IMPACT OF ELECTORAL LAWS IN REDUCING GENDER GAP IN THE VOTERS' LISTS

Waseem Abbas
Program Officer, Monitoring Evaluation & Learning Penny Appeal Pakistan
waseemabbas1993@gmail.com

Irfan Kausar
District Election Commissioner-Faisalabad
irfankausar.eo@gmail.com

Khubaib Azam
Program Assistant, Monitoring Evaluation & Learning Penny Appeal Pakistan
khubaibazam619@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
This topic is an effort to assess political emancipation of women in Pakistan in different socio-cultural aspects. It has been strived to find out whether the electoral legal framework of the country accelerates or impedes the political empowerment of women. Moreover, this study might be helpful to find out whether women are registered as voters at par to men or otherwise. Hence, registration figures of all districts by the time of promulgation of The Elections Act, 2017 and at the eve of general elections-2018 have been. Researchers have followed the mixed-method research strategy and descriptive research design for the current research. The Elections Act, 2017 and secondary data, primarily published by Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), has been used in this study. This research highlights that more efforts are required from ECP, NADRA and the development sector to enhance female registration. FATA still has to travel a long journey for political empowerment of women. The most backward districts like Kohlu, Dera Bugti, North Waziristan, South Waziristan and Mohmand Agency have a disparity of male and female registration up to 30% and substantial efforts are required to reduce such disparity.
Keywords: Pakistan, Voting Lists, Election, Electoral Laws, Gender Gap.

INTRODUCTION

Efforts for political empowerment of women are not new and their origin in modern history can be traced from New Zealand, the first country to grant the right of vote to women, on September 19, 1893. However, it had not been a piece of cake for European women to get the right to vote as they struggled a lot for getting this right (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2012).

It would be imperative to understand the concept of empowerment at the outset. Kabeer (2001) explained empowerment as 'the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them'. It is simply a process through which people gain control over their lives by democratic participation in their community life (Rappaport, 1987). United Nations believes and promotes gender parity in political empowerment.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its third session at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris, France, is an epoch-making document for ensuring the right of everyone in the decision-making process. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (2015), every individual, either directly or through a chosen representative by free will, has the right to make his government. Similarly, they have equal rights for access to public service.

Pakistan is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to most of its human rights declarations aims at political empowerment of Gender. The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan promulgated on August, 14 1973 can duly be declared as a gender-sensitive constitution. The constitution envisages the country as a society of equals where everyone has to take part for the betterment of the country. Political participation of women at grass-root level has been ensured in article 32. This article obligates the state to encourage local government institutions and further states that

representation of peasants and women shall be ensured in such institutions. Article 34 of the constitution entrusts the responsibility upon the state to take all necessary measures to ensure women's full participation in all spheres of national life. Hence, it may be presumed that the constitution-makers had been vigilant that solid women representation in social and political life is a pre-requisite for a strong nation.

Electoral laws promulgated in Pakistan also endeavour to ensure political participation of women. There are at least three electoral spheres where the law seems to be cognizant about women participation. There should be less than ten percent gap between male and female voters in the voters' lists. Moreover, at least ten percent women voters are mandatory for an election and lastly, political parties are lawfully bound to allocate at least five percent tickets against direct seats to women. This paper deals with women registration in electoral rolls and its pace after enactment of *The Elections Act, 2017(The Act hereinafter)*.

Research Question
1. What is the electoral legal framework to ensure gender parity regarding women registration as voters in Pakistan?
2. What has been the gender gap in voters' lists before the promulgation of *The Elections Act, 2017* and at the time of general elections, 2018, in Pakistan?

Objectives of the Research
The objectives of the research are as follows:
i)   To evaluate the impact of the new electoral legal framework on women registration as voters.
ii)   To find out districts where more efforts are needed for women registration.
iii)   To access the performance of NADRA and ECP for reducing the gender gap in the voters' lists.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Political empowerment of women is a universally recognised objective. Hence, emphasis must be made on the covenants and declarations passed by the United Nations in this context.

In the background study, researchers have searched different events and researches held regarding the changing identity of the woman. From the word go, United Nations vociferously supported freedom and equality; hence, women rights and empowerment may be dubbed as an inherent cause in the United Nations charter. Extracts from Article 1 of the Charter is reproduced as under:

To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

To be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends (United Nations, 1945).

Empowerment theories encompass both process and outcomes. Empowering process of individuals may include participation in community organisation whereas; empowered outcomes usually denote empowerment operationalisation (Perkins and Zimmerman, 1995). Empowerment was explained by Cornell empowerment group as an intentional, unending process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, due to which people who lack an equal share of valued resources gain a more significant opportunity to and control over those resources (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989).

Women empowerment is a quite murky and evolving concept that is still being defined and redefined, elaborated and clarified constantly. This concept is highly interlinked with gender equality. Women empowerment is a multidimensional concept covering social, economic, cultural, political, legal and psychological aspects (Malhotra et al., 2002). Decision-making by women explains the concept of women empowerment to a great deal; however, there are certain constraints in measuring women empowerment due to a lack of standardized ways. At the individual level, many researchers have tried to construct specific questions and indicators based on a Population-Based Primary Survey to measure empowerment (Kishor and Subaiya 2008).

According to Inter-Parliamentary Union (2014), the Beijing Platform for Action Signed unanimously by the delegates of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 was dubbed the new dawn for women empowerment. It pledged to remove all impediments to women for participation in public and private life. It was decided that women participation in decision-making institutions shall be enhanced by 30 per cent through a gamut of activities, strategies, and training in twenty years.

Article 32 and 34 of the Constitution of Pakistan states that:

32. The state shall encourage local government institution composed of elected representatives of the areas concerned and, in such institutions, special representation will be given to peasant, workers and women.

34. Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all sphere of national life.

Point two of section 47 of The Election Act-2017 states that:

47. Special measures for enrolment of women voters.

(2) Where the variation in the disaggregated data under sub-section (1) is more than ten percent in a constituency, the Commission shall take special measures to reduce such variation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Distinct directions relating to procedures in a research design are based upon the types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method approaches (Creswell, 2014). This research relates to mixed-method research to examine the political empowerment of women.

Researchers selected a descriptive research design for this research because of data required for this research is secondary. It is based on figures of voters published by the Election Commission of Pakistan as reliance has been made on the figures officially published by the Election Commission of Pakistan either on its website or through notifications relating to the general election 2018.

In Pakistan, few researchers have paid attention to the aspect of Gender and elections. Hence, a comprehensive document covering all aspects seems to be missing. Availability of data relating to Gender and elections might also be a reason for little research work in this field, as getting such data had been an uphill task in the past. *The Elections Act, 2017* has tried to encourage women in the field of governance and elections. Still, no researcher, known to writers of this research paper, has yet studied the impact of *The Elections Act, 2017,* on women empowerment in the electoral system.

There is a need to enhance female representation in decision-making institutions up to international standards in Pakistan. This requirement is in the backdrop of different covenants of the United Nations relating to women empowerment, for which Pakistan is also a signatory. Researchers at first hand strive to find out the impact of *The Elections Act, 2017* and *The Election Rules, 2017* regarding women empowerment in governance. The research is trying to find out if the law provides special measures to enhance female registration or otherwise.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Impact of Electoral Laws in Reducing Gender Gap in Voter's Lists

Voter registration is the bad rock over which the edifice of political empowerment of women can be erected. *The Electoral Rolls Act, 1974* did not provide any mechanism for civil registry database voter registration. Section 18 of the referred act made it mandatory for the voter to get themselves enrolled in the electoral rolls. However, section 25 of *The Elections Act, 2017* is a departure from the previous procedure. Previously, women had to visit the offices of registration officers for getting enrolled as voters and such visiting public offices is not within reach of most women in Pakistan. According to section 25, the data of every citizen who gets his national identity card is to be transmitted to the Election Commission every month for their registration as voters. This procedure might help increase women registration as every woman enrolled in the civil registry gets the right to be enrolled in electoral rolls. Section 47 of *The Elections Act, 2017* is another crucial feature of the law for enhancing women registration as voters. This section makes it obligatory for Election Commission to annually publish Gender disaggregated data for each constituency highlighting the difference in male and female registered voters. Moreover, wherever the difference between male and female voters is more than 10%, ECP has to take steps to mitigate such difference, including expediting issuance of national identity cards to women in such constituencies.

In this section, district wise registration data of male and female voters have been examined before and after promulgating the election act 2017 to find out areas where women registration is relatively lower. Moreover, statistics provided in this chapter may also be helpful to examine if *The Elections Act, 2017* has made a significant impact on women registration or otherwise. The first data of voters has been taken from the statistics published by ECP on 13 September 2017, whereas the second data is based on ECP's statistics on 7 September 2018. The data referred has been categorised into the following categories:

Category A: Low women registration (Less than 40% women registration as compared to men).
Category B: Fewer women registration (More than 40% but less than 45% women registration compared to men).
Category C: Minimum required women registration (45% and above women registration compared to men).

Based on the above categorisation, the figures have been analysed to understand registration data before and after the promulgation of the election act 2017.

Female voter registration in Balochistan
The table given below shows women registration as voters in the districts of Balochistan province in 2017 and in 2018 in comparison to men registration.

Table 1: Pre- and Post-Election Act 2017 Data from Balochistan

District	September-17				September-18			
	Male	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**
AWARAN	41,079	27,228	60.14%	39.86%	45,561	31,616	59.03%	40.97%
BARKHAN	34,288	26,829	56.10%	43.90%	38,515	29,955	56.25%	43.75%
CHAGAI	45,418	30,868	59.54%	40.46%	53,383	37,182	58.94%	41.06%
DERA BUGTI	50,861	27,601	64.82%	35.18%	61,682	38,237	61.73%	38.27%
GWADAR	57,587	47,166	54.97%	45.03%	66527	53,814	55.28%	44.72%
HARNAI	19,873	15,960	55.46%	44.54%	22303	17,484	56.06%	43.94%
JAFFARABAD	100,737	87,940	53.39%	46.61%	119,604	100,907	54.24%	45.76%
JHAL MAGSI	29,621	21,328	58.14%	41.86%	34,792	24,314	58.86%	41.14%
KACHHI	53,227	34,354	60.77%	39.23%	60301	39,564	60.38%	39.62%
KALAT	67,137	49,251	57.68%	42.32%	77,750	56,447	57.94%	42.06%
KECH	109,208	86,576	55.78%	44.22%	125995	96,636	56.59%	43.41%
KHARAN	27,764	22,394	55.35%	44.65%	31,850	25,911	55.14%	44.86%
KHUZDAR	111,386	80,280	58.11%	41.89%	132,686	96,484	57.90%	42.10%
KILLA ABDULLAH	125,114	72,982	63.16%	36.84%	148,722	83,891	63.94%	36.06%
KILLA SAIFULLAH	54,380	42,059	56.39%	43.61%	60,503	46,249	56.68%	43.32%
KOHLU	31,247	15,630	66.66%	33.34%	38793	20,237	65.72%	34.28%
LASBELA	122,261	90,877	57.36%	42.64%	136,941	99,597	57.89%	42.11%
LEHRI	28,626	20,110	58.74%	41.26%	32,790	22,882	58.90%	41.10%
LORALAI	68,047	51,921	56.72%	43.28%	81843	60,496	57.50%	42.50%
MASTUNG	51,824	36,108	58.94%	41.06%	62,403	44,785	58.22%	41.78%
MUSAKHEL	33,589	24,503	57.82%	42.18%	37,808	27,254	58.11%	41.89%
NASIRABAD	97,845	76,829	56.02%	43.98%	113,908	92,655	55.14%	44.86%
NUSHKI	42,141	29,813	58.57%	41.43%	49,445	36,520	57.52%	42.48%
PANJGUR	48,627	36,444	57.16%	42.84%	57,789	43,467	57.07%	42.93%
PISHIN	125,670	92,201	57.68%	42.32%	148,281	106,089	58.29%	41.71%
QUETTA	343,849	244,957	58.40%	41.60%	39,313	284,833	58.35%	41.65%
SHERANI	20,171	15,264	56.92%	43.08%	22,715	17,038	57.14%	42.86%
SIBI	36,489	26,465	57.96%	42.04%	41,639	30,911	57.39%	42.61%
SOHBATPUR	39,313	37,288	51.32%	48.68%	46,986	43,285	52.05%	47.95%
WASHUK	23,957	20,870	53.44%	46.56%	28,654	24,502	53.91%	46.09%

ZHOB	63,317	45,874	57.99%	42.01%	71,334	51,736	57.96%	42.04%
ZIARAT	32,407	27,323	54.26%	45.74%	36,847	29,856	55.24%	44.76%

The table above explains that when promulgated the election act 2017, there were only four districts in Balochistan Province where the ratio of female registration was satisfactory as per law. Graphical Analysis

Figure 1: Balochistan Analysis before Election Act 2017 (September 2017)
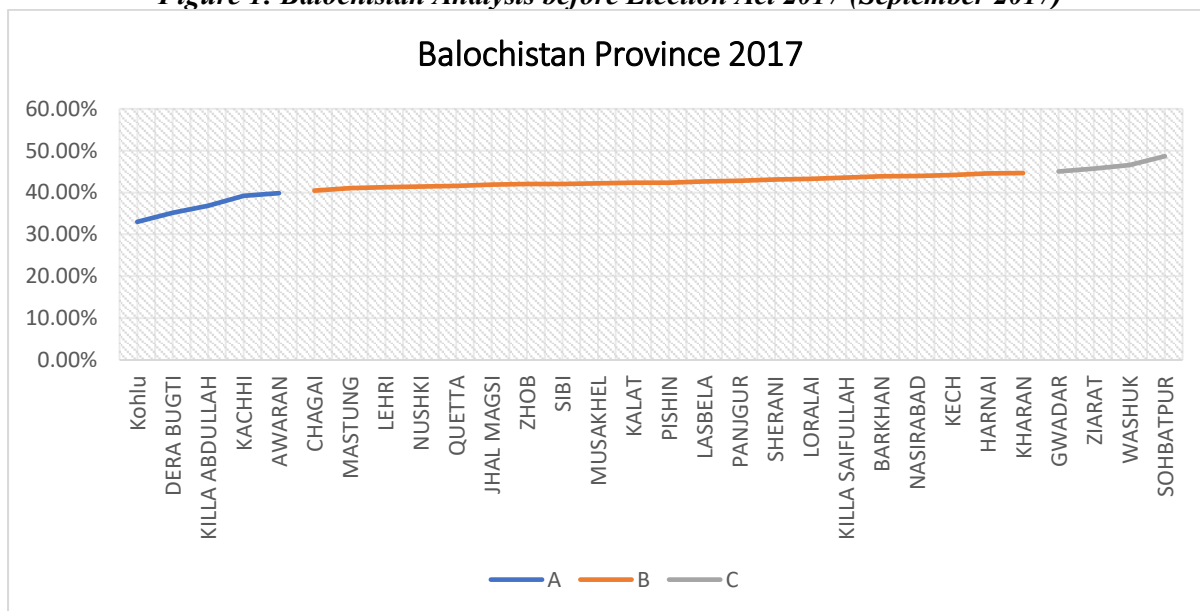
Note: A, B, C are categories mentioned in the introduction of this section.

In September 2017, five districts of Balochistan Province, namely, Kohlu, Dera Bugti, Killa Abdullah, Kachhi and Awaran, had women registration less than 40% in the Electoral Rolls whereas; 22 Districts had women registration between 40 to 45 per cent. Moreover, Gawadar, Ziarat, Washuk, Jaffarabad and Sohbatpur had the only four districts where the women and men registration gap was less than ten per cent. Still, none from them was up to fifty per cent.

Figure 2: Balochistan analysis after Election Act 2017(September 2018)
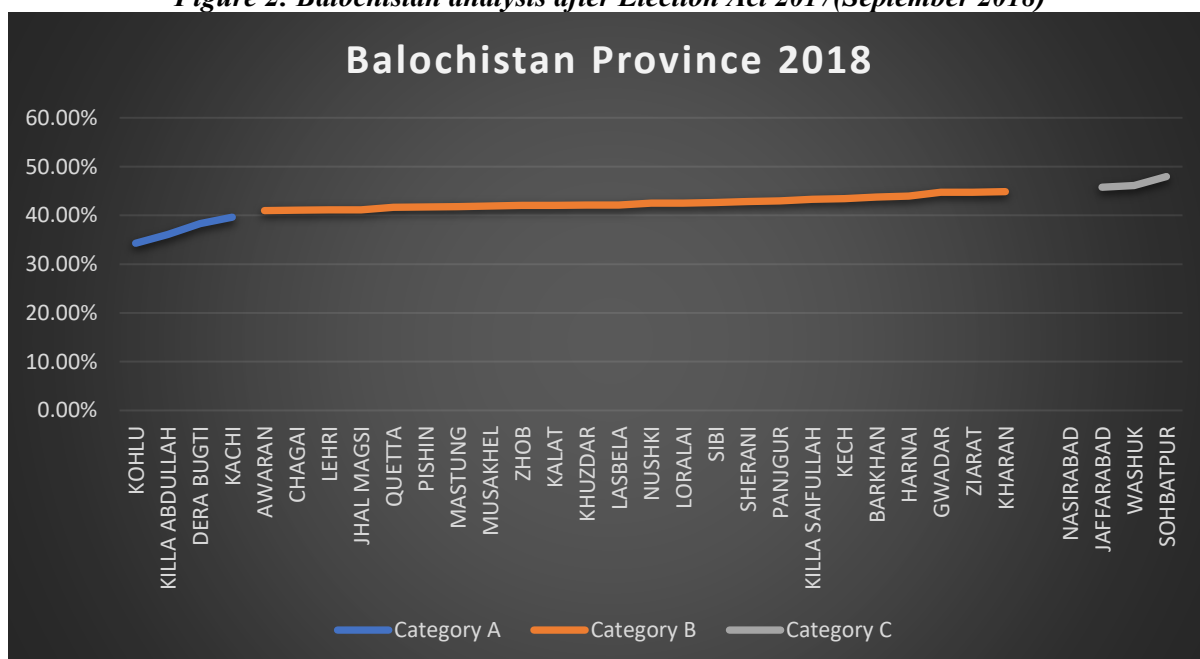
In September 2018, Awaran district improved its category, and four districts, namely, Kohlu, Dera Bugti, Killa Abdullah and Kachhi, remained in the category of less than 40 per cent registration however, women registration gap increased by more than 10 per cent to men in Gawadar and Ziarat

Districts. Jaffarabad district reduced in registration gap ratio to less than 10 per cent in the period, along with already falling Washuk and Sohbatpur districts in the category.

Figure 3: Balochistan one year comparison between 2017 and 2018
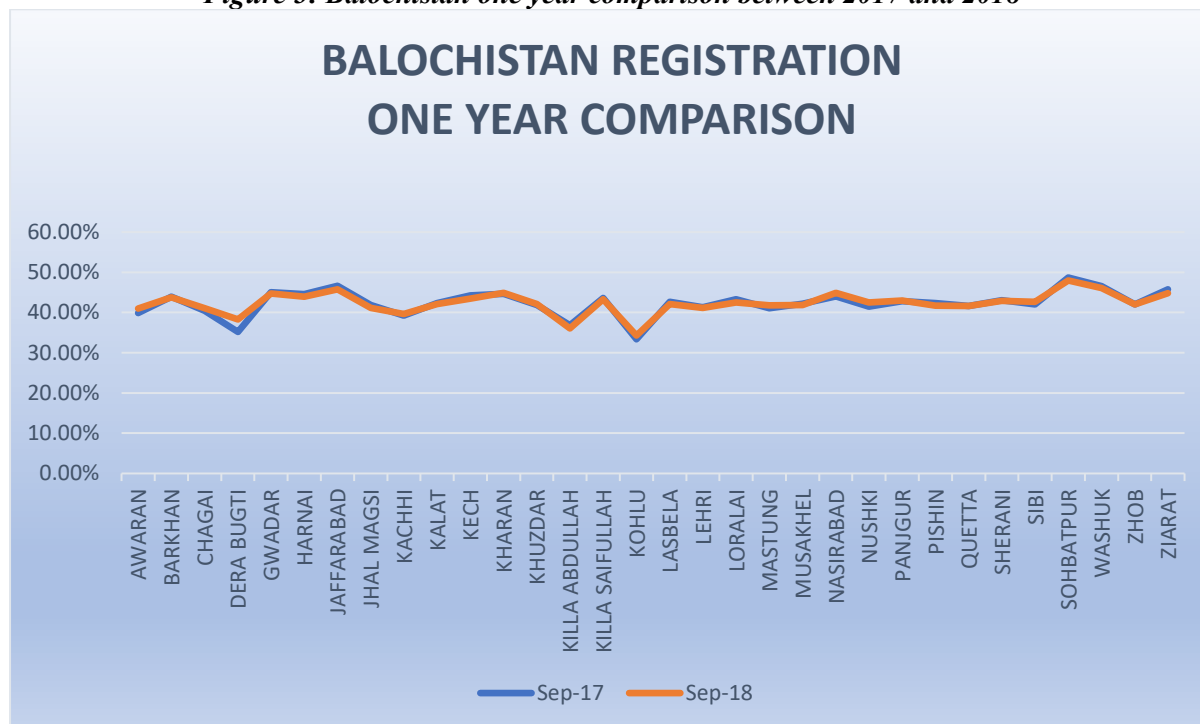
The above figure may be summarised as:

i)   In 14 districts, the gap between male and female registration decreased in one year.
ii)   In 18 districts, the gap between male and female registration increased in one year.
iii)   In Dera Bugti, the decrease in gap remained the highest that is 3.09 %.
iv)   In Ziarat, the increase in gap remained the highest that is -.98 %.
v)   The highest increase and decrease in the gap have been in Sibi Division.

Kalat Division showed significant progress in reducing the male/female registration gap.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The table given below shows women registration as voters in the districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in 2017 and in 2018 in comparison to men registration.

*Table 2: Pre- and Post-Election Act 2017 Data from KPK*

District	Sep-17				Sep-18			
	Male	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**
ABBOTTABAD	429,567	344,567	55.49%	44.51%	457,219	381,505	54.51%	45.49%
BANNU	301,070	219,586	57.83%	42.17%	330,525	252,260	56.71%	43.29%
BATAGRAM	137,951	96,163	58.92%	41.08%	152,295	105,858	58.99%	41.01%
BUNER	228,666	181,064	55.81%	44.19%	250,303	195,171	56.19%	43.81%
CHARSADDA	461,345	341,386	57.47%	42.53%	501,004	379,810	56.88%	43.12%
CHITRAL	139,281	103,764	57.31%	42.69%	151,219	118,360	56.09%	43.91%
D. I. KHAN	375,140	298,447	55.69%	44.31%	406,704	315,149	56.34%	43.66%
HANGU	145,850	104,205	58.33%	41.67%	160,297	115,650	58.09%	41.91%
HARIPUR	331,591	272,792	54.86%	45.14%	354,128	303,518	53.85%	46.15%
KARAK	207,515	164,361	55.80%	44.20%	225,956	178,518	55.86%	44.14%
KOHAT	267,405	205,720	56.52%	43.48%	284,678	222,021	56.18%	43.82%
KOHISTAN	80,613	59,410	57.57%	42.43%	89,170	65,449	57.67%	42.33%
LAKKI MARWAT	216,448	166,889	56.46%	43.54%	236,162	185,062	56.07%	43.93%
LOWER DIR	370,710	252,119	59.52%	40.48%	403,755	278,086	59.22%	40.78%

|							
MALAKAND PROTECTED AREA	202,279	153,108	56.92%	43.08%	218,057	168,391	56.43%	43.57%
MANSEHRA	487,857	371,448	56.77%	43.23%	531,096	415,961	56.08%	43.92%
MARDAN	664,563	471,997	58.47%	41.53%	720,332	520,633	58.05%	41.95%
NOWSHERA	391,973	307,122	56.07%	43.93%	425,062	332,633	56.10%	43.90%
PESHAWAR	896,385	651,285	57.92%	42.08%	979,547	713,693	57.85%	42.15%
SHANGLA	192,365	147,792	56.55%	43.45%	212,292	162,049	56.71%	43.29%
SWABI	474,706	355,505	57.18%	42.82%	515,157	398,742	56.37%	43.63%
SWAT	622,592	475,410	56.70%	43.30%	682,813	512,612	57.12%	42.88%
TANK	96,493	72,812	56.99%	43.01%	103,498	77,374	57.22%	42.78%
TOR GHAR	43,639	33,172	56.81%	43.19%	51,592	38,820	57.06%	42.94%
UPPER DIR	241,201	159,097	60.26%	39.74%	268,134	179,280	59.93%	40.07%

Graphical Analysis

Figure 4: KPK analysis before Election Act 2017 (September 2017)
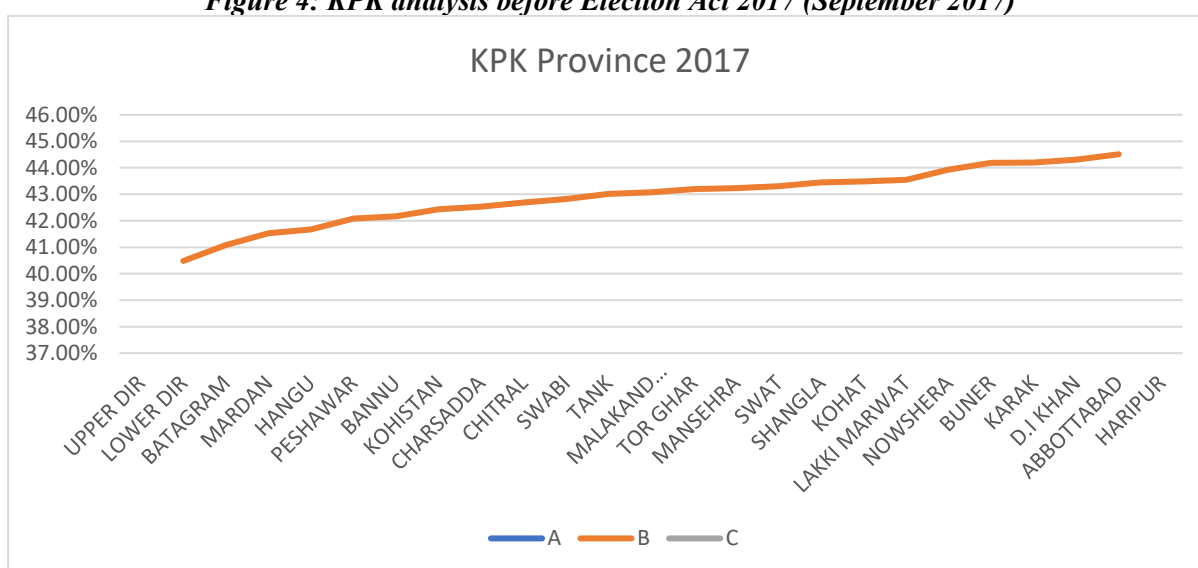
Note: A, B, C are categories mentioned in the introduction of this section.

In September 2017, the Upper Dir district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had women registration less than 40% in the Electoral Rolls whereas; the Haripur district had women registration more than 45 %. Moreover, except for the Haripur district, all other districts of the province required extraordinary measures to enhance women registration as per the law.

Figure 5: KPK analysis after Election Act 2017 (September 2018)
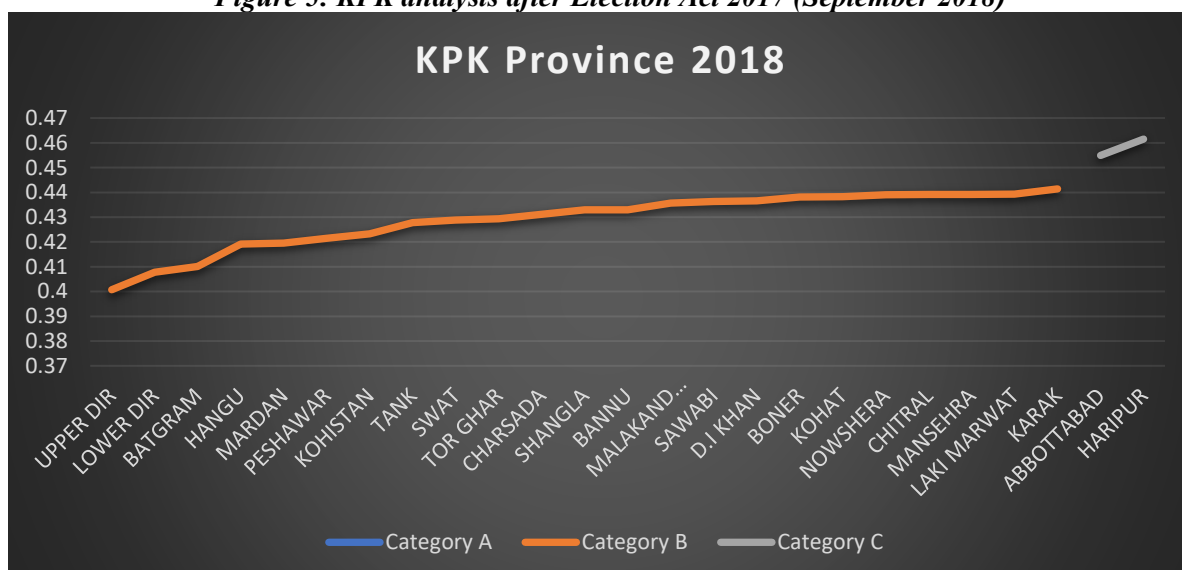
In September 2018 Upper Dir district improved its category, and no district of the province remained in the category of less than 40 per cent registration. Moreover, Abbottabad district is also categorised in the C category along with Haripur whereas, the status for other districts of KPK province remained unchanged.

Figure 6: KPK one year analysis comparison between 2017 and 2018
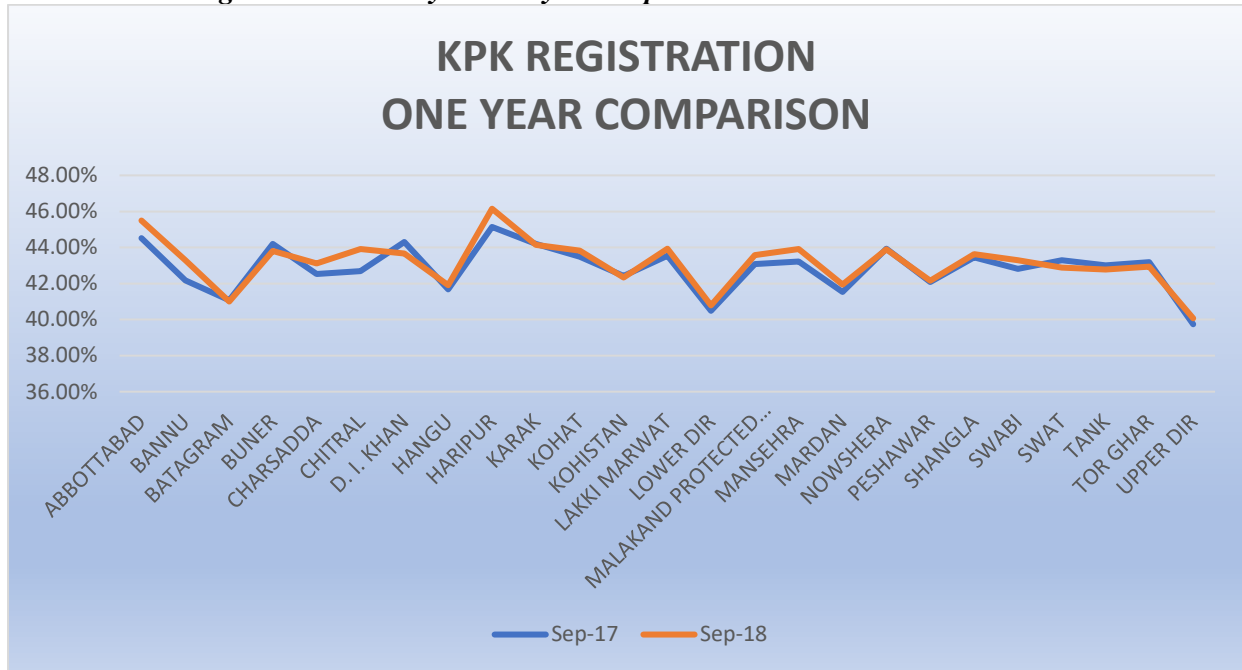

The above figure may be summarised as:

i. In 16 districts, the gap between male and female registration decreased in one year.
ii. In 9 districts, the gap between male and female registration increased in one year.
iii. In Chitral, the decrease in gap remained the highest that is 1.22 %.
iv. In D.I. Khan, the increase in gap remained the highest, that is -.65 %.
v. Hazara Division showed achievement as its two districts got the place in category C.

FATA

Table 3: Pre- and Post-Election Act 2017Data from FATA

| District	Sep-17				Sep-18			
	Male	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**
BAJAUR AGENCY	258,529	176,270	59.46%	40.54%	288,957	203,774	58.64%	41.36%
F.R. BANNU	7,895	2,602	75.21%	24.79%	8,788	36,58	70.61%	29.39%
F.R. D. I. KHAN	15,630	10,517	59.78%	40.22%	17,290	11,474	60.11%	39.89%
F.R. KOHAT	32,514	18,198	64.12%	35.88%	36,675	22,362	62.12%	37.88%
F.R. LAKKI MARWAT	6,203	4,685	56.97%	43.03%	7,065	54,29	56.55%	43.45%
F.R. PESHAWAR	15,654	11,907	56.80%	43.20%	18,310	14,627	55.59%	44.41%
F.R. TANK	11,054	7,443	59.76%	40.24%	12,159	8,777	58.08%	41.92%
KHYBER AGENCY	245,989	177,285	58.12%	41.88%	277,528	214,313	56.43%	43.57%
KURRAM AGENCY	174,801	129,250	57.49%	42.51%	193,244	144621	57.20%	42.80%
MOHMAND AGENCY	137,014	76,362	64.21%	35.79%	160,078	97,573	62.13%	37.87%
NORTH WAZIRISTAN AGENCY	179,241	45,244	79.85%	20.15%	196,668	77,537	71.72%	28.28%
ORAKZAI AGENCY	83,928	60,079	58.28%	41.72%	94,279	72,927	56.38%	43.62%
SOUTH WAZIRISTAN AGENCY	164,508	89,803	64.69%	35.31%	198,067	126,065	61.11%	38.89%

Graphical Analysis
Figure 7: FATA analysis before Election Act 2017 (September 2017)
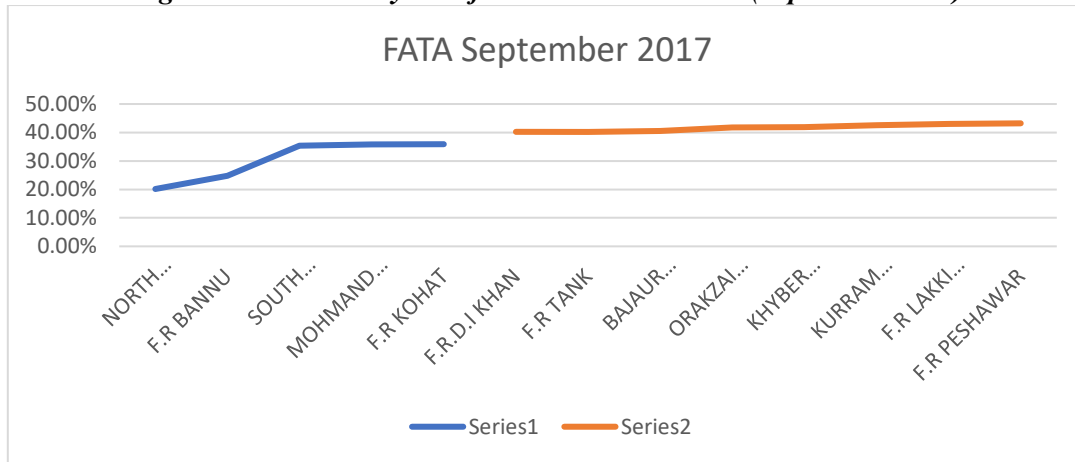
Note: A, B, C are categories mentioned in the introduction of this section.

In September 2017, five units of FATA, namely, North Waziristan Agency, F.R. Bannu, South Waziristan Agency, Mohmand Agency and F. R Kohat, had women registration less than 40% in the Electoral Rolls whereas; remaining eight units had women registration between 40 to 45 per cent. However, none from FATA units had women registration more than 45 %.

Figure 8: FATA analysis after Election Act 2017 (September 2018)
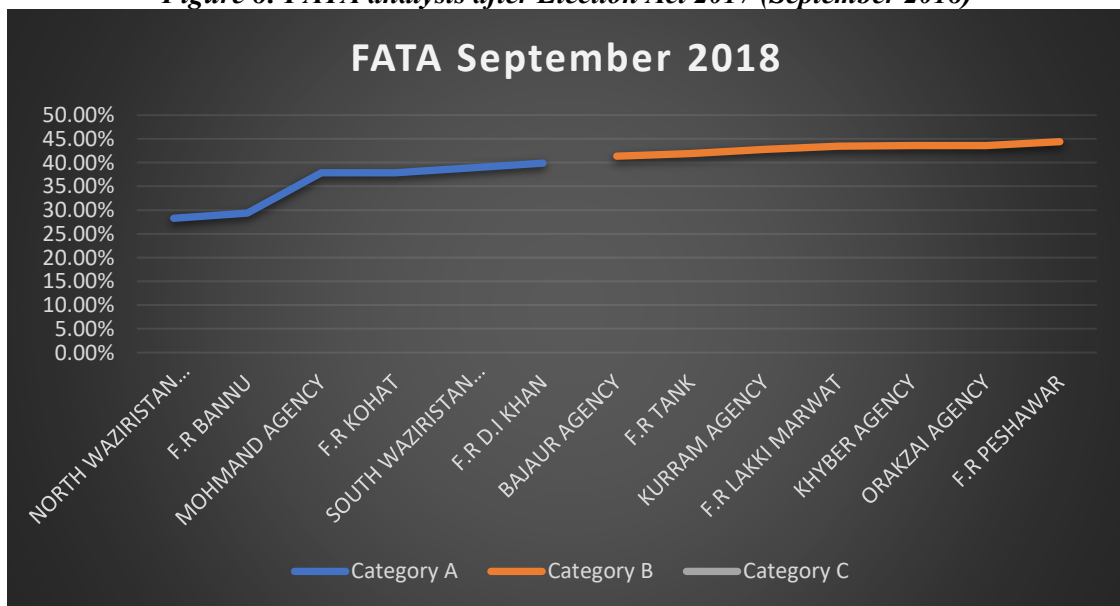
In September 2018 situation further deteriorated as F. R. D I Khan also dropped its category from B to A. However, North and South Waziristan Agencies showed some progress within the same category.

Figure 9: FATA one year comparison between 2017 and 2018
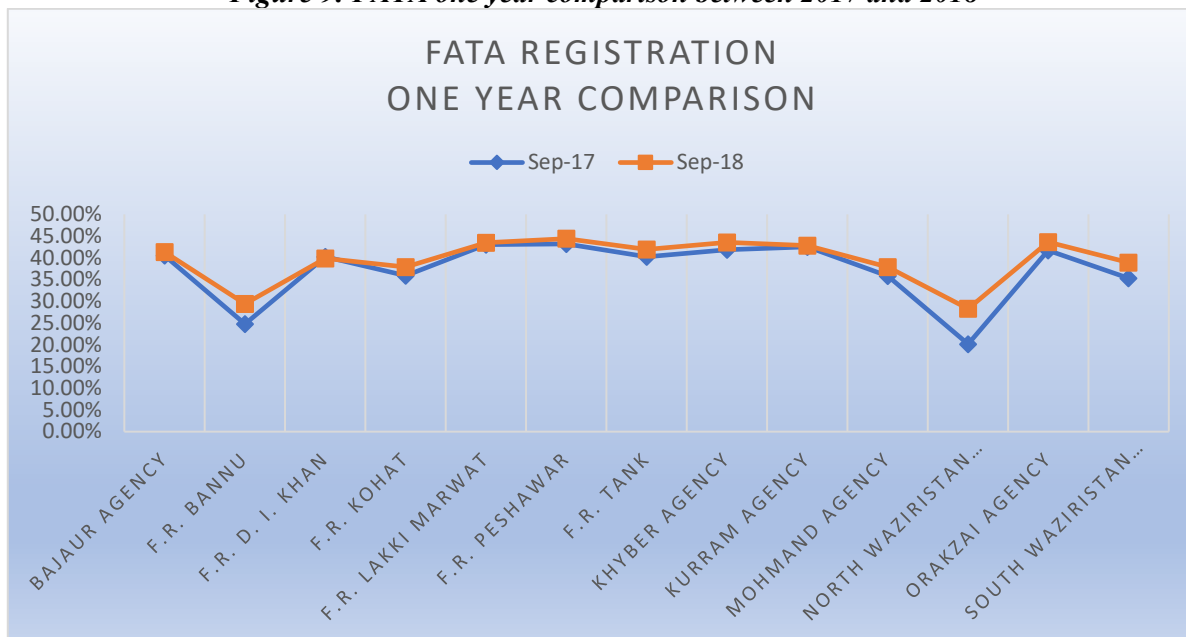
The above table shows that except for F. R D.I. Khan, the rest of the units falling under FATA showed improvement in reducing the male/female gap in voter registration; however, consistent efforts would be required for substantial improvement.

Federal Area

Table 4: Pre- and Post-Election Act 2017 Data from Islamabad

District	Sep-17				Sep-18			
	Male	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**
ISLAMABAD	373,733	321,296	53.77%	46.23%	407,801	358,659	53.21%	46.79%

The above figures show that female registration in Islamabad is as per law however; that is less than 50%.

4.5.1 Graphical Analysis

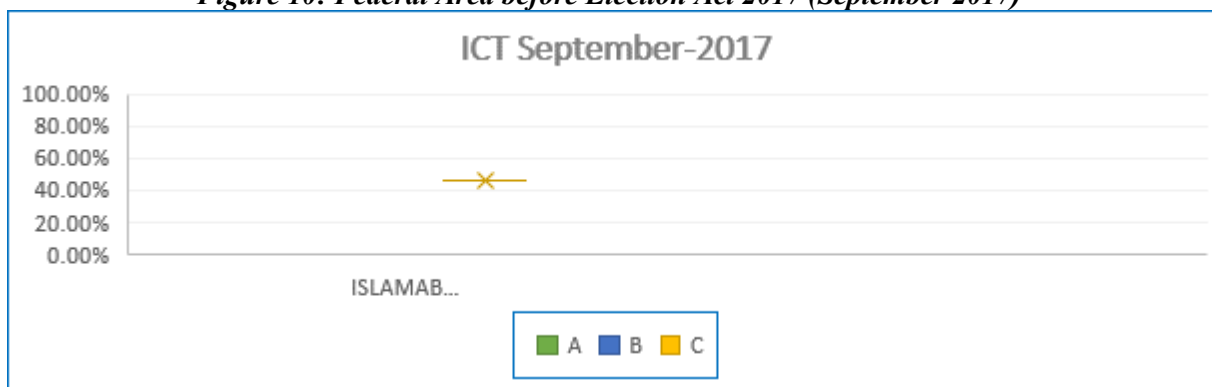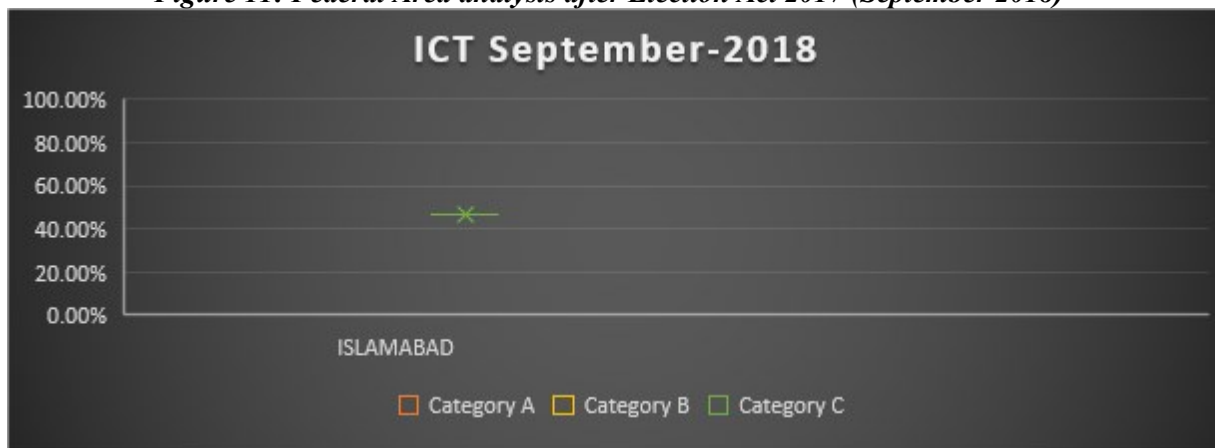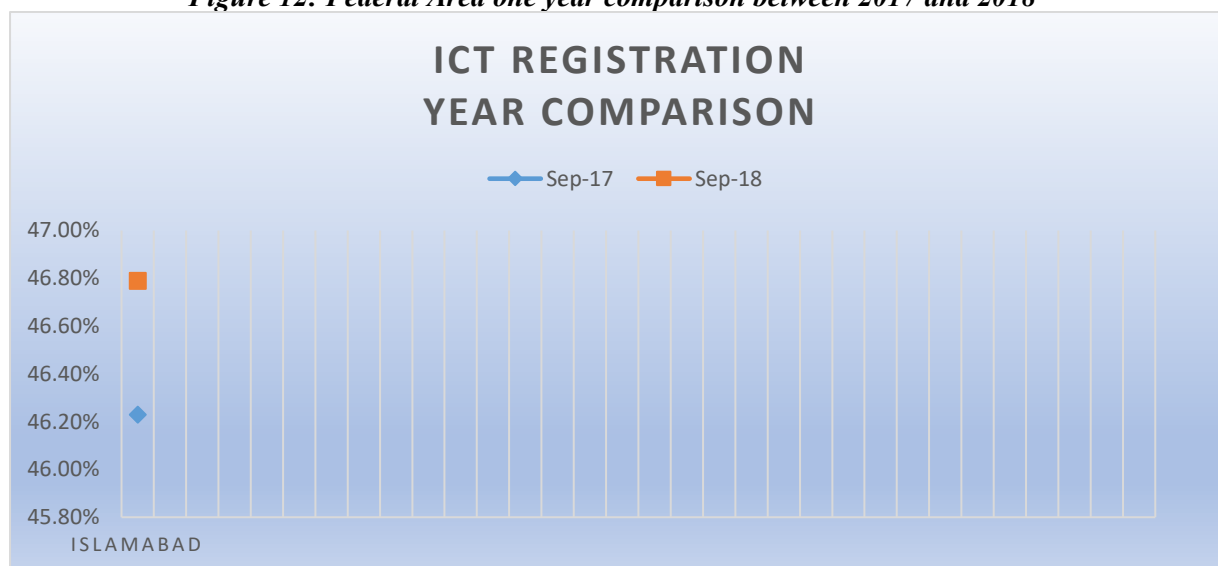*Figure 10: Federal Area before Election Act 2017 (September 2017)*

Figure 11: Federal Area analysis after Election Act 2017 (September 2018)

Islamabad capital territory slightly improved the gap between male and female registration but remained well short of 50%.

Figure 12: Federal Area one year comparison between 2017 and 2018

Punjab

*Table 5:Pre- and Post-Election Act 2017 Data from Punjab*

District	Sep-17				Sep-18			
	Male	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female %**
ATTOCK	615,720	530,968	53.70%	46.30%	639,963	572,304	52.79%	47.21%
BAHAWALNAGAR	824,648	615,645	57.26%	42.74%	886,643	662,824	57.22%	42.78%
BAHAWALPUR	967,794	770,641	55.67%	44.33%	1,044,499	836,892	55.52%	44.48%
BHAKKAR	449,905	351,061	56.17%	43.83%	481,500	390,156	55.24%	44.76%
CHAKWAL	543,766	498,054	52.19%	47.81%	568,514	535,784	51.48%	48.52%
CHINIOT	381,517	300,138	55.97%	44.03%	412,361	335,689	55.12%	44.88%
DERA GHAZI KHAN	695,395	528,747	56.81%	43.19%	755,237	574,025	56.82%	43.18%
FAISALABAD	2,294,999	1,786,987	56.22%	43.78%	2,479,472	2,000,404	55.35%	44.65%
GUJRANWALA	1,468,179	1,094,847	57.28%	42.72%	1,572,806	1,204,042	56.64%	43.36%
GUJRAT	990,989	803,555	55.22%	44.78%	1,042,588	872,863	54.43%	45.57%
HAFIZABAD	354,831	262,424	57.49%	42.51%	384,762	299,685	56.22%	43.78%
JHANG	746,233	557,240	57.25%	42.75%	804,536	621,265	56.43%	43.57%
JHELUM	472,347	418,049	53.05%	46.95%	495,058	451,134	52.32%	47.68%

KASUR	974,482	712,310	57.77%	42.23%	1,054,162	793,547	57.05%	42.95%
KHANEWAL	835,127	646,248	56.38%	43.62%	897,252	700,467	56.16%	43.84%
KHUSHAB	414,409	356,786	53.74%	46.26%	438,507	390,022	52.93%	47.07%
LAHORE	2,776,126	2,127,683	56.61%	43.39%	3,013,796	2,389,457	55.78%	44.22%
LAYYAH	467,647	368,305	55.94%	44.06%	504,224	402,394	55.62%	44.38%
LODHRAN	469,743	373,104	55.73%	44.27%	509,740	403,211	55.83%	44.17%
MANDI BAHAUDDIN	541,393	399,429	57.54%	42.46%	571,716	451,159	55.89%	44.11%
MIANWALI	469,375	385,638	54.90%	45.10%	497,116	420,154	54.20%	45.80%
MULTAN	1,275,742	1,075,666	54.25%	45.75%	1,388,408	1,169,522	54.28%	45.72%
MUZAFFARGARH	1,031,105	844,318	54.98%	45.02%	1,130,971	901,140	55.65%	44.35%
NANKANA SAHIB	406,462	300,336	57.51%	42.49%	443,130	340,087	56.58%	43.42%
NAROWAL	538,435	380,746	58.58%	41.42%	584,265	439,979	57.04%	42.96%
OKARA	893,071	692,417	56.33%	43.67%	973,772	765,326	55.99%	44.01%
PAKPATTAN	517,965	415,056	55.51%	44.49%	561,240	456,219	55.16%	44.84%
RAHIM YAR KHAN	1,252,624	939,395	57.14%	42.86%	1,385,685	1,042,731	57.06%	42.94%
RAJANPUR	450,692	362,884	55.40%	44.60%	500,380	390,173	56.19%	43.81%
RAWALPINDI	1,572,709	1,374,384	53.36%	46.64%	1,647,990	1,479,166	52.70%	47.30%
SAHIWAL	763,095	599,135	56.02%	43.98%	823,091	648,406	55.94%	44.06%
SARGODHA	1,177,141	931,752	55.82%	44.18%	1,253,163	1,029,742	54.89%	45.11%
SHEIKHUPURA	909,971	638,901	58.75%	41.25%	986,709	714,720	57.99%	42.01%
SIALKOT	1,220,676	902,619	57.49%	42.51%	1,303,401	1,031,098	55.83%	44.17%
TOBA TEK SINGH	698,788	538,440	56.48%	43.52%	749,412	599,669	55.55%	44.45%
VEHARI	838,797	634,824	56.92%	43.08%	904,071	691,822	56.65%	43.35%

The table above explains that at the time of promulgation of *The Elections Act, 2017,* there were eight districts in Punjab Province where the ratio of female registration was satisfactory as per law.

Graphical Analysis
Figure 13: Punjab analysis before Election Act 2017 (September 2017)
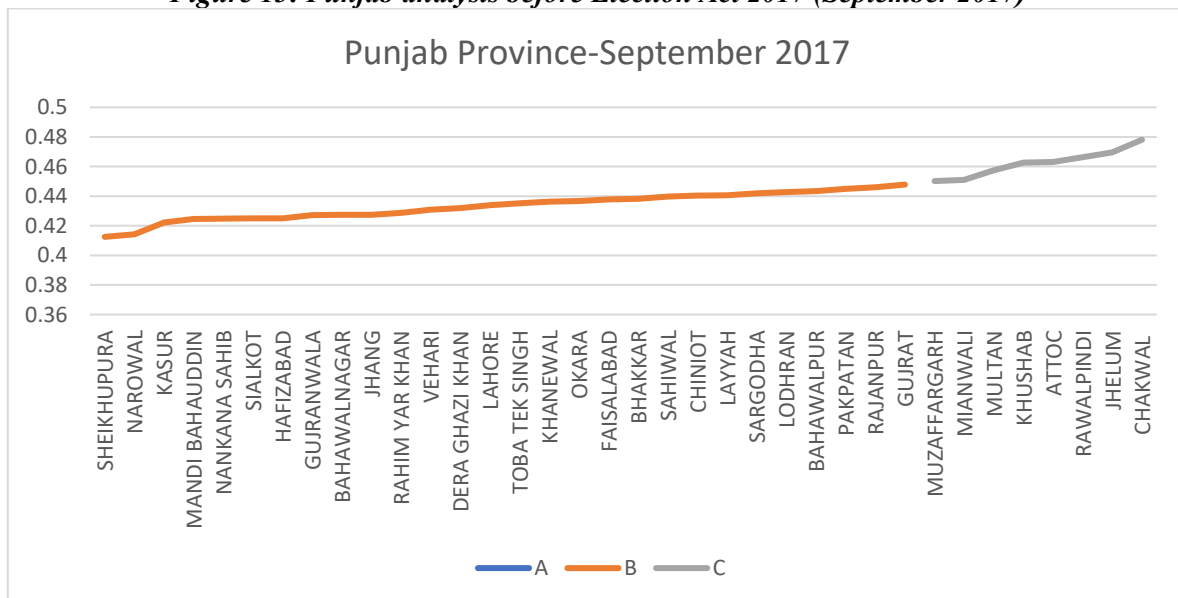
Note: A, B, C are categories mentioned in the introduction of this section.

In September 2017, Punjab was the only province with no district having women registration less than 40% in the Electoral Rolls. Whereas, Chakwal, Jehlum, Rawalpindi, Attock, Khushab, Multan, Mianwali, and Muzaffargarh districts had a women and men registration gap of less than ten per cent none from them was up to fifty per cent.

Figure 14: Punjab analysis after Election Act 2017 (September 2018)
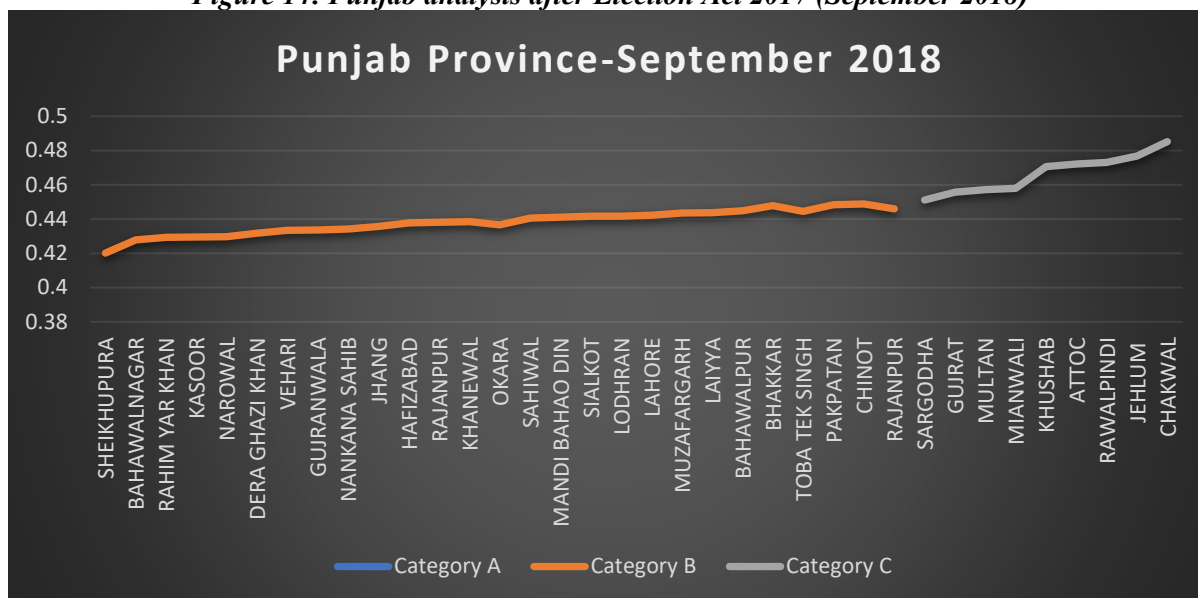
In September 2018, Chakwal, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attock, Khushab, Multan, Mianwali, Multan and Gujrat were falling in Category C. District Gujrat improved its category whereas, district Muzaffargarh slipped from category C to category B.

Figure 15: Punjab one year comparison between 2017 and 2018
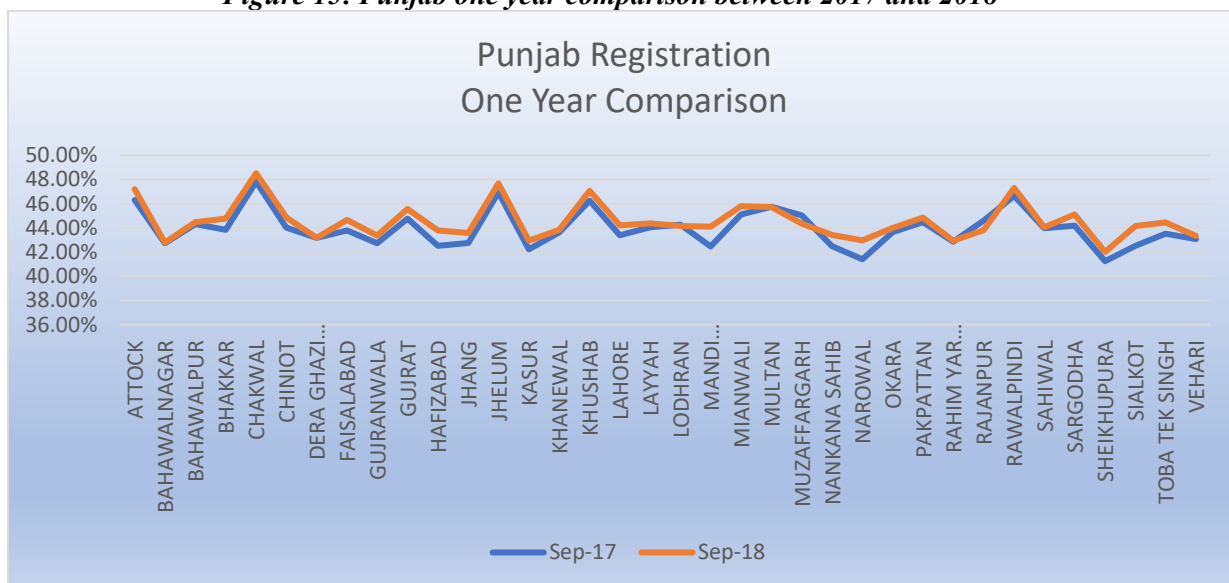
The above figure may be summarised as:

i. In 32 districts, the gap between male and female registration decreased in one year.
ii. In 04 districts, the gap between male and female registration increased in one year.
iii. In Sialkot, the decrease in the gap remained the highest that is 1.66 %.
iv. In Rajanpur, the increase in gap remained the highest, that is -.79 %.
v. The highest decrease in the gap has been in Gujranwala Division, where the top four highest reductions in the gap have been noted.
vi. D.G. Khan and Multan Division required efforts to reduce the gap between male and female registration.

Sindh

Table 6: Pre- and Post-Election Act 2017 Data from Sindh

District	Sep-17				Sep-18			
	Male	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female%**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male %**	**Female%**
DADU	364,756	302,408	54.67%	45.33%	406,443	326,908	55.42%	44.58%
GHOTKI	360,835	277,530	56.52%	43.48%	399,348	307,193	56.52%	43.48%
HYDERABAD	546,842	442,730	55.26%	44.74%	579,371	470,214	55.20%	44.80%
JACOBABAD	232,731	201,944	53.54%	46.46%	260,108	225,956	53.51%	46.49%
JAMSHORO	217,961	180,191	54.74%	45.26%	235,430	191,036	55.20%	44.80%
KAMBER SHAHDAD KOT	313,479	254,531	55.19%	44.81%	355,060	282,983	55.65%	44.35%
KARACHI CENTRAL	964,695	777,877	55.36%	44.64%	1,022,157	838,083	54.95%	45.05%
KARACHI EAST	747,441	612,214	54.97%	45.03%	782,790	654,207	54.47%	45.53%
KARACHI SOUTH	565,567	442,903	56.08%	43.92%	600,650	479,996	55.58%	44.42%
KARACHI WEST	943,799	610,666	60.72%	39.28%	1,000,384	659,666	60.26%	39.74%
KASHMORE	229,299	177,725	56.34%	43.66%	257,759	196,782	56.71%	43.29%
KHAIRPUR	531,755	437,701	54.85%	45.15%	591,319	484,935	54.94%	45.06%
KORANGI KARACHI	687,447	519,026	56.98%	43.02%	743,489	575,213	56.38%	43.62%
LARKANA	346,774	295,075	54.03%	45.97%	384,549	318,706	54.68%	45.32%
MALIR	424,255	298,611	58.69%	41.31%	439,590	312,715	58.43%	41.57%
MATIARI	166,903	149,485	52.75%	47.25%	182,892	160,012	53.34%	46.66%
MIRPUR KHAS	347,038	293,160	54.21%	45.79%	382,903	312,901	55.03%	44.97%
NAUSHAHRO FEROZE	377,490	311,487	54.79%	45.21%	418,392	338,441	55.28%	44.72%
SAJAWAL	171,583	144,930	54.21%	45.79%	192,272	156,592	55.11%	44.89%
SANGHAR	469,937	398,184	54.13%	45.87%	521,238	430,087	54.79%	45.21%
SHAHEED BENAZIRABAD	387,695	330,546	53.98%	46.02%	424,499	351,128	54.73%	45.27%
SHIKARPUR	290,566	252,604	53.49%	46.51%	321,473	275,503	53.85%	46.15%
SUKKUR	330,940	268,102	55.24%	44.76%	367,055	303,105	54.77%	45.23%
TANDO ALLAHYAR	175,336	154,419	53.17%	46.83%	195,906	169,275	53.65%	46.35%
TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN	137,954	115,252	54.48%	45.52%	150,984	123,957	54.92%	45.08%
THARPARKAR	289,539	237,212	54.97%	45.03%	319,811	254,522	55.68%	44.32%
THATTA	222,347	188,416	54.13%	45.87%	242,132	198,195	54.99%	45.01%
UMER KOT	224,481	200,145	52.87%	47.13%	248,468	213,400	53.80%	46.20%

The table above explains that at the time of promulgation of the election act 2017, there were seventeen districts in Sindh Province where the ratio of female registration was satisfactory as per law.
**Graphical Analysis**

Figure 16: Sindh analysis before Election Act 2017 (September 2017)
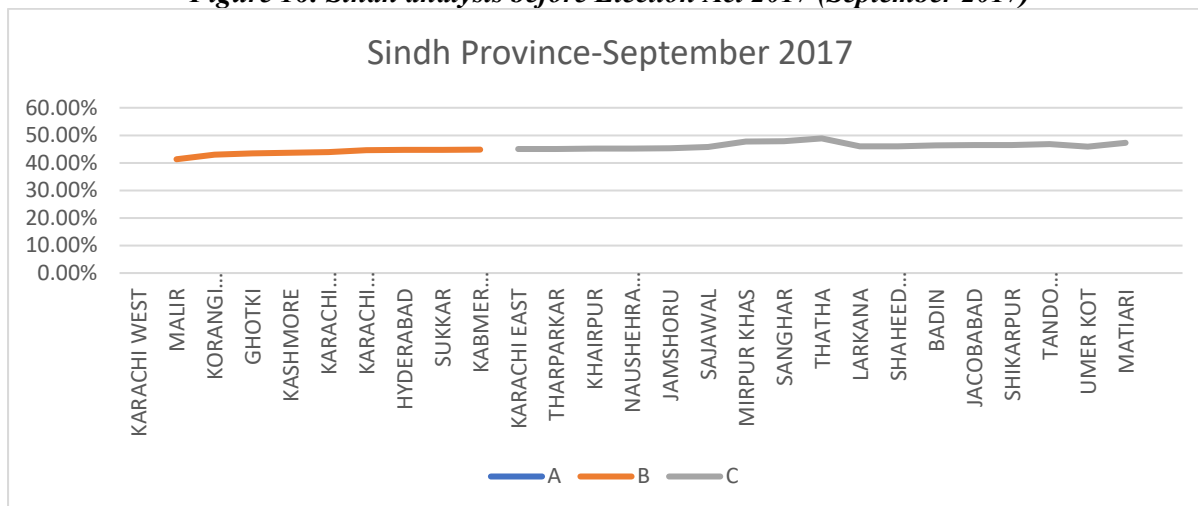
Note: A, B, C are categories mentioned in the introduction of this section.

In September 2017, Karachi West District had women registration less than 40% in the Electoral Rolls whereas; 9 Districts had women registration between 40 to 45 per cent. Moreover, 17 districts had a women and men registration gap of less than ten per cent, and in terms of districts, Sindh province was on the top.
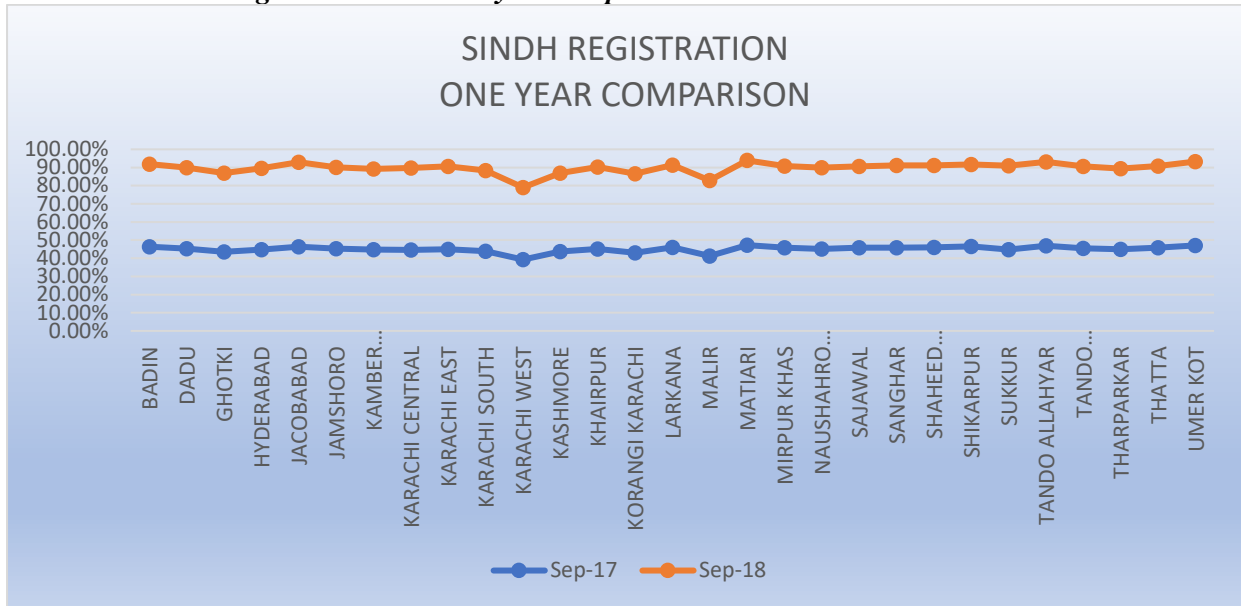
Figure 17: Sindh analysis after Election Act 2017 (September 2018)
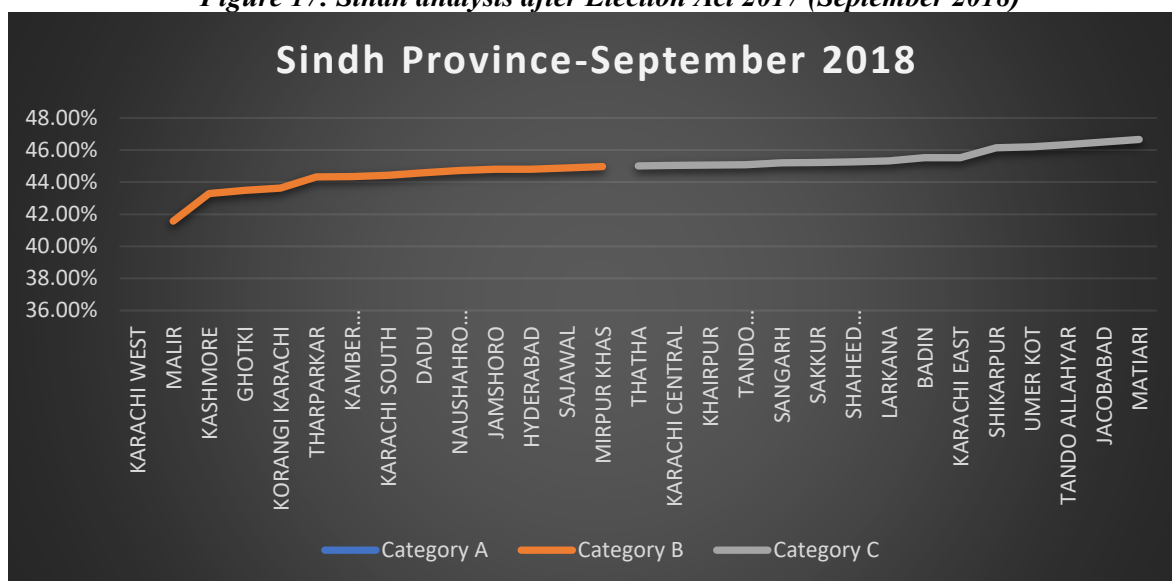
Note: A, B, C are categories mentioned in the introduction of this section.

In September 2018, Mirpur Khas, Sajawal, Jamshoro, and Naushahro Feroze districts slipped from category C to Category B.

Figure 18: Sindh one year comparison between 2017 and 2018

The above figure may be summarised as:

i.   In 10 districts, the gap between male and female registration decreased in one year.
ii.   In 19 districts, the gap between male and female registration increased in one year.
iii.   In Sukkur, the decrease in gap remained the highest that is 1.39 %.
iv.   In Shikarpur, the increase in gap remained the highest that is -1.24 %.
v.   All the districts under Karachi Division showed improvement in reducing the gap between male/female registrations in Electoral Rolls.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that electoral legal dispensation currently in vogue in Pakistan is gender sensitive. Linkage of voters list with civil registry, NADRA, is a significant step to ensure registration of all such Pakistani nationals who possess national identity card. Moreover, Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is bound to take special measures for enhancing female registration in all such districts/constituencies where difference of male and female registration is 10% or more.

Data shows that there are 72 districts in Pakistan where gender gap in the voter's lists decreased in one year. These districts include ten districts of Sindh province, 32 districts of Punjab province, 14 districts of Balochistan province and 16 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The data further reveals that gap between male and female registration increased in 50 districts among them 19 falling in Sindh Province, 04 falls in Punjab province, 18 falls in Balochistan province and 09 falls in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. These figures show that efforts to reduce gender disparity in voter's lists have been more effective in Punjab and KPK province. However, Malakand division in KPK and DG khan division in Punjab require special attention. It is important to mention that D.I khan division and newly created districts of formal FATA needs special attention for improving gender parity in political empowerment.

It is important to highlight that state institutions have to think about and work out a strategy for improving gender parity in Sindh and Balochistan Provinces. Urban areas of Sindh province seemed to improve gender parity in registration, however, special efforts and policies are required for rural areas too. Similarly, data shows that Balochistan province need indigenous policies based upon local dynamics. Kalat division has overall showed significant progress in reducing gender gap but rigorous efforts are required in Zhob division. As far as Sibbi Division is concerned, a district-to-district policy would be required for reducing gender gap in registration.

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