

# **ANALYZING THE EFFECT OF AFFECTIVE POLARIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE 2018 TURKISH GENERAL ELECTIONS**

OSMAN FEDAI

*This study analyzes the effect of affective polarization on voter turnout rate in the 2018 general elections Turkey, as the most recent general elections in the country. Through employing Comparative Elections Survey Data (CSES) data including the post-election survey conducted right after the June 2018 general elections, this study aims to understand whether it is possible to observe the positive effect of party identification on the voter turnout being as conditional in line with the various degrees of affective polarization. While the existing literature on the affective polarization predominantly focused on its effects on the voter turnout rates in European democracies, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature through providing an analysis on Turkey. In this study, it is being argued that affectively more polarized Turkish voters are more likely to turn out than affectively less polarized voters and the positive effect of party identification on Turkish voters' probability of turning out increases as their affective polarization increases.*

*The 2018 Turkish general elections represented an important case study for understanding the effects of affective polarization on the voter turnout because it represented a case study for understanding the elections in the countries wherein there was a regime change; namely switching from parliamentary towards presidential system. Following the 2017 Constitutional referendum on the proposed amendments to the Turkish constitution, Turkey's existing parliamentary system was being replaced with the presidential system and the new voting law which was putting into effect in January 2018 which changes the number of seats in Turkish parliament. In line with these changes, Turkish*

*While research findings of this study supported the first hypothesis, the second hypothesis based on the expectation that the positive effect of party identification is conditionally dependent on high levels of affective polarization can not be supported with the empirical findings. On the contrary, it is being observed that effect of partisanship is negatively associated with the voters' probability of turnout. Through admitting the possible methodological limitations of this study, further studies can provide better estimations through integrating additional control variables.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Literature on Affective Polarization and Voter Behavior**

The question of how voters' tend to vote and which factors tend to have impact on was being answered by several scholars from various angles. More recent studies highlight the central role of ideological polarization in shaping political behavior. (Svolik 2019, 2021) However, it is possible to claim that several late democracies across the world which have weakly developed party systems with weakly well-established programmatic policy-based competition (Keefer 2007) and even in established democracies in Europe, it is possible to observe that most voters do not even think of themselves as holding a strong group identity with an ideological label; as in the case of the US public (Kinder & Kalmoe 2017).

Another line of this debate argues that a new type of partisan division has emerged in recent years, which is defined as affective polarization (Iyengar et al. 2012, Reiljean 2019). Although ideological polarization can be defined as the extreme division between opponents over certain issues, affective polarization tends to reflect the degree to which members of opposing parties dislike and distrust each other in the political life. Scholars like Fiorina and Abrams (2008) viewed political polarization as a process and change in the distribution of voters' preferences from a unimodal distribution to a bimodal one; as a result of a movement away from the center toward extremes. It is also worth noting that polarization might have a moral or economic basis (Rehm and Reilly, 2010) in the real life and the distances between different policy positions do not necessarily reflect the salience of the issue hand, which might

be as important as policy distance for polarization (Hetherington 2009). Maoz and Somer-Topçu's study analyzed political polarization based on the policy similarity of parties, through generating distance matrices based on declared policy positions of political parties and is applicable to multi-party systems.

Polarization is perceived as more likely to become more detrimental when it diffuses society and creates the dichotomy of "us" versus "them". Scholars like Fiorina (1981) provided a different model to explain the development of partisanship, by claiming that as individuals have better knowledge about the political in their countries, they can better evaluate political parties retrospectively. Certain experimental studies showed that positive party identification and negative partisanship can mutually influence individuals' daily behavior and preferences including decisions about marriage (Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012). Abramowitz and McCoy (2019) highlighted that the rising affective polarization in the US led to democratic backsliding.

Regarding to studies on the Turkish political behavior and affective polarization, several scholars examined various general elections in Turkey to analyze the voter behavior. Kalaycıoğlu (2008)'s influential study focused on the roots of party identification in Turkey by analyzing the importance of socialization, ideological positions, economic expectations, and ethnicity. According to the findings of Kalaycıoğlu (2008), socialization with Turkish politics starts in the family through exposure to the parents' political ideas explains the formation of party identification only for older parties in Turkey. His study shows points out that Ideology seems to play a major role in determining the psychological orientations of those who feel attached to the main opposition party CHP versus the AKP or the MHP; nevertheless it plays little role in differentiating AKP from the nationalist conservative MHP party voters.

Mert Moral (2016) examined the relationship between affective polarization and political behavior in Turkey and in line with his empirical findings, the effective number of political parties in Turkish voters' individual's choice set decreases as their affective polarization increases. Kalaycıoğlu (2012), Aytaç, Çarkoğlu, and Yıldırım (2017)'s studies focused on how political polarization can affect the vote choices of Turkish voters throughout the political history of Turkey and Aytaç et al. (2020)'s study pointed out that partisanship in Turkey represents the pivotal element for understanding Turkey's switch to presidentialism. The authors (2017) highlighted that in the countries like Turkey wherein voters have limited knowledge about the consequences of system change; the voters simply tend to follow their party affiliations.

Several scholars developed alternative approaches for better understanding polarization. Scholars like Güneş Ertan, Ali Çarkoğlu and Selim Erdem Aytaç (2022) proposed a novel framework called "cognitive political networks (CPN)" to study political polarization using post-election survey studies. Their study was significant in that through calculating multiple whole network measures which can be reasonable proxies for perceived party polarization; the authors showed how their approach can be comparable with the traditional Left-Right political ideology distance scale commonly used in Turkish survey studies. In his thesis, Imamoglu (2022) analyzed 2011, 2014 and 2018 general elections together to understand to what extent affective polarization had an impact on the voter turnout but his study predominantly focuses on the identity-related origins of the affective polarization in Turkey; through focusing on the socio-cultural cleavages in Turkey. Another study on Turkish political behavior is McCoy et al. (2018)'s study in which the authors perceived Turkish society as polarized society in which a distinct line could divide the Turkish society, through equating political identities with social identities (McCoy, Rahman, and Somer 2018). Hence, McCoy and her colleagues treat the rising affective polarization in Turkey as a result of the social and political divisions in Turkish society.

In addition, McCoy and her colleagues emphasize the importance of the long-lasting social cleavages persistent in Turkey, such as the center-periphery cleavage, economic cleavages. Scholars like Aydın-Düzgit (2019) underlined the rising political polarization in Turkey during late 2010s, attributing its causes to the secular versus conservative Islamist division in the Turkish society.

Some studies within the existing literature also focused on the political behaviour and political participation in the countries wherein there has been ongoing ethnic conflict and the endurance of ethnic conflicts has been one of the important determinants of electoral behavior (Aytaç and Çarkoğlu 2021; Gallego 2018; Kıbrıs 2014). Gallego's study (2018), for example analyzes the impacts of guerrilla and paramilitary violence on voter turnout by reaching to the conclusion that while paramilitary violence does not affect election participation, turnout rates diminish as guerrilla violence increases. Bali (2007)'s research gives us hindsight about how the terror attacks can cause many voters to mobilize and other voters to switch parties, by blaming the incumbent government for the failed foreign policy. Thus, she reached to the conclusion that terror attacks can have effect depending on the voters' perception on their governments. Economou & Kollias' (2015) study provides an analysis based on a survey data gathered from 12 European countries between 1985 and 2010 and the findings of this study also showed that terror attacks lead to a rightward shift in voters' positions on certain issues in their countries.

### **Literature Review on the 2018 Elections and The Rationale behind the Case Selection**

In this chapter, it is aimed to provide the justification on the case selection, namely the 2018 general elections in Turkey and analyze the political atmosphere in the country before the elections. From 2002 until 2018, the Justice and Development Party (AKP ) dominated the electoral scene in five general elections, two presidential, and three local elections. After 2002, AKP's support level continuously rose to about 46–49% securing a clear win in both the 2007 and 2011 elections.

However, popular upheavals around the Gezi Park protests and then an inner clash within the party ranks in 2013 marked a turning point in AKP's tenure. With economic difficulties constraining the party's ability to maintain its support base, AKP lost about 10 percentage points of votes cast in its favor on June 7, 2015. The decline of electoral support despite active campaigning by the then first popularly elected president of the country Recep Tayyip Erdoğan resulted in AKP's loss of control of the majority of the seats in the TBMM alone. Erdoğan used the bottleneck in the Kurdish opening he had initiated a few years back that had helped him gain the Kurdish vote as an excuse to adopt a hardliner U-turn in AKP's Kurdish policy and called for a snap election in November 2015.

In less than nine months after the November 2015 elections, the FETO/PDY terror organization which, once the supporter of the AKP and Erdoğan attempted to overthrow through a bloody military intervention organized by the factions within Turkey. Both the Turkish public and the the loyalist armed forces effectively ousted the interventionist coup plotters (Esen and Gümüşçü 2017, Yavuz and Koç 2016 on the coup attempt). In line with the political uncertainty and loopholes in the domestic security, the coup attempt came with a strong purge through the state of emergency declaration that effectively restricts many fundamental democratic rights and freedoms.

The key important factor that should be kept in mind in understanding the political context in Turkey was the continuing state of emergency rule in Turkey which was in effect during the election campaign period, as a result of the July 2016 coup attempt in the country. A large group of academics, journalists, and university students associated with either separatist PKK terror organization or associated with FETO terror organization – the group who was behind the failed coup attempt and- were being detained under several charges, awaiting their indictments for exceedingly long terms. The former party co-chair of the Kurdish party HDP Selahattin Demirtaş was one of those in jail, due to his role in the violent protests by Kurdish PKK supporters towards the Turkish security forces during September 2014 protests. His candidacy for the presidential elections had to be conducted from behind

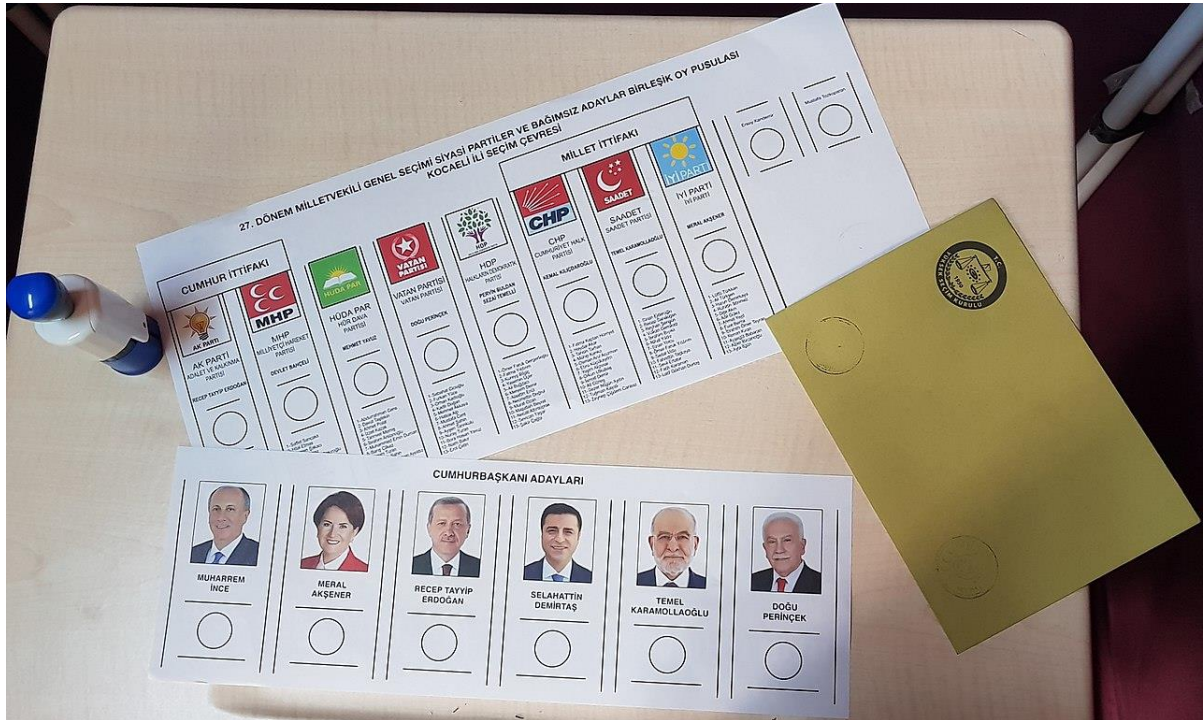
bars. Many HDP elected politicians also remained detained, and some of the HDP's mayors had been replaced by trustees appointed by the government.

In line with this atmosphere, there were also criticisms directed towards the biased media coverage of the political parties and the presidential candidates by the Turkish public broadcaster. During the May 14th-30th period right before the election, Turkish public broadcaster TRT broadcasted a total of 67 hours of coverage for President Erdoğan and his party Justice and Development Party (AKP). The main opposition CHP and its presidential candidate Muharrem İnce had 6 hours of coverage; the newly founded İYİ Party and its presidential candidate Meral Akşener could receive only 12 minutes of airtime on TRT. The HDP and its presidential candidate Selahattin Demirtaş had no coverage during the election campaign period and the candidate used his party HDP's social media accounts for his election campaign.

In order to better focus on the significance 2018 general elections in Turkey, it would be better to focus on its key characteristics that made these elections peculiar and different from the previous elections. As Çarkoğlu & Kalycioğlu (2021) stated, the 2018 elections, just like the 1946, 1961, and 1983 elections before them, were competitive but unfair and lacked the legal and political context of free speech, due to the ongoing state of emergency situation in the country following the July 2016 coup attempt. Çarkoğlu & Yıldırım (2018) also highlighted that outcomes of the June 2018 elections were shaped by both the long-term ideological/cultural divide (conservatism vs. secularist left-leaning progressive) and other two factors that were directly linked to the government's performance evaluations about the state of the Turkish economy, as well as domestic security concerns shared the Turkish electorate. Additionally, the Turkish government's decision to hold a snap elections in June 2018; rather than the usual calendar for the election to be held in November can also be attributed to the uncertainties stemming from the coup attempt, concerns about economic stability. It is possible to argue that the opposition's electoral unpreparedness for the general elections and the mismatch in the political system since the 2017 presidential system

referendum also were effectively being used by the incumbent party AKP and President Erdoğan.

Figure 1: The Ballot Paper in the 2018 Presidential & Elections in Turkey



(Note: The ballot paper at the background is for the general elections, whereas the ballot paper frontmost is for the presidential elections.)

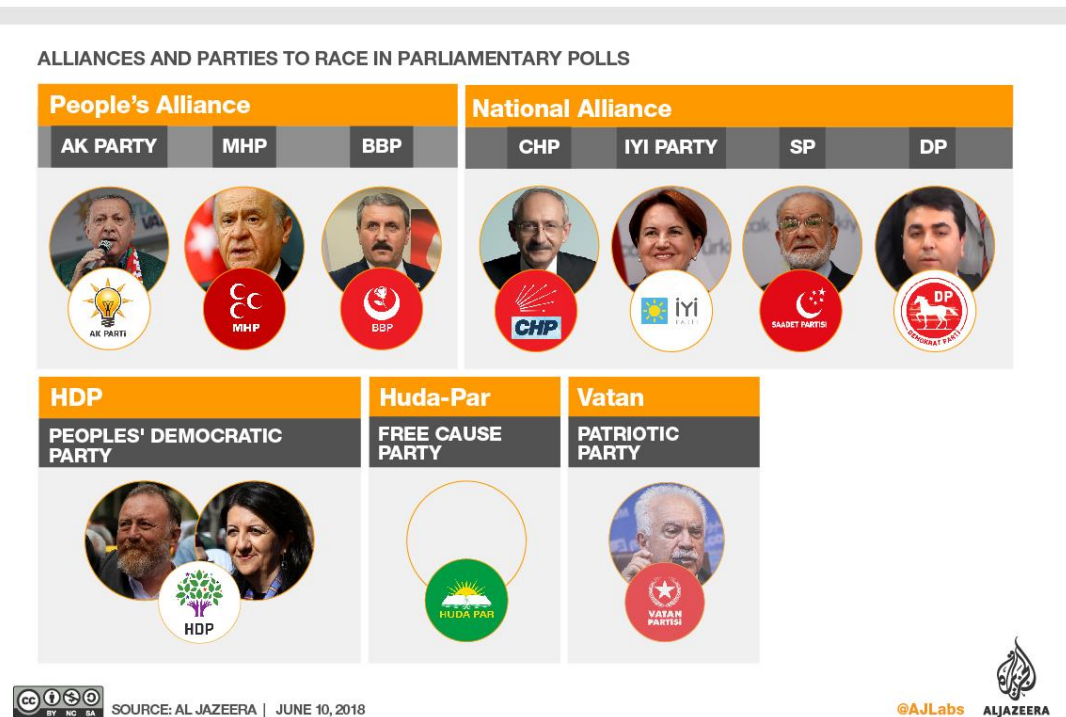
The figure above shows the new ballot paper style in 2018 Turkish general and presidential elections. The new electoral alliances law which was being put into effect in January 2018 allowed parties to form alliances and submit them to the YSK, meaning that they would be grouped together under their alliance name on the ballot paper. Also, voters would be given the option to vote for the alliance as a whole if they did not prefer a specific party. Votes cast for alliances rather than parties would then be distributed to each member party of the alliance at electoral district-level depending on their vote shares.

In line with the new system, the incumbent party AKP and the nationalist party MHP formed a new alliance called “People’s Alliance (Cumhur İttifakı) on February 20th, 2018 after the formal announcement from President Erdoğan. Later, the Great Unity Party (BBP) also joined to the alliance on May 3th, 2018. In terms of its nature, People’s Alliance was an



electoral both for the presidential elections via supporting President Erdoğan's candidacy and an electoral alliance for the parliamentary elections. The opposition parties formed the rival electoral alliance called "Nation's Alliance" (Millet Ittifakı) on May 1st, 2018. This alliance was formed by the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), the newly formed nationalist IYI Parti, the Islamist Felicity Party (SP) and finally the centre-right Democrat Party (DP). The inclusion of the Islamist Felicity Party (SP) within the alliance represented an interesting case that although the party's previous vote shares were always way below the 10% national electoral threshold in Turkey, competing in the elections under the umbrella of the Nation's Alliance removed this obstacle for the party. The Kurdish party HDP did not enter into any electoral alliance, just as the nationalist secular pro-Russian political party Patriotic Party (Vatan Partisi) and the conservative party Free Cause Party (Hüda-Par). The figure below shows the all major parties competing in the 2018 parliamentary elections:

## Turkey Elections 2018



During the June 2018 election campaign, it is possible to claim that President Erdoğan successfully downplayed Turkey's ongoing economic problems through shifting public attention to promises of the Turkish government's future policies, as well as Turkey's both

domestic and external security concerns. He remained attentive to the fight against terrorism, apparently to appeal to the nationalist constituencies. Erdoğan's populist rhetoric appears to have created a strengthened vision that the outside world is conspiring against Turkey. For instance, when discussing the economy, he contextualized the debate within a heightened sense of security and external threats. Such a discourse of securitized economic challenges is likely to conveniently help shift the blame for future economic crises toward external financial circles and their collaborators within. Surprisingly, the opposition candidates' efforts to blame the single-party government for the country's rising economic difficulties were not effective. Both opposition candidates, Muharrem Ince as well as Meral Akşener as the part leader of the newly founded IYI Parti were unable to focus their attention on the economy while Erdoğan maintained a security discourse even when discussing economic issues. Additionally, contrary to the expectations; it is possible to claim that the newly founded IYI Parti's leader Meral Akşener also failed to get the Turkish nationalist voters both during the presidential elections and general elections.

The figures below shows the election results of the 2018 parliamentary elections in Turkey which took place on June 24th, 2018. It is worth noting that the results only show the results from the ballot-boxes in Turkey, excluding the votes coming from the prisons, from the ballot boxes at the Turkish customs and the results coming from the ballots established in European European countries like Germany, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, the UK wherein there were high numbers of Turkish voters. However, Semra et al. (2019)'s analysis which is shown below gives us hindsights about the turnout rates in the expatriate Turkish citizens' voting and their vote choices. Even if this paper only focuses on the turnout rates in 2018 general elections based on the ballot boxes in Turkey; Semra et al. (2019)'s analysis contributed to the existing literature through providing analysis on how expatriate Turkish voters can have different propensities for going to the polls vis-a-vis the Turkich voters living in Turkey. Figure 2 below is from Semra et al. (2019)'s study, showing the turnout rates of expatriate Turkis voters during the 2014 parliamentary & presidential elections and during 2018 general & presidential

elections. Based on the table, it is possible to infer that votes coming from expatriate Turkish voters tend to favor the incumbent party AKP.

Figure 2: Expatriate Turnout Rates for Parliamentary and Presidential Elections (2014 – 2018)

**Table 4.** Expatriate turnout and vote choice (in percentage points) in five recent Turkish elections.

Election	Type	Turnout	AKP	HDP	CHP	MHP	IYI	Yes	Erdogan	Demirtas	Ihsanoglu	Ince	Aksener
2014-08-10	Presidential	18.94							62.54	8.30	29.16		
2015-06-07	Parliamentary	36.84	49.90	20.29	17.23	9.26							
2015-11-01	Parliamentary	44.78	56.23	18.20	16.42	7.13							
2017-04-16	Referendum	47.91						59.09					
2018-06-24	Parliamentary	50.39	51.00	17.31	17.65	7.90	4.03						
2018-06-24	Presidential	50.44							59.38	11.05		25.79	3.00

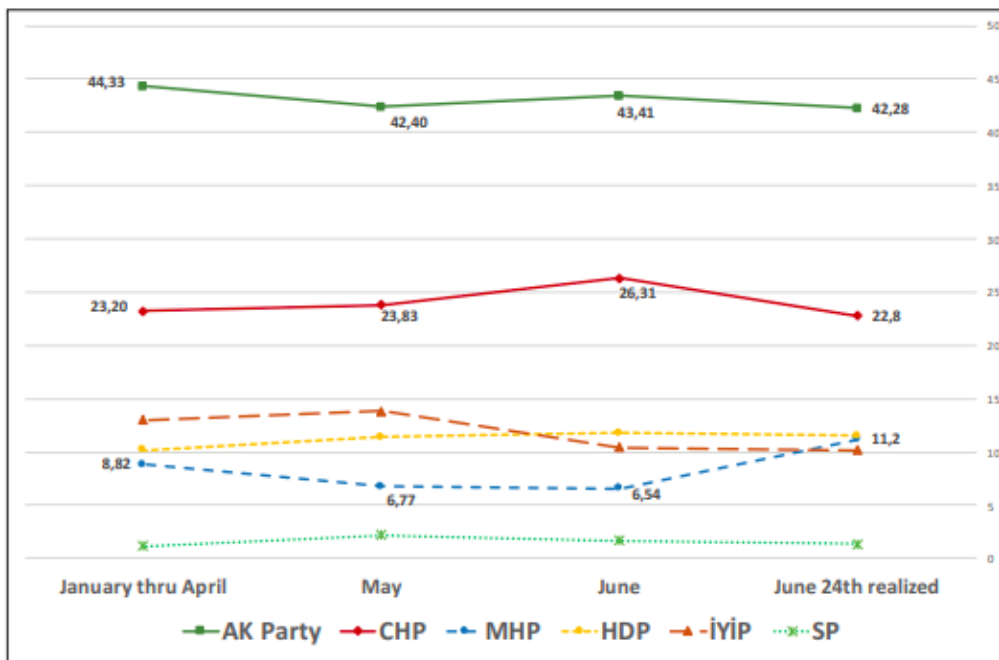
Source: Semra Sevi, Can Serif Mekik, André Blais, and Semih Çakır. "How do Turks abroad vote?." *Turkish Studies* 21, no. 2 (2020), p. 218.

The 2018 parliamentary elections in Turkey was important in terms of the voter mobilization and the Kurdish voters' political behavior. As Alptekin (2018) analyzed in his study on the electoral behavior in Turkey's Eastern cities through examining the cross-sectional and longitudinal variation in 24 eastern cities where Kurdish votes tend to matter significantly, he claimed that as parties were able to enter the 2018 elections with pre-electoral alliance blocks; parties like HDP who entered to the elections without any political alliance blocks suffered from this decision as it could not get parliamentary seats in certain cities. Additionally, Alptekin (2018) pointed out that The June 24 elections once again showed that the Kurdish citizens of Turkey do not vote as a bloc and a homogenous social structure was not observable in the region, in line with the election results.

Regarding to voter mobilization during the 2018 general elections, the 2018 parliamentary elections were also significant for understanding the canvassing efforts of political parties. Aytaç & Kemahlioğlu's study (2021) also focused on the canvassing efforts of the incumbent party AKP during its election campaign. Their study, with the question of whom the AKP targeted when contacting voters face-to-face during the campaign period found that the AKP's campaigning strategy were similar to the United States and European parties in that the loyal core party voters and marginal districts were targeted with canvassing efforts, whereas the AKP also aimed to target the voters of its ideologically close challengers

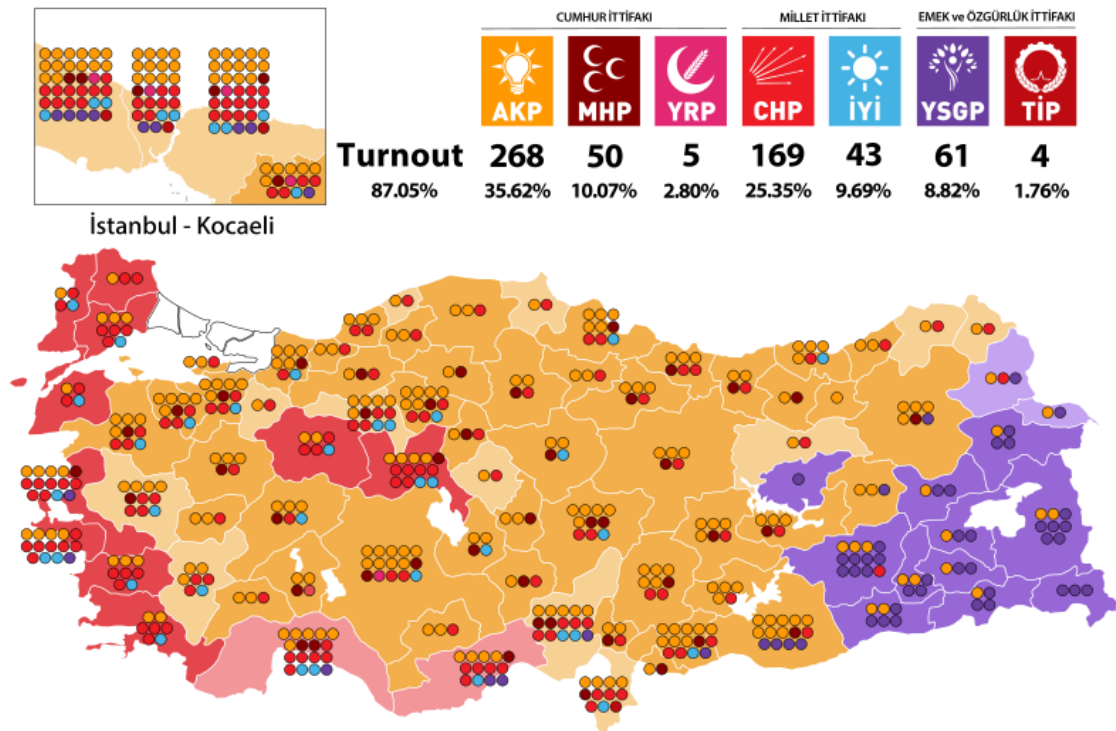
(partisans of the Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP) and Good Party (İYİ Parti, İYİP). Additionally, their study (2021, p.505) observed an empirical correlation between party contact during the campaign period and local incumbency as well as individuals' education levels, suggesting that the party organization's resource availability and individuals' socio-economic vulnerability might be playing a role in the local party campaigns.

Figure 3: Polling Results for the Five Major Political Parties during 2018 Parliamentary Elections (In Average)



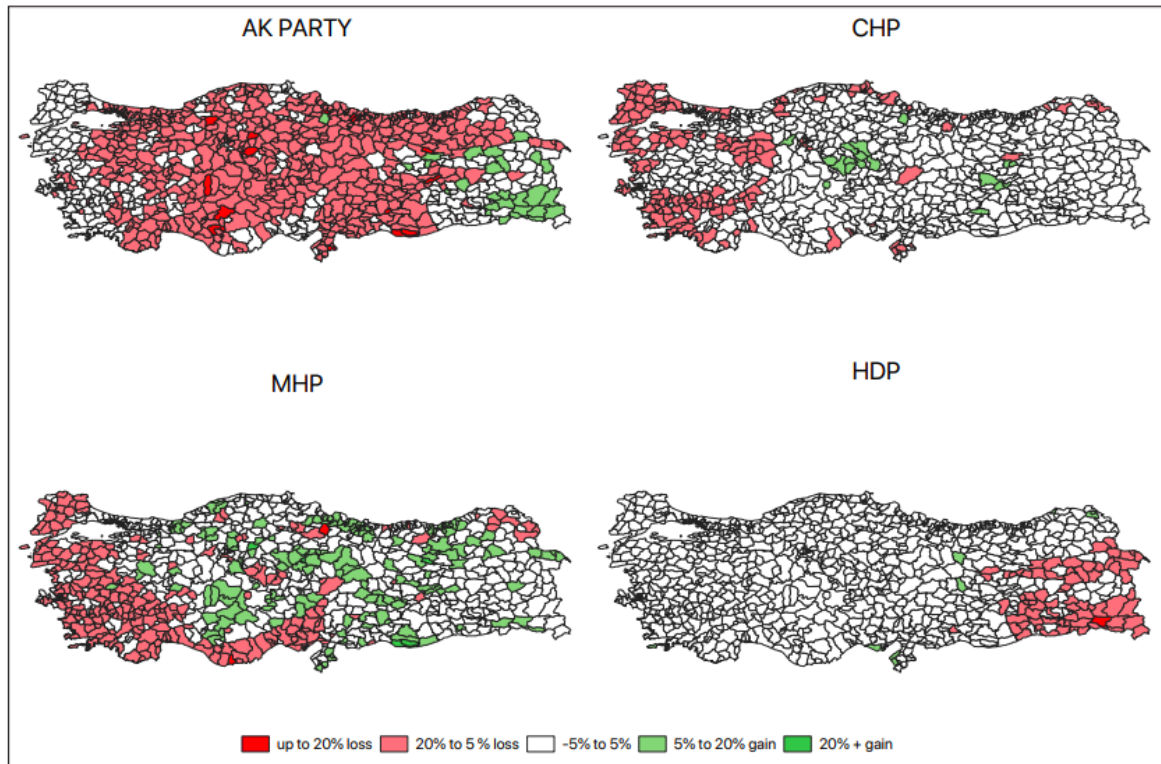
Source: Ali Çarkoğlu and Kerem Yildirim. "Change and continuity in Turkey's June 2018 elections." *Insight Turkey* 20, no. 4 (2018): p. 153-183.

Figure 4: The Distribution of Parliamentary seats by Political Parties in 2018 Parliamentary Elections



The Figure 5 below is from Çarkoğlu & Yıldırım (2018)'s paper on Turkish 2018 elections and it shows the percentage change of the four key Turkish political parties (AKP, CHP, MHP and HDP) from the November 2015 general elections to the June 2018 general elections. The data was taken from the YSK, the Higher Elections Council in Turkey based on the district-level election results and excludes the vote shares of İYİ Party as the party was founded in the year 2017: As can be seen from the figure, the AK Party (AKP) lost its electoral support predominantly in its geographic constituency; namely from the inner Mediterranean region towards central Anatolia, as well as Southern regions; while increasing its voteshare in Southeastern region especially in the cities like Şırnak, Hakkari. It is possible to claim that in the regions where the AKP lost its geographic constituency, the nationalist conservative party MHP increased its voteshare through capitalizing itself upon the losses of the AKP in the central Anatolian districts like the cities Kayseri Konya, Niğde. The Kurdish party HDP also lost its geographic constituency in the Southeastern region.

**Figure 5: Percentage Changes of the Four Major Turkish Political Parties from November 2015 General Elections to 2018 General Elections**



Source: Carkoglu, Ali, and Kerem Yildirim. "Change and Continuity in Turkey's June 2018 elections." *Insight Turkey* 20, no. 4 (2018): 153-183.

## Research Design & Hypotheses of the Study

**Table 1: Average Voter Turnout Rates Across the World from 1950 to 2015, Based on Regions**

	Average Voter Turnout
Eastern Europe and post-communist Countries	63.97
Latin America	70.32
North Africa and the Middle East	77.11
Sub-Saharan Africa	67.19
Western Europe and North America	79.41
Eastern Asia	68.13
South-Eastern Asia	70.76
Southern Asia	64.38
The Pacific	68.24
The Caribbean	63.99
All Countries	72.29
Turkey	81.43

Source: Umut Koray Imamoğlu, "To Vote or Not to Vote: Affective Polarization and Voter Turnout in Turkey, 2022, p. 27.

The Table 1 above is from Imamoğlu (2022)'s study which shows the average overall

turnout rates across the world from 1950 to 2015. The data have always been relatively high in Turkey. In the 2018 general elections, which was the last general election in Turkey, the voter turnout was 86.24 percent. The average calculated turnout of all countries is approximately 72.30 percent. Voter turnout for the June 2018 elections was 87%, both for 2018 parliamentary elections and presidential elections. Table 2 below is from Çarkoğlu & Yıldırım (2018)'s paper on Turkish 2018 elections and it shows the number of ballot boxes in 2015 June and 2015 November elections; as well as 2018 parliamentary and presidential elections. As the authors used the term “mobilized ballot boxes” based on the ballot box level data across districts, the number of these ballot boxes represent the ones where all valid votes were cast for one single party or candidate. The results of the table shows that President Erdoğan could mobilize voters across many different regions of the country, even more than its party AKP.

Table 2: The Number of Mobilized Ballot Boxes, based on ballot-box level data from 972 electoral districts in Turkey

	2015 June	2015 November	2018 Parliament	2018 Presidential
<b>AK Party</b>	272	118	75	500
<b>CHP</b>	27	20	9	31
<b>MHP</b>	0	1	1	-
<b>HDP</b>	229	369	6	4
<b>SP</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>İYİP</b>	-	-	0	0
<b>DP</b>	0	0	-	-
<b>Vatan</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>People's Alliance</b>	-	-	2	-
<b>Nation Alliance</b>	-	-	1	-
<b>Total Number of Ballot Boxes</b>	<b>173,804</b>	<b>174,648</b>	<b>180,065</b>	<b>180,065</b>

Source: Çarkoğlu, Ali, and Kerem Yıldırım. "Change and Continuity in Turkey's June 2018 elections." *Insight Turkey* 20, no. 4 (2018), p.167.

Similar to previous studies like Ward & Tavits (2019), Wagner (2021); it is aimed to test in this study the hypothesis that as the positive and negative feelings of voters towards political parties diversify, it is expected to observe that the individual voters become affectively polarized.



Consequently, as the affective polarization of a voter increases, the voters tend to perceive casting a ballot as a more important task in order to support their parties. Therefore, it is expected that affective polarization increases a voter's propensity to vote. I thus hypothesize that:

***H<sub>1</sub>: Affectively more polarized voters are expected to more likely to turn out, compared to the affectively less polarized voters.***

Perceived ideological polarization is measured in the literature as the degree to which individuals' perceptions of the ideological positions of the parties diverge from each other. The ideological extremity of voters may also affect their decisions to vote. However, if a voter places herself at the extremes of the left-right scale, she may not go to the polls by feeling excluded from the political system. Taking this into account, the level of ideological extremity can have an impact on the voters' propensity to vote and it is also aimed to control the effect of ideological extremity on turnout. Certain socioeconomic and demographic conditions as control variables are also included in the model as socioeconomic factors like age, education are also treated as important determinants of voter turnout in the literature.

The model specification for  $H_1$  is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Voter Turnout} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Affective Polarization}) + \beta_2(\text{Party Identification}) + \\ & \beta_3(\text{Perceived Ideological Polarization}) + \beta_4(\text{Ideological Extremity}) + \beta_5(\text{Gender}) \\ & + \beta_6(\text{Age}) + \beta_7(\text{Education}) + \beta_8(\text{Rural/Urban}) + e \end{aligned}$$

For the second hypothesis, it is expected that voters will go to the elections not only because of their positive party identifications but also because of their negative feelings toward certain parties or leaders in Turkey. Although positive partisanship and negative party identification are regarded as distinct determinants of political behavior in the literature like Bankert (2021)'s study on negative and positive polarization in the US; it would be examined whether there is an interactive relationship between positive party identification and affective polarization. An individual voter may go to the polls because of her strong affiliation to a



political party, but this effect of partisanship on the decision to turn out can be mediated by affective polarization. For example, a AKP partisan's propensity to turn out does not depend only on her strong affiliation to its party, it can also be dependent on his negative feelings toward the main opposition party, CHP.

Similarly, an MHP partisan may go to the polls because of his party's electoral alliance with AKP, but his partisanship might not create a motivation to turn out when he does not have strong negative feelings toward CHP or its leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. As Imamoglu (2022) also highlighted in his study, if an individual voter positively identifies with a political party in Turkey without strong negative feelings toward other parties, it is possible to observe that party identification expressed by the voter would not drive him or her to go to the ballot box. The second hypothesis of this study is that:

***H<sub>2</sub>: The positive effect of party identification on a voter's probability of turn out increases as her affective polarization increases.***

In line with this, the second model specification is as follows:

$$\text{Voter Turnout} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Party Identification} \times \text{Affective Polarization}) + \beta_2(\text{Party Identification}) + \beta_3(\text{Affective Polarization}) + \beta_4(\text{Perceived Ideological Polarization}) + \beta_5(\text{Ideological Extremity}) + \beta_6(\text{Gender}) + \beta_7(\text{Age}) + \beta_8(\text{Education}) + \beta_8(\text{Rural/Urban}) + e$$

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

In this chapter of this paper, it is aimed to focus on the data selection, the operationalization of dependent and independent variables and the choice of control variables. Even though it is possible to analyze the link between affective polarization and voter turnout at the aggregate level, the unit of analysis in this study would be individual level. Since I focus on Turkey in this study, the Modules 3 to 5 of Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) data which include questions for party feeling thermometers and turnout along with useful information about both respondents and the political context would be used. The effective sample consists of the post-election survey conducted after the 2018 general elections.

The dependent variable of this study is voter turnout which is a binary variable that scores 0 for respondents who did not cast a ballot in the current election and 1 for those who did. The independent variable of the study is affective polarization. Although there was also general elections in Turkey which took place last year in June 2023, the CSES Data does not have the election survey data on 2023 general elections yet. For this reason, the 2018 general election survey data is used, representing the most recent and available election survey data. Wagner (2021)'s study shows that it is possible to measure the affective polarization as the spread of like and dislike scores because this method considers the possibility that an individual can have positive and negative feelings towards multiple parties which exists in multi-party systems.

For testing the hypotheses, Wagner's (2021) calculations of affective polarization would be used which represents the most accurate measurements for my research question. Although some scholars like Druckman and Levendusky (2019) previously criticized this measurement by claiming that affective polarization is a measurement based on identities and while party feeling thermometers do not capture individuals' like and dislike feelings towards political parties; Wagner's (2021) calculations for affective polarization still represents one of the most widely used methods.

Firstly, it is aimed to calculate affective polarization as the unweighted spread of like-dislike scores of each respondent in the effective sample as "the average absolute party like-dislike difference relative to each respondent's average party like-dislike score" (Wagner 2021). I consider only major legislative parties in this study as the CSES Data includes the values for only the five biggest legislative parties in the effective sample. These parties are the incumbent party Justice and Development Party (AKP), Republican People's Party (CHP), Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), and Good Party (IYI Party). As the IYI Party is founded in the year 2017, the data IYI Party at CSES Module is available only in the 2018 elections. Although there are several minor parties in the Turkish parliament, the CSES

Modules do not include these parties as some of these parties were either founded after the 2018 general elections or competed within the list of major opposition parties. As a result, I these minor parties are not included in my effective sample, like Imamoglu (2022)'s approach. The calculation of unweighted affective polarization is as follows:

$$\text{Affective Polarization (Unweighted Spread)}_i = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{p=1}^P (\text{like}_{ip} - \overline{\text{like}_i})^2}{n_p}}$$

In this formula,  $p$  represents the party,  $i$  represents the individual respondent,  $\text{like}_{ip}$  the like-dislike score assigned to each political party  $p$  by the individual respondent  $i$ , and  $n_p$  is the number of political parties. Like Wagner (2021)'s formulation, the weighted version of affective polarization to account for the differences among feelings towards smaller and larger parties. The weighted version is calculated as:

$$UAP(\text{Spread})_i = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{p=1}^P (\text{like}_{ip} - \overline{\text{like}_i})^2}{n_p}}$$

In this formula,  $p$  represents the party,  $i$  the individual respondent,  $\text{like}_{ip}$  the like-dislike score as- signed to each party  $p$  by individual  $i$ , and  $n_p$  is the number of parties. Just as Wagner (2021) stated in his article, the weighted version of affective polarization to account for the differences among feelings towards smaller and larger parties is also being used for this study. The weighted version is calculated as:

$$\text{Affective Polarization (Weighted Spread)}_i = \sqrt{\sum_{p=1}^P v_p (\text{like}_{ip} - \overline{\text{like}_i})^2}$$

Where,  $v_p$  is the vote share of each party, rescaled from 0 to 1. Respondents which indicate a like/dislike score of at least two parties are included in calculations in both formats. It is also aimed to calculate affective polarization as the distance between the most liked party and the most disliked party, according to the voters. Although this

method is more appropriate, Wagner (2021), Imamoglu (2022) argued that affective polarization can be calculated in multi-party systems by assuming that the political arena is divided into two distinct camps. The distance between the most liked and the most disliked party (Max-Min) is calculated as:

$$\text{Affective Polarization (Max-Min)}_i = (like_{max} - like_{min})$$

The spread and the Max-Min measures are the main independent variables of this study. Additionally, it is also aimed to test the key hypotheses through applying for using the mean-distance measure of affective polarization, in line with Wagner (2021)'s formula. As Wagner highlights, the spread measure can provide superior estimates, compared to the mean-distance measure. Since two or more parties can take the maximum like score in the party feeling thermometer of an individual respondent, it is intended to use the question of “which political party do you feel yourselves closest to” variable of the CSES data. By this way, it would be way easier to determine the most liked party of an individual. The mean-distance measure of affective polarization is calculated as:

$$\text{Affective Polarization (Distance)}_i = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{p=1}^P (like_{ip} - like_{max,i})^2}{n_p - 1}}$$

As it was previously stated, the effect of ideological polarization on voter turnout is also examined in the literature (Wagner 2021). Therefore, it is aimed to include the effect of ideological polarization on voter turnout in our model as control variable. As Wagner (2021) stated, ideological polarization is strongly related to affective polarization, even though it is also possible to observe an imperfect relationship between ideological polarization and affective polarization (Wagner 2021). In this study, ideological polarization is operationalized through using Wagner’s method which measure (weighted) ideological polarization using a 0–10 left-right scale:

$$Ideologicalpolarization_i = \sqrt{\sum_{p=1}^P v_p (position_{ip} - \overline{position_i})^2}$$

where position is the left-right position of the party. In line with Wagner's calculation (2021); it is also possible to calculate the mean left-right position should itself be weighted by party size and is calculated as:

$$\overline{position}_i = \sum_{p=1}^P (v_p * position_{ip})$$

As previous studies on affective polarization also highlighted (Wagner 2021, Reiljan et. al. 2021); controlling for the effect of ideological extremity of the voters becomes important for understanding the degrees of affective polarization because extreme leftist or rightist voters might tend to be more engaged in politics, having higher propensity to go to the polls. Hence, it is also aimed to control for the effect of ideological extremity in this study.

Within the CSES Data, there are party like- dislike questions and while “00= Strongly Dislike”, “10= Strongly Like”. The other choices as “have not heard of the party”, “refused”, and “do not know” answers are treated as missing values. Hence, the values of the party like-dislike variable are distributed from 0 as the score for strong dislike to 10 as the score for strong like. Affective polarization is generally measured by using like-dislike scores for political parties, whereas positive and negative feelings toward party leaders can also be used as an alternative measurement of affective polarization. As positive and negative feelings of voters towards leaders might be more meaningful than feelings towards parties, it is aimed to replicate the computation steps by replacing party like-dislike scores with leader like-dislike scores that are in CSES survey data. The spread measures of affective polarization take values from 0 to 5, while the Max-Min measures of affective polarization take values from 0 to 10 (Moral 2016, Imamoglu 2022).

Finally, I control for the effect of certain socioeconomic variables on voter turnout by including age, education, gender, and residence (rural/urban) variables, as control variables in my models. Education in CSES Data is being coded as 0= Early Childhood Education, Education, 1=Primary Education,2=Lower Secondary Education, 3=Upper Secondary Education, 4=Bachelor or Equivalent, 5=Master of Equivalent, 6=Doctoral or Equivalent, 7=None Education. The Module 3 of CSES post-election survey data does not cover the perceived religiosity variable. However, it includes an alternative measurement of religiosity in terms of the religious service attendance variable, however, the highest value of the religious service attendance variable is “once a week/more than once a week”. Its values are coded as follows: 1=Never Attending, 2=Once a Year, 3=Two to Eleven Times a Year, 4= Once a Month, 5=Two or More Times a Month, 6= Once a Week/More than Once a Week; 7= Refused ot Answer, 8= Don’t Know.. The “Rural/Urban Residence” variable is added as control variable and its scale is as follows: 1=Rural Area or village, 2=Small or Middle-Sized Town, 3=Suburbs of Large Town or City, with less than 100.000 inhabitants, 4. Large Town or City with more than 100.000 inhabitants, 5= Refused, 6=Don’t Know.

Based on the OLS Regression results at Table 5, the coefficients on the party identification variable also represent positive and statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence level in all models. These findings provide empirical evidence for a positive and statistically significant relationship between partisanship and voter turnout. In line with the findings on the Table 5, it is possible to claim that affective polarization tends to have statistically significant positive effect on voter turnout in 2018 general elections in Turkey. The coefficients on all measures of affective polarization are positive and statistically significant; with 99% confidence level. According to the findings in Model 1, a one-unit increase in affective polarization (the unweighted spread of party like-dislike scores), it is possible to observe increase in the logged odds of voter turnout, on average, by .602.

Table 5: The Effect of Affective Polarization on Voter Turnout in 2018 Parliamentary Elections in Turkey

Variable Names	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Aff. Pol. (Unw. Spread) - Party	0.602*** (0.195)					
Aff. Pol. (W. Spread) - Party		0.579*** (0.210)				
Aff. Pol. (Max-Min) - Party			0.253*** (0.077)			
Aff. Pol. (Unw. Spread) - Leader				0.394** (0.186)		
Aff. Pol. (W. Spread) - Leader					0.261 (0.172)	
Aff. Pol. (Max-Min) - Leader						0.130* (0.075)
Party Identification=1	1.842** (0.913)	2.154** (0.968)	1.678* (0.950)	1.429* (0.808)	1.762** (0.767)	1.020 (0.814)
Perceived Ideological Polarization	-0.730*** (0.208)	-0.710*** (0.204)	-0.722*** (0.203)	-0.733*** (0.217)	-0.689*** (0.209)	-0.710*** (0.211)
Ideological Extremity	0.117 (0.097)	0.122 (0.098)	0.127 (0.095)	0.117 (0.097)	0.145 (0.093)	0.125 (0.093)
Age	0.030* (0.016)	0.031* (0.016)	0.032* (0.016)	0.028* (0.016)	0.028* (0.016)	0.029* (0.016)
Education	0.086 (0.136)	0.097 (0.134)	0.092 (0.137)	0.077 (0.134)	0.071 (0.133)	0.071 (0.133)
Gender	-0.221 (0.345)	-0.213 (0.342)	-0.219 (0.348)	-0.209 (0.342)	-0.216 (0.338)	-0.221 (0.341)
Rural/Urban Status	-0.483*** (0.172)	-0.474*** (0.172)	-0.493*** (0.172)	-0.462*** (0.174)	-0.466*** (0.174)	-0.453*** (0.174)
Constant	2.601** (1.063)	2.563** (1.057)	2.436** (1.072)	3.101*** (1.074)	3.211*** (1.078)	3.138*** (1.073)

The coefficients are logged odds. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

\*p<0.1, \*\*p<0.05, \*\*\*p<0.01, two-tailed tests.

In addition to gender and education, the effect of ideological extremity is also being controlled as the level of ideological extremity may lead to different effects on voter turnout. Table 5 also shows that rural/urban status is the only control variable that have statistically significant effect on voter turnout in that voter turnout rates were higher in the rural places; compared to bigger cities and metropolitan areas. Additionally, there is negative statistically significant relationship between perceived ideological polarization in all models. Hence, to account for the effect of ideological extremity on voter turnout, I present the marginal effects of varying levels of ideological extremity on voter turnout in Figure 7.

Regarding to the other socioeconomic and demographic control variables, it is possible to observe that the coefficients on the age variable only present statistical significance.

According to the findings in Table 5, the coefficients on age are positive and significant at the 99 percent confidence level; meaning that show the older voters are, the higher probability there is for them to vote. Table 6 present that religious service attendance does not also have any statistically significant effect on voter turnout in the tested models.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> hypothesis which was being tested was the positive effect of party identification is conditional on increasing values of affective polarization. As the affective polarization of a voter is low, partisanship would not drive the voter to go to the polls. The regression estimates from models for my second hypothesis are presented in Table 6. The first three models of the Table 6 provide estimates from models in which affective polarization is calculated based on party feelings thermometers, while leader feeling thermometers are presented the last three models in Table 6. However, the coefficients on the interaction term of party identification and affective polarization are negative in some models and as a result, the second hypothesis of this study is not fully supported in line with the OLS regression analysis results. Although party identification is positively and statistically significant in all models, it is not possible to claim that the interaction term of party identification and affective polarization is statistically significant for the majority of the tested models.

Table 6: The Effect of Party Identification on Voter Turnout in 2018 general Elections

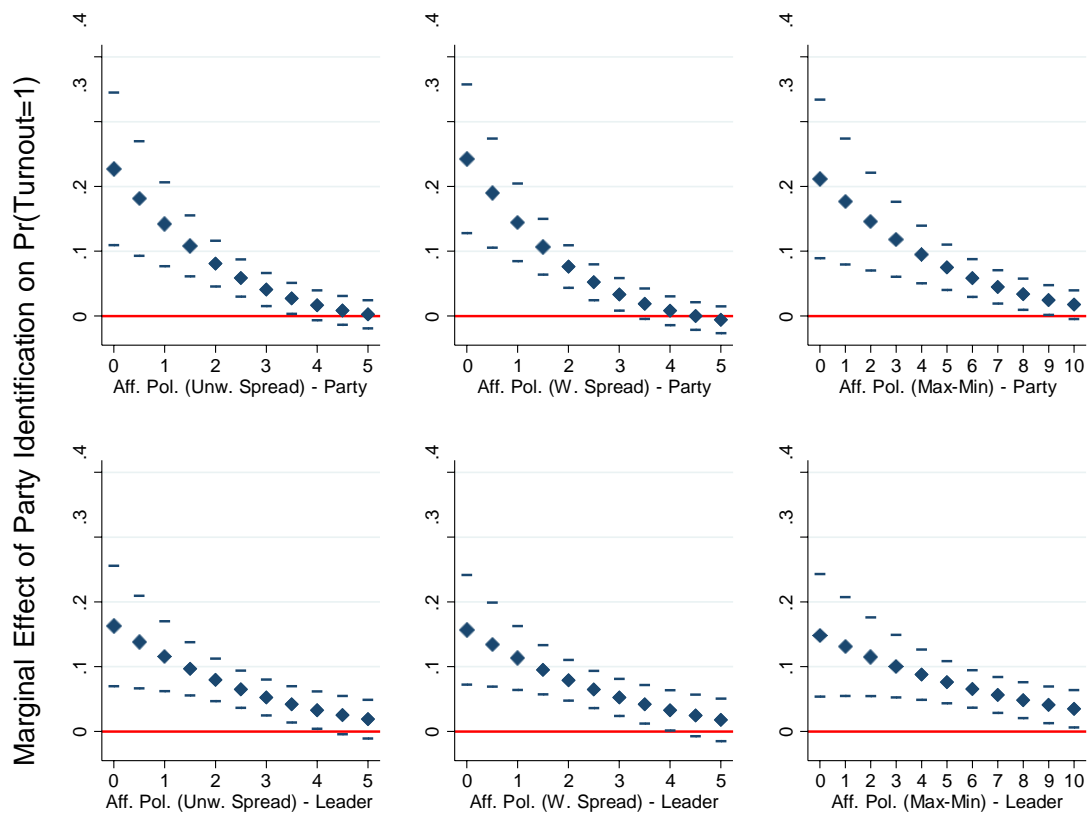


Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Party Identification	1.374***	1.361***	1.314***	1.507***	1.594***	1.516***
	(3.88)	(3.82)	(3.62)	(4.19)	(4.44)	(4.07)
Aff. Pol. (Unw. Spread) - Party	0.466 ***					
	(2.84)					
Party Identification × Aff. Pol. (Unw. Spread) - Party	0.236 ***					
	(3.71)					
Aff. Pol. (W. Spread) - Party		0.405 **				
		(2.51)				
Party Identification		0.240 **				
		(1.74)				
Aff. Pol. (Max-Min) - Party			0.156*			
			(2.36)			
Party Identification × Aff. Pol. (Max-Min) - Party			1.842*			
			(2.02)			
Aff. Pol. (Unw. Spread) - Leader				-0.176		
				(-0.57)		
Party Identification × Aff. Pol. (Unw. Spread) - Leader				-0.297		
				(-0.92)		
Aff. Pol. (W. Spread) - Leader					-0.0542	
					(-0.42)	
Party Identification × Aff. Pol. (W. Spread) - Leader					0.0298*	
					(0.11)	
Aff. Pol. (Max-Min) - Leader						-0.0601
						(-0.25)
Party Identification × Aff. Pol. (Max-Min) - Leader						0.267
						(2.05)
Ideological Extremity	0.112	0.115	0.123	0.118	0.143	0.129
	(1.17)	(1.21)	(1.31)	(1.21)	(1.53)	(1.37)
Age	0.0301	0.0299	0.0315	0.0283	0.0282	0.0288
	(1.85)	(1.84)	(1.93)	(1.75)	(1.72)	(1.75)
Education	0.0872	0.0991	0.0931	0.0767	0.0726	0.0674
	(0.64)	(0.75)	(0.68)	(0.58)	(0.55)	(0.51)
Gender	-0.223	-0.221	-0.220	-0.208	-0.216	-0.221
	(-0.65)	(-0.65)	(-0.63)	(-0.61)	(-0.64)	(-0.65)
Residence	-1.479***	-1.471***	-1.489***	-1.462***	-1.466***	-1.453***
	(-2.81)	(-2.76)	(-2.84)	(-2.66)	(-2.67)	(-2.59)
Constant	2.736**	2.813**	2.527*	3.080**	3.254**	3.013**
	(2.65)	(2.75)	(2.41)	(2.95)	(3.12)	(2.86)
N	851	851	851	850	850	850

Figure 5 below shows the marginal effects of party identification on voter turnout, as being conditional on affective polarization; with 95% level of confidence intervals around the marginal effects. The marginal effects and confidence intervals are calculated by allowing the affective polarization variable to vary within its in-sample range (from 0 to 5 for the spread measure and from 0 to 10 for Max-Min measures) Based on the Figure

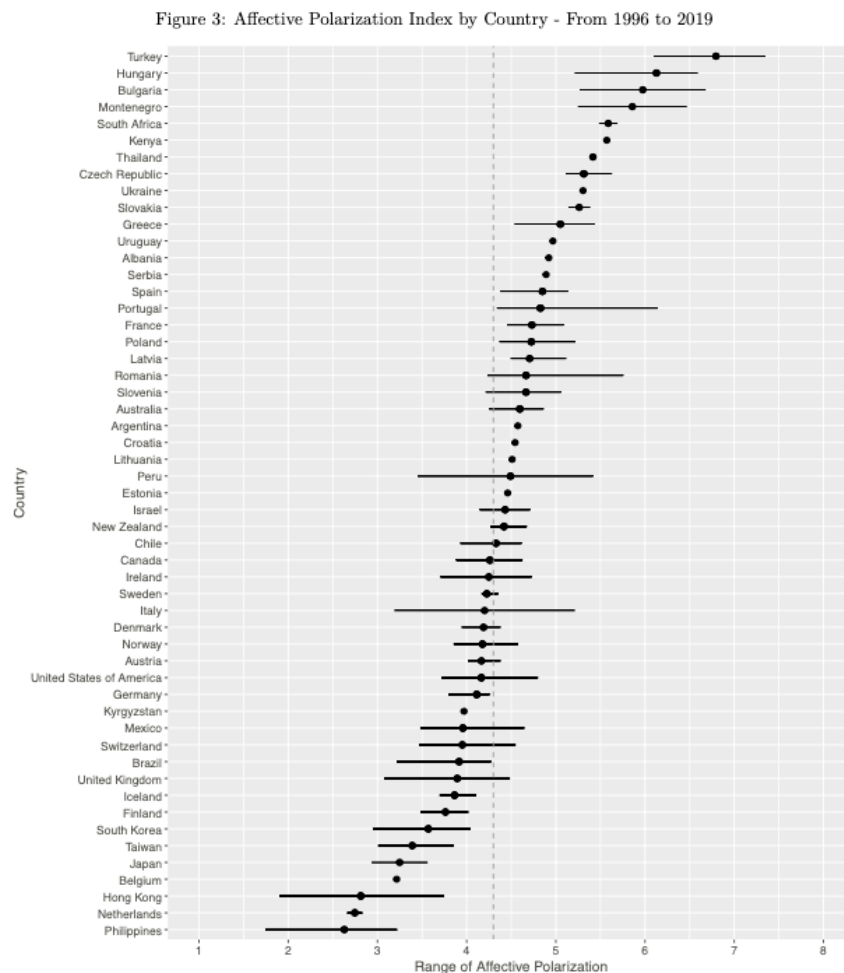
5, it is possible to infer that the marginal effects of party identification on voter turnout are decreasing when affective polarization increases and the confidence intervals around the marginal effects are not distinguishable from zero for higher values of affective polarization.

Figure 5: Marginal Effect of Party Identification on the Turnout Rates in Turkish 2018 parliamentary elections



As Orhan (2022) successfully analyzed in his article through calculating the affective polarization scores across 53 countries from 1996 to the year 2019 through using the CSES post-elections surveys data for 1996 – 2019 period, the results show again that Turkey has the highest scores of affective polarization, compared to the other 52 countries. This data which can be also seen in the Figure 8 below, shows how Turkish voters remain divided when they go to polls and how they are polarized during the elections.

**Figure 8: Orhan (2022)’s Calculations on the Affective Polarization Index Scores by Country (1996 – 2019 period)**



*Notes:* This figure shows how affective polarization varies among the 53 countries, calculated over the 170 national election surveys for these countries conducted by the CSES between 1996 and 2020. Each black dot displays the mean score for a country averaged across the available scores. The bars show the range of variation in calculated affective polarization values of a given country. The scale ranges from 0 to 10, while 10 denotes maximum out-party dislike.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS & LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

In this study, it is aimed to measure affective polarization by using leader feeling thermometers apart from party feelings thermometers which are vastly used in the literature. In European democracies, as political parties are older, more consolidated and their ideological positions are relatively more stable than in developing democracies. However, in Turkish politics, leader thermometers are expected to better measure affective polarization since some political leaders like President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan are more salient than their political parties. It is aimed to analyze whether there is an interactive relationship between party identification and affective polarization, whether identification increases an individual's propensity to go to the polls and vote.

To test hypotheses, Modules 3 to 5 of CSES data which included post-election surveys conducted right after 2018 general elections is used in Turkey. Several measures of affective polarization are being used; based on calculation of the weighted and unweighted versions of the spread of like-dislike scores and finally the analysis based on the difference between feelings toward the most liked and the most disliked parties. I also controlled for the effects of several socio demographic variables on the voter turnout in 2018 general elections. According to the findings, all measures of affective polarization have statistically significant effects on voter turnout. Apart from affective polarization, party identification and age represented a strong positive association with voter turnout. However, I could not find empirical evidence for my second hypothesis. The coefficients on the interaction term of party identification and affective polarization represented a negative relationship, contrary to the 2<sup>nd</sup> hypothesis. The marginal effect plots also showed that the positive effect of party identification on voter turnout is decreasing when affective polarization increases.

When the research findings are analyzed in line with the five pillars of causality, it is possible to claim that it is being observed that there is a negative relationship between the party identification and the voter turnout. However, there is a statistically significant relationship between the affective polarization levels and voter turnout in 2018 general elections. This means that the relationship between affective polarization and voter turnout based on the 2018 general elections data is not coincidental. Also, party identification and age represented a strong positive association with voter turnout; meaning that the relationship between these two variables are also not coincidental.

Regarding to reverse causality, it is less likely to think about the possible effect of the increased political participation on the degree of affective polarization. On the contrary, increased political participation measured as the voter turnout rates can even increase the affective polarization, as politically active voters can represent the most faithful, radical partisan voters because it is possible to think that voters with less affective polarization degrees can represent the group of voters who are either not interested in politics or the ones who are already can place the other political parties' ideological positions.

Another problem concerning the research findings might be related with the research design. This study admits that due to the unavailable data on the general elections in 2023, the data on the 2018 general elections could be used. Integrating more CSES Modules which covering the date on more general elections in Turkey can give more better estimates on the effect of positive party identification on the voter turnout. Additionally, due to the unavailability of the "Political Knowledge" variable in CSES Module 3 dataset, the effect of political knowledge – representing the respondents' ideological positions of the political parties- can be integrated for this study.

Within the existing literature; it is possible to observe that due to "contrast effect," voters can

misestimate the ideological positions of the parties which they dislike/do not support (Adams, Merrill, and Grofman 2005; Merrill and Adams 2001) and this can ultimately affect the turnout rates in that the voters who tend to exhibit high levels of affective polarization can be less accurate in placing political parties in terms of their ideological stances and tne to less turn out. Since the CSES Data Module 3 did not include the variable on political Knowledge, it was not possible to add this variable as control variable in the research design. Further studies can provide more accurate estimates through integrating a detailed data on political knowledge through applying other sources on media bias in the countries which is included V-Dem Data. As our study focused on socio-demographic control variables like age, gender, rural/urban and attending to religious services as one of the most rife variables used in studies on Turkish elections, this study admits that further control variables like income levels, home ownership, the political knowledge can be also used as control variables.

## **References:**

- Abramowitz, A., & McCoy, J. (2019). United States: Racial resentment, negative partisanship, and polarization in Trump's America. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 681(1), 137-156.
- Adams, James. 2012. "Causes and Electoral Consequences of Party Policy Shifts in Multiparty Elections: Theoretical Results and Empirical Evidence." *Annual Review of Political Science* 15(1): 401–419.
- Alptekin, H. (2018). Kurdish votes in the June 24, 2018 elections: An analysis of electoral results in Turkey's eastern cities. *Insight Turkey*, 20(4), 211-230.
- Aytaç, S. Erdem, Ali Çarkoğlu, and Ezgi Elçi. 2021. "Partisanship, Elite Messages, and Support for Populism in Power." *European Political Science Review* 13(1): 23–39.

- Aytaç, S. Erdem, Ali Çarkoğlu, and Kerem Yıldırım. 2017. "Taking Sides: Determinants of Support for a Presidential System in Turkey." *South European Society and Politics* 22(1): 1–20.
- Andı, S., Aytaç, S. E., & Çarkoğlu, A. (2020). Internet and social media use and political knowledge: Evidence from Turkey. *Mediterranean Politics*, 25(5), 579-599.
- Aytaç, S. E., & Kemahlioğlu, Ö. (2021). Voter mobilization in the 2018 Turkish general election. In *Elections and public opinion in Turkey* (pp. 157-168). Routledge.
- Aydın Düzgüt, S. (2019). The Islamist-Secularist divide and Turkey's descent into severe polarization.
- Bali, V. A. (2007). Terror and elections: Lessons from Spain. *Electoral Studies*, 26(3), 669-687.
- Bankert, A. (2021). Negative and positive partisanship in the 2016 US presidential elections. *Political Behavior*, 43(4), 1467-1485.
- Brader, Ted A, and Joshua A Tucker. 2009a. "What's Left Behind When the Party's Over: Survey Experiments on the Effects of Partisan Cues in Putin's Russia." *Politics & Policy* 37(4): 843–868.
- Carlson, Elizabeth. 2016. "Identifying and Interpreting the Sensitivity of Ethnic Voting in Africa." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 80(4): 837–857.
- Çarkoğlu, A., & Yıldırım, K. (2018). Change and continuity in Turkey's June 2018 elections. *Insight Turkey*, 20(4), 153-183.
- Çarkoğlu, A., & Kalaycıoğlu, E. (Eds.). (2021). *Elections and public opinion in Turkey: Through the prism of the 2018 elections*. Taylor & Francis.
- Druckman, James N., and Matthew S. Levendusky. 2019. "What Do We Measure When We Measure Affective Polarization?" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 83(1): 114– 122.

- Economou, A., & Kollias, C. (2015). Terrorism and political self-placement in European Union countries. *Peace economics, peace science and public policy*, 21(2), 217-238.
- Ertan, Güneş, Ali Çarkoğlu, and S. Erdem Aytaç. 2022. "Cognitive Political Networks: A Structural Approach to Measure Political Polarization in Multiparty Systems." *Social Networks* 68: 118–126.
- Esmer, Yılmaz. 2002. "At the Ballot Box: Determinants of Voting Behavior." In *Politics, Parties, and Elections in Turkey*, ed. Sabri Sayarı, and Yılmaz Esmer. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers pp. 91–114.
- Gallego, J. (2018). Civil conflict and voting behavior: Evidence from Colombia. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 35(6), 601-621.
- Haime, Agustina, and Francisco Cantú. 2022. "Negative Partisanship in Latin America." *Latin American Politics and Society* 64(1): 72–92.
- Hetherington, M. J. (2009). Putting polarization in perspective. *British Journal of Political Science*, 39(2), 413-448.
- Kalaycioğlu, E. (2008). Attitudinal orientation to party organizations in Turkey in the 2000s. *Turkish Studies*, 9(2), 297-316.
- Kinder, D. R., & Kalmoe, N. P. (2017). *Neither liberal nor conservative: Ideological innocence in the American public*. University of Chicago Press.
- Moral, M. (2016). The passive-aggressive voter: The calculus of casting an invalid vote in European democracies. *Political Research Quarterly*, 69(4), 732-745.
- İmamoğlu, U. K. (2022). *To vote or not to vote? Affective polarization and voter turnout in Turkey* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Iyengar, Shanto, and Sean J. Westwood. 2015. "Fear and Loathing across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 690–707.



Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes. 2012. "Affect, Not Ideology: A Social Identity Perspective on Polarization." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(3): 405–431.

Iyengar, Shanto, Yphtach Lelkes, Matthew Levendusky, Neil Malhotra, and Sean J. Westwood. 2019. "The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States." *Annual Review of Political Science* 22(1): 129–146.

McCoy, J., Rahman, T., & Somer, M. (2018). Polarization and the global crisis of democracy: Common patterns, dynamics, and pernicious consequences for democratic polities. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 62(1), 16-42.

Jackman, Robert W. 1987. "Political Institutions and Voter Turnout in the Industrial Democracies." *American Political Science Review* 81(2): 405–423.

Kalaycioglu, Ersin. 2013. "Turkish Party System: Leaders, Vote and Institutionalization." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 13(4): 483–502.

Orhan, Y. E. (2022). The relationship between affective polarization and democratic backsliding: Comparative evidence. *Democratization*, 29(4), 714-735.

Semra Sevi, Can Serif Mekik, André Blais & Semih Çakır (2019): How do Turks abroad vote?, *Turkish Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/14683849.2019.1607311