw attention to social or political issues that the media may overlook or not adequately address by the government.

These women recognized that demonstrations have the potential to mobilize public support and create a sense of solidarity and community among participants. By bringing attention to pressing matters, demonstrations can spark meaningful conversations, challenge existing narratives, and foster dialogue and action.

The women's statements highlighted the transformative power of demonstrations in capturing media attention, driving public discourse, and pressuring decision-makers to address the people's concerns. They emphasized that demonstrations serve as a platform for collective action, uniting passionate individuals about a cause and inspiring them to work towards meaningful change.

In conclusion, the women's interest in demonstrations reflects their belief that these events can effectively raise awareness, mobilize support, and foster a sense of unity and empowerment among participants. They view demonstrations as an essential means of drawing attention to important issues and challenging the status quo to bring about social or political transformation.

7.16.2.2 Women's Perspectives on Demonstrations and Political Parties Self-Interest

Exploring women's perspectives on demonstrations and their views on political parties reveals a range of viewpoints within the study. Among the participants, 17 women in the study did not express an interest in demonstrations and suggested they were motivated primarily by political parties' self-interest. These women may believe that demonstrations are often organized and led by political parties or interest groups rather than by ordinary citizens and that they are primarily intended to advance the agenda of those groups rather than to serve the broader public interest.

I'm not particularly interested in demonstrations because political parties or interest groups often orchestrate them. It seems like their primary purpose is to serve their agenda rather than the broader public interest (Hina Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I don't find demonstrations appealing because they often appear politically motivated rather than driven by genuine public interest. It seems like specific groups organize them to push their agenda rather than serve as a platform for the broader community (Faiza Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The interests of the ordinary public are not given due attention in demonstrations. Political parties are not protesting against the country's high petrol prices and inflation. Instead, these parties raise their interests in demonstrations (Azra personal interview Dec 2022).

Women who lacked interest in demonstrations believed that political self-interest primarily motivated such events. They expressed scepticism about demonstrations being organized and led by political parties or interest groups, rather than ordinary citizens, with an agenda that may not align with the broader public interest.

Women have varying perspectives on the role of public demonstrations in the political process. While some women see demonstrations as a means of raising awareness and building solidarity around important issues, others may view them as primarily motivated by political self-interest.

7.17 INTEREST IN POLITICAL PARTIES AND PERFORMANCE

Understanding women's interest in political parties and their performance provides valuable insights into their engagement in the political landscape. Out of the participants, an overwhelming majority of 26 women expressed an interest in political parties and their performance, highlighting their curiosity in understanding how political parties operate and deliver on their promises. Women explained that political parties play a central role in shaping public policy, making decisions, and representing the interests of their members and supporters.

The interest shown by the majority of women in understanding political parties and their performance highlights their interest in the political process. By evaluating parties' actions and outcomes, these women seek to ensure that their political participation is well-informed and meaningful.

I want to understand how political parties operate to make informed decisions regarding supporting a party that aligns with my values and priorities as a woman (Sarah Personal Interview, March 2023).

I believe that by comprehending political parties and their functioning, I can actively contribute to the political discourse and work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society for women (Aliya Personal Interview Feb 2023)

The country has high inflation, and I am interested in how political parties deal with inflation and social issues and which policies they will make to solve the common person's problems (Hina personal interview Feb 2023).

In conclusion, most women express interest in political parties, and their performance demonstrates their curiosity and engagement in the political process. These women recognize the pivotal role of political parties in shaping public policy, making

decisions, and representing people's interests. By seeking to understand how political parties operate and deliver on their promises, these women aim to make informed decisions, contribute to the political discourse, and work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society. Their interest extends to evaluating parties' actions and outcomes, particularly in addressing pressing inflation and social concerns.

7.18 EXCHANGING IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES ON POLITICAL MATTERS

The significance of political participation and discourse within women's social circles becomes evident through the findings of this study. Notably, almost all the women interviewed reported high interest in discussing political issues with their friends and family, indicating that political engagement and discourse are valued in their social circles. The problems they reported discussing, such as inflation, education policy, security issues, and women's harassment, suggest various political interests and concerns. Women explained that discussing political matters develops their critical thinking skills, enabling them to make more informed decisions and engage in constructive debates.

As a working woman, I value discussing political issues with my friends and family. These conversations expand my knowledge and awareness and sharpen my critical thinking skills. By engaging in constructive debates and considering different perspectives, I am better equipped to make informed decisions regarding important matters such as inflation, education policy, security issues, and women's harassment (Sana Personal Interview, April 2023).

By discussing political issues with friends and family, we create an environment where we can learn from one another, challenge our own beliefs, and collectively work towards a better understanding of the complex challenges our society faces (Nadia Personal Interview, March 2023).

Engaging in political discussions with my social circle has been instrumental in shaping my own political beliefs and values. Through these conversations, I have gained a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and cultural implications of political decisions, and it has motivated me to become a more active participant in the democratic process (Ayesha Personal Interview, February 2023).

In conclusion, the findings reveal that a significant number of women actively engage in discussing political issues within their social circles. These conversations serve as platforms for knowledge-sharing, critical thinking, and developing a nuanced understanding of complex political challenges. The diverse range of topics discussed, such as inflation, education policy, security issues, and women's harassment, highlights these women's varied political interests and concerns. By participating in these discussions, women expand their awareness, challenge their own beliefs, and collectively work towards finding solutions to societal issues. These conversations also catalyze personal growth, empowering women to become more informed, engaged, and active participants in the democratic process.

Women's high interest in political discourse reflects their commitment to staying informed, fostering collective responsibility, and advocating for meaningful change in their communities.

7.19 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS THAT MODERATE THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

In this section, the researcher explored the third research question and explained how socio-cultural factors such as patriarchy in family and politics, conventional gender roles, and gender socialization moderate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. These factors significantly shape the opportunities, constraints, and expectations educated women face when engaging in political activities.

7.20 CONVENTIONAL GENDER ROLES

7.20.1 Balancing Domestic Responsibilities and Political Engagement: Insights from Married Women

18 women cited that their household responsibilities do not restrict their participation in political activities, highlighting their ability to navigate the challenges of balancing domestic duties with their political aspirations. Despite societal expectations and traditional gender roles that often

place a greater emphasis on women's domestic responsibilities, these women have found ways to pursue their political engagement. To manage their household duties and political activities, these women have employed various strategies and approaches:

Four women explained that they have benefited from the support and understanding of their family members, including their spouses and extended family. This support allows them to allocate time and resources to engage in political activities without neglecting their household responsibilities.

I am genuinely grateful for the understanding and encouragement I receive from my family. Their support enables me to dedicate time and resources to my political engagements without neglecting my duties at home (Fozia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Thanks to the unwavering support of my spouse and extended family, I can participate in political activities while fulfilling my household responsibilities actively (Sarah Personal Interview Dec 2022).

The experiences shared by these four women highlight the profound impact of supportive family dynamics on their ability to engage in political activities while maintaining their household responsibilities. The understanding, encouragement, and assistance provided by their spouses and extended family members have proven instrumental in their pursuit of creating positive change. With the freedom to allocate their time and resources effectively, these women can commit themselves to their political endeavors. Their stories serve as a testament to the power of familial support in empowering women to contribute to political spheres while maintaining a harmonious and fulfilling home life.

Five women explained that effective time management and prioritization skills are crucial in balancing domestic duties and political activities. These women have developed strategies to allocate their time efficiently, giving adequate attention to their household responsibilities and political engagements.

Through careful time management and prioritization, I have been able to strike a balance between my household duties and political activities. It's essential to allocate specific time slots for each task and remain organized to ensure nothing is neglected (Hadia Personal Interview Dec 2022).

Developing time management skills has been instrumental in maintaining harmony between my domestic responsibilities and political engagements. By setting clear priorities and adhering to a well-structured

schedule, I can dedicate ample time to both areas of my life (Tasneem Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The experiences shared by these five women highlight the significance of effective time management and prioritization skills in balancing domestic duties and political activities. Through careful planning and organization, they have found ways to allocate their time efficiently, ensuring that neither aspect of their lives is neglected. These women can dedicate ample time to their household responsibilities and political engagements by setting clear priorities and adhering to well-structured schedules.

Five women explained that the ability to multitask and be flexible allows them to engage in political activities while managing their domestic duties. They utilize their free time effectively, such as during breaks or after completing household tasks, to actively participate in political discussions, campaigns, or community events.

The ability to multitask and be flexible has been crucial in balancing domestic duties and political engagements. I make the most of my free time, during breaks or after completing household tasks, to actively engage in political discussions and community events (Ayesha Personal Interview Dec 2022).

I utilize my free time wisely, leveraging moments during breaks or after completing household tasks to contribute to political discussions and engage in community initiatives (Huma Personal Interview Dec 2022).

The experiences shared by these five women highlight the importance of multitasking and flexibility in effectively balancing domestic duties and political engagements. They actively participate in political discussions, campaigns, and community events by utilizing their free time strategically, such as during breaks or after completing household tasks. These women's ability to multitask and adapt allows them to make a significant impact in both spheres of their lives.

Their stories serve as an inspiration, showcasing how women can effectively manage their time and seize opportunities to engage in political activities while fulfilling their domestic responsibilities. Their dedication to utilizing their free time reflects their commitment to making a difference and contributing to their communities.

Three women have cited that they have established networks of support, such as like-minded individuals, friends, or community organizations, that understand and value their

political aspirations. Such networks can provide emotional support, share responsibilities, and create opportunities for collaboration and engagement in political activities.

Establishing networks of support has been a crucial aspect of my political engagement. I have found a sense of belonging and validation for my aspirations through connections with like-minded individuals, friends, and community organizations. These networks provide the emotional support I need and create opportunities to actively participate in political activities (Humaira Personal Interview Dec 2022).

The experiences shared by these three women highlight the significance of establishing support networks in their political engagement. They have found a sense of belonging and validation for their aspirations through connections with like-minded individuals, friends, and community organizations. These networks provide the emotional support needed and create opportunities for collaboration and active participation in political activities.

In conclusion, the findings highlight the ability of women to navigate the challenges of balancing household responsibilities with their participation in political activities. Despite societal expectations and traditional gender roles, these women have demonstrated resilience and resourcefulness in pursuing their political aspirations. The presence of supportive family dynamics, effective time management and prioritization skills, multitasking abilities, and establishing support networks have been key strategies employed by these women. These strategies enable them to actively engage in political discussions, campaigns, and community events without neglecting their domestic duties. The experiences of these women challenge the notion that household responsibilities must restrict women's political participation and underscore their determination to contribute to the political sphere. Their ability to successfully balance these responsibilities is an inspiration. It highlights the importance of creating supportive environments that enable women to participate in political activities while managing their household duties fully.

7.21 WOMEN'S CHOICE TO PRIORITIZE HOUSEHOLD DUTIES

12 women preferred their children and household over political participation, and they explained that they prioritize their family responsibilities and value spending quality time with their children. While they do not perceive household responsibilities as a hurdle to engaging in politics, they consciously prioritize their children's well-being and

domestic duties over political activities. Their preference to focus on their children and household is influenced by various factors:

7 women participants cited that they prioritize their role as mothers and believe that investing time and effort in raising their children is of utmost importance. They consider it essential to provide a nurturing and supportive environment for their children's growth and development.

As a mother, I prioritize my role in raising my children above all else. I firmly believe that investing time and effort in their upbringing is of utmost importance. By providing a nurturing and supportive environment, I can contribute to their growth and development (Madiha Personal Interview Dec 2022).

Being a mother is a profound responsibility I prioritize above my other commitments. I firmly believe in creating a nurturing and supportive environment for my children. By investing in their well-being and development, I lay a strong foundation for their future (Saira Personal Interview Dec 2022).

The experiences these four women share highlight the deep commitment and prioritization they place on their role as mothers. They firmly believe that investing time and effort in raising their children is of utmost importance. Creating a nurturing and supportive environment for their children's growth and development is essential. For these women, being a mother is a profound responsibility that takes precedence over other political participation.

Five women cited that engaging in political activities requires significant time and energy. These women may have limited availability due to their household responsibilities, making it challenging to allocate time for political engagement outside their domestic sphere.

Engaging in political activities demands substantial time and energy, posing challenges for women like me who already have significant household responsibilities (Aisha Personal Interview Dec 2022).

As a woman with numerous household responsibilities, I find it incredibly challenging to allocate time and energy to political activities. Balancing my duties at home often limits my availability and complicates engaging

in politics outside of my domestic sphere (Mona Personal Interview Dec 2022).

The experiences shared by these five women shed light on the significant time and energy required to engage in political activities. These women, who already bear substantial household responsibilities, face challenges in finding the necessary availability to participate in politics beyond their domestic sphere. These experiences highlight the complex nature of juggling household responsibilities and political engagement.

7.22 PATRIARCHY IN FAMILY

In-depth interviews were conducted with 30 educated women participants, and questions were asked about their political participation and the influence of their male family members on their political choices.

7.23 ACKNOWLEDGING WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE/ FREEDOM OF MOBILITY

21 women, who were all married, did not experience control over their mobility regarding political activities. These women explained that their husbands do not control their mobility. These educated working women explained that they are exposed to the outside world and have independence and autonomy in their daily lives. Additionally, their husbands are highly qualified and understand the importance of education and self-care for their wives. However, these women report feeling restricted in their mobility in certain circumstances, specifically when their security may be threatened.

Fortunately, I have a supportive and understanding husband who values my independence and autonomy. However, sometimes, I feel cautious about venturing out alone due to concerns about personal safety. It's essential to balance engaging in political activities and prioritizing our well-being (Fatima Personal Interview, February 2023).

I am an educated, independent woman living in the city, and I have my car. I can go anywhere. My husband is concerned about my safety and would object if he feels that attending the demonstration can threaten my security (Ayesha personal interview Dec 2022).

I have the freedom to move around and engage in various activities, including political ones. However, when it comes to certain situations that may pose a security risk, my husband and I make joint decisions to ensure my safety. It's crucial to have open communication and take necessary precautions to navigate these challenges (Zainab Personal Interview, January 2023).

21 married women who participated in the study did not experience direct control over their mobility regarding political activities from their husbands. These women emphasized their independence, autonomy, and exposure to the outside world, allowing them to engage in various political activities. However, they reported feeling restricted in their mobility when concerns about their security arose. While their husbands were supportive and understanding, joint decisions were made to ensure their safety in potentially risky situations. These women have agency in navigating their mobility and political participation while prioritizing their well-being. Recognizing and addressing their challenges and concerns is crucial to create an environment where women can actively and safely participate in political activities.

6 women participants feel that their husbands do not restrict their mobility and that they are free to move around as they wish. However, despite having this freedom, they choose not to attend demonstrations and prefer to focus on their traditional roles and responsibilities.

Although my husband does not restrict my mobility, I choose not to attend demonstrations. I prioritize my traditional roles and responsibilities and find fulfillment in dedicating my time and energy to my family and household duties (Sara Personal Interview, March 2023).

While I can move around as I wish, I have consciously decided not to participate in demonstrations. I believe that focusing on my traditional roles allows me to contribute to the well-being of my family and maintain harmony in our household (Fatima Personal Interview, February 2023).

My husband supports my freedom of movement, but I choose not to attend demonstrations. Instead, I prefer to prioritize my responsibilities as a wife and mother, as I believe that nurturing and supporting my family

is the most meaningful contribution I can make (Aisha Personal Interview, January 2023).

The statements from the six women participants reveal that despite having the freedom to move around as they wish, they have decided not to attend demonstrations. These women prioritize their traditional roles and responsibilities and dedicate their time and energy to their families and household duties. While their husbands do not restrict their mobility, these women have chosen to focus on their immediate sphere of influence and believe their contributions within the family unit have a meaningful impact. Their decisions reflect their values, personal preferences, and the importance they place on maintaining harmony and fulfilling their traditional roles.

7.24 RESTRICTIONS ON PARTICIPATION: CULTURAL AND FAMILIAL CONCERNS

The two unmarried women experience restrictions on mobility and freedom of choice due to gender-based cultural norms and patriarchal values in their community. These norms and values limit women's participation in public life and reinforce the idea that women's primary role is within the private sphere of the family and home. In a personal interview in February 2023, Fozia and Hina shared that they are not allowed to participate in any demonstrations due to their brother and father's concerns about the potential repercussions for the family's reputation.

My brother and father do not permit me to participate in demonstrations due to concerns about our family's reputation. While I wish to engage in political activities, I must respect their decision and navigate within the boundaries set by these cultural and familial expectations (Fozia Personal Interview, February 2023).

I am not allowed to join demonstrations because my brother and father worry about the potential consequences it may have on our family's reputation. Despite my interest in political engagement, I must adhere to their wishes and find alternative ways to express my views and contribute to society (Hina Personal Interview, February 2023).

Fozia and Hina shared in their personal interviews that they are not allowed to participate in demonstrations due to concerns from their brother and father regarding

the potential impact on the family's reputation. These restrictions stem from cultural expectations and familial obligations, prioritising preserving family honour within the community. Despite their interest in political engagement, Fozia and Hina respect and abide by the decisions of their family members, navigating within the boundaries set by these cultural and familial norms. These findings highlight the influence of societal and familial pressures on women's participation in public activities, underscoring the significance of reputation and the constraints it may impose.

7.25 EDUCATED WOMEN'S SELF-DETERMINED POLITICAL CHOICES

Women were asked whether their male family members tried to influence their political choices. 27 interviewed were not influenced by their male family members when making political choices or decisions.

27 women who reported that their male family members did not influence their political choices highlight the autonomy and independence educated women exercise in their decision-making process. These women are confident in their political preferences and make decisions based on their judgment rather than being swayed by external influences. The fact that these women are not influenced by their male family members in their political choices signifies their agency and the significance they place on their own opinions. It showcases their ability to critically analyze and assess political information, consider various perspectives, and form independent views. These women believe that their education empowers them and gives them a greater understanding of political matters.

As an educated woman, I exercise my autonomy in making political choices. My male family members do not influence my decisions, as I trust my judgment and rely on my research and analysis to form informed opinions." (Sara Personal Interview, March 2023).

I value my independence and autonomy in making political choices. My male family members respect my opinions and understand that my education equips me with the necessary knowledge and critical thinking skills to form independent views (Ayesha Personal Interview, February 2023).

Higher education is crucial in empowering women by providing them with knowledge, critical thinking skills, and the ability to analyze complex issues. Educated women often feel more confident in their political choices because they believe they have a deeper understanding of various topics and can make informed decisions based on their knowledge (Aliya Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The statements from the 27 women participants highlight their autonomy and independence in making political choices. These women, who are educated and confident in their judgment, emphasize that their male family members do not influence their political preferences. They place their own opinions, demonstrating their ability to analyze and assess political information critically. These women's education empowers them to form independent views and navigate the complex political landscape confidently. Their ability to make informed decisions based on their evaluation and understanding showcases the value they attribute to education and their commitment to exercising their autonomy in the political sphere.

7.26 POLITICS IS A DIRTY GAME

The belief that politics is a dirty game and not appropriate for women is a common stereotype that reflects the patriarchal attitudes and gender biases prevalent in many societies. These attitudes can create significant barriers to women's political participation by discouraging them from pursuing political careers or subjecting them to harassment, discrimination, and even violence.

23 out of the total women participants reported that their male relatives who were politicians would not support them in entering the political arena. Although these male relatives may assist them in activities like casting votes, participating in demonstrations, or circulating petitions, they refuse to help with party membership or contesting elections. They believe politics is a "dirty game" or inappropriate for women.

I have a few male relatives who are politicians. Despite being willing to assist in certain political activities like casting votes or joining demonstrations, these male relatives refused to help me with party membership or contesting elections. This lack of support was rooted in

their belief that politics was a 'dirty game' or simply unsuitable for women (Ayesha Personal Interview Jan 2023).

My male relatives are willing to engage me in activities like voting, participating in demonstrations, or circulating petitions alongside them. However, they turned their backs on party membership or running for political office. They harboured the perception that politics is a 'dirty game' or an arena unsuitable for women (Rabia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The participant Rabia shared her experience, indicating that her cousin, actively involved in politics and holds a ministerial position, discourages women in their family from joining politics. He believes politics is challenging and male-dominated, advising women to avoid it.

This perspective reflects a discouraging attitude towards women's political participation and reinforces the gender imbalance within political spheres. The cousin's warning suggests that he believes women would face significant difficulties and obstacles if they pursued a political career.

7.27 INFLUENCE OF MALE RELATIVES IN POLITICS

Only 7 female participants reported that having male relatives who were politicians or actively involved in political activities could help them enter the political arena. These women mentioned that having influential male relatives involved in politics can contribute to their decision to join a political party or contest elections.

Having influential male relatives already involved in politics can open doors for me in the political arena. Their connections and networks can help me access opportunities and resources that would otherwise be challenging (Ayesha Personal Interview, February 2023).

Having male family members who are politicians or actively engaged in political activities can provide me with a platform and credibility in the political arena. Their established reputation and connections can enhance my visibility and influence within the political sphere (Aliya Personal Interview, March 2023).

I recognize that having influential male relatives in politics can offer me support and guidance as I pursue my political aspirations. Their knowledge and experience can help me navigate the challenges of entering the political arena (Nadia Personal Interview, February 2023).

While only a small number of women participants (7 out of 30) mentioned that having male relatives who are politicians or actively involved in politics could benefit their entry into the political arena, their perspective highlights the potential benefits of such familial connections. These women acknowledge that influential male relatives can offer guidance, support, and access to resources to facilitate their political aspirations. By leveraging the experience and networks of their male family members, these women believe they can navigate the complexities of politics more effectively. They explained that support from their male relatives could have taken various forms, such as guidance, mentorship, networking opportunities, or even direct assistance navigating the political landscape.

7.28 BEYOND SUBORDINATION

According to the statements provided by 26 women in the study, they mentioned that while they consult their husbands for various matters, such as attending protests or circulating petitions, it does not imply that they are subordinate to men within their families. They clarified that seeking the opinion or advice of male family members is a common practice, but it does not diminish their own agency or decision-making power.

In my personal experience, I have come to understand that there is a distinction between subordination and consultation. I have a strong and positive relationship with my husband, and we consult each other on various matters. However, I firmly believe that seeking or consulting his permission does not imply that I am in a subordinate position or at a lower status (Rabia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

Consulting my husband on different matters reflects the mutual respect and trust we have built in our relationship. It is a way to share our perspectives, thoughts, and concerns and make decisions together. I value and consider his input, just as he values mine (Nadia Personal Interview Dec 2022).

If my husband expresses concern about my safety and believes that attending a political demonstration could be a potential threat, he would definitely voice his reservations, and we would discuss it further. Ultimately, any decision regarding my participation in such activities would be collective, considering our perspectives and concerns (Huma Personal Interview Feb 2023).

These 26 women explained that they are not subordinate to men but consult their husbands for different matters. The women who participated in this study are working and educated and have achieved some level of independence. However, despite this independence, they still consult with their husbands on some issues. It is important to note that consulting with one's spouse or partner is not necessarily a sign of subordination or lack of independence. In healthy relationships, partners often rely on each other for support and guidance and make joint decisions on important matters that affect their lives together. Consulting with a partner can also show respect and consideration for their opinions and input. These women valued their husbands' perspectives and wanted to include them in decision-making.

7.29 PERCEPTIONS OF SUBORDINATION

The interviews conducted in the study uncovered a noteworthy finding: only 3 women reported feeling subordinate to men despite their qualifications and independent work. Despite their achievements and capabilities, these women perceive themselves as subordinate to men, indicating that deeply ingrained gender norms and societal expectations continue to influence their self-perception.

Even though I have achieved a lot in my career and have the skills to thrive independently, there are moments when I question my worth and feel subordinate to men. It's a constant battle to resist the pressures of conforming to traditional gender roles (Aliya Personal Interview, February 2023).

I recognize that I am highly qualified and capable, but societal expectations still make me feel subordinate to men. It's frustrating to see that despite my accomplishments, there is an underlying belief that men hold a higher status (Maria Personal Interview, January 2023).

As a highly educated and independent woman, I still feel subordinate to men in certain situations. It's as if the societal pressure to conform to gender roles weighs heavily on my self-perception, overshadowing my achievements (Aliya Personal Interview, March 2023).

Societal pressures and traditional gender roles can strongly influence individuals, including women who have achieved high levels of education and professional success. These pressures often manifest as expectations for women to conform to predefined roles and behaviours that place them subordinate to men. These gender roles are deeply rooted in cultural and societal norms and can persist even in the face of progress and advancements in gender equality.

Women may internalize these societal expectations, leading to subordination or feeling less valued than men. Various factors, including cultural, social, and familial influences, can influence this internalized belief. The pressure to conform to traditional gender roles may overshadow individual achievements and qualifications, leading women to perceive themselves as subordinate to men.

7.30 PATRIARCHY IN POLITICS

7.30.1 Male Dominance in the Pakistani Political System

All 30 women participants explained that Pakistan is a patriarchal society where men have traditionally held positions of power and authority in all areas of life, including politics. This belief has led to a culture where women are expected to play a secondary role in society and focus on household duties rather than pursuing political careers. The cultural norms in Pakistan assign specific gender roles to men and women. It is customary for women to be responsible for the upkeep of the home and the children. In contrast, men are expected to provide for their families and participate in public life.

These roles have been reinforced by cultural traditions and social expectations, making it difficult for women to challenge the status quo and participate in politics.

Males are very dominant in Pakistan, and we have a traditional patriarchal culture. Males are the decision-makers in the family and politics. They dislike women who break the conventional norm and participate in politics. They discourage women from participating in political activities (Sadaf personal interview Jan 2023).

The cultural norms in Pakistan have assigned distinct gender roles, with women primarily responsible for maintaining the home and caring for the children. Meanwhile, men are expected to be the providers and actively engage in public life. These societal expectations have limited women's ability to challenge the status quo and actively participate in politics (Sana Personal Interview, February 2023).

It is challenging for women in Pakistan to break free from the cultural traditions and social expectations that reinforce gender roles. The pressure to conform to these norms often hinders their ability to pursue political careers and participate in decision-making (Nadia Personal Interview, January 2023)

The interviews conducted with the 30 women participants in Pakistan shed light on the patriarchal nature of the society and its impact on women's political participation. The prevailing cultural norms and expectations assign specific gender roles to men and women, limiting women's ability to pursue political careers and actively engage in decision-making processes. The deeply ingrained belief that men should hold positions of power and authority reinforces the secondary role assigned to women in society. These societal barriers create significant challenges for women who aspire to participate in politics and challenge the status quo.

7.31 BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S INCLUSION IN PAKISTANI POLITICS

According to the interview participants, there is a prevailing male dominance within Pakistan's political system. Women participants highlighted several reasons for the gender gap in women's political participation in the country. As explained by the participants, one significant factor is the lack of support from the political system for women's involvement in politics.

The prevailing male dominance within the political system of Pakistan creates significant barriers to women's political participation. The unequal treatment and limited opportunities by political parties hinder

women from advancing and holding leadership positions within the party structure (Sara Personal Interview, March 2023).

The lack of support from the political system significantly hinders women's involvement in politics in Pakistan. Political parties often confine women to grassroots-level work or supportive roles, limiting their chances of actively participating in decision-making and holding leadership positions (Ayesha Personal Interview, February 2023).

Pakistan's electoral system contributes to the gender gap in women's political participation. The system favours male candidates, creating additional hurdles for women to succeed in elections and secure political positions (Nadia Personal Interview, January 2023)

Participants mentioned that political parties often fail to provide equal opportunities for women to contest elections. Instead, women are frequently confined to working at the grassroots level or given supportive roles within the party structure. This unequal treatment hinders their chances of advancing and holding leadership positions within the political party.

Another obstacle mentioned by participants is Pakistan's electoral system, which tends to favour male candidates. This bias makes it more challenging for women to succeed in elections and secure political positions. Various factors contribute to this bias, including societal norms, cultural expectations, and structural barriers within the electoral system. The lack of equal opportunities and the bias within the political system contribute to the gender gap observed in women's representation in political leadership roles. The interviews with participants have shed light on the prevailing male dominance within the political system and the various factors contributing to the gender gap in women's political participation.

7.32 GENDER SOCIALIZATION

The interviews with women participants focused on understanding how their families socialized them to participate in political activities. The women's perspectives shed light on how their families shaped their confidence and addressed their concerns regarding political engagement.

The participants explained that their families encouraged them to voice their opinions, engage in discussions on political matters, and actively participate in community events. At the same time, the women also acknowledged that their families had concerns regarding their political involvement. These concerns revolved around personal safety and societal perceptions. Overall, the perspectives shared by the women highlight the complex dynamics between family socialization and women's political participation. While families played a crucial role in nurturing their confidence and support, concerns for their well-being and societal perceptions also influenced their level of participation.

7.33 FAMILY SUPPORT AND CONFIDENCE

24 women participants cited that they have been socialized in a way that promotes confidence and encourages them to participate in all areas of life. This socialization has positively impacted their educational attainment and career choices, as their families have supported them in pursuing higher education and prestigious jobs. Additionally, these women have been socialized to have a high level of confidence, which extends to their political choices. They are encouraged to exercise their independent judgment and make decisions regarding voting and supporting political parties based on their beliefs and preferences. The confidence and support these women receive from their families have enabled them to excel in various fields of life, including education and careers, and they can have independent political choices.

My father always emphasized the importance of making independent decisions. His continuous encouragement played a significant role in developing my confidence and nurturing my ability to make choices based on my beliefs and convictions (Aliya Personal Interview Dec 2023).

Thanks to my family's unwavering support, I have been empowered to make independent political choices. My family instilled in me the value of being politically aware, critically analyzing different perspectives, and making informed decisions aligning with my political beliefs and values (Huma Personal Interview Dec 2023).

My father's emphasis on independent decision-making extended to the realm of politics. By encouraging me to think for myself and explore diverse political ideologies, he fostered my understanding and appreciation of democratic values, empowering me to actively engage in the political process and exercise my right to vote according to my conscience (Maham Personal Interview Dec 2023).

The interviews with women participants have highlighted the positive impact of family socialization on their confidence and participation in various aspects of life, including politics. These women have been socialized in a way that promotes independence, critical thinking, and decision-making based on their beliefs and values. The support and encouragement they receive from their families have nurtured their confidence, enabling them to excel in education and careers and make independent political choices.

The emphasis on independent decision-making by their fathers, in particular, has played a significant role in developing their confidence and empowering them to have independent political choices. Their families have instilled in them the importance of being politically aware, critically analyzing different perspectives, and making informed decisions aligning with their political beliefs and values, which has fostered their understanding of democratic values and empowered them to actively engage in the political process, including exercising their right to vote according to their conscience.

7.34 INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL BACKGROUND

12 women mentioned that they had been socialized to be confident and actively participate in election campaigns. Their families have encouraged and supported them to get involved in the political process. This support is crucial in nurturing their confidence and empowering them to engage in campaigning activities. Furthermore, out of the 12 women, 6 come from politically influential families. They have had the opportunity to witness the campaign process since their childhood. Growing up in such families, they have been exposed to the intricacies and dynamics of election campaigns from an early age. As a result, they have gained valuable experience and knowledge, which has prepared them for active involvement in election campaigns. These 6 women have been participating in election campaigns from a very young age, likely because

their families have actively involved them. This early exposure and engagement have likely contributed to their confidence and competence in campaign activities.

My family has always emphasized the importance of political engagement and actively encouraged me to participate in election campaigns. Their support has instilled in me the confidence to contribute to the political process actively (Fozia Personal Interview Feb 2023)

I belong to a politically influential family, and my father's background has significantly shaped my understanding of politics and confidence in making independent political choices. Growing up, I had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the impact of political engagement and the importance of active participation in the democratic process (Aliya Personal Interview Feb 2023)

Being involved in election campaigns early on has been a transformative experience. Guided by my father's expertise and surrounded by the energy of political campaigns, I gained knowledge about the intricacies of the political landscape. This early exposure has instilled confidence and a deep understanding of the significance of independent political choices (Maria Personal Interview Feb 2023).

The interviews with 12 women participants have shed light on the significant impact of family socialization on their confidence and active participation in election campaigns. These women have been socialized in families that encourage and support their involvement in the political process, particularly in election campaigns.

For 6 of these women, coming from politically influential families has provided them with a unique advantage. They have had the opportunity to witness and actively participate in election campaigns from a young age. This early exposure and engagement have contributed to their confidence and competence in campaign activities. They have gained valuable experience and knowledge, guided by their families' expertise and surrounded by the energy of political campaigns.

These women attribute their confidence and understanding of politics to their family backgrounds and the support they have received. Growing up in politically influential families has shaped their understanding of politics and instilled in them the importance of active participation in the democratic process.

7.35 FAMILY SOCIALIZATION AND SECURITY CONCERNS

All the study participants emphasized that they are highly educated and actively engaged in the labour force. They attribute this achievement to the socialization they received from their families, who did not suppress them but encouraged their education and participation in various spheres of life. Although the study participants mentioned receiving support from their families for their education and participation in various fields, including the labour force, their families also expressed concerns about their safety and security regarding political participation. Specifically, their families had reservations regarding activities like attending demonstrations or going alone to polling stations to cast votes, resulting in restrictions on their political engagement.

Although I have been socialized to be confident in making independent decisions, my family's concern for my safety during demonstrations has led to some restrictions (Asia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

While I appreciate my family's care and worry, I believe it is essential to assert my autonomy and engage in activities with my values (Rabia Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I understand that my family's restrictions stem from their genuine concern about the potential risks of violence during demonstrations (Hina Personal Interview Jan 2023).

These concerns about safety and security can arise from various factors, such as the potential for violence or clashes during political demonstrations, the possibility of harassment or intimidation, or the perception of unstable or dangerous environments surrounding polling stations. Families play a crucial role in ensuring the well-being and protection of their loved ones, and their concerns for their daughters' or sisters' safety in politically charged or potentially volatile situations are understandable. They prioritize the physical well-being of their female family members and choose to impose restrictions to mitigate potential risks.

The participants highlighted the importance of socialization within their families, significantly shaping their confidence levels. Being residents of cities and having received higher education, they have been raised to be self-assured individuals. This confidence is a positive outcome of their family's socialization practices. However,

it is essential to note that these safety concerns can inadvertently limit women's political participation and restrict their access to decision-making processes. Overly cautious restrictions may perpetuate gender inequalities and hinder women's ability to exercise their political rights fully.

7.36 GENDER-SEGREGATED POLITICAL GATHERINGS

17 women participants expressed a preference for gender-segregated political gatherings. They explained that while their families allowed them to pursue higher education and participate in the labour force, they were also socialized to avoid mingling with men and attending gatherings where interaction with men was inevitable.

The preference for gender-segregated political gatherings arises from my upbringing, where I was taught to avoid situations that involve interacting with men (Hajra Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I appreciate the freedom to pursue education and work, but I am also aware of the cultural norms and gender roles that discourage mingling with men in specific contexts, including political gatherings (Asia Personal Interview Jan 2023)

The preference for gender-segregated settings in politics reflects the influence of my family's values and the desire to adhere to religious beliefs (Sara Personal Interview Feb 2023).

I find comfort and familiarity in gender-segregated political gatherings, where I can express my opinions and engage in political discussions without feeling uncomfortable or against the values instilled in me (Maria Personal Interview Jan 2023).

I am socialized to be very confident in interacting with men; however, I feel more comfortable and secure in an environment where I can freely express my opinions and engage in political discussions without the interference of men (Shazia persona; interview Feb 2023).

These women explained various factors to attending gender-segregated political gatherings, including cultural norms, religious beliefs, and traditional expectations of gender roles within their communities.

The socialization process within their families plays a significant role in shaping the attitudes and preferences of women. While they have been encouraged to pursue education and participate in the workforce, there may be cultural or religious values that prioritize maintaining gender segregation in specific contexts, including political gatherings.

7.37 WOMEN'S PREFERENCE FOR GENDER-INCLUSIVE POLITICAL GATHERINGS

13 women participants expressed a different perspective from the previous group. They mentioned that they do not believe they were socialized to prefer gender-segregated political gatherings. On the contrary, they prefer and encourage gender-mixed gatherings where the perspectives of both males and females can be heard and where males can listen to females' points of view.

I believe that gender-mixed political gatherings provide a platform for males to listen to and understand the perspectives of females, fostering empathy and creating space for diverse voices to be heard (Urwa Personal Interview Jan 2023).

I do not believe that separating genders in political gatherings is necessary or beneficial. Instead, I embrace the idea of inclusivity, collaboration, and understanding to build a more equitable society (Shazia Personal Interview Dec 2023).

Gender-mixed political gatherings are an opportunity to break down barriers and bridge the gap between genders, fostering equality and promoting a more inclusive society (Kanwal Personal Interview Dec 2023).

I was not socialized to prefer gender-segregated political gatherings; in fact, I believe in the importance of gender-mixed gatherings where diverse perspectives can be shared (Fozia Personal Interview Feb 2023)

These women emphasized the importance of gender-inclusive gatherings as a platform for sharing diverse perspectives and understanding the problems faced by women in society. They recognized that participating in mixed-gender gatherings could

raise awareness about women's issues and provide a unique perspective that might not be heard in gender-segregated settings.

These women mentioned that they were socialized to be confident and assertive, and their families have actively encouraged their participation in gender-mixed gatherings. They believe that by engaging in such settings, they can challenge stereotypes, promote gender equality, and foster dialogue between different genders.



CHAPTER EIGHT

MIXED METHODS DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter employs a "side-by-side" approach, a study design that integrates quantitative and qualitative methods for data gathering and analysis. The central emphasis is on simultaneously presenting and discussing the results of these two methodologies. Two distinct integration strategies are outlined, specifically focusing on the chosen approach that begins by reporting quantitative statistical data. Following this presentation, the chapter delves into a discussion of qualitative findings, exploring themes that either support or challenge the quantitative results. The objective is to offer a comprehensive understanding of the research topic by combining the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced interpretation of the study's findings.

The "side-by-side"¹ approach is a study design in which quantitative and qualitative methods are utilized to gather and analyze data, and the results of both methods are presented together. There are two primary approaches to accomplish this.

First Approach: The quantitative statistical data could be reported first, followed by a discussion of the qualitative findings. In this strategy, the researcher displays the numerical data from the survey or other quantitative techniques, including statistical analyses, tables, and graphs. The researcher then discusses the qualitative themes that confirm or contradict the quantitative findings. This method permits the researcher to evaluate quantitative data in depth while combining rich insights from qualitative data.

Second Approach: The quantitative statistical data could be reported first, followed by a discussion of the qualitative findings. In this strategy, the researcher displays the numerical data from the survey or other quantitative techniques, including

¹ "Mixed methods writers call this a side-by-side approach because the researcher makes the comparison within a discussion, presenting first one set of findings and then the other" (Cresswell & Cresswell, Research Design, Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixmethod Approaches, 2018).

statistical analyses, tables, and graphs. The researcher then discusses the qualitative themes that confirm or contradict the quantitative findings.

This method permits the researcher to evaluate quantitative data in depth while combining rich insights from qualitative data. Both of these approaches are capable of merging quantitative and qualitative data in a meaningful way. The approach chosen will be determined by the study question, the nature of the data collected, and the researcher's preferences.

I have applied the “side-by-side” first approach, where quantitative statistical results are reported first, followed by a discussion of the qualitative findings (e.g., themes) that either confirm (or not) the statistical results. Alternatively, the qualitative findings are analyzed and compared with the quantitative results.

8.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

8.1.1 Age

The distribution of ages in the survey sample is skewed towards younger age groups, with the majority falling in the 18-25 age range. The age distribution of the interview participants was as follows: Thirteen female participants were in their 30s, fifteen were in their 40s, and two were in their 50s when they took part in the in-depth interviews. This age diversity among the participants provides a range of perspectives and experiences from different life stages.

The age distribution among the participants allows for a comprehensive understanding of the experiences, perspectives, and challenges women across different age groups face. It highlights the interplay between age, generational shifts, and the sociopolitical context in shaping women's political engagement.

8.1.2 Marital Status

In the survey, 25 individuals were married, and 375 were unmarried. Twenty-eight educated working women were married, twenty-six women were with children, two married women did not have children, and two were single.

8.1.3 Education

In survey 365, individuals had a BS degree, and 35 had an MS degree. All the women selected for in-depth interviews were highly qualified; only two had MS degrees, and the other twenty-eight had Ph.D. degrees.

8.1.4 Area of Residence

All the respondents of the survey and in-depth interviews were residents of urban areas of Pakistan.

8.2 POLITICAL INTEREST

8.2.1 General Interest in Governmental Activities

The survey results of the present study indicate that a considerable number of respondents, specifically 230 individuals, show an interest in governmental activities. This finding suggests that a substantial proportion of the population recognizes the significance of government activities and acknowledges their impact on their lives.

Similarly, the qualitative data obtained from the interviews with 30 women reveal the participants' unanimous interest in governmental activities. All 30 women expressed their interest in government activities and highlighted the substantial influence of government policies on their lives. This similarity between the survey

results and the interview findings underscores the consistent trend of women recognizing and valuing the role of government in shaping their socio-political realities.

Both data sets, the survey results, and the interview findings, demonstrate the shared perspective among respondents that governmental activities are of great importance. The convergence of these findings strengthens the reliability and credibility of the results, suggesting a widespread recognition among the participants regarding the influence of government activities on their lives.

8.2.2 Interest in Election Campaigns

Election campaigns are essential to the democratic process because they allow candidates to articulate their visions and policies to the electorate. They also allow citizens to engage with candidates, ask questions and voice their concerns. Through election campaigns, citizens can participate in the political process and have a say in shaping the future of their communities and countries.

The survey and qualitative study results provide complementary insights into women's interest in political campaigns. According to the survey, a significant proportion of respondents, 47.8% of the study sample, expressed an interest in political campaigns. This quantitative data suggests a substantial interest among the respondents in actively engaging with political campaigns.

The qualitative study, conducted through interviews with women, further enriches our understanding of this interest. The interviews revealed that most women were interested in election campaigns and emphasized their significance within the democratic process. These women recognized that political campaigns are crucial in shaping public opinion, raising awareness about important issues, and mobilizing voters. They viewed campaigns as a platform to advocate for their preferred candidates or causes, contribute to decision-making processes, and promote democratic participation.

The qualitative findings provide depth and context to the survey results by exploring the reasons behind women's interest in political campaigns. The interviews shed light on the motivations and perspectives of women, highlighting their recognition of the importance of campaigns for democratic engagement and their desire to actively participate in shaping political outcomes. The mixed-method findings consistently show substantial interest among women in political campaigns. The quantitative survey data establish the prevalence of this interest within the study sample, while the qualitative interviews provide a deeper understanding of the reasons behind it. These findings underscore the significance of political campaigns for women to contribute to the democratic process and exercise their agency in shaping political outcomes.

8.2.3 *Interest in Demonstrations*

The survey findings suggest that more than 60 % of respondents were interested in demonstrations. Demonstrations refer to public protests and marches organized by groups or individuals to express their views and concerns or to bring attention to an issue or demand change. Demonstrations can be a powerful tool for citizens to voice their concerns, raise awareness, and pressure those in power to address critical issues.

However, in the qualitative study, most women did not express an interest in demonstrations, and the study suggested that demonstrations were motivated primarily by political self-interest. This view is based on the perception that demonstrations are often organized and led by political parties or interest groups rather than by ordinary citizens. These women believe demonstrations aim to advance those groups' agenda rather than serve the broader public interest.

In conclusion, while the survey findings suggest that many respondents were interested in demonstrations, the qualitative study highlights the perception held by some women that demonstrations may be motivated primarily by political self-interest. It is essential to recognize the potential for demonstrations to be co-opted by political parties and interest groups. Still, it is also crucial to acknowledge the power of demonstrations as a means of citizen empowerment and participation in the democratic process.

Overall, the survey findings and the qualitative study provide differing perspectives on women's interest in demonstrations. While the survey indicates a significant level of interest, the qualitative research brings attention to the perception that demonstrations may be motivated by political self-interest. These differences highlight the importance of considering multiple viewpoints and understanding the complexities of political participation, including demonstrations.

8.2.4 Interest in Political Parties and Their Performance

Both data sets highlight the interest of educated women in political parties and their performance. The survey findings indicate that 59.3% of the respondents were interested in political parties. Additionally, the qualitative study states that most women participants also expressed an interest in political parties and their performance.

Both data sets acknowledge that the study's participants are interested in political parties. The survey findings do not explicitly mention the reasons for interest. Still, the qualitative research indicates that the women participants expressed a curiosity to understand how political parties function, deliver on their promises, and meet the expectations of their constituents.

Survey findings and qualitative interviews indirectly imply that the interest in political parties reflects the respondents' engagement and participation in the democratic process. Women's interest in political parties signifies involvement in understanding political parties' policies, leadership, performance, and representation.

The similarities between the data sets include the shared interest in political parties among the respondents, specifically educated women, and their curiosity to understand how political parties operate and deliver on their promises. Both data sets indicate that this interest reflects the respondents' engagement and participation in the democratic process. However, it's important to note that the first data set provides a quantitative perspective (percentage of interested respondents). In contrast, the second data set presents qualitative insights (reasons for interest) from the women participants.

8.2.5 General Interest in Political Discussions

The survey findings suggest that 65.5% of respondents were interested in political discussions. Notably, almost all the women interviewed cited their interest in discussing political issues with their friends and family, indicating that political engagement and discourse are valued in their social circles. The issues they reported discussing, such as inflation, education policy, security issues, and women's harassment, suggest various political interests and concerns.

The survey findings suggest that many respondents are interested in politics and political discussions. This interest in politics may reflect women's engagement and participation in the democratic process. Political discussions can help citizens understand the issues and challenges facing their communities and the nation. The issues the women reported discussing in the qualitative study, such as inflation, education policy, security issues, and women's harassment, suggest a range of political interests and concerns. These issues are all relevant to citizens' daily lives and have significant implications for their well-being and communities. Political discussions can help to raise awareness of these issues and foster critical thinking.

Moreover, the fact that women reported discussing political issues with their friends and family is particularly noteworthy. Engaging in political discussions with friends and family can provide women with a supportive environment to express their views and opinions, develop their political knowledge and skills, and promote gender equality in political participation.

Both data sets highlight the interest of respondents in engaging in political discussions. The survey findings indicate that 65.5% of the respondents were interested in political discussions. At the same time, the qualitative study reveals that almost all the women interviewed expressed their interest in discussing political issues with their friends and family.

8.3 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

8.3.1 *Registered as a Voter*

The survey showed that 78.1% of women respondents were registered voters. Voter registration is a critical component of the democratic process, as it enables citizens to exercise their right to vote and participate in the political system. Being a registered voter can also indicate a higher level of political engagement and participation, as citizens who register to vote are taking an active step toward participating in the democratic process.

The qualitative study showed that all the women participants were registered voters. This finding indicates a high political engagement and participation among educated working women.

Moreover, being a registered voter can have practical implications for women, enabling them to participate in elections, express their political views, and hold their elected representatives accountable. Voter registration can also indicate political efficacy, as citizens who register to vote may feel that their participation can make a difference and have a meaningful impact on political outcomes.

Both data sets imply that voter registration has practical implications for women's political participation. It enables them to participate in elections, express their political views, and hold their elected representatives accountable. Additionally, being a registered voter may indicate a sense of political efficacy, as it suggests that citizens believe their participation can make a difference in shaping political outcomes.

8.3.2 *Casted Vote in the 2018 Election*

Based on the survey findings, only a minority, 11.5% of the respondents, voted in the last election. Most of the respondents who were not eligible to vote in the 2018 elections disagreed. This implies that the majority of respondents were unable to participate in the previous election, which could be due to less age of the respondents .52% of the

sample falls in the age range of 18-21. This indicates that most women were not eligible to vote in the last election 2018.

Furthermore, the survey indicates that most respondents expressed a strong desire or passion to cast their votes in the upcoming elections. This suggests they are eager to exercise their right to vote and actively participate in the democratic process.

In the qualitative interviews, most women voted in the 2018 election. This finding suggests a higher level of political engagement and participation among the educated working women participants, as reflected by their willingness to take the time and effort to vote. The respondents of the in-depth interviews belonged to an age group of 30 to 50 years and had more experience with and understanding of the value of voting. This age group may have had more opportunities to participate in the political process and developed a greater sense of civic responsibility and engagement over time.

Both data sets indicate that the educated women expressed a strong desire or passion to participate in elections. The survey findings suggest that most respondents were eager to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming elections. At the same time, the qualitative interviews revealed that most women stated they voted in the 2018 election.

8.3.3 *Member of a Political Party*

The survey findings suggest that a very small minority, 6% of respondents, are members of a political party, indicating a relatively low level of formal engagement with political parties among the sample population. Low interest in political party membership reflects a lack of interest in party politics, a disillusionment or disconnect from mainstream political parties, or other factors that may discourage citizens from joining political parties, such as time constraints or concerns about privacy and security.

The qualitative study findings indicate that all the women participants reportedly said "no" in response to a question about whether they were members of any political party. These women were government officials with limited time and interest in formal

party politics. These women focus more on their public service duties and responsibilities than on political partisanship and may prioritize non-partisan approaches to policymaking and governance.

Overall, the survey and qualitative study findings suggest that political party membership is relatively low among the sample population and may reflect broader trends of declining party membership and political polarization in some contexts. Encouraging more citizens, including government officials and women, to engage with political parties and participate in broader political processes can help foster a more representative and responsive democracy that reflects the interests and values of all citizens.

Both data sets imply a limited interest in formal party politics among the respondents. The survey findings suggest a lack of interest in party membership, possibly indicating a lack of interest in party politics. The qualitative study supports this by highlighting that the women participants, who were government officials, mentioned their lack of interest and prioritized their public service duties and responsibilities over political party membership (See Chapter 5).

8.3.4 Take Part in Political Campaign

Both data sets indicate low participation in political campaigns among the respondents. The quantitative aspect of the analysis indicated that only 7% of the respondents participated in political campaigns. This numerical data quantitatively represents the participation rate, offering an initial understanding of the issue.

Qualitative interviews reveal specific factors contributing to the low participation to delve deeper into the reasons behind the low participation in election campaigns. These factors include traditional gender roles and the emphasis on caregiver responsibilities, concerns about security threats, and constraints related to time and interest. The quantitative data provides an overall numerical representation of the participation rate. In contrast, the qualitative data offers nuanced insights into the underlying reasons and experiences of the participants, mainly focusing on the influence

of cultural and societal conventions on women's political participation. The qualitative interviews identify factors such as traditional gender roles, caregiver responsibilities, concerns about security threats, time constraints, and lack of interest as reasons for low participation.

Both data sets suggest that women's participation in political campaigns is relatively low. The survey analysis provides an initial numerical representation of the participation rate. In contrast, thematic analysis offers detailed insights into the reasons and experiences behind the low participation, focusing on the influence of cultural and societal conventions. Combining both data sets provides a comprehensive understanding of the issue, incorporating numerical representation and nuanced insights.

8.3.5 Organized/Participated in Any Demonstration

Both data sets indicate low participation in demonstrations among the respondents. The quantitative findings revealed that only 7.3% of the respondents have organized or participated in demonstrations, while the qualitative analysis indicates that many participants cited reasons for not participating in protests. The qualitative findings specifically mention security concerns and the potential negative consequences of being identified as a reason for non-participation in political demonstrations or protests.

Combining the survey and interview findings gives a more comprehensive picture of the issue. The quantitative data highlights the low overall participation rate. In contrast, the qualitative data delves into the specific concerns and barriers expressed by the participants, focusing on security and the potential negative consequences of involvement. This approach provides a more nuanced understanding of the reasons for low participation in demonstrations, emphasizing the role of security concerns and fear of reprisals as potential barriers to political engagement.

8.3.6 Donated Money to a Political Candidate

Both data sets indicate fewer women donating money to political candidates. The quantitative findings show that only 9.0% of the respondents have engaged in such donations. At the same time, the qualitative analysis reveals that none of the participants reported donating money to a political candidate. Furthermore, the qualitative findings indicate that all participants (30) mentioned never donating money to a political candidate. This qualitative data provides additional insights into why the lack of donations exists. Some common concerns reported by participants include worries about the impact of money in politics or doubts about the effectiveness of their donation. These factors contribute to individuals' hesitation and reluctance to support political candidates financially.

On the other hand, participants mentioned that they donate money to social causes they care about, such as natural disasters or charity. Individuals may prioritize different types of charitable giving rather than direct financial support to political candidates. The mixed method analysis allows for a comprehensive understanding of the topic by combining quantitative data on the percentage of respondents who donated to political candidates with qualitative insights into the reasons and motivations behind their donation behaviours. The findings indicate a low occurrence of direct financial support to political candidates, primarily attributed to concerns about the influence of money in politics and doubts regarding the impact of such donations.

8.3.7 Circulated a Petition

Both data sets indicate a low level of individuals who have engaged in petition circulation. The survey findings demonstrate the low percentage of individuals who have circulated petitions. At the same time, the qualitative insights explore the reasons behind this and highlight the importance of petition circulation for raising awareness and garnering support for important causes.

According to the numeric analysis, only a small minority, 5.3% of the respondents, reported having circulated a petition. This numerical data indicates a low

percentage of individuals who have engaged in petition circulation. The qualitative findings shed light on the reasons behind the low participation in petition circulation, particularly among women. The majority of women respondents (18) stated that they did not circulate any petitions. Among the reasons mentioned for not participating in this activity, some respondents expressed frustration with the perceived lack of attention given to their petitions. This experience of petitions not receiving due attention can be disheartening and may discourage individuals from further participation in the political process.

However, the qualitative data also highlights the importance of circulating petitions for political participation. 12 interview participants mentioned that they had circulated a petition and that circulating a petition can serve as a means to raise awareness about a specific issue. By collecting signatures and sharing information about the issue, women can educate others and build support for their cause.

Thus, the mixed method analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The survey findings demonstrate the low percentage of respondents who have circulated petitions, while the qualitative insights explore the reasons behind this and highlight the significance of petition circulation in raising awareness and garnering support for important causes. These findings suggest that while circulating a petition may not be a common form of political participation, it may still be a valuable tool for some individuals to express their political views and concerns.

8.4 CONVENTIONAL GENDER ROLES

Both data sets emphasize women's ability to navigate the challenges of balancing domestic duties with their political aspirations. The qualitative data offers specific insights into the strategies and approaches employed by these women to manage their household duties and engage in political activities. These findings align with the quantitative finding that many participants do not perceive gender roles as hindering their political participation.

The numerical data provides a quantitative measure of the participants' perspectives on the impact of gender roles on their political engagement. 60% of the participants disagreed with the statement, suggesting they do not consider conventional gender roles a significant hurdle to their political participation.

18 women from the qualitative study stated that their household responsibilities do not restrict their participation in political activities. These women's experiences highlight their ability to navigate the challenges of balancing domestic duties with their political aspirations. The qualitative data offers in-depth insights into the strategies and approaches employed by these women to manage their household duties and engage in political activities.

The numeric finding of 60% disagreement indicates a general trend among the participants, suggesting that a significant portion do not perceive conventional gender roles as hindering their political participation. The qualitative findings provide a deeper understanding of how some women have successfully overcome the challenges of balancing domestic responsibilities and political engagement. The qualitative data adds nuance to the quantitative finding by offering specific strategies and approaches women employ to manage their household duties while participating in political activities.

The mixed method analysis reveals several significant findings regarding the effects of conventional gender roles on women's political participation and ability to navigate household responsibilities. The quantitative data indicates that a majority (60%) of the participants do not consider conventional gender roles as a significant hurdle to their political participation. They are primarily unmarried young women who are not yet involved in household responsibilities.

These participants' unmarried status and young age suggest they may not have experienced the full impact of traditional gender roles associated with household responsibilities. As a result, their perception of gender roles may differ from that of married women or have more significant household responsibilities.

The thematic analysis highlights the experiences of 18 women who successfully manage their household duties alongside their political engagement. Despite societal

expectations and traditional gender roles emphasizing women's domestic responsibilities, these women have found ways to pursue their political aspirations. The qualitative data reveals that the women in the study employ various strategies and approaches to balance their household duties and political activities. These strategies may include effective time management, seeking support from family members, and prioritizing their political involvement.

The mixed method analysis demonstrates that despite traditional gender roles, women have found ways to navigate these challenges and actively participate in political activities. Their ability to overcome these obstacles reflects their determination and resilience.

8.5 PATRIARCHY IN FAMILY

The survey highlights the influence of male family members on young unmarried women's mobility and political choices. The qualitative data explicitly highlights the experiences of married women who mentioned their husbands' understanding of education, self-care, and the importance of their wives' independence. The quantitative data provides numerical percentages that represent the agreement of female respondents regarding the influence of male family members on their mobility and political choices. The qualitative data, on the other hand, presents individual experiences and perspectives of married women, offering more nuanced insights into their autonomy and independence in daily life.

The statistical data indicate that 56.6% of female respondents agreed that their male family members limit their mobility to participate in political activities. Many unmarried young women feel restricted by their male family members when engaging in political activities. 49.1% of female respondents agreed that their male family members influence their political choices. These survey findings highlight the perceived control exerted by male family members over unmarried young women's mobility and political decisions.

In qualitative interviews, 21 married women explained not experiencing control over their mobility concerning political activities. They stated that their husbands do not restrict their mobility, attributing this freedom to their husbands' understanding of education, self-care, and the importance of their wives' independence. The married women participants mentioned that they are educated, working, and exposed to the outside world, contributing to their independence and autonomy in daily life. These qualitative findings suggest that married women generally experience more freedom in terms of mobility and political choices due to their husbands' understanding and support. However, the married women still reported feeling restricted in their mobility under certain circumstances, mainly when their security might be at risk.

The mixed method findings reveal a contrast between unmarried young women and married women regarding perceived control over mobility and political choices. The survey results indicate that unmarried young women often feel limited by male family members. At the same time, the qualitative accounts suggest that married women experience more autonomy due to their husbands' support. However, both groups acknowledge potential restrictions based on security concerns.

The thematic analysis shows that 67% of respondents disagreed that their male family members (father, husband, or brothers) control their standpoint regarding political participation. A more significant percentage of women in the study perceive themselves as having the freedom to form their opinions about political matters. At the same time, 37 % of respondents acknowledged that male members of their family influence their political choices. These survey findings reveal a mixed perception among women regarding the influence of male family members on their political stance.

The 27 interviewed women who reported not being influenced by their male family members highlight the autonomy and independence that educated women exercise in their decision-making process. These women demonstrate confidence in their political preferences and make choices based on their judgment rather than external influences. These findings emphasize the empowerment and agency of educated women in making independent political decisions, highlighting their ability to think critically and form opinions based on their knowledge and exposure to information.

These mixed-method findings provide a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between women and their male family members regarding political participation. The majority disagrees with the statement that male members of their family control their political stances.

Women in the quantitative study possess the education, exposure to information, and independent thinking that enable them to form their own political opinions. The qualitative accounts further highlight the autonomy and confidence exhibited by women in making political choices based on their judgment.

The survey findings suggest that many respondents perceive that their male family members have more liberty than them to participate in political activities. This difference may be due to cultural or social norms prioritizing men's political participation or restricting women's mobility and agency.

However, the qualitative findings suggest that the perception of unequal liberty may not be accurate for all women. Specifically, 23 married women participants reported that they have equal liberty as males to participate in political activities. Their equal status is due to factors such as education, financial independence, or a supportive family environment that values women's political participation.

The differences in perceptions and experiences of political participation between unmarried young women and the survey and qualitative study are attributed to several factors. First, unmarried young women depend on their male families for financial support, mobility, and security and may have less freedom to participate in political activities. Male family members may also feel a greater responsibility for the safety and well-being of unmarried young women, which may lead them to restrict their participation in activities that they perceive as potentially dangerous or inappropriate.

On the other hand, married women have greater financial independence and autonomy, giving them more freedom to participate in political activities without being dependent on their male family members. They also have a supportive spouse or family environment encouraging political participation. Additionally, age contributes to the differences in perceptions and experiences of political participation between unmarried

young women and married women. Younger women may be less experienced and knowledgeable about political issues and may be more susceptible to the influence of their male family members. Older women may have more life experience and a better understanding of political issues, making them more confident and independent in their political participation.

8.6 PATRIARCHY IN POLITICS

The numeric data highlights the widespread perception among survey participants that men have more dominance in politics than women. The qualitative findings then provide insights into the underlying reasons for this perception, including the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society and the assigned gender roles and expectations that contribute to women's limited participation in politics. By combining both data types, the analysis underscores the alignment between the perception captured by the survey and the cultural and societal factors identified in the qualitative interviews.

This mixed-method approach enhances our understanding of the gender disparities and challenges within Pakistan's political sphere. The data from the survey shows that 78.9% of respondents agreed that men have more dominance in politics than women, which indicates a widespread perception among the survey participants that men hold greater power and influence in the political sphere. The study findings from the interviews with 30 women participants justify and explain this perception. The women highlighted the following points:

Patriarchal Society: The interviewed women emphasized that Pakistan is a patriarchal society where men traditionally hold positions of power and authority in all areas of life, including politics. This cultural belief has shaped a societal expectation that women should play secondary roles, focusing on household duties rather than pursuing political careers.

Gender Roles and Expectations: The cultural norms in Pakistan assign specific gender roles to men and women. Women are expected to be responsible for the upkeep of the home and the children, while men are often expected to be the primary decision-

makers and breadwinners. These gender roles and expectations contribute to the perception of men's political dominance.

When comparing the numeric data and the justifications provided by the interviewed women, it becomes clear that the perception of men's dominance in politics aligns with Pakistani society's cultural norms and patriarchal structure. The numeric data reflects a widespread recognition of this gender disparity, while the qualitative findings provide an understanding of the underlying cultural and societal factors that contribute to this perception.

In conclusion, the mixed method analysis demonstrates a consensus among the survey respondents regarding men's greater dominance in politics. The interviews further explain that this perception is rooted in the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society, where men traditionally hold positions of power and authority. These findings highlight the need to address gender disparities and promote gender equality in the political sphere in Pakistan.

8.7 GENDER SOCIALIZATION

The findings provide insights into women's socialisation and confidence in voting independently. 52.6% of respondents agreed they had been socialized to be confident in voting independently. Half of the participants believe they have been raised in a way that promotes confidence in making independent voting decisions. However, 48% of women respondents disagreed with the statement that they are socialized to be confident to vote independently; a significant portion of the participants do not feel confident in making independent voting decisions. These survey findings demonstrate a division among the respondents, with a roughly equal proportion feeling confident and not confident in making independent voting decisions.

48% of women respondents disagreed with the statement that they are confident to vote independently and considering the influence of traditional practices and restrictions in urban areas, These women may face barriers and limitations in their political participation due to their family's adherence to conventional practices of rural

regions. When comparing the findings, it suggests that the traditional practices and restrictions imposed by families who migrated from rural areas may contribute to the lack of confidence reported by a significant proportion of women in voting independently.

In conclusion, the mixed method analysis indicates that in urban areas, where families migrated from rural areas and still adhere to traditional practices, a notable proportion of women do not feel confident voting independently. The influence of cultural and societal factors, such as traditional practices and restrictions, can limit women's political participation and their sense of confidence in making independent voting decisions.

The qualitative study with 24 women participants reveals that they have been socialized in a manner that promotes confidence and encourages their participation in all areas of life. Socialization has positively impacted their educational attainment and career choices, as their families have supported them in pursuing higher education and prestigious jobs. These women reported being socialized to have a high level of confidence, which extends to their political choices. The socialization they have experienced has fostered their ability to make independent decisions and have confidence in their political decision-making process.

When comparing the two sets of findings, it becomes evident that while a significant proportion of women participants may have been socialized to feel confident and make independent choices, a notable portion still does not feel confident in voting independently, according to the survey responses.

In conclusion, the mixed method analysis indicates a diverse perception among women regarding their confidence in voting independently. While some women may have been socialized to feel confident and make independent choices, a significant portion does not feel confident in doing so. 50% of respondents agreed they had been socialized to prefer gender mix political gatherings. These survey findings indicate that many respondents feel they have been socialized to prefer political gatherings that include both genders.

17 women participants expressed a preference for gender-segregated political gatherings. They explained that their families allowed them to pursue higher education and participate in the labour force. However, they were also socialized to avoid mingling with men and attending gatherings where interaction with men was inevitable. On the other hand, 13 female participants expressed a different perspective, stating that they did not believe they were socialized to prefer gender-segregated political gatherings.

The study provides insights into the women participants' perspectives regarding their preference for gender-segregated or gender-mixed political gatherings. The group that preferred gender-segregated gatherings cited their families' influence and socialization practices that emphasized avoiding interaction with men. Conversely, the group that did not prefer gender-segregated gatherings had a different perspective on their socialization experiences.

When comparing the findings, it becomes apparent that there is a division among the respondents regarding their preference for gender-segregated or gender-mixed political gatherings. While 50% of the respondents agreed with the statement indicating a preference for gender mix political gatherings, the qualitative findings highlight women participants' contrasting views and experiences.

In conclusion, the mixed method analysis demonstrates a diversity of perspectives among the respondents regarding their preference for gender-segregated or gender-mixed political gatherings. While half of the respondents preferred gender mix political gatherings, many women participants preferred gender-segregated gatherings based on their socialization experiences and family expectations. These findings reflect the complex interplay of cultural norms, socialization practices, and individual perspectives regarding gender dynamics in political gatherings.

CHAPTER NINE

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter delves into the research findings, addressing the critical question of political participation among educated women in Pakistan. The first research question focuses on the extent and nature of political involvement, examining various activities such as voting, party membership, and participation in political campaigns. The second question explores the association between political interest and actual participation, investigating the nuanced relationship between women's interest in politics and their engagement in political activities. The third question examines how socio-cultural factors, including patriarchy, gender roles, and gender socialization, moderate the political participation of educated women. Through a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and in-depth interviews, this chapter unveils a comprehensive understanding of the barriers, interests, and socio-cultural influences shaping the political engagement of educated women in Pakistan. The findings highlight a complex landscape, revealing both encouraging aspects and persistent challenges contributing to the nuanced nature of women's political participation in the country.

9.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

The first research question addressed the participation of educated women in different political activities.

How are educated women participating in political activities?

This research question aims to understand the extent and nature of political participation among educated women in Pakistan. The question seeks to examine the different ways women with higher levels of education engage in political activities, such as voting, being a political party member, participating in rallies or protests, or circulating a petition by answering this question. The researcher highlighted the barriers and opportunities that educated women face in politics.

To understand women's political participation and answer the first research question, the researcher surveyed 400 educated women studying in different universities and conducted in-depth interviews with 30 highly qualified women working in different universities in Pakistan. Data have been collected on the types of political activities that educated women tend to engage in (e.g., voting, attending political protests, being a political party member, circulating a petition, donating money to political candidates, etc.). This investigation helped to identify gender disparities in political participation and explored the factors that contribute to these disparities.

A significant proportion of women participants in this study were registered voters. The survey provided a quantitative assessment of the proportion of women registered voters. In contrast, the qualitative study provided a more in-depth understanding of the registration process and its importance to the participants. These findings suggest that registration is a priority for women in this study and likely reflects the broader population's attitudes and behaviours toward voting. This information is helpful for policymakers and organizations working to increase voter participation among women.

The survey and qualitative study findings present conflicting information about the proportion of respondents who voted in the last election. While the survey suggests that only a minority of respondents voted and attributed it to their youth and lack of understanding, the qualitative study indicates that most interview participants, qualified working women aged 30-45, voted in the 2018 election. These differences are due to the different demographics of the respondents in the study. The survey participants are predominantly young and inexperienced voters, whereas the qualitative study participants were more established in their careers and possibly more politically engaged.

There is a deficient proportion of political party membership among the women respondents in this study. The survey results suggest that only a small minority of respondents reported being political party members. The qualitative study's findings also support this, with all women participants indicating they were not political party members. The study findings suggest that the women respondents in this study have a low membership rate in political parties. Low party membership of women indicates a

lack of opportunities or incentives for women to engage in conventional political participation. Low party membership is due to structural or cultural barriers that limit women's access to political networks and resources.

The survey results suggest that only a small minority of respondents reported participating in political campaigns. The qualitative study's findings also support this, with most women participants indicating that they did not participate in election campaigns. This low level of participation in the formal aspects of the political process could be due to various reasons, such as a lack of interest, limited opportunities to participate, or barriers to participation. The findings have important implications for political campaigns and policymakers interested in engaging women in the political process.

The survey results suggest that only a small minority of respondents reported organizing or participating in a demonstration. The qualitative study's findings also support this, with most women participants indicating that they had not participated in any demonstrations due to concerns about their security and the potential negative consequences of being identified as a participant. The low level of participation in protests among female respondents in this study could be attributed to various factors, such as safety concerns and limited participation opportunities.

The survey results suggest that only a small minority of respondents reported donating money to a political candidate. The qualitative study's findings also support this, with all women participants indicating that they had never donated money to a political candidate. The low level of financial engagement in political campaigns among women respondents in this study could be attributed to various factors, such as limited financial resources or lack of trust in political candidates.

However, the interview participants suggest slightly higher engagement than the survey respondents. The survey results indicate that only a small minority of respondents reported circulating a petition. This low level of circulating a petition could be due to a lack of awareness or interest in this form of political participation or a perception that petitions are ineffective.

However, the thematic analysis suggests a slightly higher engagement with petitioning among women participants, with 12 out of 30 indicating that they had circulated a petition and raised their concerns. Some women are more willing to petition as a form of political participation. The findings have important implications for policymakers and civil society organizations interested in promoting democratic participation and civic engagement among women.

In conclusion, the research findings reveal a mixed picture of political participation among educated women in Pakistan. While a significant proportion of female participants were registered voters, indicating a recognition of the importance of voting, there were conflicting reports regarding the actual voter turnout in the last election. The study highlights a low level of political party membership, limited participation in political campaigns and demonstrations, and a low engagement in financial contributions to political candidates among the women respondents. However, there was a slightly higher level of engagement in petitioning, with some women indicating their willingness to raise concerns through this form of political participation. These findings suggest that while some women are actively involved in certain aspects of the political process, barriers and limited opportunities hinder their participation.

9.2 POLITICAL INTEREST OF WOMEN

The second research question addressed the association between women's political interests and the participation of women in political activities.

What is the association between political interest and the political participation of educated women in Pakistan?

This research question explores the relationship between women's interest in different political activities and their actual participation. The question is based on the assumption that individuals who are more interested in politics are more likely to engage in political activities. Still, this relationship may be influenced by other factors such as gender, education, or cultural norms. These factors are explored and highlighted in the present study.

To answer the second research question, the relationship between political interest and political participation of educated women in Pakistan, the researcher conducted surveys and in-depth interviews to measure these factors and analyze the correlation between them. The researcher has applied statistical analysis to identify the correlation between political interest and women's political participation.

Most female university respondents and interview participants expressed a general interest in governmental activities, and it can be concluded that there is potential for increased political participation among educated women in Pakistan. This finding suggests that women with higher levels of education are not inherently disinterested in politics but may face other barriers or constraints that limit their participation.

Only a small proportion of respondents expressed a strong interest in election campaigns; it can be concluded that there is limited enthusiasm among young female university students in Pakistan to participate actively in political campaigns. However, it is essential to note that a significant proportion of respondents reported a low or no interest in such campaigns. One possible explanation for the low interest levels in election campaigns among educated women is that they feel discouraged or excluded from the political process due to gendered cultural norms and expectations. A small proportion of respondents expressed a strong interest in election campaigns, highlighting the need for tailored strategies to engage educated women in political activities and broader societal changes to promote more significant gender equity and representation in the political sphere.

The study findings show that most women interviewed expressed interest in election campaigns because they are independent and highly qualified, which suggests a relationship between women's education, independence, and political participation. Working women with higher levels of education have greater access to information and resources and are more likely to seek out opportunities to engage with political issues and campaigns.

Furthermore, the finding suggests that women's independence influences their political participation. Women who are financially independent or have achieved greater autonomy in other aspects of their lives are more likely to take an interest in

political campaigns and use their voices to advocate for their beliefs and values. This finding underscores the importance of empowering and supporting women's education and independence to promote greater political engagement and participation.

The research findings show that most of the respondents are interested in political demonstrations; it can be concluded that there is potential for increased political participation among educated women in Pakistan through this form of activism. This finding suggests that political demonstrations may effectively engage educated women in political issues and promote greater awareness and advocacy around critical social and political challenges.

Most women did not express an interest in demonstrations and suggested that demonstrations were motivated primarily by political self-interest. This finding suggests that there may be a perception among some women that demonstrations are mainly driven by political agendas or self-interest rather than by a desire to bring about positive social or political change.

This perception is a barrier to greater political engagement and participation among women, particularly if they do not see demonstrations as an effective means of achieving their goals. Most women participants expressed an interest in political parties and their performance. The findings suggest that most respondents were interested in political parties and their performance. It can be concluded that educated women in Pakistan may be an important constituency for political parties to engage with and mobilize. This finding suggests that women with higher levels of education were interested in engaging with political parties.

Overall, the finding that most respondents expressed an interest in political parties and their performance highlights the importance of engaging educated women in the political process and promoting more significant gender equity and representation within political parties and institutions. Empowering and supporting educated women to engage with political parties and advocate for their interests makes it possible to create a more diverse and representative political system in Pakistan.

Most of the women agreed that they were interested in political discussions. In the qualitative study, almost all the women interviewed reported a high interest in discussing political issues with their friends and family. It can be concluded that there is potential for increased political participation among educated women in Pakistan through dialogue and debate. This finding suggests that women with higher levels of education are interested in engaging in discussions around political issues and have valuable insights and perspectives to contribute. By creating more opportunities for women to engage in political discourse and promoting more significant gender equity and representation, it is possible to foster a more vibrant and inclusive political culture in Pakistan.

The regression analysis findings suggest a significant relationship between political interest and participation. The fact that the p-value for the political interest predictor variable is less than .001 indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. This finding suggests that individuals with a greater interest in politics are likelier to participate in political activities. This relationship arises from various factors, such as greater knowledge and awareness of political issues and events, a greater sense of civic duty and responsibility, or a greater motivation to bring about political change. The regression found a significant association between these two variables, meaning they are related to each other positively. Individuals with a greater interest in politics are more likely to participate in political activities, such as voting, attending political rallies, or contacting their elected representatives.

In conclusion, the research findings reveal a complex relationship between political interest and political participation among educated women in Pakistan. While there is a general interest in governmental activities and political discussions among the respondents, there are variations in their levels of interest and engagement across different political activities. The study highlights limited enthusiasm for participating in election campaigns, potentially due to discouragement or exclusion from the political process based on gendered cultural norms. However, working women with higher levels of education and independence show a greater interest in election campaigns, indicating the influence of education and autonomy on political engagement. Furthermore, there is potential for increased political participation through political demonstrations, as many respondents are interested in this form of activism. The study also emphasizes the

importance of engaging with political parties, as respondents are interested in party performance. There is a significant positive association between political interest and political participation, suggesting that individuals with a higher interest in politics are more likely to engage in various political activities. These findings underscore the need for tailored strategies to encourage and empower educated women's political participation in Pakistan while addressing societal barriers and promoting gender equity in the political sphere.

9.3 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS MODERATED THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

The third research question addressed the four socio-cultural factors that moderated educated women's political participation.

How do patriarchy in family and politics, conventional gender roles, and gender socialization moderate the political participation of educated women in Pakistan?

This research question investigates the role of gender norms and socialization in shaping the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. It is based on the recognition that patriarchal attitudes and gendered expectations may discourage women from participating in politics. The question seeks to understand how patriarchy, gender roles, and socialization moderated the relationship between political interest and political participation. By examining these issues, researchers explored the complex social and cultural factors that influenced political participation among women in Pakistan and developed interventions that are responsive to these realities.

To answer the third research question, the researcher examined how patriarchy in family and politics, conventional gender roles, and gender socialization moderated the political participation of educated women in Pakistan. Mixed method research is conducted to understand how these factors impact women's decisions to participate in politics. Qualitative research involves in-depth interviews with educated working women and a survey of female university students in Pakistan to explore their

experiences and perceptions of gender roles, socialization, and patriarchy in politics and family.

9.3.1 *Conventional Gender Roles*

The findings from both the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews shed light on the relationship between gender roles and political participation among educated women in Pakistan. While the survey results suggest that a majority of the participants do not perceive household chores, caring for family members, or traditional gender roles as significant barriers to their political participation, the qualitative interviews provide a deeper understanding of the nuanced factors that influence women's engagement in politics.

The survey indicates that household chores, caring for family members, and traditional gender roles do not hinder the political participation of young female university students. However, it is important to note that the sample primarily consisted of young, unmarried, educated women living in urban areas who had not fully embraced traditional gender roles or faced substantial household responsibilities. This demographic profile explains the overall disagreement with the perceived barriers. On the other hand, the interviews revealed that the participant's ability to manage their household responsibilities while participating in political activities was influenced by their education, independence, and access to resources. Educated working women expressed their commitment to political participation and found ways to balance their responsibilities effectively.

The moderation analysis demonstrated that political interest has a significant positive effect on political participation, while the role of gender roles as a moderating factor was relatively weak. The interaction between political interest and gender roles had a small but statistically significant effect on political participation. Gender roles may slightly influence the relationship between political interest and political participation, and the impact is not particularly strong in the context of the sampled population. The interviews emphasize the importance of women's empowerment,

including education and financial independence, in enabling them to balance their household responsibilities and participate in political activities.

9.3.2 Patriarchy in Family

The survey findings indicate that many female respondents feel their male family members limit their mobility and influence their political choices. However, the majority of respondents disagreed that their male family members control their standpoint regarding political participation. The survey findings also indicate that educated women are more likely to have independent voting choices, participate in political discussions, and receive respect from their families for their opinions. Many women also feel restricted from participating in demonstrations and perceive men as better suited for political activities. The survey also reveals the importance of family support in women's political participation. Some women reported that their male family members who are politically active help them enter the political arena by providing guidance, mentorship, networking opportunities, and resources. However, the survey also acknowledges that patriarchal attitudes and practices hinder women's political participation. Cultural norms and gender biases restrict women's mobility and reinforce the idea that politics is unsuitable. Women face restrictions on mobility and freedom of choice due to gender-based cultural norms and patriarchal values in their communities.

In-depth interviews with educated women participants further shed light on their experiences. Some women reported having supportive husbands who do not control their mobility but express concern for their safety. However, they also recognize the impact of these concerns on their autonomy and freedom of movement. Participants of in-depth interviews also cited that consulting with male family members on some issues does not necessarily imply subordination or lack of independence. In healthy relationships, partners often rely on each other for support and guidance and make joint decisions.

Based on the survey findings, it can be concluded that male family members attempt to control the mobility of young unmarried women regarding political activities, potentially due to concerns about their safety. Many young unmarried women agreed

that male family members control their mobility regarding participating in demonstrations. However, qualitative interviews highlight the reasons for controlled mobility in the demonstrations. Participants of interviews explained that male family members are concerned about the safety of these women and may attempt to limit their exposure to potentially dangerous situations. The qualitative study's findings indicate that most married women interviewed did not experience control over their mobility regarding political activities. Married women have more agency and freedom to decide about their movements and activities, potentially due to their status as adults and household decision-makers.

The interviews also shed light on educated women's experiences regarding their political participation and the influence of male family members. Some women reported having supportive husbands who respected their autonomy and independence, while others experienced restrictions on their mobility and freedom of choice due to patriarchal norms. The interviews and survey highlighted that educated women made self-determined political choices and were not significantly influenced by the standpoint of their male family members.

9.3.3 Patriarchy in Politics

The findings from the survey and interviews suggest that patriarchal attitudes and male dominance in politics significantly affect women's political participation in Pakistan. Most respondents agreed that men have more dominance in politics than women, indicating the persistence of patriarchal norms and gender-based discrimination in the political domain.

Moreover, the survey results reveal that the political system in Pakistan supports the involvement of males more than females, and a significant proportion of respondents believed that men are more appropriate and capable of participating in political activities than women.

The survey also indicated that many respondents agreed that men could run a political campaign better, reflecting the gender-based stereotypes and biases that affect

women's political participation in Pakistan. Additionally, the survey findings highlight that the complex political procedure, including voter registration and the voting process, restricts participation in political activities for many respondents. These findings emphasize the general public's challenges in accessing and participating in the political process, particularly in marginalized communities, including young women.

The interviews further supported the notion that patriarchal norms and male political dominance restrict women's political participation in Pakistan. Women participants perceived men to hold more power and influence in political decision-making, and they highlighted the lack of support from the political system and the biased electoral system as barriers to women's political involvement. However, the interviews also emphasized that women are not passive victims of patriarchy and can challenge these barriers through mobilization and running for political office.

In conclusion, the detailed analysis of the survey, moderation analysis, and in-depth interviews provide a comprehensive understanding of the barriers to women's political participation in Pakistan. The findings consistently highlight the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society and the political system and the prevalence of gender-based stereotypes and biases that limit women's political involvement. The respondents of the survey and participants of the interviews both believe that men have more dominance in politics than women in Pakistan and that there is a higher level of patriarchy in politics.

The study suggests that educated women in Pakistan are resilient and determined to overcome the challenges of patriarchal political structures. They are optimistic about navigating the system and believe they can address these challenges and succeed in their political careers with the proper support and resources.

9.3.4 Gender Socialization

Socialization can impact individuals' confidence and willingness to participate in political activities. Broader societal and cultural factors may influence individuals' ability to engage in conventional and nonconventional political activities. The

participants of the in-depth interviews have been socialized to be confident. They believe in their abilities to participate in various fields of life, such as education and the workforce. However, their families are concerned about their safety and security and hence restrict their involvement in protests and demonstrations. The study participants did not feel socialized to be submissive or conform to specific gender roles. The participants were raised in an environment that promoted gender equality and allowed them to explore their potential without gender discrimination.

The findings from the statistical analysis demonstrate a negative correlation between gender socialization and women's political participation. However, the qualitative study highlights the nuanced reasons behind this correlation, revealing the complex dynamics. Despite being highly educated and raised with the expectation of achieving higher education, joining the labour force, and having independent political choices, the women in the study face obstacles when participating in political activities and explicitly attending demonstrations.

The primary hindrance to their participation is the concerns expressed by their families. The women prioritize their families' safety and well-being, leading them to avoid participating in demonstrations due to worries about security, violence, and intimidation. These concerns reflect broader societal issues that undermine women's safety and deter their engagement in political activism.

Moreover, the study highlights the diverse perspectives among women regarding attending gender-mixed and gender-segregated gatherings. Some women prefer gender-segregated gatherings, as they perceive them as providing greater confidence and comfort to express their opinions. In such environments, women feel more at ease sharing their experiences and concerns, knowing they are surrounded by individuals who can relate to and understand their struggles.

On the other hand, some women favour gender-mixed gatherings, recognizing them as valuable platforms for informing others about the issues women face. They believe including men in these discussions can lead to a broader understanding of gender-related challenges and foster empathy and support for women's causes. These

women emphasize the importance of inclusivity and the power of dialogue in driving meaningful change.

In conclusion, the detailed findings suggest that while women may have received socialization encouraging confidence, higher education, and independent political choices, various factors impeded their political participation. The concerns expressed by their families regarding security, violence, and intimidation significantly discourage their involvement in demonstrations. Additionally, women hold differing perspectives on attending gender-mixed and gender-segregated gatherings, with some valuing the supportive and empowering nature of gender-segregated settings. In contrast, others stress the significance of inclusivity and the potential for broader awareness and understanding in gender-mixed spaces.

Addressing the negative correlation between gender socialization and women's political participation requires addressing security concerns and creating safe environments that encourage women's engagement in political activities. It is also essential to establish spaces that allow for open dialogue, accommodating both gender-segregated and gender-mixed gatherings, as they can serve as catalysts for empowering women, promoting gender equality, and fostering a comprehensive understanding of women's challenges. By acknowledging and addressing these complex dynamics, societies can work towards creating more inclusive and supportive environments that facilitate women's active participation in politics.

9.4 CONCLUSION

This study delves into the dynamics of political participation among women, examining various factors that influence their engagement in political activities. The research comprehensively explores voter registration, rational decision-making, security concerns, educated women's calculated interest, cultural theory, gender socialization, and the impact of patriarchy in family and politics. The findings illuminate a complex interplay of individual and societal factors shaping women's political participation. Despite a substantial 78.1% voter registration rate, only 13% engage in party membership, 18% in political demonstrations, and 17.1% in petition circulation. These

findings indicate a discrepancy in active political participation. Rational choice theory provides insights into these patterns, highlighting how individuals make calculated decisions based on perceived costs and benefits when participating in political activities.

The study findings suggest that women hesitated to participate in political demonstrations due to security concerns. These findings align with rational choice theory, which emphasizes considering potential risks and costs before political participation. The study findings indicate that educated women are especially interested in matters that directly impact their lives. These findings align with rational choice theory, which suggests that individuals, in this case, educated women, are likely to approach political engagement more strategically and thoughtfully. The findings indicated that educated women make political choices by carefully considering the pros and cons. In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the intricate dynamics at play in women's political engagement, revealing a notable dissonance between high voter registration rates and lower levels of active participation in party membership, political demonstrations, and petition circulation. Through the lens of rational choice theory, this research delves into how educated women navigate their political involvement, emphasizing the agency they exercise in making calculated decisions based on perceived costs and benefits. Rational choice theory offers a framework to comprehend these patterns by positing that individuals weigh the potential advantages and drawbacks of political participation, guided primarily by self-interest. By applying this theory, the study illuminates the nuanced relationship between educated women's political interests and their level of engagement in various political activities.

Although 60% of participants do not perceive conventional gender roles as a significant barrier, this contradicts cultural theory, which argues that conventional gender roles inherently restrict women's political engagement. The contradiction suggests a complex interplay between individual perceptions and broader cultural norms, challenging the simplistic view that cultural theory provides regarding the impact of gender roles. In assessing the impact of gender socialization on the relationship between political interest and participation, the non-significant interaction revealed challenges to the conventional view within cultural theory. According to the theory, women are socialized to be shy and less confident, which makes them less active in politics. However, the present study found something different—it goes against what

the cultural theory explains. The study found that educated urban women, despite cultural expectations, did not necessarily exhibit lower confidence or shyness when participating in politics. This means that the observed behavior of these women does not align with what cultural theory would predict.

The subtle impact of patriarchy in family and politics on the link between political interest and participation challenges the overarching view within cultural theory. The influence of patriarchy (where men typically hold more power) in both families and politics affects the connection between being interested in politics and taking part in it. The cultural theory argues that patriarchal norms have an impact on this link, meaning that if you're in a society where men have more power, it would strongly affect how much you get involved in politics.

However, the study findings are more detailed. They show that women's education, economic independence, mobility, and the cultural rural or urban cultural setting, instead of just patriarchal norms, these factors cannot be ignored. So, the study highlights that the influence of patriarchal norms might not be as strong as cultural theory often suggests, and these other factors also affect women's political participation. The study confirms that the political system shows a preference for male involvement and supports the idea in cultural theory that patriarchal norms shape societal structures. The study's results highlight that women perceive male dominance in the political structure of Pakistan. Women's experiences offer real-life examples that agree with cultural theory's views on gender dynamics in politics.

9.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Researchers may consider exploring the various resistance strategies employed by women to overcome barriers to political participation. Investigating how women navigate and challenge societal norms and analyzing the role of resilience and collective action would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of women's political agency.

Investigating the impact of recent policy reforms, such as gender quotas and affirmative action, on women's political participation could be a promising avenue for research. This would provide insights into the effectiveness of legislative measures to enhance women's involvement in politics. Researchers may consider exploring intergenerational aspects of women's political participation by analyzing how attitudes and engagement evolve across different age groups. Longitudinal studies or qualitative interviews could illuminate the changing landscape of women's political involvement.

Examining the role of online platforms and social media in shaping women's political participation offers a relevant area for future research. Investigating how digital spaces influence political activism and community building among women could provide valuable insights. Conducting qualitative case studies on specific regions or communities would provide a nuanced understanding of contextual factors influencing women's political participation. In-depth interviews and participant observations could enrich our comprehension of these dynamics.

Research into the impact of media representation on women's political participation is essential. Examining how the portrayal of women in the media influences public perceptions and shapes political interest offers a valuable avenue for exploration. Evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive political education programs beyond traditional curricula is an area ripe for exploration. Research could explore how educational initiatives can empower women with the knowledge and skills necessary for active political participation.

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APPENDIX I

POLITICAL INTEREST SCALE AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION SCALE

The Relationship of Political Interest and Political Participation of Educated Women in Pakistan: The Moderating Role of Socio-Cultural Factors

Q1. Socio-Economic Status of Educated Women

- Age
- Education
- BS MS PhD
- Marital Status
- Married Unmarried
- Area

Political Interest Scale

Q2. What is the extent of your response to the following statement regarding your Political Interest?

	Political Interest Scale (IV)	4.	3.	2.	1.
	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I have a general interest in Governmental activities				
2	I am interested in election Campaigns.				
3	I am interested in demonstrations.				
4	I am interested in political parties and their performance.				
5	I have a general interest in political discussions.				

Political Participation Scale

Q3. What is the extent of your response to the following statement regarding your political participation?

	Political Participation Scale (DV) Items	4. Strongly Agree	3. Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
1	I am registered as a voter.				
2	I cast a vote in the last elections of 2018.				
3	My constitutional right is to vote for the political party of my choice.				
4	I am a member of a political party.				
5	I take part in a political campaign.				
6	I have organized/participated in any demonstration/protest.				
7	I have donated money to a political candidate.				
8	I have circulated a petition.				

Moderating Variables

Socio-Cultural Factors which moderate the Political Participation of Educated Women (Moderating Variables)

Gender Roles Scale

Q4. What is the extent of your response to the following statement regarding Gender Roles hindering political participation?

	Gender Roles hinder political participation (MV) Items	4. Strongly Agree	3. Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
1	Household chores restrict my political participation.				
2	Taking care of family members restricts my political participation.				
3	Taking care of children/siblings restricts my political participation.				
4	I am expected to prefer political participation over household chores.				
5	I am concerned with home-related matters more than political participation.				
6	Women are expected to prioritize family responsibilities over political participation.				

Patriarchy in the Family Scale

Q5. What is the extent of your response to the following statement regarding Patriarchy in the family?

	Patriarchy in the family (MV) Items	4. Strongly Agree	3. Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
1	Male members of my family control my mobility regarding political activities.				

2	Male members of my family influence my political choices.				
3	Male members of my family control my standpoint regarding political participation.				
4	Male members of my family discuss political issues with me.				
5	Male members of my family have more liberty to participate in political activities as compared to me.				
6	Male members of my family are best suited for politics.				
7	My male relatives who are politicians or actively involved in political activities helped me to enter the political arena.				
8	Subordination of women (to male family members) is a hurdle to women's political participation.				

Patriarchal Political Culture Scale

Q6. What is the extent of your response to the following statement regarding Patriarchy in Politics?

	Patriarchy in Politics (MV) Items	4. Strongly Agree	3. Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
1	Males have more dominance in politics than females.				

2	Pakistan's political system supports the involvement of males in politics compared to females.				
3	Men can run a political campaign in a better way.				
4	Men are more appropriate to participate in political activities than women.				
5	Complex political procedures (Registration of votes and casting of votes) restrict me from participating in political activities.				

Gender Socialization Scale

Q7. What is the extent of your response to the following statement regarding Gender Socialization and political participation?

	Gender Socialization (MV) Items	4. Strongly Agree	3. Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
1	I am socialized to be confident to vote independently.				
2	I am socialized to be confident to participate in election campaigns.				
3	I am socialized to remain away from participating in political activities (demonstrations/election campaigns)				

4	I am socialized to be confident in taking part in political discussions.				
5	I am socialized to be confident in participating in demonstrations.				
6	I am socialized to prefer gender mix political gatherings.				

