

# **Citizen's Trust in Political Leadership and Parliament of Pakistan: A Comparative Study of Punjab and Sindh**

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## **Abstract**

Present study compares the level of public trust in political leadership and the parliament in two provinces of Pakistan: Punjab and Sindh. By applying ordinal logistic regression models, study finds that respondents from Punjab had significantly more trust in their leader and parliament of the country as compared to the participants from Sindh. The variable, government performance, was observed to be the major predictor of public trust in political leadership and parliament between Punjab and Sindh. Additionally, people's interest in political affairs and conflict resolving behavior of leadership were two other variables which significantly predict public level of trust. The study suggests that respondents who were more interested in the political affairs revealed a high degree of trust in leadership and parliament. Conversely, participants who suffered from the lack of leadership interest in conflict resolving behavior showed low level of trust in both leadership and parliament in both provinces. It is concluded that public trust and distrust are significantly associated with the socio-economic development of the country. Present study may help to understand the factors that may cause public distrust in leadership and parliament of the country.

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## **Introduction**

On the basis of two primary reasons, comparative study is considered as a deadly task. First, an observable difference in the political, social and economical system is present in two nations, regions or areas which are being investigated. Due to these differences extra-care is required in the process of data collection, analyzing and interpretation. The second reason is to extricate the cause (s) of the differences which is found in the findings from two different societies. Existing literature of the

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domain suggests that these differences in the results of comparative studies are caused particularly due to the difference in language, tradition, religion, cultural and political entity.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, the task to compare public trust in Punjab and Sindh province is somehow more manageable, because of the common constitution, religion and language (Urdu). Currently, the noticeable difference between these provinces is in the nature in which they are being governed as a political entity. Since the last decade Punjab is governed by Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz group) and Sindh by Pakistan People's Party. Therefore, current study compares public trust in political leaders and parliament between Punjab and Sindh. Relevant literature provides conflicting and contradicting knowledge about the comparison of Punjab and Sindh.

Several scholars claim that there is no political system which is more superior to democracy.<sup>2</sup> Almond and Verba<sup>3</sup> in their classical work claim that public trust in the leader, government or agencies of government is correlated to the level of democracy. To measure the level of democracy, extent of public participation in the political and governmental affairs is one of the useful variables.<sup>4</sup> Literature suggests that public political participation is totally depends on the level of public trust in their leadership.<sup>5</sup> It can be stated that public participation and public trust on leader is closely associated. This argument is supported further on the basis of higher public participation in the electoral process

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<sup>1</sup> C.A. Moser & G. Kalton, *Survey Methods in Social Investigation*, Routledge, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> K. Good, "Democracy and Development in Botswana", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 35, 1 (2017): 113-128.; J. Kahne & B. Bowyer, "Educating for Democracy in a Partisan Age: Confronting the Challenges of Motivated Reasoning and Misinformation", *American Educational Research Journal* 54, 1 (2017): 3-34; D.C. Shin & H.J. Kim, "Liberal Democracy as the End of History: Western Theories Versus Eastern Asian Realities", *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* 2, 2 (2017): 133-53.

<sup>3</sup> G. Almond & S. Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Countries* (Princeton: Princeton university, 1963), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> M.M. Burgess, "From 'trust us' to Participatory Governance: Deliberative Publics and Science Policy", *Public understanding of science* 23, 1 (2014): 48-52; Y. Zhong, "Do Chinese People Trust their Local Government, and Why? An Empirical Study of Political Trust in Urban China", *Problems of Post-Communism* 61, 3 (2014): 31-44.

in the United States (U.S) and Britain<sup>6</sup> while in Pakistan, public participation was 53% in the last general election of the country. Democracy observers argue that public trust in leadership is the major factor which causes higher participation in the U.S and Britain while lower in Pakistan.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, numerous scholars claim that public trust in leadership is higher in the authoritarian countries as compared to the semi or fragile democratic states.<sup>8</sup> But researchers like Cao and Hou<sup>9</sup> asserted that in authoritarian states people are not free to express their views and use their right; therefore, public trust in leadership may not typify the true sentiment of the public. Authoritarian system do not allow public to select an alternative as democratic systems do.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, it can be concluded that public trust cannot be developed through force.

Being the resident of a democratic state, the people of Pakistan are free to express the opinion, free to use their political, social, religious as well as economic rights.<sup>11</sup> In this way, citizens have every right to change the government and leader through election if they found it unsuitable for them as well as for the country.<sup>12</sup> Current study exclusively compares public trust in political leader and parliament in two most densely populated provinces of Pakistan i-e Sindh and Punjab. Earlier researchers did not pay due attention to this problem particularly

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<sup>6</sup> E. Dinas, "Does Choice Bring Loyalty? Electoral Participation and the Development of Party Identification", *American Journal of Political Science* 58, 2 (2014), 449-65.

<sup>7</sup> D.E. Ashford, *National Development and Local Reform: Political Participation in Morocco, Tunisia, and Pakistan* (Princeton University Press, 2015); E. Dinas, "Does Choice Bring Loyalty? Electoral Participation and the Development of Party Identification", *American Journal of Political Science* 58, 2 (2014), 449-65.

<sup>8</sup> A. Tejkalova, A.S. de Beer, R. Berganza, Y. Kalyango Jr, A. Amado, L. Ozolina, "In Media We Trust: Journalists and Institutional Trust Perceptions in Post-authoritarian and Post-totalitarian Countries", *Journalism Studies* 18, 5 (2017), 629-44.

<sup>9</sup> L. Cao & C. Hou, "A Comparison of Confidence in the Police in China and in the United States", *Journal of Criminal Justice* 29, 2 (2001): 87-99.

<sup>10</sup> O.J. Reuter & D. Szakonyi, "Online Social Media and Political Awareness in Authoritarian Regimes", *British Journal of Political Science* 45, 1 (2015), 29-51.

<sup>11</sup> S. Widmalm, *Political Tolerance in the Global South: Images of India, Pakistan and Uganda*, Routledge, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> S. Qadir, M. Tariq & M. Waqas, "Democracy or Military Dictatorship: A Choice of Governance for the Economic Growth of Pakistan", *Journal of Business* 12, 1 (2016): 39-51.

in Pakistan. These provinces have been selected due to two reasons: First, these provinces are being governed by the two most prominent political parties of the country since last three decades. Second, these provinces are playing most important and significant role in the central government of Pakistan since her birth.

### Review of literature

According to Chanley et al. and Rudolph and Evans<sup>13</sup> public trust in the institution of the government, leadership or parliament enhances pro-government sentiments while public distrust increases anti-government feelings among the masses. Due to anti-government sentiments, public demand for the change of system and leadership increases.<sup>14</sup> Further, it is argued in the literature that public distrust not only increases demand for the change of leadership but it weakens the democratic values as well as system.<sup>15</sup> In this way, people seek the alternatives of democracy if the democratic values are not properly protected by the leader or government.<sup>16</sup> Contrary to this argument, several scholars believe that public distrust in leaders only raises the demand for change of leadership but does not harm the system.<sup>17</sup> Not ignoring the importance of this

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<sup>13</sup> V.A. Chanley, T.J. Rudolph & W.M. Rahn, "The Origins and Consequences of Public Trust in Government: A Time Series Analysis", *Public Opinion Quarterly* 64, 3 (2000), 239-56; T.J. Rudolph & J. Evans, "Political Trust, Ideology, and Public Support for Government Spending", *American Journal of Political Science* 49, 3 (2005), 660-71.

<sup>14</sup> V.A. Chanley, T.J. Rudolph & W.M. Rahn, "The Origins and Consequences of Public Trust in Government: A Time Series Analysis", *Public Opinion Quarterly* 64, 3 (2000), 239-56.

<sup>15</sup> Y. Shomer, G-J. Put & E. Gedalya-Lavy, "Intra-party Politics and Public Opinion: How Candidate Selection Processes Affect Citizens' Satisfaction with Democracy", *Political Behavior* 38, 3 (2016): 509-34; P. Whiteley, H.D. Clarke, D. Sanders & M. Stewart, "Why Do Voters Lose Trust in Governments? Public Perceptions of Government Honesty and Trustworthiness in Britain 2000–2013", *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 18, 1 (2016): 234-254.

<sup>16</sup> Y.A. Ecevit & E. Karakoç, "The Perils of Semi-Presidentialism: Confidence in Political Institutions in Contemporary Democracies", *International Political Science Review* 38, 1 (2017): 4-20; T. Tudoroiu, "Democracy and State Capture in Moldova", *Democratization* 22, 4 (2015): 655-78.

<sup>17</sup> M. Freitag & K. Ackermann, "Direct Democracy and Institutional Trust: Relationships and Differences Across Personality Traits", *Political Psychology* 37, 5 (2016), 707-23; D. Leiter & M. Clark, "Valence and Satisfaction with Democracy: A Cross-national Analysis of Nine Western European Democracies", *European Journal of Political Research* 54, 3

argument, political scientists contended that if public distrust became the major cause of leadership change then why not distrust in parliament augmented the demand for alternative of democracy.<sup>18</sup> Only in the democratic countries where electoral process is followed to constitute the government, this argument seems cogent while in the undemocratic states, it is not tenable. It is argued that public distrust fails to develop anti-government feeling in the countries like Russia and Belarus.<sup>19</sup> In this way, Johnson,<sup>20</sup> finds people's distrust in the leader as the main source which supports public demand for democracy. In the Arab countries, people having low level of trust in their leader and government struggled for the alternative system.<sup>21</sup> Conclusively, in the authoritarian countries public distrust cannot play a significant role in raising the demand for system change, in the fragile democratic and quasi-authoritarian states it can.

Current study tries to solve this theoretical puzzle by measuring public trust in political leadership and parliament in two provinces of Pakistan. Since the last decade both provinces have been governed by two specific political parties (Punjab by PML N and Sindh by PPP). Present study is an effort to examine how much political leadership of these parties is trusted by the people.

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(2015): 543-62; H. Pitlik & L. Kouba, "Does Social Distrust always Lead to a Stronger Support for Government Intervention?", *Public Choice* 163, 3-4 (2015): 355-77.

<sup>18</sup> M. Hooghe, S. Marien & J. Oser, "Great Expectations: The Effect of Democratic Ideals on Political Trust in European Democracies", *Contemporary Politics* 23, 2 (2017), 214-230; T.J. Johnson & B.K. Kaye, "In Blog We Trust? Deciphering Credibility of Components of the Internet among Politically Interested Internet User", *Computers in Human Behavior* 25, 1 (2009): 175-182; G. Stoker, C. Hay & M. Barr, "Fast Thinking: Implications for Democratic Politics", *European Journal of Political Research* 55, 1 (2016): 3-21.

<sup>19</sup> D. Khodyakov, "Trust as a Process: A Three-dimensional Approach", *Sociology* 41, 1 (2007), 115-32; S. Rose-Ackerman, "From Elections to Democracy in Central Europe: Public Participation and the Role of Civil Society", *East European Politics and Societies* 21, 1 (2007): 31-47.

<sup>20</sup> T.J. Johnson & B.K. Kaye, "In Blog We Trust? Deciphering Credibility of Components of the Internet among Politically Interested Internet User", *Computers in Human Behavior* 25, 1 (2009): 175-182.

<sup>21</sup> A. Jamal, "When is Social Trust a Desirable Outcome? Examining Levels of Trust in the Arab World", *Comparative Political Studies* 40, 11 (2007): 1328-49; M. Tessler, A. Jamal & M. Robbins, "New Findings on Arabs and Democracy", *Journal of Democracy* 23, 4 (2012): 89-103.

## Research methodology

### Sampling

An adopted instrument was used for the collection of data. It was distributed across the provinces by using mail services and personal visits. For better understanding, questionnaire was translated into Urdu language. In addition, simple wording and concept of the questions were used in the survey instrument. Respondents below 20 years of age level were ignored in the current study. Twenty years of age was selected because, in Pakistan, it is the age limit of adult franchise. Additionally, individuals having 20 or above age can be affiliated with any political party or have some political awareness. The total number of distributed questionnaires from these two provinces was 4080. After many follow-ups and reminders, 2021 (49.53%) questionnaires out of the total distributed, were successfully received back. At the initial stage of the data coding, 13 cases were excluded from the collected data, due to the un-complete demographic information of the participants. After measuring missing values and outliers, 1982 (48.57%) questionnaires were found valid for further analysis in the combined dataset. Out of which 845 were from Sindh and 1137 from Punjab.

*The dependent variables:* To investigate two dependent factors present study was conceptualized. Citizen's trust in political leadership, first dependent factor, was examined through "How much trust do you have in the political leadership? The item was reverse coded where 1 means 'none at all' and 4= represents 'a great deal'. Besides these four choices, respondents were given two more choices to select, one was 'don't know' and other was 'no answer'. The option 'don't know' was selected 3.5 % of the total respondents where as 'no answer' was selected by 0.6%. In this way, 4.1% of the total respondents choose these categories. Second dependent variable, public trust in parliament was measured through "How much trust do you have in the parliament of the country? Alike first variable, respondents were given four point-Likert scale (reverse coded) in the second dependent variable where 1 means 'none at all', and 4 highlight 'a great deal'. 4.9% of the respondents selected "don't know" and 0.4 % "no answer". In this way, 5.3% of the total respondents choose these categories. The responses of these categories were excluded from the data.

The dependent factors of this study were ordered as categorical variables. Due to the categorical order of the variables, ordinal logistical

regression technique was found most suitable for data analysis.<sup>22</sup> In the current study, dependent variables have been examined through single global item. Due to these single items, certain limitations were there in measuring subcomponents of public trust in political leadership and parliament of the country but several researchers claims that these items are fairly valid and reliable for the measurement of public trust over a specific institutions or regime.<sup>23</sup>

*The independent variables:* Government performance, a major independent variable has been used as a binary variable (0= Punjab & 1= Sindh). This technique was used in order to highlight the differences between both provinces. Additionally, three groups of independent variables; socio-economic, social bond and attitudinal variables were classified in multivariate analysis as control variables. Variables were classified into these groups in order to confound the relation between government's performance effect and citizens trust in political leadership and parliament. In the group of socio-economic, four variables; age, gender, education and social class was included. Participants' age at the time of data collection was recorded through variable 'age'. In this way, binary variable (0 shows male and 1 female) was used to measure gender of the participants. In this way, education was measured as an ordinal variable. For the measurement of this variable respondents were given nine options where 1 indicates 'low education' and 9 represents high. In this variable 'no formal' education of the participant was considered as the lowest level of education and 'university' was the highest degree. The last variable of this group, social class, was measured through self-perception. Self-perception is a method in which respondents declare their class themselves according to income. In measuring this variable four choices were given 1 indicates 'lower class' and 4 'upper middle class'. The factors like marriage, employment status and number of children were included in the second group of independent variables. This group of variables was given the name of 'social bond'. To measure 'marriage' dummy variable was used. Where 0 indicates 'divorced/widowed' and 1 highlights 'married'. Employment status of

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<sup>22</sup> F.E. Harrell Jr, *Regression Modeling Strategies: With Applications to Linear Models, Logistic and Ordinal Regression, and Survival Analysis*, Springer, 2015; J.P. Huang, W. Xia, C.H. Sun, H.Y. Zhang & L.J. Wu, "Psychological Distress and its Correlates in Chinese Adolescents", *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 43, 7 (2009): 674-81.

<sup>23</sup> L. Cao & C. Hou, 87-99; H. Jang, H.-J. Joo & J.S. Zhao, "Determinants of Public Confidence in Police: An International Perspective" *Journal of Criminal Justice* 38, 1 (2010): 57-68.

the respondents was examined as a dichotomous variable (1 indicates paid employment and 0 for unemployment). In the paid category retired and self-employed were also included. Parenting or number of children was examined as binary variable with 0 represents no children and 1 equal to one or above child. Finally, three variables were included in the last group, attitudinal variables. Only one item; “by considering all things, can you say you are happy?” was used to examine happiness. Reverse coding was used where 1 represents *not at all happy* and 4 indicate *very happy*. Interest in political affairs was the second variable which was also examined through single item. Single item, “how much interested are you in politics? was used, where 1 represents *no interest at all* and 4 was equal to *very interested*. The last variable that was included in this group was conflict resolving behavior of the political leader. For measuring conflict resolving behavior three items were used, which were headed by a single question: “How do you feel about these statements? 1) Great leader is one, who solves the problem and issues of the people by him/herself; 2) great leader is one, who ask his/ her assistant to intervene in the problem or issues of the people; 3) great leader is one, who suggest people to sue in the court for problems or issues. Participants were given close-ended option where 1= strongly agree and 10 = strongly disagree.

Overall reliability of this index was noticed 0. 83 and the obtained Eigen value was noticed 2.18. Log transformation technique was applied in-order to address skewness problem which occur in this variable.

## Findings

The mean score of public trust in political leadership was observed 2.28 in Sindh and 3.02 in Punjab. The findings of the t-test highlight a significant low public trust in political leadership in Sindh as compared to Punjab, which was at .05. The primary difference in the result of this variable was explained by the frequency distribution of this variable. A positive attitude toward political leadership was noticed in Punjab which was approximately 75.2 %. Adversely, only 38% of the respondents from Sindh showed positive attitude toward political leadership. In this way, the obtained mean score for the second major variable public trust in parliament was 2.24 in Sindh and 3.04 in Punjab. Approximately, 76.3 % of the total participants from Punjab show a positive attitude toward parliament and it was just 39% in Sindh. A significant difference at .05 was noticed between two provinces. On the basis of these results, it can be concluded that public trust in parliament is lower in Sindh province as



compared to the Punjab. Finding of the descriptive analyses is highlighted in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

Variables	Punjab (N=1137)			Sindh (N= 845)		
Dependent variables	Range	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD
Trust in political leadership	1- 4	3.02*	0.72	1- 4	2.28	0.73
NAA	(2.6%)			(13.4%)		
NVM	(16.0)			(48.1)		
QAL	(52.8)			(33.9)		
AGD	(22.4)			(4.1)		
Trust in Parliament	1- 4	3.04*	0.71	1- 4	2.24	0.79
NAA	(2.7%)			(18.1%)		
NVM	(13.4)			(42.1)		
QAL	(53.9)			(34.7)		
AGD	(22.4)			(4.3)		
Independent variables						
Age		43.74	12.35		42.87	15.04
Gender (Female =1)		0.53*	0.48		0.48	0.49
Education		4.24*	2.27		6.24	2.55
Class		2.32*	0.87		2.82	3.04
Marital status (Married =1)		0.87*	0.29		0.69	0.29
Employment (Employed =1)		0.93	0.18		0.95	0.18
Number of children (at least a child =1)		0.86	0.32		0.69	0.32
Happiness		2.92*	0.73		3.04	0.67
Interest in political affairs		2.77*	0.98		1.95	0.84
Conflict resolving behavior		1.81	1.46		1.78	1.10

*Note: SD= Standard deviation; N= Population; NAA= Not at all; NVM= Not very much; QAL= Quite a lot; AGD= A great deal*

\* Difference between the groups of variables,  $p < .05$

Table 1 reveals significant difference in exploratory variables of this study. Statistical higher mean score of variables like political affairs, number of children, marital status and gender was found in Punjab than

Sindh. Adversely, the mean score of variables like happiness, education and social class was found lower in Punjab as compared to that found in Sindh. As it is described above that logistical regression technique was considered as the most appropriate one according to the nature of the dependent variables. The model specification technique premises that the independent variables affect dependent variables at a constant level (for example, proportional odds assumptions). A test of parallel lines was applied in order to examine this assumption. Test of parallel lines reveals a meeting point in the both models. It expresses a constant proportional odds at all the categories of responses. The findings of the ordinal logistic regression on public trust on political leadership are described in the Table 2 below. The result of the entire sample from both provinces is described in the first column of the table. The findings highlight that the variable government performance was statistically significant in controlling other independent variables. Due to government performance a higher level of variation was noticed between the respondents of Punjab and Sindh. Besides government performance, other variables like gender, educational background and class status were also related significantly to the public trust in leadership. Higher level of trust in leadership was observed in the female, less educated respondents and those who belonged to the upper class of social status. Further, the variables from the social bond group was found not significant. Moreover the variables of attitudinal group such as conflict resolving behavior, interest in political affairs and happiness were associated significantly with public trust in leadership. The  $R^2$  revealed that the total variance in public trust in leadership was 26.2 % which was showed by the model. The prediction of participant's trust in leadership in Punjab was described through explanatory variables which are mentioned in the second column of Table 2 below. A statistically significant relation between the seven variables such as; age, gender, educational background, happiness, class status, political affairs, conflict resolving behavior and public trust in leadership was found, alike the results of the full sampling analysis. The participants who were considered elder in the category of age variable, female, less educated and upper class showed higher level of trust in political leadership. Additionally, higher level of participants' response in variables like happiness and political interest indicated higher level of trust while the obtained score of conflict resolving behavior revealed lower level of public trust in political leadership. The total variance in public trust in leadership in Punjab was 12.1 % which was showed by the model. In this way, the prediction of participant's trust in leadership in Sindh was described through explanatory variables which are mentioned in the last column of Table 2

below. Only two variables showed significant association with public trust in political leadership. Respondents from Sindh whose response rate was noticed higher for the variables happiness and political affairs shows the higher level of trust in political leadership. The model described 2.7% of the total variance in public trust in political leadership in Sindh.

**Table 2:** *Predicting public trust in political leadership through ordinal logistic regression models*

	<b>Total sample (1982)</b>	<b>Punjab (1137)</b>	<b>Sindh (845)</b>
Government Performance	-1.659 (-.381)**	--	--
<b><i>Socioeconomic Variables</i></b>			
Age	.008 (.004)	.015 (.006) **	.003 (.006)
Gender (1= female)	.219 (.080) **	.423 (.112)**	.037 (.114)
Education	-.073 (.018) **	-.078 (.024)**	-.046 (.029)
Social class	.228 (.047) **	.329 (.065)**	.128 (.069)
<b><i>Social bond Variables</i></b>			
Marital status (1=married)	-.190 (.162)	-.214(.251)	-.137 (.218)
Employment (1=employed)	.201 (.207)	.161 (.281)	.282 (.310)
Number of children (1= at least one child)	-.098 (.168)	-.126 (.243)	-.033 (.232)
<b><i>Attitudinal Variable</i></b>			
Happiness	.205 (.058) **	.177 (.080) *	.208 (.083)*
Interest in Political affair	.289 (.044) **	.385 (.059) **	.163 (.068)*
Conflict resolving behavior	-.291 (.073) **	-.385 (.099) **	-.195 (.110)
R square	.258	.115	.026

Note: \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$

Moreover, the obtained result of public trust in parliament from both provinces has been described in the Table 3 below. In the first column, the mentioned result is predicting public trust in parliament for full sample. The factor government performance was found significant and indicating that respondents of Punjab have higher level of trust in parliament as compared to the participants from Sindh. A significant

relationship of education and social class was noticed with public trust in parliament. These variables highlighted that respondent with low level of education and those who belong to the upper class of social status showed higher level of trust in parliament. In this model, variables of social bond group were found not significant but adverse to it, attitudinal variables like happiness, interest in political affairs and conflict resolving behavior were found significantly associated to public trust in parliament. The  $R^2$  indicate 26.7 % of variance in the model of public trust in parliament. Statistical significant relationship between public trust in parliament in Punjab and the independent variables such as gender, educational background, social class, interest in political affairs and conflict resolving was found (see second column in Table 3). Among these variables, participant who were female, having less education and those who considered themselves from the upper class showed a higher level of trust in the parliament. An insignificant relation between conflict resolving behavior and trust in parliament was found in Punjab while interest in political affairs was significantly related to trust in parliament. The  $R^2$  revealed that the model showed 9.8 % of the total variance in public trust in parliament. In the context of Sindh four variables like; age, happiness, interest in political affairs and conflict resolving behavior were statistically associated to public trust in parliament (see third column in Table 3). Among the respondents from Sindh, 'younger' showed higher level of trust in parliament which is a good sign. Result found that higher response in happiness and political affairs enhance trust in the parliament while it is reduced with the higher score in conflict resolving behavior. The  $R^2$  revealed that the model showed 5.7 % of variance in public trust in parliament.

**Table 3:** Predicting public trust in parliament through ordinal logistic regression models

	<b>Total sample (1982)</b>	<b>Punjab (1137)</b>	<b>Sindh (845)</b>
Government Performance	-1.641 (.100) **	---	---
<b>Socioeconomic Variables</b>			
Age	-.007 (.004)	.006 (.006)	-.014 (.006) **
Gender (1= female)	.099 (.080)	.232 (.113) *	-.009 (.112)
Education	-.049 (.019)**	-.069 (.026) **	-.005 (.029)
Social class	.144 (.047)**	.211 (.065) **	.069 (.068)

**Social bond****Variable**

Marital status (1=married)	-.120(.162)	-.056 (.249)	-.072 (.215)
Employment (1=employed)	.174 (.206)	.044 (.280)	.328 (.305)
Number of children (1= at least one child)	-.144 (.167)	-.048 (.245)	-.156 (.229)

**Attitudinal Variable**

Happiness	.139 (.058)**	.096 (.082)	.162 (.083) *
Interest in Political affair	.348 (.044) **	.473 (.060) **	.179 (.067) **
Conflict resolving behavior	-.309 (.073) **	-.373 (.099) **	-.277 (.108) **
R square	.256	.095	0.47

Note: \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$

**Discussion and conclusion**

Although it is burdensome to conduct a comparative study but at the same time it rewards by generalizing a theory which is developed in one particular region, society or country.<sup>24</sup> Present study is an academic effort to add to the literature of public trust in leadership and parliament of Pakistan with significant results. The findings of the current study are absorbing but not free from the challenges of interpretation. Against the conventional assumption that public trust in leadership is higher a feudal society, present study finds high level of trust in leadership in the residents of Punjab province. The result of the present study is supported by the study.<sup>25</sup> However, this result is different from the findings of the study conducted in Dominican Republic and Haiti, because this study was conducted into two different countries.<sup>26</sup> Contrarily, present study was conducted in two different provinces, having two different governments in the same democratic state. Punjab and Sindh were

<sup>24</sup> W.L. Neuman & K. Robson, *Basics of Social Research*, Pearson Canada, 2014.

<sup>25</sup> M.J. Park, D. Kang, J.J. Rho & D.H. Lee, "Policy Role of Social Media in Developing Public Trust: Twitter Communication with Government Leaders", *Public Management Review* 18, 9 (2016): 1265-88.

<sup>26</sup> A.T. Stoyan, S. Niedzwiecki, J. Morgan, J. Hartlyn & R. Espinal, "Trust in Government Institutions: The Effects of Performance and Participation in the Dominican Republic and Haiti", *International Political Science Review* 37, 1 (2016): 18-35.

appropriate for this study because these provinces are similar in many respects; they, for example, follow a common civilization; same cultural roots, religion, freedom history and constitution. The only major difference between them is their different provincial governments. The observed high level of public trust in the respondents of Punjab may be due to the performance of the provincial government. Since the last decade people have witnessed development in almost every department of the government such as roads, education, health, agriculture and many more. The positive impact of government performance on public trust in leadership has also been found in other studies as well.<sup>27</sup> Adversely, Sindh has been governed poorly since the last ten years. The allocated budget for almost every project or development work has been misused by the leadership and local administration. Population of the province is anxious to have basic facilities such as education, health, water, security etc. Bad governance and corrupt leadership may be the reason behind low level of public trust on leadership. The results of the current study are not surprising because the same results have been noticed in other studies.<sup>28</sup> In this way, this study suggests that people from Punjab have greater level of trust in the parliament as compared to the respondents of Sindh. Trust in leadership, like public trust in parliament, is significantly related with the performance of the government.<sup>29</sup> The parliament of the country unfortunately ignores province of Sindh in the context of resource sharing, jobs, development work and other opportunities. Researchers find that equality among the federal units is one of the major cause behind public trust or distrust on the parliament.<sup>30</sup> Hence, the result of the present study is justified. Furthermore, other findings of the current study through regression analysis were found consistent with the conducted research. Public trust in leadership has been predicted by many independent factors of this study in the expected direction. A

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<sup>27</sup> T. Christensen & P. Lægreid, "Performance and Accountability — A Theoretical Discussion and an Empirical Assessment", *Public Organization Review* 15, 2 (2015): 207-25; A.T. Stoyan, et al., 18-35.

<sup>28</sup> R. Bachmann, N. Gillespie & R. Priem, "Repairing trust in organizations and institutions: Toward a conceptual framework", *Organization Studies* 36, 9 (2015): 1123-1142; J. Torfing & C. Ansell, "Strengthening Political Leadership and Policy Innovation Through the Expansion of Collaborative forms of Governance", *Public Management Review* 19, 1 (2017): 37-54.

<sup>29</sup> P. Pillay, "Public Trust and Good Governance: A Comparative Study of Brazil and South Africa", *African Journal of Public Affairs* 9, 8 (2017): 31-47.

<sup>30</sup> J.F. Helliwell, H. Huang & S. Wang, "New Evidence on Trust and Well-being", *National Bureau of Economic Research*, 2016.

positive relationship between age, happiness and public trust in leadership was found whereas a negative relationship was seen between education, political affairs and trust in leadership.<sup>31</sup> In addition, a common predictor of public trust in the parliament has been observed in both the provinces, despite different governments; impact of interest in political affairs on both dependent variables, public trust in leadership and trust in parliament, was found in both the provinces. Additionally, variables from the social bond group were not related to public trust in leadership and parliament in either province.

*Implications of the study:* Despite limitations, the current study contributes in many ways. First, political leadership can play an energetic role in the consolidation of the democratic system. In addition, social, economic and political development of the country is highly related with the quality of leadership. Existing literature argues that public trust or distrust is one of the fundamental factors which increase or decrease the influence of the leadership. Domain literature is lacking in the examination of public trust in political leadership and parliament of Pakistan, it is one of the most important contributions of this study. The study also compares two densely populated provinces of Pakistan which may help to understand the impact of government performance on public trust. Finally, in Pakistan people are not interested to participate in the political activities of the country. Literature suggests that public distrust and discrimination are the major factors which compel people not to participate. Current study may help to understand this fact.

*Limitations of the study:* Several variables which can play a significant role in measuring public trust have been ignored in this study. These factors such as character of the leadership, political ideology, political party affiliation, level of leadership sincerity and political mobilization has significant association with public trust. Secondly, present study used single item to measure public trust in leadership and parliament which may be considered a simplistic measure. Thirdly, limited literature has been used for comparing public trust in Pakistan because the literature in this domain is lacking.

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<sup>31</sup> J.P. Huang, W. Xia, C.H. Sun, H.Y. Zhang & L.J. Wu, "Psychological Distress and its Correlates in Chinese Adolescents", *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 43, 7 (2009): 674-81.