

Multi-dimensional preferences in candidate selection? Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment among party leaders in Germany*

Michael Jankowski
University of Oldenburg
michael.jankowski@uol.de

Jan Berz
Leuphana University Lüneburg
jberz@leuphana.de

August 25, 2019

*Paper prepared for presentation at the ECPR General Conference 2019 in Wrocław
Panel P025: Between Parties and Voters: Representation Among Candidates
September 5, 2019 · 11:00-12:40*

Abstract. Candidate selection is one of the most relevant tasks of parties and has important consequences for various aspects of political representation. While previous research has addressed many important aspects of the candidate selection process, we know little about the question of which candidate characteristics are preferred by party members. We address this research gap by conducting a conjoint experiment among more than 300 local party leaders in Germany. In the experiment, potential candidates differed on various important dimensions regarding their socio-demographic background, prior political experience, local roots, and work within the political party. We find that prior political experience and engagement within the party are the most important features. However, socio-demographic characteristics and deviation from the party line also matter. These findings have implications for theories of descriptive representation as well as the impact of decentralization on party cohesiveness.

Keywords: candidate selection, representation, electoral systems, discrete-choice experiment

*The authors' name order follows the principle of rotation. Both authors have contributed equally to all work. All replication data and scripts will be made available upon publication. We are grateful to Dominic Nyhuis, Markus Tepe, the audiences of the 'Tuesday Seminar' of the Political Science department at the Leuphana University Lüneburg, the Institutskolloquium of the Political Science Department at the University of Hanover, and the AK Handlungs- und Entscheidungstheorie Annual Meeting 2019 of the German Political Science Association. Sarah Braun provided excellent research assistance. The usual disclaimer applies.

Introduction

When voters turnout on election day, a crucial election has already taken place: Usually a few month prior to the election, parties have already selected the candidates which they found most suitable to run for office, thereby defining for whom voters can (or cannot) cast their votes. For the composition of the parliament, this selection of candidates is often even more important than the election itself, simply because many candidates are selected to ‘safe’ position, meaning that they can be almost certain about their election to parliament on election day. In many cases, “selection is tantamount to election” (Rush 1969: 4) and thus “the values of the selectorate ... frequently have more impact than those of the voters” (Gallagher and Marsh 1988: 2). In sum, for many candidates “*nomination* is presumably the far more critical event than the *election* itself, the *selectorate* being more important than the *electorate*” (emphasis in original Manow 2007: 202).

Despite a strong increase in the number of studies addressing candidate selection and its various political consequences (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Hazan and Rahat 2010), many questions on this topic still remain insufficiently answered and call for further research. One of these questions is what kind of candidates are preferred by the selectorate, particularly in systems where parties dominate the candidate selection process (see Norris and Lovenduski 1995: Chap. 7). Focusing on the question of which candidate characteristics are preferred by the selectorate is important as it illuminates our understanding of which characteristics matter when selecting candidates among the pool of eligible candidates. Do parties prefer candidates of a certain gender? Should candidates be rather young or old? And should candidates always stick to the party line? Addressing such questions is often challenging, particularly in party-centered environments, as measuring the preferences of the selectorate is complicated. But finding answers to these questions is also of major importance given the strong impact the selectorate has on the composition of parliament.

In this paper, we contribute to the literature on candidate selection by providing an analysis of the preferences for candidate characteristics among the selectorate by making use of a conjoint experiment (Hainmueller et al. 2014) conducted among local German party leaders. Specifically, we focus on the case of preferences for candidates nominated in the first-tier of Germany’s mixed-member PR electoral system (Manow 2015). For these candidates, local party leaders

are representative of key actors in the decentralized, but still highly party-centered candidate selection process in Germany (Reiser 2013, 2014; Schüttemeyer and Sturm 2005), providing an excellent case for studying the preferences of the selectorate in the candidate nomination process.

Our contribution to the existing literature is at least threefold. First, to the best of our knowledge, no other study has systematically addressed the preferences of the selectorate for candidates in the German candidate selection process. Second, we identify a number of different factors that are potentially relevant for the selectorate when deciding about whom to nominate and test their impact using a conjoint experiment. Finally, we develop a series of hypothesis to test whether the electoral system, the multi-level structure, or personal characteristics of the selectors, moderate the preferences for candidate selection.

Our results indicate that political experience and engagement in the party are important factors. However, socio-demographic characteristics and deviation from the party line seem to matter as well. The local roots of a candidate, in contrast, has only very little impact despite being a frequently discussed ‘personal-vote earning attribute’ (PVEA) of candidates (Shugart et al. 2005; Jankowski 2016; Campbell et al. 2019b). Regarding subgroup preferences, we find that party leaders often prefer selecting candidates that resemble their own socio-demographic characteristics. For example, women prefer selecting female candidates and older party leaders show preferences for older candidates. With respect to the deviation from the party line, we find that moderate levels of deviation are actually preferred over no deviation from the party line, but frequent deviations are being punished. However, for local party leaders who are dissatisfied with the performance of their national party, this pattern is less pronounced implying that candidate selection preferences can indeed be driven as a corrective against the party leadership in decentralized multi-level systems.

The paper is structured as follows: The next section discusses the multi-dimensional nature of candidate selection in general and with a special focus on the German mixed-member PR electoral system. In the third section we describe the experimental approach as well as the sample of German local party leaders. The fourth section presents our results. We conclude with a discussion of our findings and by highlighting potential questions for future research.

Multi-dimensional Preferences in Candidate Selection

In most party-centered environments, both the potential candidates and the selectorate are party members. In Germany’s mixed-member PR electoral system – the case we are focusing on – candidate selection for the first tier, the electoral districts, is highly decentralized and the state or federal party leadership has only very little influence on the candidate selection process (Roberts 1988). Instead, the local party members, and especially local party leaders, have a strong impact on who is selected as a candidate (Reiser 2013, 2014).

When selecting a candidate, party leaders can take various different factors into account. For example, following the seminal work by Müller and Strøm (1999), parties are frequently describes as vote-, office-, and policy-seeking. It is reasonable to assume that the vote-seeking dimension plays an important role when selecting candidates, meaning the selectorate prefers candidates who will attract the most votes. However, following this vote-seeking principle exclusively and not taking other factors into account, might put other goals at risk. More specifically, we argue that candidate nomination might be driven by two other principles, namely policy-seeking and descriptive representation. Policy-seeking is relevant for a local party branch as the local party organization probably cares about certain topics and expects that the candidate they select puts emphasis on these policies during the election campaign and also when being elected to parliament. Second, descriptive representation, i.e. the appropriate numerical representation of certain groups, has become an important topic in recent years. Debates about gender quota implementations highlight that the personal characteristics of a candidate seem to matter as well (Krook and Childs 2010). Moreover, a bias of the selectorate against certain groups is often seen as a potential cause for the underrepresentation of certain groups in politics (e.g., Luhiste 2015).

For the context of this paper, we argue that the office-seeking dimension is not a relevant dimension for candidate selection. While we cannot fully exclude the possibility that some local party leaders might rely on office-seeking related factors in the candidate selection process, we consider it rather unlikely. Local party leaders might prefer to have a future cabinet minister among their ranks, but in all probability even elected candidates may never enter government offices over the span of their career. Government offices may also be allocated to individuals without parliamentary experience (Blondel and Thiébault 1991) and in Germany cabinet ministers can be recruited from former state-level executives (Fischer et al. 2012). Dominant theories

of cabinet allocation identify national parties, coalition committees and the prime minister as ministerial selectorate (Andeweg 2000; Bäck et al. 2016; Dowding and Dumont 2009; Strøm 2000). In contrast, local party leaders in a decentralized selection processes will be unlikely to consider the potential allocations of government portfolios at the state- or federal-level prior to election. Therefore, this dimension is not directly discussed by us.

In short, we argue that selecting a suitable candidate is a potentially *multi-dimensional* decision, meaning that the selectorate can take factors related to vote- and policy-seeking as well as descriptive representation into account when selecting a candidate. In the following, we explain these dimension in more detail. We acknowledge, however, that the list is not complete and one could find probably several additional dimensions that could be considered relevant. Yet, we are confident that the factors discussed by us are among the most relevant.

Vote-seeking Dimension

As described above, candidates are probably often selected by a party based on their ability to attract votes. Norris and Lovenduski (1995: 139), for example, find that a candidate's likelihood to win votes is one of the most sought after qualities by the selectorate. However, it remains unclear which attributes of candidates are especially relevant for winning votes. In the following, we describe two different aspects that are probably particularly relevant for this vote-seeking dimension: candidate quality – as indicated by incumbency or other previous office-holding experience – and local roots.

Incumbency and Political Experience

Probably the most obvious criterion in the selection process is a candidate's *quality*. While quality itself might have various dimensions, having demonstrated the ability to win elections and working as a politician is one of the best indicators for being capable of doing the job. Consequently, Hall and Snyder (2015: 494) argue that “one of the best measures of candidate quality is previous officeholder experience”.

In line with this argument, prior research has identified incumbency as a crucial factor in the candidate selection process. In fact, the selection of incumbents is often undisputed and it is a large surprise when an incumbent is not re-selected despite being willing to run again

for parliament. For the case of German national elections, for example, Reiser (2013, 2014) demonstrates that only in 10% of the cases an incumbent had an intra-party challenger in the candidate selection process, meaning that in the vast majority of cases the selection of incumbents was uncontested. More generally, some parties even have adopted internal regulations which *guarantee* re-selection for incumbents (Hazan and Rahat 2010: 28). In short, when an incumbent is willing to re-run for office, chances are good that she or he can do so. This ‘incumbency advantage’ has been demonstrated in various empirical analyses which highlight that (1) incumbents are more likely to re-run for office than non-incumbents¹ and (2) that incumbents receive more votes than non-incumbents due to holding office (e.g., Eggers et al. 2015).

As a consequence, candidate selection is more challenging for parties in cases where no incumbent seeks re-election. In such situations, however, political experience from other political offices can be taken into account as a comparable measure of candidate quality. It is not uncommon for politicians to gain experience in less prestigious offices in order to qualify for being a candidate in national elections (Ohmura et al. 2018). Bluntly put, in situation where no incumbent is available a party can often rely on candidates with political experience from holding other offices. These candidates are likely to have developed important skills in public speaking and political expertise (Norris and Lovenduski 1995: 159) and they potentially benefit from being already known among voters. Therefore, prior political experience is an important dimension in the candidate selection process.

Local Roots

A large corpus of literature has demonstrated that voters prefer candidates with local roots. Evidence for this claim stems not only from the U.S. (Key 1949; Lewis-Beck and Rice 1983) but also from a variety other countries (e.g., England: Arzheimer and Evans (2012); Estonia: Tavits (2010) ; Ireland: Górecki and Marsh (2012); Norway: Fiva et al. (2018); Germany: Jankowski (2016)) as well as survey experiments (Campbell and Cowley 2014; Campbell et al. 2019b). In general, the assumption is that voters use local roots of politicians as a cue to infer a candidate’s knowledge of local issues. By casting a vote for the local candidate, voters expect that the local interests will be better represented in parliament. As such, having local roots is definitely an

¹The presence of an incumbent might even deter other high-quality candidates to run for office, a process commonly referred to as ‘scare-off’ (e.g., Hall and Snyder 2015).

important personal-vote earning attribute of candidates. Consequently, we can expect parties to select local candidates in order to increase their vote share.

That parties seem to take local roots actually into account when nominating candidates has also been demonstrated empirically. Marsh (1981) was one of the first who demonstrates that candidate selection in Ireland is strongly connected upon local roots. More generally, Shugart et al. (2005) provide evidence that local candidates are more likely to be selected in electoral systems in which personal-vote earning attributes carry a greater weight. However, it should also be noticed that Tavits (2009, 2010) show how local ties do not only affect the electoral success of candidates, but also influence the parliamentary behavior of candidates. As she demonstrates, MPs with strong local ties deviate more frequently from the party line. Likewise, as well as Binderkrantz et al. (2019) show that the congruence between voters' policy preferences and MPs parliamentary is higher among MPs with a career in local politics. These findings implies that nominating local candidates might also come costly for a party as their cohesiveness in parliament is reduced.²

Policy-Seeking Dimension

While the vote-seeking dimension is definitely important, policy-seeking is a second potentially relevant aspect in the candidate selection process. Parties are heterogeneous and thus local party branches can have divergent policy preferences. Accordingly, local party leaders should have a preference for candidates who are well-informed about the local party positions. Moreover, depending on the level of satisfaction with the national party leadership, the local party branch can also prefer a candidate who is less inclined to follow the national party line and behave more independently.

Engagement in Local Party Branch

While voters might care about the local roots of a candidate, local party leaders might focus more on the question of whether the candidate is active in the politics of their local party and part takes in local working groups and other meetings. Party leaders will prefer those candidates

²For the *local party branch*, however, deviation from the party line might also be desirable as the local party leaders potentially agree with their local MP, meaning that both the selected candidate and the local party leaders deviate from the national party line. If this is the case, then deviating behavior is not necessarily 'costly' for the *local party branch*.

who engage in their branch, because these candidates are likely to be knowledgeable about local policy interests, and can be trusted to support and pursue those interests from their future position at the federal or national level. Opposed to experience in local politics, local engagement will signal a candidate's dedication to the local branch. Candidates with local engagement will therefore ensure the vertical integration of the party and coordination of policy goals across the local-, federal- and national-level (Swenden and Maddens 2009). In contrast, candidates who, at the time of their application, only sporadically engage in the local party branch will signal to local selectors that the interests of the local branch are of small importance to them.

Party Discipline

A second policy-related aspect is party discipline, i.e. the willingness of the candidate to follow the party line. National party heads seek unity (Baumann et al. 2017; Shomer 2017; Sjöblom 1968) and have little incentives to nominate candidates who are willing to deviate frequently from the party line. However, candidates who deviate from the party line may also affect their appeal to voters positively. While Patzelt (2003: p. 100-101) claims that German voters dislike parties who lack discipline, recent experimental evidence shows that voters favor candidates who demonstrate their independence from the party (Campbell et al. 2019a). Candidates who dissent from their party signal their integrity, they demonstrate that they will also reason outside of partisan lines which is perceived as a valence signal by voters. Nominating candidates who deviate from the party line can therefore further the vote-seeking goals of parties.

Local party branches may be especially likely to employ such an approach and select candidates with deviating behavior. Baumann et al. (2017) argue that the effect of party line deviation on candidate nomination depends on the interests of the selectorate. While party elites and party group leaders at the national level will view candidates who deviate from the party line as a cost, local party leaders could view such behavior as beneficial if they agree with a candidate on their deviating position, especially if they disagree with the national party elite and want to signal dissatisfaction. Local branches might also select candidates who deviate from the national party line to deliberately influence the position of their party on key issues. Therefore, deviating candidates can provide both vote- and policy-seeking benefits for local branches.

Nevertheless, even local party branches may be unwilling to select a candidate who deviates too frequently from the party line. Frequent deviation increases the overall cost to the national party and thus may endanger the party brand in general (Campbell et al. 2019a). Party brands convey information about the ideologies and policy positions of its members and function as short cut for voters to judge candidates (Stokes 1963; Aldrich 2011). If candidates deviate too frequently from the party line the brand weakens, because ideology and policy positions of the party become ambiguous. Therefore, local party branches should avoid to select such candidates. And even if this is not the case, a local party depends to a certain degree on the support of the national party, e.g. by getting support from prominent national party elites during the election campaign. Deviating too strongly from the national party could therefore ‘backfire’ against the local party. In short, local party selectors might favor candidates who deviate to a certain degree from the party line, but restrict themselves from selecting candidates who deviate *too frequently*.

Descriptive Representation

Descriptive Likeness

The third and final dimension that we consider is descriptive representation or descriptive likeness. Candidates who ‘stand for’ certain groups (Pitkin 1967; Mansbridge 1999) are more likely to be selected by people whose likeness they represent. For example, younger and older party leaders in the selectorate might be more inclined to nominate a candidate who is of similar age, because younger and older candidates can plausible claim to ‘stand for’ their respective group. Likewise, female party leaders might also prefer candidates of the same gender. Therefore, we expect party leaders to nominate candidate from their own group (e.g. gender). Female party leaders will especially matter in the frequent presence of established male networks (Butler and Preece 2016; Pini and McDonald 2011) and an extensive literature provides evidence on their crucial role for the recruitment and nomination of female candidates. Using semi-structured interviews of local party leaders, Crowder-Meyer (2013) finds that recruitment activity of female party leaders is more likely to lead to the nomination of female candidates. Numerous other studies find similar effects of gatekeepers’ gender on candidate recruitment (Cheng and Tavits 2011; Tremblay and

Pelletier 2001; Pruyzers and Blais 2019).³ Therefore, we expect female party leaders to promote female candidates and prefer them over male candidates in the nomination process as well.

Fighting Underrepresentation

Preferences for the descriptive representation of certain groups is not necessarily limited to selectors who share certain descriptive attributes. Other members of the electorate may also support an increase in descriptive representation, even if a candidate does not belong to their own group, because they perceive group representation as an improvement for representative democracy. In particular, the severe and ongoing underrepresentation of women in politics has become a prominent issue which is often not only seen as problematic by women. Several parties have already reacted to this underrepresentation by promoting female candidates and by implementing quotas in order to increase the number of elected female candidates. However, such a promotion of underrepresented groups does not take place in all parties. Studies show that left-leaning, progressive parties increase female representation, because they tend to implement voluntary gender quotas and with the aim to represent all groups in society (see, e.g., Caul 1999; Fortin-Rittberger et al. 2019; Krook and Childs 2010; Lijphart 1999; Rincker 2009; Sundström and Stockemer 2015). Consequently, we can expect party leaders in progressive parties to prefer the selection of female candidates irrespective of their own gender.

Research Design

Conjoint Experiment

Conjoint experiments have become a standard approach in political science research for analyzing multi-dimensional preferences. We follow the design of conjoint experiments as suggested in Hainmueller et al. (2014) where two randomly generated candidate profiles are displayed next to each other and the respondent has to make a decision which of the two profiles she prefers (see Figure 1 for an example). Each profile consists of attributes (e.g., gender) which can take different levels (e.g., male or female). Which level a certain attribute takes is fully randomized.

³In a recent study of Canadian party leaders at the local level, Tolley (2019) shows that party leaders also act as gatekeeper for the nomination of minority candidates who, like female candidates, are often underrepresented in parliaments.

Under this design, the effects for each level can be non-parametrically identified. In addition, these types of experiments show a high degree of external validity as they replicate real-world behavior (Hainmueller et al. 2015).⁴

Attributes and Levels

Following the different dimensions of candidate selection described above, we use seven attributes for describing the candidate profiles. Gender and age describe the socio-demographic background of a candidate. Gender has two levels (male/female) and age five (23/31/39/46/57 years). By using five levels for age, potential non-linear effects can be identified. We also include an attribute reflecting a candidate’s level of education. Education has four levels reflecting the three main different educational attainments in the German school system. For the highest degree, the university-entrance diploma (Abitur), we differentiate between candidates who studied at an university or with a vocational training (thus four levels in total). In order to simplify the interpretation of the different education levels, we refer to them as ‘low’, ‘moderate’, ‘high’ and ‘very high’. Prior political experience is measured by the years of experience in local politics, ranging from none to 7 years, with 1 year and 4 years as levels in between. Local roots is measured by providing the number of years a candidate lives in the electoral district (ranging from ‘since birth’ to ‘since 2 years’). To indicate whether a candidate is informed about the position of the local party branch, we describe whether the candidate regularly engages with the *local* party branch (yes/no). Finally, we describe the candidate’s tendency to deviate from the party line. To do so, we describe how often a candidate puts her/his own position over the position of the party. This attribute has four levels: never, rarely, occasionally, and frequently. A summary of all attributes and labels is displayed in Table 1.

⁴Tests for the validity of the experiment are described in the appendix to this paper.

Table 1: Attributes and Levels used in the Conjoint Experiment

Attributes	Levels
Gender	Female Male
Alter	23 years 31 years 39 years 46 years 57 years
Education	Low Moderate High Very high
Experience in local politics	No 1 year 4 years 7 years
Engagement in local party branch	No Yes
Residence in electoral district	2 years 8 years 15 years since birth
Deviation from party line	Never Rarely Occasionally Frequently

Figure 1: Example of Decision Screen in the Conjoint Experiment

	Kandidat/in 1	Kandidat/in 2
Arbeitet regelmäßig in lokalen Parteigremien	Ja	Nein
Alter	57 Jahre	23 Jahre
Stellt eigene Überzeugung vor Position der Partei	gelegentlich	nie
Wohnt im Wahlkreis seit...	8 Jahren	15 Jahren
Bildung	Abitur + Berufsausbildung	Abitur + Studium
Erfahrung in der Lokalpolitik	1 Jahr	7 Jahre
Geschlecht	Männlich	Weiblich

Welchen Kandidat bevorzugen Sie als Wahlkreiskandidaten für die Landtagswahl?

Kandidat/in 1

Kandidat/in 2

→

Note: This is an example of the decision screen. Each profile was randomly generated.

Estimation

Regarding the estimation of the results we follow recent progress in the analysis of conjoint experiments as suggested by Leeper et al. (2018). While Hainmueller et al. (2014) suggest estimating the ‘average marginal component effect’ (AMCE) – which is the marginal effect of a certain attribute level averaged over the joint distribution of the remaining attribute levels – Leeper et al. (2018) advocate estimating ‘marginal means’ (MM). MMs reflect the probability of a profile to be selected when it contains a certain attribute level. Therefore, MMs do not depend on an arbitrary selected reference category. This also makes them more suitable for the comparison of subgroup preferences which is not valid when comparing different AMCEs with each other (see Leeper et al. (2018) for details). Since each respondent made several comparisons, we account for the non-independence of observations by using clustered standard errors. All effects are estimated using the `cregg`-package in R (Leeper 2018).

Framing of Experiment

The survey began with the conjoint experiment. In a short explanation, we described the context of the experiment and how it works. Specifically, we told the respondents that they will have to

decide between two party members who both want to become the party’s candidate in the electoral district in an upcoming election. Because incumbency is such a strong predictor for selection, we also mentioned that no incumbents wants to run for re-selection. We randomized whether the election was for the state parliament (Landtag) or federal parliament (Bundestag). Then each respondent had to conduct five candidate comparisons, similar to the example displayed in Figure 1. After these five comparisons we asked the respondents to conduct another five comparisons, but this time for the other type of parliament. As we demonstrate in the appendix to this paper (see Figure A1), this framing regarding the state or federal parliament of the conjoint experiment had no effect. Therefore, we combine all the data and analyze it as one experiment (compare, e.g., Teele et al. 2018).

Sample

The survey was sent to a sample of local and regional party leaders in Germany in November 2018. All six relevant parties in Germany were included, i.e. the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU)⁵, the Social Democrats (SPD), the Green Party (Greens), the Liberal Party (FDP), the Left Party (Left), and the populist radical-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). For each of these parties, we randomly collected 250 email addresses of local or regional party leaders and invited them to take the survey.⁶ For the CDU/CSU and SPD, the two parties with the longest tradition in the German party and highest degree of organization at the local level, we contacted *local* party leaders. For the other parties local party branches often only exist in very large cities or regions in which the party has a stronghold. Therefore, asking leaders from these parties at the local level might induce a selection bias. As a consequence, we have contacted *regional* party branches for the smaller parties as these branches exist for all parties in all German regions. These local and regional leaders are highly informative for analyzing candidate selection in Germany. Candidate selection for electoral district candidatures in state or federal elections is highly decentralized and local/regional party leaders are the party activists that are usually highly engaged in the candidate selection process.

⁵CDU and CSU are ‘sister’ parties. The CSU only participates in elections in the federal state of Bavaria, where the CDU does not run for parliament. Therefore, we treat both parties as one party.

⁶In a first step, we collected a list of all local and regional party branches for each party. Then we randomly drew 250 units from each party and conducted an internet based search for the email address of the local party leader.

In total, 310 party leaders completed the survey which equals a response rate of 20.6%. The Left Party and the Green Party are over-represented in the survey with more than 70 responses for each party, followed by the AfD with 51 responses. The FDP responded in 42 cases and the SPD and CDU/CSU in 36 or 34 cases respectively. While the total number of responses is not particularly large – but large enough to allow for multivariate analysis and some subgroup comparisons – it should also be noted that the response rate of more than 20% is relatively high compared to other party leadership surveys.⁷ Descriptive statistics of the party leaders who responded to the survey are provided in Table A1. Assessing the representativeness of our sample is challenging as we are not aware of any representative description of local and regional party leaders in Germany. The best we can do is to compare our results to the demographics of all party members as reported in Niedermayer (2018). This comparison is displayed in Table A2. Shares of female party leaders in the sample are roughly similar to shares in the party records but the share of females in our sample tends to be often somewhat lower. However, this is in line with research on political ambition and recruitment which shows that gender gaps are already present at very basic levels of party organizations (Fox and Lawless 2014). We also find that the average age of party leaders is lower than the average age of members taken from the party records. This is highly plausible since it is highly unlikely that older, retired party members are active party leaders. Overall, our sample approximates official party demographics well.

Results

The main results of the experiment are displayed in Figure 2. The y-axis displays the attributes and their respective levels. The x-axis depicts the marginal mean. The first two attributes cover a candidate’s socio-demographic background (gender and age). Compared to the other categories, these attributes do not matter a great deal, but they are nevertheless relevant. First, the results indicate that there is a small advantage for women. This finding is in line with other recent experimental research in this area. For example, Teele et al. (2018) find a similar effect for the U.S. The absence of a bias against female candidates is important as it demonstrates that there does not seem to be a direct discrimination against female candidates in the electorate. As other

⁷For example, Teele et al. (2018) report a response rate of approx. 8.5% in two U.S. party leadership surveys.

research has shown, there is also little evidence of a gender bias among voters (Golder et al. 2017; Teele et al. 2018). In sum, these results indicate once more that women's underrepresentation in politics is probably best explained by mechanisms related to the very early political socialization of women (Fox and Lawless 2014; Butler and Preece 2016).

For age a non-linear relationship can be observed. Mid-aged candidates have a higher chance of being selected, while negative effects can be observed for comparatively old (57 years) or young (23 years) candidates. The effects for the older candidates are stronger. These age effects are similar to those reported by the British candidate study of Norris and Lovenduski (1993) in which candidates over 50 are commonly perceived as too old to start a political career, while candidates in their 30s are seen as most energetic and enthusiastic by the electorate.

The level of education has also rather weak effects. Potential candidates with low levels of education are viewed less favorable compared to more educated potential candidates. However, there is no linear increase in favorability as having studied at a university ('very high' level of education) is no advantage compared to not having studied ('high level' of education). One possibility is that this pattern is caused by chance. Another explanation might be that candidates with slightly lower levels of education are preferred, because they are perceived as less elitist and more people identify with them due to a similar socio-economic background.

Most of the other attributes show stronger effects. Prior political experience has the expected effect. The more years a candidate has experience in local politics, the higher are her or his chances of being selected. A candidate with no prior experience has a probability of being selected that is below 0.4, while being active in local politics for seven years results in a marginal mean of more than 0.6.

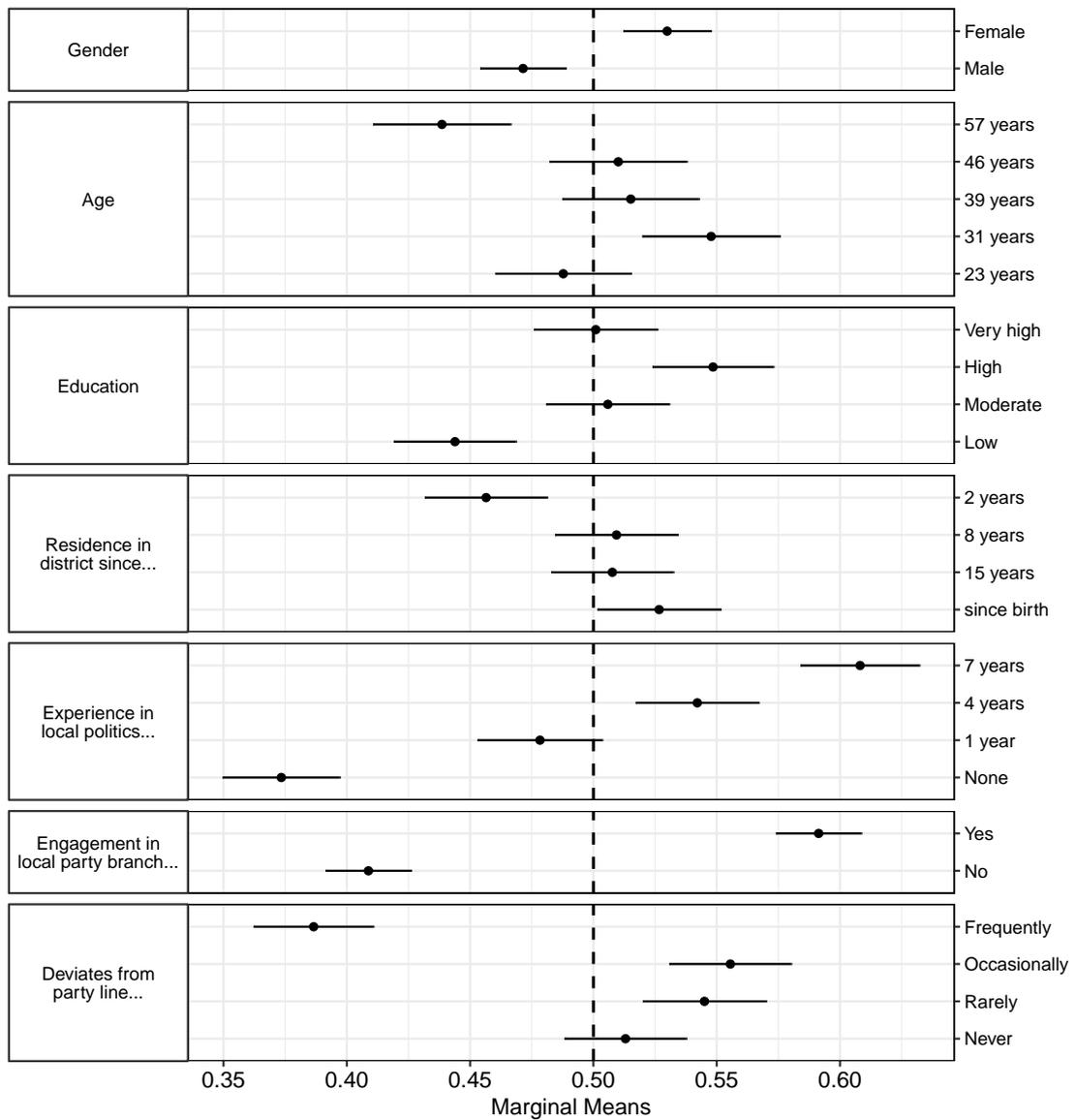
Somewhat surprisingly, local roots of a candidate does not play a major role. Candidates who live only for a few years within the electoral district are less likely to be selected and candidates in the district since birth have a higher probability of being selected. Thus, the effect goes into the expected direction, but the differences in marginal means are not particularly strong compared to other attributes, such as political experience. In contrast, engagement within the local party matters a lot. Candidates active in the local party branch are clearly preferred over candidates who do not participate in local party activities.

These results are interesting as they contrast with observational studies highlighting that local roots seem to matter quite a lot in candidate selection (Shugart et al. 2005). While we

cannot provide a full explanation for these diverging results, one possibility is that engagement in the local party branch is often strongly correlated with living in the local district for a long period of time. If this is the case, then our results might indicate that previous findings regarding the localness of candidates might measure local political experience rather than local roots. It can also indicate that voters might value candidates with local roots, but parties care less about this aspect.

Finally, deviation from the party line shows an interesting pattern. Similar to the findings from Campbell et al. (2019a) a certain degree of deviation from the party line is actually preferred by local party members compared to potential candidates who would always follow the party line. However, this preferences for ‘party rebels’ comes to a drastic stop when deviation occurs frequently. This pattern is in line with the theoretical argument that a certain degree of deviation is acceptable or even preferred by the local party leadership, but frequent deviations come with too much costs.

Figure 2: Marginal Means for Full Sample of German Party Leaders (N = 310)



Note: Plot displays ‘marginal means’ which reflect the probability of a profile being selected when it contains a certain level averaged over all remaining attributes. For example, a candidate profile in which the gender of a candidate is female, is selected with a probability of approx. 0.52 and a candidate profile in which deviation from party line equals ‘frequently’ is selected with a probability of below 0.4. Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

Subgroup Differences

Having described the general patterns of preferences in candidate selection among German local party leaders, we now turn to analyzing whether the personal characteristics of the selectors and party ideology moderate these preferences.

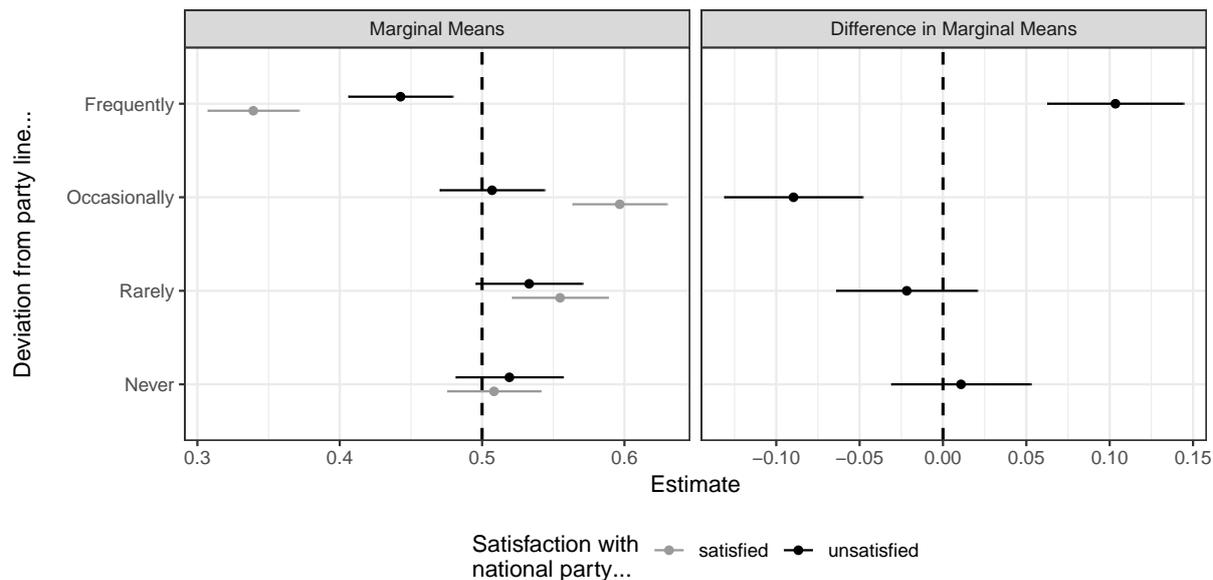
Satisfaction with Party Leadership

Firstly, we investigate whether the evaluation of ‘party rebels’ varies among party leaders. More specifically, we test whether the preference against candidates who deviate frequently from the party line is conditional on a party leader’s satisfaction with the performance of their national party. The idea behind this analysis is that dissatisfied party leaders should be less biased against rebels, because rebels can function as a corrective to the national party leadership. Similarly, party leaders who are satisfied with their national party leadership have only little incentives to select a candidate who frequently opposes the national party line.

To test for this mechanism, we distinguish between two groups of party leaders: those who are satisfied and those who are unsatisfied with their national party leadership. We estimate marginal means for both of these groups and test whether the marginal means are different between these two groups. The results of this analysis are shown in Figure 3. Clearly, party leaders differ in their preference for candidates with a deviating profile. While marginal means for satisfied party leaders follow the previously described pattern – higher probabilities for candidates who deviate sometimes, but not too frequently – unsatisfied party leaders exhibit different preferences. Rather than favoring candidates who infrequently deviate, unsatisfied party leaders are largely indifferent and show considerable lenience towards candidates who frequently deviate. This suggests that they are more willing to accept potential damage to the party brand and also do not consider deviation as a sufficient valence signal. As a result unsatisfied party leaders select candidates who sometimes deviate with a ≈ 9 percentage points lower probability than their satisfied colleagues, but are ≈ 10 percentage points more likely to select a candidate who frequently deviates. This is quite a significant difference in preference over candidates who are likely to damage the party brand.

We also ensure that this pattern is driven by dissatisfaction with the party leadership at the national level by calculating marginal means conditional on party leaders’ dissatisfaction with their *local* party. The results are displayed in Figure A2 in the appendix to this paper and demonstrate that there are no differences in the marginal means for these two subgroups.

Figure 3: Marginal Means for Deviation from Party Line Conditional on Satisfaction with National Party Leadership of Respondent



Note: Estimates are marginal means for the attribute deviation from party line conditional on the satisfaction of the respondent with the national party. Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

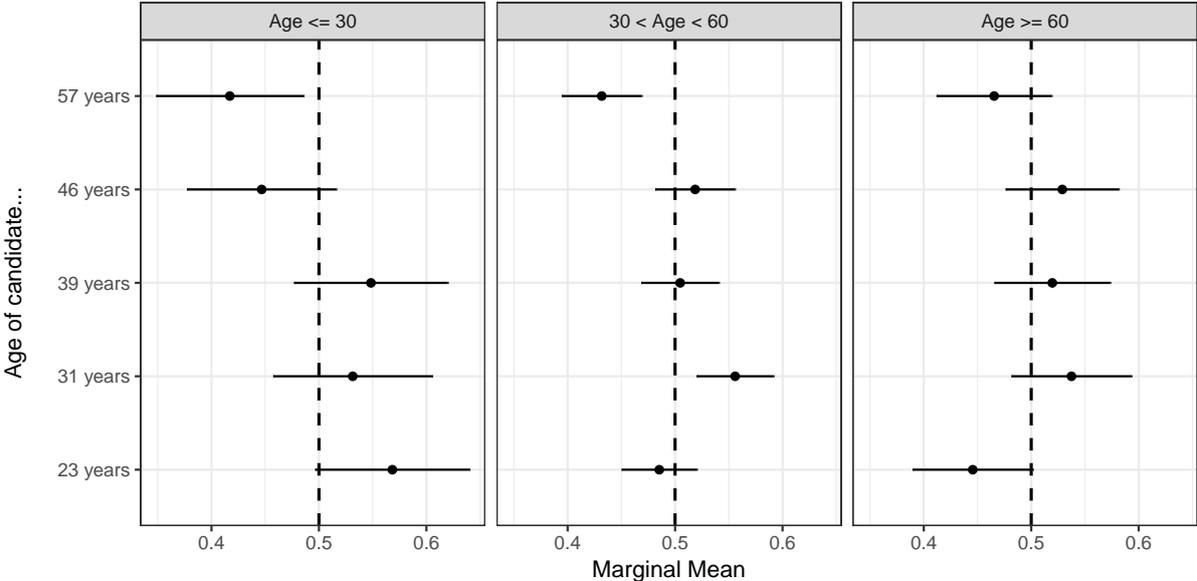
Age and Gender

Secondly, we test the assumption that party leaders will tend to prefer candidates who are more like themselves. For this purpose, we focus on the evaluation of gender and age, which are the two main socio-demographic characteristics of the candidates in our experiment. For both of these attributes, we estimate the marginal means but this time conditional on the gender or age of the respondents. Creating the subgroups for gender is straightforward. For the age of the respondents, which is measured on a continuous scale, we split the respondents into three groups: young = age ≤ 30 , mid = $30 < \text{age} < 60$, old = age ≥ 60 . The results from both subgroup analysis are displayed in Figure 4 and in Figure 5.

Young party leaders show a strong bias against old candidates and select those candidates aged 57 with a probability of $\approx 0.41\%$. In contrast, young candidates (age 23) are slightly favored by party leaders under 30. We do not find the exact reverse relationship for old party leaders, who are mostly indifferent over candidate age and only show some bias against young candidates. Party leaders in the middle age category exhibit some bias against old candidates ($\approx 0.44\%$), but favor candidates with the age of 31 who would belong to the lower strata of their age category.

However, they show no preference for candidates with other ages within their strata. These results indicate that party leaders foremost seek to avoid candidates who are clearly not similar in age. They sometimes favor candidates who are of similar age, but party leaders mostly avoid the selection of candidates who are quite young or quite old.

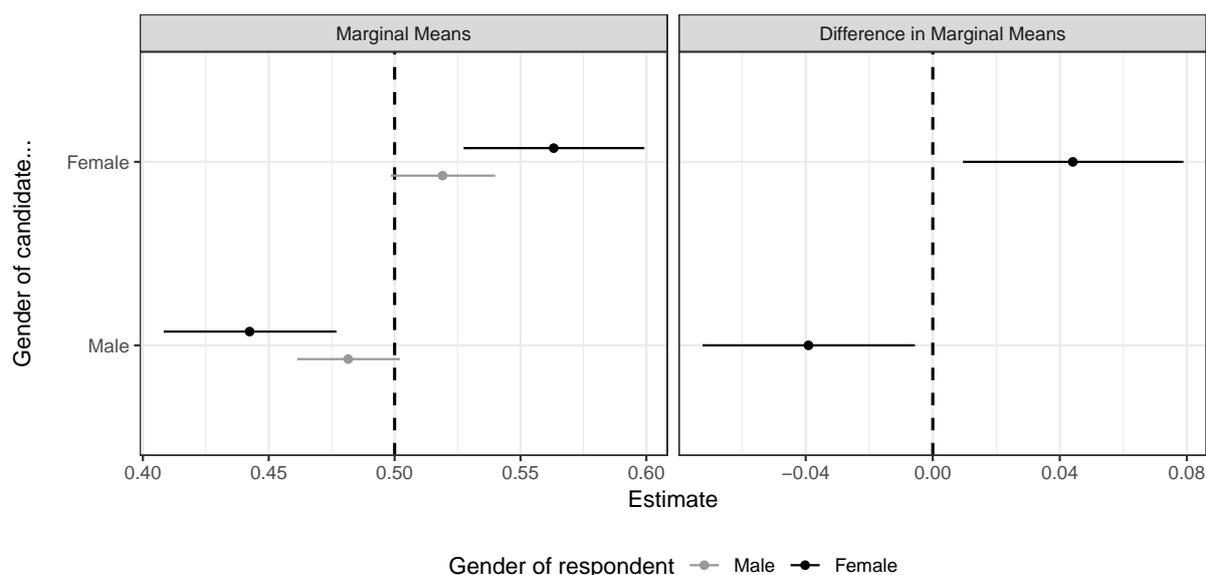
Figure 4: Marginal Means for Age Conditional on Age of Respondent



Note: Estimates are marginal means for the attribute age conditional on the age of the respondent. Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

As can be seen from Figure 5, there is clear evidence that female party leaders tend to prefer female candidates. The probability that a female respondent selects a profile in which the candidate is a women is ≈ 0.56 , while the probability is ≈ 0.52 for male respondents. On the one hand, this supports our assumption that party leaders tend to prefer candidates who stand for their respective group. On the other hand, this results holds only true for female respondents as male party leaders still tend to slightly favor female candidates. These preferences could be driven by left-wing party leaders who seek to counteract the existing underrepresentation of women in the German parliaments or indicate that members of the overrepresented group (in this case, male party leaders) are indifferent while underrepresented groups actively try to counteract existing differences.

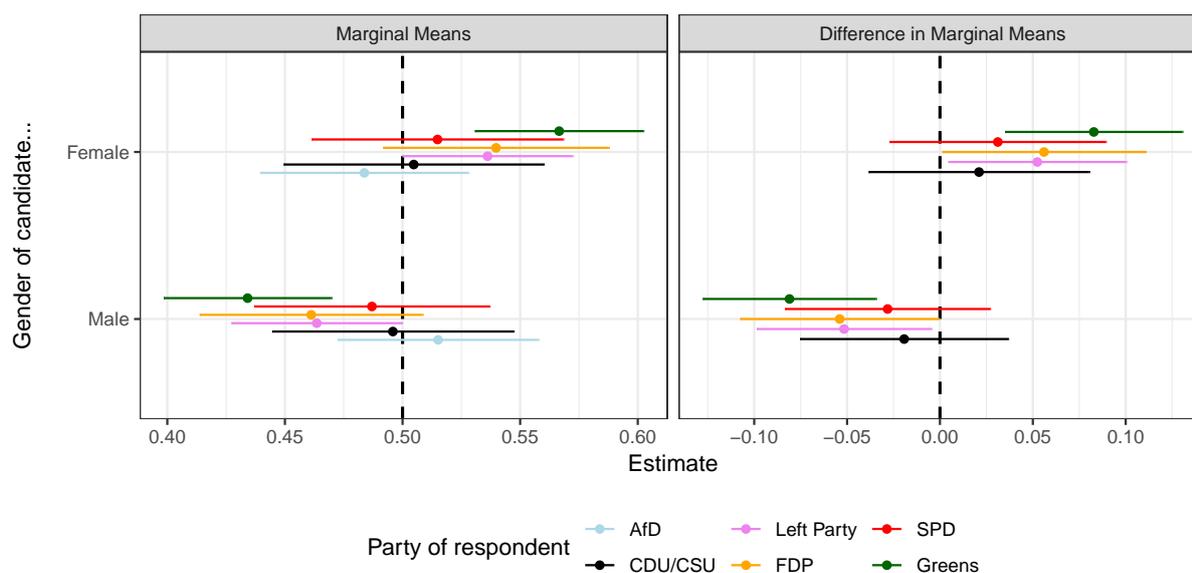
Figure 5: Marginal Means for Gender Conditional on Gender of Respondent



Note: Left panel of displays marginal means for the gender attribute conditional on the gender of a respondent. Right panel displays difference in marginal means. Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

To further analyze these findings for the gender of candidates, we also test our assumption that the preference for female candidates is stronger among progressive parties. For this purpose, we estimate marginal means conditional on the party of a respondent. The results are displayed in Figure 6, in which the marginal means are ordered based on a party's position on the GAL-TAN dimension of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2017 (Polk et al. 2017), because we expect that the position on this dimension potentially moderates the preference for a certain gender (Table A3 provides the GAL-TAN positions). The results confirm this expectation. More conservative parties tend to be indifferent with regard to the gender of a candidate, while more progressive parties tend to prefer female candidates. Particularly noteworthy is the strong preference for female candidates among the Green party members. For these respondents, the Marginal Means are above 0.56. Moreover, it can be noted that the populist radical-right populist party *AfD* is the only party where the marginal means for female candidates are below 0.5 (but not statistically different from 0.5). This pattern is also in line with the expectation that gender balance in representation is not of high priority for such parties.

Figure 6: Marginal Means for Gender Conditional on Party of Respondent



Note: Estimates in left panel are marginal means for the gender attribute conditional on the party of the respondent. Right panel displays difference in marginal means (reference category = AfD party members). Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

Conclusion

In a highly decentralized candidate selection process, the question of who becomes candidate (and often also a member of parliament) strongly depends on the preference of the local selectorate. However, analyzing the preferences of these selectors is often challenging. In this regard, this paper provides a novel analysis of the preferences of local party leaders in Germany’s mixed-member PR electoral system. By making use of a conjoint experimental approach, we demonstrated that preferences of the selectorate are multi-dimensional and that vote- and policy-earning attributes as well as preferences for descriptive likeness affect local party leader’s preferences for candidates.

Of course, a crucial potential limitation of such an experimental approach is the question of external validity. It is certainly correct that our results cannot fully explain how candidate selection takes place in reality. For example, our experiment could not incorporate the influence of informal networks between party leaders and potential future candidates. Therefore, we think it is best to understand our results as indicating how a potentially ‘ideal’ candidate looks like from the perspective of local party leaders. However, we are fully aware of the fact that such an ideal-type candidate might rarely exist. Nevertheless, we are convinced that our results

provides important findings regarding the general preferences of local party leaders regarding potential parliamentary candidates. In this regard, our findings are encouraging for the working of representative democracy. Party selectors focus on prior political experience and activities, show only minor bias against candidates with a low level of education and are not biased against underrepresented female candidates. However, only some parties in our study are actively counteracting the existing underrepresentation by preferring female over male candidates.

An unanticipated result of our experiment is the minor impact of a candidates' local roots on their likelihood to be nominated, especially when compared with a candidates' political experience and engagement in local politics. This finding contrasts with previous observational studies (Shugart et al. 2005). We therefore suspect that these previous findings could be driven by an increased probability of candidates with long-term residence to engage in local politics. Such an explanation would be plausibly, but requires further investigation.

The presented findings also contribute to current research on the role of party discipline in candidate selection processes. Recent experimental findings show that voters prefer candidates who deviate from the party line, interpreting such deviation as a valence signal (Campbell et al. 2019a). Local party leaders exhibit a slightly different preference: they appear to recognize the electoral advantage of candidates who sometimes deviate, but tend to avoid too frequent deviation to maintain a certain level of party cohesion. Still, these results are highly relevant for the literature on party cohesion as they demonstrate that the goal of an always cohesive party is not necessarily shared by the local party leadership. We can further specify this finding by demonstrating that party leaders who are unsatisfied with the performance of their national party care considerably less about party cohesion.

Further research should consider possible heterogeneity in preferences between nomination processes. Nomination by centralized national party lists could lead to lower tolerance for deviation from the party line and lower preference for local engagement than decentralized nomination in electoral districts. Likewise, our study did only focus on local party leaders. It would certainly be interesting to compare our results with the preferences of ordinary local party members. These party members also have a say in the local candidate selection process, but as they are less active in the party their view on what is relevant might still be different.

References

- Aldrich, John H. 2011. *Why Parties?: a second look*. University of Chicago Press.
- Andeweg, Rudy B. 2000. "Ministers as double agents? The delegation process between cabinet and ministers." *European Journal of Political Research* 37(3): 377–395.
- Arzheimer, Kai, and Jocelyn Evans. 2012. "Geolocation and voting: Candidate–voter distance effects on party choice in the 2010 UK general election in England." *Political Geography* 31(5): 301–310.
- Bäck, Hanna, Marc Debus, and Wolfgang C. Müller. 2016. "Intra-party diversity and ministerial selection in coalition governments." *Public Choice* 166(3): 355–378.
- Baumann, Markus, Marc Debus, and Tristan Klingelhöfer. 2017. "Keeping One's Seat: The Competitiveness of MP Renomination in Mixed-Member Electoral Systems." *The Journal of Politics* 79(3): 979–994. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1086/690945>.
- Binderkrantz, Anne Skorkjær, Marie Kaldahl Nielsen, Helene Helboe Pedersen, and Mathias Wessel Tromborg. 2019. "Pre-parliamentary party career and political representation." *West European Politics* 0(0): 1–24. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2019.1643597>.
- Blondel, Jean, and Jean-Louis Thiébault. 1991. *The Profession of Government Minister in Western Europe*. New York: St. Martins Press.
- Butler, Daniel M., and Jessica Robinson Preece. 2016. "Recruitment and Perceptions of Gender Bias in Party Leader Support." *Political Research Quarterly* 69(4): 842–851. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912916668412>.
- Campbell, Rosie, and Philip Cowley. 2014. "What Voters Want: Reactions to Candidate Characteristics in a Survey Experiment." *Political Studies* 62(4): 745–765. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12048>.
- Campbell, Rosie, Philip Cowley, Nick Vivyan, and Markus Wagner. 2019a. "Legislator Dissent as a Valence Signal." *British Journal of Political Science* 49(1): 105–128.
- Campbell, Rosie, Philip Cowley, Nick Vivyan, and Markus Wagner. 2019b. "Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots." *The Journal of Politics* 81(3): 000–000. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1086/703131>.
- Caul, Miki. 1999. "Women's Representation in Parliament: The Role of Political Parties." *Party Politics* 5(1): 79–98. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068899005001005>.
- Cheng, Christine, and Margit Tavits. 2011. "Informal Influences in Selecting Female Political Candidates." *Political Research Quarterly* 64(2): 460–471. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912909349631>.
- Crowder-Meyer, Melody. 2013. "Gendered Recruitment without Trying: How Local Party Recruiters Affect Women's Representation." *Politics & Gender* 9(4): 390–413.
- Dowding, Keith, Patrick Dumont, et al. 2009. *The selection of ministers in Europe: Hiring and firing*. Routledge London.
- Eggers, Andrew C., Anthony Fowler, Jens Hainmueller, Andrew B. Hall, and James M., Jr. Snyder. 2015. "On the Validity of the Regression Discontinuity Design for Estimating Electoral Effects: New Evidence from Over 40,000 Close Races." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(1): 259–274.
- Fischer, Jörn, Keith Dowding, and Patrick Dumont. 2012. "The duration and durability of cabinet ministers." *International Political Science Review* 33(5): 505–519. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512112462971>.

- Fiva, Jon H, Askill Harkjerr Halse, and Daniel M Smith. 2018. "Local Candidates and Distributive Politics under Closed-List Proportional Representation." *CESifo Working Paper Series No. 7039*.
- Fortin-Rittberger, Jessica, Christina Eder, Corinna Kroeber, and Vanessa Marent. 2019. "How Party Systems Shape Local–National Gender Gaps." *Government and Opposition* 54(1): 52–74.
- Fox, Richard L., and Jennifer L. Lawless. 2014. "Uncovering the Origins of the Gender Gap in Political Ambition." *American Political Science Review* 108(3): 499–519.
- Gallagher, Michael, and Michael Marsh. 1988. *Candidate selection in comparative perspective: The secret garden of politics*. Vol. 18. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Golder, Sona N., Laura B. Stephenson, Karine Van der Straeten, André Blais, Damien Bol, Philipp Harfst, and Jean-François Laslier. 2017. "Votes for Women: Electoral Systems and Support for Female Candidates." *Politics and Gender* 13(1): 107–131.
- Górecki, Maciej A., and Michael Marsh. 2012. "Not just 'friends and neighbours': Canvassing, geographic proximity and voter choice." *European Journal of Political Research* 51(5): 563–582. eprint: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2011.02008.x>.
- Hainmueller, Jens, Daniel J. Hopkins, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2014. "Causal Inference in Conjoint Analysis: Understanding Multidimensional Choices via Stated Preference Experiments." *Political Analysis* 22(1): 1–30.
- Hainmueller, Jens, Dominik Hangartner, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2015. "Validating vignette and conjoint survey experiments against real-world behavior." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112(8): 2395–2400. eprint: <https://www.pnas.org/content/112/8/2395.full.pdf>.
- Hall, Andrew B., and James M., Jr. Snyder. 2015. "How Much of the Incumbency Advantage is Due to Scare-Off?." *Political Science Research and Methods* 3(3): 493–514.
- Hazan, Reuven Y, and Gideon Rahat. 2010. *Democracy within parties: Candidate selection methods and their political consequences*. Oxford University Press.
- Jankowski, Michael. 2016. "Voting for locals: Voters' information processing strategies in open-list PR systems." *Electoral Studies* 43: 72–84.
- Key, Vladimir O. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Univ Tennessee Press.
- Krook, Mona, and Sarah Childs. 2010. *Women, gender, and politics: A reader*. Oxford University Press.
- Leeper, Thomas J. 2018. *cregg: Simple Conjoint Analyses and Visualization*. R package version 0.3.0.
- Leeper, Thomas J, Sara B Hobolt, and James Tilley. 2018. "Measuring Subgroup Preferences in Conjoint Experiments."
- Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Tom W. Rice. 1983. "Localism in Presidential Elections: The Home State Advantage." *American Journal of Political Science* 27(3): 548–556.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1999. "Democracies: Patterns of majoritarian and consensus government in twenty-one countries."
- Luhiste, Maarja. 2015. "Party Gatekeepers' Support for Viable Female Candidacy in PR-List Systems." *Politics and Gender* 11(1): 89–116.
- Manow, Philip. 2007. "Electoral rules and legislative turnover: Evidence from Germany's mixed electoral system." *West European Politics* 30(1): 195–207.
- Manow, Philip. 2015. *Mixed Rules, Mixed Strategies: Parties and Candidates in Germany's Electoral System*. Ecpr Press.

- Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent "Yes"." *The Journal of Politics* 61(3): 628–657. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2647821>.
- Marsh, Michael. 1981. "Localism, candidate selection and electoral preferences in Ireland: the general election of 1977." *Economic and Social Review* 12(4): 267–286.
- Müller, Wolfgang C., and Kaare Strøm. 1999. *Policy, office, or votes: How political parties in Western Europe make hard decisions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Niedermayer, Oskar. 2018. "Parteimitglieder in Deutschland: Version 2018."
- Norris, Pippa, and Joni Lovenduski. 1993. "'If Only More Candidates Came Forward': Supply-Side Explanations of Candidate Selection in Britain." *British Journal of Political Science* 23(3): 373–408.
- Norris, Pippa, and Joni Lovenduski. 1995. *Political recruitment: Gender, race and class in the British Parliament*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ohmura, Tamaki, Stefanie Bailer, Peter Meißner, and Peter Selb. 2018. "Party animals, career changers and other pathways into parliament." *West European Politics* 41(1): 169–195.
- Patzelt, Werner J. 2003. "Part 2: Discipline." *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 9(4): 102–115. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1357233042000306287>.
- Pini, Barbara, and Paula McDonald. 2011. "Gender and municipal politics: Problems, perspectives and possibilities." *Women and Representation in Local Government : International Cases Studies*. Ed. by Barbara Pini, and Paula McDonald. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge: 1–15.
- Pitkin, Hanna F. 1967. *The concept of representation*. Vol. 75. University of California Press.
- Polk, Jonathan, Jan Rovny, Ryan Bakker, Erica Edwards, Liesbet Hooghe, Seth Jolly, Jelle Koedam, Filip Kostelka, Gary Marks, Gijs Schumacher, et al. 2017. "Explaining the salience of anti-elitism and reducing political corruption for political parties in Europe with the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey data." *Research & Politics* 4(1): 2053168016686915.
- Pruysers, Scott, and Julie Blais. 2019. "Narcissistic Women and Cash-Strapped Men: Who Can Be Encouraged to Consider Running for Political Office, and Who Should Do the Encouraging?." *Political Research Quarterly* 72(1): 229–242. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912918786040>.
- Reiser, Marion. 2013. "Ausmaß und Formen des innerparteilichen Wettbewerbs auf der Wahlkreisebene: Nominierung der Direktkandidaten für die Bundestagswahl 2009." *Koalitionen, Kandidaten, Kommunikation. Analysen zur Bundestagswahl 2009*. Ed. by Thorsten Faas, Kai Arzheimer, Sigrid Roßteutscher, and Bernhard Weßels. Wiesbaden: 129–148.
- Reiser, Marion. 2014. "The universe of group representation in Germany: Analysing formal and informal party rules and quotas in the process of candidate selection." *International Political Science Review* 35(1): 55–66. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512113507732>.
- Rincker, Meg E. 2009. "Masculinized or Marginalized: Decentralization and Women's Status in Regional Polish Institutions." *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 30(1): 46–69. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15544770802367796>.

- Roberts, Geoffrey. 1988. "The German Federal Republic: The Two-Lane Route to Bonn." *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics*. Ed. by Michael Gallagher, and Michael Marsh. London: 94–118.
- Rush, Michael. 1969. *The Selection of Parliamentary Candidates*. Nelson.
- Schüttemeyer, Suzanne S, and Roland Sturm. 2005. "Der Kandidat–das (fast) unbekannte Wesen: Befunde und Überlegungen zur Aufstellung der Bewerber zum deutschen Bundestag." *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen*: 539–553.
- Shomer, Yael. 2017. "The Conditional Effect of Electoral Systems and Intraparty Candidate Selection Processes on Parties' Behavior." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 42(1): 63–96. eprint: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/lsg.12141>.
- Shugart, Matthew Søberg, Melody Ellis Valdini, and Kati Suominen. 2005. "Looking for Locals: Voter Information Demands and Personal Vote-Earning Attributes of Legislators under Proportional Representation." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(2): 437–449. eprint: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.0092-5853.2005.00133.x>.
- Sjöblom, Gunnar. 1968. "Party strategies in a multiparty system." *Lund political studies* 7.
- Stokes, Donald E. 1963. "Spatial models of party competition." *American political science review* 57(2): 368–377.
- Strøm, Kaare. 2000. "Delegation and accountability in parliamentary democracies." *European Journal of Political Research* 37(3): 261–290.
- Sundström, Aksel, and Daniel Stockemer. 2015. "What determines women's political representation at the local level? A fine-grained analysis of the European regions." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 56(3-4): 254–274. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020715215595691>.
- Swenden, Wilfried, and Bart Maddens. 2009. *Territorial party politics in Western Europe*. Springer.
- Tavits, Margit. 2009. "The Making of Mavericks: Local Loyalties and Party Defection." *Comparative Political Studies* 42(6): 793–815. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414008329900>.
- Tavits, Margit. 2010. "Effect of Local Ties On Electoral Success and Parliamentary Behaviour: The Case of Estonia." *Party Politics* 16(2): 215–235. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068809341053>.
- Teele, Dawn Langan, Joshua Kalla, and Frances Rosenbluth. 2018. "The Ties That Double Bind: Social Roles and Women's Underrepresentation in Politics." *American Political Science Review* 112(3): 525–541.
- Tolley, Erin. 2019. "Who you know: Local party presidents and minority candidate emergence." *Electoral Studies* 58: 70–79.
- Tremblay, Manon, and Réjean Pelletier. 2001. "More Women Constituency Party Presidents: A Strategy for Increasing the Number of Women Candidates in Canada?." *Party Politics* 7(2): 157–190. eprint: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068801007002002>.

Appendix

Sample Description and Comparison to Party Membership

Table A1: Descriptive statistics of participating party leaders

<hr/>				
AfD				
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Median	
Age	54.39	12.80	54.00	
Female	0.10	0.30	0.00	
Party membership duration	3.92	1.13	4.00	
Left-Right self-placement	6.78	1.55	7.00	
<hr/>				
CDU/CSU				
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Median	
Age	50.82	11.84	48.00	
Female	0.12	0.33	0.00	
Party membership duration	8.82	2.37	10.00	
Left-Right self-placement	5.82	1.29	6.00	
<hr/>				
Left Party				
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Median	
Age	45.22	17.24	46.00	
Female	0.30	0.46	0.00	
Party membership duration	6.42	3.56	7.00	
Left-Right self-placement	1.05	1.34	1.00	
<hr/>				
FDP				
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Median	
Age	45.55	12.36	45.50	
Female	0.17	0.38	0.00	
Party membership duration	8.02	3.02	10.00	
Left-Right self-placement	5.12	0.92	5.00	
<hr/>				
Greens				
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Median	
Age	46.68	12.52	46.50	
Female	0.45	0.50	0.00	
Party membership duration	7.93	2.99	10.00	
Left-Right self-placement	2.89	1.09	3.00	
<hr/>				
SPD				
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Median	
Age	47.36	14.47	49.50	
Female	0.19	0.40	0.00	
Party membership duration	8.39	2.69	10.00	
Left-Right self-placement	3.08	1.44	3.00	
<hr/>				

Table A2: Comparison of participating party leaders and official party member demographics

Party	Female (%)		Age (average)	
	Sample	Party records	Sample	Party records
AfD	10	17	54.4	NA
CDU/CSU	12	24.8	47.6	60
Die Linke	30	36.5	45.2	56
FDP	17	21.9	45.6	52
Greens	45	39.8	46.7	50
SPD	19	32.5	47.4	60

Note: Party member records taken from Niedermayer (2018).

Table A3: Polk et al. (2017) GAL-TAN position of political parties

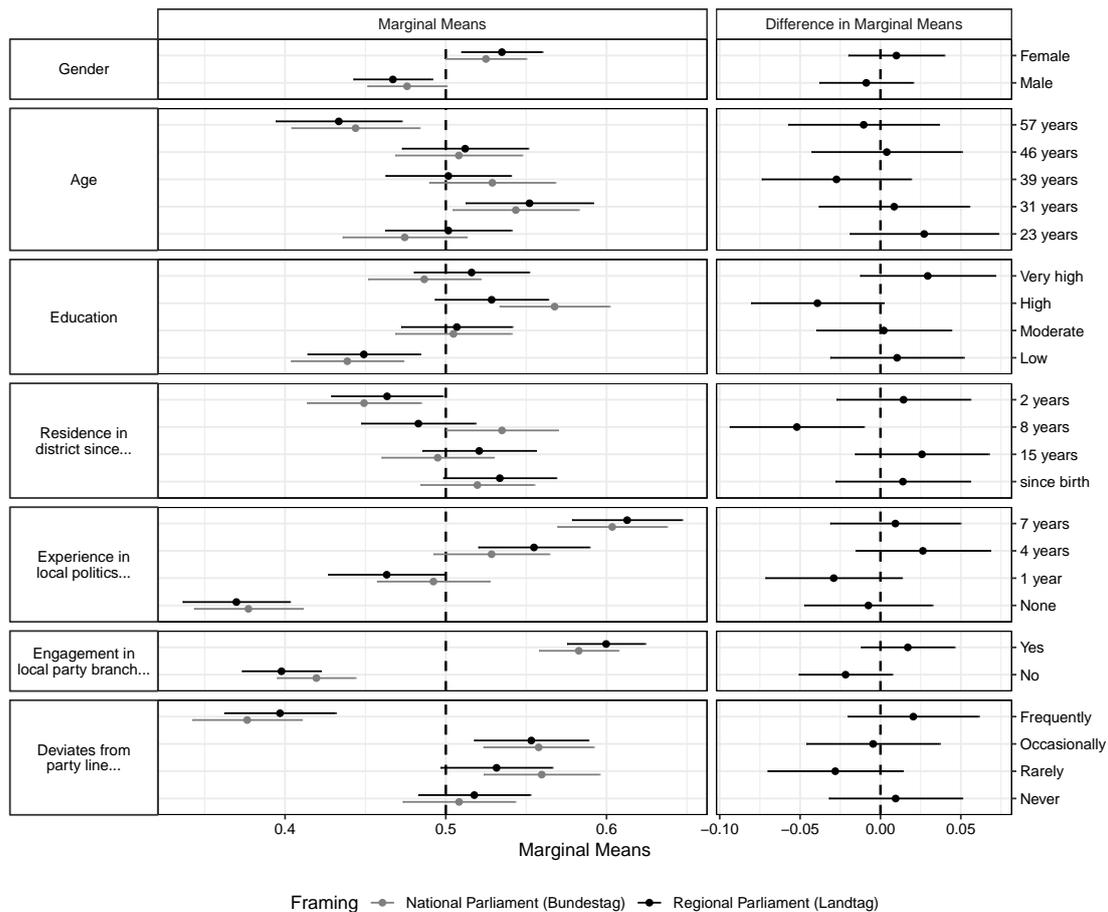
Party	GAL-TAN	Year
AfD	9.5	2017
CDU/CSU	5.8/7.5	2017
Die Linke	4.1	2017
FDP	3.8	2017
Greens	1.4	2017
SPD	3.7	2017

Note: On an 11-point scale, from 0 (Libertarian/postmaterialist) to 10 (Traditional/authoritarian).

Results Conditional on Framing of the Experiment

In the experiment, respondents were asked to evaluate candidates for state and national elections. In Figure A1 we demonstrate that this framing has no effect on the candidate evaluation – except for one attribute level, all differences in Marginal Means are insignificant and show no clear pattern. This result is confirmed by an F-Test which tests whether the preferences are heterogeneous with respect to the framing variable. The F-Test has a p-value of 0.35 indicating no heterogeneity.

Figure A1: Marginal Means conditional on Framing of Election

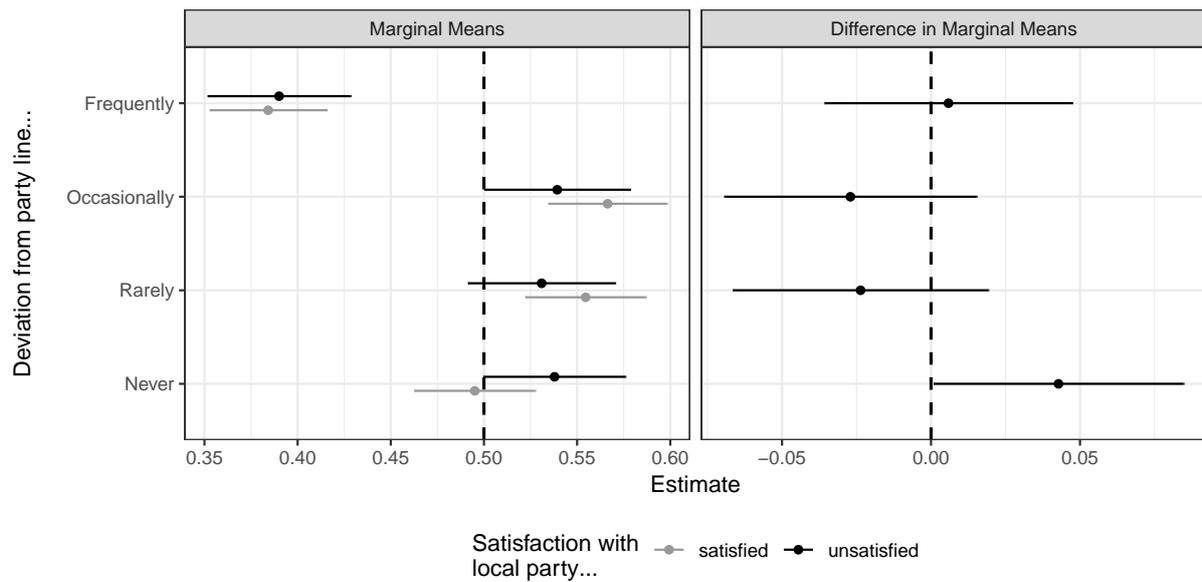


Note: Estimates are marginal means conditional on the framing of the experiment. Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

Results for Dissatisfaction with the Local Party

As stated in the main text, the effects on the preference for party deviation should not be moderated by the level of dissatisfaction with the local party organization. To confirm this idea, we asked respondents not only about their level of satisfaction with the national party but also regarding their satisfaction with their local party branch. The results are displayed in Figure A2 and show only very little evidence of effect heterogeneity.

Figure A2: (Difference in) Marginal Means for Deviation from Party Line Conditional on Satisfaction with Local Party of Respondent

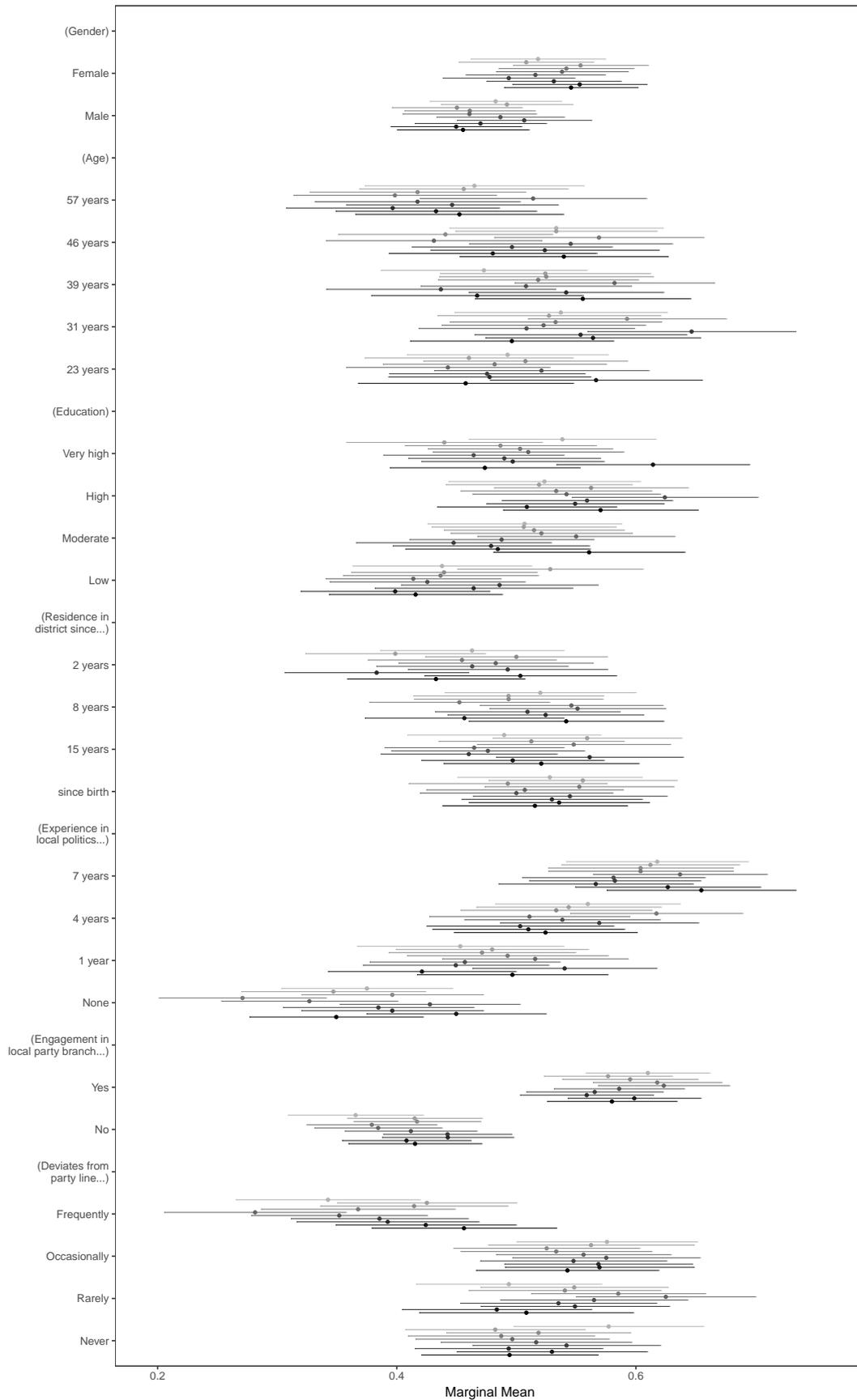


Note: Estimates are marginal means (left panel) or difference in marginal means (right panel) for the attribute deviation from party line conditional on the satisfaction of the respondent with their local party. Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

Test for Carryover Effects

Carryover effects describe that respondents might evaluate profiles differently depending on which profiles they have seen earlier in the experiment. This assumption can be tested by controlling for effect heterogeneity between the different tasks. The p-value of the F-Test for this analysis is 0.3 indicating no carryover effects. Figure [A3](#) provides visual evidence of the validity.

Figure A3: Marginal Means conditional on Task Number

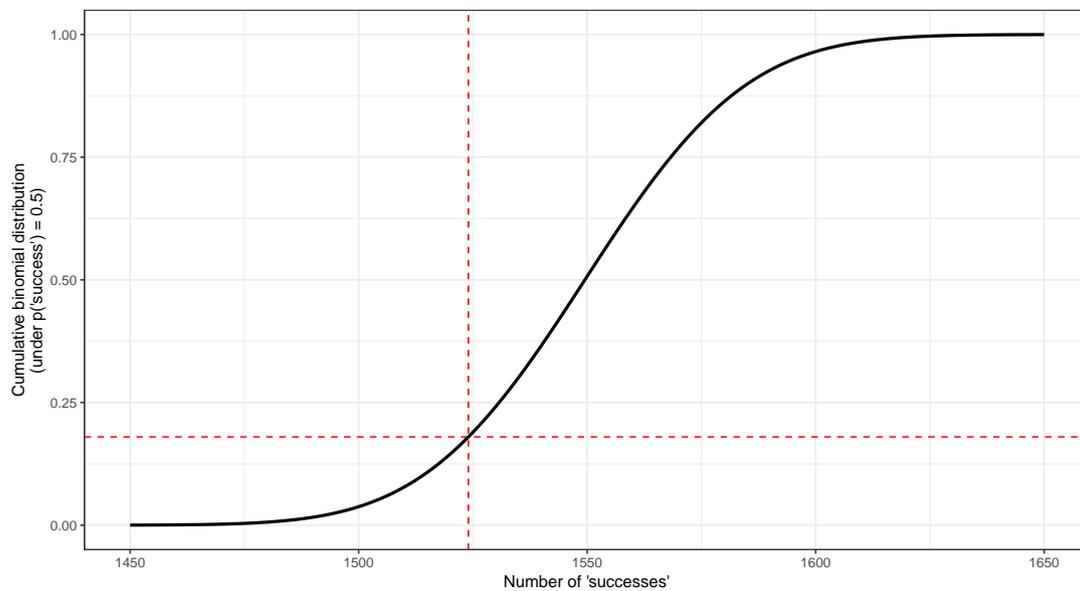


Note: Estimates are marginal means conditional on the task number in the experiment. Horizontal lines are 95% confidence intervals based on respondent-clustered standard errors.

Test for Potential Satisficing

We control whether respondents might applied satisficing strategies in the experiment by always selecting the first or second profile (without actually evaluating the two candidate profiles). This would bias our estimates towards zero. As all profiles were completely randomly generated there should be no significant difference between the number of times the first or the second profile has been selected by the respondents. This is exactly the case in our data. In the 3100 decisions taken by the respondents, 1524 times (49.16%) the first profile has been selected and 1576 times (50.84%) the second profile. The probability of observing 1524 (or less) profiles in 3100 observations is 0.18 based on the binomial distribution (see Figure A4). This indicates that respondents did not satisfice. The same holds true when we run this test for each task of the experiment. Even during the tenth task the probability of selecting the first profile was 0.49. For none of the ten task a certain profile was selected significantly more often then the other profile.

Figure A4: Cumulative binomial distribution ($N = 3100$, $p = 0.5$)



Note: Vertical dashed line denotes the number of times the first profile was selected by the respondent ($p = 0.18$).