

AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2020: MORE CHALLENGES AHEAD

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Abstract

American Presidential Elections are the most important elections in the world, the outcome of these elections has a major impact on the world's economy and politics. In last elections the unanticipated success of Republican candidate Donald Trump raised various questions about the future of US society in general and the world particular, the election results implied a vivid polarization in US society and a retreat from the multiethnic stance of the country. While in 2020 elections, Joe Biden elected as new President, his campaign and positive policies for all Americans have a big hand in his success. This election broke all previous records in the history of United States; in spite the spread of the corona Virus, voter's turnout in 2020 elections was much higher than before. Which challenges will Biden's government face in the future, this paper will endeavour to draw the expected fault lines of domestic and international politics of US in the context of newly elected government. The methodology used in this paper is based upon both primary and secondary sources books, articles, journals and newspapers. The analytical and descriptive research critically examines the different aspects of American Presidential Elections 2020, furthermore it will also highlight the future prospects in the sense that how the United States will face a strong economy like China in the future and retain its superpower title.

Keywords: America, Elections, Donald Trump, Joe Biden, American Politics.

The US presidential elections are the only elections in the globe that the whole world is trying to keep track of from the election campaign to the

results. The presidential election of world's only superpower also has an impact on world politics, economy and foreign policy. That is why elections are being watched with so much interest around the world. At the beginning of the year 2020, the entire world faced an epidemic Corona Virus; this pandemic started killing hundreds of people in the blink of eye and also swept the world in less than two months. Education activities badly suspended, ban on tourism and also on flights abroad, businesses were also badly affected. Even in a developed country like the United States, the epidemic caused record deaths. In this situation, there was a fear that the presidential election would not be held on time, but the United States surprised the whole world by holding the election on time. These elections also set many new records, the 2020 US presidential election is called the most unique election of its era.¹

BACKGROUND

There is no doubt that this presidential election not only decides the fate of Americans but also put long lasting effects on the lives of people around the world. The history of American elections is as old as the US, Democrats and Republican represents two different societies in American society in a two party system. In addition to discussing various political and economic contexts, they also discuss US international policies; their real purpose is to protect the interest of America, also sheds light on future policies through its election campaign and manifesto.² After a gap of four years, these elections are being held at a very high cost and it is only possible with good finance that voters from each state in the United States could play big role in winning their party. Many financiers in the capitalist economy support the elections and then later American presidents have to please these financiers under national and international policies.³

The American Supreme Court issued an order in 2010 that, candidates can incur unlimited expenses in elections. That is why the elections of 2012 and 2016 saw huge expenses and heavyweight campaigns. The 2016 elections gave the world astonishing results; Republican Trump's victory over Democrat Hillary surprised the United States itself.⁴ There is no doubt that the United States, like some of the developed countries of the world, is not yet mentally ready to accept a female president, however many under developed countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal have always welcomed the female presidents and prime ministers. But Hillary, a hot favourite candidate in the 2016 elections, had a long government experience; unexpectedly defeated and Republican Donald Trump has the honour of being president of the superpower America.⁵ Immigration policies tightened during Trump era, building a wall on the Mexican border was a testament of the Trump's America First policy. However, trump reduced the federal taxes and increased federal spending; bringing the federal budget deficit to more than 50 percent and that deficit reached one trillion US dollars in 2019, but still job creation was more than 23%.

*The 2017 climate change program and then the decision to maintain trade sanctions with China were some of the main decisions of Trump era. In the last year of his career, Trump declared a state of emergency to deal with the corona virus and with the end of his four years term, the election season in the United States has begun again.*⁶

INTRODUCTION

The 2020 American presidential elections were the 59th presidential elections in the American history that could have been delayed by the corona virus but these elections took place on time. Democrat Joe Biden stood up against Republican Trump and election rallies were held in all American states.⁷ In spite of corona virus, Americans took active part in the election campaign. Trump visited battle ground states and he has been widely criticised for failing to address social distance in his rallies.⁸ On the other hand Joe Biden also seemed active on political scenes, in his first presidential address; Biden emphasized the need to increase federal funding, defence production test and research. Trump also focused on the increment of defence production test, in his second speech Trump publicly said that Joe Biden called him a Xenophobic for imposing sanctions on foreign nationals. Both candidates sharply criticized each other's policies, Trump called the American economic boost and expansion the achievement of his first three years, while Biden attributed the strong economy to the Obama's era and said that Trump inherited a strong economy from the last government.⁹ Trump called environmental policy a serious issue but strongly condemned the Paris agreement on Greenhouse Gas Reduction while Biden supported it. Regarding health, Biden promised that affordable care act will be enacted while Trump expresses grave concern in his debate, saying it would be costly. Biden also adopted a flexible attitude towards Pakistan, India and especially the Kashmir Issue and it will be very beneficial for South Asia in the near future. Both candidates actively participated in their respective debates and advanced the stage of presidential election.¹⁰

As against Democrats, Republican voters are generally white people with conservative backgrounds, including old people, strong believers of Christian faith and living in villages or comparatively smaller towns, especially from southern parts of the country. Republicans are in favour of business interests and against the taxations policies for social welfare and they profess gun keeping rights.¹¹ The biggest reason the Democrats won the 2020 elections is that Joe Biden led all Americans to end racial segregation. Result of previous elections suggested polarization while 2020 elections denied polarization.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this research paper is qualitative in nature, based upon descriptive and evaluative approaches. Both primary and secondary sources have been utilised to substantiate the arguments e. g. newspaper articles, research papers and American official reports published

in American newspapers etc. The study focuses on the American Presidential Elections in particular and its results and aftermath in general. The impacts of these elections on the socio-economic spheres of global life furthermore requisite rising trends are also discussed in this research work.

AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2020

Donald Trump won the title of the oldest president of the United States in the last election, but Biden, at the age of 77 campaigned for the most powerful seat in the United States and broke Trump’s record. Despite the spread of the corona virus and the harmful effects of the epidemic, the elections were held on time.¹² Trumps slogan Make America Great Again but a few days before the election, Trump could not participate in his political activities due to contracting the corona virus but Joe Biden continued his campaign with zeal. In addition, postal voting was well received throughout the United States. In fact this trend started in 2016 and about 25 % voters mailed their ballots, corona virus caused a dramatic increase in postal voting in mid-2020, largely due to social restrictions imposed by the corona virus. Before 2020 elections, it is found out by a survey the 76% Americans are eligible for postal voting/ mailing.¹³ This election also saw some of the shortcomings of this technology, such as delays in delivery of mails and the disappearance of high speed sorting machine etc. Trump strongly opposed mail/postal voting but also sent his vote through mail from Florida. 2020 elections became the most expensive election in the United States, according to the estimation of Centre for Responsive Politics and fourteen billion \$ were spent on these elections, which is double compared to the last election, taking precautions against the corona virus during these election campaign was a key part of Trump and Biden’s campaign. However the assassination of George Floyd due to racial unrest sparked nationwide blacks lives matter Movement campaign; Trump called it symbol of hate while Biden has strongly condemned Trump’s statement and promised to form a police commission in the first 100 days after becoming president and will present a police reforms. About 158 million votes were casted in the 2020 elections.¹⁴ These elections enjoyed the highest number of casted votes in the history of United States and its turnout was higher than any other election. It was the 9th consecutive presidential election in the United States, in which the winning candidate did not get a popular vote majority by a double digit margin continuing the largest series of such presidential elections in US history that began in 1988.¹⁵

Table No. 1 Voters Turnout in 2020 Elections

Election	Voting Age Population (VAP)	Voting Eligible Population	Turnout	Turnout of VAP	Turnout of VEP
2020	257,605,088	239,247,182	159,690,457	62.0%	66.7%

Source: Voters Turnout Data, US Election Project, www.electproject.org

Democrat Biden secured 279 while Trump obtained 214 popular electoral votes; Trump is the first US president since 1992 to fail to be re-elected, earlier in 1990's Bush had failed to get re-elected. Trump is the second American president, who got lion's share of votes, but due to some margin he could not be re-elected, earlier, in the 1828, the same thing happened to John Quincy Adams.¹⁶ The victorious Joe Biden also remained succeeded in the US state of Georgia and this is the first victory for a democrat to win in that state since after 1992. Biden and Trump have won in about 25 states and this election is the first of all since 1880 in which both candidates remained victorious in same number of states. This is the first time since 1976 that the winning candidate has not won a single state more than his opponent. Senator Kamala Harris from California became the first African American and thirds female Vice-President of America. When Trump saw his failure in the election, he and his allies accused of voting fraud but American Attorney General could not find any evidence of voting fraud. The presidential electors voted for the president and vice-president seats on 14 December.¹⁷ After voting, Biden became the president of United States and Kamala Harris took over the vice president title. On January 20, 2021 both conquerors assumed office, while Trump failed to become president for the second time. Another thing to consider in this election is that Trump received 4% less white votes in this election than in 2016 elections, Democrats on the other hand managed to get black votes by a good margin. Trump and his supporters protested against the outcome of the 2020 elections and rallied which was the title Save America, Trump used social media to support his allies, but after the Biden's inauguration ceremony, all the protest gradually broke down.¹⁸

RISING TRENDS IN AMERICA

There is no doubt that throughout the history of the United States, the transfer of power from one administration to another is always very peaceful. A large number of young people casted their votes in the 2020 elections, making the turnout double than the 2016 elections. Biden took over the presidency and informed the American public about many policies and plans, also promised to restore the respected leadership on the world's biggest presidential stage, this pledge was well received throughout the United States. Joe Biden also called for reshaping diplomatic relations around the world and agreed to rejoin Iran Nuclear Accord, on which he faced strong criticism from Donald Trump. Biden announced some developmental projects in the first month of his presidency and also promised to spend 2 trillion \$ on clean energy and infrastructure.¹⁹

President Biden favoured of rejoining Paris Climate Agreement and he also planned to achieve Net-Zero emissions by 2050. Following the 2020 elections, work began on climate change and its prevention on a modern scale. On the other hand, in the face of rising tensions between the United States and China, concerns have been raised on a number of

issues. The most important of which are trade, security and the growing corona virus, in his first tweet, the American President addressed all Americans with great confidence and promised to meet their expectations, Kamala Harris also said in her first tweet that Americans have to work harder from today. Another rising trend in American society after 2020 elections is that by choosing Biden and Harris, American society has proved that he will not tolerate any kind of racism in the future.²⁰ Biden's appointment will also be favourable for American Muslims, he had also promised in his presidential campaign that he would lift the veil ban on the Muslims which was started by Trump in January 2017, Biden also quoted the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on this occasions.²¹ Joe Biden campaigned for equal rights for all Americans, regardless of race or religion and the Americans elected him as 46th president of United States of America.

CONCLUSION

The US presidential elections 2020 has broken many records in US political history, Republican Trump lost elections by low margin but turnout was much higher than all previous elections despite the corona virus. In the most expensive elections in American history, there was fierce competition between Republican Trump and Democrat Biden, Biden's balanced, positive and transcendental human rights campaign surpasses Trump's America First campaign and it proved that American society wants equality and equal rights in all circumstances. The world's number one democracy has racially discriminated against its oldest Negro inhabitants and they like democratic governments more than republicans and look very happy in their times. Trump's defeat and Biden's victory gives open proof that hatred, racial differences and inequality, emotional rhetoric and disgraceful statements sometimes bring superficial changes on political scenes but cannot turn back the wheel of political and social evolution for long term. Since Biden's presidency, Trump has become the first US president since 2000 to hold the presidency for only one term.

America will be led by Democrat Biden, and his policies will have an impact not only on the United States but around the world. Biden wants to run the United States together with all countries through his policies; he also wish to restore the real soul of America. Committed to pulling the United States out of all economic deficits, Biden wants to end all tensions and concerns with a strong economic country China. Biden's era will determined the future trends of world's politics, infrastructure, climate change and buy America policies will be led by Biden, and only time will tell which direction Joe Biden will take in the direction of US economic growth. Competing with an emerging strong economy like China, the United States also needs to strengthen its economy stronger and stronger so that it would retain its superpower title.



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