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AN ANALYSIS OF VOTING BEHAVIOR OF AFGHAN VOTERS IN 2014 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Afgan Seçmenlerinin 2014 Yılı Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçimlerindeki Davranışlarının Analizi

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Abstract

Voters as customers behave rationally when they vote. They are trying to maximize their gains from this action. As Afghanistan is experiencing new era of democracy and elections, it's very important to know the behavior of the voters. This article is trying to uncover the behaviors of the voters and the degree of this action's rationality in Afghanistan's context. The main purpose of the article is to test the rational choice and ethnicity and conflict theories as opposite arguments. An online survey has been conducted and a total of 1016 sample gathered. The analysis carried out in STATA 14 and EViews soft wares. The results show that the language, ethnicity and education have a statistically significant effect on voting behavior in Afghanistan. While the gender and age do not have any statistically significant effect on voting decision of Afghan voters which is consistent with ethnic and conflict theory and inconsis-

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tent with rational choice theory. This conclusion may be affecting the upcoming 2019 presidential elections in large scale.

Keywords: Rational Choice theory, Ethnicity and Conflict, Elections, Voting Behavior, Afghanistan, Asia.

JEL Classification: D72, H10, D70, O53.

Öz

Seçmenler, oylarını kullanırlarken tüketiciler gibi mantıklı davranır ve bu davranıştan menfaatlerini maksimize etmeye çalışırlar. Afganistan demokrasiye ilişkin seçim tecrübelerini yeni yeni denerken, seçmenlerin davranışlarını anlamak çok önemli görünmektedir. Bu makale seçmen davranışlarını açığa çıkarmaya çalışıp bu davranışların rasyonel olup olmadığını Afganistan çapında sınamıştır. Bu çalışmanın asıl amacı iki karşıt yaklaşım olan mantıklı seçim ve etnik ve çatışma teorilerinin denemesidir. Bu amaçla online bir anket uygulaması gerçekleştirilerek 1016 gözleme ait veri toplanmıştır. Analizler STATA 14 ve EViews yazılımlarıyla yapılmıştır. Ampirik bulgulara göre, seçmen davranışları üzerinde, eğitim, dil ve etnik köken değişkenlerinin pozitif etkisi bulunmaktadır. Cinsiyet ve yaş değişkenlerinin seçmen davranışı üzerindeki etkisi ise istatistiki olarak anlamlı bulunmamıştır. Bu bulgular etnik ve çatışma teorisini doğrularken mantıklı davranış teorisini reddetmektedir. Bu bulguların 2019 yılı cumhurbaşkanlık seçimlerini de büyük oranda etkileyeceği öngörülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mantıklı Seçim Teorisi, Etnik köken ve Çatışma, Seçimler, Seçmen Davranışları, Afganistan, Asya.

JEL Kodlarıı: D72, H10, D70, O53.

1. Introduction

After 2001 US lead coalition forces liberated Afghanistan from the Al-Kaida and Taliban terrorist groups, from that point onward the country has gone through a tremendous change in every aspect of life. One of the biggest changes was the elections. From 2001 up to 2016 Afghanistan managed to do three presidential elections and two parliamentary and provincial councils' elections. But the parliament elections of Afghanistan dates back to 1931 from that point forward there have been 16 elections. As new constitution's compulsory article there is also provincial council elections. In post 2001 era there have been three provincial elections also (IEC, 2016). For the first time in Afghanistan's

history the power was transferred from an elected president to another elected president in 2014. That was a huge leap forward of democracy for such a newly practicing country.

This article tries to analyze the voting behavior of the voters in the last presidential election which took place in 2014 (the run-off round). In that election there were two electoral teams competing in run-off round of elections. Because in the first round there weren't any winner. The second round was between two candidates from Pashtun ethnic and Tajik ethnic and president candidates whom had the support of Uzbeks and Hazaras. The Pashtun candidate had an Uzbek leader as his first vice president and a Hazara leader as his second. The Tajik candidate had a Pashtun as his first vice president and a Hazara leader as his second. This structure has been practiced since the first elections after 2001 less or more.

The biggest characteristic of the election of Afghanistan is that ethnic leaders are trying to form teams in order to compete in elections. In the last one and half decade of practicing the democracy and elections, it was an obvious act among the candidates. The structure of the electoral teams was based on four big ethnic groups of Afghanistan which are Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras.

Voting behavior is an exchange of trust and power for fulfilling the services that voters want from the candidates. In this context, every individual tries to vote for those candidate whom, they think, will maximize their gains and fulfilling their interest along with preferences (Horowitz, 1985). Based on this argument there is relationship between choosing to vote for one candidate and choosing not to vote for another one. In other words voters act based on their preferences rationally when they are voting. But the factors effecting voters behaviors in elections vary between countries. Also based on the theory of ethnicity and conflict ethnic groups act jointly in order to gain comparative advantage against rival ethnics. Which is common in Afghanistan.

In this article we are trying to analyze the ethnicity and language which affect the behaviors of voters in voting time. Based on the questionnaire which made and collected the data of 1016 observations, we are trying to use quantitative methods to analyze the voting behavior. In this case a simple t-test and logistic regression analyses have been used.

In order to do so the article is structured as follows: in second section the main theories of voting behavior are discussed, third section contains the data and empirical analysis methodology along with results. The last section contains a brief conclusion of the empirical work.

2. Literature Review

In voting behavior models there are lots of theories, like, psycho-social, rational choice theories and ethnicity and conflict theory. This paper aims to analyze both the rational choice theory and ethnicity and conflict theory in Afghanistan's perspective. For this, a brief description of both theories has been added as follow.

2.1. Rational Choice Theory

The rational Choice theory, dates back in (1957) with a behavioral scientist Anthony Downs, in effort to put in place an Economic explanation of voting behavior through his work "*An Economic Theory of Democracy*" and putting Political parties to competition. It marked the beginning point of the theory with the Economic work done by Kenneth Arrow in (1951) that relate economic factors thus resources, goods and technology, with political outcome of choice.

Down (1957) argues that if the assumptions of rational choice are able to explain the market, then they can explain the political functioning. He establishes a direct similarity between consumers and voters, and between enterprises and political parties. If companies seek to maximize profits and consumers act to maximize the utility, we can, then, theorize in the sense that voters seek to maximize the utility of their vote as the parties act to maximize electoral gains obtained from their political proposals.

Petracca (1991) argues that, Rational Choice Theory is an approach used by social scientists to understand human behavior. The approach has long been the dominant paradigm in economics, but in recent decades it has become more widely used in other disciplines such as Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology. The rational choice approach to politics assumes that individual behavior is motivated by self-interest, utility maximization or more simply put goal fulfillment.

The operation of the model is based on three fundamental premises: (1) the rational decision of voters and politicians are guided by self-interest and utility maximization from the voting action. (2) The system is working in a manner which is consistent with decisions of voters and politicians and supports it. (3) Despite the consistency there is a level of uncertainty still exists, which allow various options in decision making (Antunes, 2010). Despite some criticism based on individualism approach, self-regarding interest and rationality, the theory still stands up to date (Blaise, 2000).

There is in fact some empirical works based on rational choice theory to measure the degree of accuracy of it. The very first presidential election of Afghanistan which took place in 2004 was more rational as Mr. Hamid Karzai won the election by 56% of the votes. As he got the nationwide support and became the first elected president of Afghanistan (Barfield, 2005).

Keulder (2010) in his book analyzed the voting behavior of Namibian voters. The empirical results show that the Namibians are voting based on their parties rather than ethnicity and issued-based models. In other words they are casting their votes based on rational choice theory. As he argues that, there is a possibility of turnouts from parties if they failed to meet voters' demands.

In a study undertaken by Lindberg and Morrison (2008) from 690 voters in 1996 and 2000 elections in Ghana. The results indicate that the voting behavior in more rational than ethnic and linguistic oriented.

2.2. Ethnicity and Conflict Theory

Acting in collections and voting behavior in some countries are based on ethnical identities. The best theory on this special case is coming from Horowitz (1985). He in his book argues that ethnic groups are not only acting in collectives because of economic and political dominance, but they are also trying to stand against rival ethnic dominance. For this reason he argues that this behavior is kind of psychological behavior of collective actions which he refers to self-esteem. In most cases the ethnic groups sacrifice's their economic gain for that kind of comparative advantage over other ethnics (Horowitz, 1985).

When Horowitz goes further on the theory he tries to know the causes of such actions which are not for the interest of the rival groups. Because they share the same territory and they lose all, which he calls the ethnic conflicts as zero-sum game. He found out that the fear of ethnic groups for being marginalized or swamped by rivals' stands in the top of the reason for making the ethnic groups to act in such ways. These fears (which are some real and some not) lead the groups towards a collective action against rivals (Horowitz, 1985). This collective actions can be found in wide range of action from wars to elections. Which happened in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia.

In dealing with such problem he has a six-point proposal: dispersion of the political power, arrangement that emphasize interethnic competition and conflict, elections and territorial distribution of power that create incentives for interethnic cooperation, measures that help to increase interests based on other things except ethnicity and restructuring of conflict behavior through programs of interethnic redistributions (Horowitz, 1985).

In a study by Norris and Mattes (2003) which has covered 12 countries in Sub-Saharan African Ranging from Zimbabwe to Botswana, with suing the *Afrobarometer* cross sectional data between 1999-2001 found out that ethnicity does matter in voting. Also the language and race are the significant factors for governing parties.

3. Methodology and Data

An online survey was conducted in July 2016 and people that already voted in the 2014 presidential election of Afghanistan are asked to fill the questionnaires. The sample size that the research could reach via online platforms is 1016 which contains 890 men and 126 women respondents. The voters were asked about the demographical characteristics such as gender, education, ethnic and language. There were also questions about the reasons of voting, to which candidate they voted and the reason of choosing that candidate. The questionnaire had been formed using the Keudler (2010) and Wantchekon (2003).

The aim of the study is to show in which context that the voter uses the rational choice theory. As human beings, we are trying to maximize

our utility or at least minimize the degree of pain. In order to examine the rational choice theory, for Afghan voters' behavior in presidential elections in the run-off round in 2014, the current paper has used the following model which is a logistic regression and applied to show which characteristics have significant effects on the voting decision.

$$V = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Gender + \beta_2 Age + \beta_3 Edu + \beta_4 Ethnic + \beta_5 Lang + \varepsilon_i \qquad (1.1)$$

Where v denotes the voting, 1 if the respondents vote for candidate 1, otherwise 0. *Gender* is a dummy variable equals to 1 if the respondent is a female, otherwise 0. *Age* and *education* (*edu*) are in term of the years. Ethnic is a factor variable for all ethnicity included in the research (which 1 stands for Uzbek, 2 for Pashtun, 3 for Tajik, 4 for Hazara and 4 for others). The *lang* is a factor variable for language groups (1 stands for Uzbek, 2 for Pashtu and 3 for Dari speakers).

Based on the rational choice theory the voters will behave in rational way and will act to maximize their utility by voting the best candidate. In this regard, the ethnicity and language don't have any statistically significant impact, and based on ethnicity and conflict theory the votes will be distributed based on the ethnic borders and will have a statistically significant impact on voting behavior. According the above two theorems the following hypothesis has been formed:

H_0: β_4 and $\beta_5 = 0$

H_1: β_4 and $\beta_5 \neq 0$

The above hypothesis will be tested with LR-chi^2, z-test and t-test. If the null hypothesis comes true, the voting behavior of Afghan voters will be based on the rational choice theory. Otherwise the ethnicity and conflict theory will be proven. The conclusion would be that the Afghan voters voted irrational and based on their ethnicity ties.

4. Empirical Findings

For the empirical findings section at first there is a summary of the demographical characteristics of the sample, after that there is the table of reasons of voting for certain candidate and in the last, the findings of the regression analysis have been summarized. Table 1 presents the information about the survey, such as sample size and their demographical

characteristics. The sample size is 1016 which contains 890 males and 126 females. The sample contains high educated and young respondents as the mean of education among the sample is 15.21 and the mean of age is 27.21. About 43.3 percent of the respondents are Tajiks that is the highest among other ethnic groups in the sample. 65.35 percent of the respondents are contains Dari (Persian) native speakers.

Table 1: Demographical Characteristics of Sample

Variables		Frequency	Percentage	Total %
Gender	Male	890	87.60%	100%
	Female	126	12.40%	
Mean of Education		15.21		
Mean of Age		27.21		
Ethnicity	Pashtun	306	30.12%	100%
	Tajiks	440	43.31%	
	Uzbek	108	10.73%	
	Hazara	117	11.52%	
	Other Ethnics Group	45	4.43%	
Linguistic groups	Dari (Persian)	664	65.35%	100%
	Pashtu	234	23.03%	
	Uzbek	108	10.73%	
	Other Languages	10	0.98%	
Sample size		1016	100%	

The rate of women's participation in the last elections of Afghanistan was about 37 percent. The Pashtun ethnic group contains 38 percentage of Afghanistan population while Tajiks are 27 percent. So the sample is not symmetric to entire population. The reason might be the inequalities in the access to the internet based on gender and ethnic groups. So the results would be applicable to the population whom have access to internet which were more than 2 million users at the time of online survey which accounts about 25% of the entire voters population of the country.

A structured question was employed to know why Afghans decided to vote. The findings are reported at table 2.

Table 2: The reason for voting (I vote because…)

Reason for voting	Gender		Ethnicity					Total	%
	Male	Female	Pashtun	Tajiks	Uzbek	Hazara	Other		
… It is my democratic right.	208	18	79	71	29	36	11	226	22,244
… voting is a national duty	245	44	57	153	40	24	15	289	28,444
… I want to improve or change matters.	397	55	167	195	20	51	19	452	44,488
…. I am under pressure from others.	1	9	0	10	0	0	0	10	0,984
… I want my party to win/to support them.	9	0	0	0	9	0	0	9	0,886
… I want my ethnic leader to win the election.	8	0	0	6	2	0	0	8	0,787
… I want to prevent others Political rivals from winning.	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	0,492
… I trust my party.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	17	0	3	5	8	1	0	17	1,673
Total	890	126	306	440	108	117	45	1016	100

Most of Afghans (44.48%) are voting because they want to improve or change matters. 28.44 percent of Afghans are voting because they think that voting is a national duty and another considerable reason for voting is that they consider voting as their democratic right. Less than 5% percent of respondents are voting for all other reasons consisting to support their party or ethnic leader. Looking to the table 2 based on gender composition, the first threes question domination is clear among Afghans while voting. The biggest different between male in female is that, 9 of them indicated that they are under pressure from some others. The voting based on ethnicity is not very different among the Afghan voters as shown in table 2, just 9 of Uzbek ethnic voters indicated that they wanted to support their party.

The second round of presidential elections were held in Afghanistan on 14 June 2014 among two candidates. The participants were asked about to whom they vote and also they asked that what the key factor of choosing that candidate was. The responses to the structured question of "*what was the most important reason that you decided to vote to the desired candidate*" are reported at table 3.

The most important factor of the candidate whom has been chosen was political and economic programs of candidate (51.37%), which the majority of female voters selected this reason comparing to male counterparts. Also the mentioned reason is scattered among all ethnic groups in some variation, which the Pashtun and Tajik ethnic group are in big proportion comparing to other reasons. Another most important factor is the candidate's personality such as candidate's knowledge and leadership skills (22.14%) and political background of candidate (6.79%). The gender composition of knowledge and personality of the candidate is more male dominated comparing to political and economic programs of the candidate. Tribal leaders support has voters among Tajik and Hazara voters. Alongside that the Tajiks have voted based on religious interest and under pressure from family members. Less than 6 percent of the respondents chose the candidates because of the religious, ethnic and language interests. As a result of tables 2 and 3 we can conclude that Afghans voting behavior is rational behavior based on governance theories.

Table 3: Reason for choosing the Certain Candidate

Reason	Gender		Ethnicity						%
	Male	Female	Pashtun	Tajiks	Uzbek	Hazara	Other	Total	
Candidates knowledge and leadership skills	209	16	51	126	30	18	0	225	22,146
Political and economic programs of candidate	422	100	245	143	64	68	2	522	51,378
Political Background of candidate	69	0	10	0	0	17	42	69	6,791
The candidate team represents my ethnic or language group.	27	0	0	19	8	0	0	27	2,658
Our tribal elders supported the candidate	27	0	0	12	0	14	1	27	1,673
Religious interests	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	10	0,984
Under pressure from family.	43	10	0	53	0	0	0	53	5,217
Others	83	0	0	77	6	0	0	83	9,154
Total	890	126	306	440	108	117	45	1016	100

Sometime respondents in survey providing untrue or incorrect information that is called respondent error. Misunderstanding of the questions leads to the respondent error as well as social desirability bias can lead a respondent to respond in a fashion that he or she thinks is correct or better or less embarrassing.

Table 4 presents the distribution of votes among two candidates based on ethnic and language. 91.18% of Pashtuns, 75.23% of Uzbek, 92.74% of Pashtu native speakers and 75.93% of Uzbek native speakers voted for candidate one. On the other side 75.68% of Tajiks, 90.60% of Hazara and 71.69% of Dari native speakers are voted for the second candidate. The first candidate belongs to Pashtun ethnic and he is a Pashtu native speaker. The first vice president of him belongs to Uzbek ethnic and his second vice president is a Hazara. The second candidate is Dari native speaker and belongs to Tajiks while his first vice president is Pashtun and the second one is Hazara. The result of Table 4 shows that the most of ethnic groups and linguistic groups voted to the election team that their ethnic or language holder represents their language group and ethnicity more than that of other election team.

Table 4: Votes Based on Ethnic and Linguistic Groups

Ethnic groups	Candidate 1		Candidate 2		Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Pashtun	279	91.18	27	8.82	306
Tajik	107	24.32	333	75.68	440
Uzbek	82	75.23	27	24.77	108
Hazara	11	9.40	106	90.60	117
Other ethnic groups	19	43.18	25	56.82	45
Linguistic groups					
Pashtu	217	92.74	17	7.26	234
Dari	188	28.31	476	71.69	664
Uzbek	82	75.93	26	24.07	108
Other languages	9	90.00	1	10.00	10

If sociological theory of voting behavior is valid then we expect that Pashtuns and Uzbeks votes for candidate one while the Tajiks votes for candidate two. Pashtu and Uzbek linguistic groups are also have been expected to vote for candidate one and the Dari speakers are expected to vote for candidate two. We generate the dummy variables for ethnic and language that is take value of 1 when the respondents voted as expected, otherwise zero. Table 5 present Comparison of voter's characteristics between two election teams.

Table 5: Comparison of Voter's Characteristics among Two Election Teams

Characteristics	Candidate 1		Candidate 2		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-stat
Gender	0.145	0.353	0.103	0.305	1.147
Education	15.168	3.862	15.241	1.547	0.401
Age	27.346	4.237	27.084	5.073	-0.890
Ethnicity	0.728	0.445	0.637	0.481	-3.119
Linguistic groups	0.601	0.490	0.913	0.281	12.554

t-statistics for gender, education and age are not significant even in 90% confidence level, so the voters of candidate 1 are not statistically different from voters of candidate 2 in gender, education and age char-

acteristics. The ethnic and language dummy mean is higher than 0.5 (because of dummy variable nature, this threshold has been set) and it shows that most respondents voted to the candidate whom represents more of their ethnic and language characteristics.

The model 1.1 was estimated in STATA14 with logistic regression method and the results are reported in Table 6.

Table 6: Results of the Logistic Regression Analysis

Variables	Coefficient	SE	z-statistics	P value
Gender	0.351519	0.319529	1.10	0.271
Age	0.015399	0.018186	0.85	0.397
Education	0.065008	0.036582	1.78*	0.076
Ethnic (Reference Uzbek)				
Pashtun	2.123949	0.563800	3.77**	0.000
Tajik	-0.560701	0.513371	-1.09	0.275
Hazara	-1.935953	0.585502	-3.31**	0.000
Other	-1.822432	0.494659	-3.68**	0.000
Language (Reference Uzbek)				
Pashtun	-0.725311	0.632069	-1.15	0.251
Dari	-2.054254	0.516827	-3.97**	0.000
Other language	2.401635	1.153283	2.08**	0.037
Constant	0.010995	0.757968	0.01	0.988

  * *p*<0.1; ** *p*<0.05; *** *p*<0.01

  LR chi^2(9)= 530.52, Prob > chi^2=0.0000, Pseudo R^2 =0.3804

The small p-value (<0.0000) of LR chi-squared statistic indicates that one or more of the five variables have a significant impact on voting behavior. With this result the null hypothesis which supports the no relationship between voting behavior and ethnicity and language, has been rejected in 1% significance level. The results in Table 6 show that age and gender does not statistically significantly affect the voting decision of Afghans, while the education, ethnicity and language characteristics have significant effects on the voting decision. As in constructing dummy, the Pashtun candidate is 1 and 0 for Tajik candidates, the positive parameter of Pashtun ethnics are as we expected. The coefficient of Pashtun ethnic is converted to 8.364102 in terms of odds ratios, which indicates

that Pashtuns are voting to candidate one 8 times greater than Uzbeks. The odds ratio for Tajiks, Hazaras and others are 0.570810, 0.144286 and 0.161632 respectively. The odds ratio of Tajiks can't be interpreted as it's not statistically significant even in 10% significance level, but odds ratio of Hazaras indicates taking other variable constant 1/7 of hazaras and 1/6 of other ethnic groups tend to vote for candidate 1 comparing to Uzbeks. In language variable the odds of Pashtu speakers is 0.484174 and not statistically significant, which means that Pashtu speakers are voting the same as Uzbek speakers to candidate one. But Dari speakers with 0.128188 odds ratio with statistically significant in 1% significance level reveals that only 1/9 of voters of this language category is likely to cast their vote for candidate one comparing to Uzbek speakers. Other language groups coefficient in terms of odds ratio is 11.04 which means that, they are voting for candidate one 11 times greater comparing to Uzbek speakers. To be precise and visualize more, the likelihood of voting a Tajik women age 25 with 16 years of schooling to Pashtun candidate is 0.00038 or 0.038%. Comparing with likelihood of voting of a Pashtun women age 35 with 10 years of schooling to for Pashtun candidate is 0.9819 or 98.19%. The odds of other variable are nearly slightly above 1 which means that there are no difference in voting behavior based on gender, age and education between two candidates' voters. The odds ratios for gender, age and education are 1.421225, 1.015519 and 1.067168 respectively. But just, the eduction is statistically significant in 10% significance level, which means that if the voters with more years of eduction participates in elections the likelihood of increase in vote of candidate one will be 6.7%.

As it's shown in table 7, every increase in women participation will increase the vote of candidate one by 4.92% but that is not statistically significant and the same in applicable about age variable. But in case of education increase, every increment change will increase the cast of vote to candidate one by 0.86%. The participation increase in Pashtuns will have 38.6% increase effect in voting to candidate one in 1% significance level. The increase in participation of Tajiks, Hazaras and others will decrease voting to candidate one by 11.42%, 32.96% and 31.68% respectively, but just the two latters' coefficients are statistically significant in 1% level. In the language variable there is no significance difference between Pashtu speakers with those of Uzbeks in terms of change in

election participation, but the increase in participation of Dari speakers will decrease the vote for candidate one by 34.92% in 1% significance level. But the increase in participation of other linguistic groups in the election will increase the vote for candidate one by 21.19% in 1% statistically significance level.

Table 7: Results of the Marginal Effect Analysis

Variables	Delta-method			
	dy/dx	SE	z-statistics	P value
Gender	0.049176	0.042633	1.15	0.249
Age	0.002145	0.002430	0.88	0.378
Education	0.008674	0.004874	1.78*	0.075
Ethnic (Reference Uzbek)				
Pashtun	0.386436	0.107560	3.59***	0.000
Tajik	-0.114204	0.112711	-1.01	0.311
Hazara	-0.329643	0.115089	-2.86***	0.004
Other	-0.316873	0.090592	-3.50***	0.000
Language (Reference Uzbek)				
Pashtun	-0.121043	0.101204	-1.20	0.232
Dari	-0.349236	0.079557	-4.39***	0.000
Other language	0.211987	0.070958	2.99***	0.003

* $p<0.1$; ** $p<0.05$; *** $p<0.01$

This findings reveals that the voters in Afghanistan are voting based on their ethnic group leaders. These results somehow empirically clarify the theory of ethnicity and conflict of Horowitz (1985). In his book he argues that ethnic groups in order to defend their interests they act in groups. The findings reported in table 6 concludes the rejection of null hypothesis in 1% significance level. As a result of the findings the conclusion is that in Afghanistan ethnic groups are acting based on their ethnic's interests nothing more or less.

5. Conclusion

Afghanistan is newly practicing elections and democratic actions which are coming as consequence of the elections. One decade of Russian invasion and one decade of civil war devastated the country's economic,

cultural, military and political infrastructure. The civil war made the ethnic groups to practice the ethnicity based preferences which lots of them are against national interests. This behavior is leading the country through a wrong pathway which is hurting the country for every angle.

The ethnicity based preferences of voting which has been analyzed in this article is tries to show that this problem is really there. The results from empirical analysis show that ethnicity and belonging to certain language groups affect the voting behavior. There is a statistically significant relationship between voting and ethnicity and language.

The gender, education and age do not have any significant effect on voting behavior which show that there is no any differences between male and females of different ethnicity. They are voting for their ethnic group interest not for their own gender interest. The age also indicates that that there is no difference between age groups in voting preferences. Although the biggest problem comes from the results of education and its effects on voting behavior. It shows even educated young voters (which forms the bulk of the sample) don't have any different preferences and choice in election.

Comparing the results with rational choice theory it seems that there is no any rational choice taking place. Every ethnic is voting for its own leader even they are the worst among the candidates. This behavior is hurting the country and national interests. Which day by day weakening the governmental services and over all country problems are rising.

In other hand the voters think that if they vote for another ethnic's leader they will be worse off from what they are now. This vicious circle pushing the country toward an unknown future which is not clear for every one living in the country.

With a brief comparison of the results with ethnicity and conflict theory of Horowitz (1985) that is clear why there a division of votes based on the ethnicity. Afghanistan had gone through several decades of war which deepened the conflict between the ethnics whom live in the country. Nowadays the ethnics have the fear of being marginalized and subordinated by other rivals if they didn't have their own leader on the top in the country. Which lead the voters to being used by the corrupted ethnic leaders. So they have two choice (1) to vote for the corrupted their own ethnic leader or (2) to vote for others with the fear

of being marginalized. In Afghanistan the voters have been choosing the first one since there are elections. In upcoming elections, parliamentary and presidential elections, the votes will be divided highly by ethnicity and language ties. This conclusion is revealing a very dark future for the country which has an unstable security situation and economic conditions. If we add inter ethnicity problems with above conditions, we are standing on the edge of a knife.

The policy recommendation for political elites to participate in elections with less ethnicity side pressure. The biggest problem is that to have ethnicity on the top comes after Bonn conference on Afghanistan (2001). The elections law must change to overcome this problem with preventing the ethnicity based candidates and empower the national parties with national ideas not just ethnic and tribal based views.

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