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PERCEPTION OF FEMALE POLITICIANS BY THE YOUNG GENERATION IN KAZAKHSTAN

ВОСПРИЯТИЕ ЖЕНЩИН ПОЛИТИКОВ СРЕДИ МОЛОДЕЖИ КАЗАХСТАНА

ҚАЗАҚСТАН ЖАСТАРЫ АРАСЫНДАҒЫ САЯСАТКЕР ӘЙЕЛДЕРДІ ҚАБЫЛДАУ ЕРЕКШЕЛІГІ

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by

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Abstract

This research analyzes the perceptions of female politicians by the young generation in Kazakhstan. The study is based on several findings of the Western scholars and previous studies conducted during the recent years. Kazakhstan is ranked 60th in the Global Gender Gap Index (2018), which is higher than Ukraine, Greece and Czech Republic. At the same time, women hold 27% of the seats in the Parliament of Kazakhstan, but the attitudes of the Kazakhstani electorate toward the female politicians had not been studied properly since 1998. The Nazarbayev generation grew up under the rule of the authoritarian leader Nursultan Nazarbayev and have never witnessed fair elections in the country. The Nazarbayev generation was born after Nursultan Nazarbayev took power in Kazakhstan; the age of the representatives varies between 18-29 years. This study aims to answer the following research questions: 1) How politicians' gender and voters' gender stereotypes interact to shape the outcomes of leadership choice? 2) Do voters with different language preferences evaluate female politicians differently?

A survey was conducted among the students of two universities – Nazarbayev University (Nur-Sultan) and the IT-university (Almaty). The findings demonstrate that during the last 20 years the perception of the female politicians by the young generation in Kazakhstan improved significantly, although the gender stereotypes about "feminine" and "masculine" policy domains still exist. At the same time, the results of multivariate regression analysis demonstrate that people with stronger gender stereotypes evaluate male politicians more positively than female politicians, whereas people with weaker gender stereotypes evaluate the female candidates more positively. At the same time, Kazakh-speaking respondents evaluated the female politicians more positively than Russian-speakers. This study provides valuable information for further research on ethnic and gender stereotypes, and political attitudes of the Nazarbayev generation.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1. Introduction

Men continue to dominate in the political sphere even in the developed and democratic states. A phenomenon epitomizing such gender disparity is a disproportionate share of the top positions in government. Are women not as good in politics as men?

Burkhanov (2019, 57) found out that Kazakhstani society shares traditional view of gender roles. He demonstrated that when the respondents of AsiaBarometer survey (2005) were asked what future they want for their son, 35.5% and 32.2% of people respectively responded that they wanted him to be "respected by the masses and loving and charitable person". When the same question was asked about the daughter, 63.5% of the respondents replied that they want her "to find a good marriage partner". Furthermore, 12.4% of the respondents answered that they would like to see their sons as "powerful political leader", while only 2.4% wished this for their daughters.

At the same time, Bakhyt Tumenova (ex-akim of Pavlodar region in 2000s) says that women seem to be quite mistrusted in a sense of power in Kazakhstan. She says that women are appointed to political positions only because they are women. Civil activist Yerlan Kaliev argues that appointments of women to the positions of public officials is the willingness of Kazakhstani leaders to show to Western community that they respect women's rights (Azattyq, 2018). Moreover, the study of political parties in Kazakhstan demonstrates that they have almost no incentives and strategies to engage women in their activity (Asian Development Bank 2013).

During the electoral campaign for Presidential elections in 2011, one of the candidates Amantay Assylbek said: "In Kazakhstan, there are a lot of single women, and it is a national tragedy, because we lose potential mothers" (Hays 2016). In July 2019, the ex-akim (mayor) of Shymkent city met with a group of protesting women, the reason of the protests was a series of explosions at ammunition depot. During the meeting, he mentioned that "women

usually make noise and scandals", but "men should better learn how to control their wives" implying that women should take action only after getting permission of their husbands (Tengrinews 2019). Thus, we see that even the ex-mayor of one of the biggest cities in Kazakhstan held gender stereotypes.

In 2019, women held 27% of seats in the lower house of Parliament. This is surprising when compared to the global average percentage of women in the lower house of Parliament is 24.3% (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019). The deputy of Mazhilis Bakhytgul Khamenova says that "It is not easy for women to be in society, in politics and in family in Kazakhstan" in her interview for Tengrinews (2019), but women are trying to deal with their work in Parliament on the same level as men do.

However, the deputy of maslikhat of Nur-Sultan Karakat Abden does not share the views of Mazhilis's deputy. In December 2019, she published her book called "You are Kazakh girl. Be proud of it!". In the book, there are several useful tips for young girls including the importance of education and body positivism. But Karakat also mentions that Kazakh girls do not need feminism and have their own unique way that unites Western and Eastern cultures (Vlast 2019). Beside the wave of negative comments about nationalism caused by the book, the understanding of feminism discussed in the book by maslikhat (elected body, elected by the population of the city) deputy was controversial. In her book, Karakat writes the following paragraph about Kazakh women in the past:

> Kazakh women have never tried to be ahead or go against men as is common practice in Western world. At the same time, Kazakh women have never followed men blindly. In Kazakh steppe, a woman was always equal to a man. She has never covered her face, but she could mount a horse, fought alongside men for the Motherland and took part in important decision-making.

Thus, Karakat Abden believes that a Kazakh woman is equal to a man, but she does not argue with him and not trying to exceed him. It is worth noting that Karakat Abden is also founder of so-called Kazakh Institute of Fine Pann "Kazakh Girl" in Nur-Sultan. This is a

school for girls aged from 8 to 18 years, where they learn national etiquette, traditions and housekeeping. The school was sponsored by Nur-Sultan akimat (City Hall) and received 17.5 billion tenge from state budget. Moreover, the project, which promotes patriarchy values, is supported by "Nur Otan" ruling party and National Commission on Women, Family and Population Policy (Nur 2019).

Regarding Fridrikh Ehbert Stiftung (2020, 64), in 2018, 51% of the respondents in Kazakhstan agreed with the statement "Men make better political leaders and CEOs than women do." These results seem to reflect the prevailing gender stereotypes in Kazakhstan. Furthermore, one of the members of Parliament said "In our mentality, we still have a banal and cynical stereotype: a cook cannot lead the State!" (Asian Development Bank 2013).

According to the Global Gender Gap Index (2018), examining economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment, Kazakhstan is in the 60th place, which is higher than other states with similar levels of economic development or with similar post-soviet history, such as Greece, Czech Republic and Ukraine. However, it is worth noting that in subgroup rating "Political rights and opportunities for women" Kazakhstan is ranked 149th. The existing gender stereotypes in Kazakhstan described above do not correlate with the relatively high number of women in Parliament. Moreover, speaker of the Senate Dariga Nazarbayeva believes that there must be more women in politics in Kazakhstan. She emphasized the necessity of engagement of female politicians in decision-making processes. Dariga Nazarbayeva thinks that only women can work on their gender issues and urged Kazakh women to participate in the elections. But how do ordinary people perceive female politicians?

The political engagement of women remains understudied in the context of Kazakhstan. This study aims to answer the following research questions: 1) How politicians' gender and voters' gender stereotypes interact to shape the outcomes of leadership choice? 2)

Do voters with different language preferences evaluate female politicians differently? In this thesis, I explore these questions, using the case of contemporary Kazakhstan.

The methodology applied to this study was quantitative. The survey was conducted among the students of the two universities in Almaty and Nur-Sultan. The sample was 372 respondents, 54% of them were male and 46% were female. The survey was conducted online from October 2019 till March 2020. Respondents were asked to answer questions about their socio-economic status. Then, they evaluated four hypothetical candidates appointed to the position of *akim* (mayor) in their hometown. The survey was available in three languages available: Kazakh, Russian and English. The data was analyzed by using multivariate regression analysis. The results of multivariate regression analysis demonstrate that people with stronger gender stereotypes evaluate male politicians more positively than female politicians, whereas people with weaker gender stereotypes evaluate the female candidates more positively.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the existing studies on gender, ethnicity and voter's behavior. In Chapter 3, I provide a description of current position of women in politics, interethnic relations in Kazakhstan and young generation. It will be followed by a discussion of the survey experiment design and the variables used in Chapter 4. This chapter justifies case selection and sampling procedures. In order to test impact of level of gender stereotypes, ethnicity, income and gender of the hypothetical voter on his or her vote choice, I conducted the survey experiment in two biggest cities of Kazakhstan. The survey was conducted with the help of online platform within the students of Nazarbayev University (Nur-Sultan) and IT-university (Almaty). Chapter 4 also addresses the theoretical debates regarding the research questions and hypotheses. This paper aims to answer two main research questions: 1) How politicians' gender and voters' gender stereotypes interact to shape the outcomes of leadership choice? 2) Do voters with different language preferences evaluate female

politicians differently? Chapter 5 presents demonstrates the results of data analysis obtained during the data collection and Chapter 6 presents the outcomes of the analysis and explain the findings. Lastly, the conclusion presents a summary of the research's results, future interested issues, limitations and recommendations for further studies.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Gender stereotypes and voters' behavior

Gender stereotype concern of expectations about men's and women's characteristics, roles, behaviors and beliefs. The process of gender stereotyping is "the practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her or his membership in the social group of women or men" (The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2014). While some argue that institutions such as gender quota are critical to understand the question of why women are fewer than men in politics (O'brien and Rickne 2016; Rosen 2017; Allen and Cutts 2018), there are also studies focusing more on culture and values (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). The latter one views gender stereotypes are violating human rights and fundamental freedoms, when they limit people's possibilities to develop their personal careers and make life plans (The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2014). Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) divide gender stereotypes by two types: belief stereotypes and trait stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes may be negative or positive; it depends on the position for which the elections are being held. For instance, in the elections for local office women politicians might have more supporters due to positive stereotyping. According to Dolan (2014, 97), the electorate considers women politicians as more honest and better able to deal with problems on local levels than male politicians, while male candidates in the US context are believed to be stronger leaders, which makes their image more attractive for the electorate at national level elections.

There are some policy domains regarded as feminine. Women are believed to be good at dealing with issues and policy domains related to education, social development, gender equality or abortion. The perceptions of the electorate took roots in the past, when women occupied mostly contact positions related to childcare or health care. Fox and Oxley (2003)

analyzed electoral data from elections for state executive office positions held between 1978 and 1998. The results demonstrated that "women were not equally to run for all types of state executive offices. Their findings demonstrated that women were less successful for masculine offices (agriculture, taxes) and this impact did not decline overtime, even when women became to be more inclusive in politics. However, the results also demonstrated that in 1990 women were believed to be more competent in such policy areas as education, healthcare or social protection (feminine offices). Due to existing gender stereotypes, equally qualified candidates are not equally competitive in the elections. At the same time, this trend was only marginally statistically significant and, according to the authors, required further studies.

On the one hand, Fox and Oxley (2003) defines the ruling positions in the policy domains including education, healthcare and social protection as "feminine offices", whereas men are believed to be less emotional and better political leaders. On the other hand, Dolan (2005) argues that women's and men's policy priorities in their electoral platforms are rather similar than different. She claimed that the candidates are rational actors and focus on the issues that are important to their voters.

A number of studies have discussed gender stereotypes and voters' perception of female politicians, but in the recent decade there is increasing number of studies that focus on the traits of voters who are more likely to support female candidates. For instance, in 2000, Sanbonmatsu (2002) conducted a telephone survey in Ohio, the US. The respondents were asked if they preferred to vote for a man or a woman, if they had to choose between two equally competent candidates. In her experiment, the author found that more than a half of voters have a predisposition to support female over male candidates, or vice versa, and such baseline gender preference affected one's vote choice.

Dolan (2014) argues that gender stereotypes have indirect impact on vote choice, because they influence the voter evaluation of the candidate. When the electorate is not

informed on previous activity of a candidate or his/her electoral pledges, the voters evaluate the candidate in the same way as they evaluate people they meet every day. Specifically, less informed voters such as those with low education or with low political knowledge, are more likely to vote based on their gender stereotypes. In short, the effect of gender stereotypes depends on voter characteristics.

In countries where patriarchal values predominate, female politicians may be disadvantaged. For example, an experiment conducted among the students of Istanbul showed no strong and immediate negative reaction toward female politicians (Matland and Tezcur 2011). The participants of the experiment were asked to read the speeches of the hypothetical politicians, evaluate the politicians, vote and answer survey questions discussing the factors that affected their choice. There were three different speeches distributed among the participants. The results demonstrated that gender stereotypes do not explain the low level of the participation of Turkish women in political life, because most of the respondents believe that women can be as effective political leaders as men. But the experimental results showed that cultural expectations, less human capital and luck of relevant experience create barriers for women who build their career in politics.

To sum up, despite a general concern about gender stereotypes, it is yet unclear whether and how politicians' gender and voters' gender stereotypes interact to shape the outcomes of leadership choice. Moreover, gender stereotypes in politics are understudied in the context of non-democratic and non-Western states. I examine what factors determine one's favorable evaluation of female candidates.

2.2 Ethnic cues, language and voters' behavior

Several Western scholars demonstrate that there is a common ground for ethnic cues and racial politics. Norris (2004) defines ethnic identity as social construct that has deep

cultural and psychological roots and serves as a base for sense of belonging. The content of identity is a meaning of certain identity for people, their associations, level of interaction within the group, their dialogue, and boundaries (Abdelal et al. 2006). Ethnic identity is based on national, cultural-linguistic, racial, or religious backgrounds. Thus, in the context of elections, sharing a common ethnic identity helps the voters to affiliate themselves with the particular ethnic group (Boudreau, Elmendorf & MacKenzie 2018).

"Ethnic voting" described by Wolfinger (1965) explains that the voters prefer either to support a co-ethnic candidate or to oppose a candidate from a particular ethnic group. When voters try to express their identity by ethnic voting, the presence of minority group candidate in the ballot would be enough for the candidate to gain votes from the same ethnic group regardless of his or her competence for the position (Fisher et al. 2015). Philpot and Walton (2007) conducted an experiment in which black women respondents were more likely to support black women candidates than other respondents.

Stereotypes are divided by two types: belief stereotypes and traits stereotypes. Belief stereotypes are related to policy issues and ideology, while traits stereotypes are related to personal qualities of the candidates (McDermott 1998; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). For instance, voters believe that black candidates are more liberal than whites, more concerned with racial issues, and more inclined to help poor people, which are the examples of belief stereotypes (Williams 1990). Matson and Fine (2006) show that the voters evaluate female and male politicians with different ethnic background in the same way as the representatives of their ethnic group in everyday life. Thus, Hispanic women in Hispanic culture are viewed as mothers and wives who usually stay at home. As a result, they were disadvantaged in comparison with men during local elections conducted in Florida in 1996. Dolan (2014) analyzed real world survey data and showed that Black and liberal voters support female candidates, because they associate women with liberal values and consider them more

concerned with ethical issues. Thus, if the individual has certain stereotype about particular ethnic group, she or he will apply it to the candidate.

While ethnic voting is widespread in multicultural societies with a huge cohort of immigrants, survey conducted in Ukraine in 2014 demonstrated how little significance a candidate's ethnicity and native language have for the voters (Frye 2015). Despite presenting ethnicity and language as the central cleavages in Ukraine, prime mover of the voters' preferences was political orientation of the candidate. This means that in real elections, the voters would make choice basing on policy orientation of the candidate. It is important for the voters whether the candidate is oriented on European or Russian leaders. At the same time, Russian speaking and Ukrainian speaking voters turned out to have different preferences over the candidates.

Some state policies or colonial past may result in the creation of ethnically based winning coalitions. In his research, Radnitz (2017) demonstrates that there is a systematic ethnic favoritism of the politicians in Georgia. For instance, Georgian respondents evaluate Georgian candidates more positively, than with Armenian or Azeri ethnic background.

The scholars demonstrate several patterns of voter's behavior and perception of female politicians based on ethnic cues and gender stereotypes. To sum up, ethnic identity has a strong potential to be considered as one of the significant variables in voting. The electorate has a tendency to vote according to ethnic cues and support co-ethnic candidates regardless of their competence for the position. At the same time, the voters have several stereotypes about the candidates with particular ethnic background. Moreover, they are more likely to apply widespread ethnic stereotypes to the candidates with particular ethnic background. In Kazakhstan, language is a significant part of the ethnic identity. At the same time, there are two languages, which are actively used by the population: Russian and Kazakh. However, the issues and questions about the official status of Russian language are

frequently discussed in the context of nationalist ideology. Thus, in addition to the question from the previous section, this paper focuses on the following question: Do voters with different language preferences evaluate female politicians differently?

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Women and politics in Kazakhstan

In the cities of Kazakhstan, the gender role of women was affected by neo-liberal and Western values, but also by cultural expectations (Kuzhabekova and Almukambetova 2017). For instance, we can observe the situation, when after marriage a Kazakh woman performs in her new role of *"kelin"* ("young bride"), who is expected to provide services for their husband and his relatives in their household (Werner 2004). While the term "*kelin*" comes from Kazakh words "*kelgen bala*" ("a baby that just came to the new family"), being a good *kelin* is a prestigious status for women in Central Asia and most of the girls are taught by their mothers how to be a good wife from the childhood (Kamziyeva 2015; Bigozhin 2019). In modern Kazakhstan, the scholars observe the revival of patriarchy, early marriage, religion and bride kidnapping, which existed in 18-19th centuries (Musabalina 2016).

Since 20th century, the process of advocacy of women's rights in Central Asia mostly associated with ideology and different political actors. In the 20th century, Kazakhstan became a part of the Soviet Union, where the government targeted the emancipation of women in Central Asia and in the Muslim world (Kandiyoti 2007). After the Bolshevik victory, secular family laws were imposed on nomads, while early and forced marriages were outlawed. In the Soviet Union, women were supported in their roles of mothers and workers, provided opportunities for women's education and public roles, while male dominance in policy domains was considered politically incorrect. At the same time, Soviet rule oppressed other traditions and culture of Central Asian ethnic groups, because the Soviet government aimed to categorize people by "natsional'nost" (citizen's ethnicity). Women were asked to perform tasks that were unnatural for them.

According to Kandiyoti (2007), the revival of Islam started from later Soviet period in Uzbekistan. Later, most of the post-Soviet states in Central Asia considered the revival of the

traditions and patriarchal hierarchy in families were considered as de-sovietization process and reassessment of the Soviet legacy (Commercio 2015). Even the leaders of Central Asian states started to demonstrate that they celebrate Islam as a part of national identity (Thibault 2018). Alongside with the revival of the traditions and religion, women became to be less represented in political sphere, while the level of unemployment within women started to rise. At the same time, the amount of mosques started to rise in the countries. Kandiyoti (2007) argues that patriarchy became part of the gender narrative in the post-Soviet states of Central Asia. However, we cannot relate this trend to re-islamization only (Thibault 2018). Werner (2004) noted that during the time of independence of Kazakhstan, the amount of bride-kidnapping has risen significantly. The explanation of this pattern is related to the lack of attention paid to women issues and promotion of national values by the state. The state was promoted as family and the President as a protective patriarch. During the years of independence, NGO sector attempted to promote and upgrade the situation with women's rights in Central Asia. While technically some of the states could achieve some of the developmental goals, ideologically NGOs sponsored by Western countries were perceived as "aliens".

A study on gender stereotypes and evaluation of female politicians in Kazakhstan was conducted in 1998 (Herrick and Sapieva 1998). The survey experiment took place among the students of Kazakh National University in Almaty. As a result, the female candidate was evaluated as less competent than the male candidate in all policy domains. It indicated that gender was used in order to make assumptions about the politicians in Kazakhstan. In 1998, students did not see women politicians as more honest or more competent in the fields of social protection policy in contrast to Western scholars' findings. The authors also mentioned than at that time there was increasing number of tensions between ethnic Kazakhs and ethnic Russians and interethnic relationships were marked as perspective field of study.

During the process of modernization, Kazakhstani government aimed to implement Gender Equality Strategy during 2006-2016 on the basis of Kazakhstan 2050 and "100 Concrete steps" (Takteyeva 2018). The seven priorities of the strategy include "gender equality in the public and political spheres, gender equality in the economic sphere, gender education, improving reproductive health of men and women, prevention of gender-based violence, strengthening of the family, raising public awareness on gender equality" (OECD 2017). In 2019, in the Kazakhstani government women take 2 of 18 ministerial posts, 22% of women were represented in *maslikhats*. 388 men occupied political positions appointed by the President on different levels (including local Executives, *akims*). Moreover, there are no female *akims* appointed in the cities of national significance (Almaty and Nur-Sultan). In March 2020, head of the state Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev appointed a woman Gulshara Abdykaliyeva an akim of Kyzylorda region. Earlier she worked as Presidential Adviser and as the chairman of the Commission on Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy.

According to the statistics, in 2018, 9 out of 80 regional vice-*akims* were female, 5 out of 201 district *akims* were female and 348 out of 2389 *akims* in rural area were women (Radio Azattyq 2018). In general, less than 15% of the governors on different levels are female, despite widespread stereotype about the better performance of female politicians at the local offices. While we observe that 59% of adults in the US think that there are too few women in high political offices and most of respondents with positive attitudes are female (Pew Research Center 2018), similar statistics are not available in Kazakhstan and public attitudes toward female politicians remain understudied. The barriers to women engaging in politics are related to their position in the society. When a woman is trying to build her political career, she needs to balance with her socially ascribed responsibilities, because she is a key figure in organization of family life (Asian Development Bank 2013).

There must be noticed that Parliament does not have real power in Kazakhstan. The Parliament usually unanimously supports the suggestions of the ruling party. According to Kanapyanov (2018), the independence of Parliament is almost impossible in Kazakhstan due to "the strong constitutional and informal powers of the President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, which allows him to control and interfere in affairs of all branches of power". After constitutional amendment made in 2007, the power of Nazarbayev expanded significantly, political system in Kazakhstan remained to exist in authoritarian form under the rule of the state's leader Nursultan Nazarbayev (Junisbai and Junisbai 2018).

One of the most famous woman politicians on Kazakhstani political arena is Dariga Nazarbayeva, who is the oldest daughter of Nursultan Nazarbayev. In 2003, she formed political party "Asar", which later merged with the ruling party "Nur Otan". She was working as a Deputy Prime Minister from 2015 to 2016 and in 2019 she was appointed Chairwoman of the Senate. At the same time, we cannot perceive her career as emancipation of women in Kazakhstan, because she is a close relative of the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev. Moreover, Nazarbayev does not have official male successors among his children and Dariga Nazarbayeva remains one of the possible successors of his power.

The year of 2019 was marked by early Presidential elections held in Kazakhstan. Daniya Yespayeva from "AqJol", a liberal political party, was the first ever woman presidential candidate in Kazakhstan and in Central Asia. As a result, she won 5% of votes and took third place among all the candidates. However, this case does not demonstrate the situation of women in politics as it really is, because independent observers registered many violations during the elections and electoral campaign (ODIHR Final Report 2019). First and foremost, the electoral campaigns were not equally presented in the media. Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev was actively presented as the future President and was supported by the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev. Moreover, Daniya Yespayeva was not proactive during the

campaign. She did not participate in the TV debates; Azat Peruashev, the leader of "AqJol" party, presented the main points of her campaign; he also held the meetings with the electorate and political actions. Thus, her participation in the Presidential Elections was nominal in order to demonstrate that Kazakhstan value civil liberties to the international society.

To sum up, starting from the Soviet times the role of Kazakh women in family and in the society was ambiguous. On the one hand, she was oppressed with "traditional gender roles" and "cultural expectations". On the other hand, she could work and build her career as well as men. Thus, even a young generation has to fulfill its responsibilities in accordance with constructed gender roles and traditional identities. At the same time, ethnic Kazakhs turned out to be more conservative than ethnic Russians in the sense of gender equality (Laruelle 2019). At the same time, the studies on women in politics conducted in the early years of independence in Kazakhstan demonstrate that men were perceived as better political leaders than women. Overall, the current situation in the country demonstrates that women are underrepresented in the political life of the country, quota for women in the government is nominal and does not demonstrate real situation.

3.2 Interethnic relationships in the context of Kazakhstan

Since its independence, Kazakhstan has advocated the politics of multiculturalism and celebrated the diversity of its population. It is not surprising for a country where 131 ethnicities are represented. After 1991, Kazakhstan turned out to be the republic where the titular nation was a minority – 37,8% (Jasina-Schafer 2019, 6). Kyrgyz and Kazakh Soviet republics had the largest russophone population living not only in the cities, but also in rural areas (Kosmarskaya 2013). The statement from the Constitution of 1995 conceptualizes the nation of Kazakhstan as "people united by a common historic fate, creating a state on the

indigenous Kazakh land". The main idea that unites all multiethnic policies conducted in Kazakhstan is "friendship of peoples". Although the politics conducted in Kazakhstan aims to build one national identity (Kazakhstanization) including a multiethnic component of the society, people still continue to mention their ethnicity – Kazakh, Russian, Uzbek or other. For instance, in social interaction, people tend to mention their ethnic background and the question "What is your ethnicity (*natsional'nost'*)?" is common in everyday life.

The Russian minority continues its decline: from 37.8% in 1991 it went to 20% in 2018 (Laurelle 2019, 7). Despite becoming a minority in recent years, in some of post-Soviet republic, Russians were perceived by ethnic majorities as "own people" (Jasina-Schafer 2019). It is not only the perception of majority that influences the self-affiliation of minorities in Kazakhstan, but also the "socio-political context" in Russia that affects the internal policy of Kazakhstan. Many Russians in post-Soviet republics even do not consider themselves as minorities (Jones 2019). The decline of the Russian community in Kazakhstan does not correlate with the decrease in knowledge of Russian language. Officially Russian language is defined as "a language of interethnic communication" and is used in the big cities of Central Asia (Kosmarskaya 2013, 13). While in 1989, 64% of ethnic Kazakhs knew Russian language, in 2009, 92% of Kazakhs understood spoken Russian. At the same time, knowledge of Kazakh language was improved significantly (Laurelle 2019, 7). The goals of language politics in Kazakhstan were the following: a) formalization of Kazakh language; b) the reduction of Russian language in the official documents and office work. In 2009, at least 80% of Kazakhstani population knew Kazakh language (Laurelle 2019, 7).

However, we observe the differences in political agenda for Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking segments of the population. In 2016, during a series of land protests Kazakh-speakers felt betrayed by the government, whereas Russian speakers supported the government. During a series of the protests after the Early Presidential Elections in 2019,

Russian speakers and Kazakh speakers had their own different leaders of the opposition. While the Russian speaking opposition was widely discussed in the media and the police was abusing them, the Kazakh speaking population also had their leader, poet (aitysker) Rinat Zaitov. The largest protest happened when the police in Almaty arrested him. At the same time, some of the participants of the Russian speaking opposition groups including "Oyan, Kazakhstan" heard of Rinat Zaitov for the first time after these protests. This situation showed the fragmentation of Kazakh society and opposition in the context of political agenda. It also demonstrated huge protest potential of the Kazakh-speaking audience due to their long-lasting outstanding social issues.

In Kazakhstan, there are strong regional differences in the perception of minority groups. For example, people from Shymkent are more likely to choose friends among ethnic Kazakhs or Uzbeks rather than Russians, whereas the populations of Nur-Sultan and Almaty are more open to Russianness (Laruelle 2019). Few studies have been conducted on ethnic stereotypes in Kazakhstan during recent years. However, these studies indicate that ethnicity almost does not influence the perceptions of people in Kazakhstan. In their experiment of Hernández-Torrano and Tursunbayeva (2015), the authors tested whether school teachers equally nominate Kazakh and Russian students for gifted services or school. Gifted services may include the nomination of the student to be educated in a separate school or a separate class, because he or she is talented. The results of the experiment demonstrate that the ethnicity of the students does not serve as a cue for nomination, but the teachers prefer male students for nomination. Burkhanov (2019) states that the young generation is more likely to express ethnic nationalism rather than the older generation. He explains it with the fact that older generation witnessed the Soviet period, when the idea of "friendship of peoples" and unity was actively promoted.

The understanding of nation identity in Kazakhstan still remains in the process of construction. Despite the politics of Kazakhstanization, people continue to divide the society by ethnic identities and affiliate themselves with ethnic groups. At the same time minority groups in Kazakhstan continue to decline and the main division of the society is based on the usage of Kazakh and Russian languages. Both of the languages have official status, but Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking segments of the population tend to have different political preferences. The case of Kazakhstan allows us to investigate what differences appear between Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking voters. Due to the limited knowledge of the attitude of Kazakhstani electorate to female politicians we decided to conduct the experiment among the young generation of Kazakhstan.

Chapter 4. Research Design

4.1 The Nazarbayev generation

The young population of Kazakhstan was born after 1990, when Nazarbayev was appointed to be a head of Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, he was elected for the position of the President of Kazakhstan. Thus, the young generation of Kazakhstan does not have memories about Soviet times and have never seen any alternative to ex-President, except for Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev who was elected for the position of President in March 2019 by Nursultan Nazarbayev. Several potential political opponents of Kazakhstani leader Nursultan Nazarbayev have been jailed or found dead. "Young people have not witnessed interethnic wars and conflicts, the chaos of 1990s. Many view the stability and comfortable life in Kazakhstan as their birthright", Nazarbayev said (Junisbai and Junisbai 2018).

The Nazarbayev generation does not challenge their parents' values, ways of lives and "trust the family more than any other institution". Their perception of values and traditions depends on whether the individual lives in rural or urban area, whether he or she have traveled abroad or have been in contact with foreigners (Laruelle 2019). Most of them do not have concerns about the society, because they believe that women and ethnic minorities have enough rights and opportunities (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Survey 2015).

In this study, the survey was conducted among the students of Nazarbayev University in Nur-Sultan and International IT University in Almaty. The universities are located in two major cities, which are considered to be more cosmopolitan than other regions of Kazakhstan. Nur-Sultan (former Astana) is a capital of Kazakhstan, where the ministries and administration of the President are located. Almaty is a former capital of Kazakhstan, which tends to have more liberal population.

The students in both universities represent not only Nur-Sultan and Almaty, but also the whole population of Kazakhstan, including rural areas. However, the students of Nazarbayev University are believed to be different from other representatives of young generation who study in state universities. For instance, Bigozhin (2019) conducted a series of interviews with the students of Nazarbayev University about the issues of "Kazakh women upbringing". He found out that most of the students who get or are in the process of getting Western-style education do not accept traditional gender roles of Kazakhstani society. Moreover, the scholar observed that female students in Nazarbayev University freely express their concerns about psychological pressure from "Kazakh society" as well as they participate in the discussions about male-centric society and traditional gender role of a woman as "mother". Furthermore, NU students are less likely to be nationalistic in comparison with the students of other state universities. Such differences between NU students and other state universities' students are explained not only with Western-style education, but also with the students' earlier education, which they bring with themselves.

Tatkeyeva (2018) conducted focus-group research within Nazarbayev University students and their construction of gender roles. She found out that the most influential gender role model is where the man is a breadwinner and a woman's role is "to raise children, complete household tasks and also work to partially help with finances in the family" (Tatkeyeva 2018, 51). 25% prefer traditional gender role model where the man is a breadwinner and a woman is a mother, while another 25% choose 50/50 role model, where both of the spouses perform as workers and parents (Tatkeyeva 2018, 51). The author explains these findings in two ways. The first explanation is based on Inglehart's modernization theory: the speed of change of gender roles does not correlate with the change of the narratives. More precisely, gender roles are influenced by private experience within the

family, whereas narratives are influenced by public perception. As a result, the transformation of narratives turns out to be quicker than the transformation of the gender roles.

The second explanation is related to the impact of education on the preferences of gender roles. Baimuratova (2017) supports Bigozhin's (2019) argument and describes Nazarbayev University students as more affected by post-modern values and more exposed to Western education environment in comparison with the students of other universities in Kazakhstan. Tatkeyeva (2018) assumes that one of the explanation for her findings is that the type of education results in a certain gender model preferred by the student. The author also believes that there are all three narratives and three gender roles represented within the students of Nazarbayev University, because they are in the context of financial security. Most of them receives state scholarships and can afford to focus on self-realization rather than "survival and traditional values" (Tatkeyeva 2018, 46). However, 60% of the respondents from Nazarbayev University still share traditional or modern narratives. This result demonstrates that the majority of young adults in Nazarbayev University has either negative or neutral view of interethnic marriage and either positive or neutral view of Kazakh society.

The IT-university in Almaty includes broad variety of population, because Almaty is represented by different classes and segments of the population. For instance, there is a new cohort of Almaty hipsters who live in a "bubble" and almost does not communicate with the rest of the city. Almaty hipsters are liberal, cosmopolitan urban elite, speaking at least two languages and observing global trends. "Almatintsy" are people who have been living in Almaty for a long time, usually Russian-speaking and cosmopolitan (Isaacs 2019). And, finally, there are newcomers from the countryside who are mostly Kazakh-speaking with different political interests depending on their region of origin. The representatives of each group could apply to IT-university. Thus, the students represent not only Almaty, but also other regions including rural areas.

Kazakhstan is a post-colonial and relatively newly independent state, where the young generation grew up under the rule of an authoritarian leader. They did not participate in fair elections and are mostly not interested in political competitions. Young people who studied abroad or get Western-style education are more likely to challenge traditional gender roles of women. At the same time, some of the young people would like to become a "*kelin*" even if they have obtained Western-style education. In this research, we observed how the perceptions of female politicians changed during 29 years of independence did and who are the young adults who favorably evaluate female candidates.

4.2 Hypotheses

According to Matson and Fine (2006), voters with traditional societal views are less likely to vote for women. Sanbonmatsu (2002, 21) demonstrated that "voters do take gender into account when they evaluate candidates" and voters evaluate female and male candidates in the same way they perceive women and men in their everyday life. In their in-depth interviews with female leaders in business and government in Kazakhstan, Kuzhabekova and Almukhambetova (2017) concluded that female leaders believe that women are often viewed as the "weak gender" and expected to take a role of care taker in the family and in the society.

Moreover, the previous study conducted in Kazakhstan demonstrated that female candidates were evaluated as less competent than male candidates in all of policy domains. Hence, it is a reasonable expectation that people with high level of gender stereotypes will evaluate female politicians as less competent in all spheres of politics.

Thus, the primary hypothesis (H_1) to be tested is:

The respondents with stronger gender stereotypes will evaluate female politicians more negatively.

Ethnicity is an "important independent variable in voting behavior" in multi-ethnic societies (Wolfinger 1965). For example, Flannely (2002) studied US elections and demonstrated that different ethnic and racial groups (Asian, Black, Caucasian, Hispanic Americans) are more likely to vote based on racial-ethnic lines, while Caucasians from Democratic Party voted for female candidate more frequently than other groups. Wolfinger (1965) also argued in his theory of "ethnic voting" that the voters from one ethnic group usually vote for the candidates from the same ethnic group. Sometimes such voters' behavior is related to the expectation of the voters that the chosen candidate will represent their interests in high offices and they will have certain benefit. Men and men's traits are considered as a certain norm or benchmark in the society, whereas women's characteristics are rather a deviation from this norm.

However, the studies conducted in Kazakhstan and Ukraine demonstrate that ethnicity almost does not have impact on the evaluation of the individual in everyday life in these post-Soviet multi-ethnic countries (Frye 2015; Hernández-Torrano and Tursunbayeva 2015). However, Frye (2015) demonstrates that Russian-speaking and Ukrainian-speaking respondents have different preferences over the candidates. In Kazakhstan, we observe that language and language politics became significant segments of nation identity. Kazakhstani society remains in the process of nation identity construction and has two official languages. Hence, the following hypothesis will be tested:

H_2: *Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents have different preferences over the gender of the candidates.*

We argue that the behavior of the voter will be more biased by gender stereotypes than based solely on the candidate's professionalism. According to Huddy and Terkildsen (1993), trait stereotypes had significant impact on the judgment of the voter on the candidate's competence in a certain field of politics. Megoran (1999) claims that men and

their views of gender roles in the society predominantly influenced the process of ethnic

identity construction. He describes this process as "a tale of one gender" that ignores the role

of women in shaping of ethnic identity. After the collapse of the Soviet Union,

"nationalizing" policies of newly independent states of Central Asia targeted family and

gender relations (Kandiyoti 2007). Later, when the revival of Islam took place within Central

Asian countries, faith created a framework for regulation of gender hierarchy and gender

roles (Kandiyoti 2007). For instance, Matson and Fine (2006) examined the results of the set

of elections for Community Councils in Miami-Dade Country, Florida in 1996. They found

out that Hispanic women were the most disadvantaged by the electorate. The authors believe

that this outcome turned out because their gender role was sitting at home with children and

gender roles in Hispanic cultures are traditional and patriarchal. Even when women became

more involved in political life in the Western counties, they still were more likely to run for

feminine offices including the spheres of education or health care, which are traditionally

considered as women's fields of competence, rather than for masculine offices.

4.3 Data and measures

This study focuses on the effect of gender stereotypes, gender, ethnicity, income and

preferable language of the voters on their evaluation of female politicians. The unit of

analysis is individual.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of independent variables.

Variable	Standard deviation	Mean	Min	Max
Gender	.498703	.4559585	0	1
Income	1.195682	2.944737	1	5
Gender stereotypes	.5886466	2.010054	1	4
Language	.436511	.2551546	0	1

In order to measure the attitudes and values of the voters, the scholars use quantitative methods of research. In this research, an online survey was designed on the basis of Qualtrics platform. The study of ethnic processes and gender gap conducted via online platforms including anonymous online surveys is relatively new, but it has several pros. For example, the topics of ethnic discrimination or gender stereotyping are not only weakly studied in the context of Kazakhstan and other post-soviet Central Asian states. They are also not widely discussed by people in face-to-face conversations. Due to the sensitivity of ethnic and gender issues in real life, online users have less social control in the Internet and can tell about their real opinion and attitude (Nagornyy 2019).

The participants were provided with a link to an online survey experiment. Simple random sampling was used for list-based sample of high-coverage populations consisting of e-mail addresses of Nazarbayev University students in Nur-Sultan. Along with emailing, encouraging of the respondents was conducted on campus. At the same time, non-probability sampling was used for the sample from International IT University in Almaty. The link with the survey was placed in the official groups Vkontakte and unofficial chats of the university in Whatsapp. The recruitment of the respondents was also conducted on the university campus.

I have received a total of 372 observations. The sample is 54% female; the students were overwhelmingly in the process of obtaining bachelor degree (79.5%). The respondents came from range of social and geographical backgrounds, 47% spent most of their childhood outside Almaty and Nur-Sultan. Our sample is more liberal in a sense of gender attitudes than the sample from World Values Survey (2014): 38% of the respondents answered "Agree" or "Strongly agree" to the statement "Men make better political leaders than women do", 25% believe that "what most women really want is a home and children", 12% agreed that "a university education is more important for a boy than for a girl" and 26% of the sample

answered that "A woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled". 25.5% of the sample prefers to speak Kazakh language.

The participants were asked to answer 14 demographic questions regarding their gender, age, region where the participant lived most of his life, education, preferable language, income and level of gender stereotypes. After this, participants of the survey were suggested to evaluate four hypothetical candidates. I do not create the conditions of hypothetical elections, because Kazakhstani youth has never participated in fair elections that meet international standards. Early Presidential elections were conducted in June 2019. The only female candidate, Dania Yespayeva received 5% of the votes and became third out of seven candidates. However, the results of Presidential elections are debatable, because the international observers registered many violations, and the results of the elections were not revised (ODIHR Final Report 2019). Furthermore, Presidential elections are predictable for Kazakhstani voters.

In order to explore the impact of voters' characteristics on the evaluation of female candidates, eight fictional biographies of hypothetical candidates were created. One of the candidates from each was assigned to the respondents with 50% probability. This methodology was chosen in order to avoid potential bias about the candidate's background. Thus, the experiment was conducted in the form of A/B split testing. Each of the respondents was assigned with the same biography, but different names. More specifically, the respondents were asked the following:

"We suggest you to read the following biographies of the hypothetical politicians and to evaluate the competence of each candidate with the help of 0 to 100 scale for certain positions. (where 0 = not competent at all; 100 = very competent)

Kadyrova Zaure Zhussupovna/Kelemseiyt Ermek Abilmazhinuly is a 37-year-old politician. Imagine that she/he was appointed to the position of akim, married, has 2 children.

The same biographies were created for the politicians with Russian ethnic background:

Kotovich Valeriya Nikolayevna/Yegorov Viktor Nikolaevich is a 45-year-old politician. Imagine that she/he was appointed to the position of akim, married, no children."

Names in Russian and Kazakh languages are not the same. For instance, Zaure Kadyrova is a distinctly Kazakh name, whereas Valeriya Kotovich is distinctly Russian one. The difference in the biographies of the candidates is represented with different names, which serve as ethnic and gender cues, and also with age, marital status and amount of children. The candidate's gender is assigned to the respondents with 50% probability for each description.

First and foremost, we controlled outside knowledge while using hypothetical candidates for the survey. Secondly, limited amount of information about the candidates is similar to the information conditions of most elections in Kazakhstan. The voters usually have little information about the candidates and only presidential elections are broadly covered in the media. Thus, in this context, the candidate's demographic is expected to act as an informational cue to voters (McDermott 1998; Matson and Fine 2006). I can expect that in real elections the respondents would demonstrate the same preferences as in my survey experiment.

Dependent variable

I measured the evaluation score of hypothetical candidates done by the students. The evaluation was based on the question "How competent is this candidate for the position of akim at your hometown in a near future?" and on the evaluation of the candidates' competence in the following policy domains: security, economics, education, labor and social protection. I constructed the scale from 0 to 100 for the question and each policy domain.

Independent variables

There are four key independent variables in this study: gender, income, gender stereotypes and language of the respondents. In this section, I will give a more detailed description of the variables.

Gender is a dummy variable. There is empirical evidence showing that women have more positive stereotypes of female candidates and more likely to have baseline gender preference (Sanbonmatsu 2002). At the same time, some women in Kazakhstan share traditional views of gender roles in the societies. With the revival of traditions and religion in Central Asia after collapse of the Soviet Union, male privilege became an item of national culture again (Kandiyoti 2007). Thus, the correlation of this variable and the evaluation of female candidates will demonstrate whether female or male respondents have differences in their perception of female candidates.

Gender stereotypes is a variable constructed from four questions about gender roles in Kazakhstani society and perceptions of women in different spheres of social life.

Gender stereotypes variable was constructed in the following way: the sum of four answers of the respondent was divided by four. Thus, the mean of the answers demonstrates the level of the respondent's gender stereotypes, indicating higher value is stronger gender stereotyping.

Income is an ordinal variable, which demonstrates the respondents' household income. Due to the fact that most of the students get financial support from their parents, overall income of the household including salaries, pensions and other payments from other sources was taken into the consideration. This independent variable will help to find out whether the evaluation of female candidates is different among people with different level of income. In order to measure income, the respondents were suggested to answer the following question "How much income does your household expected to receive per month?". To

answer the question, the respondents were suggested to choose from five options from "less than 150 000 tenge" (1) to "more than 600 000 tenge" (5).

In this research, I also include *language* variable, because the research sample does not allow to test whether the ethnicity of the respondent influences his or her preferences. In this survey experiment, less than 5% of the respondents were Russian. However, *language* variable allows to determine whether the baseline gender preferences of Russian-speaking and Kazakh-speaking speakers are different. In the context of Kazakhstani nation-building policy, language became a part of nation identity. Political agenda for Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking segments of population is different as well (Laruelle 2019). At the same time, Koter (2019) shows that ethnic identity of the country leader may have an impact on the individual's sense of attachment to the nation, using the data from 17 African countries. In case of Africa people feel represented, if the leader of the country is a coethnic. Thus, voters' behavior is not only related to their expectation that the chosen candidate will represent their interests and they will have certain benefit, but also to the improvement of national identification.

Chapter 5. Results

5.1 Candidates' competence

The data was analyzed by means of a multivariate regression analysis using Stata software. The results are interesting in several respects. Table 2 demonstrates mean scores of the male and female candidates nominated for the position of *akim* and four policy domains. The average level of support for the candidates nominated for the position of *akim* varies from 52 to 60 points. The outlier is a pair of candidates with Kazakh background. In paired comparison, the female candidate turned out to gain more scores than the male candidate in all policy domains. At the same time, all of the other male candidates have a slightly higher level of support regardless of their ethnic background, age and marital status. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the gap between the candidates with a Kazakh background is bigger than in the pairs with a Russian background. For instance, the difference between the means of the candidates with a Kazakh background varies from 3 to 8 points, whereas the difference between the candidates with a Russian background varies from 0.3 to 0.7 points. This means that hypothetical voters are more likely to express their gender baseline preference when they evaluate Kazakh candidates for the position of *akim*, although the respondents were less likely to express it, while evaluating Russian candidates for the same position.

The widest gap was found in the first pair of candidates, where both of the candidates were married, had 2 children and were described as 37-years-old politicians. It is worth noting that the female candidate with this description gained the highest evaluation score, while the male candidate with the same description was evaluated as the less competent among all four pairs of the candidates. During the experiment, a couple of the respondents (both male and female) also noted that they felt most sympathetic to the first female candidate out of all the candidates. One of the explanations for this pattern might be based on value of age. To be more precise, the older a man or a woman, the higher his or here status and

seniority. For instance, in the pair of the candidates #5 and #6 (Table 2), female candidate evaluated as less competent and her age is 33. In Kazakhstan, the speaker of the Senate Dariga Nazarbayeva mentioned that women at the age of 45 are perceived by the society as old in a negative sense and are discriminated (The Village 2020). She even mentioned that the banks in Kazakhstan refuse to give loans to women, who are older than 45 years. In the survey experiment, the respondents evaluated four female candidates at the age of 33, 37, 45 and 56 years. We can observe that age of 37 is a midway between too young and too old age for a woman in Kazakhstan. At the same time, male candidate #5 at the age of 33 was evaluated as more competent in comparison to his older colleague.

Another explanation is based on a recent study, which demonstrates that women are more likely to be perceived as more competent than male candidates during local elections (Dolan 2014). Female candidates running for local offices are considered to be more honest and better deal with the issues on local level rather than male candidates. In the context of Kazakhstan, *akim* is not elected position, but we can observe that if *akims* could be fairly elected by the citizens, Kazakh women could be successful candidates for this position.

The evaluation score of the first pair of the candidates also demonstrates that the respondents tend to evaluate the candidates higher in accordance with their ethnic cues. The candidate with a Kazakh ethnic background gained higher average evaluation score, because the majority of the respondents are Kazakh.

Table 2. The candidates' average evaluation scores.

Candidates	Description	Mean score				
		Akim	Security	Labor and Social Protection	Education	Economics
1. Kazakh man	37 y.o., married, children	52.52747	49.39344	52.16384	52.70787	49.53039
2. Kazakh woman	37 y.o., married, children	60.44022	56.79348	69.19337	69.0663	61.12155
3. Russian woman	45 y.o., married, no children	56.79459	55.92935	60.45604	60.48352	59.19672
4. Russian man	45 y.o., married, no children	57.04469	57.07821	55.44134	56.21229	58.22346
5. Kazakh man	33 y.o., single, no children	55.75568	56.24713	56.92486	61.23121	60.09827
6. Kazakh woman	33 y.o., single, no children	53.22599	53.12717	57.68391	58.78161	56.1954
7. Russian woman	56 y.o., divorced, children	53.2807	56.09467	59.85119	58.03529	55.44118
8. Russian man	56 y.o., divorced, children	53.98295	58.77143	59.5172	57.08046	58.28

Note. Min. score = 0; max. score = 100.

While the different characteristics of the candidates have little impact on the evaluation score of the candidates for the position of *akim*, there is more significant difference between the scores of the candidates in the field of security policy. Across three of four pairs of the candidates, male candidates were evaluated as more competent for this field. While Kazakh woman candidate gained mean score of 52.8, Kazakh man gained 56.5. Slightly less difference is observed between the politicians with Russian ethnic background (1-2.5 points difference). In the first pair of the candidates with Kazakh background, female politician was evaluated as more competent and gained 7 points higher mean score than male politician with the same biography.

From Table 2, we observe that candidates #4 and #8 were evaluated as the most competent for work in security policy domain. It is worth noting that both of the candidates are Russian men in their 40s and 50s. First of all, this finding supports the existing studies' arguments and demonstrates that security is a "masculine" policy domain in Kazakhstan (Fox and Oxley 2003). Thus, men are still expected to deal with the security issues better than women.

Secondly, the pattern observed in Table 2 may be considered as a basis for further studies of trait stereotypes related to different ethnicities in Kazakhstan. For instance, it can be tested whether Russian male politicians are usually perceived to be the most competent in the security issues rather than Kazakh male politicians. In this study, the difference in the average evaluation scores between Kazakh male and Russian male candidates has marginal significance.

Table 2 demonstrates the difference in the evaluation ratings of the hypothetical candidates' competence in the field of education. The gap between male and female candidates is less than in the field of security, except for the first pair of candidates. In the most of cases, voters evaluate the female politicians more favorably than the male politicians

except for the one pair of the candidates with a Kazakh background. As well as in the previous results, the first pair of candidates with a Kazakh background has significant difference in the overall scores. The female candidate is evaluated 16 points higher than male candidate.

Thus, we observe that most of the female candidates is evaluated in accordance with gender stereotypes about "feminine" offices (Fox and Oxley 2003). It is worth noting that candidate #2 and #3 gained the highest average scores. Both of these candidates are the oldest among the representatives of their ethnic group. Candidate #2 is the female candidate aged 37 and candidate #3 is the female candidate aged 56.

In the field of economics (Table 2), the candidates with a Russian background were evaluated with a small gap. In the second pair of the candidates, a Russian woman gained slightly higher score than a Russian man, whereas in the last pair, a Russian man was evaluated more positively (3 point higher). However, there is a more significant gap between the Kazakh male and female candidates (4 to 11 points). In the first pair, the female candidate gained significantly higher evaluation score than the male candidate, while in the third pair of candidates, a Kazakh woman was evaluated as less competent than the male candidate.

Overall, the statistics on the candidates' average evaluation score in the field of economics demonstrate no significant gaps between the candidates, regardless of their gender and ethnicity. Thus, we can expect that in reality the young generation does not have any competence stereotypes about the politicians working in economics policy domain.

The results reported in Table 2 demonstrate that labor and social protection is the only policy domain, where all of the female candidates are evaluated more positively than the male candidates. While the difference within the pair of candidates with a Kazakh background is the same as in the field of education (11 points), the female candidate with a Russian background was evaluated 5 points higher on average.

Although there is only one outlier with the highest average evaluation score (candidate #1: Kazakh women aged 37), we observe that all the female candidates are evaluated as more competent to deal with labor and social protections issues. This pattern again supports Dolan's (2014) findings about "feminine" offices and demonstrates that Kazakhstani electorate used to see women working in "contact" and caring positions. It is also worth noting that the lowest average score was gained by candidate #6, who is the youngest of all of the candidates (aged 33) and has no children.

To sum up, the results indicate that most of the male candidates nominated for the position of *akim* were evaluated slightly higher than women candidates nominated for the same position. However, the pair of candidates with Kazakh background became an outlier, where female candidate gained significantly more positive score than male candidate. Regarding different policy domains, the significant difference between evaluations of female and male candidates was observed in security and economics fields. At the same time, the gap in the pair of candidates with Kazakh background was bigger than the gap within the pairs of the candidates with Russian background. In the field of social and labor protection, female candidates gained higher scores than male candidates. In the field of education, hypothetical candidates received almost equal support with not significant dominance of male candidates. I also note that few respondents mentioned that the hypothetical candidates' biography provided during the experiment was not informative enough to evaluate the politician fairly.

5.2 Voters' characteristics

Two-way frequency table on the level of gender stereotypes demonstrate that male respondents are twice more often have higher level of gender stereotypes. For instance, 75% of female respondents responded "Strongly disagree" or "Disagree" to the question if they agree with the statement "Men make better political leaders than women do". At the same

time, only 45% of male respondents do not agree with this statement. This means that more than a half of the male respondents holds gender stereotypes about female politicians.

Table 3. The respondents' reply frequency to the statement "Men make better political leaders than women do" divided by gender identity.

	Female	Male
Strongly disagree	48	13
Disagree	107	63
Agree	45	69
Strongly agree	6	21

Note. N = 372.

In this study, I focus on the respondents who evaluate female politicians more favorably. Hence, figure 1 provides the comparison of the candidates' evaluation scores divided in accordance with the respondents' language of preference.

Figure 1. Candidate's evaluation by respondent's language
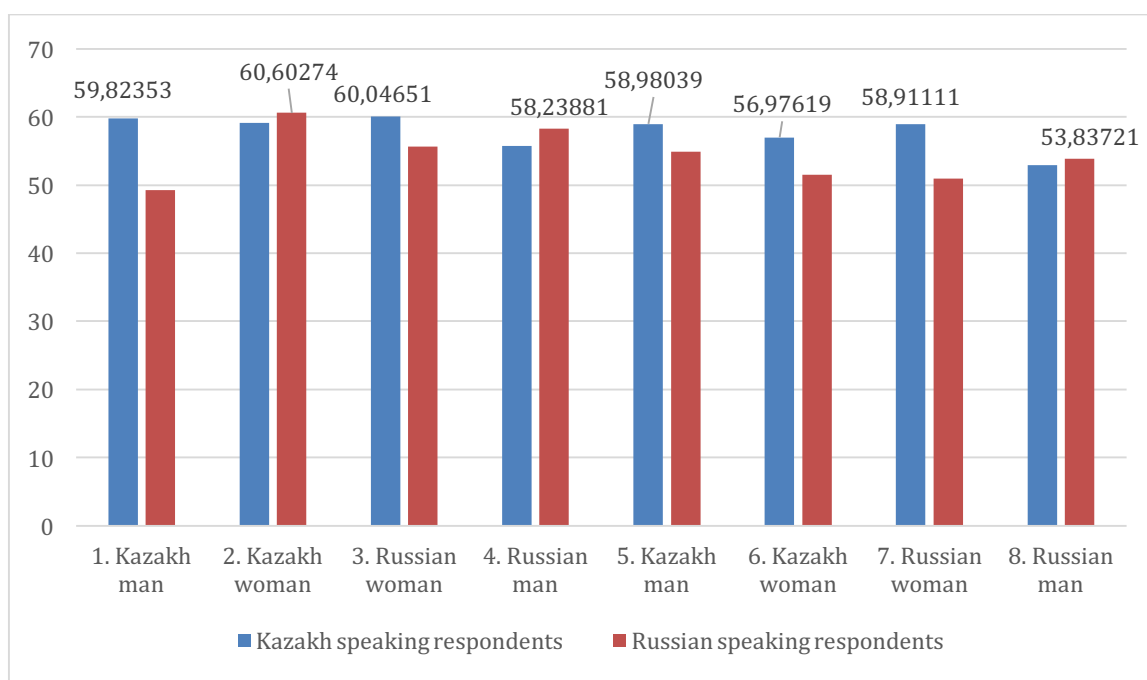
Kazakh speaking respondents evaluated the first pair of the candidates almost equally with slightly higher scores for male candidate (0.7 points difference), while in both pairs of the candidates with a Russian background, a Kazakh speaking segment of the respondents evaluated the female politicians more positively. Overall support of the candidates with Kazakh and Russian backgrounds was almost equal. However, the findings demonstrate that the average evaluation score for the Russian male politicians was slightly lower in both pairs of Russian candidates.

At the same time, opposite pattern is observed within Russian speaking respondents, who evaluated Kazakh man from the first pair of the candidates more negatively (49.3 points) than female candidate (60.5 points). For the pairs of candidates with Russian background, male politicians were evaluated slightly more favorably than female politicians. Overall level of support to the candidates with different ethnic background slightly differs from the answers of Kazakh speaking respondents. Kazakh female candidate received the highest mean score and Kazakh male candidate received the lowest mean score.

In order to test my hypotheses, multivariate regression analysis was conducted for each of the candidates.

Table 4 demonstrates that the level of gender stereotypes and income may be statistically significant for the voters who evaluate male candidates. From Table 4, we observe that the stronger respondent's gender stereotypes, the higher he evaluates Kazakh male candidate #1 (p value = 0.001). Similar correlation exists between positive evaluation of Kazakh male candidate and the level of income. Thus, the higher the income of the respondent's household, the higher he evaluates male candidate (p value = 0.027).

The opposite situation was observed in the cases with evaluation of Kazakh female candidates (Table 4). The statistical significance of the level of gender stereotypes is

confirmed by t-test and p-value (0.004; 0.029). Thus, the respondents with weaker gender stereotypes are more likely to evaluate Kazakh female politicians more favorably.

Table 4. OLS regression analysis for voters' characteristics and leadership choice.

Variables	Kazakh male candidates		Kazakh female candidates		Russian male candidates		Russian female candidates	
	candidate 1	*candidate 2*	*candidate 1*	*candidate 2*	*candidate 1*	*candidate 2*	*candidate 1*	*candidate 2*
Gender	-3.857029	-7.344261*	-3.344261**	1.788106	.9481029	2.617924	-.9558712	-.6647056
	(-1.15)	(-1.81)	(-0.95)	(0.44)	(0.26)	(0.69)	(-0.24)	(-0.15)
Income	3.230423**	2.949974*	-.9738778**	-3.152586	1.198732*	.8651499	1.369326	-2.444897
	(2.23)	(1.91)	(-0.75)	(-1.93)	(0.77)	(0.56)	(0.93)	(-1.46)
Language	5.988266	3.496819	1.916165	6.020664	-2.86509	-1.829465	6.540379	9.466081**
	(1.58)	(0.81)	(0.49)	(1.29)	(-0.68)	(-0.41)	(1.48)	(2.01)
Gender stereotypes	10.32555***	1.213004	-8.801445***	-8.10004**	.0554776	5.200627	-5.559261	-2.381374
	(3.50)	(0.720)	(-2.96)	(-2.20)	(0.02)	(1.48)	(-1.64)	(-0.65)
Observations	184	187	186	180	187	183	181	184
R^2	0.1273	0.0428	0.0779	0.0691	0.0078	0.0233	0.0299	0.0440

Notes. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

In addition to the results presented in Figure 1, Table 4 demonstrates statistical significance of the respondent's language of preference. It is interesting finding that Kazakh speaking segment of respondents is more likely to evaluate Russian female politicians more favorably than Kazakh female politicians or Russian male politicians. This outcome may become a basis for further study of trait stereotypes about Kazakhstani politicians with different ethnic backgrounds.

To sum up, contrary to my earlier expectations, Kazakh-speaking respondents were less likely to express their gender baseline preference. However, the findings demonstrate that Kazakh speaking respondents evaluated Russian women more favorably in comparison with Russian men. At the same time, Russian-speaking respondents evaluated the hypothetical candidates with wider gaps in accordance with the candidates' gender. It is worth noting that in 3 of 4 pairs of the candidates, women were disadvantaged in comparison with men. The outputs also show the correlation between the voter's level of gender stereotypes, income and language and his or her evaluation of the hypothetical candidates.

Chapter 6. Discussion

6.1 Who supports women politicians in Kazakhstan?

First and foremost, the results of the research do not demonstrate strong negative reaction to female politicians running as the *akims* of the respondent's city. This pattern supports the previous studies of the scholars who stated that women might have advantage over the male candidates in the city elections (Dolan 2014). I also found out that social and labor protection is the only field, where the female candidates have total advantage over the male candidates. This result has common ground with previous studies done by Western scholars (Fox and Oxley 2003). As well as in the US, Kazakhstani electorate associates female politicians with "contact" positions and "female" policy domains such as education, labor and social protection. According to these results, we can observe that trait stereotypes based on gender exist in Kazakhstan. We can expect that in real elections, young Kazakhstani electorate will make a vote choice on the basis of its perception of gender roles and social hierarchy. The half of the young adults will be more likely to express its gender baseline preferences.

As noted earlier, we observe significant part of the young generation, which holds gender stereotypes, especially about women leadership in politics. One fourth of the female respondents still believe that men are better political leaders than women. And more than a half of the male respondents agree with this statement. Thus, almost a half of the Nazarbayev generation (43%) still has traditional narratives, gender roles expectations and do not perceive women as competent political leaders (Tatkeyeva 2018; Laurelle 2019). The results presented in the previous section demonstrate that the respondent's level of gender stereotypes is a powerful mover of hypothetical voter's support for female candidate. Thus, the respondents with lower level of gender stereotypes evaluate Kazakh female politicians more favorably than the other candidates. The respondents with stronger gender stereotypes are more likely

to evaluate Kazakh male candidate more positively than the other candidates. This finding demonstrates that the explanation of the low levels of women's participation in Kazakhstani politics most likely lies in the public's attitudes, traditionally constructed gender roles and patriarchy social hierarchy, which revived during the years of independence in Kazakhstan (Kandiyoti 2007). Thus, these findings support H_1: *The respondents with stronger gender stereotypes will evaluate female politicians more negatively.*

The analysis of survey experiment shows that there is a difference in the evaluation of female candidates between Russian-speaking and Kazakh-speaking segments of the young generation. Thus, H_2 was supported by the results of the survey. Kazakh-speaking respondents evaluate the candidates with a Kazakh ethnic background almost equally with Russian candidates. However, in two of four pairs, Kazakh-speaking respondents evaluated Russian female candidate and Kazakh female candidate more favorably than the male candidates. This finding also demonstrates that ethnicity of the candidate is not that significant for the respondents, but it leaves space for further studies of ethnic and gender stereotypes related to issue competence of the candidates. These results support the findings of Hernández-Torrano and Tursunbayeva (2016), who already emphasized the insignificance of the ethnicity in the context of school education. There are several explanations of this outcome.

First of all, Kazakh-speaking sample in this study is relatively small, only 25% of the respondents choose Kazakh as their language of preference. Secondly, the students in Nazarbayev University and IT-University tend to be more liberal and cosmopolitan than the students in other universities and regions. Thirdly, the respondents were asked to evaluate the hypothetical candidates running for the position of *akim*, which is local office. Probably, we will not see the same outcome in case if the hypothetical candidate will be running for the position of minister or President, because the female candidates are believed to deal with the

local issues better than men (Dolan 2014). Finally, the topic of ethnicity and ethnic stereotypes has been tabooed in Kazakhstan for a long time and considered to be a sensitive one. Thus, people do not get used to express their preferences as openly as they do about gender.

Another interesting finding is that people with higher level of income in their household are more likely to evaluate Kazakh male candidate more positively than the other candidates. I argue that it does not illustrate the correlation between the income and the evaluation of the politicians, but this means that the evaluation of the politicians through the prism of gender stereotypes is widely spread within the upper class in Kazakhstan. We also can expect that the families from the upper class are more likely to face patriarchy hierarchy and strong patriarchal values within the family itself.

Regarding the second hypothesis, Russian-speaking respondents are more likely to evaluate the male candidates positively than the female candidates. They evaluated only one Kazakh female politician slightly more positively than Kazakh male candidate. Moreover, Russian-speaking respondents evaluated Russian male politicians more positively than Russian female politicians in both pairs. The results of this experiment show that the majority of the young adults in Kazakhstan tend to evaluate the female politicians more negatively than the male politicians.

Thus, I found out that the Kazakhstani electorate evaluates male politicians more favorably, but it is not strongly negative toward the female politicians. In comparison to a previous study on the evaluation of female politicians in Kazakhstan (Herrick and Sapieva 1998), I observe that the situation with women engagement in politics improved significantly. Public's attitudes toward female politicians have changed and have a positive tendency. After 21 years, the Kazakhstani electorate evaluates female political candidates more positively in "female" policy domains such as education, social and labor protection, while in 1998,

women were evaluated negatively in all policy domains. I also emphasize that some of the respondents mentioned that biography of the hypothetical candidates is too short to make objective evaluation of the candidate. I consider it as a positive tendency occurring within limited part of the educated young generation in Kazakhstan. This means that some of the young adults become interested in politicians, their activities and experience. Moreover, in the real elections they are more likely to make a vote choice according to what they know about the political candidate rather than based on their gender or ethnicity.

This tendency means that the Kazakhstani society is changing slowly and that the situation improving women's rights are improving. However, the revival of archaic traditions, traditional values, gender roles, and patriarchal values tend to slow the modernization of Kazakhstani society (Tatkeyeva 2018). Although positive evaluation of female candidates in "feminine" policy domains can be considered as a progress for Kazakhstan, I would also describe the negative effect of this pattern. Positive evaluation of women in "feminine" offices only demonstrates that the Nazarbayev generation is not ready to see the female politician in an "unnatural" role. For instance, the results of the statistical analysis demonstrate that the female candidates would not be evaluated positively in the field of security. Unfortunately, it may cause the stronger gender stereotypes within the society and limit the engagement of female politicians in all decision-making processes.

It is surprising that the age of the female candidates also plays significant role in the evaluation of the politicians by the voters. Although women at the age of 45 are perceived as old ones and frequently discriminated by the banking systems and employees, younger female candidate are also disadvantaged by the voters. For instance, a 33-years-old hypothetical candidate with a Kazakh ethnic background was evaluated more negatively than the other candidates in the majority of policy domains. At the same time, 37-years-old

married candidate with two children and a Kazakh background was perceived by the respondents as the most attractive and reliable candidate.

The level of gender stereotypes of the hypothetical voter is the key independent variable that has a significant impact on the evaluation score of the female and male candidates. Women are not engaged to participate and build political careers due to the prevailing cultural expectations and gender roles that create barriers for Kazakhstani women (Kandiyoti 2007). At the same time, the amount of the respondents with strong gender stereotypes is almost equal to the group of the respondents with weaker gender stereotypes. In addition to other traits of the voters that influence their evaluation of the candidates, the results of the analysis demonstrate the significance of income of the respondent's household. We can observe that the voters with higher level of income will be more likely to support the male politicians rather than the female candidates.

The two segments of the respondents also evaluate female politicians in different ways according to their language of preference. The Kazakh-speaking audience turned out to be more likely to support female politicians. In particular, Kazakh-speaking respondents evaluate Russian female politicians more favorably than Russian-speaking respondents. Kazakh-speaking respondents also evaluate Russian female politicians higher than Russian male politicians. Thus, we can expect that Russian-speaking voters do not get used to see women in "unnatural" gender roles. However, this statistic demonstrates the evaluation of the candidates running for local office, but in case of the Presidential elections or country level appointments their evaluations may change. This leaves the space for further studies on the voter's ethnic stereotypes about the issue competence of the political candidates.

To sum up, this survey experiment demonstrates that the young generation in Kazakhstan may perceive the female politicians positively in the local offices and "feminine" offices. The results of multivariate regression analysis demonstrated that the key variable that

influences the voter's choice is his or her strength of gender stereotypes. At the same time, the stronger gender stereotypes are widely spread among the representatives of upper class. Gender baseline preferences of the voters vary in accordance to their language of preference. During the multivariate regression analysis, the gender of the voter turned out to be insignificant for the candidate's evaluation score. This means that in real elections the voters' gender will not influence their vote choice.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

In Kazakhstan, the engagement of women in decision-making processes and political life always had only nominal character. Although there are 27% of women in Parliament of Kazakhstan, the real perception of people of the female politicians was not studied properly. First of all, it was not possible due to the lack of fair electoral system in the country. Secondly, the young generation in Kazakhstan tends to have even less interest in political life than their parents. At the same time, the Kazakhstani government adopted a Gender Equality Strategy, which included the engagement of women in political sphere from 2006 to 2016. This study demonstrates several improvements in the field of women's rights. However, there are still widely spread gender stereotypes about women in politics.

This study is important, because there were no expanded studies of public attitudes toward the female politicians in the recent years. This study aimed to test whether the strength of the voters' gender stereotypes influence on their preference of the candidates' gender by creating survey experiment by using an online platform.

The findings demonstrate that the young generation in Kazakhstan is not totally negative toward female politicians. At the same time, women were evaluated as more competent than men mostly in such "feminine" policy domains as education, labor and social protection, whereas men were perceived as more competent for the field of security. This demonstrates that the Nazarbayev generation perceives the politicians through the prism of gender roles and gender stereotypes. Furthermore, the young adults in Kazakhstan are not ready to see the appointment of a woman in a "masculine" policy domain, such as the field of security. It is worth noting that in the field of economy men and women gained almost the same average evaluation scores. According to this result, the field of economy is considered by the young generation as neither "feminine", nor "masculine". Thus, the male and the

female candidates are expected to have almost equal chances to be appointed or elected to the leading position in the economic sector.

The voters are also more likely to support the female candidate at the age of 37 than the younger (33 y.o.) or the older (45 y.o) female candidates. This happens due to the respect for age that is widely spread in Central Asia. While 45-years-old women are considered as old and are discriminated by the society, employees and even when they want to take a loan from the banks (The Village 2020), 33-years-old women are considered to be not experienced enough. Thus, the appropriate age for the female politician to be evaluated as competent for work is from 35 to 40 years, whereas for their male colleagues it is much longer lifetime period.

The findings also demonstrate that Russian male politicians are evaluated more positively for the field of security. This output demonstrates that there is a basis for further studies on ethnic trait stereotypes about the politicians in Kazakhstan. For instance, several Western scholars demonstrated that Black politicians are believed to be more liberal and more competent in such issues as unemployment and poverty.

Regarding the voter's gender preferences, I found out that the voter's level of gender stereotypes is a key variable that has significant influence on the voter's choice. At the same time, gender baseline preference expression varies depending on the voter's language of preference. For instance, Russian-speaking voters are more likely to express gender baseline preference. They also evaluate the male candidates more positively, while Kazakh-speaking voters almost do not express certain gender preferences over the candidates. Such behavior of Kazakh speaking voters may be explained in two different ways: 1) The results are relevant for local elections only and, in the case of Presidential elections, we will not observe the same results. According to Fox and Oaxley (2003), the voters believe that women tend to deal with local issues better than men, women are also believed to be more honest than men. 2) The

experiment was conducted within the students who are considered as the representatives of the most liberal universities in Kazakhstan (Bigozhin (2019). Thus, the results obtained from other universities, that are not that exposed to the Western education and post-modern values, may demonstrate less positive evaluation of the female politicians.

This study is significant not only for Kazakhstani society, but it also contributes to the existing studies on perception of the female politicians. This study shows how the Nazarbayev generation's constructed gender roles influenced their perception of women in politics. It also provides valuable data about the political attitudes of the young generation in Kazakhstan and aims to demonstrate how its perception of the female politicians has changed during the years of independence.

The proposed research contributes to knowledge building on the perception of the female politicians in non-Western countries, under authoritarian rule. It demonstrates that many findings explored by the Western scholars before are applicable to the case of Kazakhstani voters as well. At the same time, we observe that the revival of traditional gender roles and patriarchic values in the years of independence affected the construction of the attitudes to the female politicians in a unique case of Kazakhstani society (Tatkeyeva 2018). Although we observe significant improvements of women engagement in politics in contrast to the study conducted in 1998 (Herrick and Sapieva), gender stereotypes about women in politics still exist in Kazakhstani society and become a barrier for the engagement of the female politicians in decision-making processes.

There is very limited amount of the studies on the differences in political attitudes of Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking voters in Kazakhstan. This research demonstrates that the sphere of ethnic stereotypes and language-based preferences of the voters can be studied in the context of Kazakhstan. Language politics has always been a significant

component of nation-building process in Kazakhstan. Thus, we observe that it has affected the construction of political attitudes of the Kazakhstani electorate.

7.1 Limitations of the research and recommendations for further studies

In this section, I will discuss several limitations of this study. First of all, the implications of this survey experiment need to be confirmed through further research. This study also may provide valuable data for further studies not only on gender and ethnic stereotypes, but also on political marketing in Kazakhstan. Although the young generation in Kazakhstan grew up under the rule of authoritarian leader Nursultan Nazarbayev, they have some preferences over the certain types of the politicians in different policy domains. For instance, there are several hypothetical politicians, which are more attractive for the respondent than the other candidates. Further studies of ethnic trait stereotypes regarding the policy domains are also prospective in the context of Kazakhstan. To sum up, further studies might be conducted on the ethnicity, language, age, ideology and appearance of the hypothetical candidates.

Secondly, my study was conducted within a population which is not representative of the nation as a whole. First of all, the results of the research are relevant for the young generation only. Secondly, the representative sample of the Kazakh-speaking respondents is relatively small (25%) and requires further studies on Kazakh-speaking voters' attitudes toward the female politicians. Thirdly, the sample of the respondents from the minority ethnic groups including Russians is less than 10%. This does not allow to make any conclusions about the perception of the female politicians by the minority groups in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the sample is mostly represented with the students from more cosmopolitan and liberal cities and universities of Kazakhstan. The respondents are more likely to share post-modern values and are more exposed to the Western education. Thus, I expect that in other

universities and regions, the results may demonstrate less positive attitude toward the female politicians due to the higher level of gender stereotypes.

Furthermore, during the experiment, some of the participants refused to participate due to limited information provided about the hypothetical candidates. They mentioned that it is important for them to know about the politicians' previous work experience and education. This means that some of the students cannot use information about gender and ethnicity as a source of information for evaluation of the candidate. Despite the explanation in the beginning of the survey that the candidates are not real politicians, some of the respondent tried to find them on the Internet in order to evaluate them basing on some additional information. This means that in the future researches, the biography of the hypothetical candidates might be replaced by the speech or photo of the politician in order to avoid such misunderstanding.

Appendix

Methodology

Geography: 2 cities, Almaty and Nur-Sultan

Universities: International IT University (Almaty); Nazarbayev University (Nur-Sultan)

Total amount of observations: 372 observations

Form of survey: Online survey experiment

Amount of questions: 14 socio-economic questions + 4 candidates for evaluation

The survey was provided in Russian, Kazakh and English languages.

The length of the survey: 10-15 minutes

Dates: October 2019 in IT University (Almaty); January-March 2020 in Nazarbayev University

(Nur-Sultan)

Questions

1. Please indicate your gender
   o Male (1)
   o Female (0)

2. Please indicate your age

3. Please, indicate the degree you are pursuing to obtain
   o Undergraduate School
   o College
   o Graduate School

4. Please indicate the region or city in Kazakhstan where you have spent the most part of your life.
   o Almaty
   o Nur-Sultan
   o East Kazakhstan
   o West Kazakstan
   o Central Kazakhstan
   o North Kazakhstan
   o South Kazakhstan

5. The member of which ethnic group do you consider yourself to be part of?
   o Kazakh
   o Russian
   o _____

6. How much income does your household expected to receive per month? (Include income of all of your family members: salaries, pensions, and other payments from other sources)
   o < 150 000 (1)
   o Between 150 000 and 300 000 (2)
   o Between 300 000 and 450 000 (3)
   o Between 450 000 and 600 000 (4)
   o More than 600 000 (5)

7. How do you rate your household's economic situation today?
   o Very bad (1)
   o Somewhat bad (2)
   o Somewhat good (3)
   o Very good (4)

8. How much do you agree with the following statement: "Men make better political leaders than women do"?
   o Strongly disagree (1)
   o Disagree (2)
   o Agree (3)
   o Strongly agree (4)

9. How much do you agree with the following statement: "A job is alright but what most women really want is a home and children"
   o Strongly disagree (1)
   o Disagree (2)
   o Agree (3)
   o Strongly agree (4)

10. How much do you agree with the following statement: "A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl"
   o Strongly disagree (1)
   o Disagree (2)
   o Agree (3)
   o Strongly agree (4)

11. How much do you agree with the following statement "a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled?"
   o Strongly disagree (1)
   o Disagree (2)
   o Agree (3)
   o Strongly agree (4)

13. People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the working class, the middle class, or the upper or lower class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the:
   o Lower class (1)
   o Lower middle class (2)
   o Upper middle class (3)
   o Upper class (4)

14. Which language is more convenient for you?

     o   Kazakh (1)
     o   Russian (0)

Survey Experiment:

 We suggest you to read the following biographies of the politicians, evaluate the competence of each candidate with the help of 0 to 100 scale for certain positions. (0 = not competent at all; 25 = not competent enough; 75 = competent enough; 100 = very competent)

    Kadyrova Zaure Zhussupovna/ Kelemseiyt Ermek Abilmazhinuly is a 37-year-old politician. Imagine that s/he was appointed to the position of akim, married, has 2 children.

How competent is this candidate for the position of akim at your hometown in a near future?

Evaluate the candidate's issue competence to handle three following policy areas:

Security
Economics
Education
Labor and Social Protection

    Kotovich Valeriya Nikolayevna / Yegorov Viktor Nikolaevich is a 45-year-old politician. Imagine that s/he was appointed to the position of akim, married, no children.

How competent is this candidate for the position of akim at your hometown in a near future?

Evaluate the candidate's issue competence to handle three following policy areas:

Security
Economics
Education
Labor and Social Protection

    Alimzhanov Isakhan Moldakhanovich/ Kaldygulova Saniya Mussaevna is a 33-year-old politican. Imagine that s/he was appointed to the position of akim. Not married, no children.

How competent is this candidate for the position of akim at your hometown in a near future?

Evaluate the candidate's issue competence to handle three following policy areas:

Security
Economics
Education
Labor and Social Protection

    Ryabova Tatyana Grigoriyevna / Ivanov Viktor Mikhailovich is a 56-year-old politician. Imagine that s/he was appointed to the position of akim. Divorced, has three children.

How competent is this candidate for the position of akim at your hometown in a near future?

Evaluate the candidate's issue competence to handle three following policy areas:

Security
Economics
Education
Labor and Social Protection

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