

## **BIRADRI (CLAN) AS STIMULUS TO VOTE IN RURAL PUNJAB (A CASE STUDY OF PP 40 KHUSHAB 2)**

**Muhammad Kaleem\***  
**Dr.Ayaz Muhammad\*\***

### **Abstract**

*Political culture is reflection of people's activities and behaviour in their day to day political affairs and decisions. With the emergence of political society they adopted some specific method to select and dismiss their rulers, to react turmoil, to settle their disputes, to formulate their laws, rules and regulations and to meet other societal needs. They adopted various ideologies, built dynasties and developed institutions. These were production of their Culture, religion, colour, caste, creed and race. The state, government and its various institutions like army, legislation and judiciary remained the reflection of mentioned institutions. Pakistan emerged as ideological, democratic state and making progress towards the modernization. Elections are the most important indicator to measure the democratization process. Decision making bodies are reflection of People's voting pattern and behaviour. The quality of elected bodies depends on this factor. In case of Pakistan Biradri plays important role in selection of representatives. One can found its rout in the colonial regime. The military was constituted on these lines, Land was distributed by considering this factor and various other decisions were taken in light of this factor. Biradri is always considered dominant factor in casting vote in the election and this is the reason that local feudal elites dominate in rural Punjab in particular and in Pakistan in general. The main focus of this study is to evaluate the impact of Biradri in voting pattern.*

**Keywords:** *Political Culture, Caste, Biradari, Political Party, Kinship*

## **Introduction**

Punjab the land of five rivers is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. This is home of Dravidians Arians Mangols and Semitic culture and race. The roots of the caste/biradari/tribe are as old as history. The political foundation administration and governance was based on this factor. Various rulers came and established their rule in this area but they never distributed the existing socio-political culture of the area. The dominant religion of the area was Hinduism which believes in strong caste system and divides the society as *Brahamin*, *Khashatari*, *Vash* and *shudder*. Socio-political and economic system was reflection of this very factor. Muslims ruled this land for the long time, but they could not dent the foundation of this division in the society. The British rulers laid down the foundation of their rule on the existing system. consequently, the existing rulers continued as rulers of their states for the sake continuity and to guarantee the interest of the land owner class they formulated rules and regulation for example the Britishers in Indian subcontinent introduced the proprietary rights, reinforced caste/baradarism in Punjab by introducing a new law through which non agriculture family could not purchase agriculture land in Punjab, started colonization of new lands lying vacant in Punjab through this policy they consolidated people of same caste/biradari in the same *chak* (Village) more or less, it also enforced the same culture in new colonized lands. They also introduced land alienation act 1900 and set free the agriculture class from the burden of debts of Hindu merchants. The vote were not based on adult franchise but depends upon two factors education and property it was famous proverb that I am owner of forty *Marabbas* (unit of land measurement) and I have chair in district court.

## **Feudal As Dominant Actor In Politics**

The behavior of the Sub-Continent culture is predominantly defined by the caste/biradri system. At best this social system is rigid in nature in which people are divided into separate communities characterized by social hierarchy which is maintained generation after generation allowing little mobility out of the position to which a person is born. The political measures by the British colonizers to control Punjab and adjoining areas caused "biradris." to gain strength and

consolidated in one area. For example, colonial demarcation policies for district and sub district administration were made on the basis of caste and biradari considerations. The relatively straightforward Sandeman system, or the “Forward Policy” of employing “the tribes as custodians of the highways and guardians of peace in their own districts” in Baluchistan and the Tribal Areas of the Frontier, had to be bolstered by a relatively more complex form of political management in the Settled Districts of the Frontier and in western Punjab. As a result of the new legal system and proprietary rights in land crafted by the British, it was feared that the Muslim peasantry as well as the landlords in Punjab would soon lose the bulk of their lands because of their increasing indebtedness to non-agriculturalists like the Hindu moneylenders. Thus the Punjab Alienation of Land Act of 1900, while allowing free transfer of land within the agricultural tribes, prohibited permanent alienation of the land of agricultural tribes of non-agriculturalists.

“It is to be remembered that the *Musalman* peasantry of the Punjab, to the number of four millions, are chiefly congregated in the western districts between the Chenab and Afghanistan, are probably, except in some Trans-Indus tracts, more indebted and expropriated than any of the agricultural races in India, and have, in their now opinion at least, small reason to be satisfied with our rule—the unsettling effect upon their minds of the near approach of a “liberator” will be released”. (Saeed, 1980, p. 53)

It may also be pointed out that the areas of western Punjab and the North-West Frontier constituted not only the sentinel districts guarding the strategic routes but were also the homelands of the martial races who contributed the flower of the British Indian Army inexpensive administration.

The British wanted to pull resources out of India, not to put their own into India. Therefore the administrative and military system had to pay for itself with Indian revenues.... The Chief source of Indian revenue lay in land, and it had to be collected from millions of payers.... It was in the administration of the localities that the vital economics in ruling had to be made. There, governance had to be pursued by simpler arrangements....by enlisting the cooperation of *zemindars* (Land Owner), *miasidars*, *talukdarts* (Subdivision Head), and urban *raees* (Rich).

In Punjab the British tried to set up homogeneous administrative units called *Zails* (Area) comprising tribes and castes of similar origin or affinity, and over each *Zail* the head of the tribe or the leading landlord was appointed as the *Zaildar* (Area Incharge). The deputy commissioner exercised his authority and collected government (Saeed, 1980) revenue largely with the assistance of functionaries in Punjab like the *Zaildar* (Area Incharge) or the *lumbarder*, village headman appointed by the government from among the leading landlords. Whatever authority the village community had exercised was disintegrating under the British and gravitating toward the *zaildars*.

The Land Alienation Act 1900 as noted earlier, had tried to eliminate, but with only partial success, the influence of the money lender and also reduce peasant indebtedness. However, according to Darling, former Governor, the Muslim peasant was still steeped in debt during the 1920s and 1930s. In some districts the big Muslim landlords had started acquiring the land of their neighbors. Thus, along with the *Pirs* (Religious Leader), the big landlords had emerged even more powerful in western Punjab at a guess about 40 percent of the cultivated areas is in the hands of men who own over fifty acres.

Every five miles or so is the house of a tribal or religious leader, who maintains a band of retainers to enforce his influence on his poorer neighbors, and to conduct his feuds with his equals. The poor man pays blackmail for his cattle to these local chieftains and for his soul to his *Pir*, who may or may not live in the neighborhood, but visits his followers early to receive his dues. (Saeed, 1980, p. 67)

Sir Michael O'Dwyer, a former Punjab officer who rose to the governor of the province, writes: "It is now regarded by hereditary landowners of all religions and castes as their Magna Carta. A *Chak* class to defend British interests against the attack of urban representatives into legislature. (Saeed, 1980, p. 69)

### **Weak Political Parties Strong Personalities**

As far as most of the political parties are concerned, these do not exist in the form taken as the norm in the West. All the political parties are dominated by landlords big business men and enjoy the state patronage and are dynastic in nature. Real political power is spread among so many local actors, and depends heavily on

patronage, this also places limits on the ability of the military to control things for a long time. (Rafique, 2003, p. 12) On the other hand, both civilian governments and the Agencies have other means of influence, as sketched by *Murtaza Jatoi*, son of the caretaker chief Minister. The Pakistani Political parties remained under developed due to host of reasons. The authoritarian style might be one of the reasons. As matter of fact the leaders are not willing to strengthen their party organization, because they are not inclined to limits their arbitrary powers. Similarly the imbalance of powers between military, political institutions, judiciary and bureaucracy is other reason for weak political organization. The political institutions are not allowed to work freely in the post-independence era, after every few years there was coup by the military which has reversed the process of political development. Religious parties and MQM had no landlords in it otherwise they also thrive on state machinery.

The fragile structure of political parties could not contribute towards the process of democratization in the country. Majority of the parties lacked well defined objectives, clear organizational structures and procedures for implementation of its objectives, programs and manifestos (Lieven, 2011, p. 212)

### **Dynastic control, feudalism and political recruitment**

In the old days the powerful and influential elements of the society were ruling the masses. Indeed, this is still existed in political practices of Pakistan, if we analysis the political recruitment; this hard fact is revealed that from the day one politics is surrounded by some political families and dynasties in Pakistan. This disease is spread with the every passing day, now we could find the trend of family control in almost all the parties even on the government:

This dynastic control is operating at many levels, at first instance the party leadership is monopolized by some families, the leadership of PPP, PML-N and ANP coincides with the *Bhuttos*, *Sharifs*, and *Khans* respectively. In most of the parties the leadership shifts from one generation to the next.

At second level of this dynastic control could be observed that renewed political families have captured their native constituencies of National and Provincial assemblies, the *Arrain*, *Sayyeds*, *Makhdooms*, *Legharis*, *Khosa*, *Gurmanis*, *Dastis*, *Hoties*, *Jatois*, *Qureshies*, *Gilanies*, *Hashmis*, *Ghattas*, *Wattos*, *Daultanas*, *Qazis*,

*Raos, Manikas, Tiwanas, Dogars, Nakais, Ranas, Bhutties, Meyos, Awans, Wirks, Chaudhrys, Rokaris, , Parachas, Bukharis, Kharls, Nawabs, Talpurs, Pirs, Jams, Bhuttos and Sharifs* and many more could be found in national and provincial assemblies of Pakistan since independence. (Khan, 2005, p. 543) These families have occupied many seats in their native town, from each of the family there are many members in parliament. The introduction of women seats in parliament has provided more opportunity to these dynasties to get extra seats. At the third level the sons, daughters, cousins and uncles of main leaders of these families have controlled the local government which is third tier of government.

The political history indicates one instance in our political history when family dynastic control was weakened that was election 1970, according to results dynastic candidates lost to the newly emerged leadership form middle class. However in next few years the leading dynasties were able to creep in the PPP got tickets from the party and were reinstated through next election: After 70s with every passing election they were able to get more and more space, power and perks in the party organization. Consequently later on Zia provided them space by inducting them in his cabinet and later on through non- party election. This hard fact can reflect the situation that ‘some 80 percent of the PPP and PML’s candidates belong to the *Jagirdar* (Feudal) and industrialist groups in 1993 election”

As analyzed in one of the research conducted by Patten Development Organization Most of the leadership of political parties runs from one generation to the next and each dynasty has occupied many elected positions; father, mother, sons, daughters and daughters- in law are members of parliament, *Nazims* of the district councils etc.

Prof. Qureshi has explained this phenomenon with example of game hockey in his “The politics of Pakistan has a close analogy with the game of hockey with only one difference. The hockey players get projection through their nimbleness, experience and dodging. But the ball is already stuck to the sticks of the players of politics in most of the cases. In this way a big family wins the political match with, the help of its team work. Post- election drama begins with the protest voices but the referee proves to be a deaf ear. Thus the successful candidate enters

the house with great pomp and show. Sometimes the opposite team succeeds to throw the ball, stuck with the stick, on the ground and the match is converted into a good match. But it happens very rare. Actually it matters who run things in the society. And network of relationships through inter-marriages with other important family's court. Resultantly, there is a monopoly of few specific families in the Pakistan politics. Parents groom their off springs and husbands groom their wives to enter this ancestral vocation. After every election a majority of these families succeeds to knock at the Assembly. (Rafique, 2003, p. 34)

Majority of the political dynastic belong to feudal families although some steps to curtail their power were taken in the form of land reforms, but those were done halfheartedly. The majority of our politician came from the landed elite or the feudal background. Qureshi narrated all this as there is a triangle of *Zamindars*, industrialists and *Pirs* who are also land owners. All they are busy in playing the political game on the basis of *biradaris*. They provide patronage to their followers and develop the basis of patron-client relationship.

As a whole, few families enjoy monopoly in the politics and this country. "Pakistan politics, Parents groom their off springs and husbands groom their wives to enter this ancestral vocation. After every election a majority of these families succeeds to knock at the assemblies" (Siddiqi, 2010, p. 207)

"The notion of representative government was an anathema to them, and their authoritarian personalized political management undermined whatever prospects existed for democracy in Pakistan. On one hand this situation was promoting a political culture with anti-democratic atmosphere devoid of democratic values on the national level, whilst at the grass root level it was becoming a cause of polarization among the people. Moreover these winning horses provide patronage to criminal activities of their families. This fuels the personal enmity in villages and provides continuity to family feud and fights.

#### **A Case Study of Constituency PP 34(Khushab-2) before 2002**

The provincial assembly seat is very important in Punjab *Khushab* is a backward district of Punjab mostly consists of scattered population and three main towns including *Khushab*, *Quaidabad* and *Juharabad*. *Khushab 2* is consists of *Quaidabad* and adjoining areas as per population of 1998 census it had 150,000

almost. The area is irrigated by *Muhajar* link canal and fertile area mostly produced wheat, Rice and Sugar Cane. Only areas in *Warcha* and *Goliwali* Union council are barren mountainous deserts and most backwards in the constituency. The most influential agricultural biradarries in the constituency are *Tiwanas*, *Bindials*, *Gunjials* and *Uttras* but after new delimitation in 2002 the number of *Tiwana* biradari decreased and divided into two provincial constituencies so their influence decreased and only one candidate appeared in the PP election and only got 7500 votes. Now they contest election from PP 42 *Khushab* 4.

Now *Bindials*, *Gunjials* and *Uttras* are most influential castes/Biradarries as the result of election shows. There is no party loyalty in the constituency as PML (N) changed five candidates; most of the candidates remained independent and focus on *dharas*/groups the alliance of one or two biradarries. The last eight election shows 41% vote casted to independent candidates and 59% went to parties but it is pertinent to mention here, Maximum votes were casted to the candidates due to their personal influence that is why PML(N) changed its 5 candidates in 7 election and not contesting even 2 elections and in election 2002 Chaudhary Pervaiz Ghafoor contested election from PML(N) ticket \ scored 409 votes only because he was retired sub engineer of housing department belong to Lahore but served in Quaidabad. He has no biradari in the constituency therefore after having the ticket of renowned party it begged few votes. The main trends in last 7 elections showed the trend that Independent are dominant, votes based on casts and biradarries, no political ideology and Weak political parties. The important trend of rural Punjab is votes are cast on basis of biradies and enmity as well. Sometime few biradarries do not contest election but votes to the candidates who safeguard their interests or other candidates are their enemy or rivals. The subordinate classes of rural Punjab always clubbed with strong agriculture biradarries as the result of election witnessed it. The Biradari wise vote casted as per family: *Tiwana* Family 119843, *Gunjial* Family 148068, *Uttra* Family 79671, *Bandial* Family 126873 out of Total Vote 555194 casted in last 7 elections.

### **Conclusion**

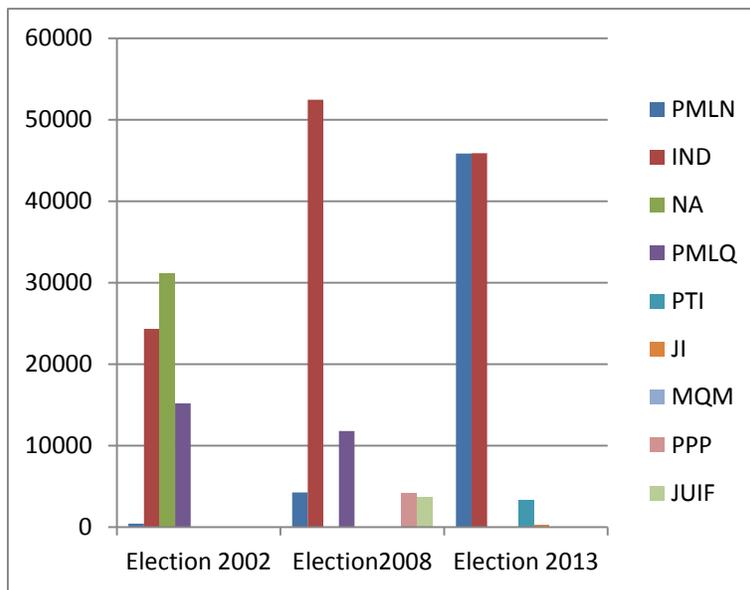
The result may be deduced that the families which dominant the political map of the country still prevailing particularly in rural Punjab because the voting pattern

is based on cast/ biradari. The candidate not only protects his and family interests but also its agricultural class and non- agricultural class whose interests attached with the agricultural classes. The political power in Pakistan is very important to safeguard economic interests as its economy still having colonial legacy. As a matter of fact the colonial regime sowed the seed of democratization by introducing elections at local level. However, the British were much more conscious about their politico economics and culture interests. For the purpose they created feudal lords, civil bureaucracy and organized military. These three classes were interconnected with each other. Land owner class was the main source of raw materials. This class was working as bridge between governments and public through local government at local functionaries like “*Namberdar*” They were given special status in political and administrative areas. Pakistan emerged with the slogan of Islamic democratic country. Consequently the first constitutional assembly adopted the parliamentary system and Quaid-e-Azam inducted as Governor General and Liaqat Ali Khan as Prime Minister. In 1946 election only qualified voters were entitled to vote. Resultantly, feudal lords were major actors of political power. The feudal class became more powerful by acquiring state land through allotment by bribing the government servants. The class operates as major and important political actor at local, provincial and central level. This political culture reflected in Pakistan politics and the first legislative assembly and local boards were comprised by the members produced by this system. This system of election worked up to 1956-58. Ayub Khan took over in 1958 and introduced adult franchised system for the first time. However this was confined to the election of local government while members of provincial and national elected through indirect election by 80,000 members of basic democrats system. This system again strengthened the existing land owners and biradari system. Election 1970 provided space to new actors’ particularly in urban areas. In 1977 they gathered their strength and major ticket holders of PPP Consequently later on Zia provided them space by inducting them in his cabinet and later on through non- party election. This hard fact can reflect the situation that ‘some 80 percent of the PPP and PML’s candidates belong to the *Jagirdar* and industrialist groups in future elections” The martial law regimes always comfortable to collaborate with this faction of society. So during the whole political history they operated as one of the powerful actor even in electoral

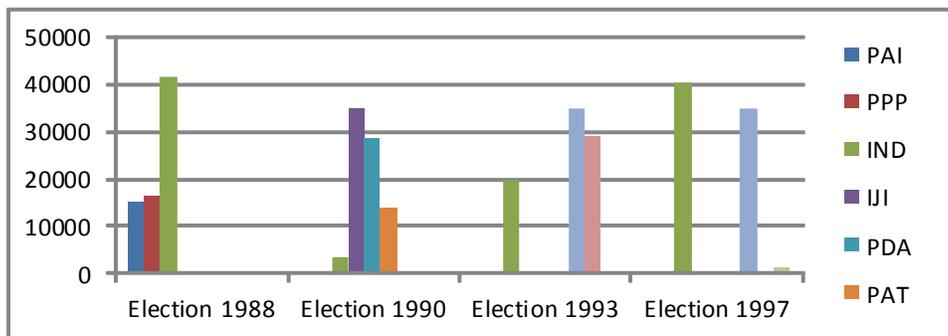
parties. Particularly rural Punjab reflects this political culture. It is good that political parties reached up to village level. However, the balance of power is in favour of biradari *dharabandi* and land owner class.

**Election Results 1988-97** All Independent Candidates included in same column  
 Source Election Commission Pakistan

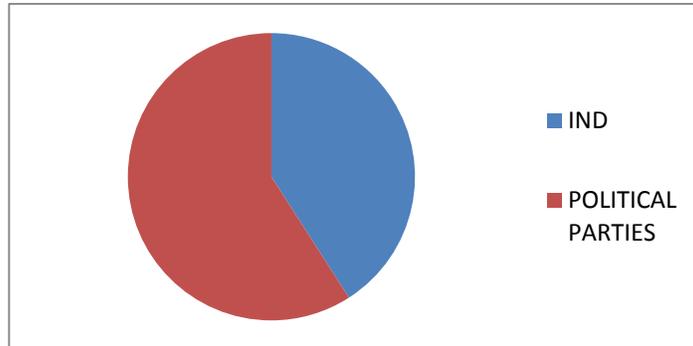
**CONSTITUENCY AFTER 2002 RENAMED AS PP 40 ELECTION RESULT 2002-13**



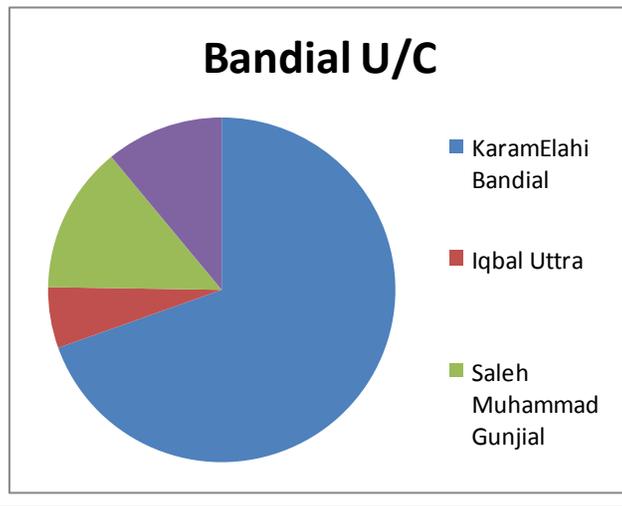
Source Election Commission of Pakistan

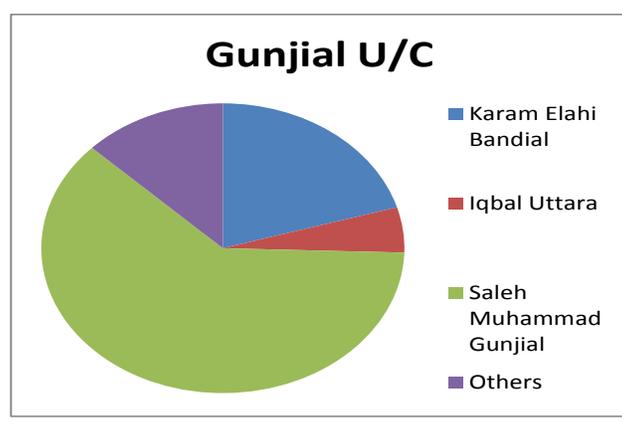
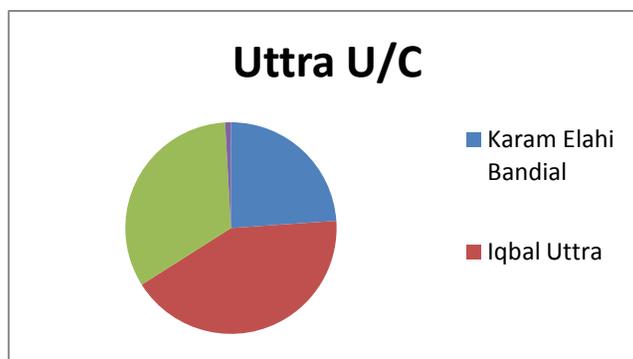


### RATIO OF INDEPENDENT AND PARTY CANDIDATES



Note: In all these 7 election independent candidates won election twice Next time these candidates join some political party and contested election and again they become independent and contested elections.





**ELECTION 2008**

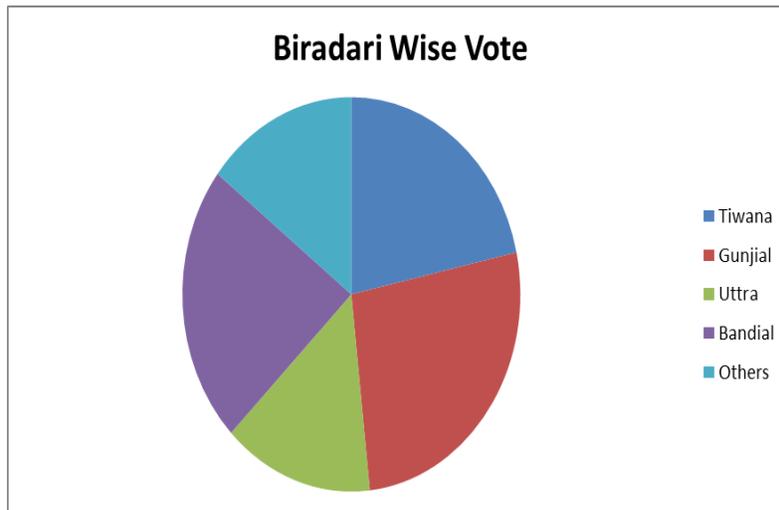
**PROMINENT CANDIDATE THEIR RESULT AND PARTY AFFILIATIONS**

<b>Election Year</b>	<b>Name of Candidate</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Votes Casted</b>	<b>Result</b>
1988	KhudaBakshTiwana	Independent	23314	Won
1990	KhudaBakshTiwana	IJI	34639	Won
1993	KhudaBakshTiwana	PML(J)	28773	Lose
1997	KhudaBakshTiwana	Independent	25789	Lose
1993	Saleh Muhammad Gunjial	PML(N)	34651	Won
1997	Saleh Muhammad Gunjial	Independent	14414	Lose
2002	Saleh Muhammad Gunjial	National Alliance	31113	Won
2013	Saleh Muhammad Gunjial	Independent	38541	Lose
1993	Muhammad Hayat Uttra	Independent	18029	Lose

1997	Muhammad Hayat Uttra	PML(N)	34670	Won
2002	Muhammad Hayat Uttra	PML(Q)	15186	Lose
2002	KaramElahiBandial	Independent	24307	Lose
2008	KaramElahiBandial	Independent	26494	Won
2013	KaramElahiBandial	PML(N)	45854	Won

### Biradari Vote Count in Last 7 Election

Tiwana Family	119843
Gunjial Family	148068
Uttra Family	79671
Bandial Family	126873
<b>Total Vote</b>	<b>555194</b>



Source Election Commission of Pakistan

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