

## **Impact of Baradari Affiliation on Electoral Contests for Power in Khushab District (1982-2008)**

### **Abstract**

*This article highlights the effects of the baradari affiliations in the tussle for power during the parliamentary elections in Punjab. The study is related with the Khushab district and it covers the time span from 1982 to 2008. Though elections have not been frequently held in Pakistan yet they during the time selected for this study decided mostly the ruling people of the district of Khushab. The paper reveals that Baradari in Punjab, a major determinant of concentration of power in the hands of a few, plays a vital role in the victories and defeats in the elections. Often the contests take place only between two major baradaries led by the undeclared chiefs of the respective baradari. The information gathered from the statistics of elections have been used to draw the conclusions.*

### **Introduction**

Elections are held in various countries at different levels to determine and decide the representative authority to run the affairs of the state, province, city or even the commune. There are different modes, different procedures and diverse rules and regulations employed to ascertain in an impartial, just and independent environment that holds the confidence of the electorate. This process seems simple yet bears multiple aspects, variety of complexities and play of actors and brokers. Elections connect the people to the political representatives, either elected or defeated. The electoral behavior transcends the political behavior of any people, community or nation. Likewise, the voting behavior determines the significance of elections as the voter casts his or her vote to stamp the aspirations, concerns, needs, demands and utility requirements of subjective orientation and objective considerations.

The social life accepts the impacts and undergoes transformation in either constructive manner or the otherwise depending upon the final effects of the whole process. This is equally part of experience and practice that elections and its politics expose the underlying predispositions in the system and society, explain relations of intra-party and inter-party nature, reveal the ecological influences and political interests of not only the political parties taking part in election but also those of other groups, structures, regions, clans and tribes. Local baradaries constitute an important impact on such interests, issues, problems and considerations.

Political scientists have presented various models to describe and determine the electoral behaviour. Such models include both proximity and

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directional models. For the first time such model was produced by Anthony Downs. The model that he presented was called the spatial and proximity models. He observed that interdependence between the decisions of parties and voters can be judged. In this model the positions for issues of voters as well candidates are translate into the preferences of the voters and the strategies of the candidates. Other factors like the direction of the movement of candidate away from the old status co to the new according to the aspirations of the voters are also measured.<sup>1</sup>

In the local contexts of Pakistan, as in any district as Khushab, the relation between voters' preferences and candidate's strategy is a big question mark. The reason is that the way the candidate adopts strategies the electoral fronts does not necessarily leads to fulfill or even to address the voter's preferences. This relation is affected by a plurality of other non-political concerns. The non-political concerns may be the baradari preferences, individual-cum community decisions, elders' directional voting patterns or the victim-voter syndromes. A victim voter is one who yields to unseen pressures, open and directed threats and contempt and other temptations of monetary value. Under such circumstances of no-preference, voter casts the vote.

Dr. Mughees Ahmad explains the role of baradari in voter-candidate relationship in Pakistani culture. He observes that Baradariesm is the main component of local political culture as well as voting behavior in Punjab. He draws three conclusions from his discussion and analyses of the voting behavior in the rural constituencies and finds baradaries in numerical majority in Faisalabad as successful. He counts ratio in favour of baradari candidates 74 per cent. His second conclusion points towards a trend in political parties to award tickets to candidates with baradari affiliation. His third conclusion also signifies the baradari influence. He points towards the change of sides by candidates from the same baradari to different political parties in different elections to acquire political power.<sup>2</sup>

It is evident from the electoral history of Pakistan that such patterns existed and vanished depending upon the political environment obtaining before and during the electoral processes. For instance, in 1970 elections, a strong wave wiped out petty considerations and Pakistan People's Party emerged as the main destroyer for politics of the baradaries in the West Pakistan. Biaderis like Qizilbash, Noon, Tiwans, Shah, Gillani, which were representing in legislative institutions since the electios of 1921, got defeated.<sup>3</sup> Craige Baxter also viewed the change in voter behavior in Punjab. He observed that the election results in 1970 testified that in Punjab old order had been changed. The politicization in rural areas had developed more than the expectations and many residents of the rural areas sought the radical solutions to their problems and the influence of major landlords was no longer the dominant factor in the politics of Punjab and the connections of baradari as well tribe which would control voting behavior in past had broken.<sup>4</sup>

But these patterns of voting behavior based on baradari affiliations revived in the next elections, which were held on non-party basis in 1985. Zia-ul-Haq's non-party elections swept away the national thinking processes and replaced them with localization of politics, breaking the party lines to give way regional, sectarian, familial and tribal aspirations. Rasul Baksh Rais (1985, p. 47) observes

that in the elections 1985 the interplay of traditional forces had an overawed influence in determining the electoral decisions. ... Party less nature of elections and the ban on traditional means of electioneering prevented debate on national issues... for that reason, the election campaign in rural areas were dominated by local issues, the personal influence of the candidate, the ties to the clan, tribe or baradari and feudal social bases in particular largely determined the outcome of elections.<sup>5</sup>

Dr. Mughees Ahmed also draws similar conclusion stating that one of Zia's legacies was the 'localization of the politics' which changed the political attention far from national politics and local issues as well as local identities again emerged in the politics of Punjab. <sup>6</sup> Political loyalties were increasingly determined by family, faction, and baradari ties, and political power was determined by the amount of patronage at one's disposal." Highlighting the baradari role in elections he said that the alliances in the elections were made on the basis of major and minor baradararies and central issue in the election campaigns seemed to be the baradari affiliation.<sup>7</sup>

Localization of politics and dominant baradari culture in legislative business of the country fill the void created by Martial Laws and absence of national politics resulted in the slow but steady demise of the democratic norms. Fresh thinking retarded and the national discourse on issues and problems checked. An interesting and eye-opening survey was conducted by S. Akbar Zaidi(2004). That survey examined various aspects and backgrounds of the members of the National Assemblies since 1970 elections. In addition to the stated objectives of this survey, another phenomenon was evident that occasional breaks and designed accidents in the political history of Pakistan damaged the smooth journey on the democratic high ways. People elected for the assemblies without political or legislative expertise or experience were mostly party candidates, rather than baradari candidates. Baradari candidates contested and won for more than one time.<sup>8</sup>

**Baradari's Influence in Politics of Parliamentary Elections**

Elections have determined the power in Pakistan at many times though not always. In more than half of the age of Pakistan the military takeovers and not the elections determined the holder of power in Pakistan. The elections have not been held regularly. This table shows the holding of elections after irregular periods and varying nature of the experiences in governance from 1982 to 2008.

**Table 1: Power Decided on Elections from 1982 – 2008**

	<b>Election Years</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Elections Held</b>	<b>Political Focus</b>
1982-85		Military Rule		Martial Law
1985-88	1985	Democratic with military ruler	1	Controlled Democracy
1988-1999	1988,1990, 1993, 1997	Democratic	4	Parliamentary Democracy
1999-2002		Military Rule		
2002-08	2002, 2008	Democracy with military ruler	2	Controlled Democracy

In the period under study 7 elections for national and provincial assemblies were held in total. In all these elections, baradaris prevailed either in individual capacity or in alliance or candidature as political party ticket holders. Baradari leaders held their seats fast both in the provincial as well as national election only with some tilt in favour of or against personalities. The actual power had been held by the baradari.

Politics differs at different levels in elections pertaining to the mode and nature of participation of key players. These players may be parties, elites, baradaris or other manifestations of influence and interest. It has often happened that there are people or groups of people that remain away from the electoral presence but play decisive roles through their support for certain candidates. In case of baradaris, it appears that every baradari seldom takes part in every level of elections i.e. local, provincial and national. Some of these players opt for only local bodies as the case of Rajar, Baghoor and Saggubaradaris in the Khushab local politics with some degree of prominence. These three baradaris are absent in national elections without any presence in winners or the runner-ups. Likewise, Khokhars, Utras, Pathans, Arians, Nagianas, etc are present at the provincial level but have no prominent role in the national elections. It is, however, significant that their support for other players at national level would be vital for the electoral victory. In this way the political process gives space to primary, secondary and even tertiary players to have their influence accounted for the success of the candidates of much strong baradaris. In return they either win some sort of agreements or the political bargain in the region. Such influences often make or break the political success.

In Khushab, one can see that baradaris like Awans, Balochs, Tiwanas, Qureshi and Ganjials are almost present in every level of elections, either national or provincial or the local one. They have their areas of influence in the form of Union Council presence at the Nazim and Naib Nazim levels. Such presence helps them to muster up enough support for victory at the provincial as well as national levels. They have their members who served both national as well as provincial cabinets as ministers.

Since 1937 to 2008, 7 baradaris (Awan, Tiwana, Baloch, Aahir, Borala, Qureshi and Ganjial) took part in elections on national scale; 14 baradaris (Awan, Tiwana, Baloch, Qureshi, Bandial, Syed, Piracha, Nagiana, Arian, Khokhar, Utra, Pathan, Ganjial and Kallu) were active on the provincial front; while 11 baradaris (Awan, Tiwana, Baloch, Bandial, Syed, Joya, Rajar, Baghoor, Saggi, Arian and Utra) were contesting elections of local bodies or local governments in the (Khushab region now status of district) Khushab district.

The hold of baradaris over electoral politics continued from the past. On the national front in 1962 Zakir Qureshi, as independent candidate succeeded against another independent Fateh Muhammad Tiwana. In the next elections of 1970, Awan baradari defeated Aahir candidate. Babu Karam Bakhsh Awan from Council League defeated Nasim Ahmed Aahair of Pakistan People's Party (PPP). It was a big victory because People's Party was the most popular electoral party under the leadership of Z.A. Bhutto. On the second seat, Zakir Qureshi was successful. He defeated Malik Najib Ullah Borala of PPP. It showed the strength of the baradari followings in district Khushab. In 1977 elections, one Awan

defeated the other Awan as Karam Bakhsh was declared successful on PPP ticket against Qazi Mureed Ahmed of Pakistan National Alliance. Nasim Aahir of PPP succeeded against Qari Abdul Sami Ganjial of Pakistan National Alliances (PNA). The 1977 elections became highly controversial as serious charged of rigging were made and the anti-government movement was launched by PNA, an alliance of 9 political parties.

The conditions at national level supported the baradari in electoral politics after Khushab was given the status of district. The 1985 elections were non-party elections which produced new conflicts and cleavages in the society. In the absence of the party politics naturally the individuals and the institution of baradari became major determinants of the decisions in the elections. From Khushab, in Punjab Assembly elections, Awan, Baloch and Tiwana baradaries won 1 seat each. It was the re-entry of Tiwana baradari, traditional ruling baraderi of the area, in list of elected politicians. Awan were not deprived of the victories in election. Malik Nasim Ahmed Aahir and Muhammad Naeem Khan Awan were elected as Member National Assembly. In 1988, Malik Naeem Khan Awan joined IJI and defeated Malik Sultan Awan of PPP. Malik Khuda Bakhsh Tiwana won election as independent, defeating Nasim Ahmed Aahir who changed side and joined IJI. The support of the party was not important as the independent candidate won with the help of the baraderi votes. In 1990 elections, Malik Naeem Khan Awan again emerged successful on IJI ticket. Malik Khuda Bakhsh Tiwana joined IJI as well and won his seat. The change of party did not decrease the status of the winner due to the support of the baraderi.

**Table 3: Baradari Position in 1985 Provincial Elections Khushab**

Election Year	Elected Body	Baradari Winners			Baradari Runner-ups	
1985	Punjab Assembly	Awan	1	Awan	1	
		Baloch	1	Ganjial	1	
		Tiwana	1	Baloch	1	
All winners and Runner-ups were independents and without declared party affiliation						

The 1988 was another beginning of civil rule in Pakistan. General Zia was killed in air crash on August 17, 1988. He had already dissolved Junejo Cabinet and 1985 parliament, leveling allegations of corruption and abuse of power. The 1988 elections produced a hung parliament and an unstable, uneasy and coalition government. In 1988 elections, Khushab witnessed once again the strong grip of the baradari phenomenon over electoral politics. The Awan baradari won 1 seat out of 3 with Tiwana and Arian baradaries one seat each. In the runner-ups, two Baloch candidates and one Awan emerged.

**Table 4: Baradari Position in 1988 Provincial Elections (Khushab)**

Election Year	Elected Body	Baradari Winners			Baradari Runner-ups	
1988	Punjab Assembly	Awan	1	Awan	1	
		Tiwana	1	Baloch	1	
		Arain	1	Baloch	1	
Party affiliations not specified.						

In 1990 elections, again Tiwanabaradari won 2 seats for provincial assembly from Khushab and one seat was won by Awan baradari. One Awan and two Baloch were in the runner-ups.

**Table 5: Baradari Position in 1990 Provincial Elections Khushab**

Election Year	Elected Body	Baradari Winners		Baradari Runner-ups	
1990	Punjab Assembly	Awan	1	Awan	1
		Tiwana	1	Baloch	1
		Tiwana	1	Baloch	1

In 1993, Malik Naeem Khan Awan from the PML (N) ticket won his seat in National Assembly. The Islami Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI) was broken up and PML (N) contested elections as a single challenger to PPP. Sardar Shuja Khan Baloch was the first appearance as elected member of National Assembly in 1993 elections. He was also a PML (N) candidate.

In 1993, Tiwana baradari was defeated on its Punjab Assembly seat while Awan, Khokhar and Arian won 1 seat each.

**Table 6: Baradari Position in 1993 Provincial Elections Khushab**

Election Year	Elected Body	Baradari Winners		Baradari Runner-ups	
1993	Punjab Assembly	Awan	1	Awan	1
		Khokhar	1	Tiwana	1
		Arain	1	Aahir	1

In 1997, the members for the National Assembly from Khushab were Malik Umer Aslam Awan and Malik Shuja Muhammad Baloch, both on PML (N) tickets. In 1997 provincial elections, Awans retained their one seat but Khokhar and Arian lost their seats to Utra and Pathanbaradaries. In the runner-ups, in Khushab were Awan, Tiwana and Naich baradaries.

**Table 7: Baradari Position in 1997 Provincial Elections (Khushab)**

Election Year	Elected Body	Baradari Winners		Baradari Runner-ups	
1997	Punjab Assembly	Awan	1	Awan	1
		Utra	1	Tiwana	1
		Pathan	1	Naich	1

General Musharraf held elections in 2002 and 2008. Musharraf era was very supportive to baradari politics and a disaster for the political parties. A Survey conducted by Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) on 2002 general elections reveals that baradari influence worked deeply in election results. The voting behavior in Punjab suggests that 23.8 percent of the voters cast their vote to the candidate belonging to their tribe, caste or baradari. The candidate of the baradari and the political affiliation combined and got 55.36 percent of polled votes.<sup>9</sup>(PILDAT, 2002) Thus the prospect of the baradari candidate with certain political party won almost double votes as compared to only baradari candidate. It is important that 37.8% voters had the opinion that their problems and basic service delivery in Punjab. It is also

important that 38 percent voters vote for the same candidate in every election regardless of their record of services to the voting community.

From Khushab, Awan baradari won two seats from the PML (Q) tickets. The Awan baradari was again going with the wind. Ganjial and Kallubaradaries won also one seat each for the Punjab Assembly. Awan, Bandial, Tiwana and Baloch candidates were among runner-ups. Sumera Malik Awan won elections in 2002 and 2008 on PML (N) tickets. On the other seat, Malik Saifulah Tiwana won as an independent. Malik Shakir Bashir Awan won on the other seat in 2008, defeating Malik Ehsan Ullah Tiwana.

**Table 8: Baradari Position in 2002 Provincial Elections (Khushab)**

Election Year	Elected Body	Baradari Winners		Baradari Runner-ups	
2002	Punjab Assembly	Awan	1	Awan	1
		Ganjial	1	Bandial	1
		Awan	1	Tiwana	1
		Kallu	1	Baloch	1
Winners: Awans (PML(Q)) Ganjial Not known Kallu Independent					

(Election Commission of Pakistan, 2015)

In 2008 elections, 2 Awans, 1 Bandial and 1 Kallu candidates won their provincial elections with Awan, Tiwana, Ganjial and Shah were in the runner-ups.

**Table 9: Baradari Position in 2008 Provincial Elections Khushab**

Election Year	Elected Body	Baradari Winners		Baradari Runner-ups	
2008	Punjab Assembly	Awan	1	Awan	1
		Bandial	1	Ganjial	1
		Awan	1	Tiwana	1
		Kallu	1	Qureshi	1
Winners: All independents					

(Election Commission of Pakistan, 2015)

Looking back at the history of baradari in electoral politics for power since 1982 to 2008, the number of elected members for 15 seats of National Assembly from Awan baradari were 9, Tiwana were 3, Baloch were 2 and Aahir 1. Runner ups were also from major baradaries. They were 8 Awan, 2 Tiwana, 1 Baloch, 1 Aahir and 1 Qureshi. The baradaries got control over the provincial electoral politics as well. 9 Awans, 4 Tiwanas, 2 Arain, 1 Khokhar, 1 Utra, 1 Pathan, 1 Ganjial, 1 Kallu and 1 Baloch won the seats out of 21 contested seats for provincial assembly.

If we look at the total winners and Runner ups in five National Assembly elections during 1982 to 2008 three major baradaries, Awan, Tiwana and Baloch were dominating the political system in the district. Out of these three baradaries Awan was at the top with 60% power positions.

**Table 10: Number of Winners/Runner Ups in National Assembly**

	Winners in NA	Runner Ups in National Assembly	Total
Awan	9	9	18
Tiwana	3	3	6
Baloch	2	1	3
Qureshi	1	1	2
Aahir	0	1	1
Total	15	15	30

(Election Commission of Pakistan, 2015)

**Graph 7: Winners and Runner Ups in National Assembly**

**Table 11: Number of Winners/Runner Ups in Provincial Assembly Elections**

	Winners in NA	Runner Ups in National Assembly	Total
Awan	9	9	18
Tiwana	3	3	6
Baloch	2	1	3
Qureshi	1	1	2
Aahir	0	1	1
Total	15	15	30

**Graph 8: Winners and Runner Up of Baradaris in Provincial Assembly Elections**

There is diversity in the baradaris at provincial level elections. The number of power holding baradaris has increased but the domination of three maorbaradaris which were dominating in the elections at national levels was unquestionable. Awan, Tiwana and Baloch baradaris were dominating the elections at provincial level. The collective ratio of three baradaris in victors or second vote holders in provincial elections (71 percent = Awan 38% + Tiwana 19% + Baloch 14 %) is obvious greater than total sum of all other baradaris.

### Conclusion

The results of these elections show the following trends:

- a) Baradari politics is not specific with any political party, trend or ideology. Each of the baradaris in Khushab, as may be the case elsewhere, evaluates the circumstantial needs for contesting elections, so they choose their platform with ease or otherwise fight as independents;
- b) Baradari leaders with political affiliations seldom embark upon new journeys with uncalculated risks;



- c) Baradari voting behavior compels the political parties to award tickets to baradariinfluentials considering them potential winners, so the political philosophy gets secondary or ever tertiary position in selection of candidates by the parties.
- d) Political alliances among baradaries cause great hurdle in the way of party leaders as two baradari might bargain on the provincial seats for the one and the national seats for the other.
- e) Running-up in elections is also a constant and on-going phenomenon as the Khushab election results show that first and second position always went to the baradari candidates on the seats they contested.

There are many more power mongers who act as brokerage units including the strong influences of baradari affiliations, interest groups of social as well as capital orientations and the power sharing procedures. Local orientation of needs and delivery of such needs hinder the way to a more harmonious journey to democracy. Influences, aspirations and predispositions all count but encircling them without a clear and unambiguous role-playing as a representative needs more and exclusive public support. When one represents only one institution, for instance, baradari or ethnicity, he or she may fall prey to the temptation of personal agenda.

#### **Notes and References**

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