Online Appendix for: Winning Elections with Unpopular Policies: Valence Advantage and Single-Party Dominance in Japan

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A Details on Research Design

This appendix section provides details on our research design, including specific information on the policy issues (attributes) and positions (levels) we included in the conjoint experiments, and descriptions of all variables included in the valence decomposition analysis.

A.1 Details on Survey Flow and Implementation

Respondents in online (mobile or desktop) surveys were recruited during the short official campaign period (only 12 days). We recruited respondents through Qualtrics Panels in 2017 and 2021, and PureSpectrum in 2024. The 2017 campaign started on October 10, and the election day was October 22. The 2021 campaign ran from October 19 to October 31, and the 2024 campaign ran from October 15 to October 27. Our final samples were 6,065 respondents in 2017, 3,675 respondents in 2021, and 4,095 respondents in 2024. Figure A.1 illustrates the flow and design elements of each survey.

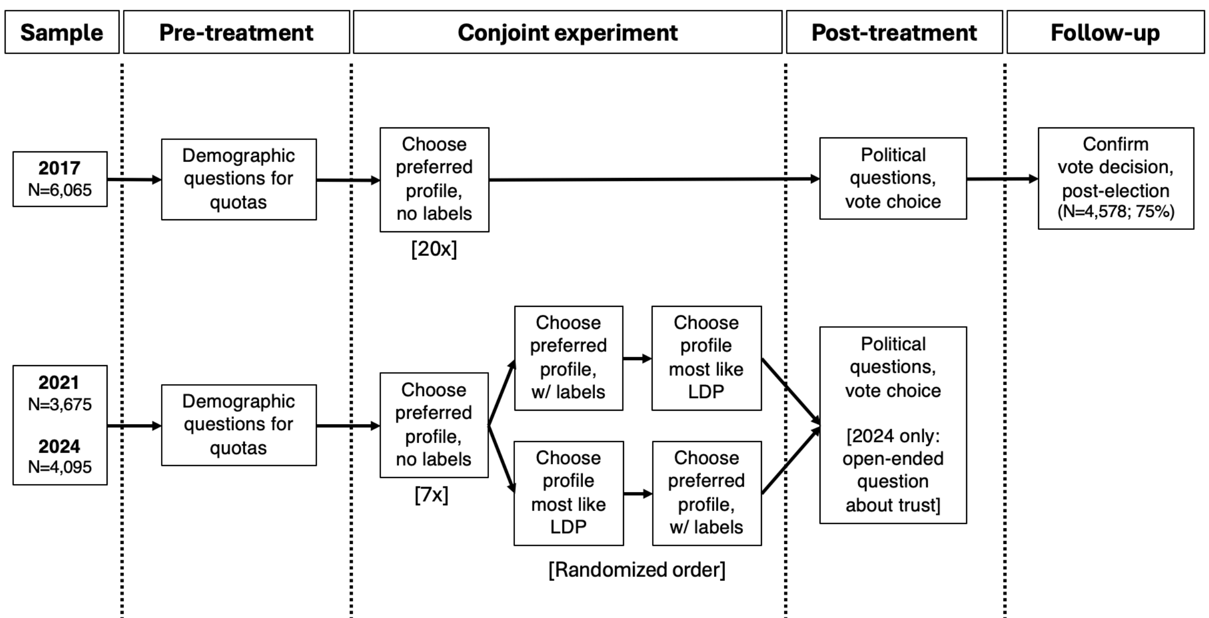

Figure A.1 – Diagram of Survey Flow. The diagram details the flow of the surveys and experimental designs as administered in 2017, 2021, and 2024.

Like almost all online surveys, our data are not strictly probability samples, but rather are sampled with stratification quotas to ensure that the marginal distributions of key demographic variables are similar to those of the population. The stratification quotas for 2017 and 2021 studies were defined by age group, gender, and region (corresponding to the eleven PR districts). We included another quota defined by education (with or without a four-year university degree), but this and some of the other quotas were removed in the last sampling stage to avoid slowing down the sample collection before election day. We additionally constructed post-stratification weights to correct for imbalances in demographic variables—specifically, we created standard rake weights that matched the marginal population distributions of age group, sex, education, income, and region (PR bloc district). The resulting weights in 2021, for example, ranged from 0.13 to 5.6. Section C.1 shows the implication of the weighting.

For the 2017 election only, we included a post-election follow-up survey: two days after the election, we re-contacted the same respondents and asked them to confirm their vote choices (or decision to abstain). In total, 4,578 respondents completed the follow-up survey. Respondents who reported having already voted early in the first wave were not invited to participate in the second wave. In our analyses, we use respondents' intended vote choices as reported in the pre-election (first wave) survey for consistency across elections.

In the 2021 and 2024 surveys, we included two additional sets of conjoint tasks, the order of which was randomized for each respondent. In one set of tasks, the respondent evaluated the exact same set of profile comparisons as in the main conjoint exercises, but with party labels assigned to the profiles. One label (randomly assigned), was always the LDP; the other was randomly assigned from one of the other parties. The order of choice tasks was randomized, to avoid the possibility that a respondent might recognize a pair of profiles. Figure A.2 provides an example of a conjoint exercise without party labels, while Figure A.3 shows how the same conjoint exercise appeared with party labels.

仮に、次のような公約を掲げた２つの政党が今回の総選挙で候補者を擁立していると想定してください。あなたは、どちらの政党を支持しますか。もし、どちらを支持するかはっきりとは言えない場合でも、どちらか一方、あえていえば支持する方を選んでください。

		政党１ Party 1	政党２ Party 2
Energy policy	**原発・エネルギー**	原子力に依存しないカーボンニュートラル実現、原発の新増設認めず	安全基準満たし地元同意得た原発は稼働、新増設せず
Foreign policy	**外交・安全保障**	日米同盟の堅持・強化、自立的な安全保障体制の構築	日米同盟の強化、平時から緊急事態まで切れ目のない体制を強化
Diversity	**多様性・共生社会**	あらゆる男女格差是正、選択的夫婦別姓の実現、同性婚に関しては明言なし	選択的夫婦別姓の早期実現、同性婚可能とする法制度実現、DV対策など充実
COVID policy	**コロナ対策**	無料自宅検査で家庭内感染抑制、抗体カクテル療法の自宅投与	病床・医療従事者確保のための法整備、休業命令などの権限を知事に移譲
Economic policy	**経済政策**	一律10万円給付で低所得者に10万円上乗せ、時限的な消費減税	非正規雇用者や女性、 子育て世帯、学生らに経済的支援(金額未定)

どちらを支持しますか Which party would you support?

Party 1 政党１	Party 2 政党２

Figure A.2 – An Example of a Conjoint Task without Party Labels. From the 2021 survey. The English translations (in red) were not shown to survey respondents.

仮に、自由民主党と日本維新の会が次のような公約を掲げて今回の総選挙で候補者を擁立していると想定してください。あなたは、どちらの政党を支持しますか。もし、どちらを支持するかはっきりとは言えない場合でも、どちらか一方、あえていえば支持する方を選んでください。

		自由民主党 LDP	日本維新の会 JIP
Energy policy	原発・エネルギー	原子力に依存しないカーボンニュートラル実現、原発の新増設認めず	安全基準満たし地元同意得た原発は稼働、新増設せず
Foreign policy	外交・安全保障	日米同盟の堅持・強化、自立的な安全保障体制の構築	日米同盟の強化、平時から緊急事態まで切れ目のない体制を強化
Diversity	多様性・共生社会	あらゆる男女格差是正、選択的夫婦別姓の実現、同性婚に関しては明言なし	選択的夫婦別姓の早期実現、同性婚可能とする法制度実現、DV対策など充実
COVID policy	コロナ対策	無料自宅検査で家庭内感染抑制、抗体カクテル療法の自宅投与	病床・医療従事者確保のための法整備、休業命令などの権限を知事に移譲
Economic policy	経済政策	一律10万円給付で低所得者に10万円上乗せ、時限的な消費減税	非正規雇用者や女性、子育て世帯、学生らに経済的支援(金額未定)

どちらを支持しますか Which party would you support?

LDP 自由民主党 | JIP 日本維新の会

Figure A.3 – An Example of a Conjoint Task with Party Labels. From the 2021 survey. The English translations (in red) were not shown to survey respondents.

In the second set of tasks, the respondent evaluated the exact same set of profile comparisons as in the main conjoint exercises, but rather than choosing the most preferred, the respondent was asked to pick which profile seemed most like the LDP. The order of choice tasks was again randomized.

In all three sets of tasks, we duplicated one task (the seventh task was the same as the first). One potential concern in any conjoint experiment is measurement error bias stemming from difficulty in responding to a question (typically, a binary choice). Clayton et al. (2023) propose a method for addressing this concern, which involves repeating the exact same choice task to measure the intra-respondent reliability (IRR). Accordingly, we added a repeated conjoint task in our 2021 and 2024 surveys to measure and correct any such measurement-error-induced bias. For example, we use this repeated task to derive the empirical IRR (80.2%) for the 2021 election. For the 2017 election, when we did not include this repeated task, we use the extrapolation method suggested by Clayton et al. (2023). The estimated IRR for 2017 is 81%. We found no substantive differences with our main results. We do not otherwise use this repeat task in our analysis.

In the 2024 survey, we also added an open-ended question following direct questions about trust in each party. This question asked respondents to explain the rationale behind their trust (or distrust) in the LDP.

A.2 Details on Conjoint Designs

Our conjoint designs generally follow those used in common political science applications. Specifically, the outcome question was a forced binary choice. The order of attributes was randomized across respondents, but fixed for each respondent to minimize their cognitive burden. For each attribute, the probability of presenting each level was constant. Finally, we did not impose any cross-attribute constraints.

In the lead-up to each campaign period, we carefully followed the policy discussions published in each of the five major national daily newspapers (*Asahi*, *Yomiuri*, *Mainichi*, *Sankei*, and *Nikkei*). These newspapers often publish conjoint-like tables with summaries of the parties' positions on major issues. After deciding on the main issues, we created descriptions of each position ("level" in the terminology of conjoint analysis) for each issue ("attribute") advocated by each party ("profile"), using newspaper summaries and the actual text of published manifestos. We avoided using any keywords, such as "Abenomics," that could potentially give away the originating party. Newspaper summaries are useful for our purposes because (1) they concisely and accurately describe the positions of the parties, and (2) voters are familiar with such summaries. Our use of these summaries as the basis for our conjoint attributes and levels thus increases the ecological validity of our survey design.

Table A.1 lists the policy descriptions for our 2017 election survey, translated into English. In this election, the parties and media discourse focused on the following five major policy issues: (1) economic policy (including Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's signature "Abenomics" policies, but also proposals for addressing growing inequality); (2) security policy (including how to respond to the threat from North Korea); (3) energy policy (specifically, whether or not to restart nuclear power reactors, which were shut down following the meltdown disaster at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant in March 2011); (4) constitutional revision (especially with regard to Article 9, the so-called "Peace Clause"); and (5) consumption tax policy (scheduled to increase to 10% from 8% in October 2019). These issues also correspond to public opinion polling on which issues were most important. For example, a *Yahoo!* poll on October 3 asked voters which issue was most important in the election, with the following results: "constitutional revision" (28%), "diplomacy and national security" (28%), "consumption tax increase/allocation" (12%), "economics (Abenomics)" (10%), "nuclear problem" (5%). Other issues attracted fewer responses.[1] For each of these five issues, we generated distinct position wordings that summarized the actual positions of eight main parties that contested the election: JCP, SDP, CDP, Hope, JIP, Komeito, LDP, and Kokoro.

Table A.2 lists the policy descriptions for our 2021 survey. In this election, the main issues were: (1) economic policy (predominantly focused on economic aid, including repeal of the consumption tax and financial handouts to respond to the economic effects of the pandemic); (2) security policy (US-Japan security alliance and defense spending); (3) energy policy (continuing debates over restarting nuclear plants and pursuing renewable energy); (4) diversity/social policy (LGBTQ rights and same-sex marriage, and whether married couples should be able to keep separate surnames); and (5) COVID policy (including strategies for distribution of the vaccine and test kits, as well as quarantine). We used the positions of the six major parties that contested the election: JCP, CDP, DPP, JIP, Komeito, and LDP. Although the SDP also ran candidates in 2021, we excluded it from the policy levels due to its minor status (along with another minor party, Reiwa Shinsengumi). In 2021, we included a direct question asking respondents which policy issue was the most important in the election. More than half (54%) indicated economic policy, followed by COVID (22%), security (10%), energy (6%), diversity (5%), and other (open-ended response, 3%).

[1] https://news.yahoo.co.jp/polls/domestic/31045/result (last accessed on December 21, 2018).

Table A.3 lists the policy descriptions for our 2024 survey. We included seven policy issues (two more than in previous years), because these were covered in national newspapers. The issues were (1) economic policy (specifically industrial policy priorities), (2) security policy (defense spending), (3) energy policy (nuclear and clean energy sources), (4) constitutional revision (similar to the same issue in 2017), (5) childcare policy (childcare subsidies and making high school education more affordable), (6) inflation policy (fiscal and labor policy tools to blunt the impact of price increases), and (7) political reform around corruption and money in politics. In response to a direct question asking respondents which policy issue was the most important in the election, a large majority again focused on economic issues: inflation (35%) and economic policy in general (31%). These issues were followed by political reform (11%), childcare (7%), security (6.5%), and energy and constitutional revision (3% each). Roughly 3.5% of respondents indicated "other," and about 18% of these (the modal group) mentioned the "money and politics" scandals in their open-ended responses. In other words, while the economy was the most important issue in both 2021 and 2024, the second most important issue in each year—COVID or political reform to address the role of money in politics—was a salient valence-related theme. As in 2021, we excluded fringe parties and focused on the same six parties as in 2021.

Table A.1 – English Translations of Positions for Each Policy Issue (Rows), by Party (Columns), 2017.

	JCP	SDP	CDP	Hope	JIP	Komeito	LDP	Kokoro
Economic policy	Raise min. wage and revitalize SMEs, the backbone of the economy. Promote AFF industries by direct income compensation. Fix inequality and poverty.	Increase min. wage. Strengthen redistribution. Promote AFF industries by direct income compensation. Expand consumption by stabilizing employment.	Increase salaries in education, medical fields. Stabilize income of middle class. Strengthen redistribution. Support SMEs, AFF industries.	Make maximum use of regulatory reform and special zones to revitalize economy through private enterprise.	Deregulate to encourage new private enterprise, promote industries, and revitalize economy.	Revitalize regional economies through support of SMEs, AFF industries, tourism, and investment in R&D of new technology.	Concentrate investment in innovation to boost productivity and support for SMEs to revitalize a private business-led economy	Improve personal income through deregulation, advancement of social infrastructure and competition.
Security policy	Strengthen sanctions on DPRK, resolve peacefully through dialogue. Withdraw cabinet decision on CSD and abolish new security laws.	Resolve DPRK problem peacefully through diplomacy and dialogue. Withdraw cabinet decision on CSD and abolish new security laws.	Collaborate with international community and raise pressure on DPRK. Strengthen regional security laws within framework of Constitution.	Overcome partisan differences to respond to DPRK and other security issues. Strengthen Japan-US defense capability, review alliance agreement, including base burden.	Collaborate with US, China, ROK to respond to DPRK threat. Strengthen Japan-US defense capability, review alliance agreement, including base burden. Strict rules on CSD.	Collaborate with international community to raise pressure on DPRK. Manage security laws and get results based on purpose of the law.	Collaborate with international community to raise pressure on DPRK. Improve capacity to cope with missiles through revised security laws; strengthen Japan-U.S. alliance.	To respond to DPRK threat, aim to establish security by strengthening diplomatic power and defense capabilities, including enemy base-attacking abilities.
Energy policy	Oppose restarting power plants and decommission. Instead, improve ratio of renewable energy.	Oppose restarting plants, decommission, and remove early. Instead, improve ratio of renewable energy.	Oppose restarting plants, and draft law for zero nuclear energy. Instead, improve ratio of renewable energy.	Reactivate plants if regulatory standards met. No expansion and aim for zero nuclear power by 2030. Instead, improve ratio of renewable energy.	Restart plants along with creation of new laws. Promote electricity liberalization to escape dependence on nuclear through market competition.	Restart plants if regulatory standards met, with understanding of local area. No expansion, aim for zero nuclear. Improve ratio of renewable energy and efficiency of thermal.	Restart plants if regulatory standards met, with understanding of local area. Position nuclear as basic power source and consider new expansion.	Reactivate plants if regulatory standards met. Diversify and stabilize energy sources including renewable energy.
Constitutional revision	Oppose revising Art. 9. Protect entire constitution.	Oppose revising Art. 9. No change to Peace Constitution.	Oppose revising Art. 9. No deviation from constitutionalism or exclusively defensive role of SDF.	Revision of Art. 9 and SDF role depends on public understanding. Discuss including right to information and decentralization.	Amend Art. 9 to protect citizens' life and property. Include free education, administrative reform, creation of the Constitutional Court.	Protect Art. 9. Clarifying SDF role unnecessary. Add new rights to the constitution instead.	Revise Art. 9 to clearly state role of SDF. Include free education, emergency response, elimination of combined districts of upper house.	Revise Art. 9 to clearly state role of SDF. Establish constitution written by the Japanese.
Consumption tax	Oppose tax increase. Instead, tax large corporations and asset owners, and eliminate inequality.	Oppose tax increase. Instead, raise corporate taxes and cut defense spending.	Freeze tax increase. Debate future burden on the people.	Freeze tax increase. Instead, tax internal reserves of large companies.	Freeze tax increase. Reduce expenditures through administrative and fiscal reform.	Raise tax as planned, use funds to make education free; reduced tax rate for food.	Raise tax as planned, with balance investing in child-rearing generation, stabilizing social security.	Freeze tax increase, but oppose tax reduction. Introduce system whereby part of tax is refunded in future.

Note: Cells show English translations of the original Japanese text. Translations are abridged and abbreviated to conserve space. SDF = Self-Defense Forces; CSD = collective self-defense; DPRK = Democratic People's Republic of Korea; ROK = Republic of Korea; SME = small and medium-sized enterprise; AFF = agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.

Table A.2 – **English Translations of Positions for Each Policy Issue (Rows), by Party (Columns), 2021.**

	JCP	CDP	DPP	JIP	Komeito	LDP
Economic policy	Provide 100,000 yen per person, including middle class; reduce consumption tax to 5%.	Provide 120,000 yen per year for low-income earners; temporary reduction in consumption tax to 5%.	Uniform 100,000 yen benefit; add 100,000 yen to low-income earners; cut consumption tax for limited time.	Lower consumption tax to 5% for limited period of two years.	Provide 100,000 yen of benefits for children from birth to 3rd year of high school.	Financial support for non-regular workers, women, households raising children, students, etc.
Security policy	Abolish Japan-US Security Treaty, conclude a Japan-US friendship treaty; shift to disarmament; oppose capability to attack enemy bases.	Maintain healthy Japan-US alliance as a cornerstone, carefully consider capability to attack enemy bases.	Maintain and strengthen Japan-US alliance, build independent national security system.	Japan-US alliance as cornerstone, consider building intra-area interception capability, abolish framework of 1% GDP spending cap on defense.	Strengthen Japan-US alliance, reinforce seamless system from peacetime to emergencies.	Strengthen Japan-US alliance; increase defense spending to 2% GDP; obtain capability to intercept missiles in outside territories.
Energy policy	Zero nuclear power plants, raise the greenhouse gas reduction target from 50% to 60%.	Achieve carbon neutrality without relying on nuclear power, no new plants.	Operate nuclear power plants that meet safety standards and have local consent, but do not build new plants.	Fade out existing plants under market principles, increase share of renewable energy.	Reduce dependence on nuclear power plants without building new ones, increase ratio of renewable energy.	Restart nuclear power plants whose safety has been confirmed, promote nuclear fusion development.
Diversity/social policy	Correct the wage gap between men and women, introduce elective separate surnames for married couples immediately; implement LGBT equality laws.	Promptly implement laws for elective separate surnames for married couples and same-sex marriage; improve measures against domestic violence.	Correct gender disparity at all stages of life; implement elective separate surnames for married couples.	Maintain family registration system; introduce elective separate surnames for married couples; promote diversity, including same-sex marriage.	Promote introduction of elective separate surnames for married couples; promote understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity.	Promote understanding of LGBT issues.
COVID policy	Large-scale, frequent, and free PCR tests; double budget for infectious disease beds.	All people entering Japan should be quarantined in hotels for at least 10 days.	Free home testing to control household infections, home administration of antibody cocktail therapy.	Legislate to secure hospital beds and medical workers, transfer authority to governors to order leave of absence, etc.	Support development of domestically produced oral medicine and expand PCR testing capacity to 1 million tests per day.	Full vaccination by Nov., dissemination of oral medicine by end of year, amend law to curb flow of people in state of emergency.

Note: Cells show English translations of the original Japanese text. Translations are abridged and abbreviated to conserve space. GDP = gross domestic product; PCR = polymerase chain reaction.

Table A.3 – English Translations of Positions for Each Policy Issue (Rows), by Party (Columns), 2024.

	JCP	CDP	DPP	JIP	Komeito	LDP
Economic policy	Tax large companies' internal reserves to support small and medium-sized enterprises with a 10 trillion yen aid package.	Make next-generation communication technologies a national project.	Promote economy using NFTs and apply 20% separate declaration tax on cryptocurrency.	Utilize special zones to create world-leading super cities.	Achieve sustainable wage increases through promoting proper price transfers in supply chains and streamlining labor.	Active investment in key growth areas such as GX and DX to solve social issues and achieve economic growth.
Security policy	Oppose establishment of new military frameworks that increase regional tensions.	Improve missile capabilities and strengthen defense with rational budget, not arbitrary numbers.	Develop strike capabilities for self-defense; increase necessary defense spending.	Increase defense spending to 2% GDP.	Promote peace diplomacy, enhance deterrence under the concept of exclusively defensive security policy.	Promote diplomacy based on rule of law; strengthen defense capabilities through increased defense spending.
Energy policy	Immediately reduce number of nuclear power plants to zero; eliminate coal power by 2030.	Create society that does not rely on fossil fuels or nuclear power by 2050.	Restart nuclear power plants that meet safety standards; rebuild next-generation reactors.	Restart nuclear plants where safety has been confirmed as quickly as possible.	Make renewable energy main power source, create society that does not rely on nuclear power.	Promote decarbonization; ensure stable energy supply, including nuclear power, with safety guarantees.
Constitutional revision	Oppose constitutional reform.	Expand discussions that contribute to expansion of citizens' rights; oppose amendments to explicitly mention SDF.	Create provisions for emergencies; allow for special extension of lawmakers' terms.	Maintain pacifism and renunciation of war while explicitly defining SDF	Consider additions to constitution, strengthening new ideas and rights in line with times.	Aim for early constitutional reform; propose four amendments, including explicit mention of SDF and provisions for emergency response.
Childcare policy	Abolish income limits for child allowances and free high school education; halve tuition fees for universities and vocational schools.	Expand child allowance; make university and school meals free; provide rent subsidies for families with children.	Abolish income limits for child allowance and child-rearing allowance; make education free through high school.	Until UBI is realized, adopt tax system where more children means lower tax burden.	Expand child allowance eligibility to age 18 and abolish income limits to enhance system.	Promote child-centered support measures tailored to different life stages.
Inflation policy	Reduce consumption tax to 5%; raise minimum wage to 1500 yen.	Provide 3000 yen monthly energy allowance to middle- and low-income households; trigger clause for further support.	Reduce income and consumption taxes; expand tax cuts for wage increases.	Gradually decrease the reduced consumption tax rate from 8% to 3%.	Continue measures to reduce burden of electricity and gas prices; raise minimum wage.	Curb rising electricity, gas, and gasoline prices while achieving wage increases that surpass inflation.
Political reform	Completely prohibit corporate and organizational donations; abolish political party subsidy system.	Prohibit corporate and organizational donations; abolish policy activity funds; revise PFCL.	Fully disclose communication expenses; abolish policy activity funds; establish independent body to monitor political funds.	Completely prohibit corporate and organizational donations; abolish policy activity funds; promote reduction of number of lawmakers.	Abolish policy activity funds; establish independent body to audit political funds.	Establish political reform headquarters; consider abolishing policy activity funds; strengthen transparency.

Note: Cells show English translations of the original Japanese text. Translations are abridged and abbreviated to conserve space. NFT = non-fungible token; GDP = gross domestic product; GX = green transformation; DX = digital transformation; SDF = Self-Defense Forces; UBI = universal basic income; PFCL = Political Funds Control Law.

A.3 Pre-Analysis Plan (PAP)

This appendix section provides details on the parts of our study that included a pre-analysis plan (PAP). Our 2017 survey was fielded prior to the widespread use of pre-registration in political science, and did not contain the party-label experiment. We pre-registered hypotheses for our 2021 and 2024 surveys, which contain the additional experimental components used to investigate party-label effects.

The following page is the pre-registration form we submitted on OSF for the 2021 PAP (https://archive.org/details/osf-registrations-pfxd9-v1). We conducted analyses of all pre-registered hypotheses. The main text reports the tests of the corollary hypotheses on the heterogeneous effects by party supporters (H2b and H3b) or perceived LDP ownership (H2c). These hypotheses related to heterogeneous effects are discussed following the presentation of Figure 3 (footnote 38 for H2b) and Figure 4 (footnote 42). The ownership hypothesis is also explored in Figure 4 (coefficient on "Perceived LDP ownership").

While we pre-registered analysis plans for many of our analyses for the 2021 and 2024 surveys, our PAP covers only part of the results we present, so our analyses as a whole should not be considered pre-registered.

Democracy Without Policy Competition: Voter Preferences and Single-Party Dominance in Japan (anonymous pre-registration)

Data collection: No data have been collected for this study yet.

Hypothesis: Hypothesis 1: The policy positions of the LDP are not the most popular positions. Hypothesis 2a: Respondents are more likely to choose a policy bundle if the LDP label is presented. Hypothesis 2b: The effect of the LDP label on the likelihood of respondents choosing a policy bundle is larger among LDP supporters. Hypothesis 2c: The effect of the LDP label on the likelihood of respondents choosing a policy bundle is smaller if respondents perceive the corresponding policy bundle as being closer to the LDP's. Hypothesis 3a: Respondents are more likely to choose a policy bundle with a particular attribute-level if the LDP label is presented, regardless of whether the attribute-level is the LDP's actual policy position. Hypothesis 3b: The effect of the LDP label on the likelihood of respondents choosing a policy bundle with a particular attribute-level is larger among LDP supporters.

Dependent variable: The unit of analysis is each profile in each conjoint task (a pair of profiles) for each respondent and for each exercise. The dependent variable is binary --- whether or not a profile is chosen.

Conditions: All respondents undertake the three sets of conjoint tasks explained in the Description section. Importantly, for each respondent, the contents of the tables presented are the same (repeated across each set in random order but with the last exercise the same as the first). We also add additional constraints so that the last exercise of the previous set and the first exercise of the next set are always different. The three sets are different in terms of the question wording or whether party labels are attached or not. The main treatment variable is whether or not the LDP label is attached to a particular profile.

Analyses: We test the hypotheses based on the following analyses/approaches. Hypothesis 1: We conduct a standard conjoint analysis using the "Without Label" exercises. If Hypothesis 1 is confirmed, the marginal means for the LDP policy positions should be smaller than those of other parties' positions (i.e., the Average Marginal Component Effects with the LDP policy positions as baselines should be larger), for most or all positions (levels). Hypothesis 2a: For all respondents, we use profiles labeled as "LDP" in the "With Label" exercises and the same sets of profiles for the same respondents in the "Without Label" exercises. We then estimate the effect of the LDP label on the probability of choosing a profile. More formally, let Y be the outcome we observe (a profile is chosen or not). We calculate E[Y | {LDP Party label is presented}] - E[Y | {No party label}], which is the difference between two conditional means. If Hypothesis 2a is confirmed, the difference between the two conditional means should be positive. Hypothesis 2b: We repeat the analysis of Hypothesis 2a but additionally condition on whether a respondent is an LDP supporter (based on responses to a separate question in the survey). Specifically, we calculate E[Y | {LDP Party label is presented, LDP supporter}] - E[Y | {No party label, LDP supporter}] and E[Y | {LDP Party label is presented, not-LDP supporter}] - E[Y | {No party label, not-LDP supporter}] and take the difference between these two differences. If Hypothesis 2b is confirmed, the first effect size (LDP label attached to a policy bundle for LDP supporters) should be larger than the second effect size (LDP label attached to a policy bundle for those who don't support the LDP). Hypothesis 2c: We repeat the analysis of Hypothesis 2a but additionally condition on whether a profile is perceived as the LDP's in the second/third set of exercises ("Ownership"). Specifically, we calculate E[Y | {LDP Party label is presented, LDP-associated profile}] - E[Y | {No party label, LDP-associated profile}] and E[Y | {LDP Party label is presented, not-LDP-associated profile}] - E[Y | {No party label, not-LDP-associated profile}] and take the difference between these two differences. If Hypothesis 2c is confirmed, the first effect size (LDP label attached to a policy bundle associated with the LDP) should be smaller than the second effect size (LDP label attached to a policy bundle not associated with the LDP). Hypothesis 3a: We repeat the analysis of Hypothesis 2a but additionally condition on a specific attribute-level. Hypothesis 3b: We repeat the analysis of Hypothesis 2b but additionally condition on a specific attribute-level.

Outliers and Exclusions: Respondents who fail a pre-treatment attention check question will be screened out from the survey sample. In addition, "speeders" (those who rush through the survey), mobile device users, non-Japanese citizens (based on self-declaration), and those who access this survey outside Japan (based on IP address) will be excluded from our analysis.

Sample Size: The sample size will be approximately 3,500-4,000 Japanese voting-age adults (18+ years old). The sample size is based on our budget. We obtain a quota-based nationally representative sample: a sample of respondents that closely mirrors demographic diversity in terms of age, gender, and regions of Japan.

Other: We will also conduct a range of exploratory analyses and descriptive analyses that pertain to party differences in policy preferences, and within-coalition policy preferences, for the purposes of making substantive contributions to understanding Japanese voting behavior and voters' preferences. These may be included in the appendix, but are not related to our main hypotheses from the experimental treatments in our survey. Because each set of exercises includes repeat pairings of hypothetical policy manifestos, an additional secondary analysis will examine within-respondent consistency in responses to the same choice set across tasks.

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A.4 Details on Variables in Valence Decomposition Analysis

Here we provide details on the variables used in the analysis to produce Figure 4 in the main text, where we explore which kinds of respondents were more likely to change a profile choice to the LDP's profile when a party label was attached.

The respondent-level variables (measured in our survey) include the following:

- `(Net) Trust in LDP` is the difference between the level of trust in LDP and the maximum level of trust in a party other than the LDP. Each question about trust had four levels, "I can hardly trust the LDP" (`1`), "I cannot trust the LDP too much" (`2`), "I can trust the LDP somewhat" (`3`), and "I can trust the LDP quite a bit" (`4`). The difference ranges from -3 to 3. The question wording was, "To what extent can you trust each of these parties?"
- `Prior LDP supporter` is a binary variable, which takes the value of `1` if a respondent reports usually voting for the LDP in past elections and `0` otherwise.
- `Familiarity of manifestos` takes the vaue of `1` if a respondent had read or heard about manifestos and takes `0` if not.
- `Cabinet job performance` has six items for which respondents rated the cabinet's performance: `leadership`, `social policy`, `economic policy`, `foreign policy`, `fiscal policy`, and `overall`.[2] Each rating has five levels: "Pretty bad," "Somewhat bad," "Neither," "Somewhat good," and "Quite good."
- `Trust in PM [Kishida (2021) or Ishiba (2024)]` has five levels: "I can hardly trust [PM name]," "I cannot trust [PM name] too much," "I can trust [PM name] somewhat," "I can trust [PM name] quite a bit."
- `Perceived policy capability of LDP` has four levels: "The LDP is mostly incapable," "The LDP is not very capable," "The LDP is somewhat capable," and "The LDP is quite capable."
- `Perceived leadership of PM` takes four levels: "The PM is mostly incapable," "The PM is not very capable," "The PM is somewhat capable," and "The PM in quite capable."
- `Perceived LDP ownership` is the proportion of profiles with an LDP party label that a respondent thought was similar to the LDP's (actual) policy bundle in the election.
- `Considered party support` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered party support in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.
- `Considered support for party leaders` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered support for the PM and party leaders in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.
- `Considered candidates' personality` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered candidates' personality in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.
- `Considered local benefits` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered local benefits in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.
- `Considered benefits for workplace` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered benefits for their workplace in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.
- `Considered candidates' policy` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered candidates' policy in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.

[2] We do not include `COVID policy` in our final analysis because this item was included in the 2021 survey only.

- `Considered parties' policy` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered parties' policy in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.
- `Considered seat balance` takes the value of `1` if a respondent considered the seat balance of parties in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.
- `Asked to vote` takes the value of `1` if a respondent was asked to vote (mobilized) in either their SMD or PR vote choice, and takes `0` if not.

The SMD-level variables come from the portal site of the official statistics of Japan (e-Stat, https://www.e-stat.go.jp/). We include the following:

- `Per capita income` (log)
- `Per capita fiscal transfers` (log)
- `Fiscal strength`
- `Total population` (log)
- `Per capita construction expenditures` (log)
- `Population density` (log)

B Details on Models and Estimation

This appendix section provides details on notation and estimation for all models used in our analyses.

B.1 Notation

i	Individuals (up to N, in set $\mathcal{I}$)
ℓ	Index of attributes (issue dimensions), e.g., economic policy (up to L)
j	Index of parties up to J (i.e., individual votes for one of J parties); each attribute ℓ has J levels
k	Choice task number for a given individual
m	Left or right profile, $m \in \{1, 2\}$
p	Types of covariates, e.g., age, prefecture, and ideology (up to P)
f	Levels of covariate values for covariate p (up to F_p)

Variables:

U_{ij}	Overall utility derived from a party j (including both valence and policy)
Z_i	Choice of party in the election
Y_{ikm}	Binary choice in a conjoint exercise
W_{ij}	Policy bundle utility j
$\widetilde{W}_{ikm}$	Conjoint profile (bundle) utility
$\mathbf{X}_i$	Demographic covariates
$T_{ik\ell m} \in \{1, ..., J\}$	The value of policy attribute ℓ that is displayed to respondent i's kth choice task's profile m

B.2 Estimation of Policy Utility from Conjoint Responses

In this subsection, we provide more formalization in our methodology of estimating the policy utility W. We use the data from the conjoint experiment exercises to predict the respondent-level support for the policy package proposed by each party.

Estimand: In contrast to the traditional AMCE estimand (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014), we are interested in a predicted value for a bundle of characteristics. Specifically, we are interested in the latent utility for a conjoint profile

$$\widetilde{W}_{ikm} = C(\mathbf{T}_{ikm}, \mathbf{X}_i)$$

that represents the utility associated with an attribute vector $\mathbf{T}_{ikm}$ and a covariate profile $\mathbf{X}_i$.

The conjoint model C is a random utility model where the outcome is a conjoint response. Each voter i makes an observed decision $Y_{ikm} \in \{0, 1\}$, where Y_{ikm} indicates voter i's binary choice of the mth conjoint profile in the kth task. In our model, the respondent does this by comparing the unobserved sum of component utilities for two alternative profiles $m \in \{1, 2\}$ given in each task k. We label this unobserved function that converts component profiles to utilities as C.

Estimation: Because Y_{ikm} represents the choice of a profile with all the information about the profile encoded in W_{ij}, we can estimate the parameters γ with a regression of Y on the conjoint profile indicators and their interaction with covariates:

$$C(\mathbf{T}_{ikm}, \mathbf{X}_i) = \text{logit}(\Pr(Y_{ikm} = 1|\mathbf{T}_{ikm}, \mathbf{X}_i)). \tag{B.1}$$

By setting up this standard model, we assume that individuals with the same covariate profile are interchangeable with respect to $\widetilde{W}$, i.e., they have the same valuation for two identical profiles:

Assumption 1 (Demographic preference homogeneity)**.** *If two individuals i and i' have the same covariate profile up to two-way interactions, i.e., $\mathbf{X}_{ip} = \mathbf{X}_{i'p}$ for all covariates $p \in 1, ...P$, where $\mathbf{X}_{ip}$ represents the two-way interaction of covariates, then the two individuals' utilities from the same conjoint profile are also equivalent, i.e., $\widetilde{W}_{ikm} = \widetilde{W}_{i'km}$ for all k and m.*

Further extensions could slightly relax this condition for strict equality by moving to random effects estimation (Goplerud 2022).

Assumption (1) requires interacting every position (attribute-level) with a set of demographic variables of each respondent, which we label $\mathbf{X}_i$.[3] We therefore estimate the form of the function C using a logit model with a two-way interaction between demographics

[3] This is a vector of P elements corresponding to the covariates we use. Specifically, we include the following operationalization of demographic covariates: geographic region (eleven regional districts used in the PR tier), age (18-19; 20-25; 26-35; 36-45; 46-55; 56-65; 66 and above), education (high school or less; vocational school, college of technology, or community college; college or higher), income (seven categories), employment status (employed or unemployed), sex (binary), and self-reported ideology (nine categories as a continuous scale, from progressive left to conservative right). All variables other than self-reported ideology are coded as categorical variables.

represented by the form:

$$
\begin{aligned}
C(\mathbf{T}_{ikm}, \mathbf{X}_i) = \gamma_0 &+ \underbrace{\sum_{\ell=1}^{L}\sum_{j=2}^{J} \mathbf{1}\{T_{ikm\ell} = j\}\gamma_{j\ell}}_{\text{Main Effects of Party Positions}} + \underbrace{\sum_{p=1}^{P}\sum_{f=2}^{F_p} \mathbf{1}\{X_{ip} = f\}\gamma_{fp}}_{\text{Main Effects of Covariates}} \\
&+ \underbrace{\sum_{\ell=1}^{L}\sum_{j=2}^{J}\sum_{p=1}^{P}\sum_{f=2}^{F_p} \mathbf{1}\{T_{ikm\ell} = j, X_{ip} = f\}\gamma_{fj\ell p}}_{\text{Effects of Party by Demographic Group (interactions)}} \\
&+ \underbrace{\sum_{\ell=1}^{L}\sum_{j=2}^{J}\sum_{p=1}^{P}\sum_{2\le f<f'}^{F_p} \mathbf{1}\{T_{ikm\ell} = j, X_{ip} = f, X_{ip} = f'\}\gamma_{ff'j\ell p}}_{\text{Effects of Party by Demographic Group (two-way interactions)}} + \varepsilon_{ikm}.
\end{aligned} \tag{B.2}
$$

where $T_{ikm\ell} = j$ denotes that each policy position (i.e., "level"), corresponds to a party j's position, for each issue (i.e., "attribute") ℓ. Researchers are typically interested in estimating the value of $\gamma_{j\ell}$, the Average Marginal Component Effect (AMCE) of level j for attribute l.

Regression Specification: Because estimating such a high-dimensional model by Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression is known to overfit to noise, we estimate a LASSO (least absolute shrinkage and selection operator) regression. We choose LASSO's penalty term by 10-fold cross-validation, and nest that within another layer of 10-fold cross-validation so that we use out-of-sample predictions.

We use this fitted model to predict the utility from a party's policy bundle. Using $\widehat{C}$ to denote the fitted function for C in Equation (B.2) with fitted coefficients $\widehat{\gamma}$,

$$\widehat{\mathbf{W}}_{ij} = \widehat{C}(\mathbf{t}(j),\ \mathbf{X}_i),$$

where $\mathbf{t}(j)$ is a vector of policy attributes whose elements are fixed to j, that is, a profile of party j. For example, if $j =$ LDP, $\mathbf{t}(j)$ indicates $T_{i\ell} =$ LDP for all attributes $\ell = 1, \ldots, L$, and therefore the coefficients $\gamma_{j\ell}$ used for estimating W_{ij} are only those where $j =$ LDP. We fit Equation (B.2) with the conjoint data and observed demographic covariates and plug in each party's policy bundle to predict $\mathbf{W}$.

B.3 Causal Quantities from Conjoint Responses

In this subsection, we cast the conjoint procedure in the potential outcomes framework to formalize the measure of party-label effects. Recall that respondents complete K tasks in which we present two profiles indexed by $m \in \{1, 2\}$, and each profile is composed of L attributes (factors).

Following the potential outcomes framework, let $Y_{ikm}(\mathbf{t})$ be the potential outcome for respondent i when the attributes for the kth task $\mathbf{T}_{ik} = \mathbf{t}$ are presented. $\mathbf{T}_{ik}$ is a stacked vector of two profiles, $\mathbf{T}_{ik} = [\mathbf{T}_{ik1}^\top, \mathbf{T}_{ik2}^\top]^\top$. Note that $\mathbf{T}$ is a column vector. A profile vector $\mathbf{T}_{ikm}$ has length L, and the ℓth element corresponds to the ℓth attribute of the profile. Each attribute presents a policy of one of the parties, $T_{ikm\ell} \in \{1, \ldots, J\}$. To estimate causal quantities, we make the following assumptions:

Assumption 2 (Consistency). *This assumption connects the potential outcomes to the observed outcomes.* $Y_{ikm} = Y_{ikm}(\mathbf{t})$ *if* $\mathbf{T}_{ik} = \mathbf{t}$

Assumption 3 (No carryover and no profile order effect). *This assumption requires that the potential outcomes are the same as long as the profiles' attributes show the same values. We also assume that the position of profiles does not affect the potential outcome.* $Y_{ikm}(\mathbf{T}) = Y_{ik'm'}(\mathbf{T}'), k \neq k', m \neq m'$ *if* $\mathbf{T} = \mathbf{T}'$.

Under Assumption 3, we can drop subscripts k and m because respondents choose the same hypothetical party whenever the same set of levels is presented in two profiles, implying that the potential outcome does not depend on the same respondent's completed tasks.

Assumption 4 (Randomization). *We randomly assign the level of attributes to the profile.*

The familiar quantities are the marginal mean and the average marginal component effect (AMCE).

Definition 1 (Marginal Mean). *The marginal mean of the ℓth attribute at level t is:* $\pi_\ell(t) = \sum_{\mathbf{t}_{-\ell}} \mathbb{E}[Y_i(T_{il} = t, \mathbf{T}_{-\ell} = \mathbf{t}_{-\ell})] \cdot \Pr(\mathbf{t}_{-\ell})$

Definition 2 (Average Marginal Component Effect (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014)). *The difference of the marginal means is the average marginal component effect:* $AMCE_\ell(t_1, t_0) = \pi_\ell(t_1) - \pi_\ell(t_0)$.

B.4 Model of the Party-Label Effect

In the 2021 and 2024 surveys, we asked the same preference question with the same set of conjoint profile exercises but with party labels randomly assigned on top of these profiles. We refer to this as the party-label experiment. Respondents saw another set of questions with the same set of conjoint profiles but with a different question (the LDP similarity experiment), and the order of the two was randomized (see Appendix A).

Using potential outcome notation, we define the party-label effect as follows. Let A_{ikm} be the randomized LDP label: $A_{ikm} = 1$ indicates that the party label presented in the mth profile of a respondent i's kth task was the LDP, and $A_{ikm} = 0$ when the party label was another party. We use Assumption 3 and drop subscripts k and m hereafter. The randomization was designed such that one of the two profiles presented was always the LDP, and another was always a different party.

Assumption 5 (Consistency across sets)**.** *Let Y_{is} be the outcome from respondent i in a conjoint task set $s \in \{1, 2\}$, where 1 indicates the preference question without party labels and 2 indicates the preference question in the party-label experiment. This assumption claims that $Y_{i1}(A_{i1}, \mathbf{T}_{i1}) = Y_{i2}(A_{i2}, \mathbf{T}_{i2})$. Hence, we can drop the subscript s. This assumption is analogous to the no carryover assumption in the conjoint design.*

We define the policy-level party-label effect as follows. For a given policy t in attribute ℓ, the party-label effect of A is the average of all profiles that vary in their policies other than attribute ℓ. Since we marginalize out all attributes except for ℓ, we call it the Average Marginal Party-Label Effect (AMPLE).

Definition 3 (Average Marginal Party-Label Effect)**.** *The party-label effect on a policy t in attribute ℓ is*

$$\tau_\ell(t) = \sum_{\mathbf{t}_{-\ell}} \mathbb{E}[Y_i(A_i = 1, \mathbf{T}_{i,-\ell} = \mathbf{t}_{-\ell}, T_{i\ell} = t) - Y_i(A_i = 0, \mathbf{T}_{i,-\ell} = \mathbf{t}_{-\ell}, T_{i\ell} = t)] \cdot \Pr(\mathbf{t}_{-\ell}).$$

The idea of averaging is similar to the standard AMCE, but our definition of the AMPLE applies to a specific policy position (level) in a specific policy issue (attribute).

Next, we define the Individual Marginal Party-Label Effect (IMPLE) that is used in the analysis in Figure 4 of the main text. We marginalize out all policy attributes at the individual level. Zhirkov (2022) defines a similar quantity for the average marginal component effect.

Definition 4 (Individual Marginal Party-Label Effect)**.** *The party-label effect on a respondent i is*

$$\tau_i = \sum_{\mathbf{t}} \mathbb{E}[Y_i(A_i = 1, \mathbf{T}_i = \mathbf{t}) - Y_i(A_i = 0, \mathbf{T}_i = \mathbf{t})] \cdot \Pr(\mathbf{t}).$$

We estimate the IMPLE by taking the difference in the sample proportion of the times the profile with $\mathbf{t}$ is chosen with and without a party label.

C Additional Results

This appendix section provides supplementary analyses to those that appear in the main text.

C.1 Summary Statistics on Estimated Policy Preference

The following figures demonstrate that our measure of policy utility estimated from the conjoint exercises correlates in expected ways across parties (Figure C.1) and with self-reported ideology (Figure C.2), especially in 2017 and 2021.

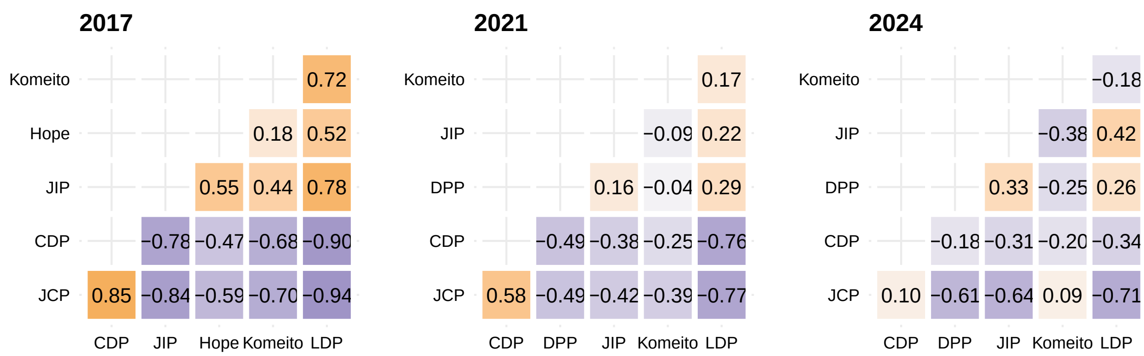


Figure C.1 – Correlation of Estimated Policy Utilities. Each cell is a correlation coefficient between the two vectors of estimated policy preferences for a pair of parties.

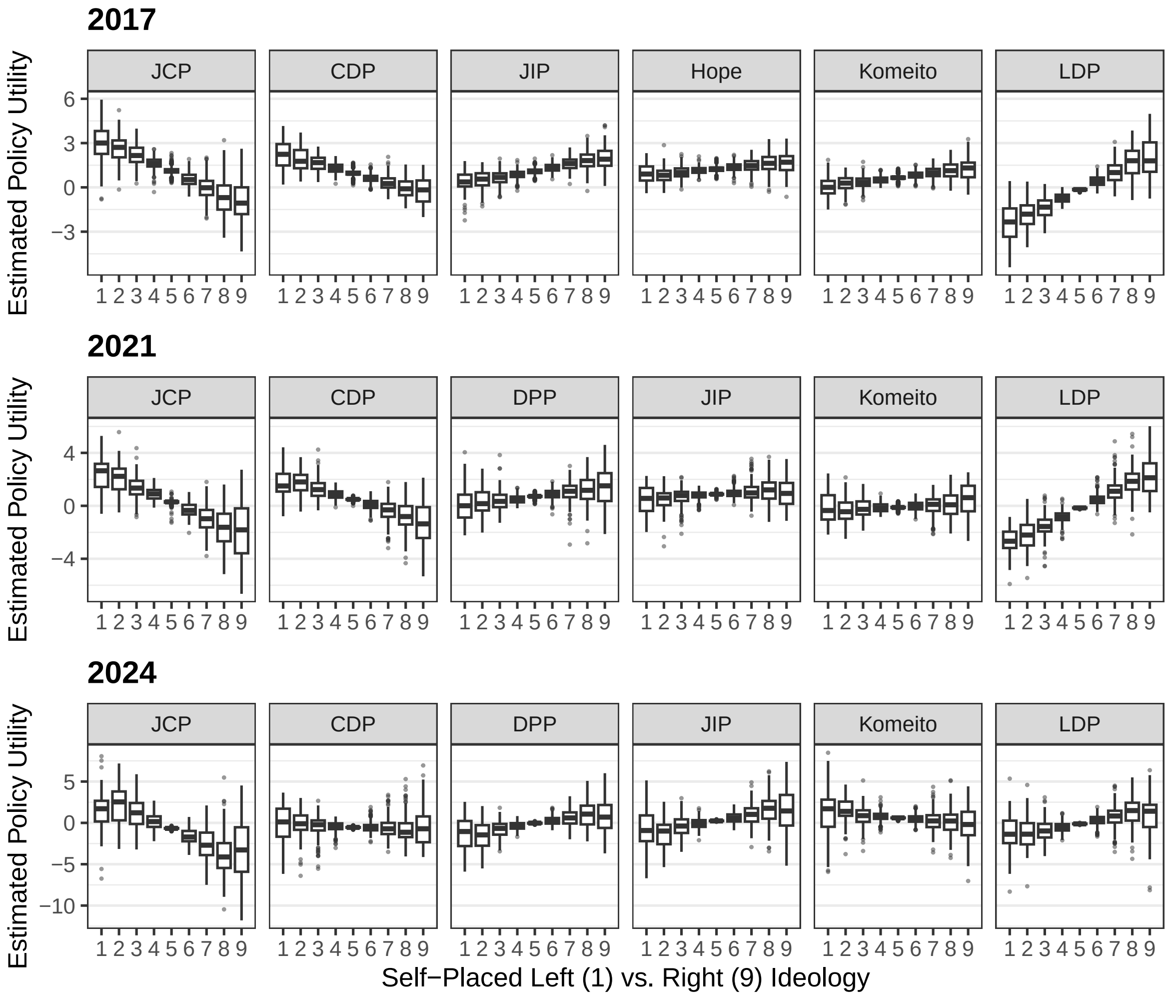


Figure C.2 – Correlation of Estimated Policy Utility with Self-Placed Ideology. Voters who place themselves to the left on a left-right ideology scale have a higher estimated preference for a left-wing party's (JCP, CDP) policy bundle and a lower preference for a right-wing party's policy bundle (LDP).

We next show how these summary statistics would change under reweighting schemes and how they differ by certain subgroups. We first examine whether our main findings change after correcting any imbalance that remains after the quota sampling. Table C.1 shows the unweighted and weighted averages and standard deviations of our estimates of policy bundle utility W_{ij} for each party j, for each year. Applying the weights described in Section A.1 makes the LDP slightly more popular, by about 0.02 standard deviations than the unweighted average, and the JCP slightly less popular. Our main pattern still holds in the weighted estimates.

Table C.2 categorizes respondents into two groups based on their voting intentions for the upcoming election: those unlikely to vote in the PR tier and those likely to vote.

Table C.1 – Implications of Survey Weighting.

	2017				2021				2024			
	Unweighted		Weighted		Unweighted		Weighted		Unweighted		Weighted	
party	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
LDP	0.00	1.00	0.02	1.08	0.00	1.00	0.04	1.10	0.00	1.00	0.01	1.02
Komeito	0.71	0.38	0.72	0.43	-0.09	0.47	-0.08	0.48	0.56	0.82	0.56	0.85
DPP/Hope	1.27	0.36	1.28	0.37	0.76	0.53	0.74	0.50	0.03	0.85	0.00	0.75
JIP	1.16	0.48	1.12	0.47	0.90	0.45	0.86	0.45	0.36	0.98	0.36	1.01
CDP	0.88	0.61	0.90	0.64	0.35	0.76	0.37	0.68	-0.53	0.81	-0.51	0.84
JCP	0.95	0.98	0.96	1.03	0.11	1.00	0.07	1.06	-0.92	1.73	-0.91	1.63

Table C.2 – Policy Bundle Utility by Turnout Intention.

	2017				2021				2024			
	Likely		Unlikely		Likely		Unlikely		Likely		Unlikely	
party	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
LDP	0.01	1.01	-0.16	0.63	-0.01	1.00	-0.01	0.82	0.01	0.99	-0.12	0.82
Komeito	0.71	0.38	0.68	0.30	-0.08	0.47	-0.14	0.40	0.55	0.83	0.58	0.70
DPP/Hope	1.28	0.37	1.18	0.33	0.76	0.53	0.70	0.41	0.04	0.86	-0.03	0.72
JIP	1.17	0.49	1.11	0.36	0.89	0.45	0.89	0.37	0.37	0.99	0.27	0.85
CDP	0.87	0.62	0.94	0.41	0.36	0.75	0.38	0.65	-0.53	0.80	-0.50	0.82
JCP	0.94	1.00	1.13	0.66	0.11	1.02	0.23	0.60	-0.94	1.77	-0.72	1.20

About 90 percent of the sample reports being likely to turn out to vote. It then shows the means and standard deviations of the policy utility W_{ij} again, within each subgroup. In 2021, likely voters and unlikely voters had the same average policy utility for the LDP. But in 2017 and 2024, non-voters were less favorable to the LDP's policy bundle on average.

C.2 Average Marginal Component Effects

Figure C.3 shows the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of each policy position on preferences for hypothetical manifestos, using the full sample of respondents in each of the three studies. Horizontal bars in plots represent 95% confidence intervals robust to clustering at the respondent level. We treat the LDP's position as the baseline in all cases and show the AMCE of each party's policy label relative to that baseline. Although the figure labels each component by the party for simplicity, recall that respondents did not see a party associated with each position. For the full descriptions of policy positions, see Appendix A.

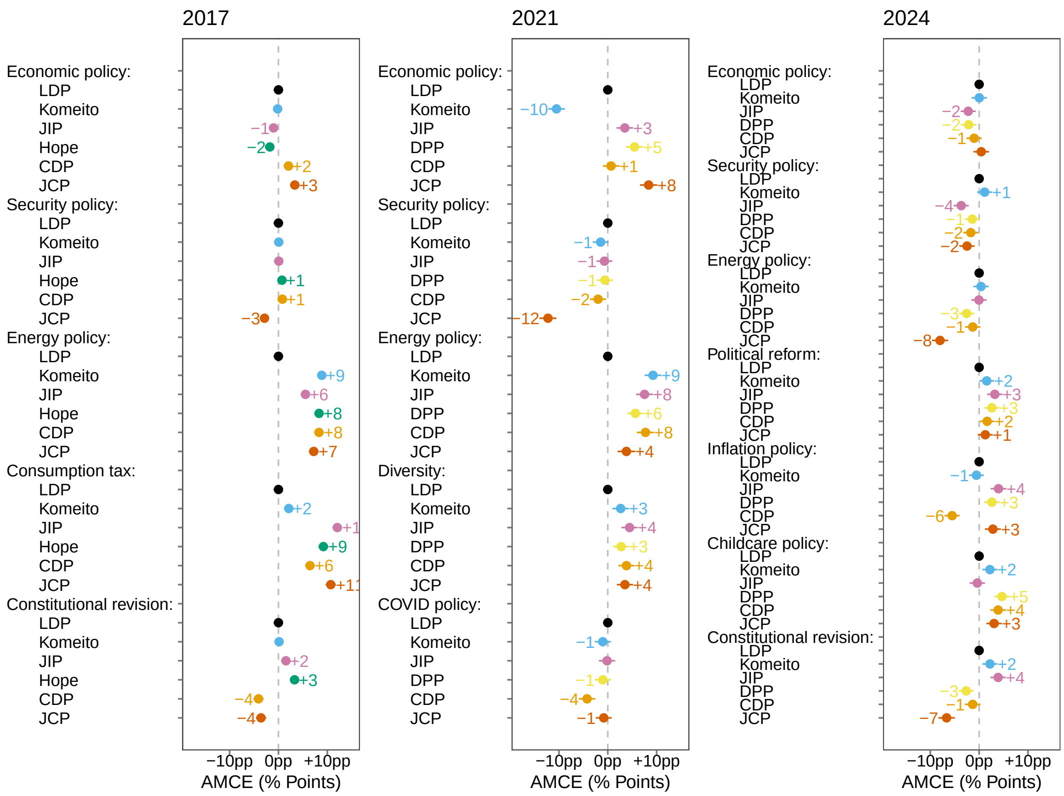


Figure C.3 – Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs). Respondents chose one of the two profiles which they would prefer. Solid circles represent the AMCEs of each party's position compared to the baseline, which is the position of LDP. Horizontal bars represent 95% confidence intervals with errors clustered at the respondent level.

C.3 Odd (Implausible) Profile Combinations

We defined odd (or implausible) profiles in 2017 as profiles that had the right-wing (LDP or Kokoro) position on constitutional revision to amend Article 9 to make more explicit the role of the Self-Defense Forces *and* the left-wing (JCP or SDP) position on foreign policy to *withdraw* the LDP's interpretation of collective self-defense (Table A.1). These combinations comprised 6 percent of all profiles seen by respondents, and thus affected about 12 percent of all binary tasks. Other policy combinations were not as inconsistent with each other (Appendix Section A.2), including in 2021 and 2024. Compared to a two-party system like the US, Japanese parties tend to be less diametrically opposed.

We considered the implication of these odd profiles by re-estimating policy utilities using the same method but only using the subset of tasks that contain those odd profiles, or only the subset of tasks without odd profiles. Recall that each respondent completed 20 successive tasks in the 2017 study, so most individuals chose between some tasks that contained an odd profile. Figure C.4 compares the utility estimates from the two subsets, for each party.

This is a most-extreme case, where we compare output estimated from mutually exclusive data points. Nevertheless, the two subsets resulted in similar estimates for the LDP and JCP (Figure C.4), correlating at around 0.75. Estimates for the Komeito and Party of Hope differed, with the estimates only using odd profiles being more varying than the larger sample. This suggests that respondents with odd profiles changed their behavior for those tasks. However, it also may be due to a smaller sample (about 12 percent of the data).

We then re-ran our main multinomial party choice model with these different utility estimates. Table C.3 compares the implications. We find that excluding the odd profiles (column 2) gives substantively similar results as the main specification (column 1). In contrast, estimates only from the odd security profiles (column 3) show a policy coefficient that is half of what is reported in our main specification (column 1, all profiles). This suggests that researchers would underestimate policy voting if all policy profiles were implausible.[4] Fortunately, in the context of these Japanese elections, we argue that none of the other policy positions were as incompatible as the one examined here.

[4] However, the difference may also be due to measurement instability in the covariates due to only using about one-eighth of the data for estimation.

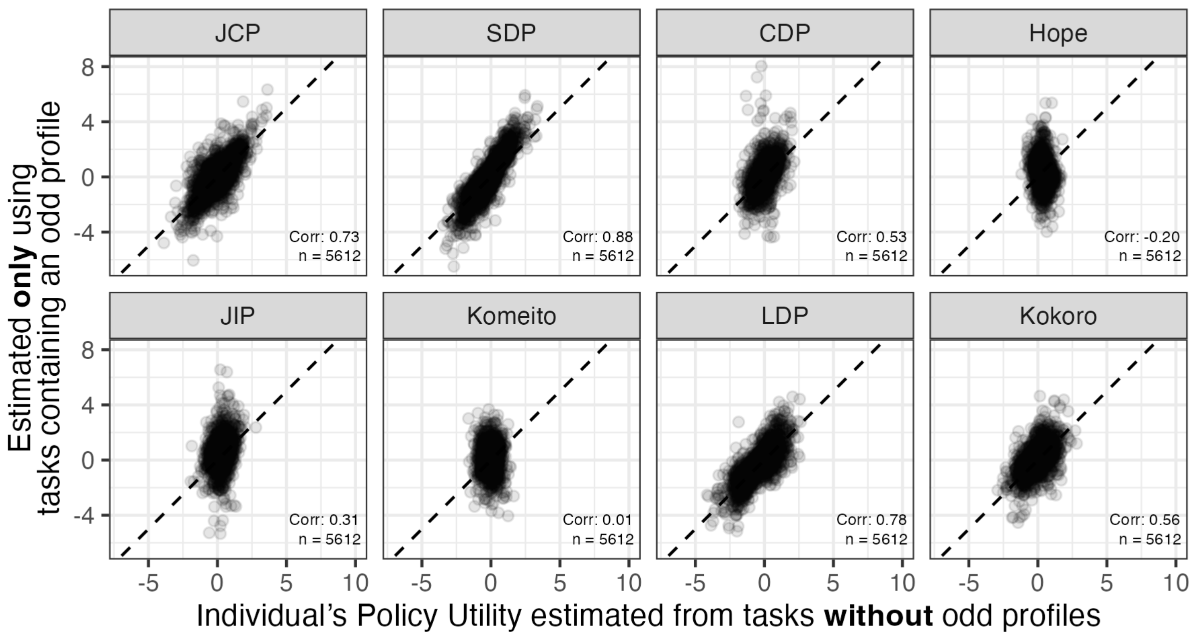


Figure C.4 – Comparison of Utility Estimates With and Without Odd Policy Profiles (2017). The x-axis shows an individual's estimated policy utility using only tasks that do not include odd/inconsistent profiles (similar to our main specification). The y-axis shows estimates of those respondents when policy utility is estimated using *only* tasks that have odd/inconsistent pairings of profiles (about 12 percent of all tasks).

Table C.3 – Implications from Excluding or Including Implausible/Odd Profiles (2017). Coefficients within each column represent a separate regression, as in Table C.4. In each regression, W is estimated from a different subset of data.

	(1) Main spec.	(2) No odd tasks	(3) Only odd tasks
Policy Utility (W_{ij})	0.64	0.64	0.33
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)
CDP Intercept	-1.38	-1.36	-1.03
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Hope Intercept	-1.39	-1.38	-0.99
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)
JCP Intercept	-2.20	-2.20	-1.70
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)
JIP Intercept	-1.83	-1.81	-1.55
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Kokoro Intercept	-3.84	-3.84	-3.69
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Komeito Intercept	-2.21	-2.20	-2.05
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
SDP Intercept	-3.75	-3.72	-3.43
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.12)
Respondents	4507	4507	4507

C.4 Multinomial Choice Model: Specification, Estimation, and Interpretation

Model estimation We estimated the model described in Equation (5) of the main text in Stata, using its `cmclogit` function (Conditional McFadden's Choice Model). In Table C.4, we compare the baseline model with no covariates to three other regression specifications mentioned in the main text, using the same function.

We show four specifications, where model (1) is the baseline model that we test from Equation (5) in the main text. In model (2), we add the respondent's self-reported trust in each party as another alternative-specific predictor of the vote. Respondents rated their trust in each party on a four-point Likert scale (see Appendix Section C.8). We recoded this variable into equidistant numbers ranging from -2 to 2 match the range of policy preferences. The inclusion of this variable halves the size of the policy coefficient. The interpretation of this change is unclear given that policy and trust are not exogenously assigned. In other words, trust may be "post-treatment" to policy.

In models (3) and (4), we include the respondent's self-reported ideology on a left-right scale as a respondent-specific variable. The inclusion of this variable addresses the concern that our measure of policy utility may not capture all relevant policy considerations by the respondent (i.e., preferences toward policies not included in the conjoint design). Including trust reduces the size of the policy utility (W) coefficient, suggesting that models (1) and (2) suffer from an omitted variable bias that trust explains. It may also suggest that policy is endogenous to trust (see the main text for a discussion). This pattern is also present when we control for per capita intergovernmental fiscal transfers received by the respondent's district (not shown).

Interpretation Logit coefficient values are often hard to interpret for two reasons. First, the units are in log odds instead of being on the probability scale. Typically, a logit coefficient of 3 is considered an extremely large increase when translated into a marginal effect on the probability scale.

Second, unlike in linear regressions, the degree of the marginal effect depends on the specific value. The horizontal shift from -10 to -8 corresponds to a negligible increase on the probability scale, whereas a shift of the same magnitude from 0 to 2 roughly corresponds to a change from 0.50 to 0.875. This intuition is helpful when interpreting the multinomial logit coefficients of Table C.4. The estimated coefficients on the policy bundle utility indicates means that a one-standard-deviation increase in the preference for party j's policy bundle, holding the values of other party bundles constant, is associated with a 0.66 (in 2017), 0.52 (in 2021), or 0.17 (in 2024) logit unit increase in the underlying valuation of party j. A 0.5 unit increase is substantial if the movement occurs when the initial preference for the bundle is at 0, because $\text{logit}(0.5) - \text{logit}(0) = 0.14$. However, the increase is not substantial if the movement starts from a party with a value far from 2. The intercept of each point relative to the LDP tells us where the parties start off. The JCP valence parameter is estimated at about -2 (relative to the LDP). A 0.5 logit unit increase starting from -2 is only $\text{logit}(-1.5) - \text{logit}(-2) = 0.063$.

Table C.4 – Conditional Logit Models with Covariates. Each regression is a conditional logit model implemented in Stata predicting party choice in the PR tier (Z_i) with our estimates of party-specific policy bundle preference W_{ij}, and other covariates. Observations here indicate number of respondent $\times$ choices.

(a) 2017

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Policy (W)	0.66	0.30	0.44	0.21
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Trust in the Party		2.36		2.35
		(0.05)		(0.05)
Komeito	-2.24	-1.86	-1.28	-1.04
intercept	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.26)	(0.31)
CDP	-1.39	-0.78	0.32	-0.06
intercept	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.27)	(0.34)
JCP	-2.21	-1.64	-0.03	-0.66
intercept	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.33)	(0.40)
JIP	-1.83	-1.28	-0.99	-0.82
intercept	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.23)	(0.28)
Hope	-1.39	-0.41	0.14	0.25
intercept	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.23)	(0.29)
Ideology	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	39064	39064	39064	39064

(b) 2021

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Policy (W)	0.52	0.22	0.12	0.06
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Trust in the Party		2.34		2.33
		(0.07)		(0.08)
Komeito	-2.25	-1.92	-0.54	-0.68
intercept	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.43)	(0.51)
CDP	-1.10	-0.62	2.66	0.92
intercept	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.39)	(0.44)
JIP	-1.70	-1.36	2.83	0.62
intercept	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.46)	(0.51)
DPP	-1.22	-0.92	0.48	-0.34
intercept	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.31)	(0.36)
DPP	-2.22	-1.74	-0.40	-1.34
intercept	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.41)	(0.47)
Ideology	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	18072	18072	18072	18072

(c) 2024

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Policy (W)	0.16	0.05	0.05	0.02
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Trust in the Party		2.08		2.06
		(0.06)		(0.06)
Komeito	-2.08	-2.10	-1.14	-1.72
intercept	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.39)	(0.47)
CDP	-0.38	-0.64	1.66	0.01
intercept	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.22)	(0.25)
JCP	-1.60	-1.71	1.30	-0.69
intercept	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.34)	(0.42)
JIP	-0.87	-1.12	0.09	-0.81
intercept	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.24)	(0.30)
DPP	-1.29	-1.68	-0.98	-1.56
intercept	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.28)	(0.32)
Ideology	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	17736	17736	17736	17736

C.5 SMD vs. PR Tier Vote Intentions

In our analysis in the main text, we used reported party vote intentions in the PR tier of the electoral system for modeling simplicity. Table C.5 compares the estimates of the policy and valence terms when using the SMD vote intention rather than the PR vote intention as the outcome of interest. Using the SMD vote complicates the estimation because of the wide range of varying choice (VC) sets. The median district has only 3 parties fielding a candidate, instead of all parties. We limit our attention to the 2017 survey, which had the most respondents.

Table C.5 estimates conditional logit models that uses the same IIA assumption to identify the coefficients when certain choice sets are missing. In the first SMD model (Ignore VC), we assume that all parties fielded a candidate in all districts (i.e., there is no varying choice set). This setting corresponds to how the survey respondents reported their vote intentions, because we did not change the set of possible options by respondent's self-reported SMD.

In the second SMD model (Allow VC), we use SMD-level candidate data merged with respondent's SMD (identified via their self-reported municipality) to let the choice sets vary by the actual availability of candidates in the election. In all three regressions, only respondents who self-report a party or candidate choice in both the SMD and PR tiers are used so that the SMD and PR regressions start with the same number of observations.

Overall, the results show that the effect of policy utility on vote choice in the SMD tier is largely consistent across different assumptions of the varying choice sets. The coefficient on policy utility is somewhat larger in the PR tier than in the SMD tier, which we interpret to mean that policy voting is stronger when voters vote in the PR tier.

Table C.5 – PR and SMD. Conditional logit coefficients, estimated among respondents who reported voting intentions for both the SMD and PR tiers.

	Outcome: SMD Vote		PR Vote
	Ignore VC	Allow VC	
Policy Utility (W_{ij})	0.57	0.59	0.65
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
CDP Intercept	-1.60	-0.75	-1.25
	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.07)
JCP Intercept	-2.10	-1.91	-2.09
	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.09)
SDP Intercept	-4.07	-1.81	-3.92
	(0.17)	(0.25)	(0.18)
Komeito Intercept	-2.89	-1.15	-2.20
	(0.11)	(0.31)	(0.09)
JIP Intercept	-2.47	-1.23	-1.86
	(0.09)	(0.12)	(0.08)
Observations	2,845	2,318	2,828

Each column represents a multinomial (conditional logit regression). SMD (single-member district) vote and PR (proportional representation) vote represent different outcomes in different tiers. indicates Varying Choice set when not all parties fielded a candidate. The Kokoro party is excluded from consideration in all analyses because they did not run candidates in SMDs. The intercept represents the difference with the LDP. Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by respondents.

C.6 Do Voters Associate Policies with the LDP?

In the 2021 and 2024 surveys, we added a third set of conjoint exercises. Respondents saw the exact same pairs of profiles (in random order) as in the first set of exercises (see Appendix A).[5] However, instead of being asked to choose their preferred profile, they were asked: "*Which of these two profiles would you say is more similar to the LDP's policy manifesto?*" This set of exercises, which is similar to designs used to study candidates in the US (Goggin, Henderson, and Theodoridis 2020) and left-right party placement in Japan (Miwa, Arami, and Taniguchi 2023), allows us to evaluate whether voters associate some policy positions with specific parties. In other words, just as parties might have "ownership" over some policy issues (e.g., Bélanger and Meguid 2008; Petrocik 1996), so too might they have ownership over particular issue positions.

Figure C.5 shows the AMCEs on the outcome of whether the respondents identified a profile (without party labels) as being closer to the LDP's position. The LDP's position is set as the baseline, and all of the AMCE point estimates are negative. In other words, when respondents see policy positions that are not those of the LDP, they are indeed less likely to think that a hypothetical bundle containing those positions is closer to the LDP's policies.

The effect sizes also indicate respondents' understanding of other parties' policy positions. The parties in this figure are sorted roughly according to the difference from the LDP's positions. The perceived policy positions of the LDP's coalition partner, Komeito, are similar to the baseline, as the small negative AMCEs indicate. By contrast, respondents correctly perceive the positions of some left-wing parties, such as the CDP and the JCP, as being most different from the LDP. The sizes decreased in 2024. The results of this experiment suggest that the discrepancy between respondents' policy preferences and their intended party vote choices occurs even though respondents can recognize the LDP's (or "conservative") policy positions somewhat accurately.

[5] The first set always came before the second (or third) set, but the order of the second and third sets was randomized (i.e., respondents saw sets in the order of 1-2-3 or 1-3-2). In addition, the order of exercises *within each set* was randomized with the condition that the last exercise in a preceding set and the first exercise in the next set were always different. In randomizing the order of exercises in this way, it is unlikely that respondents would recognize the repetition of the same set of comparisons.

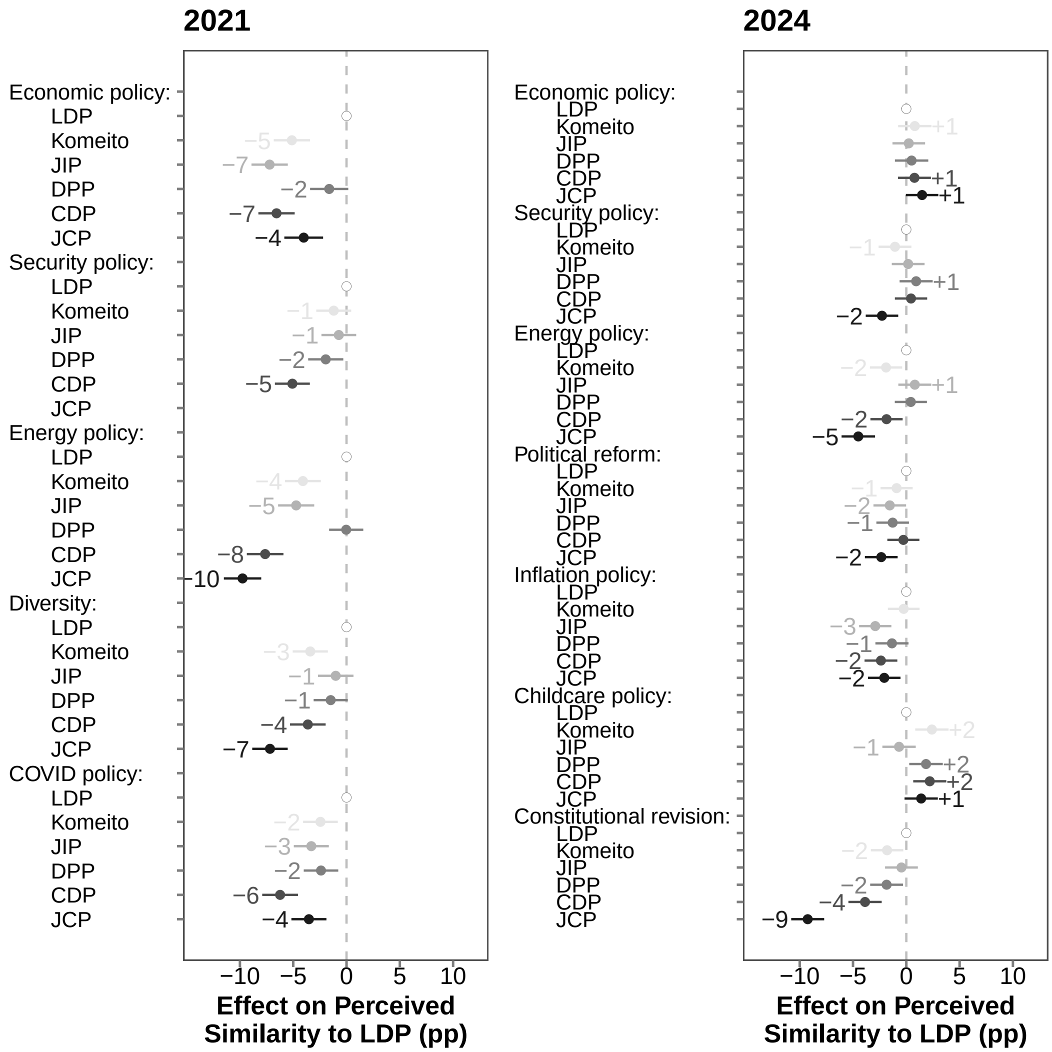


Figure C.5 – Party Similarity Experiment. AMCEs of each party's position compared to the baseline, which is the position of LDP. Formatting follows Figure C.3.

C.7 Disaggregated Results By Election Year

Table C.6 shows the same results as Table 1 in the main text but broken out by each election year. Figure C.6 shows the same results as Figure 4 in the main text but broken out by each election year.

Table C.6 – Highest Policy Utility and Vote Choice. See Table 1.

2017:

	Party Choice in Election (Row Sums to 1)						
Preferred Bundle	JCP	CDP	Hope/DPP	JIP	Komeito	LDP	Total n (bundle)
JCP	0.15	0.24	0.22	0.09	0.05	0.25	1,570
CDP	0.15	0.23	0.27	0.06	0.04	0.25	177
Hope/DPP	0.06	0.15	0.20	0.15	0.07	0.36	1,741
JIP	0.05	0.11	0.15	0.12	0.05	0.54	960
Komeito	0.01	0.07	0.15	0.10	0.04	0.63	91
LDP	0.02	0.05	0.12	0.13	0.04	0.64	213

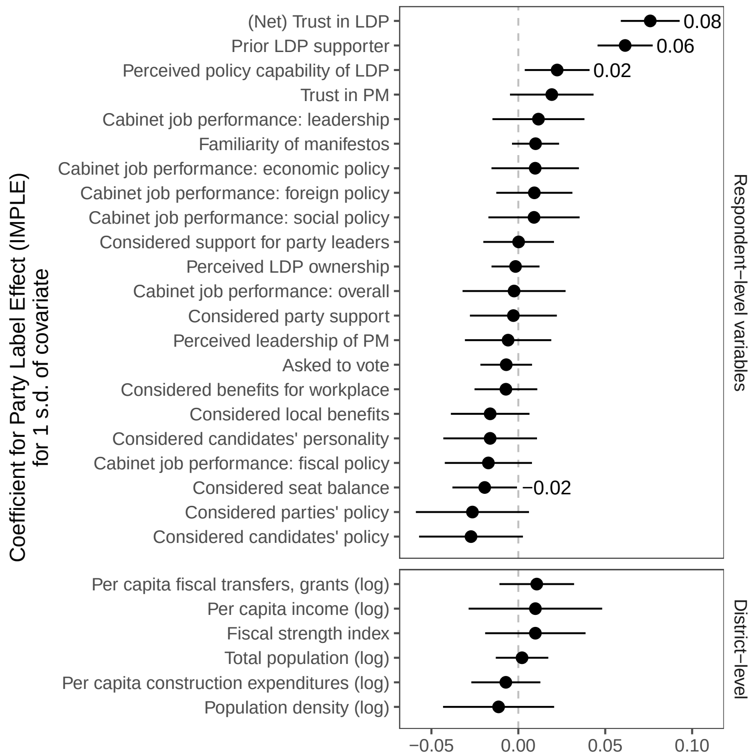
2021:

Preferred Bundle	JCP	CDP	Hope/DPP	JIP	Komeito	LDP	Total n (bundle)
JCP	0.26	0.36	0.05	0.16	0.02	0.15	251
CDP	0.16	0.27	0.10	0.20	0.04	0.21	201
Hope/DPP	0.04	0.09	0.06	0.26	0.04	0.51	452
JIP	0.08	0.18	0.07	0.19	0.05	0.43	1,841
Komeito	0.24	0.24	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.47	17
LDP	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.15	0.04	0.69	250

2024:

Preferred Bundle	JCP	CDP	Hope/DPP	JIP	Komeito	LDP	Total n (bundle)
JCP	0.18	0.43	0.06	0.08	0.03	0.22	232
CDP	0.06	0.08	0.21	0.16	0.02	0.48	63
Hope/DPP	0.02	0.13	0.12	0.13	0.05	0.55	165
JIP	0.03	0.17	0.13	0.19	0.04	0.43	407
Komeito	0.07	0.25	0.10	0.17	0.06	0.35	1,865
LDP	0.05	0.12	0.11	0.17	0.04	0.50	224

(a) 2021



(b) 2024

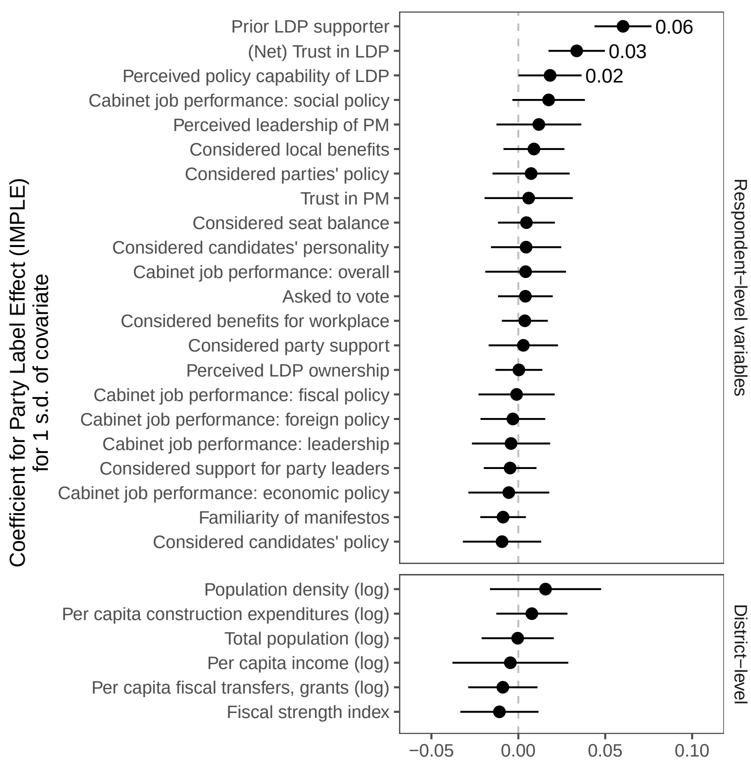


Figure C.6 – Figure 4 by Election Year (2021 and 2024). This figure replicates Figure 4 from the main text, but split by year rather than pooled.

C.8 Descriptive Statistics on Trust

Figure C.7 shows the answers to a question on trust in each major political party. Each stacked bar chart shows the distribution of responses to a four-point categorical scale. The annotated numbers are the percentages of respondents who gave one of the two responses positively indicating trust. In 2017 and 2021, the LDP earned the most trust among respondents. In 2024, trust declined for most parties, but the drop was largest for the LDP, by 13 percentage points. The LDP's trust advantage over other parties shrank to statistically indistinguishable levels in 2024.

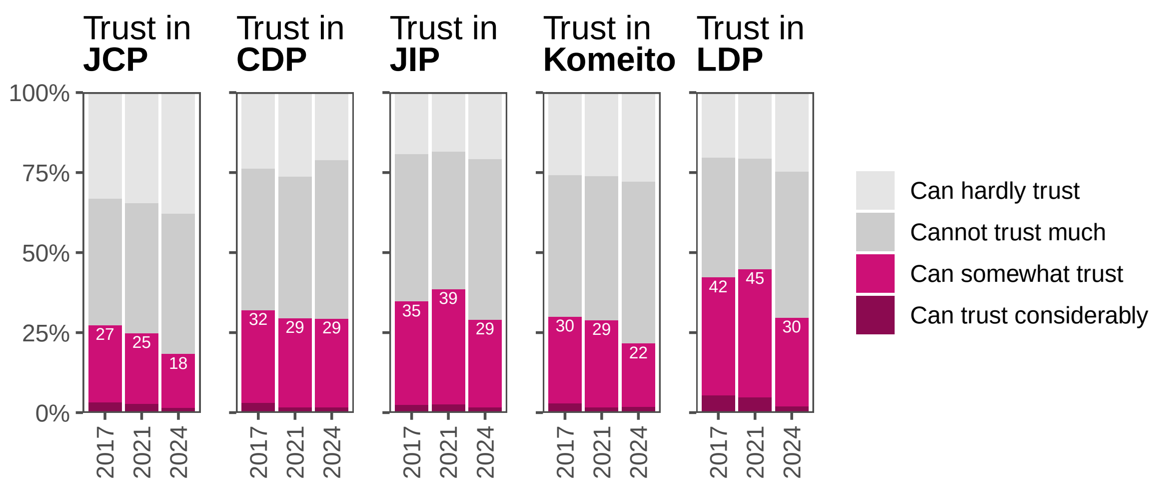


Figure C.7 – Levels of Reported Trust for Political Parties, 2017-2024. The question wording was "To what extent can you trust each of these parties?"

The Japanese wording for the trust question, and the question format in the survey, is below:

Q13.5 以下の政党を、どの程度信頼することができますか。全ての項目にお答えください。

	かなり信頼することができる (1)	やや信頼することができる (2)	あまり信頼することができない (3)	ほとんど信頼することができない (4)
自由民主党 (Q13.5_LDP)	○	○	○	○
立憲民主党 (Q13.5_CDP)	○	○	○	○
公明党 (Q13.5_Komeito)	○	○	○	○
日本維新の会 (Q13.5_Ishin)	○	○	○	○
国民民主党 (Q13.5_DPP)	○	○	○	○
日本共産党 (Q13.5_JCP)	○	○	○	○
社会民主党 (Q13.5_SDP)	○	○	○	○
れいわ新撰組 (Q13.5_Reiwa)	○	○	○	○
NHK 党 (Q13.5_NHK)	○	○	○	○

Figure C.8 reports an exploratory analysis of respondents' reasons for trusting (or not trusting) the LDP in the 2024 survey. In the 2024 survey, we immediately followed up the trust question with an open-ended question asking respondents to explain their answer with as much detail as possible.[6] We parsed the responses into Japanase words (tokens) using `RcppJagger` (Eshima and Yoshinaga, 2023) and counted the prevalence of certain keywords we picked.

We defined a "money and politics" topic as responses including the words , , , , , or (this last word is associated with the Unification Church). We defined an "execution/competence" topic as responses including the words , , , or . Finally, we defined an "inflation" topic as responses including the words , , , or . We arrived at this list through iterating through a keyword-assisted topic model (Eshima, Imai, and Sasaki 2024). The topic model produced similar results, but we present the counts-based measure here for simplicity and reproducibility.

The left panel shows that mentions of "money and politics" in some form are most prevalent among respondents who reported lower levels of trust in the LDP. The opposite pattern emerges for mentions of "execution/competence" (center panel). It is the more-trusting respondents who mention competence as a reason for their trust in the LDP. The right panel pulls out mentions of "prices" to assess whether inflation was related to trust attitudes. This topic is much less prevalent and noisy, but the correlation with trust is similar to the "money and politics" topic.

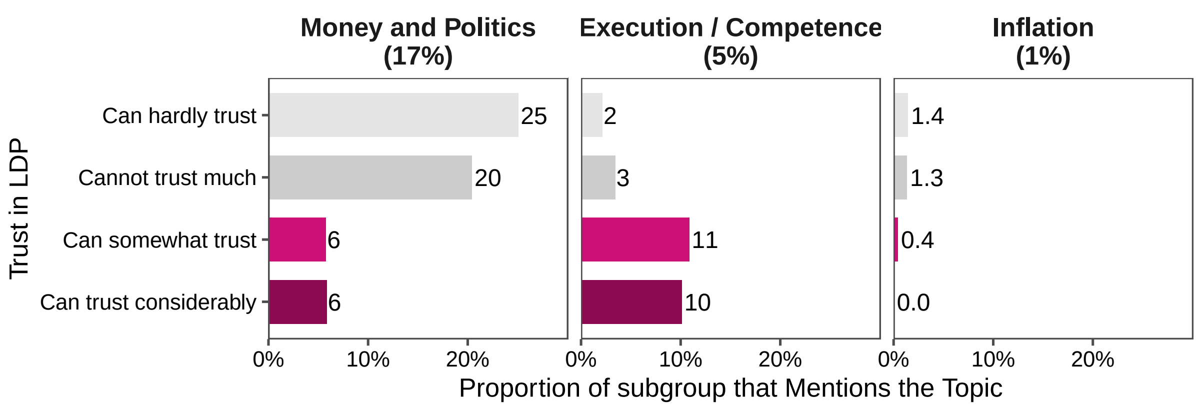


Figure C.8 – Open-ended Responses Explaining Trust in LDP This figure shows an exploratory categorization of keywords associated with respondents who reported varying levels of trust in the LDP in 2024.

Figure C.9 shows differences in reported trust and the valence advantage estimates for a regionally dominant party: the JIP. We use the 2021 election survey, as the JIP performed well in that election and was credited with competently managing the COVID pandemic (Pekkanen, Reed, and Smith 2023). Panel (a) shows the levels of trust for parties among all respondents (top), and just for respondents in the Kinki region where the JIP dominates (bottom). Panel (b) shows the Average Marginal Party Label Effect (AMPLE) of the JIP label among respondents in the Kinki region (in blue) and in other regions (in yellow). We code the Kinki region as the prefectures of Shiga, Kyoto, Osaka, Nara, and Wakayama.

[6] The question was: "

(a) Trust for Major Parties **(b)** AMPLE of the JIP Label

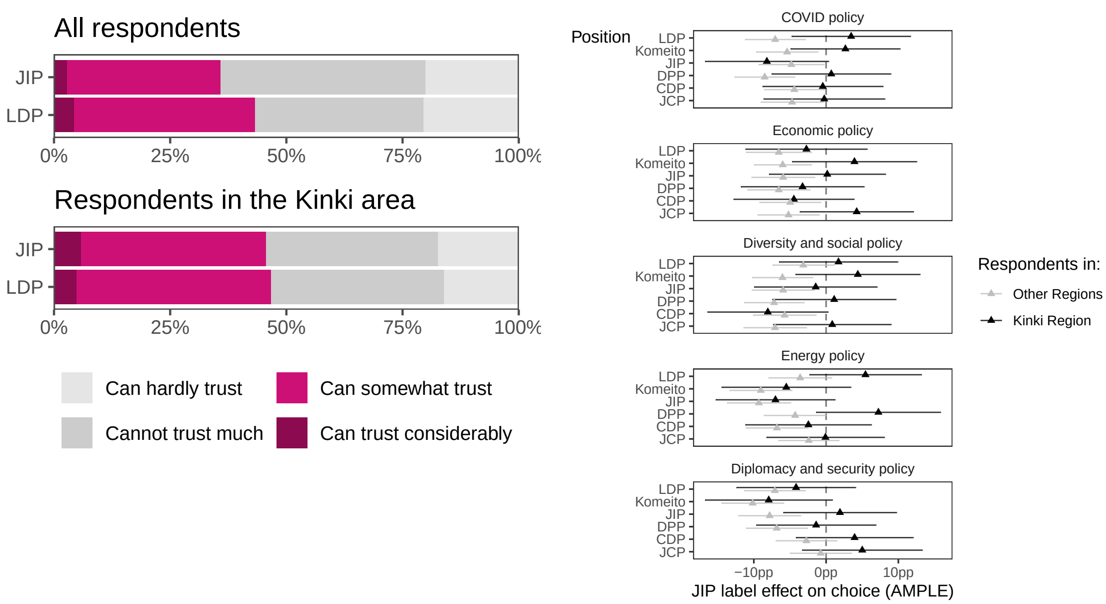


Figure C.9 – **Subgroup Analysis of the Valence Advantage: JIP in Kinki** This analysis splits the sample in the 2021 survey to explore how trust varies for the regionally dominant JIP in Kinki. In the context of the 2021 election, the JIP was credited with competent management of the COVID pandemic, and enjoyed levels of trust similar to the LDP (a); and higher party-label effects (AMPLE) in the Kinki region compared to other regions (b).

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