

Approval Ratings of Pakistan's Democratically Elected Prime Ministers from 1988 to 2015: Trends from Gallup Pakistan History Project Polls Data by Abdullah Tajwar, Research Executive at Gallup Pakistan

FOREWORD by Dr Ijaz Shafi Gilani (Chairman Gallup Pakistan)

I am pleased that Gallup Pakistan is taking the bold step of placing in the public domain, its Trend data on Perceptions of the Performance of Prime Ministers of Pakistan. The data was gathered over the last 3 decades (1988-2015). Indeed the data are not perfect, nor is the write up. Academic analysts might find many a flaws in it on technical grounds. Other analysts may be pleased with some parts and displeased with others depending on their perspective. If the decision was to rest solely with me I might have waited for resolving the technical issues, and treaded more cautiously in the write up on political sensibilities on several principled and technical grounds. I suppose there is now general consensus in the academia that any discourse on politics is a political act in itself. It may, however, be in the partisan or non-partisan domain. That choice exists. On the whole, all political discourse, including its analysis, requires basic rules to operate fairly. This is true for practitioners as well as analysts. And yet, our national political scene is too young, possibly still in its fragile phase, to claim that such rules and norms have developed, much less matured.

As a consequence, we sometimes experience despairingly hostile and unfair treatment of well-meaning desire to contribute to public discourse by placing our scientific work in the public domain. I can say (with a naughty smile) that over the years we have 'enjoyed' the pleasure and the pain of receiving 'unfairly exaggerated appreciation' on some occasions and 'unfairly negative criticism' on other occasions! It has often depended on whether our poll findings were found pleasing or disturbing by its readers. But we are on the whole optimistic that while political discourse as well as political analysis in Pakistan is not flawless, it is improving. We hope that our contributions, such as this Trend data Report, will contribute to that process. Our research and reporting is not flawless but we will follow the golden rule of being fair in our action and would expect fairness in return. With best wishes for the young Gallup team which has worked on the Report and all our colleagues in the academia and public discourse whose feedback would be most appreciated and valued.

Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gillani

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Public Opinion Polling & Democracy: An Introduction

The role of public opinion in a democracy cannot be understated. Theoretically, a democracy is a form of government that has its foundations in the masses for it is the masses that elect a government into power. Therefore, since democracies are supposed to be representative of the public vote, they have to be cognizant of the demands and wishes of their people so as to ensure their legitimacy and accountability. Public policy enacted by a government must therefore be based on or determined by what the masses opine.¹ Though the chances of public opinion actually shaping policy may depend on other factors, the premise that public opinion does nevertheless exert pressure on policy makers cannot be discarded. Thus, public opinion ranks as an important determinant of the actions taken by a government with regards to deciding between different courses of action.² In fact, the 'power of vote' that a democracy bestows on a citizen of the state at the time of elections is perhaps the most reflective and powerful manifestation of public opinion. It empowers the public to decide whether to accept or reject a political party. Furthermore, even in the time period between successive elections in countries, various democratic checks, such as initiative, referendum and recall, as well as public opinion polling, both commercial and state sponsored, also enable the opinion of the public to impact on various laws, measures and personalities within the state.³

Public Opinion has been seen to have a profound impact on effective public administration and governance. Over the years, there has been a gradual thrust in democratic countries to incorporate new and more accurate methods of ascertaining the views of the masses on various issues and agendas associated with administrative policies. This shift from more intuitive ways of judging public opinion towards a more scientific and research based method of public opinion polling has subsequently caused public opinion to have greater importance in the eyes of those in power.⁴ One can observe an increase in the use of public relations offices

¹ Margolis, Michael. "Public Opinion, Polling, and Political Behavior." The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 472, Polling (March 1984): 61-71.

² Verma, Vishwanath Prasad. "Public Opinion and Democracy ." The Indian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 17, No. 4 (October-December 1956): 311-321.

³ Verma, Vishwanath Prasad. "Public Opinion and Democracy ." The Indian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 17, No. 4 (October-December 1956): 311-321.

⁴ Truman, David B. "Public Opinion Research as a Tool of Public Administration ." Public Administration Review, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1945): 62-72.

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and publicity mechanisms. These offices and institutions have been established upon the increasing necessity of informing and gauging public opinion. "The different administrative offices are under the constant necessity of recognizing the trend of public opinions and have to explain their policy and action to the public. The public has to be convinced before it can lend its cooperation."⁵ It is this trend that has given rise to the popularity of scientific public opinion polling as a valid and accurate measure of public opinion.

Scientific opinion polling gained credence with developments in the scientific sampling theory as statisticians the world over warmed up to the idea of a representative sample of the population being selected on the principles of 'random selection' in the course of the first half of the twentieth century.⁶ A surge in the popularity of public opinion polling came in the wake of the elections of 1936 in the United States of America when George Gallup successfully predicted the winner by the use of scientific opinion polling. The closeness of the actual election results with those unearthed by the poll lent further wind to the importance of this discipline. Thus, public opinion polling gradually became "the sole measure of public opinion".⁷ Public opinion is now not only restricted to politics but has also expanded to include views and opinions on all aspects of society such as opinions on social issues, religious events, popularity of consumer goods and so on and so forth. Nevertheless, the most important use of public opinion polling lies in the political and administrative domain of a democratic country. It enables policy makers to at least be aware of public sentiment and opinion of a particular public policy item. This has become more pronounced in the wake of mass communication and information technology which has enabled vast sources of information such as information on political figures, parties, public policies, administrative inefficiencies, institutional corruption, etc. to become available to the public.⁸ Therefore, in light of an increasing proportion of the public becoming well informed on matters pertaining to the political scenario within their country, public opinion polls have gained an added measure of legitimacy.

⁵ Verma, Vishwanath Prasad. "Public Opinion and Democracy ." The Indian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 17, No. 4 (October-December 1956): 311-321.

⁶ Bethlehem, Jelke. "The rise of survey sampling." Statistics Netherlands (2009): 1-28.

⁷ Korzi, Michael J. "Lapsed Memory? The Roots of American Public Opinion Research ." Polity, Volume XXXIII, Number 1 (2000): 50-75.

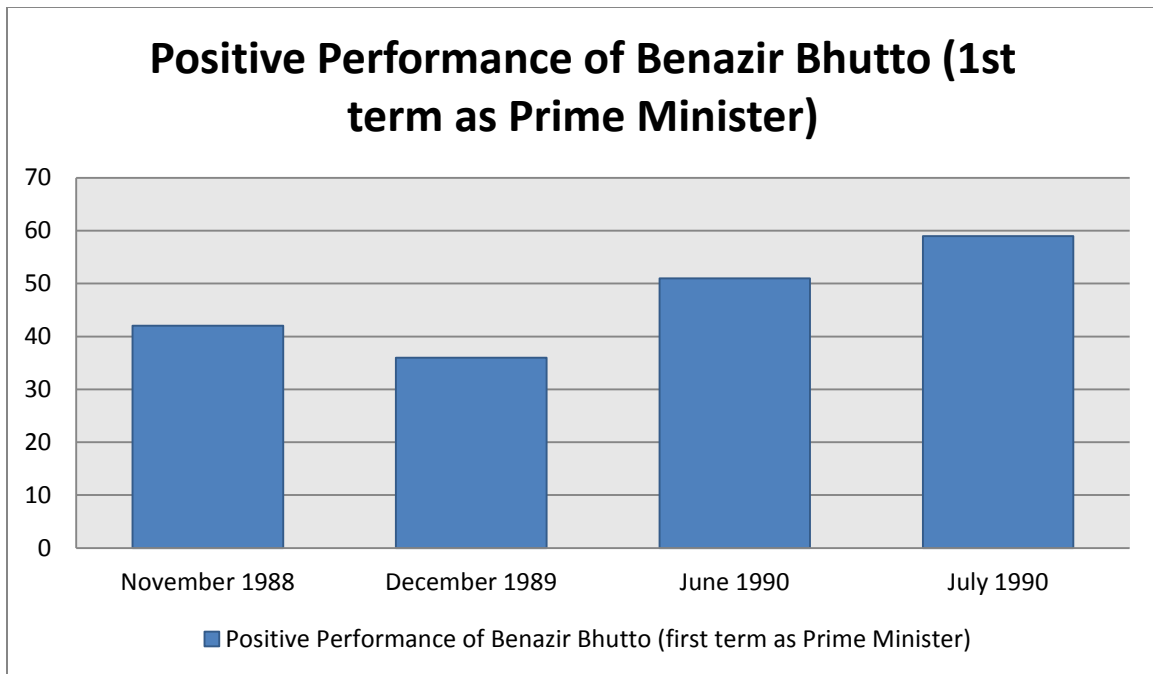
⁸ Cantrell, Paul D. "Opinion Polling and American Democratic Culture." International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1992): 402-437.

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Performance of Pakistan's Prime Ministers

Similarly in Pakistan, it was Gallup Pakistan that pioneered the field of scientific public opinion polling in Pakistan in the 80's. Since then, Gallup Pakistan has maintained an extensive record of public opinion polls on a myriad of issues pertaining to Pakistan. In the domain of politics, Gallup Pakistan polls, by virtue of their accuracy and representativeness, have become somewhat of an informal authority on ascertaining the public mood. One such question that Gallup Pakistan has regularly asked the Pakistani public has been regarding the performance of Prime Ministers heading the Country's democratically elected government of the time. Therefore, after years of unearthing the views of Pakistanis on the performance of their Prime Minister at a said time and place in history, Gallup Pakistan has successfully compiled a time-series data on this very question. Thus, polling data on performances for Prime Ministers starting from Benazir Bhutto in 1988 to Nawaz Sharif in 2015 have been tabulated and compiled by Gallup Pakistan. This time series data has enabled us to observe and subsequently attempt an analysis of the shifts in public opinion regarding the Prime Minister's performance during the tenure of his or her government. From table 1 present in the appendix on the last page of this document, separate bar graphs have been constructed with the aim of elucidating the varying trends in the positive performance of each Prime Minister during the tenure of their government. These trends will be analysed and explained in the context of Pakistan's political history.

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Source: Gallup Pakistan National Survey (covering 4 provinces and Urban/Rural areas)

As can be observed from the table above, Benazir Bhutto's performance was deemed positive by a significant proportion of the Pakistani public in a majority of the Gallup Pakistan polls carried out during her reign as the Prime Minister. In the months of June and July 1990, Benazir Bhutto's Positive Performance mark was over 50 percent, thus implying that a majority of Pakistanis had positively rated her performance. However, in the months of November 1988 and December 1989, her performance was seen positively by a proportion of less than 50 percent. Nevertheless, her positive performance marks of 42 percent for November 1988 and 36 percent for December 1989 are still significant since they represent the opinion of a sizeable proportion of the Pakistani public. The remainder of this section will therefore focus on interpreting these positive statistics by viewing them in Pakistan's political climate of the late eighties and early nineties.

In November of the year 1988, Benazir Bhutto's performance was being seen rather positively by the Pakistani public. This relatively higher public view of Benazir's performance as Prime Minister can be explained by Pakistan's political landscape in that year. General elections were slated to be held in the country after a hiatus of over a decade. General Zia ul Haq, who had ruled Pakistan for eleven years as a dictator, had died in a plane crash in August of the same year. Therefore, in the wake of his death, parliamentary democracy was finally returning to

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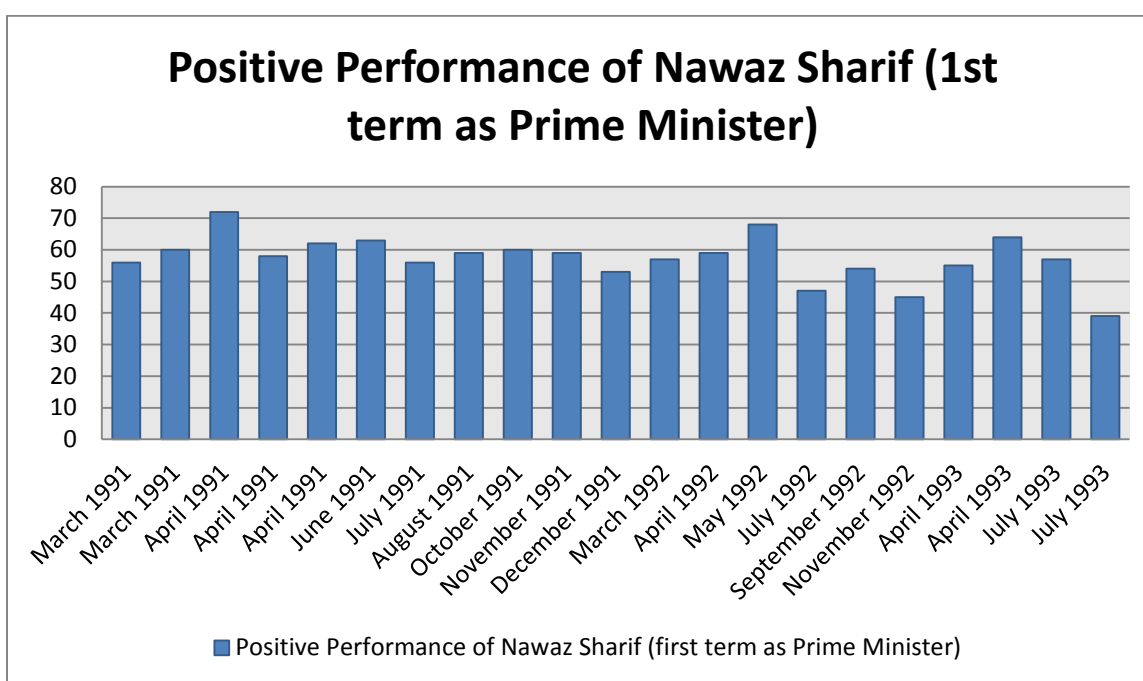
Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto's popularity was also enhanced by the fact that she was none other than the daughter of Pakistan's ex-Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a hugely popular figure in Pakistani politics and founder of the Pakistan People's Party, who had been hanged on the orders of none other than General Zia ul Haq himself, after Zia had toppled Zulfikar Bhutto's government in a coup d'état.⁹ However, this decision of Zia to execute Bhutto had only resulted in Zulfikar Ali Bhutto being hailed as a martyr by the millions of loyal voters of the Pakistan People's Party. Thus, it can reasonably be argued that there were many within Pakistan still sympathetic towards the cause of Benazir Bhutto based on the history of her family. With Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's legacy becoming eternal in the wake of his death, Benazir's victory in the general elections of 1988 made for an almost fairy tale ending. Benazir, the prodigal daughter, had successfully avenged her late father by bringing democracy back to Pakistan and ushering in a new era based on the principles of political freedom and liberty. Thus, there was a distinct air of hopefulness in the Pakistani political climate in this year which explains Benazir Bhutto's high positive performance of 42% in 1988.

However, gradually, Benazir's performance ratings began to decline, as can be observed by the relatively low positive performance rating of 36% in December 1989. This time was marked by a political tug of war between the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan. This political struggle had its roots primarily in General Zia ul Haq's decision to amend Pakistan's constitution in order to strengthen the executive powers of the President. As a result of this 'Eighth Amendment' passed during General Zia's time, Pakistan went from being a parliamentary democracy to a quasi-presidential form of government. Resultantly, Benazir Bhutto saw her influence being curtailed by the then President of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, thus making it difficult for her government to pass legislations as the President had the authority to veto them. Therefore, Her Government's performance stuttered as did her popularity, shown by the results of Gallup Pakistan Polls conducted in that year. Nevertheless, Benazir's popularity still remained positive regardless of the apparent failings of her government and even registered an increase in the months of June and July 1990 to 51% and 59% respectively. These positive spikes in Benazir's performance ratings can best be explained by the growing polarity between the office of the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Benazir's highest positive performance rating of 59 percent, recorded in July 1990, is significant because it came at a precarious time for Benazir's government, which had become under increasing pressure from

⁹ British Broadcasting Corporation. [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12966786). October 27, 2015. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12966786> (accessed November 6, 2015).

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the President and was under threat of dissolution. Therefore, these positive performance ratings given by Pakistan's majority, represented, in a way, the support of the majority for a truly democratic form of government based on coequality between the legislative and the executive, as opposed to the current status quo which was heavily tilted in favour of the President. However, any hope of a return to the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan in its original form was dashed as Benazir Bhutto's government was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq in August of 1990, thus marking the start of the last decade of the twentieth century for Pakistan; a decade that would be characterized by overbearing Presidents and shaky elected governments.



Source: Gallup Pakistan National Survey (covering 4 provinces and Urban/Rural areas)

In the fresh elections held after the ouster of Benazir's PPP from government, The Islamic Democratic Alliance, known in Pakistan as the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) won the elections and came into power. The IJI was a conglomerate of various right wing political parties which had joined forces against the leftist Pakistan People's Party. The largest party within the Alliance was the PML-N, headed by Nawaz Sharif, who took charge of the position of Prime

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Minister after winning the elections. In the polls conducted by Gallup Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif's popularity soared. In the six surveys conducted by Gallup Pakistan till June 1991, Nawaz Sharif had an astonishing average positive performance rating of over 50 percent. These ratings imply that an overwhelming majority of Pakistan's public was pleased with the performance of Nawaz Sharif as Prime Minister of Pakistan in the initial months following the general elections. Such overwhelming public approval so early on necessitates a plausible explanation, which can be unearthed by delving in the politics of the 90's. One probable driver of Nawaz Sharif's high performance ratings can be attributed to the fact that Nawaz Sharif's PML-N and the broader Islami Jamhoori Ittehad were conservative parties, and hence represented the more ideologically and religiously orthodox strata of Pakistan's society. Nawaz Sharif and the PML-N were surviving remnants of General Zia-ul-Haq's era, as Nawaz Sharif had served as Chief Minister of Punjab for Zia's government. A foundational pillar of Zia-ul-Haq's regime was His Islamisation Programme. As a result of that policy, Islam had successfully become institutionalized in the country and various political figures and parties operating in Pakistan had made substantial forays in the political landscape of the Country, thereby enhancing their influence and prestige among the masses. Since Nawaz Sharif himself had been a proponent of the policy of Islamisation by virtue of being a Chief Minister of Zia's Government, His victory in the general elections of 1990 was therefore perceived as a victory for Pakistan's religious right. This claim can be furthered by the fact that the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad was an overwhelming conglomerate of religious parties, such as the Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamaat Ulema-e-Pakistan; Nizam-e-Mustafa Group; Markazi Jamaat-e-Ehle Hadith (Lakhvi group), Jamaat-e-Mashaikh Pakistan; Azad Group and Hizbullah Jihad. Therefore, at least for the more religious minded lot, Nawaz Sharif was seen as a counter thesis to the socialist Pakistan People's Party and the secular Muttahida Qaumi Movement. Many such religious reforms enacted during Nawaz Sharif's reign, such as the Shariat Bill of 1991, were meant to appease the public and sustain the Muslim League's popularity within the masses as a party that took serious care and respect for the principles of Islam.

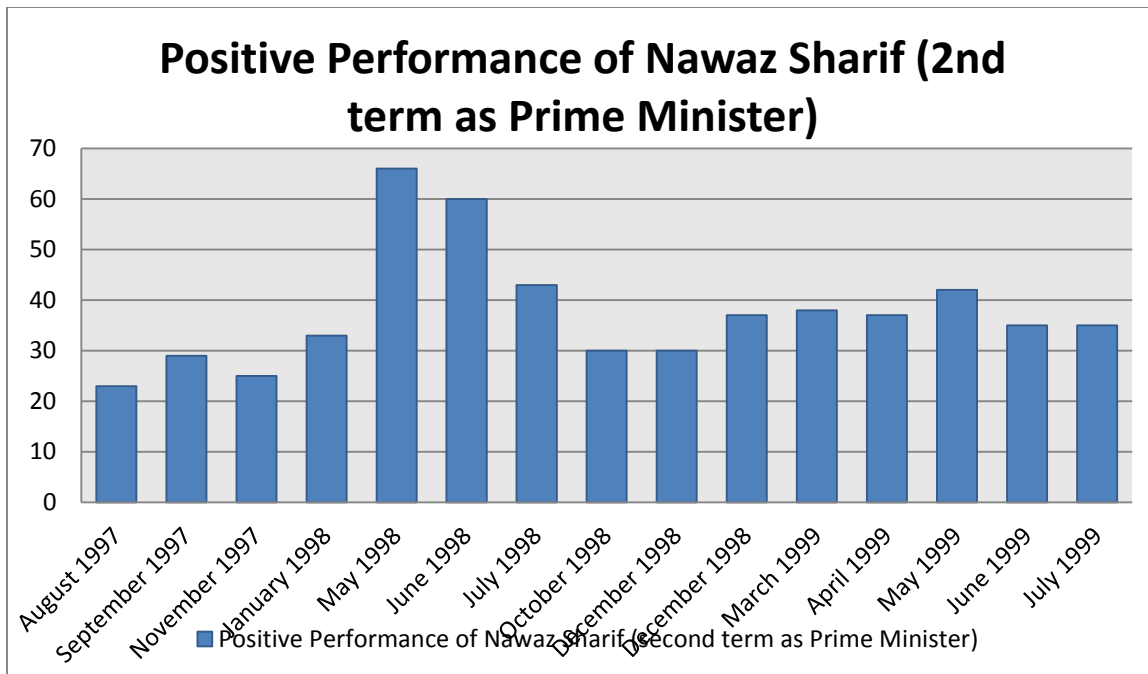
Nawaz Sharif continued to maintain an overall positive performance rating of over 50 percent till the end of his tenure in 1993, when his government was dismissed by the incumbent president of the time, mainly because of his economic reforms. Nawaz Sharif's government adopted a policy of economic liberalization, whereby many public enterprises were denationalized so as to aid in the country's economic growth. Focusing on free-market reforms, Nawaz Sharif encouraged and enabled the private sector to open up industries in all the major sectors of Pakistan, so as to reduce unemployment. As a result of his liberal economic policies,

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a number of private enterprises began operating within Pakistan. Thus, it can be reasonably argued that the positive impact of Nawaz Sharif's economic policies was not on the public, which felt that He was taking Pakistan on the path of development and progress. However, there were some hiccups along the way, such as the Co-operatives societies scandal in 1992 that caused millions of Pakistanis to lose their money when it went bankrupt. Thus, Nawaz Sharif's positive ratings took a hit in 1992, falling below the 50 percent point in the latter months of that year.

More importantly, Nawaz Sharif had won the lion's share of seats in Punjab, Pakistan's largest province by far, in terms of population. Nawaz's popularity in Punjab was unquestionable. Therefore, in any representative sample of Pakistani population, the share of Punjab would undoubtedly be significant based on the fact that a majority of Pakistanis reside in Punjab. That is not to say that Nawaz Sharif did not carry out any developmental work in Punjab. On the contrary, Punjab flourished under Nawaz Sharif's leadership. The idea of a motorway linking Islamabad to Lahore was also envisaged by Nawaz Sharif in his first tenure as Prime Minister. Furthermore, agricultural and economic reforms begun by the government also aided in his popularity within the province. Therefore, Nawaz Sharif, all in all, maintained an overwhelmingly positive outlook among the people of Pakistan during his first tenure as Prime Minister, as can be seen from his positive performance ratings in all the time periods when Gallup Pakistan conducted their surveys.

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Nawaz Sharif's second term in office did not start on a very positive note as the results from Gallup Pakistan Polls conducted in August and November in 1997 give Nawaz Sharif a positive performance rating of just (23%) and (25%) respectively. These ratings are Nawaz Sharif's lowest by far, even after being compared to His ratings in His other two reigns as Prime Minister. These results are significant because they imply that at the start of his second tenure as Prime Minister, a majority of the public held a negative view about Nawaz Sharif's Performance since there was a greater percentage of people who felt that Nawaz Sharif's performance was 'bad' or 'very bad' as compared to the percentage of the public that felt His performance was 'good' or 'very good'. Table 1 attests to this claim as the proportion of people negatively rating his performance for these months was higher (24% in August and 28% in November 1997). This damning verdict of Nawaz Sharif's performance can partly be explained by the fact that his government was sworn in power once more under acrimonious circumstances as the previous government of Benazir Bhutto had been ousted out of power midway into its tenure by then President Farooq Leghari. Furthermore, by this time, the decade of 90s in Pakistani Politics had become characterized by a constant struggle for power between the Pakistan People's Party and the more conservative Pakistan Muslim League of Nawaz Sharif. Both parties were involved in a constant blame game not just amongst each other but also with the office of the President. Both parties, in their previous stints in power, had

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unsuccessfully tried to repeal the eighth amendment but had instead been ousted by the Presidents of those times. As a result of these continuous political upheavals, there was hardly any political stability within the country as both the Muslim League and the People's Party had not yet been able to complete their five years in power. As a result, each government kept meddling with or changing the policies of its predecessor, to adverse consequences. However, as Nawaz Sharif's policies gradually began to take shape, his net performance ratings experienced a positive upsurge as can be seen by the positive rating of Nawaz Sharif's performance crossing the 30 percent mark (33%) in January of 1998.

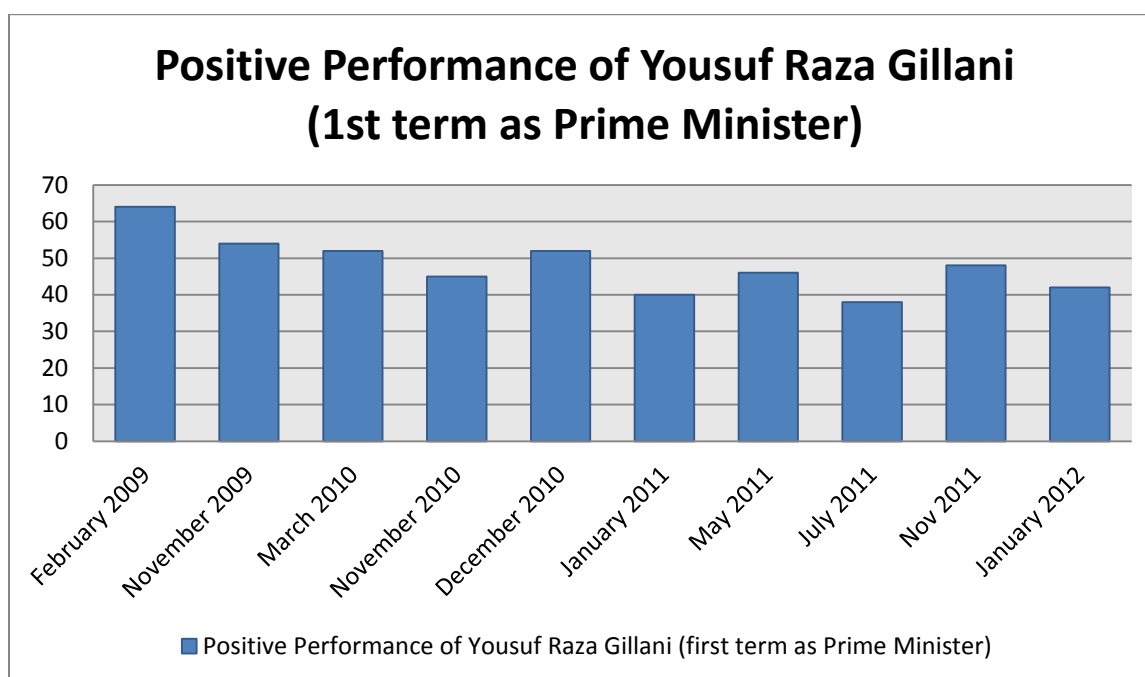
The month of May in the year 1998 was one of gargantuan proportions for Pakistan as well as the rest of the world. May marked the month when Pakistan became a Nuclear Power, after successful nuclear tests carried out in the province of Chagai in Baluchistan.¹⁰ Although Pakistan's nuclear tests were condemned internationally and the country was also subjected to economic sanctions by a number of states as well as the International Monetary Fund, at home, these nuclear tests were heralded as a victory of Pakistan and Islam as Pakistan also became the first Muslim country to possess nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Pakistan had successfully developed an effective deterrent to ward off the threat of aggression by India. Thus, Pakistan's entry into the exclusive club of states possessing nuclear weapons was well received by the Pakistani people and an entire nation rejoiced in the knowledge of the fact that Pakistan now had arguably the most effective weapon to counter almost any external security threat. Therefore, Nawaz Sharif and his government also cashed in on this public euphoria by claiming ownership of these nuclear tests since the tests had taken place in their government. Nawaz Sharif's highest positive performance ratings of (66%) and (60%) in his second tenure therefore came in the months of May and June 1998 respectively.

However, as the public's elation ebbed away and the reality of the economic implications of becoming a nuclear power began to take their toll on the people, Nawaz Sharif's popularity also suffered. From this point onwards till His ouster from office by General Pervez Musharraf, Nawaz Sharif's performance was not able to reach up to the highs experienced in May and June of 1998 and it stayed below the 50 percent mark till the end of his tenure. As Pakistan's debt rose and foreign reserves diminished, development and progress suffered. Subsequently, more

¹⁰ British Broadcasting Corporation. *www.bbc.com*. October 27, 2015. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12966786> (accessed November 6, 2015).

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people began finding fault with the incumbent leadership and Nawaz Sharif's ratings stopped being seen positively by a majority of the public.



Source: Gallup Pakistan National Survey (covering 4 provinces and Urban/Rural areas)

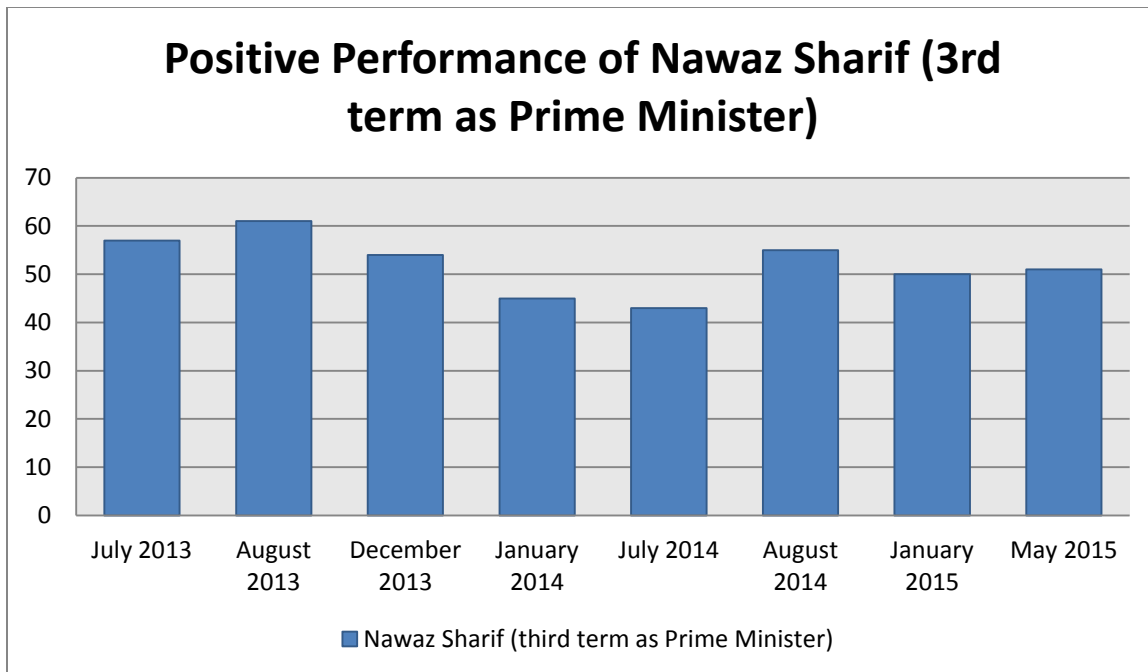
Yousuf Raza Gillani's reign as Pakistan's Prime Minister came in the aftermath of the general elections of 2008 which were won by the Pakistan People's Party. These general elections also came at a crucial juncture in the history of Pakistan as they signaled the beginning of the end for another military dictator of Pakistan, Parvez Musharraf. After a hiatus of eight years, democracy once again reigned supreme in Pakistan. The Pakistani public was once again exuding optimism regarding the political landscape of Pakistan. More importantly, these elections were made all the more significant as they were held in the wake of Benazir Bhutto's assassination at a political rally in 2007 just two months prior to the general elections. An entire nation had mourned the passing of Pakistan's iconic first and only female Prime Minister and a daughter of arguably the most famous political family of Pakistan. Many have since on argued that it was Benazir's death that inspired the victory of the Pakistan People's Party in the

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general elections of 2008. The proponents of this hypothesis claim that the People's Party's victory was brought about by a sizable segment of the public voting for the Party out of sheer sympathy. Such was the personality and standing of Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan and the larger world that one cannot just categorically dismiss this hypothesis.

Therefore, it was against this political backdrop that Yousuf Raza Gillani was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Initially, public sentiment was one of overwhelming support and optimism and is duly reflected in the high positive performance rating of (64%) that Yousuf Raza Gillani received in February 2009. However, Pakistan's worsening security situation began affecting public opinion on the performance of the Prime Minister. The insurgency in Swat by the Taliban as well as the terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan Cricket Team struck fear in the entire country. Moreover, Pakistan's worsening security situation and instances of rampant corruption within the government negatively impacted on public perception of Yousuf Raza Gillani's premiership. However, his performance ratings still continued to be seen positively by a significant proportion of Pakistanis, dropping below the 4 percent mark just once throughout his reign (38% in July 2011). This apparent juxtaposition can perhaps be explained by the fact that the public may have felt that the fault behind People's Party's poor governance lay not with Yousuf Raza Gillani but with others in his government who were abusing their political powers to further their own gains.

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2013 marked the return of Nawaz Sharif in the political hot-seat as he was sworn in the Prime Minister office for an unprecedented third time. At the time he took over the reins of the country, the economic situation of the country was at an extreme low; hyperinflation, unemployment, rampant corruption, fiscal debts and critical energy crises plagued the country's economic base. These insurmountable pressures and a lack of effort by the previous government to effectively tackle them had inevitably also translated into extreme public frustration and hopelessness. With the elections however, Pakistani masses were enthusiastic to see a change in the status quo and aspired to see Pakistan move forward. Thus the months immediately following the elections i.e. July and August 2013 saw Nawaz Sharif's performance being rated positively by an outright majority of Pakistanis, indicating the broader hope of change that he had inspired within the citizens of Pakistan.

On the security front however, the country did not fare well initially and this could partly be responsible for the dip in positive ratings given to the prime minister in the first half of 2014, which fell for the first and only time in his third term as Prime Minister below the 50 percent point. In the two surveys conducted January and July 2014, Nawaz Sharif's positive performance ratings were 43 and 45 percent respectively, thus implying that the majority of

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Pakistanis did not have a positive view of Nawaz Sharif's premiership in that year. In order to indicate his commitment to resolve the terrorism crisis he called for peace talks with the Taliban. His strategy did not work however as just a few days later the terrorists struck prominent army officials and soldiers leading to their deaths. Chief of army staff Raheel Sharif vocalized his strong disapproval and refused to allow cooperation with the Taliban. With this setback, it seems that the public did not register positive rating for the prime minister.

However, as 2014 trudged on, public approval gradually rose again. A significant step in this regard was the official announcement of Operation Zarb-e-Azab against terrorist groups in North Waziristan in mid June 2014. The Operation indeed helped in slowing down terrorist activities that had been plaguing the country especially in the first half of the year. The Jinnah International Airport attack (June 2014) had marked a culmination point for the government to officially announce its strategy against terrorism. At the face of this threat, it seems that the masses united in favour of the government despite the fact that at the same time Nawaz Sharif's arch rival and opposition party leader Imran Khan began holding protest marches and sit-ins against the government alongside the Pakistan Awami Tehreek led by Dr. Tahir ul Qadri. According to the stance of the Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf and the Pakistan Awami Tehreek, elections in 2013 had been massively rigged and they not only demanded justice but also the prime minister's immediate resignation. With large public turnovers at protests held throughout the country it is surprising that Nawaz Sharif's performance rating remained overwhelmingly positive in August 2014. Thus part of the reason for this support could be the government and army's successful tackling of terrorism and part of the reason could also be that at the face of protests and oppositions, Nawaz Sharif's supporters mobilized their own following in favour of the incumbent government. At the same time the government was also registering high support for its ambitious communications and infrastructural projects including the Metro Bus, construction plans for Dasu and Bhasha Dam and Prime Minister's youth programs (including distribution of laptops).

The end of 2014, however, was eclipsed by a particularly horrific episode of terrorism. In December 2014 the country witnessed one of its most brutal terrorist attacks on primary and high school going students of Army Public School Peshawar. It is partly in response to this instance of terrorist brutality that the Pakistani masses united against common external threats and provided support to the government in its efforts against the terrorists by the beginning of the New Year i.e. January 2015.

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Furthermore, 2015 offered new opportunities for Pakistan, especially with regards to infrastructural developments. Work on the CPEC (Pak-China Economic Corridor) ramped up and opened the possibility of more development opportunities along the length of that corridor and particularly at Gwadar Port and its heretofore neglected and untapped resources. Added to this, the launch of Metro Train in the twin cities (Rawalpindi and Islamabad) in May 2015 registered popular support in favour of PML-N registering a positive performance rating for Nawaz Sharif's government by a majority of Pakistanis. However, it still remains to be seen if the Government's inability to establish socio-economic stability as well as resolve the long standing issue of power shortages in the country will eventually begin to cause a dent in the dominant popularity of Nawaz Sharif among the people of Pakistan. Till then, Nawaz Sharif's performances continue to be held in a positive light by Pakistan's majority.

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Appendix

Table 1

Scale Type	Year	Month	Very Good	Good	Average	Bad	Very Bad	DK/NR	Positive Performance (Good+Very Good)	Negative Performance (Bad+Very Bad)	Code
5	1988	Nov	13	29	24	12	3	19	42	15	1
5	1989	Dec	15	21	21	19	5	19	36	24	1
5	1990	June	14	37	23	8	7	11	51	15	1
5	1990	July	29	30	15	6	9	11	59	15	1
5	1991	Mar	25	31	24	6	5	9	56	11	2
5	1991	Mar	26	34	27	4	2	7	60	6	2
5	1991	April	38	34	18	3	2	5	72	5	2
5	1991	April	30	28	22	6	5	9	58	11	2
5	1991	April	26	36	21	9	4	4	62	13	2
5	1991	June	26	37	21	7	5	4	63	12	2
5	1991	July	23	33	24	9	6	5	56	15	2
5	1991	Aug	24	35	20	8	9	4	59	17	2
5	1991	Oct	26	34	23	5	6	6	60	11	2
5	1991	Nov	24	35	21	9	7	4	59	16	2
5	1991	Dec	22	31	23	10	9	5	53	19	2
5	1992	Mar	26	31	28	6	4	5	57	10	2
5	1992	April	24	35	24	8	5	4	59	13	2
5	1992	May	31	37	15	7	3	7	68	10	2
5	1992	July	13	34	32	11	4	6	47	15	2
5	1992	Sep	20	34	24	9	6	7	54	15	2
5	1992	Nov	18	27	25	11	9	10	45	20	2
5	1993	April	22	33	29	5	6	5	55	11	2
5	1993	April	36	28	16	7	6	7	64	13	2
5	1993	July	24	33	22	8	6	7	57	14	2
5	1993	July	11	28	45	8	5	3	39	13	2
5	1997	Aug	10	13	41	14	10	12	23	24	2
5	1997	Nov	14	11	39	21	7	8	25	28	2
5	1997	Sep	14	15	40	14	7	10	29	21	2
5	1998	Jan	14	19	39	13	4	11	33	17	2
5	1998	May	43	23	24	4	6	0	66	10	2
5	1998	June	26	34	31	5	3	1	60	8	2
5	1998	July	15	28	44	7	6	-	43	13	2
5	1998	Oct	10	20	47	15	6	2	30	21	2

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5	1998	Dec	10	20	47	15	6	2	30	21	2
5	1998	Dec	15	22	46	9	7	1	37	16	2
5	1999	Mar	11	27	40	10	3	9	38	13	2
5	1999	April	14	23	46	8	7	2	37	15	2
5	1999	May	27	15	44	6	3	5	42	9	2
5	1999	June	11	24	48	7	4	6	35	11	2
5	1999	July	11	24	48	7	4	6	35	11	2
5	2009	Feb	40	24	19	7	3	7	64	10	4
5	2009	Nov	20	34	25	12	4	5	54	16	4
5	2010	Mar	22	30	24	14	5	5	52	19	4
5	2010	Nov	14	31	26	15	8	6	45	23	4
5	2010	Dec	22	30	24	14	5	5	52	19	4
5	2011	Jan	15	25	30	16	8	6	40	24	4
5	2011	May	22	24	31	11	9	3	46	20	4
5	2011	July	16	22	29	15	11	7	38	26	4
5	2011	Nov	22	26	26	12	9	5	48	21	4
5	2012	Jan	15	27	28	19	9	2	42	28	4
5	2012	July	20	20	24	19	10	7	40	29	5
5	2013	Jan	23	22	22	20	11	2	45	31	5
4	2013	July	13	44	-	30	6	7	57	36	2
4	2013	Aug	17	44	-	20	12	7	61	32	2
5	2013	Dec	25	29	23	13	7	3	54	20	2
5	2014	Jan	18	27	25	17	10	3	45	27	2
5	2014	July	13	30	24	18	12	3	43	30	2
5	2014	Aug	25	30	16	15	11	4	55	26	2
5	2015	Jan	19	31	23	15	10	2	50	25	2
5	2015	May	28	23	20	15	13	1	51	28	2

Code List: 1. Benazir Bhutto 2. Nawaz Sharif 4. Yousuf Raza Gillani 5. Raja Parvez Ashraf

Source: Gallup Pakistan National Survey (covering 4 provinces and Urban/Rural areas)

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Table 2

Scale	Year	Average Positive Performance (yearly)	Average Negative Performance (yearly)	Code
5	1988	42	15	1
5	1989	36	24	1
5	1990	55	15	1
5	1991	60	12	2
5	1992	55	14	2
5	1993	54	13	2
5	1997	26	24	2
5	1998	43	15	2
5	1999	37	12	2
5	2009	59	13	4
5	2010	50	20	4
5	2011	43	23	4
5	2012	42	28	4
5	2012	40	29	5
5	2013	45	31	5
5	2013	57	29	2
5	2014	48	28	2
5	2015	51	27	2

Code List: 1. Benazir Bhutto 2. Nawaz Sharif 4. Yousuf Raza Gillani 5. Raja Parvez Ashraf

Source: Gallup Pakistan National Survey (covering 4 provinces and Urban/Rural areas)

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