

# Voters and Foreign Policy: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment in Pakistan\*

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## Abstract

How much are politicians constrained by the preferences of their voters? How much weight do voters place on foreign policy when deciding between electoral candidates? In traditional surveys in Pakistan, the vast majority of respondents identify India as an enemy and a serious threat to Pakistan. What these studies do not assess is whether these beliefs affect voting behavior. What if a political candidate emerged that had otherwise popular characteristics, but advocated policies of friendship toward India? Using a conjoint survey experiment conducted on a population-based sample of 1,990 respondents in Pakistan, we find that voters punish politicians who advocate a friendly policy toward India, but only modestly. Candidate attitudes toward India were the least meaningful characteristic for voter choice among five characteristics tested. While Pakistan is widely viewed as a garrison state where the military largely determines foreign policy (Fair 2014; Shah 2014; Paul 2014), our results help distinguish whether the Pakistan military achieves its policy preferences because of institutional power alone, or because public support for policies of antagonism toward India dissuades civilian politicians from policies of peace. Our results suggest the former. We also describe individual-level correlates for support of policies of friendship or antagonism toward India. Rural, less educated voters are more likely to punish politicians advocating peaceful policies.

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\* Special thanks to participants in the Brown-Harvard-MIT South Asian Politics Seminar for their feedback on this project.

In 1999, Pakistan and India fought a limited war over a mountainous section of the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir, near the Indian town of Kargil. That war represents the only clear occasion in which a conflict between two democracies escalated to a war.<sup>1</sup> Why did the democratic peace not operate in this instance? More generally, why have long periods of democratic rule in Pakistan not been associated with the end of its multi-decade rivalry with India? In fact, for a decade prior to the Kargil war civilian governments had overseen a general worsening of relations between Pakistan and India, with those governments using militant proxies to support a partially indigenous insurgency in Indian-administered Kashmir.

Experts tend to explain this puzzling behavior in one of two ways. First, they argue that Pakistan was not, and is not, meaningfully democratic, despite any formal coding in cross-national datasets. Instead, the Pakistan military, and the Pakistan Army in particular, overrules, ignores, or subverts civilian control of national security policy. That is, Pakistan's international behavior is conflictual because the army prefers it to be (Fair 2014; Shah 2014; Paul 2014).

Alternatively, others suggest that Pakistani civilian politicians adopt hawkish policies in substantial part due to popular pressures to do so. Thus Hagerty (1998) argues in his study of an earlier Kashmir crisis, "The available evidence suggests that in [India and Pakistan], public opinion, a centerpiece of the 'democratic peace' thesis, actually exacerbated rather than dampened tendencies toward conflict." Similarly, Fortna (2004: 101) concludes, "The domestic stakes of Kashmir continue to stand in the way of peace between India and Pakistan." In making this claim, she references, in part, the decision by the civilian government led by Nawaz Sharif in 1999 to ultimately de-escalate

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<sup>1</sup> More formally, a circumstance in which two states that both have Polity IV scores greater than 7 engaged in armed conflict that results in over 1,000 battle deaths.

the Kargil conflict by withdrawing Pakistani forces, which she argues “was extremely unpopular and contributed to his downfall in a coup in October.”

Current research does not allow us to fully determine which of these two mechanisms is responsible for the perpetuation of India-Pakistan conflict even during periods of nominally democratic government in both capitals. It is therefore difficult to discern whether the Pakistan military achieves its policy preferences because of institutional power alone, or because public support for policies of antagonism toward India dissuades civilian politicians from policies of peace. Indeed, if the public strongly supports conflict with India, this could confound efforts to prove military influence in Pakistani politics since the strength of the military would be derivative and perhaps epiphenomonal to popular preference.

This paper tests the second of the two proposed explanatory pathways, in particular, whether civilian politicians are constrained by the preferences of their supporters. It presents the results of a conjoint survey experiment carried out among 1,990 respondents in three provinces in Pakistan examining whether voters are willing to punish politicians that advocate more conciliatory policies toward India. We find that, despite strongly held anti-India opinions, respondents were largely unconcerned by the foreign policy positions of hypothetical candidates. Respondents did penalize candidates for advocating friendly relations with India, but the scale of that penalty was modest. Our research design—unlike isolated questions about voter preference—allows us to test candidate positions on India vis-à-vis other candidate attributes; we find that a candidate’s stance on India was the least consequential among five characteristics tested in the experiment, despite the oversized role that the country plays in Pakistani politics. This evidence strongly suggests that the Pakistan military, rather than popular demand, determines Pakistan’s national security policy.

We further find several instructive heterogeneous treatment effects with potential implications for the future of the India-Pakistan rivalry. In particular, more educated respondents,

respondents in urban areas, younger respondents, and supporters of the current ruling party (the Pakistan Muslims League-Nawaz) are all more likely to support candidates who advocate peaceful relations with India than their less educated, rural, older, or alternative party-supporting peers. As a consequence, the current Pakistan government may have considerable latitude from its own constituents to pursue more peaceful policies with India, and that latitude may grow over time. This does not indicate imminent or inevitable peace, but nor does it suggest that Pakistan is doomed to conflict if voters become more influential in national security policy outcomes.

Our findings speak to broader literatures about the democratic peace, civil-military relations, public opinion and foreign policy, and enduring rivalry. The existing literature on voters and foreign policy outcomes was developed in a Western, primarily U.S., context. The developing world, where party systems often vary wildly from their Western counterparts, may offer different pathways between vote preferences and foreign policy outcomes. Narang and Staniland (n.d.), for instance, in their study of neighboring India find “overwhelming evidence” that politicians have considerable leeway to pursue policies of their preference without fear of voter sanction, which in turn leads those politicians to focus on other areas and cede foreign policy to bureaucrats and diplomats instead. Pakistan where—as our survey results suggest—voters are largely disinterested in the foreign policy position of political candidates offers another example in which patronage-based party systems may vary from more programmatic alternatives.

## **I. Theory: Public Opinion and Foreign Policy**

How much are politicians constrained by the preferences of their voters? How much weight do voters place on foreign policy when deciding between electoral candidates?

The relationship between society and foreign policy is at the heart of a number of theories of international relations. As a class, such theories might be categorized using Waltz’s (1959) “second-

image” label, in which he distinguished between those theories of international politics that had their source in the nature of individuals (“first-image”), societies (“second-image”), or the structure of the international system (“third-image”). Alternatively, Moravcsik (1997) has argued that all liberal theories of international politics take as their basis the belief that states represent some subset of domestic society, with those societal preferences aggregated via political institutions. Any theory where voters have meaningful sway would be a “second-image” or liberal explanation, though not all second-image or liberal explanations require an important role for voters.

Most theories that do involve a meaningful role for voters in foreign policy outcomes can be approached in a “principal-agent” framework. Voters serve as a principal and select a ruler or government to act as their agent. Since voters in large communities cannot govern directly, they must rely on an appointed agent to act in their best interests. That agent may have other preferences, so voters may attempt various strategies to align the agent’s behavior with their wishes.

One strategy would be a concerted effort for voters to identify leaders and representatives that share their preferences. In order for such a *preference similarity* approach to meaningfully affect foreign policy, several conditions need to be met. Aldrich and colleagues (1989) identified three. First, did voters have coherent beliefs on foreign policy? Second, did they view foreign policy problems as important? Third, did they believe the political parties offered distinct proposals to deal with those foreign policy problems? If each answer was affirmative, then “attitudes on foreign affairs should have a significant effect on electoral choice, as great or greater than that of domestic issues.” (Aldrich et al 1989, 132; also see Aldrich et al. 2006)

If these criteria are met, then voters can shape foreign policy in a number of different ways. Democracies, for instance, appear to be less capable of offering territorial concessions than autocratic states, leading to longer and less tractable territorial disputes (Huth and Allee 2002). Democratic leaders may feel compelled by their voters to engage in humanitarian interventions even

when such interventions run contrary to what those leaders view as the state's strategic interests (Bass 2008). Democracies may be more prone to "outbidding behavior" where hawkish publics put pressure on their politicians to support more hawkish foreign policy (Colaresi 2005). Such outbidding theories need not take voter preferences as fixed, but instead some propose an iterative process whereby initially hawkish publics lead to more hawkish politicians who in turn offer messages that create even more hawkish publics (Snyder 2000).

These theories all indicate that democracy—the form of government that gives the greatest weight to voter preferences—is not always associated with more cooperative international behavior. There are also many more optimistic theories about democracy, most notably varied theories associated with the democratic peace, which require publics in a democracy to constrain their elites in international crises, especially crises with other democratic states (cf. Owen 1994).

In the remainder of this paper, we examine whether such theories apply to Pakistan and its voters.

## **II. Context**

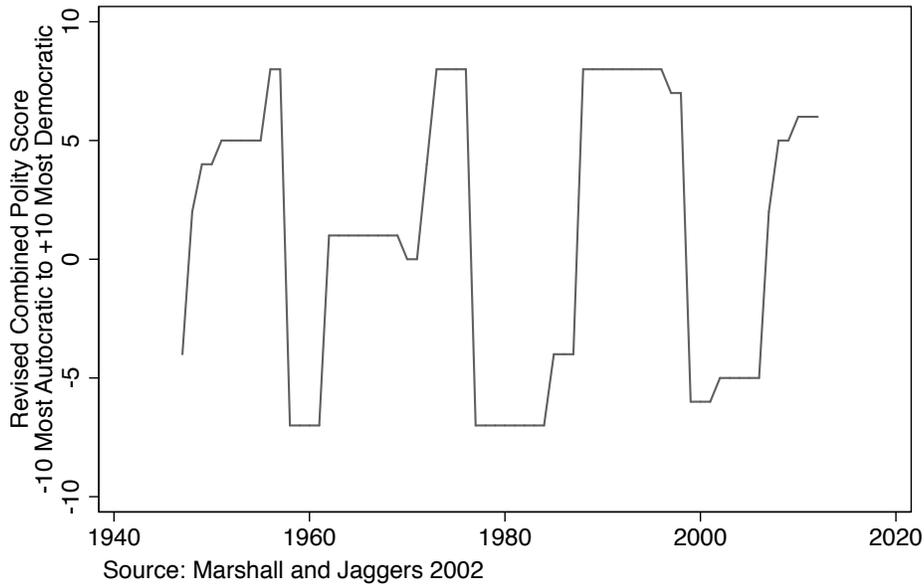
Most interstate rivalries begin at state formation (Valeriano 2012). India and Pakistan provide an archetypical case. Celebrations of independence in both capitals in August 1947 were marred by reports of widespread violence associated with the partition of the former colonial British India into two states, a Hindu-majority but avowedly secular India and a Muslim-majority Pakistan. Within three months of independence, India and Pakistan fought their first war, over the Muslim-majority former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was the first of four wars between India and Pakistan; others followed in 1965, 1971, and 1999. Three of those four wars were fought over the status of Jammu and Kashmir. Periods between the wars were not tranquil either. From 1947 to

2001, the Correlates of War project records 36 years when there was at least one new or ongoing use of military force by either India or Pakistan against the other (see figure below).



Simultaneous with this pattern of interstate conflict, Pakistan has struggled to build durable democratic rule. Military chiefs overthrew the government of the day in 1958, 1969, 1977, and 1999. Those military dictators were unable to consolidate autocracy, as well, and military regimes transitioned to democracy in 1971, 1988, and 2008 (see figure below).

### Unstable Regimes in Pakistan, 1947-2012



Pakistani politics is then characterized both by fragile democratic rule as well as the inability (or unwillingness) of the military to consolidate power for an extended period.

While certain political parties in Pakistan are considered to be more amenable to improving relations with India, this has rarely translated into coherent policy platforms. Nonetheless, parties can be broadly grouped into center-right and center-left parties, which are thought to impact their attitudes towards India. In particular, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), considered a center-right and fiscally conservative party, maintains a stronghold among industrialists in Punjab and controlled the national government at the time of the survey. The PML-N emerged to national prominence with military support and with sympathetic ties to conservative Muslim clerics, who frequently maintain anti-India stances. The PML-N, however, pursued a major conciliatory initiative with India in 1999 prior to the Kargil war, and more recently Nawaz Sharif appeared inclined toward cooperative relations with the new Indian government led by Narendra Modi after 2014. The PML-N is a microcosm of Pakistani political parties in that it has, at various times, been associated with

differing positions on India and its membership and elected representatives hold varying views even today.

The left-of-center Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has a stronghold in Sindh province, where it led the provincial government at the time of the survey, and was a member of the national opposition. The PPP's founder, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was stridently anti-India in rhetoric, but his daughter, Benazir Bhutto, who led the party from the 1980s until her death in 2007, was more amenable to friendly ties with India, even though governments under her leadership occasionally engaged in violent anti-India activities. The center-right Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf is a relative newcomer to the scene, was founded in 1996 by former cricket player Imran Khan, and had no governing role at the national level when the survey was administered, though it led the governing coalition in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. In the 2013 election, it received the third largest number of seats in the national assembly. Other parties, such as the left-of-center, almost exclusively Pashtun Awami National Party (ANP), the Karachi-based Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), and the Sindh-based Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) have been in and out of differing coalitions at the provincial and national level, and all exhibit some degree of heterodoxy on views toward India.

In addition to party-based variation (as well as intra-party variance), there is a general perception that the residents of Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province, are more anti-Indian than those of Pakistan's other three provinces. Punjab suffered the most violence of any province during partition (Aiyar 1998), provides the largest share of the Pakistan Army officer corps (Fair and Nawaz 2011), and is the birth province for the overwhelming majority of the members in the largest anti-India militant group, the *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, or Army of the Pure (Fair 2013).

Nationalism is culturally transmitted through many channels, including private discourse, education, party messages, media, and official statements. Some research in Pakistan has focused on

public education, especially textbooks used in instruction. This research finds textbooks, especially for grades 9 and 10 (before students complete matriculation), contain substantial anti-India content (Afzal 2015; Nayyar and Salim 2005). In other work, Fair (2008) and Fair (2013), based on two separate samples of slain anti-India militants, found they were more educated than the average Pakistani, with matriculates being the largest single educational grouping. Outside of the Pakistan context, however, higher levels of education are typically associated with greater support for cooperative foreign policies (Holsti 2004; Wittkopf 1990; Wittkopf 1995).

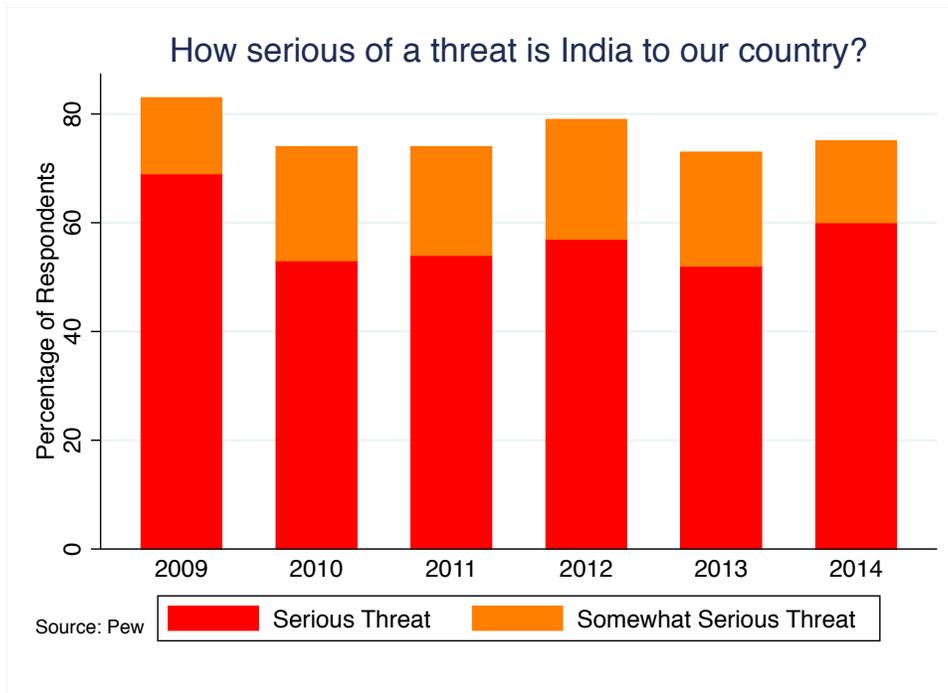
Pakistan, like much of the developing world, is urbanizing, and is projected to have a majority urban population in the next two to three decades (Blank et al. 2014). Historically, cities and urban areas played an important role in the development of nationalism (Gellner 1964), as this new imagined community replaced traditional structures in the lives of urban residents. Conversely, residents in rural areas may be more interested in traditional, patronage-based politics and disinterested in all programmatic appeals, including ones relating to foreign policy. If urban areas foster greater nationalism in their residents, then Pakistan's urbanization could contribute to stronger anti-India sentiment.

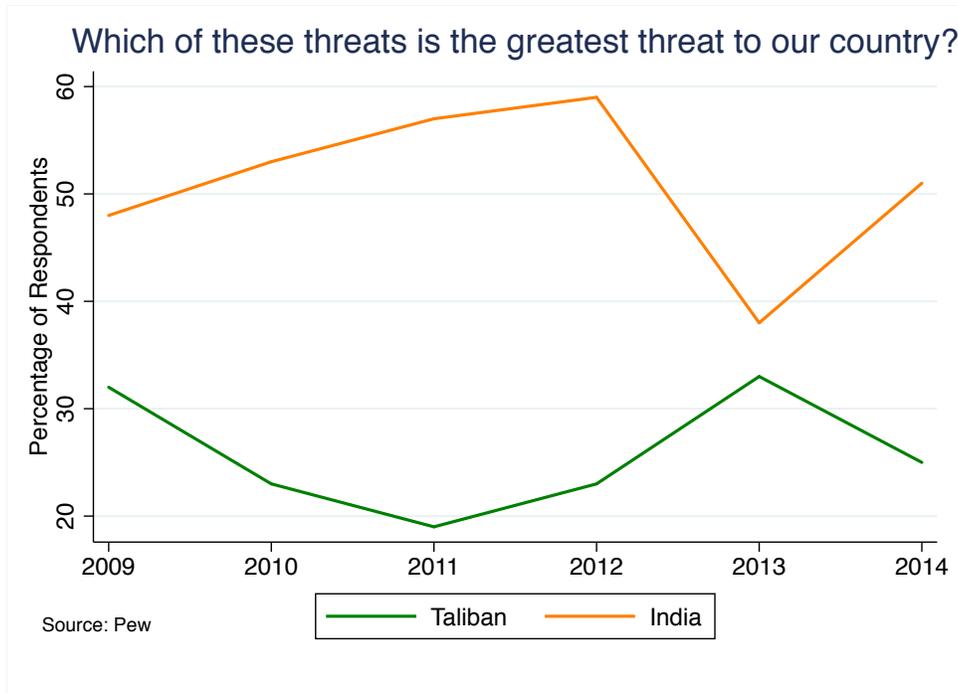
Finally, even if there is demographic and geographic variation in sentiment toward India, do Pakistani attitudes overall appear to meet the Aldrich et al. (1989) requirements of coherence and salience? Here the evidence suggests both requirements are met.<sup>2</sup> Pakistani attitudes towards India appear largely coherent. Since 2006, the Pew Research Center has found a majority of Pakistanis have an unfavorable view of India. A plurality of Pakistani respondents has always held a "very unfavorable" view of India, with the percentage of respondents holding this strong view exceeding 50 percent in most surveys in the last decade. Unsurprisingly, Pew also finds a majority of Pakistani

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<sup>2</sup> Aldrich's third requirement that there exist a meaningful choice for voters is something we vary experimentally below, though as the description of party attitudes earlier in this section indicates, there is meaningful variation in party and candidate attitudes toward India.

respondents label India as a “very serious threat” to their country since they began asking the question in 2009 (see figure below). Similarly, a majority of Pakistanis classified India as an “enemy of Pakistan” in Gallup Pakistan surveys separate from this project in 2006 and 2016. This identification of India as a “very serious threat” implies some degree of importance for foreign policy matters, which is the second criteria. India’s pronounced salience is also evident in that a majority of Pakistani respondents labeled India the “greatest threat to our country” when asked to compare India to the threat from the Taliban or Al Qaeda in Pew surveys (see figure below). Moreover, Pew found approximately 70 percent of respondents labeled “the situation in Kashmir,” the primary dispute between India and Pakistan, as a “very big problem” in surveys fielded from 2009 to 2013.





### III. Hypotheses

If voters appear to have clear views on India and if they believe policy toward India is important, do they in turn seek out elected representatives that hold similar preferences? And which voters are more concerned with rewarding or punishing legislators depending on their India policy? The preceding discussion motivates a series of hypotheses.

The following hypotheses were filed as part of a pre-analysis plan prior to the implementation of the survey and registered with Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP).<sup>3</sup> First, given the consistently anti-Indian sentiments expressed by the Pakistani populace, we predict that respondents will prefer those candidates advocating a harsh line with India and penalize those who propose friendlier ties.

*H1: Respondents will prefer the candidate taking a hard line on India relative to a friendlier approach with India.*

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<sup>3</sup> ID number 20150819AB.

We also expect heterogeneous differences on the effect of a candidate's stance toward India depending on characteristics of the respondent:

*H2: Respondents who have only completed primary education (or less) or respondents who have completed higher education will prefer candidates who advocate a peaceful relationship with India at greater rates than respondents who only have secondary education or some secondary education.*

*H3: Respondents from Punjab, or who are ethnically Punjabi, will prefer candidates who advocate a hardline with India at a greater rate than respondents from other provinces or non-Punjabi ethnicities.*

*H4: Young (< 30 years old) and old (>55 years old) respondents are more likely to prefer candidates who support peace with India than middle-aged respondents (between approximately 30 and 55 years old).*

After filing the pre-analysis plan, and also motivated by the discussion above, we identified several additional hypotheses, which should be viewed as exploratory.

*H5: Urban respondents will prefer candidates who advocate a hardline toward India over those advocating friendly relations in comparison to rural respondents.*

*H6: PML-N voters will prefer candidates who advocate friendly relations toward India compared to non-PML-N voters.*

#### **IV. Research Design**

Working with the Pakistan Institute for Public Opinion (an affiliate of Gallup International), we fielded a conjoint survey experiment of 1,990 respondents. The survey was carried out door-to-door by both all-male and all-female teams of enumerators. The enumerators were trained by one of the authors (Siddiqui) and Gallup staff that had been familiarized with the survey as a result of previous training with one of the authors. The survey was conducted in Urdu and consistent with Pakistani norms, women enumerators interviewed female respondents while men interviewed male respondents. Polling sites were randomly sampled from census blocs, with an over-representation of urban census blocs (as defined in the most recent country-wide census in 1998) in Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Balochistan was excluded from the survey due to security restrictions which prevented surveyors from accessing much of the region or asking sensitive questions. Within

each of these blocs, households were randomly selected. Within each household, the Kish grid method was used to identify individuals above the age of 18 to interview.

This led to a sample with 50 percent of respondents from Punjab, 20 percent from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 30 percent from Sindh. Respondents were 43 percent Punjabi, 20 percent Pashtun, 14 percent Sindhi, and 9 percent Mohajir. Thirty-eight percent of respondents are from census blocs classified as urban in the most recent (1998) Pakistan census. Alternatively, 17 percent of respondents come from constituencies classified as urban by the Center for Economic Research in Pakistan, with 40 percent of respondents in constituencies classified as mixed urban-rural. Men were more willing than females to take the survey, resulting in a sample that is 36 percent female. Pakistan's religious minorities have some incentive to hide their sectarian or religious status, but 5 percent of respondents classified themselves as Shi'a.

The experiment measured the effect of five candidate attributes (the independent variables) on the likelihood of voter support (the dependent variable). These independent variables were: political party affiliation, whether the politician had *biradari* (clan) support (or the politician's ethnicity), the politician's involvement in violence, his/her foreign policy position toward India, and his/her promised programmatic or clientelistic appeals.

Surveys in Karachi were slightly different from those carried out in the rest of the country. Here, ethnicity rather than *biradari* was presented as the form of candidate identity. This decision was made because ethnicity, and not *biradari*, is the relevant cleavage in Karachi, particularly pertaining to party politics. Equally, it would have been unrealistic to vary the ethnicity of candidates in the surveys carried out in other locations because it would be seen as unusual for too many non-Punjabis to be running for a national assembly seat in Punjab, for example. This would in itself have created confusion in the minds of the respondents, resulting in biased responses.

Each of the five attributes took on at least two values, and with the exception of ethnicity in Karachi, each was randomly assigned. In Karachi, ethnicity and partisan affiliation was linked such that all Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) candidates were Sindhis, all Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) candidates were Muhajir, all Awami National Party (ANP) candidates were Pashtun, while Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) candidates could be one of any of these three possible ethnicities. Because each attribute was randomly assigned, respondent could therefore be asked to choose between candidates who both belonged to the same party but who differed in all other facets.

Each respondent was asked to determine which of two hypothetical candidates for National Assembly he/she was more likely to vote for, in a forced choice design. As Hainmueller et al. explain, “This question closely resembles real-world voter decision making, in which respondents must cast a single ballot between competing candidates who vary on multiple dimensions” (2014, 4). Paired designs also reduce satisficing behavior, such as nondifferentiation (giving the same answer to a battery of similar questions) (Hainmueller et al 2015, 2399). The respondent was then also asked to rate each candidate on a Likert scale of 1-7 to measure the degree of respondents’ preference for a candidate on a scale that ranged from “not at all support” at 1 to “fully support” at 7. Higher numbers therefore indicate greater support for the candidate. Each respondent was shown three different candidate pairings. The order of candidate attributes appearing first was also randomized across respondents to prevent order effects.<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all of the results presented here utilize the “forced choice” design, but the results from the Likert scale design are fully consistent—substantively and statistically—with the findings outlined in this section.

Because literacy rates in Pakistan are low—the national average is approximately 55 percent but some rural districts have rates as low as 30 percent—and because the conjoint survey design was too complicated to merely read out-loud to respondents, we created pictorial representations of each

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<sup>4</sup> In other words, since each respondent received three pairings, the order was randomized in the initial pairing and then kept the same for that respondent for the subsequent two pairings.

candidate characteristic (cf. Meyer and Rosenzweig 2016). These pictures were printed on magnets that were then arranged on a board according to a random order determined by a tablet carried by each enumerator. Pictures were reviewed in focus groups and pretests beforehand to ensure that they were both a neutral and accurate representation of each candidate characteristic and that they made sense and were easily understood in the local context. Extensive pilots helped demonstrate that respondents were interested in the pictorial board and magnets, and reacted to the interactive nature of the questioning with greater understanding than when the questions were simply read out loud. Indeed, Gallup enumerators explained that they found that the respondents were much more engaged with the survey than in their previous experience carrying out surveys in similar contexts, and were therefore willing to dedicate their time to answering the questions. This qualitative feedback gave us further confidence in the research design.

**Table 1: Candidate Foreign Policy Potential Values**

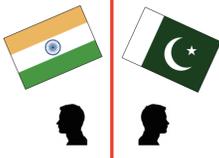
Attribute Description	The candidate supports a hard-line with India ( <i>india kay saath sakbt rawayay ka hami hai</i> )	The candidate supports friendly relations with India ( <i>india kay saath dosti kay taloqaat chabta hai</i> )
Attribute Pictorial Representation		

Table 1 above shows the pictorial representation associated with the two possible values that the foreign policy attribute could take (see Appendix for all possible candidate attribute values).

## V. Findings

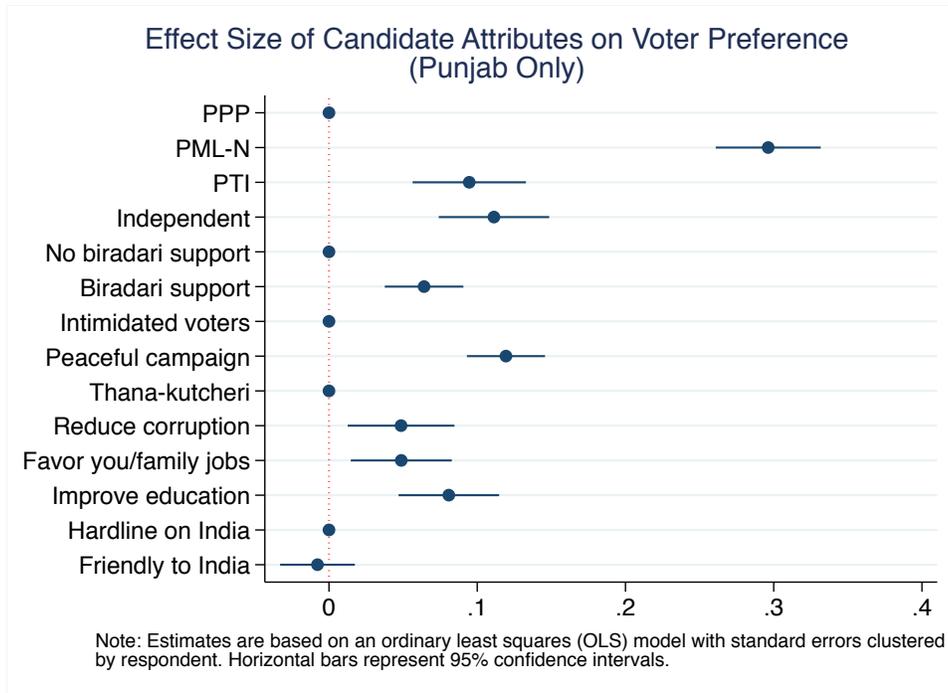
Are hypothetical parliamentary candidates punished for taking a friendly stance with India despite the overwhelming belief among respondents that India is a serious threat to Pakistan? The answer is they are only modestly penalized overall, and there is little evidence of punishment from some of the most important voting constituencies.

As noted above, the survey included both *rating* and *choice* outcomes, since respondents were asked to rate all candidates on a 7-point Likert scale and then were asked to select which of the two hypothetical candidates they preferred. Candidates supporting friendly relations with India were rated 0.01 points lower by respondents, a quantity indistinguishable from zero using conventional levels of statistical significance ( $p=.75$ ). Candidates supporting friendly relations with India had a 2 percent lower probability of being selected in the forced choice setup, a modest but statistically significant difference ( $p<.05$ ) from those advocating a hardline toward India.<sup>5</sup>

The figure below shows the effect size in the forced choice setup of all possible candidate attributes among respondents in Punjab province, the largest and most electorally significant of Pakistan's four provinces. Since political party contestation varies from province to province, it is preferable to examine party-related candidate attributes at the provincial level rather than the national level. In Punjab, the relatively modest consequences of candidates' positions toward India is fully apparent. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was and remains the most popular party in Punjab. Candidates from that party were 30 percent more likely to be selected by respondents than candidates from the least popular party in Punjab, the Pakistan People's Party

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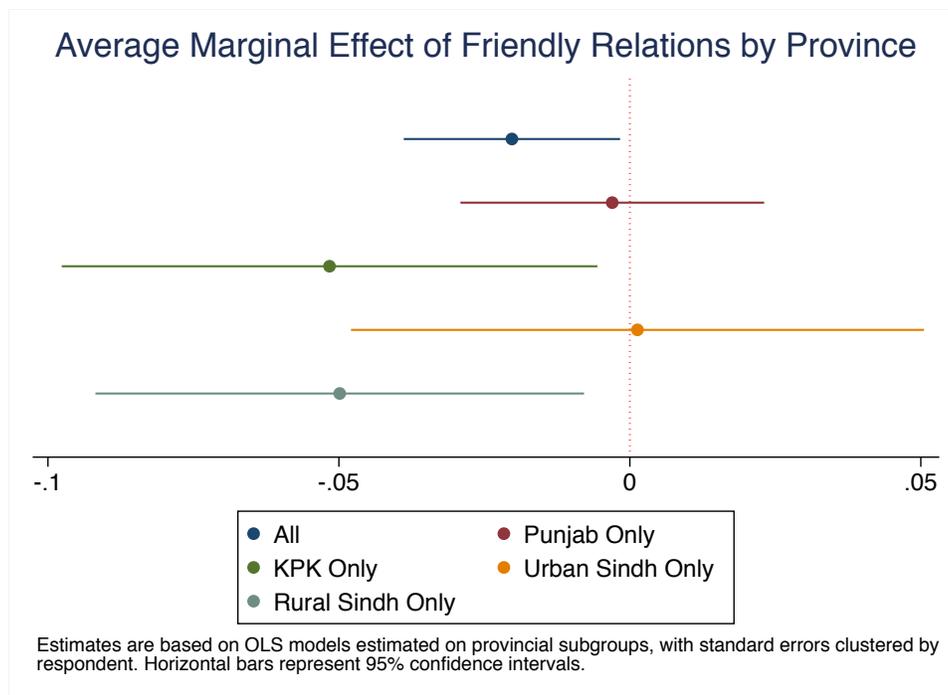
<sup>5</sup> Formally, this is the Average Causal Marginal Effect (ACME), which equals the increase in the population probability that a profile would be chosen if the value of the respective component were changed from the reference category to the specified category, averaged over all the possible values of the other components given the joint distribution of the profile attributes (Hainmueller et al 2014, 10-11).



(PPP). While this partisan attribute was the most consequential among those tested, other attributes were also meaningful for respondent preference. Whether or not a candidate was supported by a candidate's *biradari* (clan or kinship network) was associated with a 6.4 percent increase in the probability of a supported candidate being selected. Candidates that were said to have run a previously peaceful campaign were also rewarded, selected with a 11.9 percent greater frequency than those that were said to have attempted to intimidate voters in a past campaign. Finally, the experiment tested a series of clientelistic and programmatic appeals. Here the reference category were candidates that promised to help with *thana* (police station) and *kutcheri* (courthouse) problems, a common category of constituent services seeking to assist those having difficulty navigating the legal system. Alternative policy offerings included promises to provide jobs to the respondent (or his/her family), reduce corruption, or improve education. All of these alternatives increased the probability that a candidate would be selected by between 4.9 percent and 8.1 percent. In comparison, in Punjab, a candidate proposing a friendly stance toward India decreased the probability of being selected by less than 1 percent. This stance resulted in an indistinguishable level

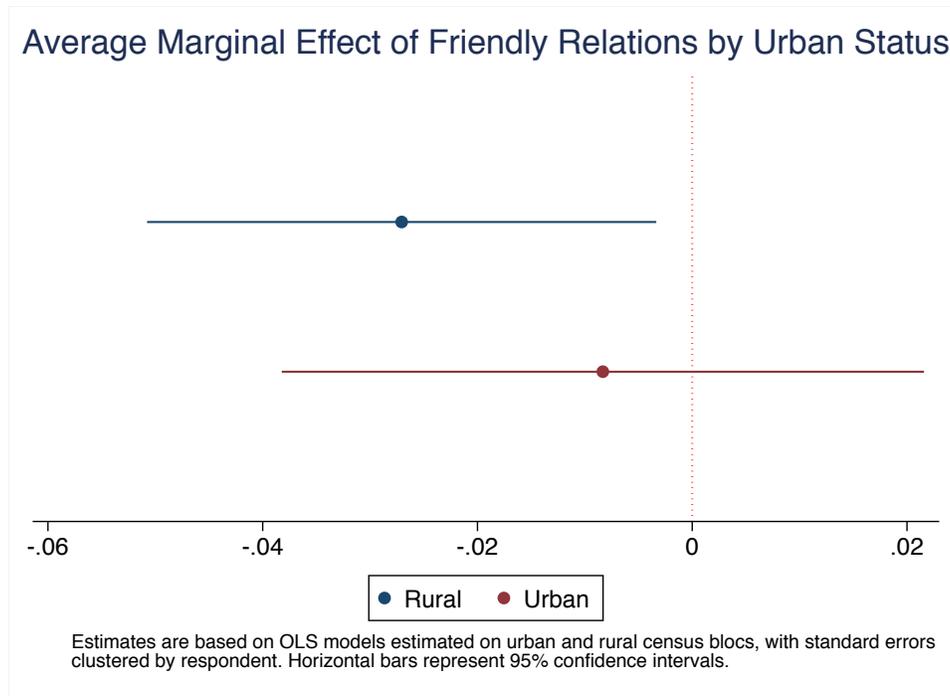
of support at conventional levels of significance ( $p=.55$ ) compared to those candidates favoring a hardline toward India.

Punjab was not the only area in which the candidates' stance toward India had an indistinguishable marginal effect on respondent preference. As the figure below shows, respondents in both Punjab and urban Sindh (the large cities of Karachi and Hyderabad) selected candidates that favored friendly relations at rates indistinguishable from those candidates that preferred hardline India stances. In contrast, in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and rural areas of Sindh province, respondents "punished" friendly stances by selecting candidates that held them approximately 5 percent less often than those with hardline stances, differences that are statistically distinguishable from zero ( $p<.05$ ). The evidence does not support the hypothesis that residents of Punjab will differentially favor hardline politicians; if anything evidence to the contrary is present.



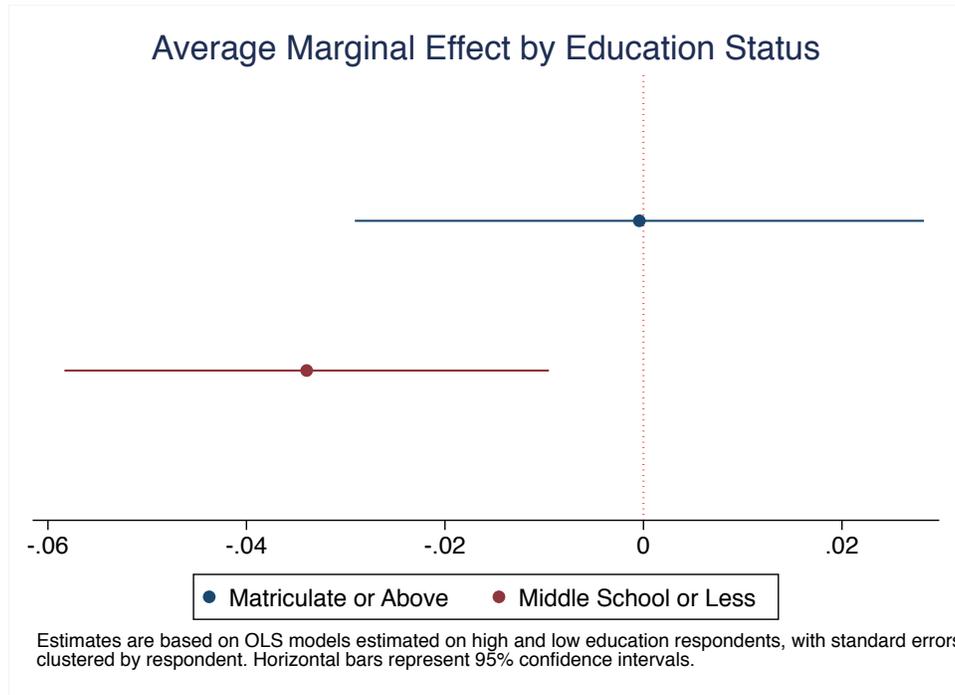
With respect to urban and rural respondents, here too the theoretical intuition the urbanization might be associated with higher levels of nationalism, and hence bellicosity, does not

seem evident in the data. While residents in urban areas were 0.8 percent less likely to select a candidate that favored friendly ties with India, the difference between candidates that favored a hardline policy was indistinguishable from zero at conventional levels of significance ( $p=.59$ ). Residents of rural areas, in contrast, were 2.7 percent less likely to select a candidate that proposed friendly relations with India ( $p<.05$ ).

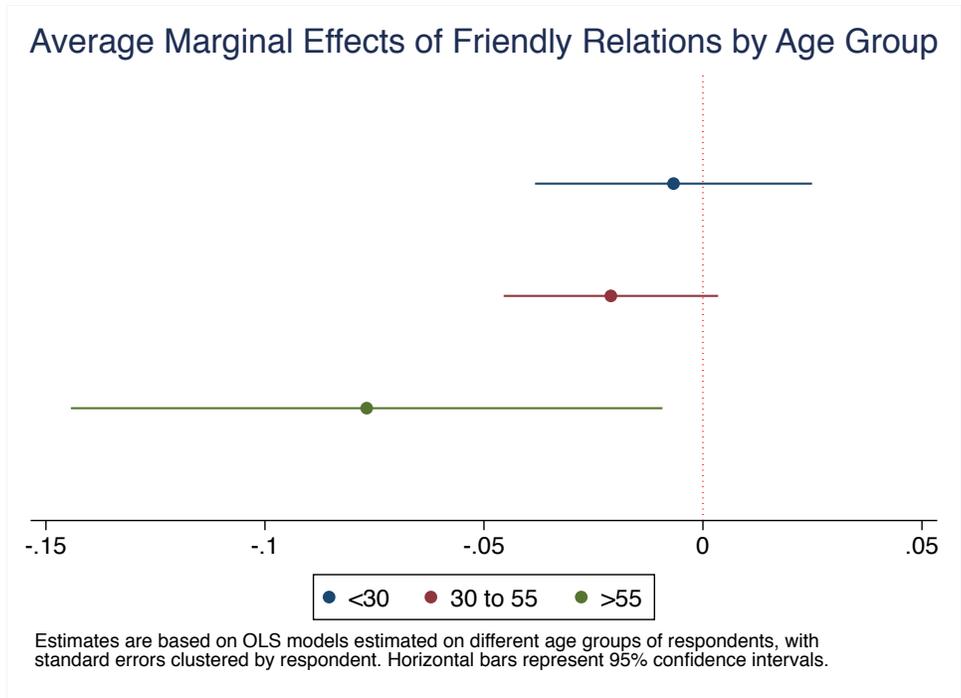


While evidence from biographical data from militants as well as studies of curricular content have led some to question the value of education in fostering more cooperative international views in Pakistanis, the results from this study tend to bolster the more traditional finding that education ameliorates rather than exacerbates hawkish tendencies. Respondents that had matriculated (completed exams following their 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade) demonstrated no inclination to punish or reward candidates (0.00 percent change in probability) for their policy stances toward India ( $p=.98$ ). In contrast, those respondents with a middle school education or below were 3.4 percent less likely to support a candidate advocating a friendly stance toward India. While we collected more fine-grained educational data in an attempt to identify potential non-linearities in the relationship between

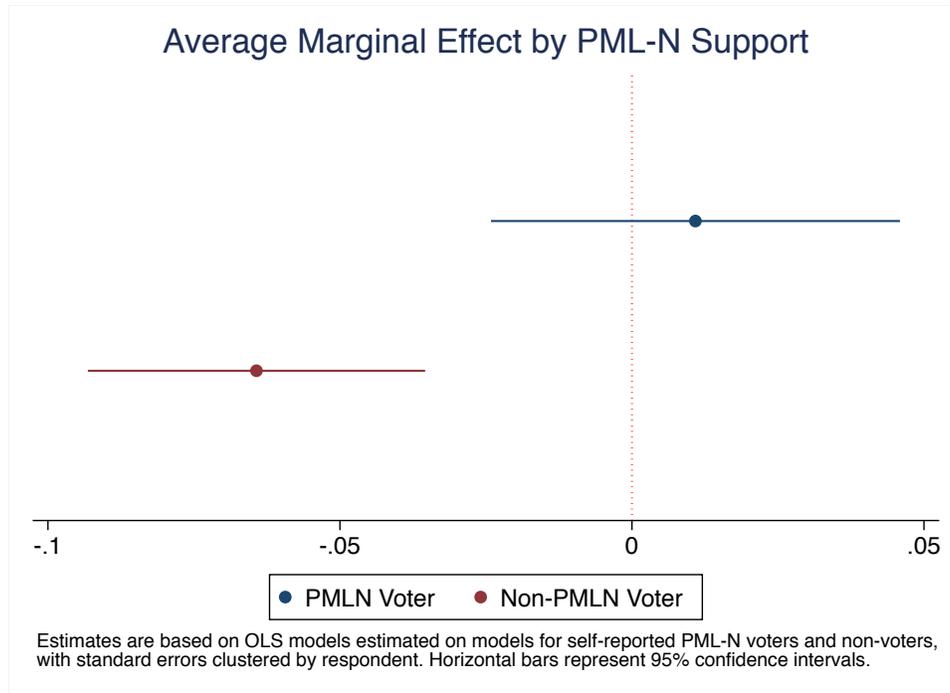
education and foreign policy preferences, there is little evidence to support more complicated functional forms (or larger numbers of educational categories) than the high/low educational distinction shown in the figure below.



Additionally, we hypothesized that both the young and the old would be more likely to prefer candidates who support peace with India than middle-aged respondents, consistent with a theory of youthful optimism for the young and conflict fatigue with the old. The results demonstrate that those under 30 were in fact least likely to prefer a candidate with a hawkish stance on India (with a 0.6 percent difference,  $p=.68$ ), while those older than 55 were most likely to do so (7.7 percent difference,  $p<.05$ ). Middle-aged respondents punished politicians advocating friendly policies toward India modestly (2.1 percent difference,  $p<.10$ ) in comparison to their older peers. Older respondents are only one generation removed from the violent partition that divided India and Pakistan, and also may have first-hand memories of three of Pakistan's four wars (in 1965, 1971, and 1999).



Finally, given Nawaz Sharif’s recent support for improved relations with India, we were interested in whether his voters—specifically, respondents who stated they had voted in the last election for the PML-N, Sharif’s party—would treat hypothetical candidates favoring peace differently than voters who supported other parties in the previous election. Here, there is substantial evidence that they did. PML-N voters did not oppose candidates favoring friendly policies, and if anything may have modestly favored them with a 1.1 percent greater likelihood of support, but with an effect estimate indistinguishable from zero ( $p=.54$ ). In contrast, non-PML-N voters punished candidates favoring friendly policies, selecting them 6.4 percent less often ( $p<.001$ ). This finding is also present in a less stringent definition of PML-N support, whether or not a respondent feels “close to” the PML-N, irrespective of their self-reported voting behavior in the past election.



## VI. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has presented the results of a conjoint survey experiment carried out among 1,990 respondents in three provinces in Pakistan, in which we find that—despite strongly held anti-Indian opinions—voters in Pakistan were largely unconcerned by the foreign policy positions of hypothetical candidates. Why do these findings matter? What implications do they have for research and policy?

First, they help clarify the sources of Pakistan’s persistent anti-India policy. They suggest that legislators, on average, have little to fear from whichever India policy they support. This does not eliminate the possibility that legislators face other, stronger sources of electoral pressure to pursue anti-India policies. For instance, patrons that can mobilize voters on behalf of an elected representative may have strongly held views, even if individual voters in the absence of patron instruction do not. Alternatively, anti-India voters may organize, protest, or canvas against pro-India representatives, generating broader electoral consequences than a survey experiment alone would

indicate. Our findings help bound the size of the electoral dangers an individual legislator might face, and open up new avenues for inquiry.

Second, our findings help underscore the difference between respondents' stated positions on policy matters—whether India is an important, serious problem for Pakistan, for instance—and the extent to which these positions matter when presented with possible candidates that espouse varying views on that policy. Issue questions on surveys suggest Pakistanis feel strongly and deeply about their country's stance toward India, and they have held those views for some time, but this survey experiment suggests that those views only weakly translate into candidate preference. The reason for this difference deserves additional scrutiny, though one obvious explanation may be that Pakistani respondents believe certain India answers are socially desirable, biasing their responses on simple survey responses in a way not as evident in a conjoint experimental setup when multiple candidate attributes are varied simultaneously (and hence the ability of enumerators or onlookers to judge the respondent is sharply reduced).

Third, we cannot rule out the possibility that respondents are largely indifferent to hypothetical candidate's foreign policy positions because they believe those candidates are only weakly responsible for foreign policy. Narang and Staniland (n.d.) hypothesize in the Indian context that political incentives on foreign policy issues vary across distinct “accountability environments,” with one important variable being the *clarity of responsibility* that elected officials have over foreign policy. In the Indian context, they argue that parliamentary structures, and especially the frequency of coalition governments in recent decades, muddle that responsibility, encouraging voters to focus on different candidate attributes where there is greater clarity, such as patronage. Many of their arguments are also true in the Pakistani context, though coalition governments are less common in Pakistan than they are in the politically more diverse India. Responsibility is muddled in an even more important way, though, in the Pakistani context, where the military and associated intelligence

agencies may be perceived as responsible for foreign policy, diminishing the role of any elected representative in that domain.

Fourth, and finally, the survey's findings return the emphasis to civil-military relations, and especially the role of the Pakistan Army in decision-making. While considerably more research remains to be done, our findings suggests very cautious optimism that if Pakistani civilians managed to consolidate control over the military, India policy would not automatically be conflictual because of strong public pressures. While it is certainly possible that Pakistani voters would alter their behavior in the event of a civilian government that had full autonomy on national security issues, it seems even more likely that civilian politicians would finally be able to pursue a foreign policy course that they believed advanced Pakistan's well-being.

## Appendix

**Table 1: Attributes for Candidate Profiles in Conjoint Experiment**

Attributes	Values
Party	Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Independent
Biradari support (in Punjab, KP, and rural Sindh)	Your biradari <u>has</u> decided to put its vote behind this candidate Your biradari has decided <u>not</u> to put its vote behind this candidate
OR	
Ethnicity (in Karachi)	Sindhi (if PPP) Pathan (if ANP) Muhajir (if MQM) Sindhi/Pathan/Muhajir (if PTI)
Election campaign/violence	During the last election, the candidate hired goondas (thugs) to intimidate voters During the last election, the candidate ran a peaceful campaign
Programmatic policies	The candidate vows to improve education in Pakistan The candidate vows to favor you and your family in solving any thana-kutcheri problems The candidate vows to favor you and your family in providing jobs The candidate vows to reduce corruption in Pakistan
Foreign policy	The candidate supports a hard-line with India The candidate supports friendly relations with India