



Disclaimer on Pre-Election Surveys

Gallup Pakistan has been conducting Pre-Election surveys since early 1980's in Pakistan. As the 2018 General Election season arrives, Gallup Pakistan and many other credible research institutions would be conducting surveys and polls. We would, in the interest of more informed and deliberated debate on media and other forums like to put forward the following note:

Pre-Election surveys are good enough to predict most likely winner and loser but cannot predict the margin of victory. Victory margin depends on who turns up to vote or stays at home.

One of the largest barriers faced by pre-election voting intention polling is estimating how many people will turn out to vote. Even people who say they are certain to cast a ballot sometimes don't turnout.

Similarly, voters can and do change their voting intentions prior to and on voting day, which can cause significant deviation in results. Gallup therefore advises caution and responsibility in use of Pre-election surveys.

Pre-election polls are more than just prediction for who would win. Although election polls attract a great deal of attention for their ability to predict the outcome of elections, their most important function is to help journalists and citizens understand the meaning of the campaign and the election. Polls help to explain, among other things, what issues are important, how candidate qualities may affect voters' decisions, and how much support there is for particular policy changes.

By Elections also add another layer of complexity to the science of prediction. Unlike the General Elections, studies have shown that the voters are less serious in their voting decisions and are prone to making momentary swings from one party to the other and also to change their intention of voting all together. The stakes are considered too low in By Polls by the voter – leading to one more reason for election outcomes to be determined on the Election Day and providing an eerily uphill task for pollsters to predict.