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Special Issue on Forecasting the 2024 US Elections

Forecasting Popular Vote and Electoral College Vote Results: Partisan-Bounded Economic Model

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The Partisan-Bounded Economic Model forecasts popular vote and Electoral College vote results in the 2024 presidential election based on economic growth, presidential popularity, and shifts in party identification within the electorate. While previous forecast models for presidential elections have generally been successful in predicting popular vote outcomes, there are issues to be addressed and problems to be solved. Many models incorporate economic conditions as one of predictor variables; however there have been outliers in economic performance. Specifically, severe economic downturns occurred during the 1980 and 2020 elections, leading to outlier values for economic condition variables. These outliers weaken the correlation between the economic performance and electoral outcomes, thereby underestimating the impact of economic conditions on electoral results. Additionally, the outliers inflate the predicted values in electoral results, thereby reducing the predictive power of forecast models.

Researchers have noted an ample influence of the economic performance on the voters' decisions in presidential elections (Tuft 1978; Fiorina 1981; Lewis-Beck 1985, 1988; Erikson 1989; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000; Campbell 2008), and many forecast models evince a solid influence of economic conditions on popular vote results (Campbell 2021; Lewis-Beck and Tien 2021; Lockerbie 2021; Erikson and Wlezien 2021). Nonetheless, partly due to the partisan vote and voter inertia, presidential elections are unlikely to result in lopsided outcomes even in the face of economic turmoil or prosperity. Roughly 60 percent of the electorate are partisan voters today, with approximately 90 percent of them consistently voting for candidates of their parties.¹ Also, incumbent presidents in reelection campaigns are likely to receive a certain amount of votes because of their visibility, name recognition, and voters' risk aversion. In his explanation of "voter inertia," Campbell explains that undecided voters may give the benefit of the doubt to the candidate who currently holds the office (Campbell 2008).

Therefore, the influence of economic performance on electoral results could have limitations. For instance, whether the economic growth is 10 percent or -10 percent, its effect on electoral results might not significantly differ from that of 5 percent or -5 percent growth. As described in further detail below, in the Partisan-Bounded Economic Model, outliers in the annualized GDP growth are truncated to fall within a fixed range of 5 percent to -5 percent. Any GDP growth values exceeding 5 percent or falling below -5 percent in the original measurement are re-coded as 5 percent and -5 percent, respectively.

Secondly, most of the forecast models have focused on the percentage party vote won by in-party candidates as predicted variable. In contrast, the Partisan-Bounded Economic Model forecasts the percentage of the *total* popular vote and the percentage of the *Electoral College* vote won by in-party candidates, as well as party-vote percentages. Forecasting could differ somewhat from scientific analysis. In general, the merit of forecasting models is evaluated based on predictive success, narrow probability bounds, and length of lead times (Dowding 2021). However, in social science, the focus is on explaining and testing the influences of various factors on voters' decisions rather than merely predicting the winner. During presidential elections, most voters contemplate whether to keep the incumbent president (or their party) in office or replace them with another candidate (Fiorina 1981; Lewis-Beck 1988; Campbell et al. 2010). Thus, as for dependent variable, the percentage of *total* popular vote won by in-party candidates, rather than just party-vote percentages, may offer a more theoretically coherent measure of the aggregate outcome of voter decisions.

Furthermore, regarding predictive success in forecasting, it is important to note that the popular vote result may not always align with the Electoral College outcome, which can ultimately determine the outcome of the election. For five times in American history, a

candidate who had not won a plurality of popular votes in the nation won a majority of Electoral College votes, thereby leading to their electoral victories. This so-called *split result* could occur largely due to the unequal representation of popular votes and candidates' wasted votes. Popular votes across the states are not equally represented in the Electoral College. The Connecticut Compromise guarantees two senatorial seats and a minimum of one House seat to all states regardless of population size. Consequently, popular votes in less populous states are overrepresented and votes in populous states are underrepresented in the allocation of Electoral College votes. When a loser of national popular vote wins in a lot of overrepresented states, she is likely to win a larger proportion of Electoral votes relative to the size of the popular votes she won, thereby increasing the likelihood of a split result (Saeki 2025).

Also, with the exception of Maine and Nebraska, a candidate who fails to win a plurality of popular votes within states does not garner any Electoral votes.ⁱⁱ In competitive states where the margin of loss is minimal, this discrepancy significantly decreases the ratio of Electoral votes to popular votes won by the candidate. Thus, the likelihood of a split result increases substantially when the national popular vote winner accrues wasted votes across numerous states (Saeki 2025). The Partisan-Bounded Economic Model tests the unique impact of predictor variables on Electoral College results and analyzes their influences and predictive power.

Table 1: 2024 Presidential Election Results Forecast

<i>Forecast</i>	
Party Vote for Harris	52.39 percent
Total Popular Vote for Harris	49.40 percent
Electoral College Vote for Harris	59.15 percent
<i>Predictors</i>	
GDP (Truncated)	5 percent
Presidential Approval	38 percent
Partisan Shift	-2 percent
<i>Equations</i>	
Party Vote = 0.247*(Approval) + 0.767*(GDP Truncated) + 0.191*(Partisan Shift) + 39.557	
Total Vote = 0.299*(Approval) + 0.734*(GDP Truncated) + 0.382*(Partisan Shift) + 35.137	
EC Vote = 1.104*(Approval) + 4.011*(GDP Truncated) + 1.486*(Partisan Shift) + 0.117	

As presented in Table 1, the Partisan-Bounded Economic Model forecasts an electoral victory for Vice President Kamala Harris. It predicts that Vice President Harris will secure 52.3 percent of the party vote, 49.4 percent of the total popular vote, and 59.1 percent of the Electoral College votes. For presidential popularity, the model utilizes the presidential approval rating in June or a month close to June during an election year, as reported by the Gallup Poll. As for the shift in party identification within the electorate, it records the percentages of Democratic and Republican voters during an election year (second or third quarter) and calculates the change in party affiliation of the incumbent president compared to four years prior. For the current year, the annualized GDP growth in the second quarter stood at 5.2 percent (5 percent for the truncated GDP measurement), whereas the presidential approval rating was at 38 percent. Additionally, there was a quadrennial decrease of 2.0 percent in Democratic voters.

Forecast Models and Outlier in the 2020 Election

To date, researchers have analyzed the impact of economic performance, presidential popularity, and other factors on electoral outcomes, based on the results of presidential elections spanning the years between 1948 to 2020. Several models correctly predict a popular vote winner in 16 out of 19 elections while they result in incorrect predictions for the 1960, 1968 and 1976 elections (viz. Lewis-Beck and Tien 2021). If Richard Nixon is assumed to have won the popular vote in the 1960 election (Campbell 2008; Alexander 2019; Longley and Pierce 1996; Gains 2001), the models make a correct prediction in 17 out of 19 elections.

Donald Trump's victory in the 2016 election stunned analysts and pundits. Before the vote count, researchers and the media mostly expected a victory for Hillary Clinton. *The New York Times* announced that Clinton held an 85% chance of winning, and *ABC News* reported that Clinton had a 95% chance of winning. In parallel, a majority of econometric models employed by scholars forecasted Clinton's victory. Subsequently, the unexpected triumph of Trump raised questions about the robustness of forecasting models. Nonetheless, most econometric models forecast popular vote results rather than Electoral College vote results, and a great majority of models correctly predicted Clinton as a winner of the popular vote.

Rather than the 2016 election, the 2020 election presented a methodological challenge for forecast models. The year 2020 witnessed abnormal economic performance due to the coronavirus pandemic. The unemployment rate peaked at 14.7 percent during the year, while the annualized GDP growth rate in the second quarter of 2020 plummeted to -33.3 percent, marking a record low since the Great Depression. While the nation's annual GDP growth rate averages approximately 3 percent from 1947 until 2020, the extraordinary economic conditions during the 2020 election year resulted in outlier values for the economic indicators. These outlier values

would weaken the correlation between the economic performance and electoral outcomes, thereby underestimating the impact of economic conditions on electoral results. Also, these outliers inflate the predicted values in electoral results, thereby reducing the predictive power of forecast models.

Presidential Elections and Economic Conditions

For many decades, scholars have noted a significant influence of the economic condition of the nation on the voters' decisions and the results of presidential elections (Tufte 1978; Fiorina 1981; Lewis-Beck 1985, 1988; Erikson 1989; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000; Campbell 2008). Most of the forecast models for presidential elections incorporate various indicators of economic performance (i.e. Campbell 2021; Lewis-Beck and Tien 2021; Abramowitz 2021; Lockerbie 2021; Erikson and Wlezien 2021), and they all have evinced a significant impact of economic conditions on electoral results.

The postulation of economic influence on vote decision is largely based upon the *retrospective voting* thesis. The so-called “reward-punishment” model exemplifies genuine retrospective voting during elections (Key 1966; Tufte 1978). Key contends that the vote decisions by the populace is founded upon the voters' evaluation *ex post* of the president's performance *ex ante* (1966). Subsequently, Tufte (1978) observes that the electorate makes vote decisions largely based upon the economic performance under the present administration. Therefore, according to the retrospective voting thesis, elections are quasi-referenda on the heretofore presidential performance, often pertaining to the state of the national economy.

However, due to the partisan vote and voter inertia, an economic turmoil or prosperity would not drastically decrease or increase the popular vote won by in-party candidates in

presidential elections. Scholars note that a great majority of voters make voting decisions based on their partisanship while voters' party identification is very stable. The authors of *The American Voter* note that "Few factors are of greater importance for our national election than the lasting attachment of tens of millions of Americans to one of the Parties" (Campbell et al. 1960). The analysts suggest that the results of presidential elections are generally predictable with few surprises due to the stable and prevalent partisan behavior of the electorate. In comport with the Michigan model, Philip Converse's concept of the *normal vote* exemplifies the assumption of stability in presidential elections (1966). The normal vote is a minimum aggregate proportion of votes presidential candidates of the two major parties are expected to receive. Converse explains that the results of presidential elections are regularly within the parameter of normal vote due to the solid influence of partisanship on vote decision and the stability of party identification within the populace (1966). Further, in addition to the direct influence of partisanship on voter decision, partisanship may influence voters' evaluation of the economy. Several scholars observe that voters have a more positive evaluation of economic conditions when the party of the incumbent president is the party they support (ie., Bartels 2002; Gerber and Huber 2010; Brady, Ferejohn and Parker 2021).

Also, some voters are risk-averse or lack significant information and therefore tend to vote for the incumbent president (or in-party candidates). During an election, many voters know or hear about the incumbent president. In contrast, the information about the challenger is relatively less available, less clear, and less proven. Most voters do not know about the challenger as well as they do about the sitting president. As a result, some voters- specifically undecided voters with less political knowledge- may vote for the incumbent president (Campbell 2008).

Consequently, in general, electoral outcomes are stable over time. Even at a time of extreme economic downturns or upswings, electoral results are unlikely to significantly deviate from the outcomes in other elections. For instance, when GDP growth is higher than 10 percent or falls below -10 percent, its impact on electoral results would not differ drastically from the impact of 5 percent economic growth or -5 percent growth. In the Partisan-Bounded Economic Model, values higher than 5 percent or lower than -5 percent in the original measurement of economic growth are re-coded as 5 percent and -5 percent, respectively, for the secondary measurement of economic growth.

Method and Variables

In the Partisan-Bounded Economic model, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimates are analyzed for electoral results spanning from 1948 to 2020. The predicted variables include the percentage of the *two-party* vote won by in-party candidates, the percentage of *total* popular votes won by in-party candidates, and the percentage of *Electoral College* votes won by in-party candidates. The regressors include economic growth, presidential popularity, and shifts in party identification within the electorate.

As for economic growth, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the second quarter (annualized) of the election year is used. For the secondary measurement of economic growth, values higher than 5 percent or lower than -5 percent in the original GDP growth data are re-coded to 5 percent and -5 percent, respectively. Thus, the secondary measurement truncates GDP growth values to a fixed range of 5 percent to -5 percent. The threshold of 5 percent and -5 percent were determined based on the standard deviation of the sample and the Z-scores for outliers. The standard deviation of the original GDP growth measurement is 8.62, indicating

significant variation across the 19 elections studied. The Z-score for GDP growth during the 2020 election is -3.75, whereas a Z-score higher than 3.0 or lower than -3.0 generally suggests an outlier. Preliminary analysis tested various truncation values, and the chosen threshold of 5 percent and -5 percent were found to minimize the standard deviation and Z-scores. After truncation, the standard deviation of GDP growth in the sample is reduced to 2.66, whereas the Z-score for the truncated GDP growth (-5%) during the 2020 election is -2.15.

For presidential popularity, the presidential approval rating in June or a month close to June during an election year, reported by the Gallup Poll, is used. A few analysts posit that in-party candidates under a second-term president would rather face an electoral disadvantage whereas the voters would prefer out-party candidates (Abramowitz 2021; Norpoth 2021). In-party candidates during the 1952 election (Adlai Stevenson) and 2008 election (John McCain) failed to win popular votes. However, George H.W. Bush, during the 1988 election after the Reagan presidency, as well as Gore during the 2000 election and Hillary Clinton during the 2016 election, won more popular votes than out-party candidates. In addition, Nixon possibly won more popular votes than Kennedy did in the 1960 election after the Eisenhower presidency (Campbell 2008; Alexander 2019; Longley and Pierce 1996; Gains 2001). Therefore, the hypothesis in question is not strongly supported. In a preliminary analysis, a dummy variable for a second-term presidency was included in the empirical test, and the variable was insignificant.

Regarding partisanship in the electorate, again, the authors of *The American Voter* stress the impact of voters' partisanship on electoral results (Campbell et al. 1960). However, the relationship between voters' partisanship and their vote decision could potentially be bi-directional. Morris Fiorina stresses that some voters adjust their partisanship *ex post* in accordance with their vote decision *ex ante* for the forthcoming election (Fiorina 1981; 2017).

Thus, the shift in party identification within the electorate could serve as both a cause and a precursor to the electoral outcomes.

For the variable of partisan shift, the percentages of Democratic and Republican voters during an election year (second or third quarter), as reported by Pew Research Center and Gallup Poll are recorded. The change in the party of the incumbent president from four years prior is then calculated. Independent voters leaning to the Democratic or Republican parties are excluded from the calculation. For instance, during the 2020 election, the percentage of partisan voters supporting the Republican Party was 26 percent, which represented a 1 percent decrease from 27 percent in 2016. As for the 2024 election, the percentage of Democratic voters was 30 percent, reflecting a 2 percent decline from 32 percent in 2020.

Popular Vote Estimate

Figure 1 reports the scatter plot for the observed values of the percentage *two party* vote won by in-party candidates (Vote Party) and the GDP growth (GDP). As shown on the graph, the GDP growth in 2020 (Trump, -33.3 percent), and the one in 1980 (Carter, -11.6 percent) to a less degree, are outliers. Figure 2 presents the scatter plot for the same dependent variable and the re-coded measure of economic growth (GDP Truncated), while the outlier values of the GDP growth are re-scaled within the fixed range between 5 percent and -5 percent. The values of GDP (Truncated) for 2020 (-33.3% for GDP) and 1980 (-11.5%) elections are -5 percent, whereas the values for 1972 (6.9% for GDP) and 1984 (5.1%) elections are 5 percent. Figure 2 exhibits a linear pattern among the measured values.

Figure 1. Party Vote and GDP: 1948-2020

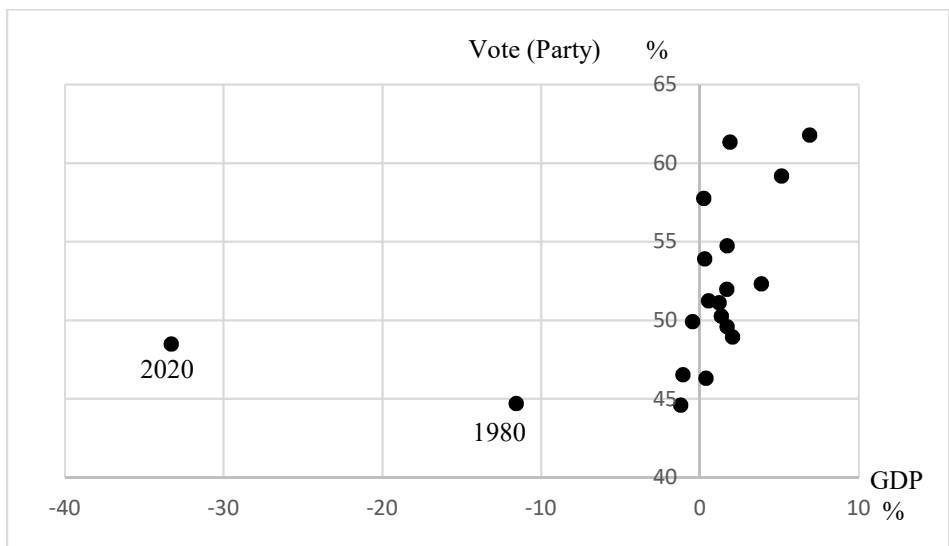


Figure 2. Party Vote and GDP (Truncated): 1948-2020

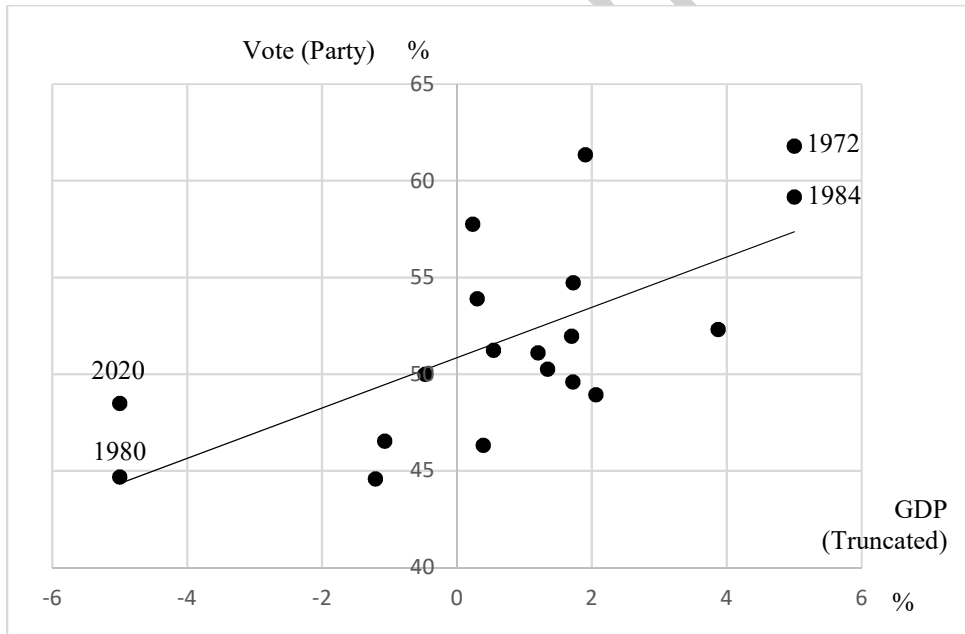


Table 2. Popular Vote Won by In-Party Candidates 1948-2020

	<i>Eq. 1</i> <i>Party Vote</i>	<i>Eq. 2</i> <i>Party Vote</i>	<i>Eq. 3</i> <i>Total Vote</i>	<i>Eq. 4</i> <i>Total Vote</i>
Approval	0.288 *** (0.057)	0.247 *** (0.047)	0.343 *** (0.073)	0.299 *** (0.067)
GDP	0.11 (0.083)		0.083 (0.106)	
GDP (Truncated)		0.767 ** (0.223)		0.734 * (0.313)
Partisan Shift	0.205 (0.156)	0.191 (0.124)	0.395 + (0.199)	0.382 * (0.174)
Constant	38.268 *** (2.876)	39.557 *** (2.292)	33.634 * (3.672)	35.137 ** (3.219)
R-squared	0.739	0.836	0.723	0.789
Adj. R-squared	0.687	0.803	0.668	0.747
S.E. of regression	2.898	2.299	3.699	3.229
F-statistic	14.213 ***	25.528 ***	13.104 ***	18.751 ***

+ p<.10 *p<.05 **<.01 ***p<.001

Entries are OLS regression coefficient.

Standard errors are in parentheses.

Next, multivariate equations are estimated to test the influences of independent variables. Table 2 reports the results of estimates. As for the percentage party vote won by an in-party candidate, the result of Equation 1 shows that presidential popularity (Approval) is significant with a positive value of coefficient. In-party candidates are likely to win a higher percentage of party vote when an incumbent president is popular. GDP and Partisan Shift in Equation 1 are insignificant. For Equation 2, GDP (Truncated) replaces GDP. Approval remains significant

while Partisan Shift remains insignificant. GDP (Truncated) is significant with a positive value of coefficient. In-party candidates are likely to win a higher percentage of party vote when the national economy is growing highly. The value of adjusted R^2 for Equation 2 suggests that the estimate explains 80 percent of the variation in the percentage party vote won by in-party candidates.

Figure 3. Percentage Party Vote Won by In-Party Candidate

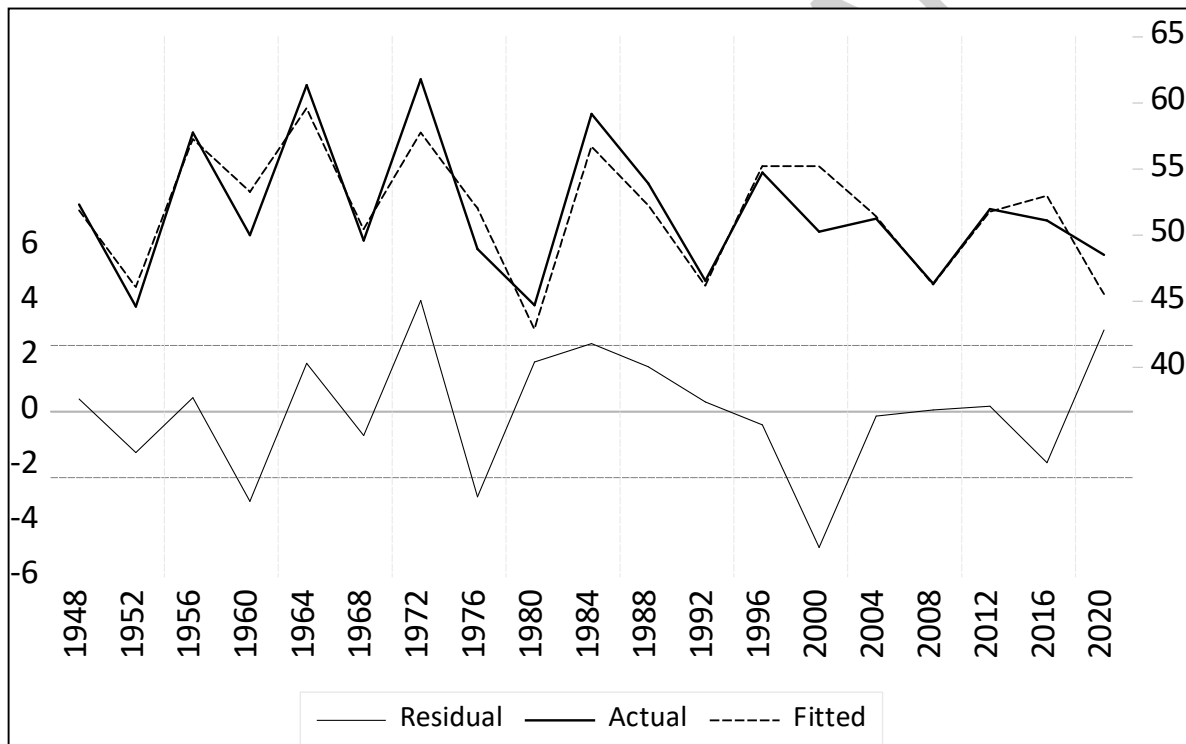


Figure 3 presents the observed (actual) values, estimated (fitted) values, and errors (residuals) of Equation 2. Figure 3 illustrates that Equation 2 predicts the party vote results very well. However, Figure 3 reveals relatively large residuals for the 1960, 1972, 1976, 2000, and

2020 elections. Nixon in the 1972 election, as well as Trump in the 2020 election, won a large number of votes relative to the values of their popularity and economic condition. Inversely, in the 1960 (Nixon), 1976 (Ford), and 2000 (Gore) elections, in-party candidates won a disproportionately small number of votes relative to the economic performance and the popularity of the incumbent president. Overall, Equation 2 accurately predicts the correct popular vote winner for at least 17 out of 19 elections. Assuming Richard Nixon won the popular vote in the 1960 election (Campbell 2008; Alexander 2019; Longley and Pierce 1996; Gains 2001), the model's accuracy increases to 18 out of 19 elections. The model incorrectly predicts a victory by Ford in the 1976 election (predicted 51.5 percent, actual 48.9 percent).

Apropos of the percentage total vote won by in-party candidates, Approval remains significant with positive values of coefficient in both Equation 3 and Equation 4. Also, GDP (Truncated) remains significant in Equation 4. Further, the shift in voters' party identification (Partisan Shift) is significant in both Equation 3 and Equation 4. The positive values of coefficients indicate that in-party candidates are likely to win a larger proportion of total popular votes when the voters of their parties increase. The value of adjusted R^2 for Equation 4 suggests that Approval, GDP (Truncated) and Partisan Shift jointly explain 74 percent of the variation in the percentage total vote won by in-party candidates.

Electoral College Vote Estimate

The forecast model for Electoral College vote results is estimated using the same independent variables, which include economic conditions, presidential popularity, and shifts in voters' party identification. The dependent variable is the percentage of Electoral College votes won by in-party candidates.ⁱⁱⁱ

While Table 3 presents the results of the estimate, Approval and GDP (Truncated) in Equation 5 are significant with positive coefficients. In addition, the shift in party identification in the electorate (Partisan Shift) is significant with a positive value of coefficient. Thus, when partisan voters of in-party candidates increase, the candidates are likely to win more electoral votes. The value of adjusted R^2 suggests that the Approval, GDP (Truncated), and Partisan Shift jointly explain 79 percent of the variation in the percentage Electoral College vote won by in-party candidates. Thus, the explanatory power of the estimate is substantial.

Table 3: Percentage Electoral College Vote

	<i>Eq. 5</i> Electoral College Vote	
Approval	1.104	***
	(0.244)	
GDP (Truncated)	4.011	**
	(1.154)	
Partisan Shift	1.486	*
	(0.639)	
Constant	0.117	
	(11.852)	
R-squared	0.826	
Adj. R-squared	0.792	
S.E. of regression	11.892	
F-statistic	23.774	***

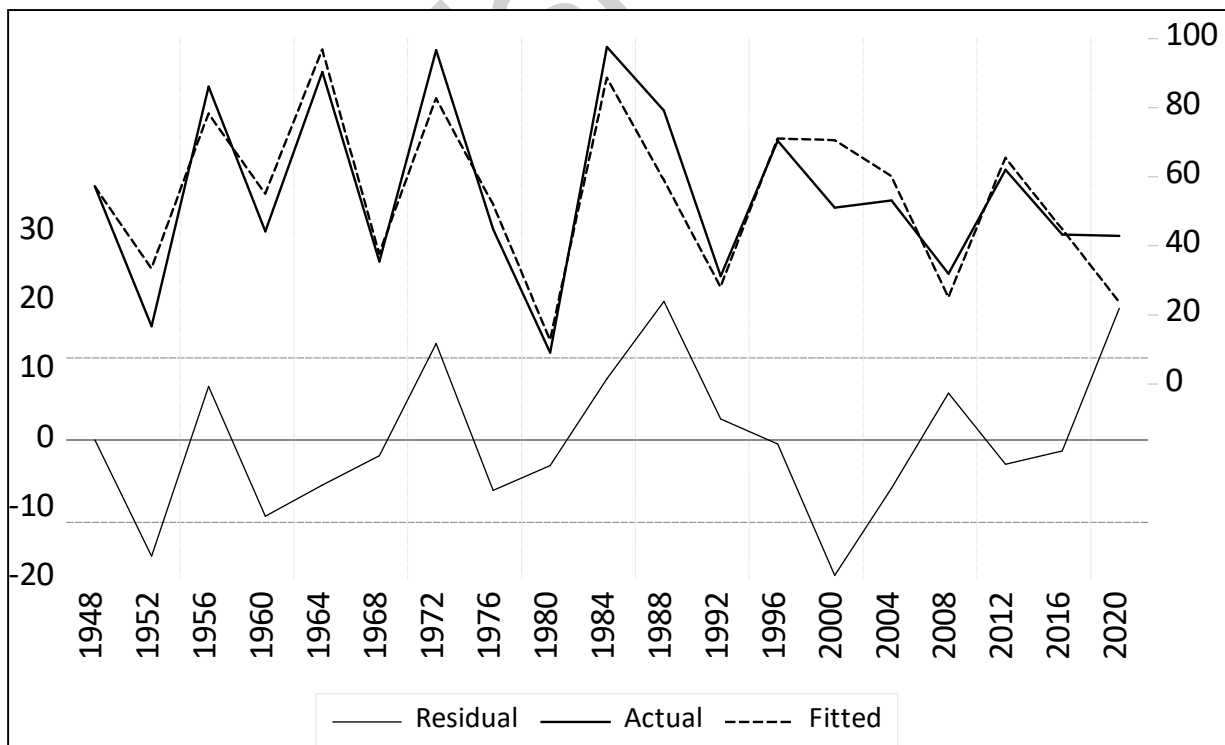
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Entries show coefficients.

Standard errors are in parentheses.

Figure 4 presents the observed (actual) values, estimated (fitted) values, and errors (residuals) of Equation 5. Figure 4 demonstrates that overall, Equation 5 predicts the percentage Electoral College vote won by in-party candidates very well. Still, Figure 4 reveals relatively larger residuals for the 1988, 2000, and 2020 elections. Bush in the 1988 election and Trump in the 2020 election won many electoral votes relative to the values of independent variables. During the 2020 election, Trump won 43 percent of electoral votes while the equation estimates 24 percent of electoral votes for him. As for the 2000 election, Gore won a disproportionately small number of votes relative to the values of independent variables. Gore won 49.5 percent of total electoral votes. While the electoral votes of Florida are discounted, Gore won 51 percent of electoral votes. However, the equation estimates 71 percent for his electoral votes.

Figure 4. Percentage Electoral College Vote: Actual and Predicted Values



Overall, Equation 5 predicts accurate Electoral College vote winners for 16 out of 19 elections. The model incorrectly predicts electoral victories by Nixon (1960: actual 44 percent, predicted 55 percent), Ford (1976: actual 45 percent, predicted 52 percent), and Gore (2000: actual 49.5 percent, predicted 71 percent). As for the 2000 election, researchers explain that Gore would have won in a Florida statewide recount (ie. deHaven-Smith 2005; Edwards 2019; Foley 2019).^{iv} Accordingly, if the 2000 election is discounted, the model predicts accurate Electoral College vote winners for 16 out of 18 elections. As for the 2016 election with the split results, the model proffers a largely accurate estimate for Hillary Clinton. In 2016, Clinton won 43 percent of electoral votes whereas the predicted value is 45 percent.

Conclusion

The nation is currently experiencing ample economic growth. At President Biden's inauguration in 2021, the unemployment rate was 6.2 percent. In contrast, the unemployment rate decreased to 3.8 percent in the second quarter of 2024, nearing a 50-year low. Also, the Gross Domestic Product expanded by 5.2 percent in the second quarter.

However, despite favorable economic indicators, President Biden's popularity among the electorate is currently low. According to the Gallup Poll survey conducted in April 2024, the presidential approval rate was 38 percent. In comparison, President Trump's approval rate in April 2020 was 46 percent. On July 21, 2024, President Biden announced that he was dropping out of his reelection bid and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris as his replacement. While this event is highly unusual, it is unlikely to exert a unique influence on the electoral results. A historical comparison can be made with March 31, 1968, when President Lyndon Johnson

withdrew from his reelection bid. Following his withdrawal, Vice President Hubert Humphrey was selected as the Democratic nominee at the tumultuous Democratic Party National Convention. Despite President Johnson's withdrawal from reelection campaign, the Partisan-Bounded Economic Model provides a reliable prediction for the 1968 election. Humphrey secured 49.6 percent of the party vote, while the Partisan-Bounded Economic Model predicts 49.0 percent for him.

The Partisan-Bounded Economic Model predicts that Vice President Kamala Harris will secure 52.3 percent of the party vote, 49.4 percent of the total popular vote, and 59.1 percent of the Electoral College votes. Thus, the electoral result of the 2024 election is likely to be closely contested, resulting in a victory with a narrow margin for either candidate. Regardless of the winner, a significant proportion of the nation is expected to remain deeply dissatisfied with the result.

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ⁱ Approximately 88 percent of the electorate identify as either partisan or independent leaning towards a major party.

ⁱⁱ Maine and Nebraska employ the Congressional District method instead of the Winner-Take-All method. In these states, a candidate who wins a plurality of popular votes within a congressional district receives an Electoral vote. In addition, a statewide popular vote winner receives two additional Electoral votes. Thus, notably, the Congressional District method removes the unit rule. Nevertheless, this method may not reduce wasted votes since there are many wasted votes within *districts*. Currently, one of the two districts in Maine is a competitive district, whereas one of the three districts in Nebraska is competitive. While there are large wasted votes in these competitive districts, there could be some wasted votes in the remaining non-competitive districts as well.

ⁱⁱⁱ For the 2000 election, the electoral vote of Florida is excluded from the calculation due to the controversial Supreme Court ruling in *Bush v. Gore*. Whereas the electoral votes of Florida are discounted, Gore secured 266 out of 512 votes.

^{iv} In the 2000 election, the day after Election Day, the results in Florida showed Bush leading by just a little over 300 votes- a narrow margin requiring a mandatory recount under state law.

Although Bush's legal team sought to limit the recount, the Florida Supreme Court ordered an immediate manual recount in all counties on December 8. Subsequently, the dispute went to the U.S. Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court ruled that the use of different standards for the recounts in different counties was a violation of the Equal Protection clause of the Constitution. Secondly, the Supreme Court ruled that the case would not be sent back to the Florida Supreme Court for the latter to order a statewide recount with uniform standards, because such a statewide

recount could not be completed before December 18, the day the electors would cast their Electoral College vote. The ruling, by 5-4 vote strictly split along ideological line, effectively halted the recount in Florida, and Bush was declared the winner in Florida. Consequently, Bush won 271 Electoral College votes- only one vote more than the necessary 270 votes to win the election, though Gore won 543,895 more popular votes. Several analysts estimate that Gore would have won in a Florida statewide recount (ie. deHaven-Smith 2005; Edwards 2019; Foley 2019).

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