

DECLINING ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION IN THE ESTABLISHED DEMOCRACIES –THE UNINTENDED ROLE OF THEIR NEO-LIBERAL POLICIES

Fizza Batool

Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, Karachi

ABSTRACT

The number of countries having democratic governments elected through public votes has almost quadrupled as a result of second and third waves of democratization. Incongruously, however, countries that were once involved in the development of this idea of one-person-one-vote are witnessing continuous regression in the political participation. The paper looks at the empirical and theoretical research on the factors influencing electoral participation and explains how they are insufficient in explaining the observed decline. An impetus is provided for studying regression in political participation as an unintended consequence of neoliberal policies of Western democracies.

KEYWORDS:

Electoral Participation, Liberal Democracies, Neoliberalism, Voter turnout

1. INTRODUCTION

The globalization of democratic ideals has broadened up the circle of political participation in many new and potential democracies. The number of countries having democratic governments elected through public votes has almost quadrupled as a result of second and third waves of democratization (Huntington and Nelson 1976: 17). Many other countries where electoral process has not yet begun, citizens have started acknowledging their right of self-determination and have demonstrated this recognition through protests and rallies (Branch and Mamphilly, 2015: 41-43). The most recent example is of Arab Spring that has brought up a major shift in the global politics, making people of the Middle East politically vocal after a long wait (Davis, 2016: 1). In some countries, they are successful in consolidating their political rights while in others their political activity is still limited to informal forms.

Incongruously, however, countries that were once involved in the development of this idea of one-person-one-vote are witnessing continuous regression in the political participation (Blais et al., 2004: 221; Gray and Caul, 2000: 1094-1095; Jackman and Miller, 1995: 467). The analysis of the trends of voter turnout, as will be provided later, has shown a clear indication of slow but steady regression in public's level of participation in the liberal democratic countries, commonly believed to enjoy strong and stable democratic system. Emphasizing on the role of voter turnout as one strong indication of public participation in stable and continuous democracies, the paper looks at the empirical and theoretical research on the factors influencing electoral participation and explains how they are insufficient in explaining the observed decline.

The main lacuna in the research conducted so far is the negligence towards the economic policies that can influence societal and individual behaviour. The paper specifically looks at the effect of the neo-liberalization of states: development of states that follow the principle of non-intervention

in market affairs. The paper explains how neoliberal policies of the liberal democracies is shaping the political behaviour and perception of their citizens. Not much has been written on this subject because of the absence of any direct association between neoliberal policies and an individual's voting behaviour (Steiner, 2010: 455). However, the present research using the theories of electoral behaviour explains how neoliberal policies actually influence the factors provided in the theories as determinants of political participation. In this way, the paper acknowledges the importance of theoretical work conducted so far yet broadens its scope by linking it up with the economic force of neoliberalism.

2. VOTER TURNOUT TRENDS IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

One look at the voter turnout graph of 5 key liberal democracies can raise alarm for anyone expecting democracy to become a globalized reality. All these countries are among those that somehow took part in the development of the idea of democracy and then spread it to the world during the colonial period. To what extent the graph shown in figure 1 is true in explaining the situation in countries having established democratic setup is a matter of debate. While some scholars have accepted the decline in the electoral as well as the political participation of established democracies of West (Gray and Caul, 2000: 1095; Putnam, 2000: 31-32), others have claimed it to be a mere exaggeration (Franklin, 2004: 4-5; McDonald and Popkin, 2009: 965-967).

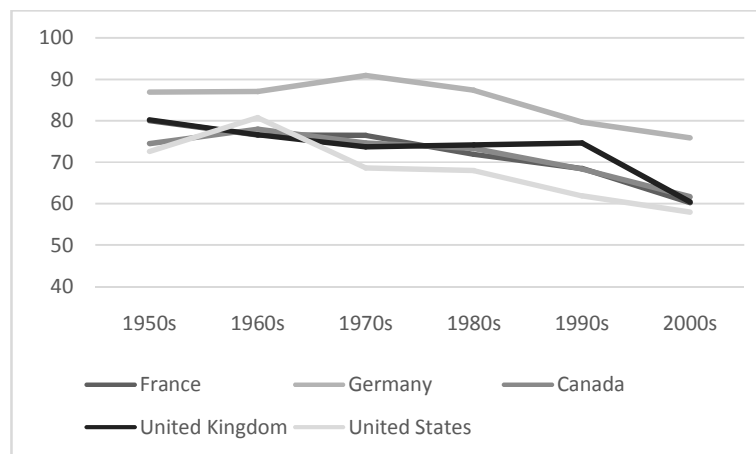


Figure 1: Declining Voter Turnout in 5 Key Liberal Democracies of the West

2.1. TIME-SERIES ANALYSIS

To validate the declining trend in the electoral participation of countries having a long history of liberal democratic setup, a cross-sectional analysis of time-series data of 10 electoral democracies was conducted. These democracies are considered as the very first countries to have the democratically elected governments, relatively stronger liberal institutions, and have contested largely free and fair elections for major part of their history since the 1950s. Departing from the usual analytical method of comparing voter turnout of each election separately for each country, the present research is more focused on the long-term declining effect and have used the method used by Gray and Caul (2000: 1093). The average turnout of all elections contested during the 1950s was measured for each country to serve as a baseline. However, the average voter turnout is measured in this research as a percentage of actual voters of the total registered voters instead of voting age population, due to the controversies attached to its validity. Also, despite Gray and Caul's (2000: 1096) critique that the use of decade averages show a much lesser decline in voter's

turnout, the average voter turnout of each decade has been compared with the baseline. This was needed in order to test the hypothesis of continuity and to enable better inter-state comparison. The main source of voter turnout data is Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) which has established a separate database of voter turnout of all democratic countries around the world. However, all figures have been double checked using official sources of electoral data of these selected countries. In case of differences, a third private source like International Foundation for Electoral Systems and PARLINE database on national parliaments have been used. Figures closer to the private source between the one quoted in IDEA database and provided by the national source of electoral data has been selected in these cases. The outcome is a time-series through which we can more accurately compare the change in voter turnout of all selected countries, irrespective of the differences in their average voter turnouts during the 1950s.

2.2. RESULTS

The results of the analysis are shown in table 1. As can be seen, relative to 1950s, the voter turnout of the all selected countries has declined. In particular, for elections contested in recent years, not a single country has been able to reach or cross the average voter turnouts in the 1950s. Even in Australia where voting is compulsory, there is a decline of 2 points in the recent elections. The highest negative figure is of France's recent elections which are almost 25 points lower than their average voter turnout in the 1950s (Baptist: 2014). Except for Australia and Norway, where the shift from the average voter turnout levels of the 1950s is not very high, all other countries have shown a two-digit shift.

Table 1: Change in the voter's turnout of each decade from the 1950s

Countries	VT _{1950s}	VT _{1960s -}	VT _{1970s-}	VT _{1980s -}	VT _{1990s -}	VT _{2000s -}	VT _{2010s -}
	1950s	1950s	1950s	1950s	1950s	1950s	1950s
Australia	95.61	-0.36	-0.3	-1.36	-0.16	-0.97	-2.39
Canada	74.49	3.5	0.14	-1.18	-6.17	-12.86	-13.38
France	80.02	-3.47	-3.55	-8.18	-11.58	-19.87	-24.62
Germany	86.88	0.18	4.05	0.45	-7.24	-11.04	-15.35
Italy	93.79	-0.96	-1.49	-4.85	-8.3	-11.92	-18.6
New Zealand	94.74	-5.67	-8.78	-3.34	-8.87	-15.83	-19.16
Norway	78.82	3.96	2.74	4.24	-1.73	-2.39	-0.59
Switzerland	68.98	-4.87	-16.71	-20.79	-25.15	-22.23	-20.23
United Kingdom	80.24	-3.68	-6.55	-6.13	-5.6	-19.87	-14.3
United States*	72.6	8.13	-4	-4.68	-10.76	-14.66	-20.76

* The voter turnout rates of the 1950s are not available and are calculated based on the estimation of average difference with VAP

The continuity in the decline is also confirmed through the figures in table 1, with 6 out of 10 countries showing continuous negative figures through all decades. Even in Canada, Germany, Norway and United States, where there was rise from the 1950's electoral participation during earlier decades, there is continuity in the regressive trend for latest decades. The negative trend initiated in the USA during the 1970s, in Canada during the 1980s, and in Germany and Norway during the 1990s. 21st century, thus, marks the era of continuous low voter's turnout in established democracies.

3. WHY IS ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION DECLINING?

The disappearance of voters from the voting booths, as found through the analysis, is actually linked to the disappearance of public as a political actor. In fact, declining electoral participation is a symptom of “much deeper trouble in body politic” (Putnam, 2000: 35). The Eurobarometer report published in 2015, found that 62% of EU citizens have no trust on the national parliament while 63% have no faith on their respective national governments (Eurobarometer, 2015: 2). As per Pettersen (2003: 12), the declining interest of American citizen in the politics is clear - 60% of the Americans were watching presidential debates on their TV sets in 1960 elections, while less than 30% are found to be tuned in during 2000 elections.

The declining participation of the public in established liberal democracies extends to the extent of making democracy at risk in the very countries aiming to secure the world for democracy (Macedo et al., 2005: 1). Western European states and the USA, despite still enjoying the rank of full democracies in the famous *Democracy Index*, are suffering from an unceasing drop in their average democracy scores (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2017: 5). Quoting from the report, one of the major reasons behind this drop in the score is “declining popular participation in elections and politics” (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2017: 3). What is causing this negative trend is a question next to be addressed.

3.1. DETERMINANTS OF ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION IN LITERATURE

Political participation is a broad area of research on which bulk has already been published. The factors described in the research to influence the political participatory behaviour of the public are numerous and varied. They differ in terms of the form of political participation, like electoral participation, political campaigning, rallying, participation in local unions etc. Even on restricting the focus on the electoral form of participation, research offers plenty of reasons as to why someone cast vote, ranging from simple demographic factors to a complex theory based on rational actor model of voting. Theoretical research on electoral behaviour can be broadly categorized into three schools of thought (Bartels, 2010: 3-16). Each theory offers a different explanation to what can cause a decline in voter turnout. Empirical studies can also be categorized with respect to the theoretical school they are inclined to.

3.2. SOCIOLOGICAL SCHOOL OF VOTING BEHAVIOUR

The sociological school searches for the factors influencing the voting behaviour in the society a voter belongs to. The pioneering work for this school has been conducted in University of Columbia by eminent sociologist of his time Paul Lazarsfeld along with his colleagues during 1940 and 1948 presidential elections of USA (Lazarsfeld et al., 1948: 10; Berelson, 1954: 3). Using repeated interviewing method, they conducted penal studies to understand the determinants of voting behaviour and found that the most influencing factors are the social background of the voter. The religious and socio-economic class influence the voter’s decision to cast vote for either democrats or republicans. Although their research did not directly address the question of non-participation in the elections, they laid the foundation for the future research on sociological determinants of voter turnout.

Among the factors identified by scholars belonging to the sociological school of voting behaviour, the most notable one is the social network with stronger social networks causing higher participation (Bond et al., 2012: 297; Leighley, 1990: 470; McClurg, 2003: 449). At individual level, the strong ties with family and friends, membership in social organization, higher religiosity, and involvement in political discussion with peers has been found to increase the likelihood of political participation (Albanesi, et al., 2007: 400; Gerber et al., 2016: 495;

Yates and Youniss, 1998: 506; Zaff et al., 2008: 42-47). In cross-national studies, the effect of the social network has been observed to cause higher voter turnouts in smaller communities (Frandsen, 2002: 866; Oliver, 2000: 369), with higher political mobilization (Baek, 2015: 17), and diverse religious and ethnic societies (Oliver, 2000: 371; Inglehart and Norris, 2003: 134). Linking the strength of social networking with the declining political participation in established democracies is, nevertheless, difficult. Established democracies of the West are mostly liberal societies with institutions supporting political mobilization. The ethnic and religious diversity of these countries are also increasing with the increasing population of immigrants. Yet these countries are seeing declining participation of the public in political affairs.

The social characteristics of the population in the country has also been reported by some studies to influence the voter turnout levels of that country. Inglehart and Norris (2003: 134-135) found that countries having predominantly Catholic population have a lower level of political interests, knowledge and participation of the women in contrast to the countries having a predominantly Protestant population. However, in many studies, Catholicism was found to be the main factor contributing to increasing turnout (Holman and Shokley, 2017: 841; Gerber et al., 2016: 495; Hayes, 2017: 340). The religiosity of the population has been reported in some studies to cause an increase in participation (Blais et al., 2004: 232; Albanesi et al., 2007: 400) but as found by Djupe and Grant (2001: 310) the effect of religiosity is not similar along all religious groups in the USA. They explained that mere church attendance does not translate into higher participation in politics but rather the political interests of the religious group and the degree of their political mobilization influence the electoral behaviour of the religious community. This contradiction in studies is understandable as religious or ethnic identities are not homogeneous throughout the world. Being Muslim in a Muslim majority country and a Non-Muslim country is not similar and, consequently, is not expected to influence electoral behaviour similarly. Catholicism may be a contributing factor in one country, but not the other. These are contextual factors that are suitable for case studies but not for cross-national analyses.

3.3. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCHOOL OF VOTING BEHAVIOUR

The psychological group of studies are largely the outcome of a research initiative taken in Michigan University to understand the determinants of voting behaviour during 1948 elections (Campbell and Kahn, 1952: 18). A series of studies were conducted by the same study group to test their theory (Campbell et al., 1954: 10; Campbell and Cooper, 1956: 1-5; Stokes et al., 1958: 367; Campbell et al., 1960: 8-12). The core concept of their research was partisanship – a long-term favouritism towards a particular polity party – which is developed through familial and social influence. They, nevertheless, accepted the role of contextual factors and held that the voting behaviour in a particular election is a function of some short-term effects produced as a result of the current political situation. Partisanship mediate the relationship of electoral behaviour with these short-term determinants and mainly contribute by resisting contrary influence (Campbell et al., 1960: 24-37).

The lack of partisanship or political alignment in individuals has long been proposed as one major factor to cause regression in the political participation in the Western countries (Cassel and Hill, 1981: 191; Schmitt and Holmberg, 1995: 97). Nevertheless as noted by Bartels (2000: 36) declining partisanship was present in these countries prior to 1980s. Particularly in the last two decades, the trend of partisanship voting has revived in the USA (Bartels, 2000: 40-41) and other established democracies of Europe (Allan and Scruggs, 2004: 500). Also, it is unclear as to why this declining partisanship is only effective in the liberal democracies of the West where political parties enjoy favourable and secure environment for campaigning. The role of negative campaigning can be cited as one reason, but research has shown that negative campaigning

enhances the partisanship and encourages voting among party-loyalists (Stevens et al., 2008: 535).

3.4. ECONOMIC SCHOOL OF VOTING BEHAVIOUR

Another explanation is based on the rational choice model of voting behaviour. The founder of this model, Downs (1957: 139-140) proposed the voters as rational actors. He held that people decide to vote on the basis of cost-and-benefit decisions. They participate in politics only when the benefit of participation is much higher than its cost. Because the overall effect a single vote can make in changing the political decision-making setup is negligible (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968: 30), scholars believe that even a slightest change in the cost of voting like bad weather can result in voting absenteeism (Lee and Hwang, 2017: 525; Stockemer and Wigginton, 2018: 1034). Based on this model, the increasing number of political parties would decrease the turnout while the increasing competition in the elections would increase it. This is because, with more political parties, the value of the vote to influence outcome will decline while with high completion every single vote would make some difference (Gray and Caul, 2000: 1098).

Nevertheless, the only benefit for casting vote is not to influence the outcome of the elections. Citizens' political decisions are mainly based on their perceptions which can vary person to person based on their own criteria for judging the pros and cons of joining a political organization, campaigning for a political party, rallying for a cause, or casting vote in the national or local election. Thus, research has found that if the criteria are social rather political or economic, the person might feel motivated to cast vote despite the required cost of time and resources (Edlin et al., 2007: 293-294).

The inability of the research studies in explaining this ironic phenomenon of declining participation of the public in the established liberal democracies lies greatly in examining the problem microscopically. Research either look at the individual or social factors to understand the motivation of individuals or societies for political participation or their lack thereof. Majority of contributions have been made by the scholars from disciplines like psychology and sociology who are accustomed to viewing problems more deeply. Although no one can deny the significance of research conducted so far, to clearly understand the factors underlying this problem there is need to step back a little and to have a broader view of the situation.

The socio-political and economic environment of the overall world, the role of globalization in making the world more coherent and the local forces attempting to fight the global wave of democracy and liberalism are important dynamics to understand the political behaviour of individuals in different parts of the world. The individual and social factors commonly reported in the literature to influence public participation in politics can mediate the relationship of factors operating at the global level and together they can provide a clearer and comprehensive picture.

4. NEOLIBERALISM AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION – A MISSING LINK

The process of neoliberalization is apparently a global phenomenon yet countries differ in the degree of acceptance of neoliberalism as a mode of governance and in the liberalization of their market. The first-wave democracies, which are shown above to suffer from a continuous decline in political participation are also the countries where the foundations for neoliberal economic policies were laid. In fact, in some studies, there are clear pieces of evidence that industrial democracies or free-market democracies are the ones suffering from this decline (Gray and Caul, 2000: 1092; Jackman and Miller, 1995: 467). Ironically, however, these studies counted on the same individual and social factors to understand the declining trend instead of questioning as to

why this pattern of regression is only present in the countries having free market industrial economies and not the others ones.

After studying the relationship, the researcher found that the possible reason behind this reluctance of scholars in linking the neoliberal policies with the declining participation is the absence of any direct relationship between the two. Neo-liberal policies, actually operate as a contextual factor and a variable that control the relationship of studied factors with the political participation. Since political participation is already a complex phenomenon and there are multiple factors influencing the variation in it, it is not an easy job to comprehend and clarify the role of neo-liberal policies. Yet neglecting this factor, would lead to unanswered questions and an unclear understanding of the trends of political participation. The paper provides answers to these questions by explaining the link between neoliberal policies and political participation and explaining how the neoliberal policies actually control the societal and individual factors studied above.

The link between neoliberalism and political participation requires understanding the link between market and state. Although much debate has been made on the relationship between state and market in a neo-liberal society, there is consensus that the connection between the two in the Western countries is manifested through their closeness throughout historical development and the support they provided to each other during the course (Brady et al., 2007: 314; Riain, 2000: 187). A free market economy is deemed essential for a liberal democratic society to provide the autonomy to individuals for materializing their self-interest. For this reason, neoliberals have greatly emphasized on this right of private property and have called it the key for allowing the individuals to convert their private interests in public vices (Harvey, 2005: 2). This liberty of having the private property allows the individual to accumulate capital for their private interests and the idea is that an individual accumulating capital for its personal good is more likely to promote the public good. Thus, capital serves as a tangible form of liberty for the individual in liberal society (Suri, 1999: 44).

The central institution in a capitalist economy is market – a theoretical place where individuals exchange good and services. Neo-liberals believe that this market should be kept away from the authority of the state. Therefore, a neo-liberal state has only a few limited jobs in economic affairs like making laws for the free market economy to function, ensuring a stable macroeconomic environment, taking taxes and, sometimes, subsidizing the local or endangered segments of the market. This state, with not much role in the economic matters, gets weak over time as it plays no significant role in providing the tangible form of liberty to its citizens (Tanzi, 2011: 306).

The neo-liberal state, however, has an important role in providing the political liberty to its citizens. The notion of political participation in a neo-liberal state is founded on the idea that every individual is sovereign and has the right to make his or her own political decisions. Political participation in a neo-liberal state is, therefore, a manifestation of an individual's right of self-determination. An individual by participating in the political domain informs the state forces of his or her desires, and the state is expected to give him opportunities for actualizing that desire. However, this political liberty exercised through vote or other means is just an abstract form of liberty provided to the individual for satisfying their intangible desires (Suri, 1999: 44).

Theoretically, in a democratic state, every single individual has equal opportunities for political participation. The market forces, which works in the non-citizenship domain, however, does not treat every individual to be equal. It works on the principle of competition and there are victors as well as losers. So the tangible or concrete form of liberty is not available to every individual on an equal basis. As an unintended consequence of neo-liberal policies, the tangible liberty offered through market overpowered the intangible liberty offered by the state. One symptom of this

problem is the increasing economic activity of the individual in neo-liberal democracies at the cost of declining political activity.

One may argue that political participation is not an individualistic act and is more of a duty to secure general welfare. So while a person might not feel much benefit of casting a vote, the social pressure can make him cast vote. However, the very foundation of a neoliberal state is the security of individual interest. As explained by Öztekin (2015), through example from literature, the political societies founded on this individualism are in line with theory of John Locke and Hobbes – the father of liberal political theory. While one cannot neglect the important of social forces, the declining role of state in provision of tangible individual economic benefit has its effect in the form of slow but constant decline in political participation.

Among the few empirical studies that found the state's economic policies to be the factor that has the power to convert a citizen into active voter is by Mahler and colleagues (2014: 13-14). He held that the governmental policies that support redistribution of wealth cause increase in the electoral participation. For neo-liberal states, where the government has no major function in redistribution of wealth are, thus unable to motivate their citizens and the result is the declining participation we have just witnessed.

5. CONCLUSION

The study showed evidence of decline in the electoral participation in established democracies through time-series analysis. Keeping one's eyes close to this empirical evidence and continuing with the false belief that there is no harm to the western democracy would not only be an act of academic corruption but would also produce serious practical issues for the overall democratic setup of these countries. The first step of treatment is the acknowledgement of disease. The academics should, thus, see the work pointing out these negative trends in the democracies of the West as diagnostic and not "anti-democratic."

The paper after reviewing the literature on factors influencing electoral participation found that majority of research studies have neglected the simple fact that declining participation is more profoundly present in countries with the free-market industrial economy and liberal institutions. The individual and societal factors have been used repeatedly to explain the decline without providing any clear answers to simple questions like why political participation is declining in countries having better educational opportunities and higher socio-economic development – the two individual factors that strongly relate to political participation (Berinsky and Lenz, 2011: 357; Krishna, 2002: 440). Similarly, it has not been explained as to why partisanship has been unable to boost the voter turnout despite the freedom enjoyed by political parties for mobilization in these countries. The research body acknowledged the role of social networking and mobilization for improving political participation but did not link it well with the declining trend of political participation in the liberal democratic countries providing more freedom to individual and civil society.

The answers to these questions are in the neoliberal policies of these countries. One of the unintended consequences of neoliberalism is the weakening of state in comparison to the market. Since market becomes the sources of the fulfilment of all tangible desires for a person in neo-liberal democracies, the importance of intangible desires of liberty to choose the legislators for the public suffers decline.

A person interested in benefits produced by the market views the act of voting or participating in a protest as of loss of time and resources, as the elected government would not have much

influence over their functioning. However, family, class, political parties and other similar entities offer intangible benefits like bonding, reputation and social recognition. In a decision of political participation, the market is a competitor to other institutions like family, class, political party, and state and with its unchecked power in the neo-liberal state, the likelihood of victory for the market is much higher. This explains how strong market forces control the influence of other factors and leads to declining political participation in these countries.

REFERENCES

- [1] Huntington, Samuel P., and Nelson, Joan M. (1976). *No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
- [2] Branch, Adam and Mampilly, Zachariah (2015). *Africa Uprising: Popular Protest and Political Change*. London, Zed Books Ltd.
- [3] Davis, John. (2016). *The Arab Spring and Arab Thaw: Unfinished Revolutions and the Quest for Democracy*. London, Routledge.
- [4] Blais, André, Gidengil, Elisabeth, and Nevitte, Neil. (2004). Where does turnout decline come from? *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 221-236.
- [5] Gray, Mark, and Caul, Miki. (2000). Declining voter turnout in advanced industrial democracies, 1950 to 1997: The effects of declining group mobilization. *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 9, pp. 1091-1122.
- [6] Jackman, Robert W., and Miller, Ross A. (1995). Voter turnout in the industrial democracies during the 1980s. *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 467-492.
- [7] Steiner, Nils D. (2010). Economic globalization and voter turnout in established democracies. *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 444-459.
- [8] Putnam, Robert D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York, Simon and Schuster.
- [9] Franklin, Mark N. (2004). *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- [10] McDonald, Michael P., and Popkin, Samuel L. (2001). The myth of the vanishing voter. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 95, No. 4, pp. 963-974.
- [11] Baptist, Simon (2014, June 12). The 'flaws' of French democracy. *BBC Magazine*. Retrieved May 31, 2018 from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-27310566> [Accessed May 31, 2018]
- [12] Eurobarometer. (2015). Public opinion in the European Union. *Standard Eurobarometer 83*, Retrieved May 31, 2008 from: http://ec.europa.eu/comfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/eb/eb83/eb83_first_en.pdf
- [13] Pettersen, Thomas E. (2003). The Vanishing Voter. *Connections*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 12-16.
- [14] Macedo, Stephan, et al., (2005). *Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation and What Can We Do About It*. Washington, D.C, The Brookings Institute.
- [15] The Economist Intelligence Unit (2017). *Democracy Index 2017: Free Speech under Attack*. New York, The Economic Intelligence Unit.
- [16] Bartels, L. M. (2010). The study of electoral behavior. In Leighley, J. E. (Ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of American Elections and Political Behavior* (pp. 239-261). Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- [17] Lazarsfeld, Paul Felix, Berelson, Bernard, and Gaudet, Hazel. (1948). *The People's Choice: How the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign*. New York, Columbia University Press.
- [18] Berelson, Bernard R., Lazarsfeld, Paul Felix, and McPhee, William N. (1954). *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a presidential campaign*. New York, University of Chicago Press.
- [19] Bond, Robert M., Fariss, Christopher J., Jones, Jason J., Kramer, Adam D., Marlow, Cameron, Settle, Jaime E., and Fowler, James H. (2012). A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization. *Nature*, Vol. 489, No. 7415, p. 295.
- [20] Leighley, Jan E. (1990). Social interaction and contextual influences on political participation. *American Politics Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 459-475.
- [21] McClurg, Scott D. (2003). Social networks and political participation: The role of social interaction in explaining political participation. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 56, No. 4, pp. 449-464.
- [22] Albanesi, Cinzia, Cicognani, Elvira, and Zani, Bruna. (2007). Sense of community, civic engagement and social well-being in Italian adolescents. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 17, No. 5, pp. 387-406.

- [23] Gerber, Alan S., Gruber, Jonathan, and Hungerman, Daniel M. (2016). Does church attendance cause people to vote? Using blue laws' repeal to estimate the effect of religiosity on voter turnout. *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 46, No. 3, pp. 481-500.
- [24] Yates, Miranda, and Youniss, James. (1998). Community service and political identity development in adolescence. *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 495-512.
- [25] Zaff, Jonathan F., Malanchuk, Oksana, and Eccles, Jacquelynne S. (2008). Predicting positive citizenship from adolescence to young adulthood: The effects of a civic context. *Applied Development Science*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 38-53.
- [26] Frandsen, Annie Gaardsted (2002). Size and electoral participation in local elections. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 6, pp. 853-869.
- [27] Oliver, J. Eric. (2000). City size and civic involvement in metropolitan America. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94, No. 2, pp. 361-373.
- [28] Baek, Young Min. (2015). Political mobilization through social network sites: The mobilizing power of political messages received from SNS friends. *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 44, pp. 12-19.
- [29] Inglehart, Ronald and Norris, Pippa (2003). *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change around the World*. New York, Cambridge University Press.
- [30] Holman, Mirya R., and Shockley, Kristin (2017). Messages from above: Conflict and convergence of messages to the Catholic voter from the Catholic Church hierarchy. *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 840-861.
- [31] Hayes, Bernadette C. (2016). Religious Differences in Electoral Turnout among Women in Northern Ireland. *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 2, pp. 322-343.
- [32] Djupe, Paul A., and Grant, J. Tobin. (2001). Religious institutions and political participation in America. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 303-314.
- [33] Campbell, Angus, and Kahn, Robert. L. (1952). *The People Elect a President*. Ann Arbor, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- [34] Campbell, Angus, Gurin, Gerald, and Miller, Warren Edward. (1954). *The Voter Decides*. Evanston, Row, Peterson & Co.
- [35] Campbell, Angus, and Cooper. Homer C. (1956). *Group Differences in Attitudes and Votes: A Study of the 1954 Congressional Election*. Ann Arbor, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- [36] Stokes, Donald E., Campbell, Angus and Miller, Warren Edward. (1958). Components of electoral decision. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 52, No. 2, pp.367-387.
- [37] Campbell, Angus, Converse, Phillip E., Miller, Warren Edward, and Stokes, Donald E. (1960). *The American Voter*. New York, John Wiley & Sons.
- [38] Cassel, Carol A., and Hill, David B. (1981). Explanations of turnout decline: A multivariate test. *American Politics Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 181-195.
- [39] Schmitt, Hermann, and Holmberg, Soren (1995). Political Parties in Decline? In Klingemann, H-D and Fuchs, D. (Eds.). *Citizens and the State* (pp. 95–133). New York, Oxford University Press.
- [40] Bartels, Larry M. (2000). Partisanship and voting behavior, 1952-1996. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 35-50.
- [41] Allan, James P., and Scruggs, Lyle. (2004). Political partisanship and welfare state reform in advanced industrial societies. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48, No. 3, pp. 496-512.
- [42] Stevens, Daniel, Sullivan, John, Allen, Barbara, and Alger, Dean. (2008). What's good for the goose is bad for the gander: Negative political advertising, partisanship, and turnout. *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 70, No. 2, pp. 527-541.
- [43] Downs, Anthony. (1957). An economic theory of political action in a democracy. *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 65, No. 2, pp. 135-150.
- [44] Riker, William H., and Ordeshook, Peter C. (1968). A Theory of the Calculus of Voting. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 62, No. 1, pp. 25-42.
- [45] Lee, Junhan, and Hwang, Wonjae. (2017). Weather, voter turnout and partisan effects in Korea, 1995–1999. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 45, No. 4-5, pp. 507-528.
- [46] Stockemer, Daniel, and Wigginton, Michael. (2018). Fair weather voters: do Canadians stay at home when the weather is bad? *International Journal of Biometeorology*, Vol. 62, No. 6, pp. 1027-1037.
- [47] Edlin, Aaron, Gelman, Andrew, and Kaplan, Noah. (2007). Voting as a rational choice: Why and how people vote to improve the well-being of others. *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 293-314.
- [48] Brady, David, Beckfield, Jason, and Zhao, Wei. (2007). The consequences of economic globalization for affluent democracies. *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 33, pp. 313-334.

- [49] Riain, Sean O. (2000). States and Markets in an Era of Globalization. *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 187-213.
- [50] Harvey, David. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- [51] Suri, Abdul Wahab. (1999). Some contradictions of capitalist democracy. *Pakistan Business Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 42-46.
- [52] Tanzi, Vito. (2011). *Government versus Markets: The Changing Economic Role of the State*. New York, Cambridge University Press.
- [53] Öztekin, Sercan. (2015). An analysis of individualism and human nature in Robinson Crusoe. *International Journal of Humanities, Art and Social Studies (IJHAS)*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 7-15.
- [54] Mahler, Vincent A., Jesuit, David K., and Paradowski, Piotr R. (2014). Electoral turnout and state redistribution: a cross-national study of fourteen developed countries. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 2, pp. 361-373.
- [55] Berinsky, Adam J., and Lenz, Gabriel S. (2011). Education and political participation: Exploring the causal link. *Political Behavior*, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 357-373.
- [56] Krishna, Anirudh. (2002). Enhancing political participation in democracies: What is the role of social capital? *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 437-460.

AUTHORS

Fizza Batool is a doctorate candidate in Department of International Relations, University of Karachi. She is writing a thesis on socio-political factors behind political participation in illiberal democracies and is mainly interested in studying topics related to democratization, political participation and comparative political analysis. Email: fiza555@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6988-702>

