

Slicing Layers of Voter: The Relationship between the AKP and Mass Support in Turkish Elections

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Abstract

In many research the mass support for the AKP refer to the economic voting theory that based on the reward-punishment mechanism between the voters and the incumbent. Although Economic Voting Theory is promissive, it does not tell so much about the ongoing mass support when the incumbent fails in terms of the economy. On the other hand, many research refer to the polarization levels in order to explain ongoing support for the AKP. But this explanation does not explain the mechanism behind the polarization. We know very less about the factors lead to maintain and even increase the mass support for the AKP in terms of polarization. Thus, the shares of Economic Voting Theory, Polarization Levels, and the other factors are remaining unrevealed in terms of voter behavior. In this paper, the main factors that leads to mass support for the AKP will be analyzed with a nationwide survey data including various elections since 2007. Hence, the study will attempt to understand the main motivations for various supportive groups of the AKP. The results will contribute our understanding for the survival strategies of the incumbent.

Keywords: Voter Behavior, Economic Voting Theory, Center Periphery, Polarization

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