

Identifying Voter Preferences for Politicians' Personal Attributes: A Conjoint Experiment in Japan*

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Abstract

The personal attributes of politicians are often important in determining the outcomes of elections, yet few studies have rigorously investigated which particular personal attributes (among many) are most relevant in shaping voters' preferences for politicians. We investigate this question with a conjoint survey experiment in Japan. In contrast to the commonly observed attributes of actual Japanese politicians, we find that voters dislike older politicians and celebrities, and are indifferent with regard to dynastic family ties and gender. Our results also reveal consistent preferences when respondents are primed with information about the different electoral contexts of Japan's mixed-member bicameral system, despite differences in the observed attributes of politicians across these contexts. These discrepancies suggest a significant role played by parties' recruitment and selection practices, rather than voters' preferences *per se*, in shaping the types of politicians who represent voters in parliament. (140 words)

Keywords: representation, electoral systems, personal vote, conjoint analysis, Japan

Word count: 10,062 (including captions and references)

1 Introduction

The personal attributes of politicians have long been viewed as an important component in determining the outcomes of elections and the nature of representation in democracies (e.g., Pitkin, 1967; Putnam, 1976). Party leaders seeking to win elections take the personal attributes of potential candidates seriously, both because the right combination of attributes will help optimize the party’s mobilization efforts, and because the candidates they nominate will ultimately determine the composition and character of the party itself (e.g., Crotty, 1968; Schattschneider, 1942). Leaders are also aware that what constitutes the “right” combination of attributes is in part conditional on the electoral rules. Indeed, cross-national observational data indicate that the personal attributes of politicians — including gender, age, race, ethnicity, geographic ties, professional background, and prior political experience — tend to differ across electoral systems (e.g., Borchert and Zeiss, 2003; Norris, 1997).

Despite being of fundamental importance to our understanding of elections and representation, however, few studies have rigorously investigated which particular personal attributes are most relevant in shaping voters’ preferences for politicians. Part of the challenge in investigating this question is that politicians possess more than a single attribute that might appeal to voters, in addition to having a party affiliation (which conveys additional information to voters) and articulating various specific policy positions. As a result, it is usually unclear which attributes — among the many that might be possessed — are evaluated positively or negatively by voters. This challenge is compounded by the fact that many attributes, such as education and income, are correlated with each other, making it difficult to isolate which particular attributes matter most to voters. Similarly, it is difficult to use observational data to disentangle voter preferences for politicians’ personal attributes from multiple other confounding factors affecting election outcomes.

In this study, we investigate the relative importance of politicians’ personal attributes to voters with a conjoint survey experiment in Japan. Conjoint analysis is a survey method

developed for marketing research that has recently been adopted for use in political science (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto, 2014). In our experiment, we juxtapose pairs of hypothetical politicians’ profiles featuring a random combination of common personal attributes observed among actual Japanese politicians. We then ask respondents to choose the person they find most desirable as a representative. This design allows us to evaluate voters’ multidimensional preferences for the various attributes that make up a typical politician’s overall profile.

Our approach builds on a small but growing number of studies using conjoint analysis to evaluate the attributes of politicians (e.g., Carnes and Lupu, forthcoming; Franchino and Zucchini, 2014; Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto, 2014).¹ Our contributions to this budding literature are twofold. First, we include several attributes that have been identified in the existing literature as being particularly relevant to a “personal vote” (Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina, 1987), such as local ties, prior experience, dynastic family ties, and celebrity status. Including these “personal vote-earning attributes” (Shugart, Valdini and Suominen, 2005) in the hypothetical politician profiles — detached from the other qualities encompassed by actual politicians — allows us to examine an important question that is under-explored in the existing literature: how much do voters value these attributes of politicians *per se*?

Second, the institutional context of Japan allows us to explore whether preferences vary when voters consider politicians who are elected under different electoral rules. Japan’s parliament (Diet) consists of two chambers, each of which uses a mixed-member majoritarian (Shugart and Wattenberg, 2001) electoral system. As a result, members of parliament (MPs) are elected through a total of four different electoral contexts. The different electoral rules are intended to provide different types of representation to voters — namely, locally-oriented representation in geographically small districts with candidate-centered voting, ver-

¹A handful of other studies have investigated voter preferences for various attributes using alternative experimental survey designs, including conjoint-like designs (e.g., Campbell and Cowley, 2014; Carlson, 2015).

sus broadly-oriented representation in large districts using variants of list-based proportional representation (PR). We randomly assign our respondents to be primed with information on one these contexts, and investigate whether distinct preferences for certain types of politicians emerge depending on the context that is primed.

In the following section, we first introduce our empirical setting of Japan and the four representational contexts created by its mixed-member bicameral parliament. We then document several patterns in the observed attributes of Japanese candidates and MPs in each context. In Section 3, we discuss why it is difficult to identify voters' preferences for the personal attributes of politicians using such observational data. In Section 4, we present the details of our conjoint survey experiment design, which we propose as a solution to this identification problem. Section 5 presents the results of the experiment, first pooled across all respondents and then split by the informational priming respondents were given.

The results reveal that Japanese voters have strong preferences for and against certain personal attributes in politicians. Specifically, voters prefer experienced or locally born politicians, but do not prefer politicians affiliated with a major political party. In stark contrast to commonly observed attributes of actual Japanese politicians, we find that voters do not prefer older politicians or celebrities, and are indifferent with regard to dynastic family ties and gender. Our results also reveal consistent patterns in voters' preferences regardless of the priming of different representational contexts, and despite significant differences in the observed attributes of the actual candidates and MPs in each context. These discrepancies suggest a significant role played by parties' recruitment and selection practices, rather than voters' preferences *per se*, in shaping the types of actual politicians nominated and elected in electoral processes. Section 6 concludes and discusses avenues for further research.

2 Contextual Background for the Case of Japan

Japan is an ideal setting for our experiment for two reasons. First, numerous scholars of Japanese politics have emphasized the relevance of the personal attributes of politicians in elections (e.g., Curtis, 1971; Ishibashi and Reed, 1992; Hirano, 2006; Scheiner, 2006). Popular wisdom is that successful politicians must cultivate the three *ban*: *jiban* (support base), *kaban* (financial resources), and *kanban* (name recognition) (Curtis, 1971). Second, the mixed-member majoritarian systems used in the two chambers of the Diet provide important intra-country variation with regard to the electoral rules under which parties nominate candidates and voters cast their ballots. In this section, we first explain these two contextual backgrounds of our research design. We then use observational data from two recent elections to present some statistics on the personal attributes of candidates and MPs in each chamber.

2.1 Parties and the Personal Attributes of Politicians

In the dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), candidate selection has traditionally been decentralized to local party branches, with heavy influence of local elites (Reed, 2009). This means LDP nominations often favor local politicians who supported a previous incumbent, or dynastic “legacy” candidates who are related to the previous incumbent (Fukui, 1997; Ishibashi and Reed, 1992). The name recognition enjoyed by such candidates helps them perform well in elections (Asako et al., 2015). Former national bureaucrats (viewed positively by party leaders for their expertise) have also been common, though have been partly displaced in recent years with ever more legacy candidates.

The main opposition to the LDP, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was formed in 1996 by defectors from the LDP and other parties and expanded through a series of party mergers over time.² As a result, the backgrounds and personal attributes of DPJ candidates

²The DPJ merged with another party in 2016 and re-branded itself as simply the Democratic Party. At

have been more diverse than those of LDP candidates (Smith, Pekkanen and Krauss, 2013). In part because of its short history, the DPJ's candidates have less often had backgrounds in local politics or the national bureaucracy, and political dynasties have been less common. On the other hand, the DPJ has been more active than the LDP in recruiting and nominating women as candidates (Gauder, 2013).

Two other parties have consistently contested recent elections. Kōmeitō, in coalition with the LDP since 1999, is a small religious party affiliated with the Buddhist organization, Sōka Gakkai. Beyond Sōka Gakkai, the party does not have direct ties to interest groups in society from which to recruit candidates, so nearly all Kōmeitō candidates are also members of Sōka Gakkai, and often are former employees of the party or the religious organization (Smith, 2013). The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) is a small, but well-financed, leftist party that is the oldest party in Japan. Local ties are not dominant in JCP nomination decisions. The party recruits many of its candidates from among party employees, citizen's group activists, union leaders, and left-wing lawyers (Curtis, 1979).³

2.2 Institutions: Mixed-Member Bicameralism

The Diet consists of two chambers, each of which uses a mixed-member majoritarian electoral system. Specifically, for the House of Representatives (the lower chamber, henceforth HR), 295 members are elected by a first-past-the-post (FPTP) system in single-member districts (SMDs) contained within Japan's 47 prefectures. Another set of 180 members are elected through a closed-list PR (CLPR) system in one of eleven regional districts that overlap with the SMDs.⁴ Voters cast their ballots in the SMD tier of the mixed system by physically

the time of our survey experiment, it was still known as the DPJ.

³Candidates in recent elections have also been fielded by a number of smaller and ephemeral parties, including the Social Democratic Party, the People's Life Party, the Party of Future Generations, and the Japan Innovation Party.

⁴The number of seats per CLPR district ranges from 6 to 29. The seat allocation formula is D'Hondt.

writing out the name of a candidate on the ballot paper. In the CLPR tier of the system, voters instead write the name of a party. Candidates may be dual-listed in both tiers. If a dual-listed candidate loses his or her SMD contest, he or she might still be elected through the party’s PR list. Such candidates have been dubbed “zombies” in the media, since they “died” in SMD but were “brought back to life” in PR.

The mixed-member system for the House of Councillors (the upper chamber, henceforth HC) combines 146 seats elected in districts that are geographically coterminous with the 47 prefectures, and 96 seats filled through an open-list PR (OLPR) contest in a single, nationwide contest.⁵ In the prefecture-based district races, members are elected with the single non-transferable vote (SNTV) system with district magnitude (the number of seats) ranging from 1 to 5.⁶ Voters cast their ballots for a single candidate, as in the SMD tier of the HR, and seats are allocated in descending order of vote share until all seats are filled. In the OLPR tier, voters write the name of a candidate or a party. Seats are allocated first to parties, then to candidates on those parties’ list in descending order of personal preference votes until all party seats are filled. The dual-listing provision is not used in the HC.

Japan’s mixed-member bicameral parliament is thus a psephologist’s dream for evaluating the effects of different institutional arrangements. Members are elected under four different electoral systems (FPTP, SNTV, CLPR, OLPR) in districts of four different geographical sizes: sub-prefectural area (FPTP in HR), entire prefecture (SNTV in HC), regions made up of multiple prefectures (CLPR in HR), and the entire country (OLPR in HC). Furthermore, voters have different ways to cast their ballots; specifically, they choose a candidate (FPTP, SNTV), a party (CLPR), or either a candidate or a party (OLPR). These differences are summarized in Table 1. All of this variation exists within a single country, which allows us

⁵Members of the HC are elected to staggered, fixed three-year terms, with only half up for re-election every three years.

⁶For prefectures that return only one member each election, this tier of the mixed system is effectively equivalent to FPTP in SMDs.

Table 1: Mixed-member systems of Japan’s bicameral parliament

| | District tier | PR tier |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| House of Representatives | FPTP in districts within 47 prefectures (295 seats) | CLPR in 11 regional districts (180 seats) |
| House of Councillors | SNTV in 47 prefectural districts (146 seats) | OLPR in national district (96 seats) |

Note: FPTP = first-past-the-post system; SNTV = single, non-transferable vote system; CLPR = closed-list, proportional representation system; OLPR = open-list, proportional representation system.

to avoid some of the challenges to inference that are inherent to cross-national comparisons of politicians’ attributes.

Theoretically, this intra-country variation should produce different degrees of relevance for the personal attributes of politicians (Carey and Shugart, 1995; Shugart, Valdini and Suominen, 2005). The most consistent finding in the existing literature is that PR systems tend to elect more women and ethnic minorities than SMD systems, as they lower the electoral risk to parties of nominating a diverse slate of candidates (e.g., Moser, 2008; Rosen, 2013; Rule, 1987).⁷ Numerous other studies indicate that electoral systems that structure vote choice around candidates (e.g., FPTP, SNTV, and OLPR) rather than parties (e.g., CLPR) are more likely to feature candidates with strong personal vote-earning attributes, such as local ties, prior political experience, name recognition or celebrity status, or a dynastic family relationship to a previous politician (e.g., Gallagher, 1985; Nemoto and Shugart, 2013; Tavits, 2010). The importance of such attributes in candidate-centered vote systems should also increase with the intraparty competition produced by the larger district mag-

⁷We do not consider ethnicity, as Japan is ethnically homogeneous.

nitude of the SNTV and OLPR rules in the HC. This is because increased informational demands on voters should heighten the salience of personal attributes as heuristic devices in vote choice (Shugart, Valdini and Suominen, 2005). Relatedly, where electoral districts are geographically delimited to smaller units, such as SMDs in the HR and prefectural SNTV districts in the HC, we should expect stronger demand among voters for a politician with local ties to that district (Grofman, 2005).

2.3 Observed Personal Attributes of Politicians

A few previous empirical studies have taken advantage of mixed-member systems to confirm observational differences in politicians' attributes under different electoral rules, while holding country-specific factors constant (e.g., Kostadinova, 2007; Moser, 2008; Moser and Scheiner, 2012; Manow, 2015). This research has focused only on gender or ethnicity, however, leaving other important attributes of politicians, in particular those related to the personal vote, unexamined. Moreover, an important challenge with any observational data on politicians' attributes is identifying whether the observed differences are due to voters' distinct preferences for specific attributes under different contexts, versus parties' different strategies for recruiting and nominating candidates. Before we discuss this problem and our proposed solution, it is nevertheless useful to first document the observed differences in the attributes of the actual candidates and MPs elected to each chamber of the Diet.

To this end, we collected information on the personal attributes of all 433 candidates who ran in the July 2013 HC election and all 1,191 candidates who ran in the December 2014 HR election (the two most recent elections before our survey experiment was conducted). For each candidate, we coded his or her party affiliation at the time of the election, previous number of terms served, current incumbency status, age, gender, hometown (birthplace), place of education and highest level of educational achievement, prior occupation, and family background in politics, among other common attributes of Japanese candidates. For space reasons, here we simply highlight a few notable patterns in the observed attributes of

candidates and winners across institutional contexts (Figure 1).⁸

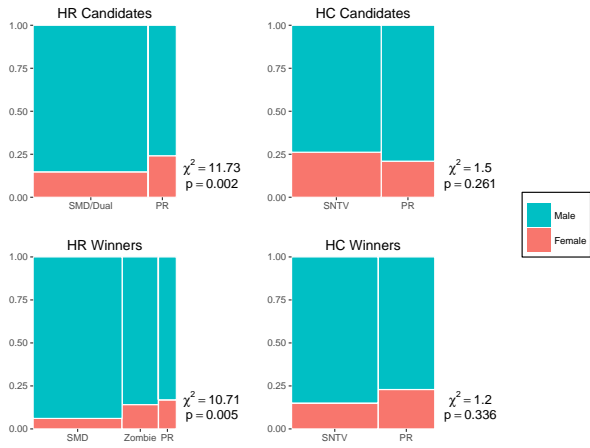
The top two panels show the distributions of gender (Figure 1a) and age (Figure 1b) among candidates and winners in each chamber and electoral system tier — SMD (including dual-listed) versus PR for the HR; SNTV (including SMDs) versus PR for the HC. For the HR, we separate PR winners who ran as “pure” PR list candidates from the dual-listed candidates who lost in SMD but were elected in PR (so-called “zombies”). We find that women are more prevalent among MPs in the PR tiers of each chamber than among MPs elected in the smaller districts. The difference is significant in the HR, but not in the HC. It is also notable that women are more common among zombie winners than among SMD winners. Figure 1b shows the distribution of age across the contexts, grouped into five categories. Of note here is that older candidates (i.e., 70 or over) appear to do better than younger candidates at getting elected in the SMD (HR) and SNTV (HC) tiers, but not in the PR tiers of either chamber. More generally, Japanese candidates and politicians tend to be old. Only about 10-20% of candidates and politicians are less than 40 years old.

The middle two panels consider two common career backgrounds. Figure 1c shows the patterns for local assembly experience (including either municipality-level or prefectural-level assemblies), while Figure 1d shows the patterns for former national bureaucrats. Local assembly experience has been used in previous studies as a key measure of both local orientation and the personal vote (e.g., Nemoto and Shugart, 2013; Scheiner, 2006; Shugart, Valdini and Suominen, 2005; Tavits, 2010). Politicians with local assembly experience are significantly more prevalent in the smaller, district tiers of each chamber than in the larger, PR tiers. The exception is that local politicians appear as candidates in the HC at roughly the same rate; however, they appear to win at higher rates in the district races. Former bureaucrats are more common among candidates and winners in the SMD tier than the PR tier in the HR, but there are no apparent patterns across tiers in the HC.

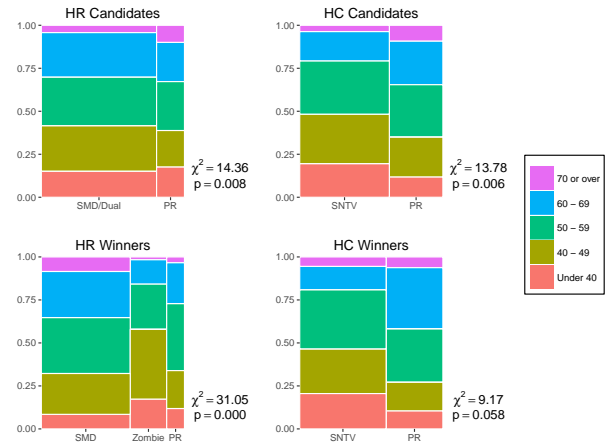
Finally, the bottom two panels highlight differences in the observational data regarding

⁸Additional attributes are presented in Figures 6 and 7 in the Online Appendix.

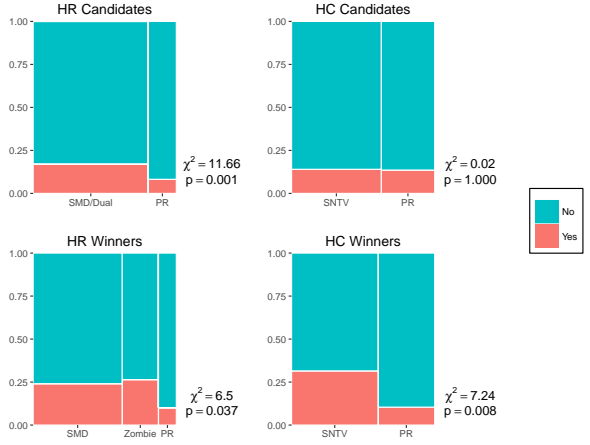
(a) Gender



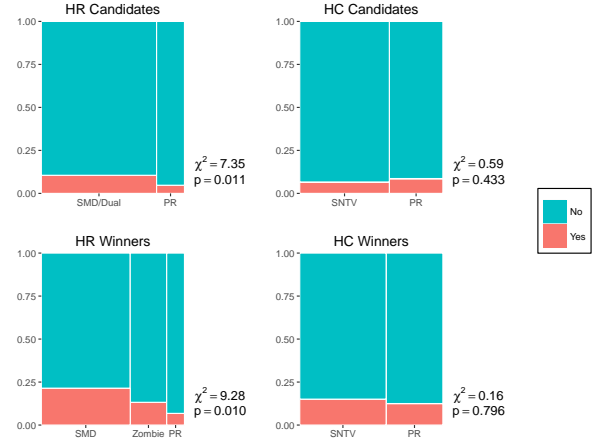
(b) Age



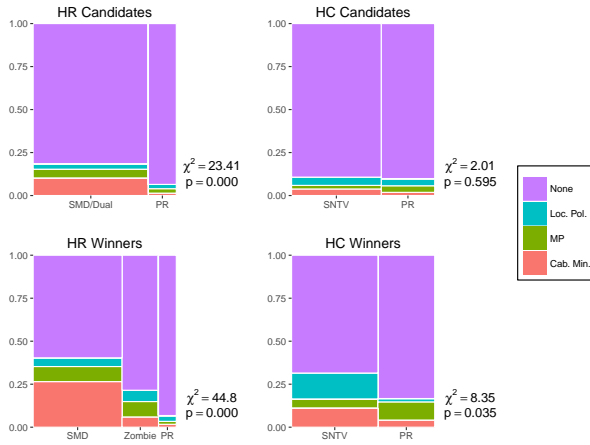
(c) Local Assembly Experience



(d) Former National Bureaucrat



(e) Dynastic Family Ties



(f) Celebrity Status

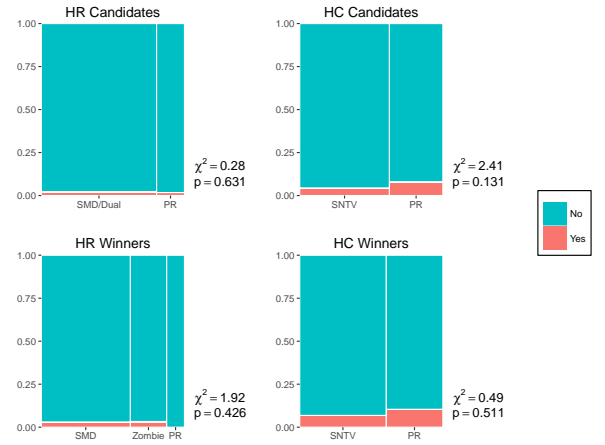


Figure 1: Personal attributes across candidates, winners, and institutional contexts.

Note: Attributes coded based on profiles listed in newspapers and candidate websites during the 2013 House of Councillors and 2014 House of Representatives elections.

dynastic family ties (Figure 1e) and celebrity status (Figure 1f), two attributes that are particularly relevant for the personal vote, as both are likely to increase name recognition. We code whether each politician was related to a previously elected local politician, a previously elected national-level politician (who never served in cabinet), or a former cabinet minister. Overall, political legacies are much more prevalent among the candidates and MPs of the district tier of the HR. In the HC, legacies appear as candidates at equivalent rates across tiers but are more likely to appear in the district tier among winners. We define a celebrity candidate as any candidate with a high profile from a previous career in television, movies, music, comedy, sports, news, and so on (in Japan often described generally as a “talent”). The observational data show that such candidates are most common in the OLPR tier of the HC, where their national name recognition is presumably an electoral asset; however, the difference across tiers is not statistically significant.

3 Identification Problems

The patterns evident in the observational data appear to suggest that the theoretical expectations of the literature on the relationship between electoral systems and politicians’ personal attributes are more or less supported. For example, politicians with dynastic ties are more prevalent in the district tiers than in the PR tiers. However, such observational data are limited in important ways for understanding the actual preferences of voters for different personal attributes in candidates and MPs.

First, every politician has multiple attributes, including age, gender, experience, prior occupation, and so on, and usually runs with a party label that also represents a number of substantive policy concerns of voters. It is simply not possible to separate specific attributes from a politician’s overall profile of attributes to determine which attributes were most attractive to voters. For example, although incumbents tend to do well in elections, it is often not clear how much of the incumbency advantage is due to incumbents’ personal

attributes (e.g., name recognition and experience) versus their party labels (e.g., Carson, Engstrom and Roberts, 2007; Fowler and Hall, 2014). Similarly, although a substantial amount of research finds that candidates tend to receive more votes in their hometowns (e.g., Key, 1949; Rice and Macht, 1987; Górecki and Marsh, 2012), it is not clear whether this reflects voters’ preferences for a local candidate *per se*, or the greater mobilizational advantages that local candidates have in their hometowns.

Each of the observed attributes may also be correlated with a number of other attributes, which makes it impossible to determine which were most valued by voters. To illustrate this point, Figure 2 presents a set of correlation matrices for several of the common personal attributes of candidates and MPs in the HR and HC. These attributes include age and dummy variables for experience (incumbency), gender, education (any college and a degree from the prestigious University of Tokyo), local ties (birthplace in the district), any dynastic ties, party (LDP, DPJ, or JCP), and local political experience. We pool observations across electoral tiers because the point here is simply to illustrate the ways in which certain attributes may be overlapping. The top two panels of Figure 2 present the correlations among candidates in the HR and HC; the bottom two panels present the corresponding correlations for MPs. In each panel, the cells in the bottom-left part of the matrix give the numerical values of the correlations, while the mirror-image cells in the upper-right part of the matrix are color-coded, with darker blue (red) indicating larger positive (negative) correlations.

The correlation matrices illustrate how some attributes of interest to voters may be correlated, which makes it a challenge for researchers, let alone party actors involved in candidate selection, to determine what kinds of attributes voters actually prefer. Not surprisingly, age (*Age*) and prior incumbency experience (*Exp.*) are highly correlated, as are local birth (*Local*) and local political experience (*Loc. Pol. Exp.*). Candidates and MPs from the LDP are more often dynastic (*Dynastic*) than in other parties, but they also tend to be older and are more likely to be born in the district they represent. Similarly, the membership of the DPJ and JCP includes more women. These party differences make it difficult to determine whether

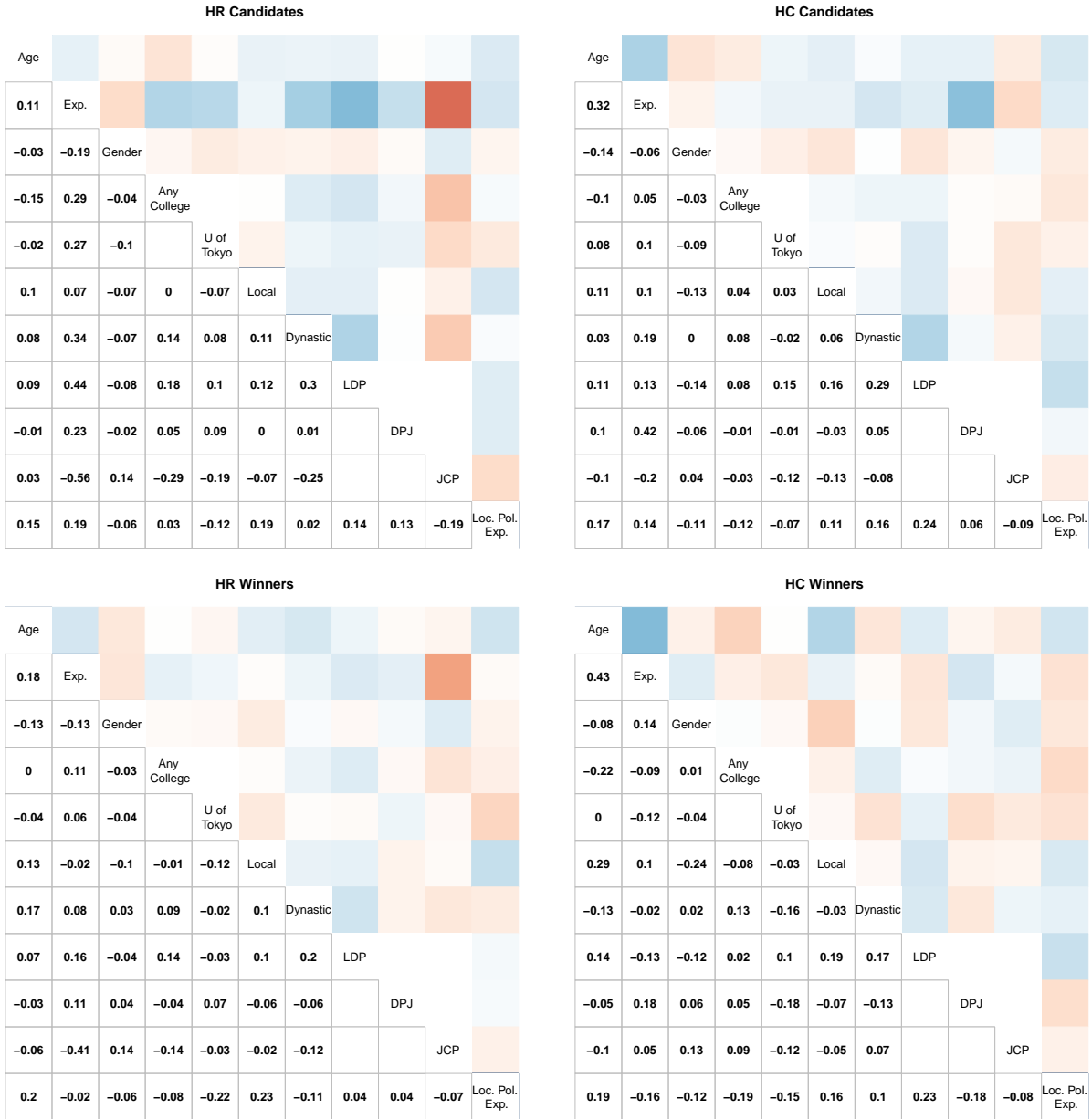


Figure 2: Correlation matrix of common attributes of candidates and MPs.

Note: The bottom-left part of the matrix in each panel gives the numerical values of the correlations, while the mirror-image cells in the upper-right part of the matrix are color-coded, with darker blue (red) indicating larger positive (negative) correlations.

voters valued the personal attribute (e.g., gender or dynastic family ties), or whether they supported the party, and the party’s candidate just happened to have these attributes.

An additional problem with observational data is that the observed attributes of politicians are in part a reflection of which eligible citizens attempt to run for office and who among them are selected by parties. The nature of political life or the structure of political opportunity may be more suited to certain socio-demographic backgrounds than others (e.g., Iversen and Rosenbluth, 2010). As a result, even if we observe more politicians with certain attributes in a given country or party, it could have more to do with the *supply* of candidates with these attributes than the *demand* from voters. Similarly, even if we observe that certain attributes are common among elected politicians, it could be because voters preferred candidates with those attributes, or because there was a lack of choice for candidates with alternative attributes. Thus, it is unclear to what extent the observed differences in politicians’ attributes under different electoral rules can be attributed purely to popular preferences, rather than the supply-side factors that are controlled by political elites.

4 Survey Design

The previous two sections documented, on one hand, the existence of observable differences in the personal attributes of politicians under various electoral contexts in Japan, but on the other hand, the difficulty of using observational data to identify which particular personal attributes are relevant for voters when shaping their preferences for politicians. Our research question, then, is twofold: First, which personal attributes are actually most preferred by the Japanese electorate? Second, do voters prefer different types of politicians depending on whether politicians are members of Japan’s HR or HC, and whether they are elected by plurality rule in a small-sized district (either FPTP or SNTV) or by proportional representation (CLPR or OLPR) in a larger-sized district? To examine these questions, we conducted

a survey experiment on 2,200 Japanese citizens of eligible voting age (20 and older).⁹ This section elaborates on our experimental design.

4.1 Random Assignment of Respondents to Groups

We randomly assigned respondents to one of four groups: group (1) was exposed to information about the SMD tier of HR elections, and then to information about the PR tier of HR elections; group (2) was exposed to the same set of information about HR elections but in the reverse order; group (3) was exposed to information about the SNTV tier of HC elections, and then to information about the PR tier of HC elections; group (4) was exposed to the same set of information about HC elections but in the reverse order. We prepared two groups of respondents for each chamber (HR versus HC) to avoid any potential ordering effect. After each piece of information was presented, each respondent undertook five conjoint tasks, thus making the total number of tasks per respondent ten overall.

Specifically, the respondents in the first group were first asked to read the following sentences that highlight the electoral system, the geographical unit/size of the district, and how voters cast a ballot:

The House of Representatives uses two electoral systems: single-member district and proportional representation list. For the **single-member district** races, **the entire country is divided into 295 districts**, and voters write **the name of a candidate**. The candidate with the most votes wins. On the next five screens, you will see tables featuring hypothetical politicians with different attributes

⁹Respondents were recruited with assistance of the online survey company, Qualtrics Panels, between November and December, 2015. Our sample is not a probability sample, but is similar to the population in terms of demographics variables for age, gender, prefecture of residence, income level, and educational background. We corrected for slight imbalances using post-stratification weights obtained via entropy balancing (Hainmueller, 2012). The results are similar, however, regardless of whether we use these post-stratification weights.

running for office in a **single-member district** race. Please examine each table carefully before answering the questions that follow.

After completing the first set of five conjoint tasks, respondents were asked to read the following sentences:

Thank you very much. For the second type of House of Representatives election, **proportional representation list** races, **the entire country is divided into 11 districts**, and voters write **the name of a party**. Seats are allocated to parties based on the party vote. On the next five screens, you will see tables featuring hypothetical politicians with different attributes running for office in a **proportional representation list** race. Please examine each table carefully before answering the questions that follow.

Respondents in the second group were given the same sets of information about the electoral systems for the House of Representatives, but in the reverse order. The respondents in the third group were first asked to read the following sentences:

The House of Councillors uses two electoral systems: district and proportional representation list. For the **district** races, **each prefecture is a district**, and voters write **the name of a candidate**. Candidates are elected in the order of who gets the most votes, up to the number of seats up for grabs. On the next five screens, you will see tables featuring hypothetical politicians with different attributes running for office in a **district** race. Please examine each table carefully before answering the questions that follow.

After completing the first set of five conjoint tasks, respondents were asked to read the following sentences:

Thank you very much. For the second type of House of Councillors election, **proportional representation list** races, **the entire country is the district**,

and voters write the name of a candidate or the name of a party. Seats are allocated to parties and then to candidate(s) in the order of votes, up to the number of seats that the party wins. On the next five screens, you will see tables featuring hypothetical politicians with different attributes running for office in a proportional representation list race. Please examine each table carefully before answering the questions that follow.

Again, similar to the second group in the HR scenario, the respondents in the fourth group were given the same sets of information but in reverse order.

Our goal is to test whether providing respondents with information about how voters cast their ballots (i.e., whether voters choose a candidate or a party) and whether a politician represents a relatively small geographical area (e.g., one of 295 SMDs or a prefecture) versus a larger area (e.g., one of eleven large regions or the entire country) might have an impact on the attributes that respondents prefer in politicians. Specifically, we are interested in whether the clear difference observed for the actual politicians in these representational contexts (Section 2.3) is an accurate reflection of voters' preferences for different types of politicians under different electoral contexts, or a product of "filtering" at the elite level. Taken at face value, our observational evidence seem to suggest that respondents will reveal discernibly different preferences for politicians in different electoral contexts. However, given the shortcomings of the observational data, we cannot *a priori* rule out the possibility that respondents have identical preferences across these contexts.

An important caveat for interpreting our results is that this priming is not intended as a realistic simulation of the actual conditions and processes of voting under the different electoral contexts that exist in Japan. Rather, it is designed to activate respondents' factual understanding of the electoral rules and investigate how such activation affects the way they evaluate politicians' personal attributes. While this may limit the external validity of our findings in some ways, it also has the benefit of isolating the impact of (information about) electoral rules *per se* from other aspects of the Japanese Diet. In this regard, it is

also important to note that we did not put our experiment in the context of any specific election that happened in the real world. This is advantageous for measuring respondents’ preferences without encouraging them to associate the hypothetical politicians presented in our experiments with any actual politicians.

4.2 Randomized Attributes and Levels

In each of the ten conjoint tasks, respondents compared two hypothetical politicians and answered the following question: “Which of the following two persons do you think is the most desirable as []? Even if you are not entirely sure, please indicate which of the two you would prefer.” The phrase within the square brackets was either “a **single-member district** member of the House of Representatives,” “a **proportional representation list** member of the House of Representatives,” “a **district** member of the House of Councillors,” or “a **proportional representation list** member of the House of Councillors.” Note that we underlined and highlighted the words associated with the electoral system.

Figure 3 shows an example of the conjoint tables shown to respondents. Each profile of a hypothetical politician has nine personal attributes. The order of these attributes was randomized for each respondent to avoid any possible order effect. To avoid a cognitive strain, however, the order was fixed across all ten exercises for the same respondent. The “levels” (specific attributes) were randomly assigned for each profile. The randomization of the attributes allows us to make causal inference about which of these attributes are more relevant in respondents’ choice of politicians, and which specific levels on those attributes are more positively or negatively evaluated by the respondents than others. Specifically, we follow the approach proposed by Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto (2014). Their fully-randomized conjoint analysis non-parametrically identifies the average marginal component effect (AMCE) for each of the attribute levels on the probability of choosing a profile.

Table 2 provides the entire set of attributes and levels of those attributes used in the conjoint experiment. The first attribute (*Party*) is a politician’s party affiliation (or non-

次の2人の人物のうち、どちらがより小選挙区選出の衆議院議員として望ましいと思いますか。もし、どちらが望ましいかはっきりとは言えない場合でも、どちらか一方、あえていえばより望ましいと思われる方を選んでください。

| | 人物 1 | 人物 2 |
|-------------|--------|------|
| 最終学歴 | 地方国立大卒 | 東大卒 |
| 親の政治家経験 | 国会議員 | 大臣 |
| 過去の当選回数 | 1回 | 2回 |
| 衆議院議員としての経験 | 在職中 | 在職中 |
| 性別 | 女性 | 男性 |
| 職歴 | 北海道知事 | タレント |
| 出身地 | 北海道 | 北海道 |
| 年齢 | 42歳 | 30歳 |
| 所属政党 | 自由民主党 | 無所属 |

どちらを望ましいと思うか

人物 1

人物 2

Figure 3: Example of conjoint table shown to respondents (in Japanese).

Note: Column headers are: “Person 1” and “Person 2.” The text above the table asks: “Which of the following two persons do you think is most desirable as a single-member district member of the House of Representatives? Even if you are not entirely sure, please indicate which of the two you would prefer.” The first column lists attributes, such as party and former occupation. Full English translations of attributes and levels are in Table 2. The text below the table asks: “Which person do you prefer?” and is followed by two buttons for the respondent to use to register his or her choice.

affiliation) and has five levels: the “Liberal Democratic Party (LDP),” “Kōmeitō,” “Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ),” “Japan Communist Party (JCP),” and “an independent” (baseline level).¹⁰ Given that many Japanese voters are so-called *mutōha*, meaning those who do not have any party they strongly support or who even have an anti-party sentiment, we expect that independent politicians will often be regarded as more desirable among Japanese voters. Yet, when respondents are primed with the electoral system under which voters need to (or are able to) choose a party rather than a candidate, we expect that party-affiliated politicians will be more likely to be chosen in the conjoint tasks.

The remainder of the attributes in the profiles are composed of common personal attributes of relevance in Japan. For *Hometown*, levels include “Inside prefecture” (born in local area, baseline level) and “Outside prefecture” (born in other area). We used the actual name of the prefecture of residence of the respondent based on the respondent’s answer to an earlier question in the survey.¹¹ It is expected to have a large AMCE, particularly when voters are primed with electoral rules under which they choose a candidate who represents a geographically-smaller electoral district, such as the SMD tier of the HR or SNTV of the HC.

The third, fourth, and fifth attributes (*Highest educational attainment*, *Prior occupation*, and *Parental political background*) are also relevant to a politician’s *local*-ness. The levels included in our analysis are “a graduate of the University of Tokyo,” “a graduate of a local public university,” “a graduate of a prestigious private university,” and “a high school graduate” (baseline level) for *Highest educational attainment*; “a business employee” (baseline level), “a business executive,” “a celebrity,” “a local government employee,” “a national

¹⁰Independents cannot win a seat in the PR tier of the HR or HC. Once party-affiliated candidates are elected, however, they can choose to be independents, or they might be expelled from their party (and become independents). Since we ask respondents to assess the desirability of *politicians* rather than *candidates*, it is not necessarily out of context to have “an independent” as an attribute level for *Party*.

¹¹Specifically, we presented the name of prefecture for the “Inside prefecture” level and the name of prefecture with a word *igai* (meaning, “other than”) for the “Outside prefecture” level.

Table 2: Hypothetical politicians' attributes in the conjoint experiment

| Attributes | Levels |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Party | <i>Independent</i> DPJ JCP Kōmeitō LDP |
| Hometown (Birthplace) | <i>Inside prefecture</i> Outside prefecture |
| Highest Educational Attainment | <i>High school</i> Local public university Prestigious private university University of Tokyo |
| Prior Occupation | <i>Business employee</i> Business executive Celebrity Local government employee National government employee Prefectural assembly member Prefectural governor |
| Parental Political Background | <i>None</i> Prefectural assembly member National assembly member Cabinet minister |
| Previous terms served | <i>None</i> 1 term 2 terms 3+ terms |
| Experience (Incumbency) | <i>None</i> Formerly in office Currently in office |
| Age | 30, 42, 57, 64, 79 |
| Gender | <i>Male</i> Female |

Note: Baseline levels are italicized. The University of Tokyo is the national public university that is widely considered to be the most prestigious in Japan. Local public university refers to all other public universities. Levels for hometown are represented as “[name of prefecture of respondent]” or “outside of [name of prefecture of respondent].” Celebrity is represented by the Japanese word “tarento” (a talent from TV, movies, music, comedy, etc.). Local political offices are represented as “[name of prefecture of respondent] assembly member” and “[name of prefecture of respondent] governor.”

government employee,” “a prefectural assembly member,” and “a prefectural governor” for *Prior occupation*; and “a cabinet minister,” “a national assembly member,” “a prefectural assembly member,” and “none” (baseline level) for *Parental political background*.¹² Similar to the effect of “inside” for *Hometown*, we expect that respondents will be more likely to choose a (hypothetical) politician who went to a local university, was a local assembly member or governor, and whose parent was also a local assembly member or governor, particularly when primed with the electoral systems under which candidates represent a geographically-smaller electoral district.

Note that respondents may also regard these three attributes as proxies of politicians’ credentials and consider more educated and more experienced politicians as more desirable. We added two additional attributes that are directly relevant to politicians’ experience in politics, *Experience as []* and *Number of previous terms*. The phrase within the brackets is either “a member of the House of Representatives,” or “a member of the House of Councilors” depending on which chamber the respondent was given in the initial randomization of the priming treatment. The attribute levels are “none” (baseline level), “formerly in office,” and “currently in office” for *Experience as []*, and “0” (baseline level), “1,” “2,” “3+” for *Number of previous terms*. We imposed cross-attribute constraints to avoid generating logically impossible profiles—specifically, politicians with “none” for *Experience as []* are constrained to have a level of “0” for *Number of previous terms*, and vice versa. When analyzing the results, we use a combined attribute named *Experience*, which includes seven levels: “No experience” (baseline level), “Formerly in office, 1 term”, “Currently in office, 1 term”, “Formerly in office, 2 terms”, “Currently in office, 2 terms”, “Formerly in office, 3+ terms”, and “Currently in office, 3+ terms.” We expect that more experienced politicians will be more preferred by voters, but we do not have *a priori* expectations with regard to the impact of our treatments on the magnitude of AMCEs under the different representational

¹²For “a prefectural assembly member” and “a prefectural governor,” we used the name of each respondent’s prefecture of residence. See Footnote 11.

contexts. In other words, we have no *ex ante* expectations that respondents’ preferences for experience will vary depending on whether a (hypothetical) politician is a member of the HR or HC or whether he or she represents a small or large district.

Finally, we include two demographic attributes, a politician’s *Age* and *Gender*. The levels are “30” (baseline level), “42,” “57,” “64,” and “79” for *Age* and “Male” (baseline level) and “Female” for *Gender*. Again, we do not have *a priori* expectations with regard to the impacts of these attribute levels. As these attributes in the real world are correlated with others, such as experience, it is important to add them in our conjoint analysis. However, given the literature on the relationship between electoral systems and gender representation, we expect that respondents might have less favorable views toward female politicians in the smaller-sized districts of each house.

5 Results

The results of our conjoint analysis are presented in Figures 4 and 5. We first show pooled results using all 2,200 respondents. We then present how the estimated AMCEs differ by the priming of different electoral rules, district sizes, and voting procedures.

5.1 Overall Results

Figure 4 shows our estimated AMCEs for the pooled sample, where the solid circles represent the point estimates and the horizontal bars represent the 95% confidence intervals robust to clustering at the respondent level. One of the most striking patterns is that Japanese voters strongly prefer independent politicians unaffiliated with any political party over party-affiliated politicians. Compared to the baseline level of *Party* (“Independent”), the effects of party labels (“DPJ,” “JCP,” “Kōmeitō,” and “LDP”) are all negative and statistically significant. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that a majority of Japanese voters in traditional surveys do not report themselves to be supporters of a specific party. The

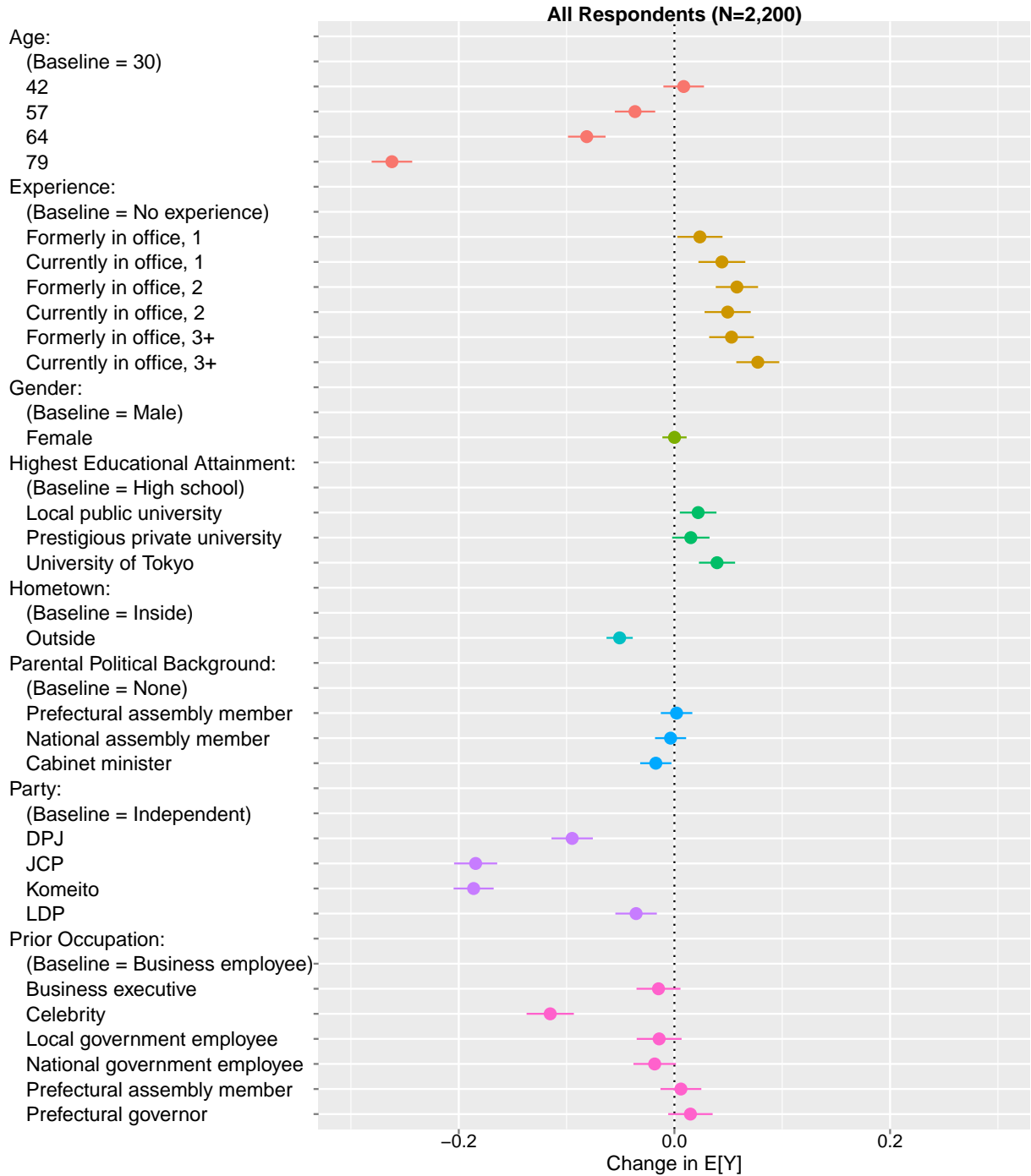


Figure 4: Average effects of hypothetical politicians' attributes on respondents' preference. *Note: Each solid circle in the plot represents the estimated average marginal component effect (AMCE) of an attribute-level on a respondent's probability of choosing a hypothetical politician containing that attribute-level, compared against a politician with the baseline level for the same attribute. The horizontal bars represent 95% confidence intervals robust to clustering at the respondent level.*

particularly large and negative effects of “JCP” and “Kōmeitō” are, however, insightful and noteworthy. These small parties have strong support from their own core supporters, but are not generally popular with other voters.

Moving beyond party label, which personal attributes do Japanese voters care most about? A striking result shown in Figure 4 is that they strongly prefer younger politicians. Compared to the baseline level of *Age* (“30”), the effect of “42” is not statistically significant, but the effects of “57”, “64”, and “79” are all negative and statistically significant. The effect of “79” is particularly large. When this level is presented, the probability that a respondent chooses the profile decreases by about 26.2 percentage points. This is another result that is clearly inconsistent with the observed attributes of actual politicians reported in Section 2.3. Japanese politicians tend to be much older than what voters would prefer.

Although younger politicians are generally more preferred, this does not imply that experience is irrelevant. The effects for the various levels of *Experience* show that politicians who are formerly or currently in office are more positively assessed by voters than the baseline level of “No experience.” The effects tend to be larger for “Formerly in office” than for “Currently in office” and larger as the number of past victories increases from “1”, “2,” and then to “3+.” This seemingly contradictory result — that Japanese voters prefer younger but experienced politicians — demonstrates the effectiveness of decomposing the relevance of personal attributes through conjoint analysis. When using observational data, it would be difficult to identify the effects of these two attributes of politicians on actual vote decisions, because they are strongly correlated.

These results may explain, for example, the growing popularity of Shinjirō Koizumi, the son of former prime minister Junichirō Koizumi. Although he is only 35 years old, he has already won three times (in the 2009, 2012, and 2014 HR elections). We need to be cautious, however, in making such an interpretation. He may be popular not because he is young and experienced but because he is a son of a former prime minister. Dynastic politicians are often able to enter politics at a younger age, bypassing traditional stepping stones to office such

as local assembly experience (Feinstein, 2010). The estimated effects of *Parental Political Background* should help to further decompose these attributes that are strongly correlated in observational data. Compared to the baseline category of “None,” the effects of “Minister”, “National assembly member,” and “Prefectural assembly member” are all small. The effect of “Minister” is negative and barely significant at the 5% level, but the effects of the other two levels are almost zero and insignificant. Contrary to the empirical evidence of a vote advantage for members of Japanese dynasties (Ishibashi and Reed, 1992; Asako et al., 2015), these results suggest that dynastic ties in and of themselves are not necessarily valued among Japanese voters.

Female candidates have been traditionally rare outside of the JCP, but in more recent elections, other parties have begun to recruit more women as a tool to mobilize votes (Gaunder, 2013; Smith, 2013). In the 2009 election, for example, DPJ party leader Ichirō Ozawa nominated many new female candidates, who were later dubbed the “Ozawa Girls” by the media. The results of our analysis indicate that a politician’s gender is, on average, irrelevant when voters consider the desirability of a representative to the Japanese Diet. Compared to the baseline category (“Male”), the effect of “Female” is almost zero and not at all significant.

What if a politician is a celebrity, or *tarento* in Japanese? Celebrity politicians are increasingly common in Japanese politics. Some of them even take a key role in party and/or government; for example, HC member Renho Murata, commonly known as Renho, is a former commentator on various TV and radio programs and a former minister under the DPJ government (2009–2012). Contrary to the fact that political parties are increasingly active in nominating such celebrity candidates, the effect of “Celebrity” for *Prior Occupation*, compared to the baseline level of “Business employee,” is negative and statistically significant. The effect is also quite large: when “Celebrity” is included in a profile, the probability that respondents choose that profile decreases by approximately 11.5 percentage points. This counter-intuitive finding needs further scrutiny in future research. It is possible that Japanese voters initially valued well-known celebrities in politics but, after major

parties repeatedly and aggressively nominated them, voters have developed an anti-celebrity feeling. In the 2013 HC election, for example, some very well-known former baseball players were defeated in their electoral bids.

Other prior occupations seem to be irrelevant for Japanese voters. Specifically, compared to the baseline level of “Business employee,” the effects of “Business executive,” “Local government employee,” “National government employee,” “Prefectural assembly member,” and “Prefectural governor” are all small and statistically insignificant. It is possible, however, that some of these occupations that are geographically specific are relevant under some electoral contexts but not others. We will examine this possibility in the next subsection.

We included two other attributes that are related to politicians’ “localness.” The effect of “Local public university” for *Highest Educational Attainment* is positive compared to the baseline level of “High school.” The effect, however, is small and barely significant. The effects of “Prestigious private university” and “University of Tokyo” are also positive compared to the baseline, and the effect of “University of Tokyo” is large and statistically significant. Japanese voters appear to consider university graduates as more desirable, but going to a local university is not particularly relevant, at least on average. Again, it is possible that the effect of “Local public university” is larger when respondents are asked to consider the desirability of politicians elected from geographically small areas.

Finally, for *Hometown*, the effect of “Outside” as compared to the baseline of “Inside” is negative and highly significant. Even when provided with information about other attributes, such as the politicians’ age, experience, and party affiliation, Japanese voters still prefer politicians who are born locally. We expect that this “hometown effect” is particularly large under electoral systems in which politicians are elected from geographically smaller areas (Hirano, 2006). We now turn our attention to exploring whether some of these preferences exhibit variation depending on the electoral context priming that respondents were given.

5.2 Effects by Priming of Electoral Context

In our experiment, each respondent was primed with information on the electoral rules, district sizes, and voting procedures used in Japan’s mixed-member bicameral system. How did this priming of the electoral process affect voters’ preferences for politicians? Figure 5 shows the results of our tests when divided into separate groups by priming treatment. The top set of panels compares SNTV versus PR in the HC; the bottom set compares SMD versus PR in the HR. In each set, the far-right panel shows the point estimates of the differences in AMCEs for each attribute level between the two experimental (electoral tier) conditions, along with their 95% confidence intervals. Since each respondent was given both of these pieces of information in 5×2 conjoint exercises, this figure compares the difference in attitudes within each respondent.

The results are unambiguous: all four of the leftmost panels are very similar to the results shown in Figure 4. In addition, the difference between the priming conditions is statistically significant for only one out of the 56 comparison. All other differences are statistically insignificant. Given the large number of hypotheses being tested in this analysis, we interpret our single statistically significant estimate not as evidence of a true difference between the two conditions, but as stochastic noise. We also separately compared the results with respondents pooled across chambers (HR versus HC) and pooled across tier type (plurality-rule district versus PR); again, we found no statistically significant difference for either of these comparisons.¹³ Overall, our finding consistently shows that there is no difference between the experimental conditions in any of the AMCEs.¹⁴

The clear lack of difference in the AMCEs between the experimental conditions of our survey suggests that Japanese voters prefer the same types of politicians even when asked to

¹³These additional results are available in Figure 8 in the Online Appendix.

¹⁴We also note that our sample size is large enough to statistically detect even the smallest difference that we consider to be substantively meaningful. In other words, our null finding is not due to a lack of statistical power.

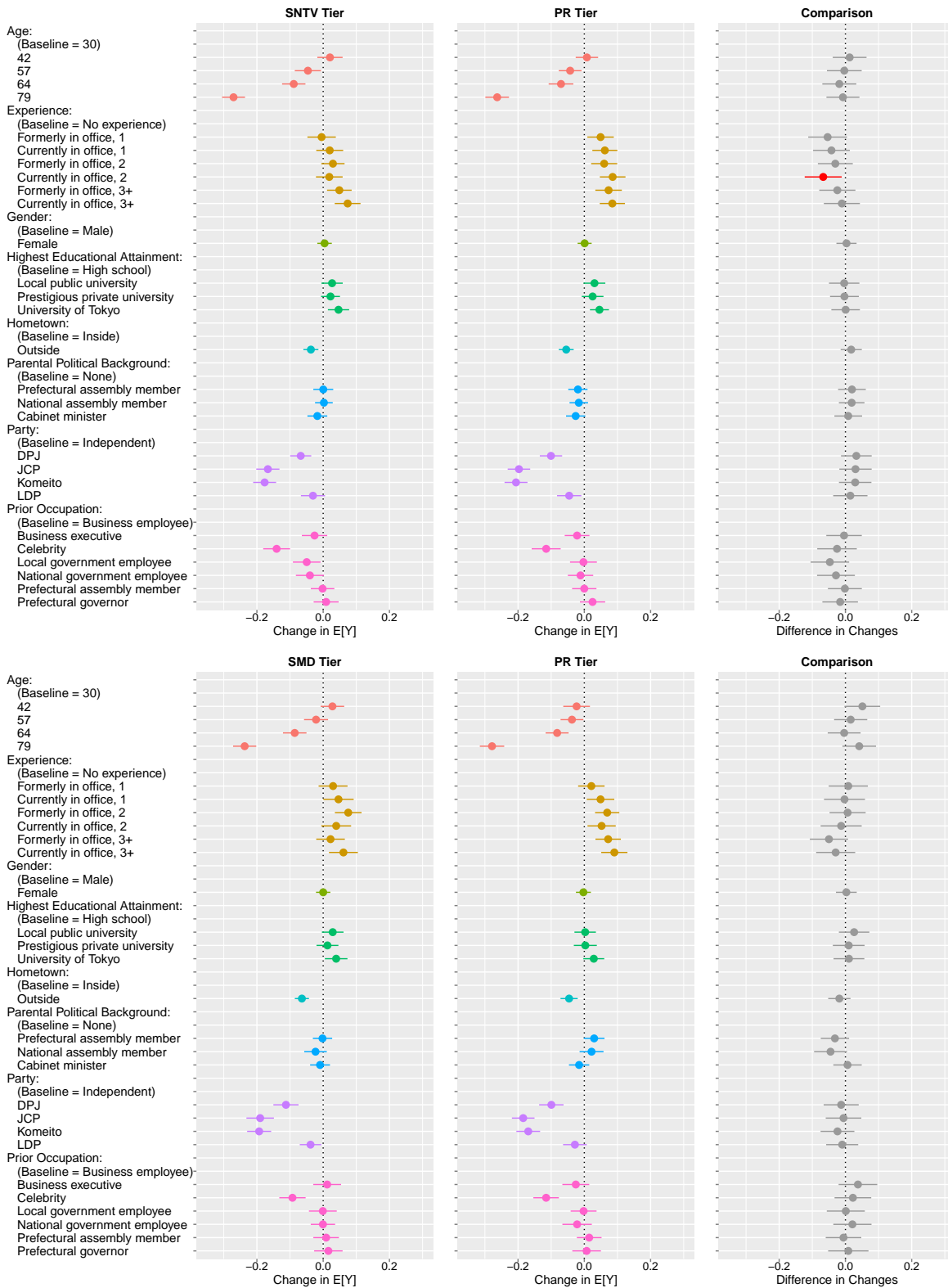


Figure 5: Effects of politicians' attributes on respondents' preference by priming conditions. *Note: Top panels give the results for the HC (SNTV versus PR priming); Bottom panels give the results for the HR (SMD versus PR priming). The third panel for each shows the difference in the estimated AMCEs.*

consider the kind of representation they desire under different electoral rules.¹⁵ In contrast to the patterns of politicians’ observed personal attributes we documented in Section 2.3, respondents in our study do not appear to change their preferences for different attributes depending on their understanding of the differences across electoral contexts.

Overall, our results suggest that voters in Japan may not be getting what they want in politicians — at least in terms of their personal attributes — and that the discrepancy may be attributed to causes at the elite or institutional level. Such factors might include the supply of different types of candidates nominated by the parties, or the way in which the electoral systems structure vote choice in favor of certain types of politicians (and likely this latter process reinforces the former), as we briefly discuss in the next section.¹⁶

6 Conclusion

The personal attributes of politicians are an important component in determining the nature of representation in democracies. Nevertheless, inferring voters’ preferences for different attributes based on observational data poses challenges for researchers. By applying the statistical method of fully randomized conjoint analysis to address this issue, we have identified

¹⁵We also replicated our results using the subset of respondents who passed several manipulation checks and screener questions included in the survey (Figures 9 and 10 in the Online Appendix). Thus, we are confident that our null findings are not due to any failure of manipulation or lack of engagement among the respondents.

¹⁶It is also important to keep in mind that our priming treatment did not realistically simulate the actual electoral conditions but only provided factual information about the rules. This implies a third possibility: our treatment may not have primed the particular aspects of the difference between the HR and HC elections that actually matter for voters’ preferences in the real world. That is, it is possible that voters would develop different preferences across electoral contexts due to some peculiarities of the elections in Japan, rather than to their general understanding of the ways in which politicians are elected. While we are less interested in the determinants of preferences that are highly context-specific, they are nonetheless important for future research on Japanese politics.

the multidimensional preferences of Japanese voters for the personal attributes of politicians, *independent of* the numerous factors that affect the outcomes of actual elections. Our results reveal that the types of politicians voters would prefer are considerably different from the types of politicians who actually represent them in the Diet. Despite the fact that there are many elderly, celebrity, dynastic, and male politicians in Japan, voters do not appear to prefer older politicians or celebrities, and are indifferent with regard to dynastic family ties and gender. Furthermore, these preferences are consistent regardless of whether voters consider the different electoral system contexts of the mixed-member bicameral parliament. This finding stands in remarkable contrast to the observed attributes of the actual candidates and MPs across these electoral contexts.

These discrepancies — what we might call “representational gaps” between voters’ preferences and the actual attributes of politicians — suggest two implications. First, although numerous previous studies have used the observed attributes of actual candidates and MPs in their analyses, we need to be cautious about making inferences about voters’ preferences for politicians based solely on such observational evidence. As we have discussed theoretically and demonstrated empirically, the types of politicians who run and are elected are not necessarily reflective of the preferences of voters. Even if a politician who happens to have a trait (e.g., female or dynastic) gets selected or elected, this observed fact itself does not necessarily imply that voters value that trait *per se*.

Second, as we noted in the previous section, the difference between demand (what types of politicians voters want) and supply (what types of candidates actually want to run and get nominated) could be largely a function of political parties’ recruitment of potential candidates under specific institutional contexts. This points to an important debate in the literature related to different perspectives of representation (Pitkin, 1967). One perspective is that party leaders may want to improve “descriptive representation” and are eager to present voters with candidates representing a microcosm of the socio-demographic variation of society, including gender, race, age, place of residence, level of education, and occupa-

tional background. In this view, our findings may suggest that parties in Japan simply face difficulties in recruiting the “right” candidates for this goal, such as younger candidates. Alternatively, party leaders may be simply misunderstanding what voters actually want and nominating certain types of candidates, such as celebrities, that voters would actually prefer not to have in parliament.

Another perspective is that party leaders may want to improve “substantive representation” and maximize the opportunity to advocate for their policies. Therefore, they may not care much about the socio-demographic attributes of politicians, and instead focus on strategically recruiting experienced and capable candidates. In this view, our findings may suggest that the quality of political representation is not necessarily low in Japan, since voters may prefer experienced politicians or locally born politicians, and these types of politicians may also be more effective at delivering policy benefits.

Investigating these various pathways through which representative democracies can aim to reflect voters’ diverse preferences is a promising direction of future research. As we have demonstrated in this paper, an effective research design for pursuing these questions is to combine empirical analysis of the rich observable data of *actual* politicians and conjoint analysis of voters’ preferences for *hypothetical* politicians. It should be particularly fruitful to replicate similar research in other democracies with different historical, cultural, and electoral contexts. Another avenue for future research might investigate how specific contextual events — such as a high profile scandal involving a celebrity politician, or the selection of a female politician as party leader — affect the salience of these attributes for voters relative to other attributes. The accumulation of such comparative evidence will be crucial to expanding our understanding of where voters’ preferences for politicians come from, and whether these preferences are effectively represented in modern democracies.

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Online Appendix

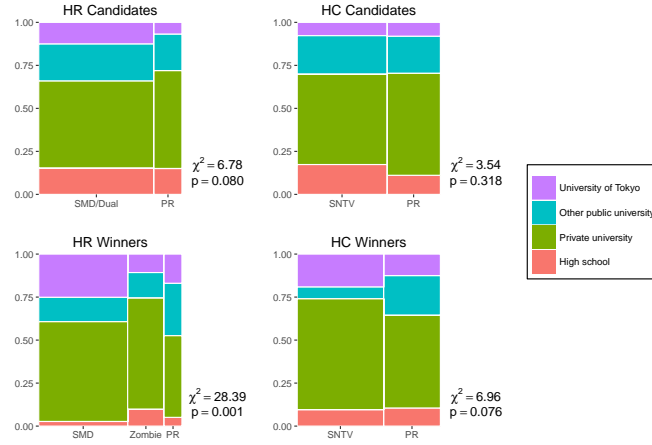
Figures 6 and 7 show the observed distributions of politicians’ personal attributes that are omitted from the main text, disaggregated into groups in the same manner as in Figure 1.

Figure 8 shows the estimated AMCEs from our conjoint experiment for each of the two primed dimensions: HC vs. HR (top) and plurality districts vs. PR (bottom), along with the differences in the AMCEs (rightmost plots). The results confirm our conclusion based on the main analysis reported in Figure 5: There is no discernible difference in the AMCEs between any of the experimental conditions.

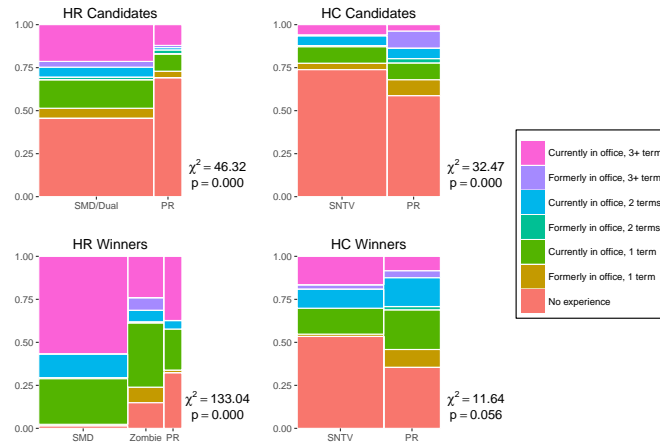
Figures 9 and 10 show the results of our tests whether the overall null findings are due to failure of manipulation or lack of engagement among the respondents. For the manipulation check, we included two knowledge questions about each of the treatment conditions the respondents were exposed to, and labeled those who answered both of them correctly as “knowledgeable” for the corresponding condition. Figure 9 shows the result of the same analysis as in Figure 8 only on the knowledgeable respondents ($N = 604$ for the upper house; 706 for the lower house; 622 for the district tier; and 432 for the PR tier). As in the main analysis, none of the differences in the AMCEs are statistically significantly different from zero.

For the test of respondents’ engagement, we included a pair of screener questions at the end of our survey, and marked those who passed at least one question as “attentive” respondents. We then repeated our analysis on the attentive respondents ($N = 766$, of whom 372 were in the upper house condition). The results, reported in Figure 10, show that only one out of the 28 comparisons shows statistically significant difference between the two priming conditions on each dimension, replicating the overall null finding even on the attentive subsample.

(a) Education



(b) Experience



(c) Party

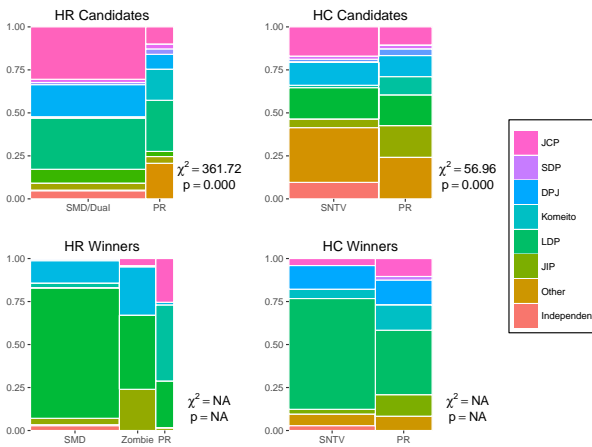
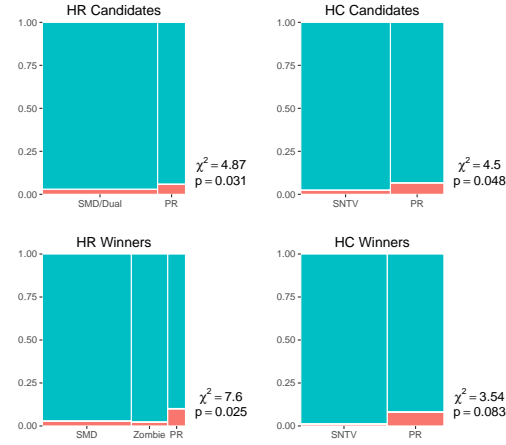


Figure 6: Personal attributes across candidates, winners, and institutional contexts. *Note: Excludes attributes presented in Figure 1 in the main text.*

(a) Secretary for MP



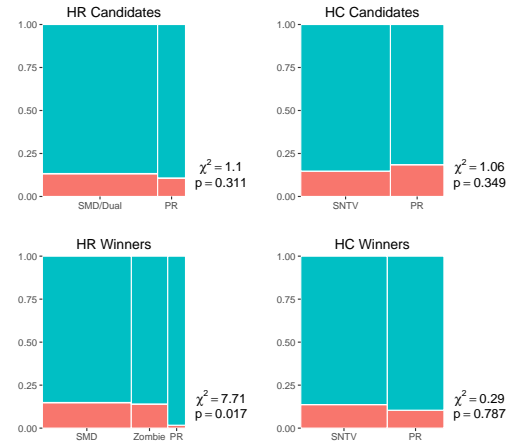
(b) Local Level Bureaucrat



(c) Business Employee



(d) Business Executive



(e) Hometown

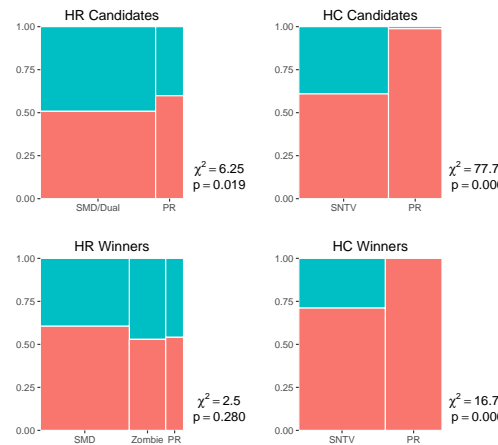


Figure 7: Personal attributes across candidates, winners, and institutional contexts (cont'd).
Note: Excludes attributes presented in Figure 1 in the main text.

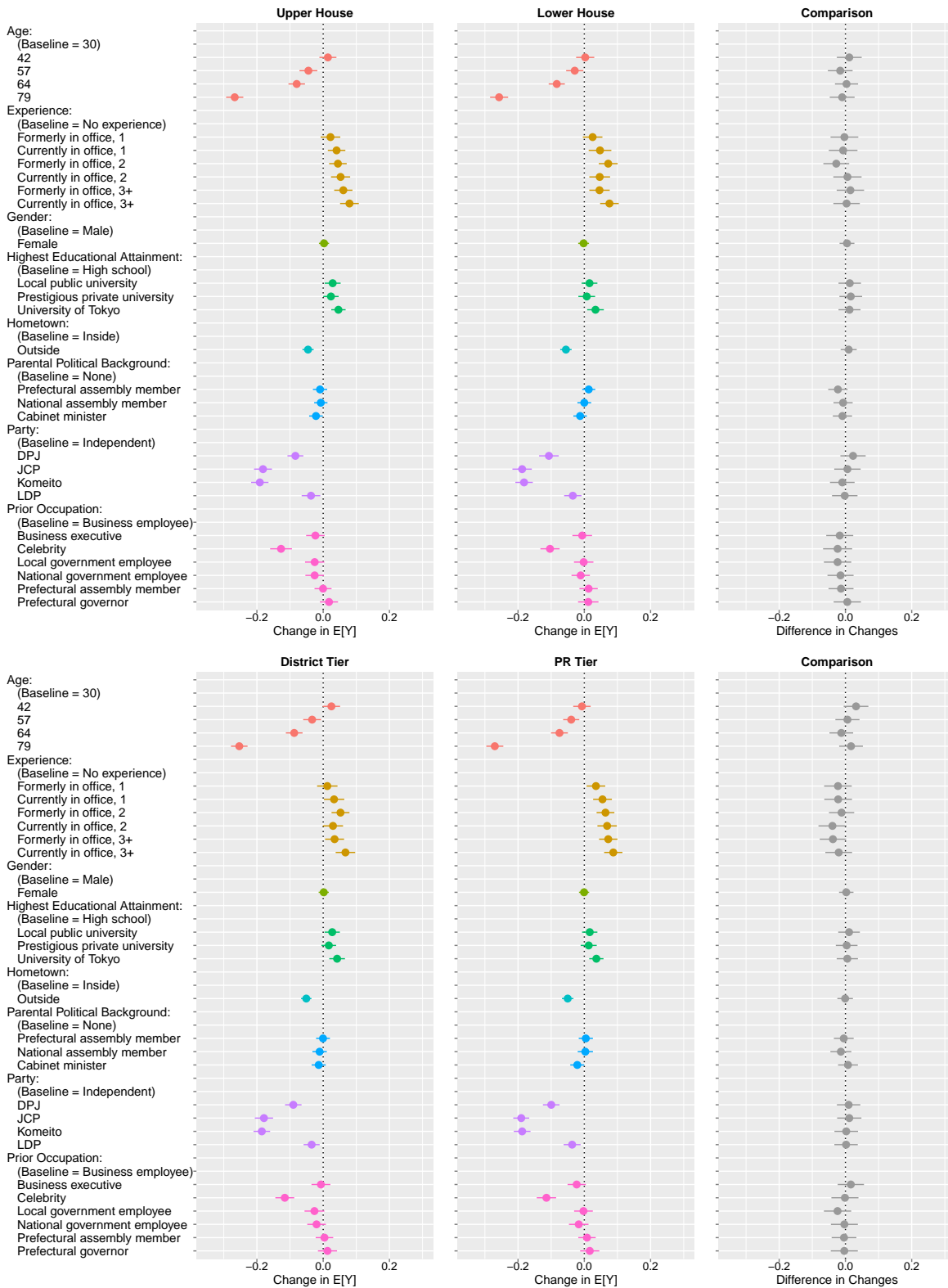


Figure 8: Effects of politicians' attributes on respondents' preference by priming conditions. *Note: Top panels give the results for the HC vs. HR, pooling across the tier types. Bottom panels give the results for plurality vs. PR, pooling across the houses. The rightmost panel for each shows the difference in the estimated AMCEs.*

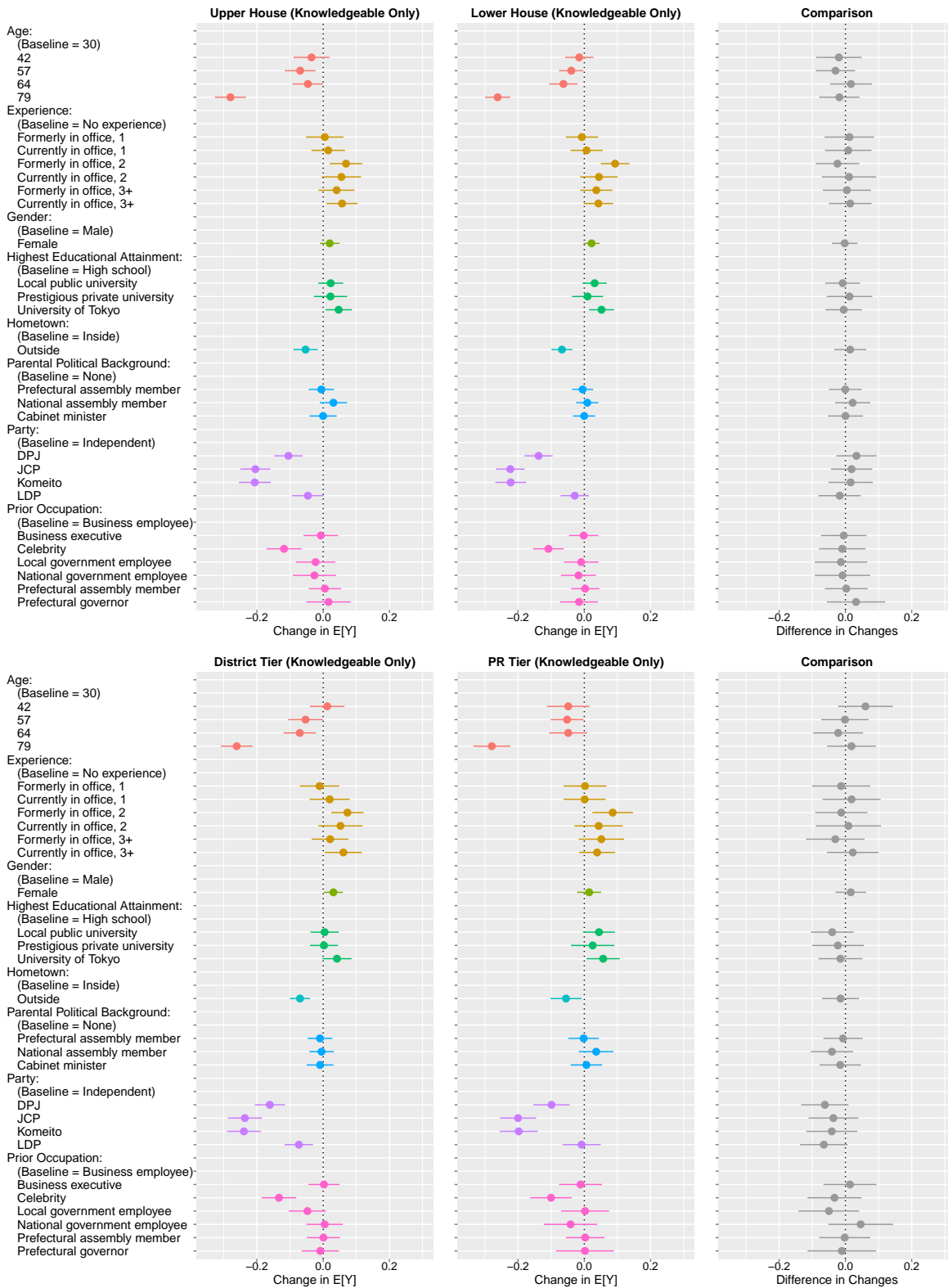


Figure 9: Effects of politicians' attributes on respondents' preference by priming conditions. *Note: Estimates of the quantities equivalent to Figure 8 on the subsample who passed the manipulation check (knowledge tests on the treatment text).*

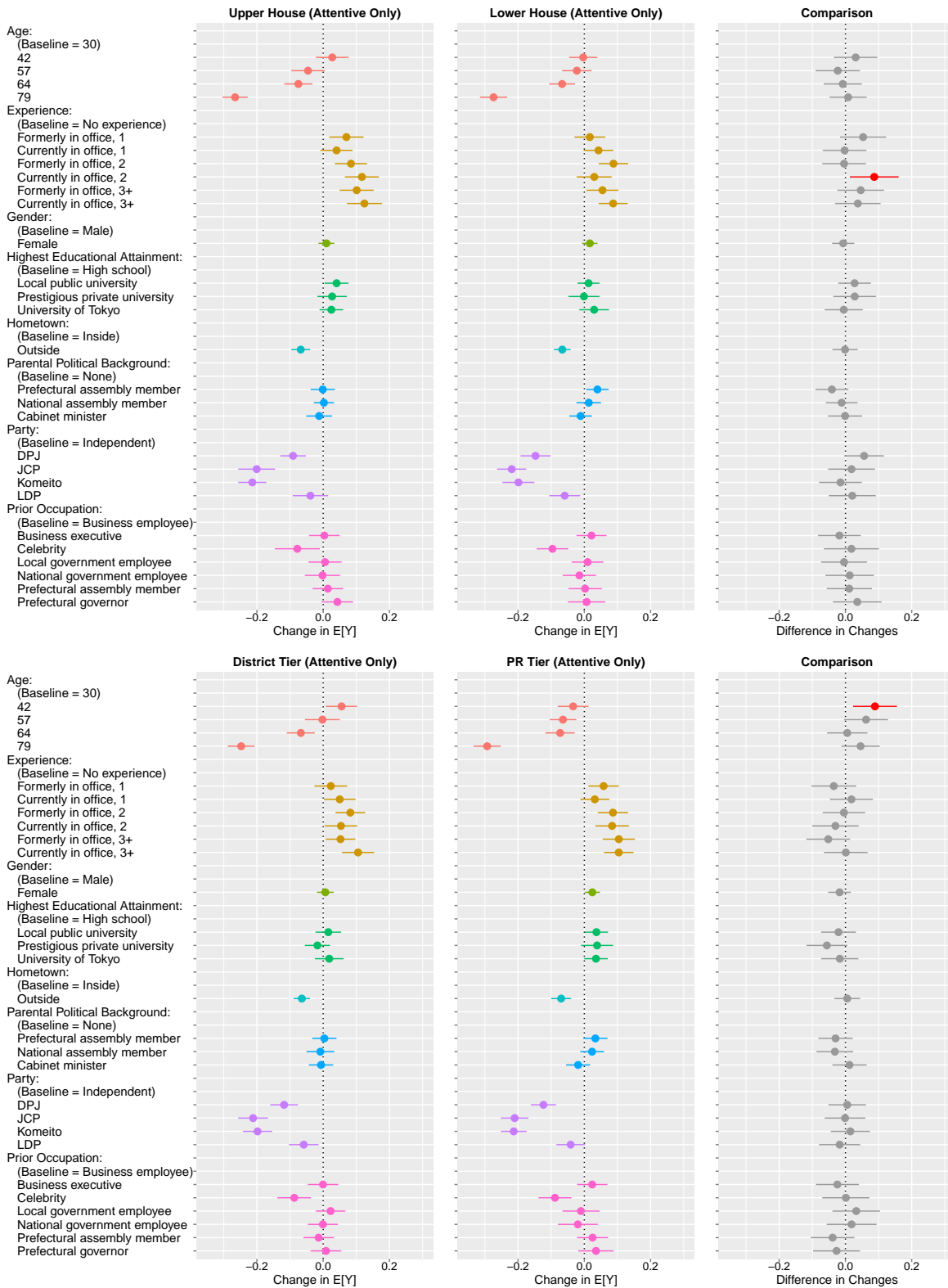


Figure 10: Effects of politicians' attributes on respondents' preference by priming conditions. *Note: Estimates of the quantities equivalent to Figure 8 on the subsample who passed the screener questions placed at the end of the survey.*