# Kazakhs and Russians: To each their own

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# Contents

# Acknowledgements

# Abstract

I examine the corruption, democracy, rights, and nationality attitudes of ethnic Russians and Kazakhs residing in Kazakhstan, using data from the World Value Survey collected in 2011. My findings suggest that there are differences in the political leanings of ethnic Russians and Kazakhs living in Kazakhstan. The strongest findings suggest that ethnic Russians do not feel entirely integrated into Kazakhstani society. In addition, my results indicate that while immigration status does not inform these differences, the level of education does drive disparities in political leanings. Differences in opinions between Russians and Kazakhs who have not completed a high school education drive much of the variation in political beliefs. However, nationality attitudes still appear to be uniform across each nationality, not driven by level of education. I argue that overall, Russians have a more disillusioned view of politics in Kazakhstan than do ethnic Kazakhs.

# 1. Introduction

The motivation for this research is to examine how Kazakhs and Russians differ in their views of Kazakhstani politics and life in Kazakhstan relating to government involvement. Within this motivation is nested the question of how integrated ethnic Russians are into Kazakhstani society. The relevance of this research lies in the fact that the relationships between ethnic groups in central Asia have long been fraught with conflict due to complex historical factors. Perhaps most notably, Russian migration into Kazakhstan, which has occurred for multiple centuries, has been marked by frequent oppression of Kazakhs, both nomadic and settled, by Russian newcomers or by the Empire or Soviet state itself. Differences in political and other related opinions may demonstrate the remaining effects of rifts caused by Russian policies and by the migration of Russian individuals themselves. Disparities in responses between Russians and Kazakhs may also reflect differences in "political culture," which I define as the political leanings and tendencies of a particular group, and expectations, as the Russian and Kazakhstani political systems operate differently (albeit not entirely dissimilarly).

In delineating the distinct Russian and Kazakh political cultures, this research may provide context for how these two groups may approach larger world crises in the greater Russian sphere of influence, especially events like the Ukraine crisis. Anecdotal evidence suggests that ethnic Kazakhs tend to support Ukraine in the crisis while ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan unsurprisingly feel more tied to Russian motives, often yearning for the "glory days" of the Soviet Empire. Understanding the areas of greatest difference in opinion between the two groups with respect to political and identity matters, as well as their relative prioritization of democratic institutions can elucidate the nuances behind these groups' opposing loyalties. It can also help predict responses of former Soviet states and their citizens to potential future encroachment by the Russian Federation.

In order to examine the differences of opinions between individuals that identify as ethnically Russian and Kazakh living in Kazakhstan, I analyze data from responses to questions in the World Value Survey (WVS) that reflect political and life-related opinions likely related to political culture that have the potential to differ in response by Russians and Kazakhs. Ultimately the selected questions to be analyzed could be divided into four different categories of question: corruption attitudes, democracy attitudes, civic rights attitudes, and national identity attitudes. Strong effects were found of being ethnically Russian on the aggregate of the replies to all questions. However, strong effects of identifying as ethnically Russian were not found for each group of survey questions, as this variation was primarily driven by

differentiation in responses to the final category, national identity attitudes. There were five individual survey questions that resulted in statistically significant differences in responses between Russians and Kazakhs. In addition, when examining the effects of being a first generation or immigrant Russians in Kazakhstan, I found significant results in three additional variables.

My findings demonstrate an empirical difference in the responses to various political and social questions between Russians and Kazakhs living in Kazakhstan. Controlling for numerous factors that if omitted may inaccurately alter the regressions on the Russian dummy variable, I find that Russians appear to be more disillusioned about governmental institutions in Kazakhstan and maintain a less favorable attitude towards democratic institutions, while at the same time, their outlook on human rights appears to be more positive than Kazakhs'. First generation and immigrant Russians also appear to value political fairness more than do other Russians and Kazakhs. However, the most convincing result of the statistical tests I performed is that Russians do not seem to feel that they are fully integrated into Kazakhstani society; they demonstrate a lack of pride and belonging on this front. While I do not suggest a mechanism for what causes these differences, these results likely point to differences in the political culture of Russians compared to that of Kazakhs, as life in Russia and Kazakhstan are vastly different and may shape the views of families of both these ethnicities today.

## 2. Background

The relationship between Kazakhs and Russians in Kazakhstan is extremely complicated. Kazakhstan has spent much of its recent history under the control of Russian-based governments, both during the times of the Russian Empire and during the Soviet Union. Russians have been living in and around Kazakhstan since around 1731, when the territory – then referred to as "The Younger Horde" – became partially inhabited by the Russians as a voluntary choice made by the aristocracy of Kazakhstan, although the reasons for this are disputed. Most of the migrants that came during this time were of Cossack or peasant origin. While this annexation established Russian settlement in present-day Kazakhstan, it did not cause a substantial number of Russian settlers to move to the new territory. In 1868, the Russian government declared that Kazakh land was for the collective use of Kazakhs (Kendirbaeva 741). Russian Cossack settlers began to build fortresses on this land, justified by the government as measures of protection for Kazakhs from outside attackers. However, in truth, the Russian government's motivation was to gain control over the nomads and the steppe.

In 1891, the substantial wave of migration to Kazakhstan came when the government declared all steppe land property of the state, allowing Russian muzikhs (peasants) to migrate and occupy the property as their own. Migration continued to progress at a high level during the first decade of the 20th century, when some 1.15 million peasants flowed in and attempted to cultivate often barren steppe land. Kazakhs represented roughly 82% of the population of the territory (Kendirbaeva 742).

Migration became even more prevalent under Soviet control, when many different groups were forced to migrate to Kazakhstan. Some of the forced migrants included kulaks (wealthy peasants
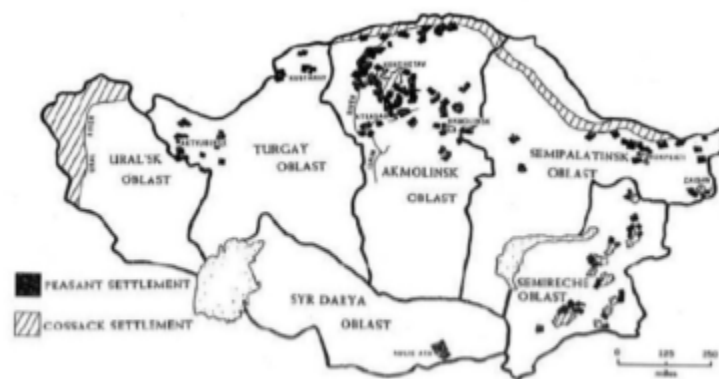


Panel A. Pattern of Russian settlements in Kazakhstan around 1900



Panel B. Pattern of Russian settlements in Kazakhstan around 1915

Fig. 1: Evolution of Russian settlements in Kazakhstan in the early 20th Century. (Demko)

dispossessed of their land by Soviet reallocation policies), refugees from the First and Second World Wars, as well as ethnic conflicts in the Caucasus and Central Asia, workers sent to aid the industrialization process for the territory (1930s), "unreliable peoples" that Stalin either did not trust or

did not care for (early 1940s), and military personnel creating settlement in the region (from the 1940s-1991). Many other migrants purportedly volunteered to help develop unused Kazakh land in the 1950s and in the last 20 years of the Soviet Union's existence. Kazakhstan was also used by the Soviet government as a site for the deportation of citizens. Between kulaks, former Polish military employees, and Baltic people, by 1943, over 500,000 individuals had been forcibly relocated to Kazakhstan. By the fall of the Soviet Union, a staggering 6.2 million individuals had migrated to Kazakhstan (Kendirbaeva 743).

During the Soviet reign, the Kazakh population decreased considerably. Famine and the stealing of private property by Russians provoked riots that killed over one million people in central Asia. This hunger continued until the end of the decade as a result of the Civil War, causing 800 thousand Kazakhs to perish from 1917-1920. During collectivization in the 1930s, Stalin's policies provoked more famine and disease, which killed another 1.75 million Kazakhs, 42% of their total population. This caused roughly one third of the remaining population to migrate to non-Soviet territories, although many of those seeking refuge eventually did return to Kazakhstan. From 1930 to 1937 alone, the Kazakh population of Kazakhstan decreased by 30% (Kendirbaeva 744).

The reversal of many of the trends above did not occur until the end of Soviet occupation of Kazakhstan. Russians had outnumbered Kazakhs in Kazakhstan for much of Soviet control due to Kazakh death and outmigration and Russian resettlement, either forced or voluntary. This had reversed by 1993, when there were roughly one million more Kazakhs than Russians. The dominant post-Soviet migratory trend has been the out-migration of Russians and other non-Kazakh groups from Kazakhstan, a trend that began in the 1980s. Since then, the Russian population in Kazakhstan has decreased to around 4.5 million by 2007 and now sits at around 3.6 million (still representing a significant proportion of the population) (*Численность Населения Республики Казахстан По Отдельным Этносам На Начало 2016 Года*). Despite the smaller population, tensions still exist between the groups.

## 3. Literature Review

Significant research has been devoted to the dynamics between Russians and Kazakhs in Kazakhstan. Examining the colonial-era migration patterns, Aldashev and Guirkinger in "Colonization and changing social structure: Evidence from Kazakhstan," show how over a short period time at the turn of the 20th century, Cossack and Russian peasant migration into Kazakhstan caused significant

disruptions to Kazakh social structures and institutions. Because Kazakhs were pastoral nomads, and the incoming Russian populations were sedentary agriculturists, Russian peasants increased the population pressure on Kazakhs by settling on the pastures where they would live, move through, and graze their livestock. Russians farming technology made agriculturalism a much more efficient manner of living than Kazakh nomadic pastoralism, a harsh lifestyle. Kazakhs began to take on the sedentary lifestyle which led to the breakdown of traditional Kazakh family and clan structures (Aldashev and Guirkinger 413).

While the changing lifestyle of Kazakhs may potentially indicate an integration between Russian migrants and Kazakhs, and Soviet philosophy preached a sort of internationalism that downplayed and discouraged the emphasis on ethnic differences, Edward Schatz in "The Politics of Multiple Identities: Lineage and Ethnicity in Kazakhstan" discusses how the Soviet efforts to transcend regional identities failed. Kazakhs saw the nature of Soviet discourse as dull and unappealing and found the command economic and governmental systems to be undesirable. While clans did not necessarily re-form, the undesirable Soviet government caused Kazakhs to form closer ties with their lineage identity (Schatz 490). While this lineage identity differs from a more collective Kazakh identity, this social structure still exhibited an anti-Russian sentiment, and was highly political in nature.

While lineage-based identities created divisions amongst Kazakhs in Kazakhstani society, long-time president Nursultan Nazarbayev has attempted to combat this bridge these divisions by promoting a collective Kazakh identity. Since the beginning of the post-Soviet Era, he has undertaken extreme actions, such as moving the capital to Astana, increasing funding for films that promote the identity of Kazakhstan, and adopting new national symbols that point to Kazakh nomadic tradition (Mkrtchyan 26, 29). All of these changes have attempted to push away the memory and influence of Soviet control, which suppressed cultural differences for many years. Beyond the influence of Soviet Control, Mkrtchyan cites the "negative legacy of Russian colonialism on Kazakh's national identity" (Mkrtchyan 17). Nazarbayev's nationalistic activities, while attempting to unify his nation, might have the secondary effect of alienating ethnic Russians who do not share the same history and cultural heritage.

National movements towards a unified Kazakh/Kazakhstani identity, however, do not necessarily inform differential economic outcomes between Russians and Kazakhs. In "Sometimes, winners lose," by Ira Gang and Achim Schmillen, the authors acknowledge the "Kazakhization" efforts that have been undertaken to assist formerly disadvantaged populations, and examine the differential effects of these policies on Kazakhs and ethnic Russians (Gang and Schmillen 1). They find that compared to Russians,

Kazakhs are better endowed with characteristics that are correlated with earning a higher income, but nonetheless, Kazakhs maintain lower living standards on average. In addition, they claim that ethnic Russians have moved into high level positions that were mostly held by Kazakhs in the past.

While these academic works compare ethnic Russians and Kazakhs in Kazakhstan and give historical context on the relationships between the groups, there is little empirical research detailing the differences in political opinions between Kazakhs and Russians in Kazakhstan. In this paper, I attempt to help close this gap by examining the differential tendencies of Kazakhs and Russians relating to corruption attitudes, democracy attitudes, rights attitudes, and nationality attitudes.

## 4. Methodology and Data

My principal data source is the World Value Survey (WVS) Database, a questionnaire that attempts to study "changing values and their impact on social and political life." These surveys are designed to be nationally representative across all countries, and the results of the questionnaires distributed to respondents are easily, and freely available on the internet (*WVS Database*). Each survey asks around 270 questions to respondents, ensuring that there were ample independent variables to select from to achieve the goal of my research. The WVS conducted its most recent study of Kazakhstan in 2011 and the survey consisted of 1,500 individual observations, equivalent to the responses of 1,500 individuals. However, as the goal of my research was to examine Kazakh and Russian attitudes, all other data was filtered out, resulting in 794 Kazakh responses and 498 Russian responses, for a total of 1,292 responses. From the nearly 270 questions, 15 variables reflecting political and social attitudes were selected as dependent variables for the analysis. These variables were systematically selected both to demonstrate socio-political attitudes, but also because I suspected that Kazakh and Russian respondents may answer the questions very differently. While the data were collected through self-reporting, the survey's recency, as well as the WVS's renown and its thorough methodology verify the survey's accuracy.

To analyze the data, I utilized Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis on a set of control variables, in addition to an explanatory variable reflecting ethnic identity. As the WVS contains a wide range of questions, I was interested in combining these questions into various topics, and examining each topic individually. For example, "How often are votes counted fairly in election?" and "How often do the rich buy elections?" are both questions related to

corruption perceptions. I combined the responses to these two questions (as well as two others) in PCA, and I used the first principal component as my outcome variable.

After this, I regressed each first PC and each individual variable on the same "Russian" dummy and the list of controls. This allowed for the viewing of differences in responses between Russians and Kazakhs at both a topical and a more specific, individual-question level. The more specific views of the two groups were informative regarding specific priorities or opinions each group might have without losing these responses in the larger categorical PC-level data. For example, my analysis showed that even though Russians value living in a democratic nation less than do Kazakhs, there was no difference between the two groups with respect to whether they believed democracy is specifically important for Kazakhstan itself. Once the individual regressions were completed, the entire process, beginning with the regressing of PCs on the controls, was repeated with the added dummy variables for first generation Russians and immigrant Russians to see if these more specific groups maintained different opinions from either other Russians, the rest of Russians in Kazakhstan as a whole, or Kazakhs. This was also repeated with individual level regressions. These variables were included to examine if a specific group of Russians based on the duration of their or their family's time in Kazakhstan drove the results of the PCs and/or individual level regressions, and to examine if significant results were relatively uniform across the Russian population in Kazakhstan as a whole. Once again, the PC-based and individual level regressions were repeated including an interaction variable for Russians and their level of education, either below a secondary education, a secondary education, or a tertiary (college level) education. These tests were performed to provide a separate look at how education impacts responses, and if this impact is different between Russians and Kazakhs and the overall population at each level of education.

Applying these methods to the data, I selected a set of survey questions to be used as dependent variables on the left-hand side of the regression equations. Each variable was assigned to a category that best defined the aspect of political culture or identity it measures, and PCA was conducted separately with each of these categories. When interpreting the results presented, please keep in mind that PCA captures varying degrees of variation when including different sets of variables. Table 1 includes the percentage variation captured by the first PC from each analysis.

**Tables 1-5: Principal Components and Dependent Variables**

**Table 1: Variation Captured by First PCs**

| PC | General |
|----|---------|
| Overall | 16.86% |
| Corruption | 40.60% |
| Democracy | 30.20% |
| Rights | 35.40% |
| Nationality | 62.46% |

**Table 2: Corruption Attitudes**

| Variable Name | Question Asked | Response Scale |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| votes_counted_fairly | How often are votes counted fairly in elections? | 1-4 |
| rich_buy_elec | How often do the rich buy elections? | 1-4 |
| cheat_tax | How often is cheating on your taxes justified if you have the chance? | 1-10 |
| bribe_accept | How often is an individual accepting a bribe justified? | 1-10 |

**Table 3: Democracy Attitudes**

| Variable Name | Question Asked | Response Scale |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| gov_democratic | How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? | 1-10 |
| democracy_important | Is democracy a good way for Kazakhstan to be governed? | 1-4 |
| democracy_now | How democratically is Kazakhstan being governed today? | 1-10 |
| free_elections | In a democracy, how important is it for people to choose their leaders in free elections? | 1-10 |
| honest_income | Do you think honest elections are important in deciding if your family will make a good living? | 1-4 |
| honest_growth | Do you think honest elections are important in | 1-4 |

| | determining the economic development of Kazakhstan? | |
|---|---|---|

**Table 4: Rights Attitudes**

| Variable Name | Question Asked | Response Scale |
|---|---|---|
| civil_rights | In a democracy, how important is it that civil rights protect people from state oppression? | 1-10 |
| human_rights | How much respect is there now for human rights in Kazakhstan? | 1-4 |
| police_interfere | How often do the police or military interfere with people's private life in your neighborhood? | 1-4 |

**Table 5: Nationality Attitudes**

| Variable Name | Question Asked | Response Scale |
|---|---|---|
| proud_national | How proud are you to be Kazakhstani? | 1-4 |
| part_nation | To what extent do you see yourself as part of the Kazakhstani nation? | 1-4 |

These lists of attitudes attempt to capture two different types of opinions from respondents: opinions on the actual state of the government and its actions and personal opinions on desires for institutions (mostly democracy) or acceptability of certain behaviors (mostly corruption behaviors). Including both types of questions allows the assessment of political/identity opinions and political/legal culture in Kazakhstan.

The following table includes the independent variables of interest examined in the regressions.

**Table 6: Variables of Interest**

| Variable Name | Description |
|---|---|
| russian | Identified ethnicity of respondent (dummy) (Kazakh or Russian) |
| russian_1stgen | Respondent identifies as ethnically Russian and one or more parent was born outside Kazakhstan (dummy) |
| russian_immigrant | Respondent identifies as ethnically Russian and is |

| | themself an immigrant (dummy) |
|---|---|
| level_educ | Level of education (categorical) (range[1-3], 1 indicates respondent did not complete high school, 2 indicates respondent completed high school but not university studies, 3 indicates respondent earned a university degree) |

In testing for the differential responses of Russians and Kazakhs to questions in the WVS and overall categories of questions, a list of control variables was needed to absorb any bias created by other factors or characteristics of the lives of Russian and Kazakh respondents. Below, I include a table of controls including in the regressions. These variables account for much of the demographic variation in responses that would interfere with the observed effects of being Russian on responses to the selected survey questions.

**Table 7: Demographic Control Variables**

| Variable Name | Description |
|---|---|
| gender | Gender of respondent (dummy) |
| age | Age of respondent (numerical) |
| agesq | Age of respondent squared (numerical) (included to account for potentially lessening effect of age on response) |
| hs | Whether or not respondent received a high school education (dummy) |
| col | Whether or not respondent received a high school education (dummy) |
| employed | Employment status of respondent (dummy) (only considered employed if employed full-time) |
| income | Income of respondent (categorical) (10 levels) |
| class | "Socio-economic" class of respondent (categorical) (5 levels from upper to lower) |
| children | How many children a respondent has (categorical) (range[0-3], where 3 includes 3 children or more) |
| married | Marital status of respondent (dummy) (considered |

| | |
|---|---|
| | married if either married or "living together as married") |
| region | Region of residence of respondent (categorical) (all regions of Kazakhstan divided, effects absorbed using areg command as numerical value associated with region not interpretable as magnitude) |

# 5. Results

The results of the first set of PCA are summarized by a clear difference in responses between Russians and Kazakhs living in Kazakhstan. The first analysis performed involved regressing the first PC on all variables under all categories (listed in Tables 1-4). Since this PC mixes together a wide variety of qualitative information, the level of the synthetic variable is somewhat arbitrary, which renders an interpretation of the regression coefficient difficult. However, a significant P value for the Russian variable would indicate a difference in responses between Russians and Kazakhs. The results of the regression are shown in Table 8. The Russian variable is significant at the 10% level of significance, indicating that, for the variables selected, there is a differential response between Russians and Kazakhs. This test, however, does not indicate if there is an imbalance in a category of variable, or if an individual variable drives this significant result. Thus, analogous regressions were needed for each categorical PC, to examine the significance of the Russian variable for different types of questions. Upon

**Table 8: Overall first PC Regression Results**

| | PC1: All |
|---|---|
| russian | 0.182* |
| | (1.75) |
| gender | 0.0109 |
| | (0.12) |
| age | 0.00116 |
| | (0.06) |
| agesq | 0.0000196 |
| | (0.09) |
| employed | 0.155 |
| | (1.48) |
| hs | -0.0140 |
| | (-0.09) |
| col | 0.0616 |
| | (0.47) |
| income | -0.00266 |
| | (-0.11) |
| married | 0.0500 |
| | (0.42) |
| children=0 | 0 |
| | (.) |
| children=1 | -0.215 |
| | (-1.29) |
| children=2 | -0.276 |
| | (-1.61) |
| children=3 | -0.166 |
| | (-0.88) |
| Constant | 0.387 |
| | (0.88) |
| Observations | 1292 |
| | |

$t$ statistics in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, **** $p < 0.001$

running these regressions (results in Table 9) only the Nationality Attitudes test showed a significant result for differential responses between Russians and Kazakhs (although the Democracy Attitudes were almost significant at the 10% level). This indicates that most of the significance of the overall first PC regression results from the high level of significance of the Nationality Attitudes categorical PC, whereas the rest of the categorical PCs display much less of a distinction between Russian and Kazakh responses. This result expresses that Russians appear to feel less of a sense of belonging to the Kazakhstani nation than do Kazakhs, a result that is expected, as these ethnic groups have exhibited tensions for many years and Russians are not originally from Kazakhstan.

To obtain a more specific picture of differential responses, I then regressed each individual variable from the survey within each category. Significant results for differential responses between Russians and Kazakhs were obtained for regression analysis on five of the selected variables (Table 10). The interpretation of the results are, of course, different for each variable. The statistical significance of gov_democratic, along with its estimated coefficient indicates that ethnic Russians, out of a 10 point scale, on average, answer .242

**Table 9: First PC regression results for each variable category.**

|  | PC1: Corruption | PC1: Democracy | PC1: Rights | PC1: Nationality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| russian | -0.101 | 0.137 | 0.154 | 0.535$^{****}$ |
|  | (-1.21) | (1.63) | (1.29) | (7.27) |
| gender | 0.00204 | -0.0416 | 0.0278 | 0.0224 |
|  | (0.03) | (-0.54) | (0.25) | (0.34) |
| age | 0.00886 | -0.00461 | 0.00248 | 0.00822 |
|  | (0.60) | (-0.27) | (0.11) | (0.59) |
| agesq | -0.000110 | 0.0000638 | -0.0000751 | -0.0000564 |
|  | (-0.73) | (0.34) | (-0.33) | (-0.39) |
| employed | 0.166$^{**}$ | 0.0301 | 0.0246 | 0.0754 |
|  | (1.97) | (0.35) | (0.21) | (1.09) |
| hs | 0.270$^{**}$ | 0.0505 | 0.0984 | -0.278$^{**}$ |
|  | (2.15) | (0.41) | (0.47) | (-2.18) |
| col | -0.146 | 0.0591 | -0.0303 | 0.135$^{*}$ |
|  | (-1.53) | (0.58) | (-0.19) | (1.72) |
| income | -0.000303 | -0.00752 | 0.00205 | -0.0161 |
|  | (-0.01) | (-0.35) | (0.07) | (-0.89) |
| married | -0.0123 | 0.000605 | -0.159 | -0.0922 |
|  | (-0.13) | (0.01) | (-1.20) | (-1.19) |
| children=0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | (.) | (.) | (.) | (.) |
| children=1 | -0.0367 | -0.187 | 0.152 | 0.0379 |
|  | (-0.28) | (-1.38) | (0.80) | (0.36) |
| children=2 | -0.0638 | -0.203 | 0.320 | 0.0211 |
|  | (-0.47) | (-1.42) | (1.63) | (0.18) |
| children=3 | 0.0226 | -0.236 | -0.0506 | -0.196 |
|  | (0.15) | (-1.46) | (-0.23) | (-1.64) |
| Constant | -0.380 | 0.208 | -1.196$^{**}$ | -0.0821 |
|  | (-1.15) | (0.56) | (-2.43) | (-0.27) |
| Observations | 1292 | 1292 | 1292 | 1292 |

$t$ statistics in parentheses

$^{*}$ $p < 0.10$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.01$, $^{****}$ $p < 0.001$

points lower than Kazakhs when asked "how important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?" This indicates that Russians may have a preconceived tendency away from democracy. The results of the second column also indicate that Russians believe that Kazakhstan is governed less democratically than Kazakhs, which is consistent with the claim of the Woodrow Wilson International Center that Russians believe that Kazakhs have disproportionate control over the Kazakhstani government (Peyrouse 14). The third column indicates that Russians believe that human rights are more well respected than Kazakhs do. While this appears inconsistent with the prior two results, this might relate to the experiences of human rights abuses of Russians in Russia before the fall of the Soviet Union. The final two columns are closely related, indicating that ethnic Russians are significantly less proud of carrying the Kazakhstani nationality than Kazakhs are, and that Russians feel significantly less part of the Kazakhstani nation than ethnic Kazakhs do. These results are so strongly significant, that they drive the entire overall first PC to indicate differential responses between Kazakhs and Russians. These responses are potentially a sign of ethnic tensions that first arose from colonial era migration. In addition, they demonstrate that

**Table 10: Significant results from regressions on individual variables.**

| | gov_democr atic | democracy_ now | human_righ ts | proud_natio nal | part_nation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| russian | -0.242** | -0.300** | -0.346**** | 0.314**** | 0.103*** |
| | (-2.23) | (-2.27) | (-6.08) | (7.81) | (3.27) |
| gender | 0.122 | 0.201 | -0.121** | 0.0310 | -0.00613 |
| | (1.19) | (1.64) | (-2.27) | (0.92) | (-0.22) |
| age | -0.000332 | -0.00447 | 0.00560 | 0.00315 | 0.00197 |
| | (-0.01) | (-0.18) | (0.51) | (0.45) | (0.33) |
| agesq | -0.0000117 | 0.000126 | -0.0000532 | -0.0000197 | -0.0000125 |
| | (-0.05) | (0.50) | (-0.45) | (-0.26) | (-0.20) |
| employed | 0.159 | 0.115 | -0.0556 | 0.0404 | 0.0153 |
| | (1.48) | (0.85) | (-0.97) | (1.12) | (0.50) |
| hs | 0.0827 | -0.288 | 0.249*** | -0.0997 | -0.0945* |
| | (0.48) | (-1.45) | (2.77) | (-1.57) | (-1.70) |
| col | -0.0802 | 0.202 | -0.122* | 0.0340 | 0.0691* |
| | (-0.54) | (1.19) | (-1.80) | (0.78) | (1.79) |
| income | -0.00731 | 0.202**** | 0.00581 | -0.0194** | 0.00343 |
| | (-0.23) | (5.31) | (0.42) | (-2.09) | (0.41) |
| married | -0.0683 | -0.0757 | -0.0943 | -0.0248 | -0.0535 |
| | (-0.52) | (-0.52) | (-1.49) | (-0.58) | (-1.52) |
| children=0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | (.) | (.) | (.) | (.) | (.) |
| children=1 | 0.344* | 0.124 | 0.153* | 0.103* | -0.0350 |
| | (1.86) | (0.64) | (1.76) | (1.76) | (-0.78) |
| children=2 | 0.402** | -0.0451 | -0.0803 | 0.0284 | -0.00499 |
| | (2.02) | (-0.22) | (-0.91) | (0.47) | (-0.10) |
| children=3 | 0.382* | -0.0712 | -0.0297 | -0.0377 | -0.0874* |
| | (1.80) | (-0.31) | (-0.30) | (-0.60) | (-1.66) |
| Constant | 8.231**** | 5.732**** | 2.418**** | 1.331**** | 1.218**** |
| | (15.38) | (10.13) | (10.15) | (8.60) | (8.92) |
| Observations | 1292 | 1292 | 1292 | 1288 | 1292 |

$t$ statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, **** $p < 0.001$

Russians do not feel integrated into Kazakhstani society, likely maintaining close ties to their Russian identity. Overall, other than the results of the human rights variable, these results speak to a Russian attitude of a disillusionment and skepticism with democracy in general, and more specifically, with the democratic values of the Kazakhstani government and Kazakh people.

**Table 11: Overall first PC regression results including variables russian_1st gen & russian_immigrant**

| | PC1: All (w/ russian_1stgen & russian_immigrant) |
|---|---|
| russian | 0.213* |
| | (1.91) |
| russian_1stgen | -0.154 |
| | (-0.76) |
| russian_immigrant | -0.0484 |
| | (-0.20) |
| gender | 0.0105 |
| | (0.11) |
| age | 0.00162 |
| | (0.08) |
| agesq | 0.0000199 |
| | (0.09) |
| employed | 0.152 |
| | (1.46) |
| hs | -0.0159 |
| | (-0.10) |
| col | 0.0619 |
| | (0.47) |
| income | -0.00463 |
| | (-0.19) |
| married | 0.0490 |
| | (0.41) |
| children=0 | 0 |
| | (.) |
| children=1 | -0.219 |
| | (-1.31) |
| children=2 | -0.279 |
| | (-1.63) |
| children=3 | -0.172 |
| | (-0.91) |
| Constant | 0.387 |
| | (0.87) |
| Observations | 1292 |

$t$ statistics in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, **** $p < 0.001$

To investigate the effects of migration, a prominent theme of the Russian experience in Kazakhstan, I created two additional dummy variables, russian_1stgen and russian_immigrant, which respectively denoted that a respondent was Russian and one or both of their parents was an immigrant and that a respondent was Russian and was themselves an immigrant. I regressed the overall first PC on the new equation, including these two new variables (Table 11). This rendered similar results to the overall first run PCA, demonstrating a difference in responses between Russians and Kazakhs once again. However, being a first generation or immigrant Russian seems to have no bearing on the overall results.

To view categorical effects on this, I once again conducted analogous regressions (Table 12) (controls have been omitted from most tables from here forward as their effects are unimportant to my analysis). These results suggest, as they did in Table 9, that the difference in responses between Russians and Kazakhs is heavily driven by Nationality Attitude question responses. The new element that this table

provides is that it shows that immigration status, as a whole, does not impact the response of a subject compared to other Russians or compared to Kazakhs.

To investigate the impact of immigration status on responses more specifically, I once again regressed each individual variable on the same variables as in Table 10, as well as the new russian_1stgen and russian_immigrant variables. All variables that were statistically significant for differential responses between Russians and Kazakhs in the last set of individual-level variable regressions remained significant, with results driven by the Russian population as a whole. However, three variables demonstrated significant results that were driven by the newly added variables (Table 13). The first column shows that immigrant

**Table 12: First PC regression results for each variable category (including immigration status.)**

|  | PC1: Corruption | PC1: Democracy | PC1: Rights | PC1: Nationality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| russian | -0.107 | 0.146 | 0.0735 | 0.483**** |
|  | (-1.19) | (1.64) | (0.58) | (6.23) |
| russian_1stgen | 0.187 | -0.183 | 0.320 | 0.105 |
|  | (1.34) | (-1.03) | (1.39) | (0.57) |
| russian_immigrant | -0.256 | 0.225 | 0.262 | 0.350 |

**Table 13: Newly significant results from individual variable regressions (with immigrant status)**

|  | votes_counted_fairly | free_elec | police_interfere |
|---|---|---|---|
| russian | -0.0314 | -0.00304 | -0.0591 |
|  | (-0.46) | (-0.02) | (-1.03) |
| russian_1stgen | -0.0758 | 0.507* | -0.0729 |
|  | (-0.58) | (1.94) | (-0.79) |
| russian_immigrant | -0.267* | -0.105 | 0.175* |
|  | (-1.78) | (-0.31) | (1.91) |

Russians, compared to other Russians and Kazakhs, believe that elections are more fair. The result in column two is driven by first generation Russians, who, compared to other Russians and Kazakhs, believe that free elections are an important feature of a well functioning democracy. Finally, the results in the third column show that immigrant Russians, compared to others, believe that the police interfere in their business more often. The first two of these results may point to a higher level of political awareness among more recently arrived families, but more research would be needed to confirm this interpretation with more certainty.

The last effect I examined related to the level of education of Russians. Creating the variable level_educ allowed for the analysis of differential responses between Russians that were uneducated, received a high school, or university education. In addition, creating this variable permitted the examination of differences between Kazakhs and Russians at the same level of education. In order to view the combined effects of the Russian and level_educ variables, regressions were performed on the factor

variable i.russian##i.level_educ, which expresses the interaction between the two variables. Once again, the overall first PC was regressed on the controls, as well as the new factor variable (Table 14). This regression shows significant results for uneducated Russians and High School level Russians. However, to develop a more accurate interpretation for the correct differential responses, I needed to conduct F tests to examine the differences between Russians and Kazakhs. Two tests were conducted, examining the hypothesis that the sum of the Russian coefficient and the high school Russian coefficient equal zero, as well as examining the hypothesis that the sum of the Russian and college Russian coefficients equal zero. Neither of these tests returned significant results, indicating that the differential response result of Russians is driven by a difference between uneducated Russians and uneducated Kazakhs, while educated Russians and Kazakhs do not respond significantly differently to the questions. To once again examine the driver of this result, categorical effects were examined (Table 15). At first glance, multiple response categories seem to exhibit significant differences in responses between groups, but as was the case with the overall first PC analysis, F tests were needed for a more precise interpretation. Insignificant regression results with respect to differences between Russians and Kazakhs

**Table 14: Overall first PC regression results including interaction i.russian##i.level_educ**

|  | PC1: All (w/ education interactions) |
| --- | --- |
| russian=1 | 0.646** |
|  | (2.25) |
| level_educ=1 | 0.223 |
|  | (1.06) |
| level_educ=2 | 0.311 |
|  | (1.28) |
| russian=1 # level_educ=1 | -0.507* |
|  | (-1.66) |
| russian=1 # level_educ=2 | -0.581 |
|  | (-1.57) |
| gender | 0.0185 |
|  | (0.20) |
| age | 0.000742 |
|  | (0.04) |
| agesq | 0.0000244 |
|  | (0.11) |
| employed | 0.157 |
|  | (1.50) |
| income | -0.00300 |
|  | (-0.12) |
| married | 0.0637 |
|  | (0.54) |
| children=1 | -0.225 |
|  | (-1.35) |
| children=2 | -0.289* |
|  | (-1.70) |
| children=3 | -0.176 |
|  | (-0.94) |
| Constant | 0.162 |
|  | (0.35) |
| Observations | 1292 |

$t$ statistics in parentheses
$*$ $p < 0.10$, $**$ $p < 0.05$, $***$ $p < 0.01$, $****$ $p < 0.001$

were already presented in the table for both the Corruption Attitudes and Rights Attitudes categories, so F tests for these categories were meaningless. However, conducting the same two tests that were conducted with the overall first PC analysis for each category for the Democracy Attitudes and Nationality attitudes revealed some differences between Russians and Kazakhs. The insignificance of the F tests for Democracy Attitudes indicated that differential results in the table are driven by the uneducated Russian population. Highly educated Russians and Kazakhs behave similarly in their responses to democracy related questions, while uneducated Russians answer differently from uneducated Kazakhs on democracy related questions. F tests conducted for the Nationality Attitudes category revealed different results. The F tests for this category

**Table 15: First PC regression results for each variable category (including education interactions).**

| | PC1: Corruption | PC1: Democracy | PC1: Rights | PC1: Nationality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| russian=1 | 0.0829 | 0.539** | 0.106 | 0.850**** |
| | (0.38) | (2.47) | (0.28) | (3.74) |
| level_educ=1 | 0.358** | 0.243 | 0.0549 | -0.107 |
| | (2.33) | (1.63) | (0.21) | (-0.74) |
| level_educ=2 | 0.251 | 0.400** | 0.132 | -0.0145 |
| | (1.46) | (2.27) | (0.44) | (-0.09) |
| russian=1 # level_educ=1 | -0.187 | -0.405* | 0.104 | -0.373 |
| | (-0.80) | (-1.73) | (0.26) | (-1.53) |
| russian=1 # level_educ=2 | -0.297 | -0.680** | -0.198 | -0.251 |

returned significant results, at the 1% level, demonstrating that all Russians answer differently on nationality questions. There is a larger difference between the responses of non educated Russians and Kazakhs and a smaller difference between the responses of educated Russians and Kazakhs.

While many individual-level regressions on the education interaction exhibited fascinating results, four particular variables showed especially interesting results (Table 16). For cheat_tax, respondents were asked how often cheating on taxes was justified. For all education interaction variables, significant results were obtained. While there are

**Table 16: Notable results from individual variable regressions with education level**

| | cheat_tax | gov_democratic | democracy_now | proud_national |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| russian=1 | 0.779** | -0.721** | -1.243**** | 0.583**** |
| | (2.11) | (-2.32) | (-3.48) | (5.06) |
| level_educ=1 | 0.575** | -0.138 | -0.784*** | 0.0444 |
| | (2.33) | (-0.62) | (-3.12) | (0.71) |
| level_educ=2 | 0.694** | -0.381 | -0.548* | 0.0465 |
| | (2.29) | (-1.39) | (-1.87) | (0.65) |
| russian=1 # level_educ=1 | -0.775** | 0.460 | 1.073*** | -0.316*** |
| | (-1.97) | (1.39) | (2.87) | (-2.60) |
| russian=1 # level_educ=2 | -0.933* | 0.917** | 0.972** | -0.225 |

no significant differences between Russians and Kazakhs at higher levels of education, uneducated Russians significantly believe it is more justified to cheat on taxes than uneducated Kazakhs. For the importance of living in a democratic country, an F test on the results of the second column reveal that high school educated and uneducated Russians seem to care less about living in a democratic country than Kazakhs from those education levels, while college educated Russians and Kazakhs respond similarly. The third column results, along with an F test with insignificant results, demonstrate that uneducated Russians significantly believe that Kazakhstan is less democratic than do Kazakhs at that same level of education, but educated Russians at both levels of education respond similarly to educated Kazakhs. Out of these four variables, the only one in which the F test demonstrated an overall difference between Russians and Kazakhs that was not dependent on education was the proud_national variable, in which Russian respondents as a whole are significantly less proud of carrying that Kazakhstani nationality than Kazakhs. These results as a whole are indicative of the changes in values that come with education. It appears that education can unify the differences in political beliefs between Russians and Kazakhs, but when it comes to ethnic identities, ethnic Russians remain staunchly tied to their homeland identity. While political cultures may be conquerable, ethnic and national identities are transcended less easily.

## 6. Conclusion

Analysis of ethnic Kazakh and Russian attitudes with respect to corruption, democracy, rights, and nationality demonstrate various differences in opinions between the two groups. In general, Russians appear to be less in favor of democracy than Kazakhs and in general appear more skeptical and disillusioned with government institutions. With respect to rights, however, Russians seem more optimistic about their state in Kazakhstan compared to Kazakhs. The strongest result from the category divisions was that Russians appear to not feel completely integrated into Kazakhstani society, based on their lack of pride in the Kazakhstani nationality and sentiment of a lack of belonging to the national community of Kazakhstan. When Russians were broken out into first generation and immigrant categories to examine the effects, there were few marked differences between any of the groups. While significant results were recorded for three individual variables, there was no consistent trend to be found that was different from the findings based on Russian ethnicity as a whole. Examining the effects of education, however, resulted in striking results, indicating that many of the individual variable results, such as differences on opinions relating to corruption, and more notably, democracy, are driven by disparities in ethnicity in at low levels of education, rather than disparities in in ethnicity as a whole. Fascinatingly,

however, nationality attitudes demonstrated no disparities based on education; these differences in opinions appeared to remain highly based on ethnicity itself.

These results also offer a foundation for explaining differences of opinion between ethnic Russians and Kazakhs on the current crisis in the Ukraine. By demonstrating where the differences in political opinion lie more specifically, we can better understand why ethnic Russians and Kazakhs in Kazakhstan may approach the invasion of Ukraine with differing opinions at a more granular level. While educated Russians and Kazakhs tend to respond similarly to political questions in the WVS, future research may attempt to observe if this marquee result holds for the question of one's stance on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Other results of the paper, such as Russians' belief that Kazakhstan is less democratic compared with ethnic Kazakhs, may offer an explanation for the ideological split that is seen between Eastern and Western Ukrainians. Vladimir Putin continues to weave a narrative that Russia's goal is liberation of Ukranians from political and social oppression, and seeing that ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan have lower levels of faith in the democratic institutions of the country, this result could extend to ethnic Russians in the Ukraine that support this notion and its use as a justification for war. However, this would require deeper research and attention to disparities between the dynamics at play in Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

There are a number of limitations present with my study, despite the results I encountered. The use of responses to the WVS as a source for data presents a few issues. First of all, the scales of the numerical responses were chosen relatively arbitrarily. Responses to some questions were measured on scales of 1-10, while other responses were measured on a scale of 1-4. This produces a pattern in the variation of responses that is not consistent across the entire survey. In addition, due to the length and breadth of the survey, respondents answering questions towards the end of the survey may not be contemplating their answers heavily enough as they prioritize completing the survey over their accuracy. The problem of balancing the variables correctly also presents a challenging task. While it is clear that not all variables possess equal importance, the relative levels of importance of each variable are somewhat arbitrary, nearly impossible to define, and difficult to balance within each categorical first PC regression accordingly. With respect to my analysis, the most notable limitation was the lack of time, which prevented me from screening a wider range of variables and balancing the delineated categories more evenly. In addition, defining "political culture" is a treacherous task; while characterizing opinions in a specific area of politics is possible, speaking about the higher-level "political culture" of a groups, despite my attempt at a definition, is difficult to capture purely qualitatively.

My findings open up numerous possibilities for future research. First of all, my research would benefit from a more firm and thorough backing in data and statistics. As I was not able to examine all of the relevant variables in the study, future research may be able to produce more inclusive results that take more variables into account. In addition, future research may produce more accurate results if a model that more accurately balances variables in each category in terms of their individual importance could be produced. Finally, similar studies, if conducted on other former Soviet states with Russian minorities, would allow for comparative analysis of contrasts in political attitudes between different ethnicities. Ukraine may be an ideal study subject, as its post-Soviet economic experience runs in sharp contrast to that of Kazakhstan. While Kazakhstan's natural resources have rendered the country's growth and modernization efforts successful, Ukraine's economy has not experienced the same level of growth. I would aspire to continue this research upon obtaining a more advanced understanding of econometrics and statistics, as well as more experience engaging in research in the Central Asia.

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