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# The Psychology behind Voting Behavior in Kosovo

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## The Psychology behind Voting Behavior in Kosovo

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July, 2018

**TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

Abstract .....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
I.    Statement of the Problem .....	5
II.   Literature Review .....	6
III.  Methodology .....	13
IV.  Analysis of the Results .....	15
V.   Conclusion.....	35
References.....	36
VI.  Appendices .....	41

**ABSTRACT:**

The extent to which voting is a rational behavior is highly debated among social psychologists and political scientists. This paper aims to answer the question of what guides the voting behavior in Kosovo. Firstly, it suggests that the voters' rationality is limited and that implicit biases override policy analysis. Secondly, it argues that social identity, family voting, gender bias, ideology, and emotions are all significant in its own way in guiding the voting behavior in Kosovo. It does this through a combination of secondary and primary research that includes one survey of 250 respondents and the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The findings support the idea that rational and irrational factors compete with one another when the voting decision is being made. Generally, the irrational factors are the ones to prevail while rationality takes a secondary role in this matter. Lastly, the findings support the second hypothesis that that ideology, social identity, gender bias, emotions, and family all play an important role in affecting the voting behavior.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

To my parents, my life coaches to whom I owe everything! Thank you!

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Thank you to Gent Rusinovci for all the love and moral support!

## I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the principal issues for many social psychologists is to understand what guides voting behavior. Informed and rational voting decisions constitute the backbone of a stable representative democracy. Nevertheless, many studies question the rationality of the voters' choices, given that the requirements for making a rational choice are beyond the interests and capabilities of the citizens (Dahlberg, 2009). Considering the little impact of a single vote in the elections, most of the citizens (despite, perhaps political analysts) may not be willing to sacrifice their time by engaging in policy inquiries. Some may even go as far as stating that "the divergence between the necessity of [representation] and citizens' incapability of reasoned [and informed] choices constitutes a democratic dilemma as it threatens to reduce the idea of representative democracy to an illusion" (Dahlberg, 2009).

This study analyzes the psychological factors behind the voting behavior in Kosovo. New studies show that 90% of our decisions are made subconsciously, and not on a rational basis (Schlesinger 2015). Although one may think that one is fully in control of the decisions that we make, many voting choices are subject to millions of explicit as well as implicit biases (Carpenter, 2009). Thus, a thorough understanding of these inner preferences may make the citizens more alert during the next elections. An increased level of awareness among the voters is particularly essential in a developing country such as Kosovo, given that they share responsibility for determining the future of their country.

This study brings forth two hypotheses with regards to the Kosovars' voting behavior. The first one suggests that the rationality of the voters is limited and that the implicit biases override the rational factors of the voting decision.

Now the question is what are these inner biases that may guide voting behavior?

It is essential to note that differences in biases occur at many levels of analysis: among individuals, social groups, and countries. This would generate a lengthy list of biases that may not be applied universally. Thus, the second hypothesis suggests that social identity, family voting, gender differences, ideology, and emotions are all important in guiding the voting behavior in Kosovo.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 *The State of Debate on the Rationality of the Voters*

There is an ongoing debate on whether people vote rationally or based on their inner biases. There are studies that support the first belief that people vote based on self-interest or collective good (collective rationalism). Others believe that voting behavior, as well as decision-making, in general, is emotion-based. People vote for someone who corresponds with their perception of themselves.

The debate unfolds on the grounds of economic and behavioral models of decision-making. The economic model of rationality assumes that individuals are rational human beings who make choices based on a cost-benefit analysis. It assumes that individuals have an impressive amount of knowledge and access to information in relevant areas before making a decision. In a response to this, Herbert Simon (1955), a Nobel Prize Winner, puts forth the argument that the rationality of human beings is bounded by cognitive limitations as well as limited information and resources. This may push individuals to make premature decisions based on their inner biases, culture, or ideological preferences (Simon, 1955).

In the context of voting behavior, proponents of the rational model suggest that people vote by assessing the pros and cons of each candidate or political party. They argue that: “Voters decide whether to vote and how to vote, based on maximizing an expected utility with both selfish and social terms” (Edlin, Gelman, Kaplan, 2007). They may vote for the person or party based on the expectations they have for their performance on major issues such as economic growth and lack of corruption (McGann, 2016). Nevertheless, most of the advocates of this stance give credit to the numerous studies done on the role of inner biases in the voting behavior. Otherwise, they would need to extend the definition of rationality to the point of becoming meaningless if they were to assume that inner biases are rational or that their role is insignificant to the voting behavior.

Studies in neuroscience and social psychology suggest otherwise. In the book *The American Voter*, it is argued that identification with a party is formed at an early stage in life, and it is usually maintained throughout time. It showed that political campaigns activated these inner biases and that yields to political choices during the elections (Potter, 2006).

Studies by the psychologist Vittorio Caprara show that people vote for candidates who have a similar personality to them which is conveyed through ideology. The decision to vote for

an ideology may be irrational in itself since a single ideology may not be convenient for every policy (Winter, 2015).

A new and more acceptable way of thinking suggests that rationality and implicit biases are not quite opposites, rather they compete with one another in a political campaign. When in competition, emotions and inner biases take over the voting decision most of the time because it is easier and it does not require much knowledge on politics (Durham, 2016).

## *2.2 Implicit Biases vs. Policy Analysis*

Bryan Caplan (2007), in his prominent work *The Myth of the Rational Voter: Why Democracies Choose Bad Policies* purports an interesting view on the irrational voting decisions that many citizens tend to undertake. Caplan suggests that voters act in accordance with their values, beliefs, and preferences in order to derive psychological benefits. For these beliefs to be right, citizens may need to have a certain degree of knowledge and expertise in the policy areas. For instance, many people may believe in and vote for protectionist policies, even if many experts in the economy suggest that free trade yields to the most benefits (Caplan, 2007).

A similar view is supported by Jon Krosnick, a psychologist, and a professor at Stanford University suggests that it is hard to vote rationally. For once, one has to have a certain level of education in order to fully understand the advantages and disadvantages of voting in favor of a policy or another. One has to know how the government should work and even then, one is not confident that the promises will come true (Krosnick, n.d). Besides, going through each party's electoral programs may be a daunting task. Considering that the probability of a single vote having a tremendous effect on the elections' results is close to zero, analyzing policies may be time-consuming.

Nevertheless, all of the previously mentioned studies acknowledge the fact that there are many rational voters who make informed decisions. It is just that this rationality may at times, be bounded by inner biases and beliefs.

## *2.3 What are the Implicit Biases that Guide Voting Behavior?*

Individuals are often subject to a set of explicit and implicit biases that may or may not guide their decision-making. Kristin J. Anderson (2009), in the study *Benign Bigotry: The Psychology of Subtle Prejudice* suggests that explicit biases have decreased throughout time. For instance, in the 1940s 68% of the American respondents believed in the racial segregation in

schools, whereas in the 1950s only 4% held such beliefs (Anderson, 2009). Changing norms on what is socially acceptable and what is not have had a tremendous contribution to this decrease. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that the biases have vanished; they were merely suppressed in the subconscious mind of the individuals.

Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald, social psychologists, used the term of implicit biases for the first time in 1995. This term refers to the “ingrained beliefs, whether positive or negative, about other individuals or groups that are triggered automatically”. They believe that these implicit biases have the capability to actually predict behavior. Although the majority of the social psychologists acknowledge the presence of implicit beliefs, they remain divided on the issue of how much of the individuals’ behavior is guided by these biases (Olson, Camille A., et al., 2006).

### *2.3.1 Social Identity: the Concept of “The Other” in Voting Behavior*

In 1979, Henri Tajfel and John Turner have introduced the social identity theory which is their greatest contribution to psychology, and the foundation of this research study. Tajfel argued that social identity is an individual’s sense of belonging to a particular group or society. These groups are tremendous sources of pride and self-esteem that is why people tend to increase their self-image by discriminating “the others” that are not part of that group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). There are several drawbacks when applying the social identity theory. A critique by Leonie Huddy (2001) suggests that the above-mentioned theory doesn’t account for differences in the definition of identity. For instance, having an American identity does not mean the same thing to every individual. Additionally, social identities are not highly erratic as Turner argued, but they tend to persist over time (Huddy, 2001).

Steven Greene (1999), Professor at North Carolina State University, has placed Tajfel’s social identity theory to the party identification concept proposed in *The American Voter*. He brings out the social identity theory that the self-perceived membership to social groups affects attitudes and perceptions. People perceive bigger differences than what they are in reality between an in-group and out-group and they show more preference to the in-group. Greene points out that these social identifications are not real but only self-perceived (Greene, 1999).

The following studies propose a different course on the matter. Eric Dickson, Professor at New York University, and Kenneth Scheve, Professor at Yale University, recognize the role of

social identity in voting behavior but they go a step further to analyze how that affects the campaigns of political parties and candidates. They try to answer the question: “Why do candidates in democratic elections sometimes make campaign appeals to voters’ social identities?” So, the role of social identity in the voting behavior is also recognized by the political parties and the candidates. This is evident in their political speeches and the electoral campaigns. The study puts forth the argument that the concept of social identity rather than policy preferences leads the political campaigns. There are even instances where some politicians employ identity rhetoric to make up for the ‘slack’ in their policies (Dicksen & Scheve, 2005).

### *2.3.2 Family Voting: a remnant of a collectivist culture*

Revisiting once again, *The American Voter* by Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes (1960), family voting may be a behavior learned at an early stage of development. The book argues that party identification is one of the most important influencers in the voting behavior. The party identification forms following the funnel model which says that party identification is learned at an early stage in life by parents and by close social circles. This shapes the way how one develops one’s own attitudes and beliefs in line with those of the parents and the preferred political party. Later on, these inner beliefs subconsciously taken by parents and close social circles are reflected in individual positions on ‘the six attitudinal dimensions’ which include: the personal traits of a Democratic or a Republican candidate, issues of domestic or foreign policy, and the involved groups in politics and questions of interest that may affect them. These dimensions are able to predict the voting behavior of individuals with 87% accuracy.

The political attitudes formed at the early stage of development are continuously reinforced by collectivist and individualist aspects of culture. While individualist cultures emphasize the importance of the individual independently of others, collectivist cultures place a high importance on relationships, roles, and statuses. The latter is the case with Kosovo, where the family is of the highest importance for the majority of the citizens. The decision-making process in the collectivist cultures constitutes consulting and taking into account the opinions of other family members, especially those of the older men in the family who are often considered as authoritative figures. This is reflected in the voting behavior in collectivist cultures.

According to a National Study on the Family Voting in Albania (2014), Albanian families traditionally vote together, although it does not happen at the voting centers, but at home. When

people were asked about the pressure that women in Albania have by the men of the family to vote in a particular way, 27% answered that this phenomenon occurs very often and 31% answered that it sometimes happens (“National Study”, 2014).

According to Perri Klass (2016), independently of the above-mentioned cultural dimensions, parents play a significant role in the voting behavior of individuals. Growing up to hearing political debates at home and the values that parents hold in relation to political matters are of primary importance when analyzing the voting behavior (Klass, 2016).

### 2.3.3. *Gender Biases*

Whether gender differences affect voting behavior has been the subject of a debate since the enfranchisement of women. Most of the studies purport that there is very little gender bias in the voting behavior. Danny Hayes and Jennifer Lawless (2016) suggest that women candidates are not treated differently than men by the media during the electoral campaigns. “Voters’ attitudes toward female candidates aren’t primarily shaped by gender stereotypes” (Hayes, Lawless, 2016). On the other hand, they both recognize that gender biases exist beyond the consciousness of the voters and are able to shape their voting behavior. This argument has been advanced by Cecilia Mo, a professor at Vanderbilt University, who has done the Implicit Association Test on 407 participants in order to find out whether subtle gender biases exist. This test required the participants to associate female and male names with “leadership” or “assistant”. She compared the results to questions on how they would vote in hypothetical situations and she found out that individuals who associated female names with the word “assistant” were more likely to vote for male candidates (Mo, 2014).

Unconscious gender biases may be even more prevalent in the Western Balkans, given the patriarchal society, rules, and norms. Removing gender biases requires a fundamental change in the general mentality because of traditional gender roles. Gender quotas and the legal framework is not effective in overcoming this challenge due to struggles to implement them (Browne, 2017).

### 2.3.4 *Ideology: moral subjectivity and voting behavior*

“Ideology, it has been said, is like halitosis—it is something the other person has” (Eagleton 1991). This explains the idea that individuals often prefer to believe that their political convictions are purely driven by reasoning and logic and that it is other individuals who are irrational and ideological.

The term “ideology” was first introduced by Antoine Destutt de Tracy (1797) as an objective science of ideas. This understanding of the concept has been questioned by many scholars who equate ideology with “false consciousness” (Marx& Engels, 1846; Althusser, 1970). For most of them, ideology operates unconsciously and misrepresents the real world. According to Marx& Engels (1846) in *The German Ideology*, these ideological beliefs should be regarded as social and psychological products. The relation between ideology and unconsciousness has been noticed even in contemporary studies of the voting behavior.

Winter (2015) recommends that differences between liberals and conservatives are products of implicit preferences inherently apolitical, such as the desire to change or to keep the status-quo. Charles Tabel and Milton Lodge have demonstrated that the political behavior is often subject to the moral subjectivity bias. People were asked to express their opinions on gun control, and later they had to evaluate the pro and con arguments presented by professionals. The results showed that people gave a better evaluation of the arguments supporting their own views.

Other studies by the Sapienza University suggest that ideology is a way for politicians to display their personality to their voters. Thus, people tend to vote for candidates that convey a similar personality and ideology to them (Winter, 2015). This behavior drives incentives for the candidates or political parties to follow a particular ideology that appeals to the voters, although that is not in the public interest. No ideology can be applied to all aspects of policy-making and each problem may require a different set of attitudes and approaches to be addressed. As Winter writes “sometimes a smart decision is liberal; at other times, conservative” (Winter, 2015).

### *2.3.5 Emotions and the Negativity Bias*

It goes without saying that emotions, both positive and negative, are crucial to understanding behavior, particularly that of the voting behavior. We are accustomed to seeing the brain’s limbic system as two subsystems that generate different emotions. One generates positive emotions that include excitement and enthusiasm, whereas the other one generates negative emotions that include anxiety and fear (Marcus & Mackuen 1993).

Drew Westen (2008), in his groundbreaking work *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotions in Deciding the Fate of the Nation* suggests that the political brain should not be seen as two separate systems, but rather as a network of “neurons, associations, feelings, images, and

thoughts” (Westen, 2008). It further acknowledges the idea that emotions play an important part in the elections and that rationality only has a supporting role.

Nonetheless, not all emotions are equal in terms of impact. The negative emotions have a significantly greater impact on the brain compared to the positive ones. Westen (2008) suggests that “If you’re trying to convince people to change course, you generally have to elicit emotions such as anxiety or anger”. The idea that negative emotions are stronger is widely known as the negativity bias.

While enthusiasm triggers greater political involvement and participation in party events, negative emotions increase attention and emotional reactions. Individuals start paying serious attention when there are signs of threat and problems in politics (Marcus, Mackaen, 1933). The implications that fear and anxiety have in the voting behavior is reaffirmed by Peter Hatemi et. al. (2013). They further suggest that many political figures attempt to invoke fear in the minds of the voters in order to mobilize groups to support a certain individual or cause (Hatemi et al., 2013). One may consider as an example the rise of the populism and the massive support for right-wing parties in Europe and elsewhere.

Among many other expert explanations on this matter, anxiety and fear may be one of the reasons behind this major shift. Most of the right-wing political parties and proponents of the populist movement induce similar fears: potential ‘invasion’ by immigrants, cultural threats, and endangered freedom of speech by political correctness (Shuster, 2016). These fears have also been reflecting in the voters’ choices, with the latest shift in voting behavior happening in Austria, where the Freedom Party, promising to provide protection against immigrants and the other above-mentioned threats won. Kosovo has not been left untouched from these developments and the shift towards populism.

In the context of Kosovo, populism tends to reject the political establishment and mentally categorizes the society in 2 groups: “the peoples” who are pure and innocent, and the leading elite which is corrupt and harmful. It is mostly manifested by a nationalist rhetoric that points out to the failures of the institutions such as the visa isolation, and the contested statehood of Kosovo (Shala, 2016). The discourse used in the parliament is a product of a destructive political culture which tends to produce more anxiety and panic than constructive criticisms of the policies presented by other politicians. For instance, the debate about the demarcation of the Kosovo-Montenegro border

has been characterized by a war rhetoric rather than a constructive discussion of the policy options. Some members of the parliament went as far as to say that Kosovo's territories have been occupied so we are in a state of war. They also said that Montenegro wants the mountain peaks because they are getting ready for a war. This is a discourse of panic which only contributes to the political culture of rhetoric in Kosovo that does not correspond with the political reality. This culture neglects any constructive discussion about the real policy options and distracts the public's attention with unnecessary panic and anxiety (Cakaj, 2018).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### *3.1 Research Design*

The work is carried out through a combined descriptive research design that contains both secondary and primary data. Secondary data, by drawing analogies to similar studies done in other countries, constitutes the theoretical basis for analyzing the psychology behind voting behavior in Kosovo. The study also takes a look at the discourse of the most prominent politicians in Kosovo and how they target, through speech, citizens' subconscious biases in order to trigger a particular voting behavior. This is done with the purpose of testing the hypothesis that implicit biases guide the voting behavior in Kosovo.

Additionally, the study suggests that the most prevalent biases in Kosovo are social identity, family voting, gender differences, ideology, and emotions.

Primary data consists of one survey and the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The IAT is part of the Project Implicit launched by researchers from Harvard University who were interested in unconscious biases that individuals may have. There are many tests but for the purpose of this study, only the Gender IAT is done by 40 respondents that know English. This helps in detecting whether gender biases exist among Kosovars.

The survey has 8 demographic questions and 16 close-ended questions. It is an online survey done in Albanian and in English, although most of the respondents have filled the Albanian version of the survey. The survey demonstrates the degree to which implicit biases can affect voting behavior in Kosovo. The survey is conducted first at the municipality of Prishtina, as a matter of convenience, and then in 8 other municipalities such as Gjakovë, Pejë, Gjiilan, Ferizaj, Mitrovicë, Podujevë, and Drenas.

The presentation and the discussion of the results will follow the structure of the literature review section. For instance, all the findings regarding social identity will be in one subsection.

### *3.2 Sampling Design*

According to the KQZ, there are 1,888,059 registered voters in Kosovo out of which 747,228 have voted in the Parliamentary Elections 2017 (“Rezultatet Përfundimtare 2017” 1). This population is first clustered in the previously mentioned municipalities, selected based on the highest number of voters in the Parliamentary Elections 2017. Then, a convenient sample of 250 respondents responded to the survey questions. The answers are categorized in terms of demographics in order to look for possible relations to the motives that guide their voting behavior.

### *3.3 Limitations*

One of the limitations of this study is its small sample size as a result of a limited time and resources for conducting the study in all Kosovo municipalities. In places where the survey is limited in giving insight to the voting behavior of Kosovars, its results have been combined and supported with other secondary data. Additionally, The Implicit Association Test requires the participants to know English that is why only the respondents who know the language were chosen to take the test.

Some of the respondents with no formal education required further assistance in answering the survey questions. This may increase the possibility of biased or dishonest answers. Finally, implicit biases are better detected through experimentation which is not possible for the students obtaining a bachelor’s degree.

## I. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

### 4.1 Political Context of the Voting Behavior in Kosovo

Following Kosovo's independence in 2008, its first elections had a low turnout of 45% which reflected a general dissatisfaction with the economic and social situation, notably with unemployment and corruption. Halil Matoshi, a political analyst, said that only the militants of the present political parties took part in the elections at that time ("Turnout low in Kosovo's first elections" 2009). It should be mentioned that elections before independence were regulated by UNMIK, in accordance with the Resolution 1244. The first ever elections in Kosovo were won by the biggest political party at that time LDK in 2000 (nearly 60%). Gradually, the voting pattern has changed throughout years where most of the votes were dispersed among major political parties such as LDK and PDK. In 2010, for instance, the political campaigns of the leaders were not focused on the platforms and policies, but rather on personalities. Some political parties such as LDK did not have a program at all (Ejupi & Qavdarbasha 2011). At the same year, a small party called FER was created emphasizing the need for professionalism, rule of law and new ways of governing. Nevertheless, this party won only 2% of the votes.

***Table 1: The Results of the General Elections in 2010, Kosovo***

EMRI I PARTISË / NAZIV PARTIJE	VOTAT /GLASOVI	%	MANDATE / MANDATI
PDK	224,339	32.11 %	34
LDK	172,552	24.69 %	27
VETËVENDOSJE!	88,652	12.69 %	14
AAK	77,130	11.04 %	12
Koalicioni AKR-PD-PSD-PPI-PPK-PNDSH-PGJK	50,951	7.29 %	8
FER	15,156	2.17 %	0
LDD	14,924	2.14 %	0

This political context reinforces the idea that individuals do not always make decisions in a rational and a logical manner. A political party may not present its program at all and still get a decent amount of votes.

The importance of education in the voting behavior has been brought into light in the previous sections of this study. Because it is hard to vote rationally, a certain level of knowledge is required to analyze the pros and cons of the political party or the candidate. Nevertheless, the education system in Kosovo was put into question from the PISA results in 2015. They rank Kosovo among the worst performing nations in terms of education where students earned 378 points compared to the OECD average of 493 (OECD, 2015). When students are not exposed to

a high-quality education they may find it difficult to get involved into critical analysis of party programs and to make a knowledgeable decision when it comes to voting. The level of education may say a lot about the irrational aspect of the voting behavior in Kosovo.

4.3. Analysis of the Survey and IAT Results

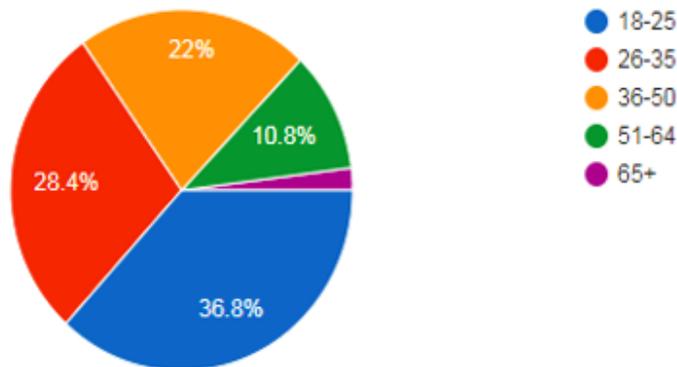
4.3.1 A Demographic Analysis of the Results

Regarding the demographics of the sample, most of the respondents are younger than 35 years old (65.2%), with only 2% belonging to the age group of 65+. This is partly because a large part of the responses come from university level students at various municipalities in Kosovo.

Moreover, it is interesting to know whether the voting behavior of young adults differ from that of the older people in Kosovo.

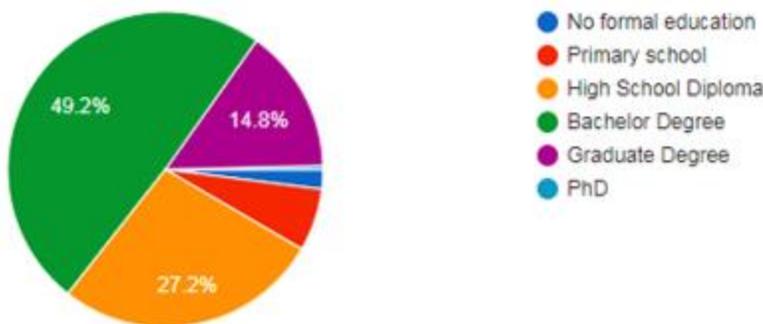
**Graph 1: The Age Group of Survey Respondents**

The majority of the respondents were educated individuals where 49.2% have earned a



Bachelor’s Degree, 15.8% have pursued further studies, 27.2% earned a high school diploma; and 6.4% have only finished primary school while 2% have not attended formal education.

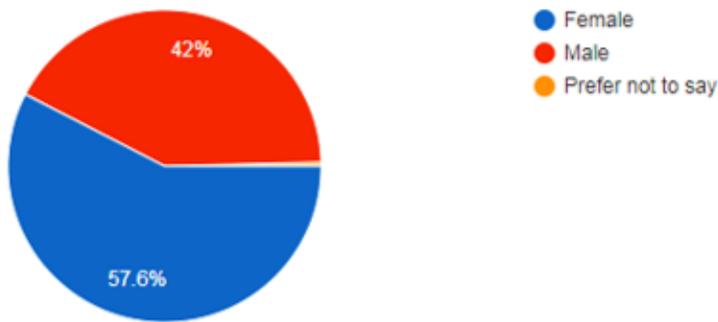
**Graph 2: The Level of Education of the Respondents**



The level of education of the respondents is crucial in understanding whether implicit biases are higher among those with a lower level of education or the vice-versa. Out of 250 respondents,

**Graph 3: Gender of the Respondents**

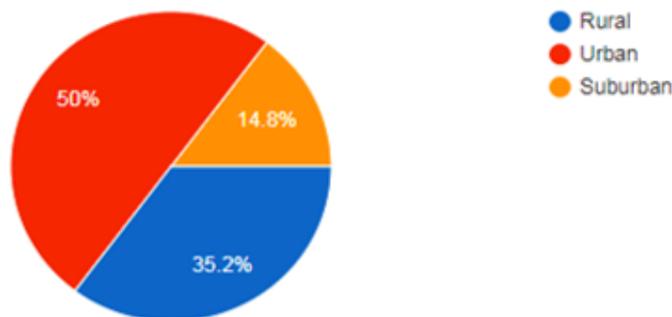
57.6% of the respondents were female whereas 42% were male.



With regards to the area of living, 50% of the respondents said that they live in the urban areas, 35.2% said they live in the rural areas, and 14.8% answered suburban. Here it is important to provide some explanations regarding what is considered as rural, urban, or suburban in Kosovo. Urban areas in Kosovo include all the cities as well as the small cities called “qyteza”. The rural areas include all the villages of Kosovo, whereas suburban areas include the peripheral zones of each municipality. Because Kosovo’s Agency of Statistics (KAS) and the people, in general, are more accustomed to the division between urban and rural, this paper focuses on these two subgroups.

**Graph 4: Area of Living**

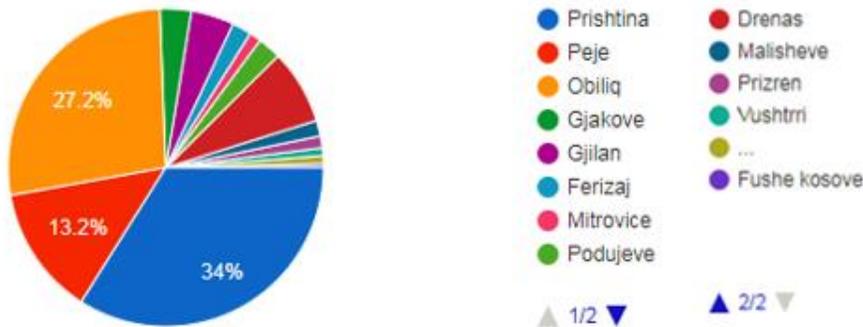
Going deeper into the geographical division of this study’s sample, 34% of the respondents live



in Prishtina, 13.2% live in Peje, 27.2% live in Kastriot/Obiliq, 7.6% live in Drenas, Gjilan 4.4%, Gjakove 3.2%, Podujeve 2.4%, and nearly 8% from other municipalities. The sample was taken

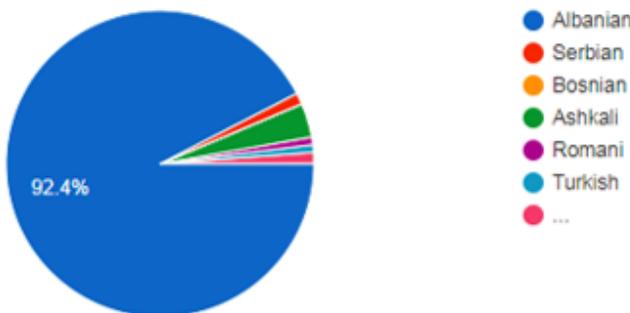
by convenience that is why an equal amount of respondents from each municipality was not taken.

**Graph 5: Municipality of Residence**



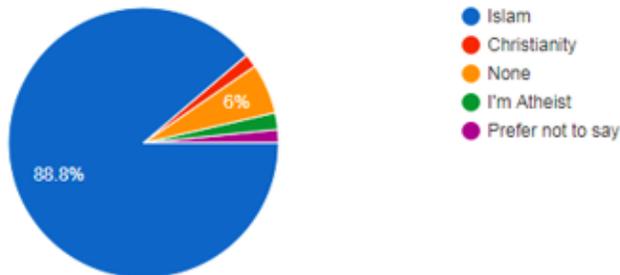
Although there is diversity in terms of municipalities, in terms of ethnicity 92.4% of the respondents are Albanian, 3.6% are Ashkali, 1.2% is Serbian, and the others are 2.8%. This more or less reflects the ethnic composition of the total population in Kosovo where approximately 95% are ethnic Albanians and the other 5% are ethnic minorities. Knowing the ethnic group the respondents belong to is crucial in understanding the social identity theory and the voting behavior of certain groups in Kosovo.

**Graph 6: The Ethnicity of the Respondents**



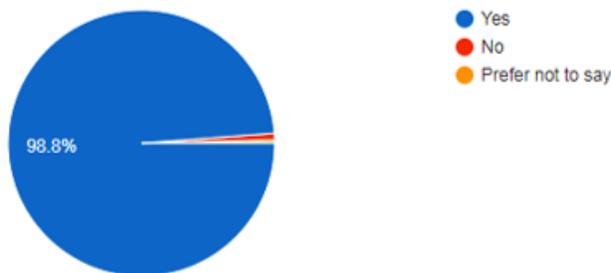
Finally, the religious composition of the sample tells us that 88.8% of the respondents are Muslim, 6% of them are not religious, 1.6% are Christian, 2% atheist, and 1.6% of the respondents preferred not to tell their religious affiliations. This will give us some insights on how important are religious preferences when it comes to voting for a party or a candidate.

**Graph 7: The Respondents' Religious Preferences**



When the respondents were asked whether they vote, 98.8% of the respondents answered yes, 0.8% answered no, and 0.4% preferred not to answer. It is important to provide a short explanation on why such a large amount of respondents said that they vote when in fact the voter turnout in Kosovo is less than 50%. According to KQZ the voting turnout for the 2017 assembly elections was 41.30%. In this study, 98.8% said that they vote because I have deliberately chosen the respondents who vote. The purpose of this study was to look at the behavior of the voters so it was necessary to take a convenient sample of people who vote. This study acknowledges the fact that this result is not representative of the whole population of Kosovo; nevertheless, it is very helpful in providing some insights into the behavior of that 41.3 % who votes.

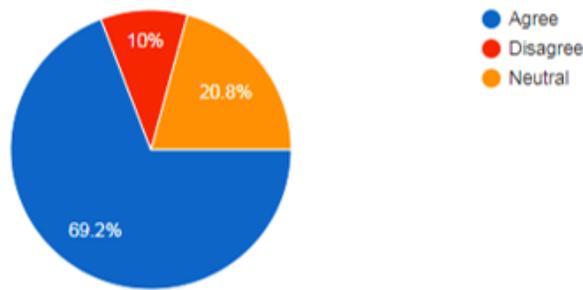
**Graph 8: Whether the Respondents Vote**



**4.3.2 Implicit Biases vs. Policy Analysis**

This section's results have generally supported the first hypothesis- that the rationality of the voters is limited and as such, implicit biases guide the voting behavior in Kosovo. The number of respondents who believe that psychological factors play a crucial role in their voting decision is about 70%.

***Graph 9: Opinion on whether implicit biases guide voting behavior in Kosovo***

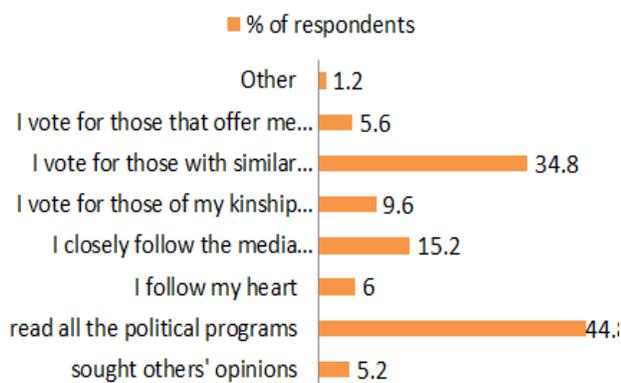


This is not only the opinion of the respondents given that many political leaders in Kosovo, through their discourse during the electoral campaigns, have acknowledged the role of implicit biases in the voting behavior. We will later see how politicians from almost all the political parties in Kosovo have appealed to the voters by targeting their social identity, emotions, or ideology.

In an attempt to answer whether irrationality overrides policy analysis in the voting behavior in Kosovo, the results have shown that although the respondents claim to read the political programs and engage in a cost-benefit policy analysis, they are in fact guided by their implicit biases.

The findings also show that 36.8% of the respondents read and analyze the programs of the political parties in Kosovo and then decide who to vote for; 33.9% of the respondents said that they vote for those that have similar values, morals, and ideology to them; 20.6% of the respondents follow the media debates during the electoral campaign; whereas 8.3% of the respondents have admitted to exchanging their vote for a job offer in return.

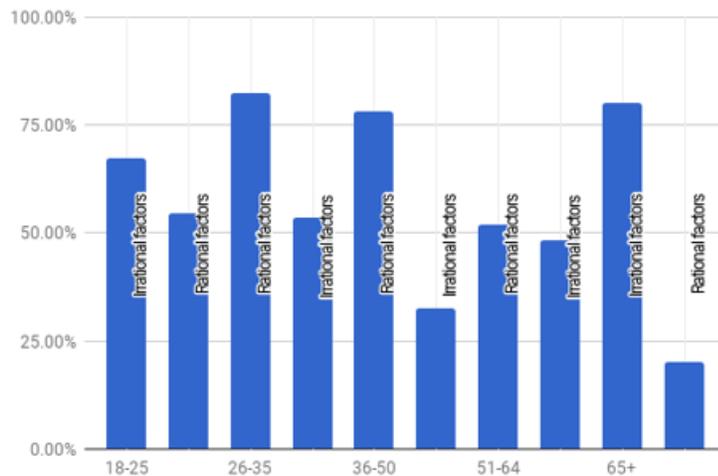
***Graph 10: How the voting decision is made***



***Graph 11: Aspects considered when voting***



***Graph 12: Irrational/Rational factors among different age groups***



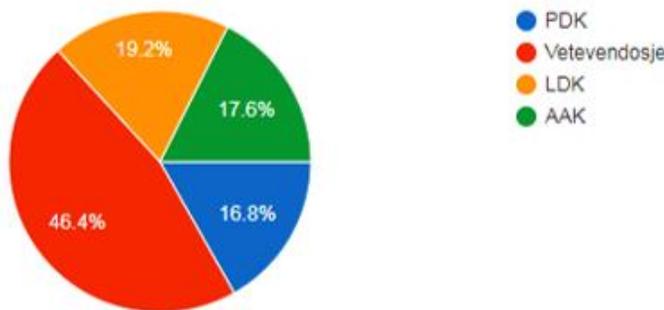
When the respondents answered how they make their voting decision, one notices certain differences in different age groups. For instance, the age group 18-25 engaged in irrational activities before deciding who to vote for (67.29%). Irrational activities include following their heart, being influenced by the opinion of others, voting for their kinship group or for those with similar values. Nevertheless, one sees how rational factors take precedence in the age groups 26-35 and 36-50 and then we notice their decline in the age groups 51-64 and 65+. Rational factors include reading the political programs, following the media debates, and voting for those that offer jobs. They all include a cost-benefit analysis at some point in their decision making. These differences across the age groups may indicate an answer to the question of whether we become more rational with age or less when it comes to voting behavior. Many studies agree that people’s motivational factors may change with age. Younger people are often viewed as risk-takers and more emotional when it comes to making decisions. This changes throughout time, however, when people rely more on their knowledge and experience to make a voting decision. Older adults (60+ years), on the other hand, tend to be more motivated by emotional rather than facts/information. This comes as a result of their reduced cognitive ability and memory capacity (Williams& Drolet, 2005).

Given that the respondents could select more than one option when they were asked how they make their voting decision, most of the respondents selected a combination of irrational and rational factors. Thus, this table alone does not precisely illustrate the bigger picture on whether

the respondents are really rational voters. As anticipated, the findings exposed many inconsistencies in the respondents’ answers.

Firstly, the fact that 62.8% of the respondents (see graph 11) claimed to take into consideration the policies presented in the programs of the political parties only tells us that they like to believe that they are rational voters who analyze the pros and the cons of the programs presented without taking into accounts implicit biases such as identity, ideology, negativity, gender and so on. Nevertheless, findings suggest otherwise.

**Graph 13: Which of the following political parties promised lower taxes for large businesses?**



When they were asked which one of the following parties have expressed in their programs that they want to lower the taxes for large businesses, 46.4% of the respondents answered “Vetëvendosje”, when in fact that is precisely the opposite of what this political party aspires. It is interesting to note that 78.76% of those who said that they read the political programs or follow the media debates did not correctly guess what party offers lower taxes for large businesses.

**Graph 14: Respondents who did NOT guess who offered lower taxes for large businesses**

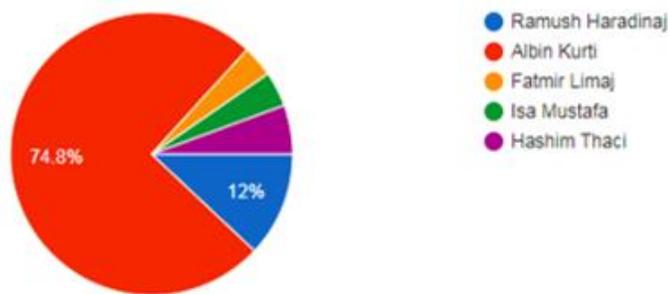


Similarly, 36.21% of those whose preferred political party is “Vetëvendosje” have incorrectly assumed that “Vetëvendosje” promises lower the taxes for large businesses. This indicates that the most of the voters may not even read the political programs of their preferred political parties let alone of the other parties in Kosovo. As was illustrated previously in the charts, the

respondents had quite different opinions on who might have suggested such policies. 19.2% of the respondents answered LDK, 17.6% of them said AAK, and 16.8% answered PDK. However, when it came to figuring out which one of the politicians has said that “In 4-5 years Kosovo will be at war again” 74.8 % of the respondents correctly answered “Albin Kurti”.

**Graph 15: Which one of these politicians is most likely to have said this:**

**“In the 4-5 coming years Kosovo could be at war again”?**

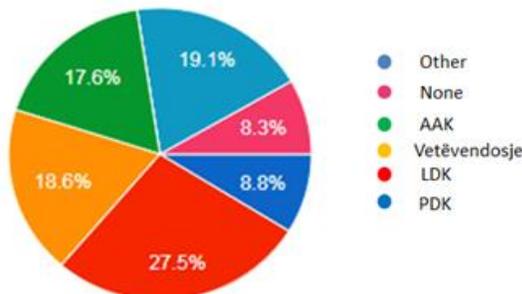


The graph shown below shows that 12% of the respondents have incorrectly answered Ramush Haradinaj, 5.6% Hashim Thaci, 4% Isa Mustafa, and 3.6% Fatmir Limaj.

If we assume that most of the respondents are rational and take into account the policies presented in the political programmes, then how come they cannot clearly remember who has proposed what policy, but the majority of them remember the politician who has anticipated a war in the near future? Now, the findings concerning the second hypothesis will be shown and analyzed.

4.3.3 Social Identity: The Concept of “Other”

**Graph 16: Preferred Political Party**

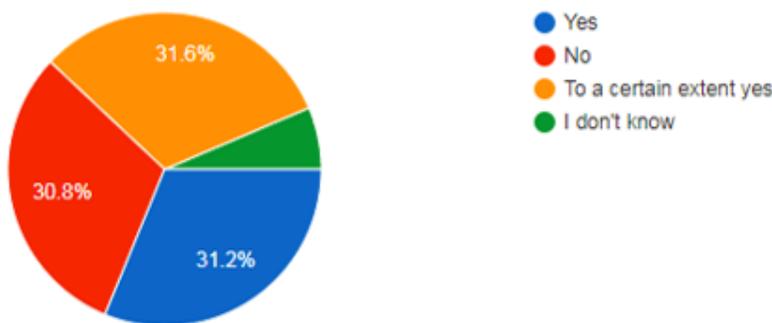


When looking at the relation between the respondents’ ethnicity and their preferred political party, it is important to note that all the respondents belonging to a minority group have chosen the political party that represents that particular minority group.

For instance, the respondents belonging to the Ashkali community have chosen the Democratic Party of the Ashkali in Kosovo (PDAK). These findings support the idea that social identity plays a key role in the voting behavior of people.

Among the minority groups in Kosovo, ethnic identity is crucial in preserving their culture and customs. This also affects their voting choice.

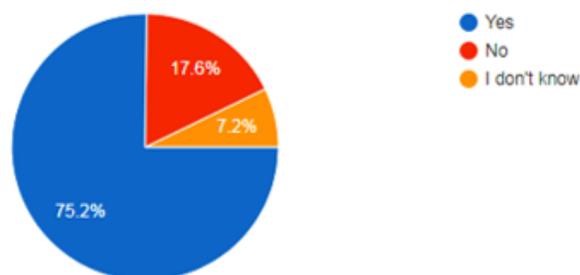
**Graph 17: Identification with the political party/candidate**



As mentioned previously in the paper, social identity is a sense of belonging that an individual has in relation to a particular group, in this case, a political party. When the participants were asked whether they identify with a political party, 62.8% of the respondents answered yes, while 30.8% of the respondents said no.

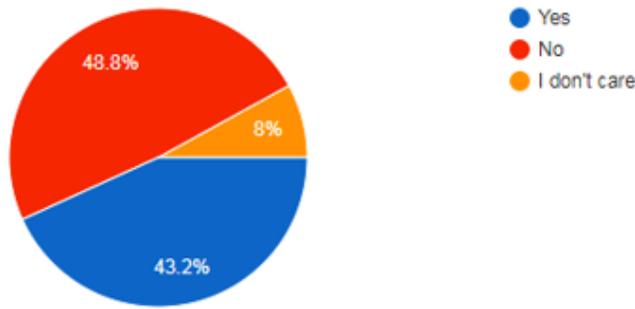
Additionally, when they were asked whether they know someone who always votes for the same political party, 75.2% of the respondents answered yes. This explains the idea that individuals find certain elements of themselves in their preferred political parties.

**Graph 18: Whether the respondents know someone who always votes for the same party**



In fact, some respondents have taken their identification with their preferred political party at a higher level where they consider themselves as partisans of the party. The graph below shows that 43.2% of the respondents have said that they consider themselves “a partisan” of a political party/candidate whereas 48.8% said that they didn’t.

***Graph 19: The level of partisanship of the voters***



It is crucial to analyze the level of partisanship in the voting behavior in Kosovo in terms of demographics. The table shown below gives some insight on the relationship between the level of education of the respondents and their level of partisanship toward a political party or a candidate. One notices that the level of partisanship is high in individuals with a lower level of education and low at individuals with a high level of education. For instance, 80% of the respondents with no formal education answered yes at the partisanship survey question. 68.75% of those that have only finished the primary school have done the same. The level of partisanship gradually declines where one finds that 75.51% of those with a Bachelor or higher degree of education show a lower level of partisanship toward a political party. What does this mean? Educated people have a higher cognitive ability and factual understanding which is better able to compete with the social identity bias toward a political party. In this case, partisanship is overridden by the cognitive ability of an individual.

***Table 2: Comparison between the level of partisanship and the level of education***

Level of Education	No formal education	Primary School	High School Diploma	Bachelor	Master	PhD
Yes	80%	68.75%	41.17%	43.08%	32.43%	0%
No	0%	18.75%	48.53%	50.41%	62.16%	100%
I don't care	20%	12.50%	10.29%	6.50%	5.41%	0%

Nevertheless, social identity bias is not confined to party identification and partisanship. The social identity theory is a sense of belonging to a certain group. This includes a sense of belonging to a group of people from a certain place and with certain religious preferences. In the previous charts that showed the aspects taken into consideration when the respondents vote, 9.6% of the respondents claimed that they vote for those of their “in-group”, 24% take into consideration the place where the candidate comes from, and 10% vote for those with similar religious preferences to themselves.

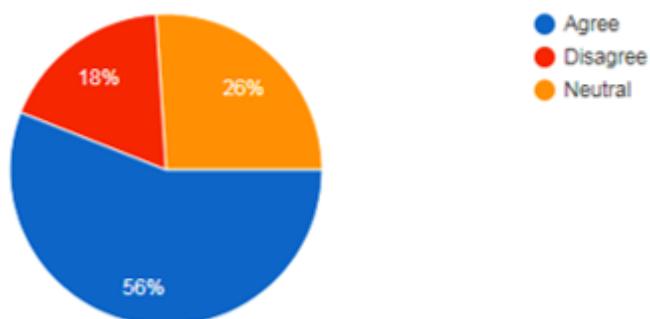
The importance of the social identity for the voters in Kosovo is stated in the political discourse of some of the most prominent politicians in Kosovo. Hajredin Kuci, a member of PDK in the local elections of 2017 said that “PDK is KLA, and KLA is Skenderaj” (Kuci, 2017). This type of connection is automatically made by the voters, given that the residents of Skenderaj are often considered as the “partisans of the party”. Kuci, as well as other members of the party, have been reinforcing the connection of PDK and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) which has served as a source of pride for the party throughout years. Mentioning such a connection during the local elections would try to trigger an automatic association and identification between the people who live in Skenderaj, KLA and ultimately the above-mentioned political party.

#### *4.3.4 Family Voting: an issue of a collectivist culture*

Only 5.6% of the respondents have claimed that they usually vote for their family members. Nevertheless, when the respondents were asked whether they know someone who pressures their family to vote for a certain political party or candidate, 52.4% of the respondents said yes, 33.2% said no, while the other 14.4% said that they do not know.

#### **Graph 20: Whether the respondents agree with the statement:**

#### **“Most married women in Kosovo vote the same way as their husbands?”**

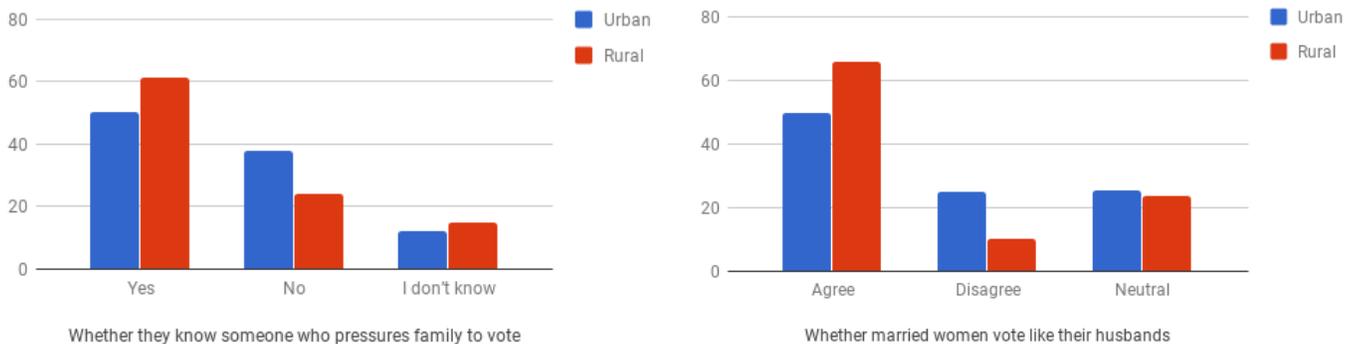


Furthermore, when asked to agree or disagree with the statement that most married women in Kosovo vote as their husbands, 56% agreed, 18% disagreed, and 26% remained neutral.

These results display the many ways through which family voting may be manifested. It shows that family may influence the voter implicitly or explicitly (in the form of pressure). To some extent, the results portray the collectivist culture in Kosovo where married women, in this case, value the opinion of men in the family when it comes to important decisions such as voting.

In order to have a better understanding of the family voting as an implicit bias in Kosovo, we need to look back on the book *The American Voter* by Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes (1960). Because family influence occurs at such an early stage of brain development, it is a subconscious bias that is difficult to notice for most of the people. Family influence is reflected in the position individuals hold on moral values, ideology, and personality.

**Graph 21: Comparison between respondents' area of living and family pressure**



Later findings will show the importance that voters place on ideology and personality.

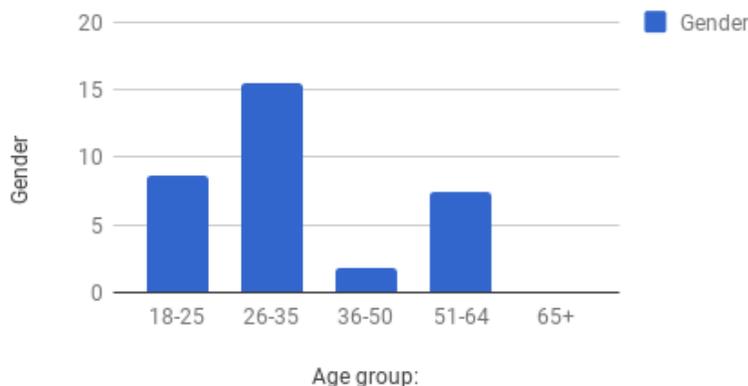
Before that, one may also need to look at the relationship between family influence and the respondents' area of living (urban or rural). According to the set of findings shown under graph 21, 65.91% of the respondents who live in the rural areas agree that married women vote like their husbands, whereas 10.23% of them disagree. Consequently, 49.6% of the respondents who live in the urban areas say that married women vote like their husbands, while 25.8% disagreed.

Family pressure is usually more present in rural areas where family values and tradition are preserved more conservatively than in urban areas. These family values place a high importance on the opinion of the older men of the family.

#### 4.3.5. Gender Biases

With regards to the gender bias among voters in Kosovo, the findings shown under graph 11 suggest that only 8.8% of the respondents take into consideration the gender of the candidate when voting.

***Graph 22: Comparison between the gender and the age group of the respondent***



The respondents of the age group 26-35 (15.49%) have shown the most attention to the gender of the candidate, whereas the age group 36-50 (1.8%) shows the least attention to it.

Because gender bias has been surprisingly low among all of the survey respondents, an Implicit Association Test (IAT) for gender bias has been done to 40 respondents who knew English. IAT tests whether an automatic association of female-family and male-career happens inside the brain of the respondents. The test requires the respondent to associate female names with family and male names with career. The findings of IAT show that 32 out of 40 (80%) participants have shown a moderate to strong automatic association of female names with family. An explanation of the IAT findings requires referring back to Browne (2017) who suggested that the Western Balkan countries typically adhere to strong gender roles because of the male-dominant culture. Although gender bias may not directly affect the voters’ choices, it affects their behavior during the elections and their perception of women and politics.

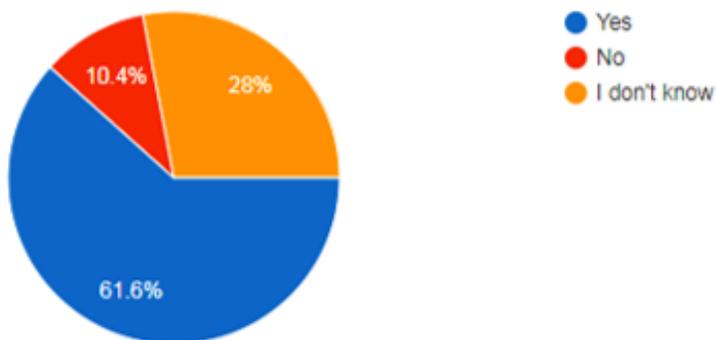
Vlora Citaku, the Ambassador of Kosovo in the United States has also spoken about the gender bias in Kosovo politics. She highlighted the fact that double standards are used to judge women in politics in Kosovo. The public opinion is harsh and less forgiving towards the mistakes made by women in politics in comparison to men (Citaku, 2018). This is best illustrated when Atifete Jahjaga was the President of Kosovo. From the beginning to the end of her term, Atifete

faced numerous criticisms regarding her manners, intellect, looks and what not. Without commenting on whether the criticisms were rightfully made or not, the former President has faced numerous double standards during her term. She was the only president whose high school grades were published by the media in Kosovo as an attempt to damage her reputation and legitimacy. The media has also followed her without her knowledge or consent to the hair-dresses. This was followed by comments on how she cares more about her looks than her duties as a President. One should note that the same has not happened for any of the male politicians in Kosovo, and this is not because their high school grades are necessarily better or because they never went to a hairdresser (Lajmi.net, 2016).

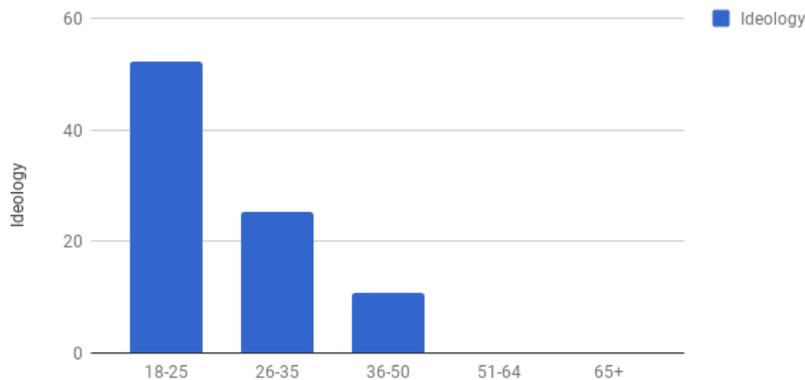
#### 4.3.5 Ideology: moral subjectivity and voting behavior

The findings suggest that ideology and personality traits are the most important aspects for the majority of the respondents (89.6%). When the respondents make their voting decision, 28.4% of them consider ideology and similar moral values to be among the most important factors and 61.2% of the respondents take the personality of the candidates into consideration when voting. Ideology and personality are put together because the politicians convey their personality to the voters through ideology (Winter, 2015).

#### **Graph 23: Opinion on whether the ideology of the political party/candidate affects voting choice:**



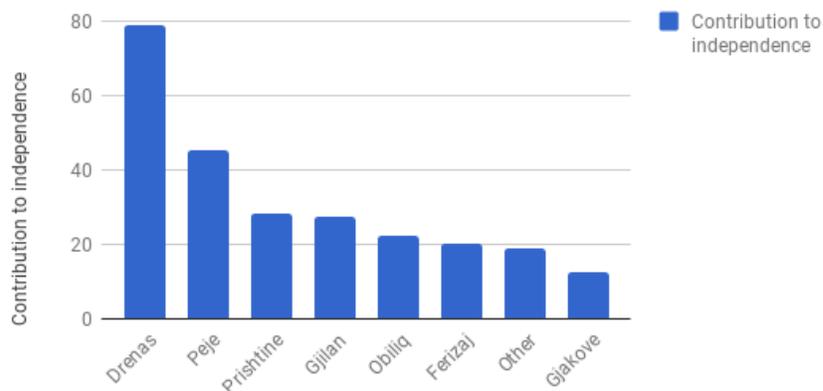
When asked to give their opinion on whether the ideology of the party or the candidate affects their votes, 61.6% said yes, whereas 10.4% said no. Ideology is particularly important for the young adults aged 18-35 (77.52%).

***Graph 24: Age groups that consider ideology as important when voting***

Here, it is necessary to distinguish between the political ideology of the political parties and the ideology conveyed through morals and values in general. Voters' decisions are usually affected by what they value, not the political ideologies of the parties that are presented during the elections.

It is essential to mention that there are little to no previous studies done on the Kosovar voters' values and preferences. On a general note, the Kosovar society is mostly a conservative one, in which cultural values and tradition are viewed very highly (Shaipi, Maliqi, 2009). It has been suggested that the national identity is very important in that the voters will not accept a political party that may be seen as a threat to this national identity. This may be one of the reasons why the political party ORA- a party promoting cosmopolitan values, was not very well accepted by the voters. Nevertheless, not all Kosovar voters had the same national values. They were divided among Ibrahim Rugova's "pacifist wing" and the KLA's "militant wing" (especially during the post-war period). This division had little to do with political ideology preferences and more with contribution during the war and respect for war values. In other words, any contribution to the independence of Kosovo translated into a political legitimacy to govern for those individuals (Shaipi, Maliqi, 2009).

This is noticed in the respondents' attention towards the candidates who have contributed to Kosovo's war of independence. 31.2% of the respondents said that contribution to the independence is one of the most important factors to take into consideration when voting. Out of this 31.2%, most of the respondents were from the worn torn municipalities of Drenas (78.94%) and Peja (45.45%).

***Graph 25: Municipalities that consider contribution to independence when voting***

The place of origin of the candidates has inherent value for the voters in Kosovo. For instance, most of the voters from Drenica or Dukagjin give value to the leaders of PDK and AAK just because they are from that region. This is noticed also in the graph 11 where 24% say that they take into consideration where the candidate comes from before making their voting decision. When one mentions values one should also note that there is a continuous confrontation between the individual choices and the standard norms of the society that derive from tradition. With the help of the international community after Kosovo's independence in 2008, the legislature of Kosovo promotes very liberal values regarding individual rights. Nevertheless, the degree to which these laws are implemented is highly dependent on the values and the mindset of the society. For instance, one may see that Kosovo has a positive attitude toward LGBTI and women's property rights in legislative terms, however, they face difficulties in implementation because of these standard social norms deriving from traditional conservative values.

Now let us turn to an analysis of the political ideologies of the parties in Kosovo. One of the highlights of this topic is that there are no clear ideological differences between the political parties in Kosovo. The voters, as well as the political parties, are confused as to what ideological profile they belong to. This confusion may be intentional by the political parties in order to maximize the number of votes. A possible explanation as to why there are no clear ideological differences between the political parties in Kosovo is that these parties have been founded during the fight for independence and democracy. Even during the post-war period, it was difficult to form clear ideologies because of the greater role of the international community in Kosovo (Mexhuani, 2017).

Except for the lack of ideological differences among the parties, one may notice that there is incoherence between what the party categorizes itself in terms of political ideology, and how it actually acts during its term. For instance, PDK identifies itself as a center-right party, stands for privatization at the same time as it promotes a larger bureaucracy (a leftist policy) (Sejdiu, Haliti, 2017).

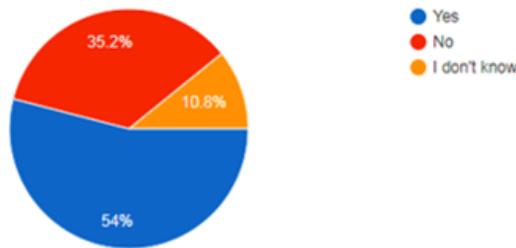
Voters' confusion about the political ideologies and policies was noticed when the respondents were asked which political party has promised lower taxes and approximately 60% of them have guessed wrongly.

An analysis of the discourse of the politicians in Kosovo also highlights the importance of ideology during the elections. During the 2017 local election campaign of Vetëvendosje in Mitrovicë, Albin Kurti, a leading activist of the above-mentioned party, held a speech in which, among other things, the unification of Kosovo with Albania is mentioned. Considering that these were the local elections where the candidates are supposed to unfold their policy programs and recommendations, the issue of unification is rationally irrelevant to local-level politics. Nonetheless, Albin Kurti has implicitly recognized the role of ideology and the "Albanian identity" in the voting behavior. Such national causes have a special importance for the majority of the Albanian voters in Kosovo. As shown in graph 11, 31.2% of the respondents have claimed that they take into consideration the candidate's contribution towards the liberation and independence of Kosovo when voting. This may also be one of the reasons why Hajredin Kuci and other politicians try to associate their political party with the Kosovo Liberation Army.

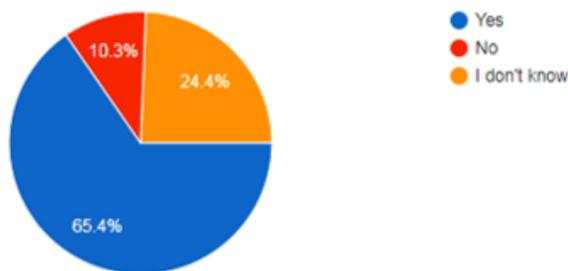
#### *4.3.6. Emotions and the Negativity Bias*

Information that stirs negative emotions is more likely to be retained in the voters' memory and this seems to be the case with the voters in Kosovo. When they were asked whether they have ever been emotional during an electoral campaign and whether these emotions have affected their voting decision, 54% claimed that they felt emotional, and 65.4% of those that said yes claimed that these emotions affected their voting decision. This tells us that emotions, whether positive or negative, directly affect people's voting behavior.

**Graph 26: Feeling emotional towards a political party/candidate**



**Graph 27: The effects of these emotions in the respondents' voting decision**



The findings under graph 15 have also suggested that politicians who stir negative emotions are more likely to be remembered. Going back to the question that asks the participants to identify one politician that might have said that “in the 4-5 years Kosovo will be at war again”, 74.8% correctly answered “Albin Kurti”. This tells us that people generally have a negativity bias which makes them retain negative information better than positive ones. The slogan of the political party “Vetëvendosje” that says “Me Zemer” may also acknowledge the impact of emotions on the voters. The above-mentioned party calls for the voters to vote with their heart, although only 6% of the respondents said that they follow their heart when voting (graph 10).

**Table 3: The age group of the respondents who said they follow their heart when voting**

Age group:	How voting decision is made:	Percentage
18-25	I follow my heart	7.60%
26-35	I follow my heart	1.40%
36-50	I follow my heart	1.80%
51-64	I follow my heart	7.40%
65+	I follow my heart	40%

With regards to age, people of the age group 65+ (40%) and the age group 18-25 (7.60%) said that they follow their heart when they vote.

Negative sentiments such as fear and anxiety are evident among people in Kosovo as the world faces the rise of populism and the right-wing shift in the voting behavior. In Kosovo, these sentiments are manifested in the form of nationalist rhetoric by the politicians, and in the form of general distrust in the institutions in Kosovo and the EU integration process (Shala, 2016). For instance, the declarations of the President Hashim Thaci claim that if the EU closes its doors for the Kosovars, then all the Albanians will unify in one country (Ahmeti, 2017). Anti- EU speech and declarations are also evident among the opposition parties such as Vetëvendosje, which among others opposes the dialogue with Serbia.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has come to the end of its journey, one that has allowed us to explore what guides the voting behavior in Kosovo. It has analyzed and framed some implicit biases that are more likely to affect the voting pattern of the citizens. These implicit biases are social identity, family voting, gender, ideology, and emotions. This was done through a survey of 250 respondents, 40 of whom have also taken the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The results show that although we like to think we apply logic and common sense in every aspect of the world, the most important decisions that we make are guided by irrational subconscious biases. We vote for the political party that is the closest to us. Based on early family influences, we vote for one ideology and one set of moral values even though it may produce socially harmful policies. Our votes shift along the political spectrum based on anxiety and fear induced by a nationalist rhetoric. Finally, we even make political decisions based on the traditional gender roles. When comparing the five implicit biases: social identity, family voting, gender bias, ideology, and emotions, we see that each of them has its importance in different aspects of the voting behavior. For instance, personality traits and ideology (89.60%) is particularly important for the vote choice, but emotions are more important in shifting the votes or mobilizing the population for a certain cause.

This paper may have given its readers mixed sentiments and thoughts about personal behavior, voting decisions, and democracy, so I would like to address them. Although the list of the explored implicit biases is not exhaustive, it may be helpful for the reader to turn each of these biases into questions that they may ask themselves. Will a particular ideology solve the policy problems facing Kosovo? Is gender a determining factor in the capacity to lead the country? These questions will help you to know yourself with all the irrational assumptions and biases. When you acknowledge your biases you have a better chance of controlling their effects on your decision-making process.

Finally, the backbone of a stable representative democracy is making informed and sound decisions. This is particularly important in a developing democracy such as Kosovo since it may protect the citizens from harmful policies. To broaden the understanding of the voting behavior one may think of elections as a market. If ideology, emotions, or social identity is what it takes to win the votes of the citizens, then the politicians will offer exactly that without focusing much on the actual policies that may solve the problems of the country.

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## II. APPENDIX A

**Prospective Research Subject:** Read this consent form carefully. Ask as many questions as you like before you decide whether you want to participate in this research study. You are free to ask questions at any time before, during, or after your participation in this research.

**Project Title:** The Psychology behind Voting Behavior in Kosovo

**Principal Researchers:** Fjolla Qorri

**E-mail:** [fjollaq@auk.org](mailto:fjollaq@auk.org)

**Organization:** Rochester Institute of Technology Kosovo (AUK)

**Location of Study:** Kosovo

### **Purpose of This Research Study**

You are being asked to participate in a research study designed to explore the implicit biases that may affect voting behavior in Kosovo. This research is being conducted as a part of the Senior Capstone at Rochester Institute of Technology Kosovo, Kosovo.

### **Procedures**

You will be asked to fill out a survey of 24 questions. This procedure will take approximately 5 minutes.

### **Possible Risks**

There are no known or possible risks in this research.

### **Financial Considerations**

You will not receive any financial compensation for your participation nor will you incur any costs as a result of your participation in this research.

### **Confidentiality**

Your identity in this study will be treated as confidential. Results of the study, including all collected data, may be published in our paper and in possible future journal articles and professional presentations, but your name or any identifiable references to you will not be included. However, any records or data obtained as a result of your participation in this study may be inspected by the persons conducting this study and/or Rochester Institute of Technology Institutional Review Board, provided that such inspectors are legally obligated to protect any identifiable information from public disclosure, except where disclosure is otherwise required by law or a court of competent jurisdiction. These records will be kept private in so far as permitted by law. In case we refer to the information you have/will provide for this study, we will make sure not to identify you and/or use pseudonyms, code names etc. All study data will be retained for a minimum of three years and then destroyed.

**Resources**

Any questions you may have about this study will be answered by the principal researcher ([fjollaq@auk.org](mailto:fjollaq@auk.org)) or Venera Demukaj ([vdemukaj@auk.org](mailto:vdemukaj@auk.org)) or Albina Balidemaj Basha ([abalidemaj@auk.org](mailto:abalidemaj@auk.org))

**Subject and Researcher Authorization**

I have read and understand this consent form, and I volunteer to participate in this research study. I voluntarily choose to participate, but I understand that my consent does not take away any legal rights in the case of negligence or other legal fault of anyone who is involved in this study. I further understand that nothing in this consent form is intended to replace any applicable federal, state, or local laws.

### III. Appendix B

#### Survey Questions

1. Which age group do you belong to?
  - 18-25
  - 26-35
  - 36-50
  - 51-64
  - 65+
2. What is your gender?
  - Female
  - Male
  - Prefer not to say
3. Which ethnic group do you belong to?
  - Albanian
  - Serbian
  - Bosnian
  - Ashkali
  - Romani
  - Turkish
  - Other: Please specify\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the highest degree of education you obtained?
  - No formal education
  - Primary school
  - High School Diploma
  - Bachelor Degree
  - Graduate Degree
  - PhD
  - Other: Please specify\_\_\_\_\_
5. Marital status:
  - Married
  - Single
  - Divorced
  - Separated
  - Widowed
  - Other: Please specify
6. What municipality do you live in?
  - Prishtine
  - Peje

- Obiliq
  - Gjakove
  - Gjilan
  - Ferizaj
  - Mitrovice
  - Podujeve
  - Drenas
  - Other: Please Specify
7. Which of the following best describes the area you live in:
- Rural
  - Suburban
  - Urban areas
8. What is your religious preference?
- Islam
  - Christianity
  - None
  - Atheist
  - Prefer not to say
  - Other: Please specify
9. Do you vote?
- Yes
  - No
  - Prefer not to say
10. If yes, why do you vote? (You may tick more than one)
- Right and responsibility
  - To decide the future of my country
  - At the request of others
  - It is a habit
  - Other: Please specify
11. How do you make your voting decision (you may tick more than one)?
- Sought others' opinions, and then decided
  - Read all the political programs and analyzed the policies presented
  - I follow my heart when it comes to voting
  - I closely follow the media debates and speeches during the elections
  - I vote for those from my own kinship group ("one of us" rule)
  - I vote for those with similar values, morals and ideology to mine
  - I vote for those that offer me a job
  - Other: Please specify
12. Would you say you identify yourself with the candidate or political party you vote for?

- Yes
  - No
  - To a certain extent, yes
  - I don't know
13. Would you consider yourself “a partisan” of a political party or a candidate?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't care
  - Other: Please specify
14. Do you know someone who always votes for the same political party or candidate?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
15. Do you know someone who pressures their family to vote for a certain candidate or a political party?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
16. Would you agree with the statement “Most married women vote in the same way as their husbands”?
- Agree
  - Disagree
  - Neutral
17. What is your preferred political party?
- PDK
  - LDK
  - Vetëvendosje
  - AAK
  - None
  - Other: Please specify
18. Have you ever felt emotional towards a political party/ candidate during an electoral campaign?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
19. Did these emotions play any role in your voting decision?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know

20. Please select all of the following aspects you take into consideration when making a voting decision? (you may tick more than one)
- The policies presented in the political programme
  - His/Her level of education
  - His/Her personality traits
  - His/her ideology (values and beliefs on key issues)
  - I always vote for a political party, not the candidate
  - Where he/she comes from
  - The gender of the candidate
  - The political party/candidate's perspective on religion
  - I usually vote for my family members/friends
  - Contribution to Kosovo's liberation and independence
  - Other: Please specify
21. Would you say that the ideology of the political party or candidate may affect one's voting choice?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
22. Which one of these politicians is most likely to have said this: "In the 4-5 coming years Kosovo could be at war again"
- Ramush Haradinaj
  - Albin Kurti
  - Fatmir Limaj
  - Isa Mustafa
  - Hashim Thaci
23. Which of the following political parties has promised lower taxes for large businesses:
- PDK
  - Vetëvendosje
  - LDK
  - AAK
24. Finally, would you agree with the statement that most of the voting behavior is guided by certain inner biases?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know

IV. APPENDIX C

The Implicit Association Test

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is a test that looks at the automatic associations in our brain between concepts (gender or sexuality) and stereotypes (family/career or good/bad). The tests may be taken at <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>. The IAT about the association between men/women and career/family starts with 10 survey questions and continues with a little game shown in the pictures below. The survey questions range from family income to whether the

Questionnaire

Page 9 out of 10

During your youth, who was your primary caregiver?

Birth or adoptive mother
Birth or adoptive father
Step-mother
Step-father
Other relative
Other
N/A (I did not have a primary caregiver)

Submit Decline to Answer

respondent associates family with female or career with male.

Figure 1: One of the survey questions of the IAT on gender bias

Implicit Association Test

Next, you will use the 'E' and 'I' computer keys to categorize items into groups as fast as you can. These are the four groups and the items that belong to each:

Category	Items
Male	Ben, Paul, Daniel, John, Jeffrey
Female	Rebecca, Michelle, Emily, Julia, Anna
Career	Career, Corporation, Salary, Office, Professional, Management, Business
Family	Wedding, Marriage, Parents, Relatives, Family, Home, Children

There are seven parts. The instructions change for each part. Pay attention!

Continue

Figure 2: Some of the instructions during the IAT on gender bias