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Participation in demonstrations and civic engagement: case of Kazakhstan

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Abstract. This article reveals the political participation of Kazakh citizens (i.e. participation in demonstrations and contacting the government) by differentiating rural and urban citizens. Previous scholars mainly focused on possible reasons why Kazakh people participate in politics and mainly related it to socio-economic conditions, the political system and corruption in the country. However, the existing literature pays insufficient attention to urban-rural disparities. This study attempts to identify the main factors that influence Kazakh citizens' political participation. Moreover, it compares and contrasts the political participation among rural citizens with their urban counterparts. The results suggest that internet usage and education have statistically significant impact on intention to contact the government in both urban and rural areas. With regards to participation in demonstrations, internet usage and satisfaction with the political system play a significant role in all sampling units. Interestingly, religiosity of urban residents is positively correlated with both contacting the government and participation in demonstrations. In contrast to rural residents, the educated urban middle class is less likely to attend demonstrations.

Keywords: civil society, political participation, demonstrations, Kazakhstan, open government.

Introduction

This study attempts to incorporate two modes of political participation, namely participation in protests and the intention to contact the government officials by urban and rural Kazakh citizens. We observe Kazakh citizens' political activism has grown over the last decade, particularly participation in protests. Citizen participation in contentious politics was a rare case in the 1990s in Kazakhstan, however the colored revolutions 2003-2005 in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan and the Arab spring had deep impact on political activism of Kazakhstani citizens. Since 2010, there have been a growing number of protests on the streets, and the biggest protests are the anti-Chinese protest (2010), Zhanaozen riots (2011), land reform protests (2016), protests held by mothers of multi-children and protests against the outcomes of the presidential election (2019).

Many scholars argue that the reasons of protests stem from the following issues: authoritarian rule, corruption, self-enriching elites, grave socio-economic problems, nepotism and rising inequality [1, 2, 3]. The expansion of telecommunication technologies has transformed the political culture of citizens in Kazakhstan. The frequent usage of the internet, mobile phones and social media such as Facebook, V Kontakte, and Twitter are the main drivers of social mobilization.

According to Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights, most of the protests are impulsive in nature, in other words they respond to some changes in the political system or decisions, and reforms. Another characteristic of protests in Kazakhstan relates to its episodic and local nature. Schmitz and Wolters (2012) argue that this is due to the vast territory with huge distances between oblasts and dramatic regional differences that hinder the network protests [1].

According to Worldwide governance indicators, the 'Voice and Accountability' category has been worsening since 2006 [4]. Similarly, Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (2016) ranks Kazakhstan as a hard-line autocracy and highlights its repressive environment where alternative voice is curtailed and viewed as unwelcome [5].

In contrary to political protests, there is a lower political activism in engagement with the government through existing platforms. New multiple mechanisms of interaction between the government and citizens have been introduced such as open akimat, public councils, open dialogue and open budget. While Kazakh citizens are passive and reluctant in co-production of services compared to Western people, they still approach public authorities to channel some social, communal or personal problems.

Existing theories on political culture, good governance and others mainly explain political participation in now advanced industrial countries, determinants of civic engagement and participation in protests may differ in authoritarian state such as Kazakhstan. Therefore, this research is the attempt in revealing main determinants of political participation in overall Kazakhstan and urban-rural settings. Kazakh authorities have been occupied in lowering protests and increasing civic engagement over the last decade, findings of this research may provide some hints and clues in proper managing these policies.

Participation in protests and civic engagement with the government are the two modes of political participation. Thus, this paper captures these two modes of political participation as a research target. This study's research question is: What are the main factors (i.e. socio-economic, political culture, experience with regime) that affect participation in protests and contacting the government officials in rural-urban areas? Moreover, the paper aims to compare and contrast the findings for rural versus urban samples.

Literature review

Existing literature on protests in Kazakhstan does not differentiate between urban and rural, mainly focuses on state's response to protests, possible reasons to protests and the main state actors [1, 2, 3, 6]. Similarly, literature on civic engagement with the government suggests participation of Kazakh citizens remains low possibly due to the lack of institutional capacity, bureaucratic obstruction, people's parochial-subject behavior, lack of trust toward local governments [7, 8, 9, 10].

Previous research mainly employs qualitative research and secondary data analysis to examine the issue of political participation. However, this study distinguishes between urban and rural settings assuming that the two vary in terms of level of education, socio-economic conditions and political culture. Therefore, this is the first scholarly attempt to demonstrate that similar factors may affect differently in urban and urban parts of Kazakhstan.

Social mobilization is still in its infancy in Kazakhstan, while huge territory and distance between regions further hinder the mobilization. Growing inequality also impede collective action as economically disadvantaged parts of the society are more willing to protest [2, 6] whilst the financially secured middle-class is fearful of losing their jobs, social positions and this makes the mobilization a harder task to accomplish. In Western countries, the middle-class acted as the driving force of democratization and challenged the ancient régime. However, in authoritarian states middle class is the main beneficiary of existing regimes and thus reluctant in attending demonstrations [11, 12]. Therefore, we assume that economic conditions may be one of the factors that contribute to the participation in protests and contacting the government.

H1. Economically disadvantaged groups are more likely to participate in demonstrations and contact the government

Resource mobilization is another approach that attempts to elucidate the dynamics of protests in the Post-Soviet countries. Resource mobilization theory stresses the availability of resources to groups and participants' positions in the social network. Recent research has shown that availability of resources such as education, usage of the internet, membership in networks have a strong correlation with contentious politics [1, 6]. Similarly, research demonstrates that availability of internet has positive impact on civic engagement [13].

H2. Higher education positively correlates with political participation.

H3. Usage of internet as a source of information increases the chances of political participation.

There are widely known theories that attempt to explain citizens' engagement with institutions. According to Almond and Verba (1963), if the society does not exercise participation widely itself, institutional change by the state does not improve or foster participatory democracy [14].

In other words, even if the state adopts well-designed institutions and rules and the citizens have limited capacity or interest in politics, then this would not bear fruitful results.

Makhmutova and Akhmetova (2011) find that there is a “very low political engagement in Kazakhstan probably due to citizens’ indifferent attitude” [15]. Thus, we assume that political culture and engagement is one of the factors that affect citizens’ political participation.

H4. Higher political culture is positively associated with political participation.

Distrust and lack of confidence in the government is widely discussed in the participatory literature. Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2013) argue that distrust in public bodies is a communist legacy that undermines civic participation in post-Soviet space [16]. Research by Mishler and Rose (1997) indicates a low level of trust in public institutions in post-Communist countries [17]. Similarly, Abbot and Sapsford’s (2011) research provide evidence of low trust in government in post-Soviet countries including Kazakhstan [10]. Thus, we assume that a low level of trust and confidence in government agencies is the obstacle in contacting the government.

H5. The higher the confidence (trust) in government the more citizens contact the government.

Another factor which might impact civic engagement is religiosity. According to existing literature, religiosity is positively correlated with civic participation [6, 16]. Pop-Eleches and Tucker’s statistical results demonstrate that lower religiosity of post-Soviet states contributes to the participatory deficit in these countries [16].

H6. Religiosity has positive impact on political activism.

Methodology

In the empirical section, the study employs the survey data provided from the seventh wave of the World Value Survey (2018), which covers the whole Kazakhstan (i.e. 14 oblasts and three cities of republican status – Astana, Almaty, Shymkent) [18]. It employs a multistage sampling procedure and based on Krish grid technique. Overall sample size equals to 1277, for urban respondents N=755, for rural respondents N=522. However, during the statistical testing the Stata program excludes some missing data, and thus may provide a lower sample size in the end.

The dependent variables are operationalized as follows: the question on contacting the government official (Question #214 in World Value Survey (2018)) has four types of answers: might contact, have done, would never do, do not know, no answer. Have done and might contact the government official = 1, would never do=0 and do not know/no answer were defined as missing values. The next dependent variable is attending peaceful demonstrations (Question #211), similarly it has four types of answers: might attend, have done, would never do, do not know, no answer. Have done and might do = 1, would never do=0 and do not know/no answer were defined as missing values. Based on coding, our statistical analysis assesses an intention to attend demonstrations and contact the government.

Further, in order to test and measure the hypothesis on economically disadvantaged groups, the following question is included: “Frequency you/family (last 12 month): Gone without a cash income” (Question #54) often=1, sometimes=2, rarely=3, never=4. This implies the higher the level of cash (never=4), the richer the person is, as he never goes without cash income.

The next hypothesis on education employs the related question on the education level of respondents, with 0 = early childhood education, 1 = primary education, 2 = lower secondary

education, 3 = upper secondary education, 4= post-secondary non-tertiary education, 5 = short-cycle tertiary education, 6 = bachelor or equivalent, 7 = master or equivalent, 8 = Doctoral or equivalent, don't know/no answer/not available/not asked = missing values.

Usage of internet utilizes the question on the information source: Internet (Question #206) 1 = Never, 2 = Less than monthly, 3 = Monthly, 4 = Weekly, 5 = Daily, Don't know/ no answer = missing data.

In order to measure our hypothesis on political culture, this study employs two questions on interest in politics (Question #199) 1 = not at all, 2 = not very interested, 3 = somewhat interested, 4 = very interested. Another question relates to the membership in political party (Question #98) 0 = not a member, 1 = inactive member, 2 = active member.

The following hypothesis on confidence is based on a related question on confidence in the government (Question #71) 1 = none at all, 2 = not very much, 3= quite a lot, 4 = great deal. Finally, religiosity is measured by the frequency of prayers which relates to all religions in Kazakhstan (Question #172): How often do you pray? 1 = Never, 2 = less often, 3 = once a year, 4 = only on special holidays, 5 = only when attending religious services, 6 = several times each week, 7 = once a day, 8 = several times a day. The control variables include the following: gender, age and satisfaction with the political system. Details of coding for control variables are specified in Table 1.

Table 1

Coding for control variables

Variable	Measurement and coding
Contact the government official	Question 214: might contact = 1 , Have done =1 would never do =0 , do not know/ no answer = missing value
Political action: attending lawful/peaceful demonstrations	Question 211. Might contact = 1 , Have done=1 would never do =0 , do not know, No answer = missing value
Political party	Question98: Active/Inactive membership: political party not a member=0, inactive member=1, active member=2
Pray	Question172: How often do you pray? Never=1, less often=2, once a year=3, only on special holidays=4, only when attending religious services=5, several times each week=6,

	once a day= 7, several times a day=8
Interest in politics	Question199: Interest in politics not at all=1, not very interested =2, somewhat interested= 3, very interested=4
Education	Question275: Highest educational level: Respondent [ISCED 2011] scale base from 0 to 7 0= early childhood education, 1= primary education, 2= lower secondary education, 3=upper secondary education, 4= post-secondary non-tertiary education, 5= short-cycle tertiary education, 6= bachelor or equivalent, 7= master or equivalent, 8=Doctoral or equivalent, don't know/no answer/not available/ not asked = missing values.
Satisfaction with the political system performance:	Question252: Satisfaction not satisfied at all= 1, be increasing tendency completely satisfied =10
Female	Question260: Sex: Female=1 male =0
Confidence in Government	Question71: none at all=1, not very much=2, quite a lot=3, great deal=4
Cash	Don't know = missing value
Internet as a source of information	Question54: Frequency you/family (last 12 month): Gone without a cash income often=1, sometimes=2, rarely=3, never=4 Question 206 1= Never 2= Less than monthly 3= Monthly 4= Weekly 5= Daily Don't know/ no answer = missing data

Source: World Value Survey 2018, Kazakhstan [18]

Table 2

**Differences in socio-demographic, political engagement and experiences with regime
between rural and urban residences, 2018 Kazakhstan**

	Pooled	Rural	Urban
Sample size	1277 100%	521 40.8%	756 59.2%
Gender			
Male	45,22%	46,64%	44,24%
Female	54,78%	53,36%	55,76%
Interest in politics			
not at all	12,54%	11,32%	13,38%
not very much	43,65%	44,34%	43,18%
somewhat	33,15%	34,93%	31,92%
very much	8,62%	8,45%	8,74%
Confidence in government			
None at all	4,08%	3,65%	
Not very much	25,16%	17,66%	
Quite a lot	46,47%	46,07%	
Great deal	22,10%	32,05%	
Satisfaction with political system			
Not satisfied at all	1,88%	0,58%	2,78%
2	2,82%	3,26%	2,52%
3	3,45%	4,22%	2,91%
4	9,25%	12,09%	7,28%
5	17,55%	19,00%	16,56%
6	15,60%	11,52%	18,41%
7	14,11%	13,82%	14,30%
8	11,05%	11,71%	10,60%
9	5,33%	5,95%	4,90%
10 completely satisfied	11,44%	9,79%	12,58%
Pray			
Never	13,24%	11,52%	14,44%
Less often	2,74%	2,50%	2,91%
Once a year	3,53%	2,11%	4,50%
Only on special holidays	18,73%	22,84%	15,89%
Only when attend events	20,22%	19,96%	20,40%
Several times each week	12,70%	9,60%	14,83%
Once a day	11,44%	13,05%	10,33%
Several times a day	11,05%	13,24%	9,54%

Member of the party			
Not a member	83,15%	82,92%	83,31%
Inactive member	9,25%	8,64%	9,67%
Active member	1,57%	2,88%	0,66%
Cash			
Often	9,09%	6,14%	11,13%
Sometimes	26,49%	27,45%	25,83%
Rarely	29,47%	36,47%	24,64%
Never	32,68%	28,60%	35,50%
Internet usage			
Never	24,84%	32,05%	19,87%
Less than monthly	6,27%	9,98%	3,71%
Monthly	5,49%	7,49%	4,11%
Weekly	16,38%	12,86%	18,81%
Daily	42,87%	33,97%	49,01%

Source: author's work based on data from World Value Survey, Kazakhstan [18] Note: missing data was excluded, % from the total number of respondents in each unit of analysis

As seen from Table 2, rural residents have a higher confidence in government, 32.5% responded that they have a great deal of confidence, whilst it is merely 15.23% for their urban counterparts. It is striking that almost 3% of the rural respondents responded that they are active members of political parties in comparison with 0.66% of urban respondents. Lussier (2011) mentions the existence of mobilized participation in authoritarian and patrimonial political regimes [19]. In other words, rural residents are active members of the dominant Presidential party "Nur Otan" and perhaps this "participation is sponsored and guided by the local government in order to legitimize its claim to power" [20]. The index on cash illustrates that in urban areas 11.13% respondents mentioned that they often gone without cash income that is almost double of that for rural respondents. Next, internet usage is much higher in urban areas with almost 50% of respondents mentioning their daily usage of internet as a source of information whilst only 33% of rural citizens indicated the internet as a daily usage.

Table 3

Differences in intention to attend demonstrations and contact the government between rural and urban residences, 2018

WVS 7 th wave 2018	Political action: attending lawful/ peaceful demonstrations			Contacting the government official		
	Pooled	Rural	Urban	Pooled	Rural	Urban
Would never do	71,47%	71,17%	74,30%	39,34%	44,34%	36,84%
Might do	18,18%	19,00%	17,18%	33,07%	34,36%	33,44%
Have done	2,51%	2,88%	2,32%	17,95%	12,86%	21,36%
Don't know	7,84%	5,95%	6,19%	9,64%	8,45%	8,36%

Source: World Value survey 7 wave Kazakhstan (N=1277) [18], % from the total number of respondents

According to Table 3, it can be observed that urban citizens are more active in contacting the government official (21.36% in urban settings compared to 12.86% among rural residents). In general, the intention to contact the government (around 51%= 33.07%+17.95%) is much higher compared to intention in attending demonstrations (around 22%=18.18%+2.51%). We assume this relates to the repressive society and authoritarian regime conditions present in this country.

Table 4

Summary statistics for key variables

Variables	Pooled	Mean Urban	Rural	Sd	Min Pooled	Max
Cash	2.87	2.82	2.85	0.98	1	4
Confidence	2.88	2.75	3.07	0.79	1	4
Party	0.13	0.11	0.15	0.38	0	2
Pray	4.80	4.70	4.94	2.12	1	4
Internet	3.48	3.76	3.06	1.68	1	5
Demons	0.22	0.21	0.23	0.41	0	1
Contact g	0.56	0.59	0.51	0.49	0	1
Satisfaction	6.33	6.39	6.24	2.22	1	10
Female	0.54	0.55	0.53	0.49	0	1
Age	41.24	39.94	43.13	14.21	18	86
Education	4.79	5.12	4.29	1.70	0	7
Interest	2.38	2.37	2.40	0.81	1	4

Findings and Discussion

The dependent variable is dichotomously measured through logistic regression. To interpret the beta coefficients we need to take into account that change in independent variables is associated with the probability of contacting the government $contgov=1$ and intention to attend demonstrations=1, via the maximum likelihood approach:

$$\text{logit (Probability of contgov)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ cash} + \beta_2 \text{ conf} + \beta_3 \text{ pray} + + \beta_{5\text{female}} + \beta_3 \text{pparty} + \beta_3 \text{educ} + \beta_3 \text{interest} - \beta_3 \text{satisf} + u$$

where the effect of independent variables on the binary dependent variable will be estimated. In the logit model, β_1 measures the change in the probability of success when X_j changes, holding all other factors fixed. Therefore, logit multiple regression provides the probability

estimate of independent variables on the intention to participate in demonstrations and contacting the government official.

Table 5

Factors affecting contacting the government (Logit)

	Moderating effect	Pooled	Rural	Urban
	B/SE/Sig.	B/SE/Sig.	B/SE/Sig.	B/SE/Sig.
Political culture				
Interest in politics		-0.006/0.018/-0.08	-0.075/0.159/-0.47	0.032/0.119/0.28
Member of the party		0.308/0.87/1.64*	0.028/0.280/0.10	0.416/0.279/1.49
Socio-demographic				
Education	0.04/0.045/1.07	0.166/0.041/4.01***	0.156/0.064/2.43**	0.182/0.061/2.97***
Female		0.254/0.139/1.82*	0.298/0.231/1.29	0.184/0.189/0.97
Pray	0.017/ 0.046/0.38	0.033/0.023/1.44	-0.008/0.055/-0.16	0.120/0.046/2.59***
Internet	0.529/0.11/4.60***	0.302/0.043/6.95***	0.505/0.075/6.71***	0.163/0.059/2.74***
Cash		-0.086/0.070/-1.23	-0.007/0.125/-0.06	-0.075/0.090/-0.84
Urban	0.915/0.801/1.14			
Experience with regime				
Satisfaction		-0.025/0.031/-0.80	-0.091/0.052/-1.74*	-0.011/0.043/-0.27
Confidence		-0.084/0.090/-0.94	-0.071/0.150/-0.47	-0.052/0.125/-0.67
Urbaninternet	-0.305/0.161/-1.89*	-1.283/0.524/-2.45	-1.790/0.890/2.00 **	-1.313/0.721/-1.82*
Religurban	0.105/0.061/1.73*			
Educurban	0.011/0.0619/0.18	Prob>chi2=0.0000	Prob > chi2=0.0000	Prob>chi2=0.0001
Cons.	-2.35/0.58/-4.02***	pseudo R2=0.0774 N=956	pseudo R2=0.1357 N=386	pseudo R2=0.0522 N=520
	Prob>chi2=0.0000 pseudo R2=0.0343 N=1044			

Note: Stars indicate levels of significance: ***p<0.01 **p<0.05 *p<0.10

Logit regression analysis on rural and urban population finds strong support in favor of the hypothesis on education (Table 5), and in all sampling units the coefficient on education is statistically very significant. The higher the education levels, the higher the chance of contacting the government. Thus, we fail to reject the null hypothesis on education. Another independent variable that is significant in all sampling units is the usage of the internet as a source of information; the coefficient on the internet use is statistically very significant (Table 5). Thus, we fail to reject our hypothesis on usage of internet concerning contacting the government. This means that in authoritarian societies such as Kazakhstan usage of the internet provides

alternative views about the political system and impacts people's political awareness. In contrast, without internet access people may rely highly on pro-government TV channels and be unaware about their political rights, new initiatives and opportunities, which lead to a less chance to approach the government officials.

Religiosity is positively related to contacting the government in urban settings, which is statistically very significant (t statistics on variable Pray=2.59, table 4). However, although rural respondents are more religious (13.24% responded that they practice religion several times a day which is much higher than in urban settings), religion does not seem to have impact on civic participation in rural areas. We fail to reject the hypothesis on religiosity concerning urban residents; however, we reject the null on religiosity with regards to rural setting.

Interestingly, for rural areas satisfaction with the regime plays a significant role, despite the marginal statistical significance of the coefficient on satisfaction in rural sampling (t statistics = -1.74, table 4), it can be interpreted that the higher the level of satisfaction with government officials, the lower the intention to contact the government in rural settings, holding all other variables fixed (ceteris paribus effect in multiple regression). The dissatisfaction model posits that citizen participation increases due to the dissatisfaction and distrust in the government [21]. As long as Kazakh rural citizens are satisfied with the government, they hold less intention in contacting the government.

According to the findings, females participate more in general which is marginally significant at the 10% level, females with many children have a strong voice and influence in decision-making in Kazakhstan. According to the existing literature, particularly females with children in authoritarian countries are proactive in political participation [22].

Based on these findings displayed in table 4, we reject our hypotheses on political culture (membership in parties, confidence), economically disadvantaged groups as they are statistically insignificant in urban-rural samplings. Although in overall population membership in the party is marginally significant (t=1.64), still it provides an insufficient result in terms of political culture as both urban and rural samples indicate no significance on this independent variable.

Prior to making any final comparison between urban-rural areas in terms of religion and internet as a source of information, we design a moderating effect analysis in order to crosscheck these findings.

The results of interaction term on three interested variables on *urbaninternet*, *religrurban* show marginal significance at 10% significance level, this means urban residents who use internet as a source of information contact less compared to rural residents. Based on rural and urban sampling we failed to reject our hypothesis on usage of internet as a source of information, which increases the chances of political participation. When we want to compare this across urban-rural settings we employ interaction term and reveal that urban residents with internet contact less compare to rural residents (t=-1.89, table 4).

Further, the independent variable on religiosity measured by the frequency of pray is insignificant in rural and statistically very significant in urban, whilst in moderating effect model *religrurban* is marginally significant (t=1.73) which implies that religious urban people contact the government more compared to the base group (i.e. rural religious people). However, we need to bear in mind that there is still 10% of chance that we are wrong in considering that religious

urban people contact the government more compared to the base group. The existing literature states that religious people tend to attend religious places frequently (mosques, churches etc.) and have a habit to be involved in civil society (NGO, trade union, youth organization) [23, 16]. This, in turn, increases their participatory political culture and subsequently they are more engaged with local institutions. Why urban religious people contact more compared to rural religious people is perhaps due to the absence of NGO, civil society institutions in rural areas of Kazakhstan where religious people can enhance their participation culture. Contrary to this, in urban areas religious citizens are active and have more platforms to enhance their participatory political culture through engaging in NGOs and other institutions. Thus religious urban citizens are more likely to contact the government.

In sum, if the policymakers intend to improve civic engagement of rural citizens with local government, based on our findings the authority should provide access to the Internet as the interaction term on *urban internet* also states that they contact less compare to rural internet users. Next, given the more religiosity in rural areas they are reluctant in contacting the government, thus we assume this is due to the absence of civil society organizations that may improve rural citizens' political awareness, and the local authority should create more platforms and opportunities for civil society organizations in rural areas.

$$\text{logit (Probability of attend.demons)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{cash} + \beta_2 \text{conf} + \beta_3 \text{pray} + \beta_{5\text{female}} + \beta_{3\text{pparty}} + \beta_{3\text{educ}} + \beta_{3\text{interest}} - \beta_{3\text{satisf}} + u$$

Table 6

Factors affecting participation in demonstrations (Logit)

	Moderating effect	Pooled	Rural	Urban
	B/SE/Sig.	B/SE/Sig.	B/SE/Sig.	B/SE/Sig.
Political culture	0.706/0.16/4.17***			
Interest in politics		0.234/0.107/2.17 **	0.534/0.189/2.82 ***	0.005/0.149/0.04
Member of the party		0.372/0.187/1.99**	0.086/0.292/0.30	0.558/0.286/1.95
Socio-demographic				
Education	0.053/0.056/0.95	0.079/0.050/1.58	0.232/0.078/2.95 ***	0.01/ 0.077/0.02
Female		-0.053/0.169/-0.31	-0.005/0.273/-0.02	-0.051/0.280/-0.22
Pray	0.084/0.061/1.37	0.083/0.031/2.67 ***	0.085/0.068/1.26	0.247/ 0.063/3.88***
Internet	0.323/0.147/2.20**	0.258/0.059/4.37 ***	0.288/0.090/3.20 ***	0.271 / 0.091/2.98 ***
Cash		-0.167/0.082/-2.03 **	-0.181/0.146/-1.23	-0.094/ 0.112/-0.84
Urban	2.667/1.183/2.25**			
Experience with regime				
Satisfaction	-1.307/0.057/-2.28	-0.119/0.038/-3.11***	-0.129/0.065-1.98**	-0.139/0.053/-2.63***
Confidence		-0.048/0.106/-0.46	-1.22/0.173-0.71	-0.026/0.153/-0.17

Urbaneduc	-0.02/0.073/ -0.39			
Urbaninternet	-0.16/0.076/-2.15**			
Religiou-surban	-0.201/ 0.208/ -0.97			
Urbaninterest	0.146/0.082/1.78* -0.66/0.21/-3.11***			
Const.	-4.229/0.874/ -4.83	-2.702/0.647/-4.17	4.021/1.080/-3.72	-2.634/0.935/-2.82
	Prob>chi2=0.0000 pseudo R2=0.0726 N=1004	Prob>chi2=0.0000 pseudo R2=0.0746 N=977	Prob>chi2=0.0000 pseudo R2=0.1449 N=396	Prob>chi2=0.0000 pseudo R2=0.0821 N=529

Note: Stars indicate levels of significance: ***p<0.01 **p<0.05 *p<0.10

According to Table 6 statistical analyses on intention to participate in demonstrations provides differed results compared to the previous dependent variable on contacting the government. Although variable on internet similar to the previous result and it is statistically very significant in all sampling units. Higher the usage of the internet as an information source higher the intention to participate in demonstrations, this implies that internet serves as a networking platform and source to the alternative views about socio-economic and political system in Kazakhstan. We fail to reject our hypothesis on internet usage that is positively correlated with political activism. Similarly, coefficient on satisfaction is statistically very significant in all sampling units, displaying that higher the satisfaction the less the chance to participate in protests. This implies that protesters are those people who are highly dissatisfied with political system.

Further, similar to the result on contacting the government the coefficient on religiously is statistically very significant in urban setting. However, the variable on religiosity does not have impact on intention of participation for rural respondents, table 5).

Interest in politics is the variable through which we measure political culture of citizens; we fail to reject our hypothesis on political culture for rural respondents and in the whole population as well. Moreover, membership in political parties has a significant effect at 5% level on the dependent variable in general population. Thus, we can draw inference that political culture has impact on participation in demonstrations in Kazakhstan, holding all other variables fixed (ceteris paribus effect). Likely, coefficient on cash is statistically significant at 5% level in general population, this result implies that people who never goes without cash are less likely to participate in demonstrations. In other words, economically advantaged strata are less likely to participate in demonstrations; therefore, we fail to reject our hypothesis on economically disadvantaged groups for the pooled sample.

In order to crosscheck our findings and better compare urban-rural settings; we additionally conduct moderating effect analysis. The findings of interaction term between urban education are statistically significant at 5% level ($t=-2.15$), this implies that urban educated middle-class tend to less attend demonstrations compared to the base group. This is consistent with the prior regressions we have done previously on urban and rural samples, where education is statistically significant only for rural areas (table 5).

Religious urban citizens are more likely to attend demonstrations and the findings of moderating effect is marginally significant at 10% significance level ($t=1.78$). Similarly, result of moderating effect on urban interest is consistent with the prior findings, urban citizens with higher interest in politics are less likely to attend demonstrations ($t=3.11$).

In sum, determinants of the participation in demonstrations vary compared to contacting the government. Usage of internet has a positive relation with the dependent variable for both urban and rural settings, religiosity is positively associated with dependent variable only for urban residents, educated urban residents with interest in politics participate less in demonstrations compared to religious and educated rural residents. The policy-makers intent to decrease the growing number of protests, according to our model people attend protests due to dissatisfaction with political system in both rural and urban areas. Protesters are the representatives of lower strata because our model illustrates that educated urban people who possess interest in politics deter themselves in participation of demonstrations.

In authoritarian countries participation in protests is a risky matter; therefore, drivers in authoritarian countries differ compared to now advanced Western countries. Income and education levels are highly positively correlated in participation in protests in advanced industrial countries and the middle class played a significant role in regime change [24, 25]. However, in authoritarian countries citizens with higher education are reluctant to participate in protests because they are the main beneficiaries and their income depends on the existing regime. There is a high opportunity cost for the middle class and this is the reason for free riding on participation of economically disadvantaged groups [6, 11, 12].

Likely, middle-class educated Kazakh urban citizens are less likely to attend demonstrations. This implies that the government should pay more attention on problems of lower strata, the cash variable in pooled model also statistically very significant ($t=-2.03$, Table 6) with negative sign, which can be interpreted as the richer the person there is a less likelihood in attending demonstrations. This justifies our assumption that economically advantageous strata are less likely to participate in protests. The authorities should pay more attention on issues raised by the lower strata in Kazakhstan.

However, these models (tables 5 and 6) are not immune to endogeneity bias. There are possible limitations in terms of omitted variables, which relate to political and economic institutions. It is preferred to conduct statistical analysis with panel data when World Value Survey publishes the next wave survey results, panel data may assist in excluding time-constant unobservable variables. Another concern relates to the question on binary dependent variable whether the respondent contacted the government's official, more proper question would be whether the respondent contacted the municipal government in rural areas.

Another limitation of the findings related to the number of observations in the model, the total N given by the World Value Survey equals to 1277, however after running the regression number of observations falls dramatically for the pooled model from 1277 to 956, 977 (tables 5 and 6). This is due to the missing value, however we need to be cautious and subject those dropped observations to the scrutiny as it may decrease the research validity. In my view, World Value Survey entails too many answers that contribute to missing data such as do not know, no answer, not available, not asked, missing. All these types of data generate the missing value in the end and decrease the internal validity of the study.

The logit regression provides small Pseudo-R squared in all units of analysis; it ranges from 3% to 14%. Wooldridge (2008) states that despite the small R squared if we have a large data size, we are still able to estimate precisely the effect of explanatory variables on the dependent variable [26]. Given the N=1277 by the World Value Survey, we assume estimates in logit regression of this study are still valid and reliable.

Conclusion

This study attempted to reveal the main factors that affect citizens' political participation. The result suggests that internet usage and education have statistically significant impact on intention to contact government officials across both urban and rural areas. Concerning participation in demonstrations, internet usage and satisfaction with the political system plays a significant role in all sampling units. Interestingly, religiosity of urban residents is highly positively correlated with both contacting the government and participation in demonstrations. The interaction term on religious urban citizens indicates that (albeit at the 10% significance level) religious urban residents attend and contact the government more compared to rural residents.

The key contribution of this study to existing research stems from the differentiation of Kazakh citizens by rural-urban residency areas. Although variables on education, internet usage and satisfaction play a statistically significant role on urban-rural intentions to participate in politics, the explanatory variable on interest in politics determines rural citizens' participation in demonstrations. This implies that political culture and awareness are one of the determinants of rural resident's political participation. Given their higher religiosity, lower usage of the internet and higher confidence in government compared to urban counterparts, rural residents tend to participate less (table 3). This should be due to lower political culture and an absence of civic organizations in rural areas, which might decrease their participatory political culture. The explanatory variable on religiosity reveals that although it is lower among urban residents, it affects political participation of urban residents. Moreover, findings demonstrate that urban residents who possess higher education and interest in politics attend demonstrations less compared to rural residents. This finding is contrary to the thesis that the middle class drives democracy and consistent with the literature on protests that highlights passive middle class in authoritarian countries [11, 12]. Thus, the middle class (educated and with higher political culture) in urban areas of Kazakhstan attend demonstrations less perhaps due the fear to lose social positions, jobs and other benefits.

Authors' contribution:

Davletbayeva Zh.Zh. – general guidance, methodology, interpretation of results.

Makulbayeva G.A. – methodology, collection of empirical data, content analysis.

Dyussenov M.M. – empirical data collection.

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Демонстрацияларға қатысу және азаматтық белсенділік: Қазақстан жағдайы

Андатпа. Бұл мақалада ауыл және қала азаматтарын ажырата отырып, қазақ азаматтарының саяси қатысуы (шерулерге қатысу және үкіметпен байланысуы) зерттеледі. Бұл зерттеу Әлемдік құндылықтар 2020 деректерінің негізінде жүзеге асты. Бұрынғы зерттеулер қазақ халқының саясатқа араласуының ықтимал себептеріне тоқталып, оны негізінен елдегі әлеуметтік-экономикалық жағдайлармен, саяси жүйемен және сыбайлас жемқорлықпен байланыстырған. Бірақ, қала мен ауыл арасындағы айырмашылықтарға жеткіліксіз көңіл бөлінген. Бұл зерттеу Қазақстан азаматтарының саяси қатысуына әсер ететін негізгі факторларды анықтауға арналған. Сонымен қатар, ол ауыл азаматтарының саяси қатысуын қалалық тұрғындармен салыстырады. Зерттеу нәтижесі, интернетті пайдалану мен білім деңгейі қалада да, ауылдық жерлерде де үкіметпен байланысу ниетіне статистикалық тұрғыдан маңызды әсер ететінін көрсетеді. Шерулерге қатысу бойынша, тұрғындардың интернетті пайдалануы және саяси жүйеге қанағаттануы ауыл мен қала үшін маңызды рөл атқарады. Қала тұрғындарының дінге жақын болуы үкіметпен байланысуға және шерулерге қатысуға әсер етеді.

Түйін сөздер: азаматтық қоғам, саяси қатысу, демонстрациялар, Қазақстан, ашық үкімет

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Участие в демонстрациях и гражданская активность: кейс Казахстана

Аннотация. В данной статье раскрывается политическое участие граждан Казахстана (т.е. участие в демонстрациях и контактах с правительством) путем дифференциации сельских и городских жителей. Предыдущие ученые в основном фокусировались на возможных причинах участия казахов в политике и в основном связывали это с социально-экономическими условиями, политической системой и коррупцией в стране. Однако в существующей литературе недостаточно внимания уделяется различиям между городом и деревней. В данном исследовании предпринята попытка определить основные факторы, влияющие на политическое участие казахстанцев. Более того, он сравнивает и противопоставляет политическое участие сельских жителей с их городскими коллегами. Результаты показывают, что использование интернета и образование оказывают статистически значимое влияние на намерение связаться с правительством как в городских, так и в сельских районах. Что касается участия в демонстрациях, использование Интернета и удовлетворенность политической системой играют значительную роль во всех единицах выборки. Интересно, что религиозность городских жителей положительно коррелирует как с контактами с властями, так и с участием в демонстрациях. В отличие от сельских жителей, образованный городской средний класс реже посещает демонстрации.

Ключевые слова: гражданское общество, политическое участие, демонстрации, Казахстан, открытое правительство

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