

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW PROVINCES, ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF THOUGHTS AND IMPACT OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: EXPLORING THE PERCEPTION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND MADARIS STUDENTS

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This research study was designed to explore the perception of the religious groups regarding the issue of new province in Punjab. 500 research subjects belonging to Hanfi, Deoband, Ahl-e-Hadees and Shia school of thoughts were selected after preparing the list of Madrasas in the Multan city. A clear majority of the religious leaders showed their desire to establish a new province in the region. The Brailvi and Shia were more likely to have intention in order to establish new province in the region as compared to Deobandi and Ahl e Hadees. The majority of the research participants believed that by establishing new province in the region will increase the availability of resources and will help to abolish the sense of deprivation of the people of this region. The most of the research participants were agreed to this notion that mainstream political parties have developed a roadmap for the creation of new province in Punjab. Regarding the effective role of mainstream political parties in order to form new province the PML N was highly appreciated and was ranked first by the majority of the participants and PPP and PTI were ranked on second and third respectively in their priority. The majority was agreed that political parties are creating their vote bank by highlighting the issue of new province by making the promises to the people of this region and also shared their observation that this movement has been hijacked by the mainstream political parties for the sake of political mileage. They also shared their concerns that after general elections 2013 this promise to establish new province will be neglected by the elected government that was just a political slogan in the election campaign. Regarding the role of media majority of the participants revealed that print media have performed very vital role in this regard. Newspapers and television were the reliable source of information among them and widely accessed by these groups in terms of information seeking. Quite amazingly it was discovered that the majority of the research participants have acknowledged the role of political parties PML N, PPP and PTI with regard to their seriousness of the issue. Shia and Brailvi were favored more strong support to the movement of new provinces in Punjab in comparison of other religious sects.

Keywords: South Punjab, Seraiki Belt, Religious Leaders, Hanfi, Brailvi, Ahl e Hadees, Shia, Khateeb, Interpersonal Communication, Media.

Introduction & Background:

Pakistan as a federal national state is defined by the constitution in which power is shared between the provinces and

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the federal government. The Federal System in Pakistan was inherited from the British rule and it has been practiced till yet since it's throughout tempestuous history. The distribution of resources and transfer of other powers and rules are not accordingly in order to establish a bond between the central government and its counterparts. The current issue of discussion of new province formation was also flashed due to the government decision to rename the NWFP (North West Frontier Province) as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This name was labeled by the government in 18th amendment under the constitution of Pakistan due to political decision made by the government of that time. But it was also strongly opposed by the non-Pashtun population and this gave birth to a separate demand of province *Hazara* of their own which is now being opposed by the media, political parties and other social activists (Zulfiqar, 2012).

Similarly, the other movement for the establishment of new province in the Southern Punjab was also in its peak and the National Assembly approved a resolution for establishing new province. For this purpose the provincial assembly of the concerned province was also instructed to take further steps in this regard. On this, Punjab Assembly also passed another resolution in order to restore the Bahawalpur state to its provincial status. The two mainstream political parties of Pakistan People's Party and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz agreed by forming national commission to demarcate the limits of the suggested provinces (Zulfiqar, 2012).

Why New Provinces?

The new provinces formation demands are not new that have been raised up time to time. The major reasons behind these movements and demands were sometimes on the grounds of socio economic backwardness; sometimes for removal of sense of deprivation among the people of the concerned regions; sometimes on ethnic grounds and sometimes on the distribution of resources. After the 1998 census the population of Saraiky speaking people was more than thirteen million in Pakistan having the seventeen districts in southern part of the Punjab province which is called the focal point of Saraiky language. Keeping in consideration their strength in the Punjab clearly depicts the notion that they need their durable identity so they demanded a separate province so called 'Saraikistan' (Fayyaz, 2011).

Southern Punjab Province:

The case for South Punjab has been presented on socio-economic grounds. The justification for the decision is the isolated demography of the Saraiky speaking inhabitants which is dispersed over 23 districts, extending from Mianwali, Bhakkar, and DG Khan, Multan and Bahawalpur in Punjab to D.I Khan and some parts of Lakki Marwat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Saraiky province thus would have become another unmanageably big province and its economic deprivation matter blamed on Punjab's large size would have remained unsolved. According to a PILDAT Discussion Paper, South Punjab comprises around 48.5 percent of the total area and 31.57 percent of the population of the present province of Punjab (Punjab Development Fund, 2012).

It has three partitions sectioned into eleven districts. The distribution of funds through Annual Development Program (ADP) was 17.76 percent in 2006 that was enlarged to 29.02 percent in 2010. The social gages in education, health, and labor and employment sector also show a pitiable picture: 43.11 per cent people are living below the poverty lines as compared to 27.69 percent in Punjab. South Punjab has an agricultural economy and has no Central Punjab's industrialized and town development. Its industry includes small units and the agricultural economy which is largely occupied by big landowners who have their family seats in the assembly (Ibid).

Bahawalpur Province:

The debate of new province in the southern Punjab is not a new issue it can be traced back in the regime of Yahya Khan when one unit was dissolved. Apart from the major reasons behind this decision the Bahawalpur state was inducted into a single province Punjab. The people of this region declared it a severe blow to disintegrate Pakistan and a movement was emerged for its restoration. Furthermore, Fazle e Haq committee was also formed in order to make decision about its future. Even a well-planned effort was made to crush this movement for the restoration of Bahawalpur State to its original position but security agencies of Punjab opened the fires and shelled tear gas to disperse the protesters and 2 death casualties and hundreds were put behind the bars. A petition in the court was also filed by the prominent member of this movement Mr. Riaz Hashmi by providing the evidences that state should facilitate them as its responsibility. But

all in vain and the petition was cancelled and no right was given to the members of this movement to further initiate such type of case for proceeding. Mr. Riaz was the person being a vibrant member who initiated the term 'Saraikistan' then became the head of the Pakistan Saraiky Party (Langah, 2011).

The following is the list of local political parties those are fighting legal and political battle for the creation of separate province in Punjab:

1. Pakistan Saraiky Party (PSP)
2. Saraiky Qoumi Movement (SQM)
3. Saraikistan Qoumi Mahaz (SQM)
4. Saraikistan National Party (SNP)
5. Saraiky Qoumi Itehad (SQI)
6. Saraiky Sooba Movement (SSM)

Religious Groups in Pakistan:

Since independence in 1947, the religious political parties were striving hard for *Islamization* in the newly born state of Pakistan. Moreover, they strived for to define ideological discourse of the country by Objective Resolution in 1949. They were of the view that Sharia Laws should be adopted in Pakistan especially in the regime of military dictator General Zia. According to their move and having a formal constitutional acknowledgment they considered the divine laws precedent over the laws made by the Parliament. In spite of achieving all those even now they are in struggle to gain absolute *Islamization* in the state (Mehmud, 1995).

Pakistan is an Islamic Republic State where Islam is the dominant religion and according to census data 98% Muslims are in majority. Islam has been divided into different sects which are named as schools of jurisprudence. More than 60% Muslims belong to Hanfi school of thought, further divided into two sub groups, *Brailvi* and *Deobandi* schools. Shia's are the second largest Muslim sect in Pakistan and majority belongs to (*Ithna Ashria*) followed by *Ismaili* both *Nizari* and *Mustaali*. The accurate and confirmed figure is not available to indicate their strength or number in Pakistan. By an estimate by the different scholars 60% are Sunni including sub sects *Brailvi* and *Deobandi*, 20% Shia, 8% Ahl e Hadees and remaining other sects. It is also estimated that almost 60% seminaries or Madrasas are under Brailvi sect, 20% by Deobandi and 10% by different Shia organizations and remaining 10% are run by Ahl e Hadees school of thought (Haleem, 2003).

Rationale and significance of the Study:

The issue of formation of new provinces in Pakistan is getting force day by day with the proposal which is approved by the parliamentary commission for the establishment of a new province which is proposed as ' *Bahawalpur Janoobi Punjab*'. But the basic question which needs to be answered while taking into account the demand and requirement for new provinces is: On which ground the new provinces be formed on an administrative or ethnic basis? In 1955 in West Pakistan the feudal-religious-bureaucratic-military nexus led to the establishment of one unit with the dissolution of the provinces. In 2010 and after that the claim for new provinces gained force and emerged as a serious political dialogue. After renaming the NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) in the 18th Amendment was termed a key change in the political landscape, and it without any delay led to a reaction in the other parts of the country like in southern Punjab to demand for a new province. *This research study is designed to explore the perception of the religious groups with special reference to the issue of new province in Punjab. it is aimed to investigate the knowledge, demands, opinions, priorities suggestions and satisfaction level of the religious groups including students, teachers and Khateeb/Imams of Madaras belonging to different socio economic demographics.*

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research project are to explore:

- The perception of different religious groups about formation of new province in Punjab.
- Their demands of the new province either on ethnic or administrative grounds.
- The perception of different Muslim school thought in the mirror of Islamic teachings about formation of new provinces.
- The perception of the participants regarding the role of media and mainstream VS local political parties with regard to Saraiki province.
- The contributing factors and pros and cons of establishing new province.

Literature Review:

There have been no researches conducted on religious grounds in order to measure the perception and public opinion of the research

subjects regarding partition and formation of new provinces in Pakistan. However, the studies conducted on public opinion and perception about different issues is being synthesized in this part of the study. Zulfiqar (2012) argued that Pakistan despite being a federal state has not fully evolved the spirit of federalism. The recent clamor for new provinces adds a new dimension to challenges already faced by the federation. Though both opponents and proponents of the demand have valid arguments in their support, the creation of new provinces is a complex issue. New provinces can only be created through constitutional means and national consensus.

Ahmar (2013) explored how conflicts can be prevented in the new provincial set-up of Pakistan. He argued a potential threat of the outbreak of conflict between different ethnic and lingual groups, if new provinces are created without taking considering the interests of major stakeholders and the concerns of minority-majority ethnic and lingual groups. Walgrave, Soroka and Nuytemans (2007) investigated the role of media in shaping and public perception in Belgium the political system is much closed that's why media role is too limited but they found systematic variations in media effects. They concluded that foreign policy issue was less likely to have media impact. Page & Bouton (2006) concluded that it is the that how people receive, perceive, retain and gather information and as well as what are their preferences regarding the supplied information by the media.

Bennett et al. (2006) found that the media shared the observations of key political players and they believe media create impact on public minds regarding the different political issues and policies. Holsti (2004) argued the efficacy of media, political leaders and the public with regard to shaping of public opinions about different issues of important salience. Baum (2004) also investigated the role of mainstream media and political leadership in public opinion. Gartner & Segura (2000) divulged the public opinion regarding casualties of Vietnam War. Burstein (2003) & Sobel (2001) explored the public opinion in terms of foreign policy issues and concluded that various interest groups, movements for social change and reforms play a major role in shaping public attitudes. Gartner & Segura (1998) concluded that there was no significant supportive evidence of impact of racial composition about the casualties in Vietnam War and its influence on public

minds. According to Just et al. (1996) media role in influencing public perception cannot be neglected. Zaller (1992) argued that Elite leaders initiate debate and make decision while information validates the wisdom and genuineness of the decision that goes to public through different information sources like media, elite group, pressure groups and opinion leaders.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

This expletory research has been designed to ascertain answers of the following research questions.

- 1: What is the knowledge level of respondents of the different religious school of thought about the formation of new province in Punjab?
- 2: What are the reliable and effective sources of information for the research subjects?
- 3: What are their pros and cons based views regarding the issue of new province in Punjab?
- 4: What is the perception of religious groups about the role of mainstream political parties regarding the said issue?
- 5: Whether the respondents are satisfied with the contribution of current regime and their predecessors?
- 6: What are their views about establishment of the new provinces in the light of Islamic teachings?
- 7: Do they consider the present Western democratic political system compatible with Islamic Political system?
- 8: Do they think that the issue of new provinces must be referred to Federal Sharia Court for its resolution?

Research Design:

The questionnaire survey method would be applied as a research design. The sample comprised of 500 respondents i.e Madaris's *Talibs*, *Khateeb/Imams* and the teachers belonging to different Muslim sects of Multan district. The background variables are given below;

- ❖ **School of thought / Sects** (Sunni (Hanfi), Sunni (Deobandi), Ahl-e-Hadees, Shia).
- ❖ **Profession** (Talib, Imam/Khateeb, Teacher).
- ❖ **Location** (Urban dweller, Rural dweller).
- ❖ **Education** (Religious education, Formal education, Both).
- ❖ **Age group intervals** (less than 20, 20-35, 36-50, 51-65).
- ❖ **Mother Language** (Saraiky, Punjabi, Urdu, Other).

Sampling Selection Criteria

The purposive sampling technique has been applied in order to draw sample from different religious groups in Pakistan in accordance to their proportion in the society. The proportion of sample according to their strength and size in the population is as under;

- ✓ 50% (250) Sunni (Brailvi) school of thought.
- ✓ 20% (100) (Deoband School of thought (Sunni sub-group)).
- ✓ 15% (75) Ahl-e- Hadees School of thought.
- ✓ 15% (75) Shia Schools of thought.

Whereas further breakup of sample is as under:

- 60% Students sample
- 20% Khateeb/Imams sample
- 20% Teachers sample.
- a) 150 students, 50 *Khateeb/Imams* and 50 teachers (***Moallim***) from Bralvi sect.
- b) 60 students, 20 *Khateeb/Imams* and 20 teachers from Deoband sect.
- c) 45 students, 15 *Khateeb/Imam* and 15 teachers from Ahl-e-Hadees sect.
- d) 45 students, 15 *Khateeb/Imam* and 15 teachers from Shia sect.

Data Analysis & Interpretation of Results:

The responses were collected through pre-constructed questionnaire survey. The responses of the research subjects were coded into a coding sheet and after analyzing the data the results are prepared in the forms of charts, graphs and tables using the statistical software of SPSS.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Religious Groups:

Variable	Frequency	Parentage %
<i>School of thought</i>	-	-
<i>Brailvi</i>	250	50 %
<i>Deobandi</i>	100	20 %
<i>Ahl-e-Hadees</i>	75	15 %
<i>Shia/Jafri</i>	75	15 %
<i>Profession</i>	-	-
<i>Student</i>	300	60 %
<i>Imam/Khateeb</i>	100	20 %
<i>Teacher</i>	100	20 %
<i>Background</i>	-	-

<i>Urban</i>	251	50.2 %
<i>Rural</i>	249	49.8 %
<i>Education</i>	-	-
<i>Formal Religious Education</i>	104	21 %
<i>Only General Education</i>	5	1 %
<i>Both</i>	391	78 %
<i>Age Group</i>	-	-
<i>Less than 20 Years</i>	108	22 %
<i>20-35 Years</i>	241	48 %
<i>35-50 Years</i>	74	15.8 %
<i>51-65 Years</i>	77	15.2 %
<i>Mother Language</i>	-	-
<i>Urdu</i>	54	11 %
<i>Punjabi</i>	72	14 %
<i>Saraiky</i>	345	69 %
<i>Other</i>	29	6 %
Total	500	100 %

N=500

The socio demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in the above table.

By school of thought 50% Brailvi, 20% Deobandi and 15% Ahl-e-Hadees and Shia school of thought respectively were selected to explore their opinion among 500 research subjects. In the category of profession 300 students, 100 Khateeb/Imams and 100 teachers were surveyed in all religious groups by allocating their proportion in the population. The majority of the respondents educated through formal and religious education. Most of the respondents (241, 48%) belonged to the age group 20-35. Similarly the mother language of the majority of the respondents was from Saraiky.

Table 1: Sources of information regarding New Province in Punjab:

Sources	Frequency Percent	
Newspaper	323	64.6
Radio	24	4.8
Television	118	23.6

Internet	8	1.6
Interpersonal Sources	27	5.4
Total	500	100.0

The Majority of the respondents (64%) utilized print media, as dominant source of information while consumption of electronic media was found less than 30%.

Plus Points of Establishing New Provinces in Punjab:

Table 2: Plus Points of Establishing New Province in Punjab:

Plus Points	Frequency	Percent
Increase in the availability and distribution of resources	137	27.4
Provision of access to the people for the solution of their issue	118	23.6
Abolishing the sense of deprivation	119	23.8
Fulfillment of popular demand of this area	124	24.8
All above	2	.4
Total	500	100.0

The table shows in lucid manner that the increase in the availability and distribution of resources, fulfillment of the popular demand and abolishing the sense of deprivations were divulged as the most top three plus points of the formation of new provinces in Punjab.

Negative implications of formation of new provinces in Punjab:

Negative consequences	School of Thought				Total
	Brailvi	Deobandi	Ahl e Hadees	Shia	
Financial burden on public exchequers	59	17	26	14	116
	23.6%	17.0%	34.7%	18.7%	23.2%
Deepening of conflict between political leadership of South and upper Punjab	58	43	13	11	125
	23.2%	43.0%	17.3%	14.7%	25.0%
Provoke Regional and lingual prejudice	75	15	29	34	153
	30.0%	15.0%	38.7%	45.3%	30.6%
Weakening of federation of Pakistan	38	9	7	11	65
	15.2%	9.0%	9.3%	14.7%	13.0%
All above	20	16	0	5	41
	8.0%	16.0%	.0%	6.7%	8.2%
Total	250	100	75	75	500

N=500

The table indicates the cross tabulation of school of thought and negative implications of not forming the new province in the region. Approximately one third of the respondents were of the view it would provoke factor of regional and lingual ethnocentrism. Moreover, by and large half of the respondents were of the view that formation of new provinces would be financial burden and also escalate the conflict between upper and lower Punjab.

Restoration of Bahawalpur State:

Table 3: Restoration of Bahawalpur State:

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	434	86.8
No	66	13.2
Total	500	100.0

In response to the question regarding restoration of Bahawalpur State, the majority of the respondents were not in favor to restore the Bahawalpur state.

Response of different religious groups regarding the effective role of Political Parties with reference to new province establishment:

School of Thought	Effective role of Political Parties				Total
	PPP	PML (N)	PML(Q)	PTI	
Brailvi	101 40.4%	70 28.0%	11 4.4%	68 27.2%	250 100%
Deobandi	9 9.0%	52 52.0%	11 11.0%	28 28.0%	100 100%
Ahl-e-Hadees	0 .0%	48 64.0%	12 16.0%	15 20.0%	75 100%
Shia	50 66.7%	0 .0%	2 2.7%	23 30.7%	75 100%
Total	160 32.0%	170 34.0%	36 7.2%	134 26.8%	500 100%

It was explored that two-third Shia respondents and majority of Brailvi school of thought followers acknowledged the contribution of Pakistan Peoples Party regarding formation of new province. On the contrary, the majority of Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadees school of thought were praiseworthy of efforts rendered by PML (N) for the said purpose.

Response of different religious groups regarding New Province Political Slogan for General Election 2013:

School of Thought	New Province as Political Slogan					Total
	Strongly Agreed	Agreed to some extent	Disagreed to some extent	Strongly Disagreed	Neutral	
Brailvi	30 12.0%	90 36.0%	41 16.4%	59 23.6%	30 12.0%	250 100%
Deobandi	51 51.0%	4 4.0%	7 7.0%	13 13.0%	25 25.0%	100 100%
Ahl e Hadees	35 46.7%	10 13.3%	7 9.3%	4 5.3%	19 25.3%	75 100%
Shia	4 5.3%	2 2.7%	12 16.0%	46 61.3%	11 14.7%	75 100%
Total	120 (24%)	106(21%)	67(13%)	122(24%)	85(17%)	500

The highest number of Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadees with this notion that new province was mere a political slogan for the vote bank by the political parties. While by and large half of the respondents from Brailvis and above three-fourth Shias had not considered it a political gimmick.

Table 5: Response regarding fulfillment of promise made by PML (N) in order to form new Province in the southern Punjab:

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	320	64
No	180	36
Total	500	100.0

The results of the study highlights as two-third of the respondents believed that promise of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) would not fulfill her promise, proclaimed during general election campaign 2013 to establish new province in the southern Punjab as they raised the issue in the mainstream media in order to gain political mileage.

Responses regarding effective role of media in order to form new Provinces in the Punjab:

Table 6: Response Regarding Effective Role of Media:

Sources	Frequency	Percent
Electronic Media	182	36.4
Print Media	213	42.6
Social Networking Sites	30	6.0
Interpersonal Communication	75	15
Total	500	100.0

The above table shows the role of different media as perceived by the religious groups to solve the issue of new province. Majority of the respondents considered newspapers and magazines as the most

effective media which played significant role highlighting the issue and suggesting possible solutions. While electronic media and interpersonal communication sources emerged as the 2nd and 3rd effective mediums respectively.

Discussion:

This research study was designed to explore the perception and concerns of the religious groups- Sunni (Brailvi & Deobandi), Ahl-e-Hadees and Shias about the issue of partition of Punjab into new province. Moreover it also investigated their views about the role of the mainstream and regional political parties in connection of the division of Punjab either on linguistic grounds or administrative levels? This matter was also taken into account that either Islam has given any possibility to divide the provinces into further units in order to improve the performance for the prosperity and well-being of its public. The rationale behind the selection of religious groups to measure their perception regarding the issue of new province and partition of Punjab was that, Pakistan came into existence on the map of the world as an Islamic democratic State. Another solid reason behind the Pakistan movement was the two nation theory where Muslim can live according to the teachings of Islam by following the fundamental values and principles of religion Islam in order to live freely to keep firm in their beliefs/faith. Religious scholars have played a vital and effective role in Pakistan movement and they are also the stakeholder of political system in Pakistan. Due to their effective role as opinion leaders, their perception would be taken into consideration as they have been actively participating in politics through using the platform of their respective religious political parties as well as via pulpit of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

For the purpose of analysis a total 550 questionnaire were distributed whereas 500 research subjects from four religious sects including Brailvi, Deobandi, Ahl-e-Hadees and Shias was positively responded. The purposive sampling technique was used to draw the sample from the population. In the entire sample 60% proportion was comprised of students and 40% ratio consisted of teachers and Khateeb/Imams of the different religious sects in Multan. The teachers and the students were approached by visiting the different Madrasas, for this purpose a list of Madrasas was prepared for the appropriate selection. Khateeb/Imams were accessed individually by visiting the Mosques and Madrasas of the

respective religious sect. The sample of Brailvi religious students and teachers was collected from Madrasa 'Anwar Ul Aloom, Mohzin Ul Aloom, Darul Quran Madrasa, similarly students and teachers of Deobandi school of thought were selected from the Madrasa Jamia Qasim-ul-Aloom and Jamia Khair-ul-Madaris. The Shia students and teachers were selected from Madrasa Sahib-uz-Zaman, Madarasa Shaheed Mutahri students and teachers belonging to Ahl-e-Hadees school of thought were selected from the Madrasa Darula Hadees Muahmmadia & Markaz Ibn-ul-Qasim.

The data for the analysis of the perception about the new province was collected by designing a questionnaire, comprised of 37 closed and open ended questions. The questionnaire was translated into Urdu and after getting prior permission from the relevant authorities of different Madrasas belonging to different sects. Then questionnaire was distributed among the teachers and students into their classes in some Madrasas the researcher in his presence collected the questionnaire after filled by the research participants but in most Madrasas the researcher was not allowed to visit the class personally so the questionnaires were handed over the concerned teacher/ in-charge and were collected after a given time. Some Madrasas management promised to collect the sample within a week three days while some took the period of one week or more depending on nature of engagements.

The findings of the study indicated that all respondents of religious groups research knew about the issue of new province and were alive to about the said issue but it was revealed that the major source of information among all religious school thought participants were the newspapers followed by television, radio, interpersonal communication channels and internet. Furthermore, a clear majority of the religious sects showed their desire to establish a new province in the region and it would be a milestone. In response to the question that the establishment of new province in Punjab is need of the hour almost 50% participants revealed that it is need of the hour to form new province by partitioning Punjab to fulfill the demand of the people of this region as regional and mainstream political parties promised them. It was further revealed that the majority of Shias and Brailvis supported the political cause for establishing new province in the region as compared to Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadees who responded that by establishing

new province nothing would be better and neither will bring a positive changes for the solution of the local issues. The education variable was also contributing factor in shaping the view to form new province in the region. Those having only formal religious education refuted this point that issue of new province formation is need of the hour as compared to those having both formal general and religious education. Similarly, among the all age groups interval, the majority of the respondents having less than twenty years of age shared their view that it is essential to establish new province.

The most of the respondents shared their opinions that by establishing new province in the region will increase the availability of resources and will help to abolish the sense of deprivation among the people of this region. Some also told that it will be the fulfillment of the promise of their popular demand which is being demanded over the years in Punjab. Moreover, in the negative consequences by not establishing or neglecting the issue of partition of Punjab the majority revealed that it will provoke lingual and regional clash and also will escalate the conflict between lower and upper Punjab. Not only this, they were also against the restoration of Bahawalpur State because they perceived it further division of Punjab that will not be favorable to integrity of the country. But almost all respondents were in favor to the induction of Bahawalpur into the new province after division of the Punjab. But when they asked about their active participation almost all religious respondents declined that they neither have become part of this movement nor they have delivered a religious sermon of such kind in the Masjid to elaborate the benefits and significance of the new province. Nearly all participants favored the new province but on administrative basis, not on linguistic or ethnic grounds and more than 80% proposed that the new name of the province must be "*Janoobi Punjab*" and also suggested Multan as capital city of new province instead of Bahawalpur or Dera Ghazi Khan.

Regarding the effective role of mainstream political parties in order to form new province, the slight difference was explored regarding contribution of PML (N) and PPP. But among Shias and Brailvis PPP was most effective role playing party on the issue of new provinces and it was because the strength of these schools of thought are relatively greater in Multan. Secondly PPP highlighted

her political agenda and politically contributed actively in this region that was the main reason behind their perception about this political party.

The majority of the respondents were of the view that the local political parties have been politicizing this issue in order to enhance their vote bank and also shared their observation that this political movement has been hijacked by the mainstream political parties for the sake of political mileage by superseding and undermining the local and regional level political parties which have been proactively making struggle in order to translate dream into reality for the several decades to establish new province in the southern part of the Punjab. They also expressed their concerns and apprehensions that after general elections 2013 this promise to establish new province would be neglected by the new elected government and that would prove a political slogan in the election campaigning merely to grab to vote bank.

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