

## The Vote, Election and Democracy in Southeast Asia: A Case of Thailand

Assoc. Prof. PaithoonBhothisawang, Ph.D.

*Faculty of Political Science and Law, Burapha University 169 Long-Hard Bangsaen Road,  
Saen Suk Sub-district, Mueang District, Chonburi 20131.*

**ABSTRACT:** Thailand is located in Southeast Asia. Thailand's democracy was still struggling that is a military coup by the loop 13 times. The last time was on May 22, 2014. Every time a new constitution to allow more democratic and promised to re-election soon. Elections in Thailand are interesting. The purpose of this research is to determine the factors that influence the election of political leaders in Thailand then create a mathematical equation to know what the votes are derived from and how important are each of them? A total of 1522 samples from the four constituencies were randomly sampled. In the North, 423 are sampled of member of parliaments(MPs) election, In the Central are 373 sampled of Mayor election, In the Northeastern region, are 322 sampled of village headman election and in the Southern part of the constituency is the Head of the Subdistrict Administrative Organization(SAO) are 404 sample. By using "Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis" The research found that the most influential factors in getting the most votes and winning the election are political campaigns and tactics. Second, political affiliations or political parties, group policy (Party, Group). Third, relief aid, kinship and patronage (Patronage) and finally, the distribution of wealth and money (Money) statistically significant at the .05 level. It is considered that these factors are differently down the hierarchy. This can be written as an equation as Obtaining the vote  $1 = 33.54 + .37 \text{ Campaign} + .23 \text{ Party, Group} - .12 \text{ Patronage} + .09 \text{ Money}$ . Factors that did not affect the voting result were statistically significant at the .05 level and not according to hypothesis that was set are Personal Qualification of Candidates (Personal), Donation to the community and the public (Donation) And gambling fraud and bribery (Fraud). The suggestion for this research is the agency responsible for the election should find ways to prevent the distribution of political capital to political people to gain more votes. Politicians and political parties should consider using the campaign strategy. Determine your party's or group's policies and factors. In the equation, what factors will have the effect of making itself and its representative party victorious in elections. Researchers should extend this research to broader scope of research so that they can be used as a new political theory.

**Keywords:** The Vote, Election, Leader, Southeast Asia

### I. INTRODUCTION

Thailand is located in Southeast Asia, The center of the 10 ASEAN countries. Thailand is the only country to avoid a colony of Europe has been achieved several years ago. Once the US military bases in the war against Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to fight communism loop until 1975. Thailand is a democratic revolutionary change of government in 1932. So far, more than 80 years ago. Thailand's democracy was still struggling that is a military coup by the loop 13 times. Every time a new constitution to allow more democratic, the last time was on May 22, 2014 the military coup begin again. The reason that to maintain order and also claimed the elected government is corrupt and political leaders and politicians to buy the votes. During this time the constitution was drafted at 20 to build a new democracy. Democracy is a regime that values the rights of the individual compared to other forms of government. Democracy is based on three principles: Popular Sovereignty, Freedom and Liberty, Equality. It is therefore generally accepted that democracy is the least evil rule because the rule in the democratic system give opportunity for the majority of people to influence the mechanism of the state with equal and free political competition. In order to obtain a delegation of people to represent the people in the administration of the country, they must obtain the consent of the people and administer the country according to the willing of the people. To look at the power of the people through agents or the party is going through a political process called "Elections" cannot be separated from democracy.

Election is the process of seeking the common will of the people or a tool to make the majority of people appear by citizens have to choose their politicians to represent themselves in political duty. Theoretically, the representative is authorized to perform the duties of the people. The election is the confirmation of the supremacy of the people in practice. So the election is a way of life in democracy. The election is based on the basic principles that allow people to express their true intentions by providing a secret ballot and free from threats. There are no restrictions on the skin, gender, and status, and everyone has equal voting rights, i.e., each one has the same voice. Elections are at the heart of democracy. In particular, fair elections are a political righteous process of using the sovereignty of politicians. The election of members of the House of Representatives constitutes the beginning of the process of entering the political power of democratic rule in a parliamentary system of great importance. According to the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2007, the general election of the members of the House of Representatives, 500 members, Member of the House of Representatives of the 375 electoral districts and 125 from the party lists, the announcement of the general election mandate in 2011 led to the general election on Day 3 July 2011 To filter a democratic regime to respects the rights of individual freedom as possible by compared to other forms of government but the regime is required to select the person or group of persons to act as representatives of the people by the political movement called "Elections". The election does not seem to be a problem and is not very complicated but by the fact of the election, there are many problems that one of them is buying votes especially in recent general elections, and likely to intensify, with the spread to local elections. It becomes a political culture of the Thai society (Ratanachoti, 1998, p. 4), which is usually done secretly and it is consent between the payer and the payee, which is difficult to legalize. Currently, the buying of votes in Thailand. There is a tendency for violence to intensify, which is opposite with efforts to develop democracy and political participation. Even the current constitutional law has been enacted, which is considered to be the most democratic ever. And the election is a duty of the people of Thailand and the law that causes an independent organization to oversee the electoral process. In order to make the election fair, however, the legal approach is still not able to solve the problem of buying vote from Thai society. Because the relationship between buyers and sellers evolved into a political culture and another is form of representation through the electoral process, usually done secretly with the consent of both parties between payer and the payee. Especially, the area where the people are living indoors and there is a local community that adheres to a conservative cultural tradition. Like Northeast and North. Until the scope of such trading behavior was extended throughout Thailand (Bhothisawang et al., 2003, p. 1) It is well known that in each election candidates have to spend a lot of money to use to pay for both open and non-disclosure campaign until a political liability. Many politicians, when they get elected they will try to use their power to call for economic benefits in the interests of each other. The corruption of the capital to restore the capital and the law cannot do anything on them. Rattanadilok Na Phuket (1994, p. 34). Sunan (2002) studied factors affecting the decision to elect members of the People's Council of Chonburi. the results show that canvassers affect the decision to vote. Sakda (1999) studied factors influencing the selection of members of the House of Representatives of the people of Chonburi. Avika (2006) A study of local elections on the buying of vote rights of local political parties. It creates a system of economic patronage with employees, with monetary and economic returns in the local budget system. Suwat (2005) studied the Decision on the election of members of the House of Representatives during the campaign. Natasha (1997) studied the structure of power in the community and local politics. This research is a research study of the main patronage system in Chonburi. Peng (2005) Studied on the power structure of the community and the election of the Head of the sub-district administrative organization relied on relatives, disadvantaged candidates who spent money on elections and led to the system. Nattakorn (2002) studied the factors affecting the election of senators. Other researchers studied this include: Sathaporn (2014), Sittisak (2013), Panya (2014), Arrom (2012), Somwang (2012), Chaipot (2014), Onratya (2013), Pairat (2003) studied the behavior of people's election in Pattani Municipality. The Concepts, Theories and Research related to Voting and Political Leader include:

**1. Concept of Electoral behavior** : Base on the analysis of electoral behavior or the factor behind the voter, behavior of voters can be divided into 3 groups. 1) Social and Demographic Factors or Socio-Economic Status. (Deterministic Factors) 2) Psychological Factors 3) Economic Model or Consciously Rational Theories.

**2. Concept of Patronage System**: In the past, relationships in patronage systems were relationships where client were adverse to patrons because when the patron are sponsor client. Client will be in a position to repay the sponsor immediately. If later, the sponsor wants the client to do something the client cannot refuse. (Scott, 1977, p. 100). 3. Concept of buying vote rights: The candidate uses another support type may be fraudulent buying vote because of the limit supports. 4. Concept of political party or Thai political group: Thai Political party organization is not a Western or universal political organization. There is a common fund for the activities of the party, but it is also a grouping of "small nets" in the "big nets" that rely on their help and solicitations the money in political party or the capitalist party. The political base case can be said another important factor that will guide you to know that which political parties are more likely and less likely to buy vote rights. 5. Concept of Strategy and Method of Campaign: Is a concept that considers technical and how the campaign at the moment

will be able to attract and changing the decision of the voters in that election. Candidates try to implement strategies and how to get elected voters by using both correct and incorrect methods, such as attracting interest in the candidate. Impressed in the versatility, ability or compassion, the use of party policy, party leaders, past party work and dreaming of what the future will do for the people. Using relative kinship powerful influence teachers or elders are canvassing. Walking, knocking on the door, making a score by creating a ghost card, parachute cards, fire cards, transfer of house registration to vote and other ways, including buying the election votes as mentioned above. Nowadays, in the metropolitan area, there are billboards, posters, forums, direct and indirect advertisements on radio and television. Using the internet, new mobile phones (smartphones) has teamed up to take care of this specific. In the outskirts of the city, funds were also set up, and the team took care of the people in charity, ordination, traditions, temples, and social events through donations or host responsible for community and social expenses These factors affect people's voting decisions but it is not clear exactly. Which factors affect the vote or is it another, Are there any factors that have a significant influence on the voters, Are there any factors that affect the polling of political leaders and how does it influence the election of candidates are different or not.

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the factors that affect to the vote of election of candidates or political leaders.
2. To understand the level of factors affecting to the votes.
3. To create formula or equation for predicting the vote from various factors.

Research framework From the literature review, theoretical concepts can be defined as a conceptual framework for research as follows.

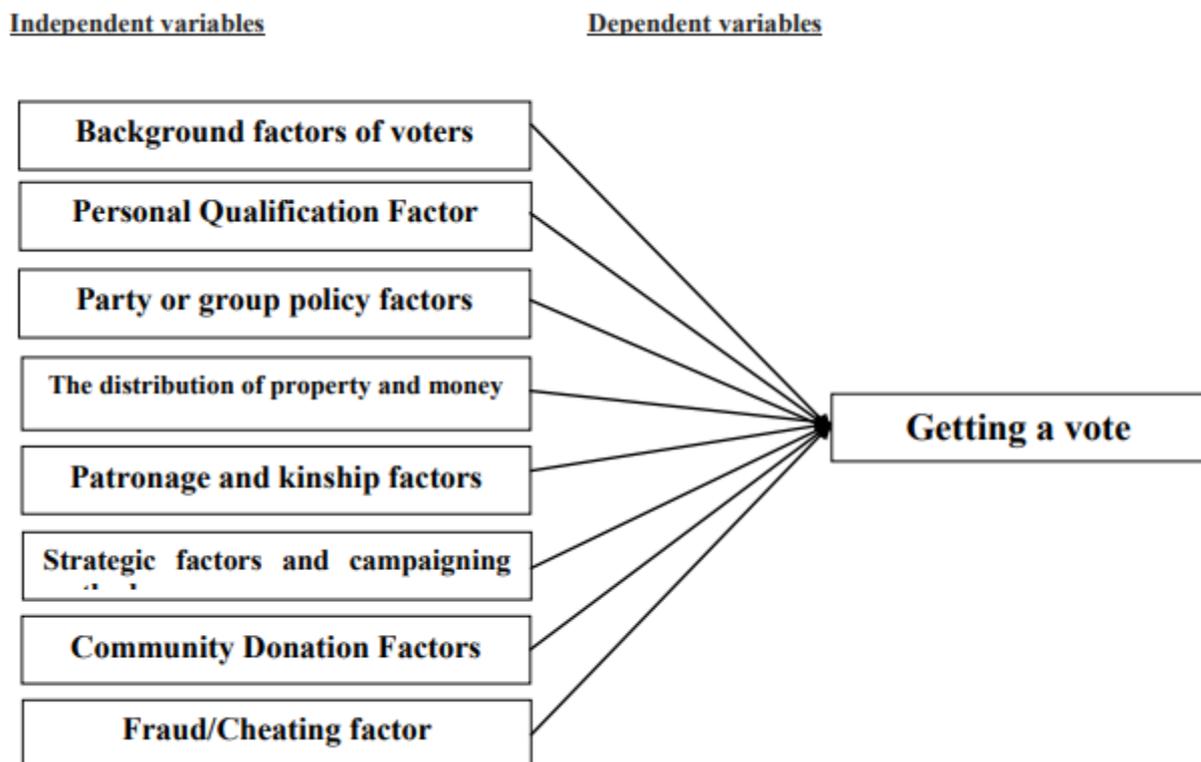


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research area The four constituencies in Thailand, Village Headman election at the village level, Head of SAO election at the sub-district level, Mayor election at the Municipality and district level, MPs election at the Provincial and national level. Population and sample 1. Randomly selected constituency Randomly select the electorate by selecting one province in each region, namely Lamphun (Northern), Sisaket Province (Northeast), Prachin Buri (central) and Phatthalung (southern). The constituency was elected from 4 constituencies from 375 constituencies nationwide. The constituency in Lamphun Province 1) In the remaining constituency of the Northeast. Central and South Randomly selected municipal as the second step. One municipal borough in Prachinburi 2) In the remaining 2 constituencies of the Northeast and South constituencies. Randomly selected constituencies Sub District Administration Organization (SAO) Step by step as a Municipality level. That is a Sub

District Administration Organization in Phatthalung 3) In the remaining constituency 1, the last constituency of the Northeast. Randomly selected village level constituencies one village level in Sisaket 5) The constituency of the research community includes 4 constituencies, namely 4 constituencies, MPs, mayors the constituency, the Head of SAO and the village headman's constituency from 4 regions. 2. Find the sample size from the population in each constituency Calculate the sample size from the research population, which represents the voter. Using Yamane's formula (1967, pp.886-887; 1973 p.726)

Measuring tools In this research, sample voters are willing to sacrifice their time and willingly answer the question. So I tried to create a not too long questionnaire, but the full range of variables to meet the hypothesis set. In each of the questions, there may be several messages containing several sub-variables included in the same question, I created a questionnaire. The Nominal Scale, the Ordinal Scale, and the Ratio Scale are used to measure the background of the voter and chose the Interval Scale. For measuring information about Party policy factor and the role of the party, Candidate Qualification Factor, Strategic factors and campaigning methods of candidates, Patronage and kinship factors, the distribution of property and money, Factors of Fraud, cheating gambling and bribery officials and getting a voter vote is a variant based on. The tool used in this study was a questionnaire on political election in Thailand. It is divided into 2 parts: Part 1 is a questionnaire about the factors that influence the decision to vote for the candidate and to get the candidate's votes. There are 9 items, with the number from 0-100, the use Interval Scale Part 2 is a questionnaire about the background factors of voters. This includes questions about gender, age, education level, primary occupation, and average monthly income. There are 7 items for the respondents to fill in the blanks or fill in the numbers according to the facts of the respondents. This is the use of the Nominal Scale, Ordinal Scale, Interval Scale and Ratio Scale. By using the questionnaire, 30 samples were tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The reliability of the program was 0.76 and the reliability of the second test, questionnaire was 60. The sample was analyzed with the software program. The reliability was 0.84 of the second test.

Data analysis In this research, the program was analyzed using statistical data for forecasting and predictive equation or formula with Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis .05 statistical significance or 95% confidence (Norusis, 2012). To get an answer, what are the factors influencing the vote of the political leader and what factors influence is difference? And what link to Causal Relationship?

#### IV. RESEARCH RESULT

Analyzing the factors affecting voter turn-ups will bring the factors into the equation, one step by step, sorted according to the importance and influence of that factor. This will start from steps 1,2,3 and 4, but in this article, we will focus on presenting the results by analyzing the results of the final step. To show for those who get the highest number of votes (those who win the election are political leaders), as it is the stage where the results of the research come out and to test the hypothesis of the research. The results are shown in the following table:

#### REFERENCE

- [1]. Avika, E. (2006). Buying of vote rights of local political parties: A case study of Tambon Municipality of the eastern districts. Faculty of Political Science and Law, Burapha University.
- [2]. Arrom, K. (2012). The Opinion of people on the Election of MP. Burapha University.
- [3]. Bhothisawang, P. et al. (2003). Local Wisdom to Prevent Voting : A Study of Eastern Region. Chonburi: College of Public Administration. Burapha University.
- [4]. Chaipot, J. (2014). Factors affecting to the Decision of MP. Burapha University.
- [5]. Chitra, P. (1998). Election behavior of people in Bangkok's slum community. Office of the Secretary of the House of Representatives.
- [6]. Kwanfa, S. (2010). Relationship between political and political campaign management. The political participation of the mayor electing mayor. Chiang Mai University.
- [7]. Natasha, W. (1997). Structural Power in Communities and Local Politics: A Case Study of Pattaya City. Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University.
- [8]. Nattakron, W. (2002). Factors affecting the election of the senator. Bangkok: juridical.
- [9]. Norušis, M. J. (2012). IBM SPSS Statistics 19 Advanced Statistical Procedures
- [10]. Companion. NJ: Prentice Hall Inc