Switching voters' identities:

Effect of identity interference of social identity to partisan identity on political perception and voting.

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Introduction

Political scientists have long studied significant variations in voting pattern of various socio-demographic groups (i.e. class, gender, age, race/ethnicity, etc. Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, 1944; Lipset and Rokkan 1967), and the most significant group, partisans. Considering that socio-demographic categories serve as sources of one's social identities, interaction effect of social and political identities on political perceptions and behavior is an important topic for electoral behavior.

People have multiple identities, but indeed, they usually manage them well without internal conflicts (Brewer 2001: 122-123). Multiple identities however, can potentially cause an attitude conflict (Burke 2006: 84-86). For example, a hypothetical feminist Catholic may suffer from a potential attitude dilemma caused by her identity: as a Catholic, she may oppose abortion, but when she thinks herself as a pro-choice feminist, she may support it. What would happen to her electoral choice if her partisan identity (PID) and other important social identity cause this type of internal conflict? Such a question has not been investigated at all with an appropriate method in the voting behavior literature for a long time.

This paper explores the effect of identity interference of a PID by a social identity (SID) on the political perception and voting behavior. We examine for the first time, whether the information implying that many other members of the identified occupational group support a different party than the respondents' PID. More specifically, we conducted an online experimental survey of about 1,000 Japanese office workers, in which the participants are randomly assigned to one of three groups, an identity stimulus group (ISG), a policy stimulus group (PSG) and a control group. Participants in ISG receive non-programmatic, mere numerical information that the disproportionally fewer ingroup members of SID (office workers) support the party that they identified, whereas those in PSG receive information that the identified party proposes a policy that has a negative implication for typical office workers. Our findings are three-fold. First, different patterns of identity stimulus effects are observed between two partisans of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). Second, participants in ISG estimate a larger ideological distance between their own position and that of their identified party than those in a control group. Third, a positive interaction effect between identity stimulus and the strength of partisanship on their voting intention is found among LDP partisans. As for DPJ identifiers, such an effect is not observed, and neither a direct or interaction effect of policy

stimulus is found. Altogether, the overall results suggest important interaction effects of multiple identities on political perceptions and behavior, although their vote choice may be more resistant.

In the following sections, we first review the relevant literatures on PID and SID briefly, and link them to investigate the effect of identity interference. The next section describes the procedures of our experiment and measurement of relevant concepts. Then in the third section we report the descriptive statistics and the regression results of our experimental treatment effects. The final section explores the interpretations and implications of our results.

Applying Theories on Social Identification to Partisan Identification

Party identification has been a central concern in the voting behavior literature since the *The American Voter* (Campbell, et al. 1960). Although many important criticisms are made to its concept, nature measurement, and assumptions (to name some, for fundamental disagreement with its concept, Fiorina 1981; Achen 1992; on long-term and short-term stability, Crewe 1976; MacKuen, Erikson and Stimson 1989; on conceptual (in)transferability, Campbell and Valen 1966; Thomassen 1976. For a recent review, see Budge 2009: 27-31), party identification is understood to have a function of a perceptional screen and a sticky navigation of their voting behavior for a long time, because it not only provides a shortcut for a decision, but also derives from a long-term, affective attachment to the party and/or its members (Campbell, et al. 1960: 42; Bartels 2002; Green and Schickler 2009: 195-196; Greene 2004; Mimura 2009; for a review, see Johnston 2007; Weisberg 2008: 116-126).

While some scholars argue that PID can be treated as an identity among many other SIDs, (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002: ix, 24-27; Weisberg and Greene 2003; Greene 2004), both literatures on SID and PID have rarely communicated well for a long time (Monroe, Hankin and Van Vechten 2000; Huddy 2001). This is unfortunate, when the social psychology literature experienced a considerable development in theories and findings on SIDs. If PID can be treated as an SID, then in principle, the nature of PID should be the same as that of SID. We first adopt one of the robust findings of the self-categorization theory that self-categorization process strengthens the perceived similarities in characteristics and norms shared by other ingroup members, and the

perceived dissimilarity with outgroup members (Hogg and Abrams 1988; Turner, et al. 1987). In other words, once people identify themselves as a social group, they tend to think that other ingroup members share similar traits and group norms (for example, a pro-life Catholic individual may believe that many other Catholic members are also pro-life, if they believe being Catholic means so),[4] and that outgroup members share dissimilar traits and norms (i.e. non-Catholic are pro-choice). This reasoning is based on the shared belief in the prototypical characteristics of ingroup members, and such a belief is enhanced when their identity is stronger (Hogg, Hardie and Reynolds 1995).

We apply this idea both to PID and SID in a way that the implication of the perceived prototypical similarity of ingroup members of an SID interferes that of the PID. More concretely, when voters find that typical ingroup partisan members are mostly composed of dissimilar members to themselves in terms of their other important SID, do they still perceive the party, and support the same party as they previously did? Because individuals have multiple identities, all of which should enhance the perceived similarities of their ingroup members and dissimilarities of outgroup members, voters may consequentially change their political perceptions and behavior, when they face the contradictory information suggesting that the prototypical image of the ingroup members (partisans) are at odds with the ingroup members of their SIDs (Huddy 2001: 149). In other words, such an image shift may switch voters' identity to base their decision on, from "me as a partisan" to "me as a Catholic" (Wheeler, DeMarree and Petty 2007). Politics are often group-based in the strategic reality of parties (Uhlaner 1989; Dickson and Scheve 2006) and voters' perceptions (Huddy 2003: 515-516; Conover 1988; Fowler and Kam 2007).

This study is exploratory in nature, but some predictions can be made following previous studies on identity inhibition and interference. An identity inhibition theory (Hugenberg and Bodenhausen 2004; Macrae, Bodenhausen and Milne 1995) argues that when people face conflicting normative suggestions from their different social identities, they evade a self-contradiction by actively suppressing one of the identities at their cognitive level (a similar notion is discussed from the identity control theory by Burke 2006: 84). According to them, when multiple social identities are primed, primed identities compete for an activation, and an SID that wins the mental "race" is adopted as a dominant normative guidance, while the lost one is actively suppressed (Hugenberg and Bodenhausen

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[4] The identity boundaries and meanings of identities should be conceptually distinguished, but a shared image of a prototype provides meanings (Huddy 2001: 141-143).

2004: 233). Applying this idea to the relationship between PID and SID means that the function of either a PID or an SID is expected to be suppressed, when identity is interfered. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether PID "wins" or "loses" the race, but because PID encourages perceived similarities of partisan members in characteristics (ideology) and norm (supporting the identified party), we expect to see a more distanced perception of the party's ideological position and decreased propensity of voting for an identified party, if PID loses the identity race.

Rather than a simple version of identity interference, the strength of PID could interact with this process. Settles (2004) examines the negative influence of the potential identity conflict of being female and scientists at the same time, and reports that scientific performance, self-esteem, and life satisfaction are lower, when their two identities interferes each other: for many female scientists, being a woman makes them feel difficult to fit the definition of scientist. Importantly, the perceived level of identity interference is the highest, when the female identity is central (important) and the scientist identity is not central (unimportant). Applying this finding to our study would mean that the level (strength) of PID mediates the effect of identity interference.

In sum, this paper seeks to find whether voters would react to the identity interference of SID to PID by changing their political perception and voting behavior, as they find their prototypical image of partisan members is interrupted by other SID. The theoretical basis of this study is that holding an SID encourages a perceived similarity in norms and characteristics of other ingroup members. We investigate this effect by conducting an online experimental survey, which will be discussed in the next section.

Experimental design

In order to examine the effect of identity interference of SID to PID, an experimental survey was conducted for Japanese office workers between August 24th and 27th in 2007, about a month after the House of Councillors (*Sangiin*) general election on July 29th. Following the nature of the research question, all the participants must have the same SID; otherwise the identity interference effect becomes heterogeneous. A category of "office workers" (*kaishain*) is chosen, because it is a well recognized, broad occupational (and social) category in Japan. There are at least two advantages of using this identity over the others. First, compared to other SIDs associated more clearly with political parties (such

as Buddhists *Sōkagakkai* members and *New Kōmeitō* or, Clean Government Party; hereafter *Kōmei*), the perceived non-partisan nature of office workers enables us to examine the effect of identity interference to two major partisans of Liberal Democratic Party and Democratic Party of Japan.[5] In other words, the applicability of the experimental effect using this identity is not as limited as that of *Sōkagakkai* members to *Kōmei*. If we turn this argument around, however, the non-partisan nature of office workers may impair the validity of our experimental treatment, because participants may doubt the relationship between office workers and PID as presented in our experiment. This can be considered as an advantage of our study: considering that office workers' identity is less likely to interfere with the PID in Japan, our experimental setting is a "least likely case" of identity interference.

In our "Internet Survey of Businesspersons' Political Attitudes," 2533 office workers were sampled from the total sampling pool who registered with the survey company, Yahoo! Japan.[6] They were instructed by an e-mail to access to a designed web site to answer the questions, and 1071 office workers participated in our research (43.1% response rate). We eliminated 43 participants who took too short time (in less than two minutes, who are considered to have disregarded our entire questions and instructions) and those who took too much time (more than 15 minutes, who are considered to have stopped or searched for additional information to our treatment question in the middle) to answer our questions, although the results of our analysis are almost identical. Because of the small

[5] The post-2007 election survey of *Waseda CASI/PAPI 2007* survey (Waseda University, principal investigator: Aiji Tanaka) reveals that office workers were less likely to feel close to or voted for LDP than non-office workers by roughly 10% points: about 27.5% of non-office workers answered that they felt close to LDP, while only about 16.4% of office workers did so. *Waseda CASI/PAPI 2007* survey was funded by the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research A (18203008) and by the Open-Research-Center Enhancement Program (2004-2008 led by Koichi Suga) of the Academic Research Advancement Promotion Programs for Private Universities, and the dataset will be accessible through Social Science Japan Data Archive (http://ssjda.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/) in near future.

[6] Yahoo! Japan Research is one of the most major internet survey companies in Japan, which held roughly 1,570,070 registered members in September 2007. Among these members, about 200,000 were registered as office workers (excluding company executives) whose age ranged from 20 to 65 years old in the enrollment survey. Our sampling method is random but weighted by the proportion of office workers' gender and geographic distribution across 47 prefectures in Japan based on the actual geographical distribution of office workers in 2002 (Sōmusho Tōkeikyoku 2002).

number of observations and the incomparable treatments in the research design (policy stimulus is not provided to other partisans and non-partisans), our analysis are restricted to two major partisans of LDP and DPJ.

Our first task is to measure a direction of PID. In Japan, because a typical PID question format used in many English-speaking countries sounds awfully unnatural, a party support question ("*Which party do you support?*") has been most frequently asked in many past academic studies (Miyake 1998) and in commercial polls. Although the party support is highly correlated with party identification, this question may measure a different concept than party identification per se (Mimura 2009). Accordingly, we measure a direction of PID by two "close party" questions. All the participants are first asked to choose, if they have, a party that they "*usually feel closest to*" them. If they answer no parties, they are asked again to choose, if any, a party that they feel "*a little closer to*."[7]

Dependent variable

Our two dependent variables are partisans' 1) a perceived ideological distance between themselves and the identified party, and 2) the voting intention for the identified party under the PR system. After the experimental treatment, all the participants including those in a control group are asked to rate the ideological position of their own, LDP and DPJ on a one-dimensional, eleven-point scale from the most liberal (*kakushinteki*, 0) to the most conservative (*hoshuteki*, 10). The perceived ideological distance is measured by the absolute distance between their ideological position and the rated position of the party that they identify (either LDP or DPJ). This variable varies from zero (when the location is identical) to ten (farthest apart) with the mean of 1.97.

Our second dependent variable is measured by a question, "*If there is an election tomorrow, would you go to vote? If yes, which party would you vote for?*" We create a binary variable by assigning one to those who answered the same party as their partisanship (vote choice = PID), and zero to those who answered otherwise (vote choice ≠ PID). In aggregate, this variable measures the latent propensity of partisans' voting for their

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[7] Certainly, this measurement of PID is not without problem (Huddy 2003: 522-524), but we used it for practical reasons. First, our results are comparable to those in the randomly sampled national surveys conducted in the same period (Table 1). Furthermore, the close-party question is a dominant, de-facto measurement of partisanship in the most major international survey, the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (Blais, Gidengil, Nadeau and Nevitte 2001: 8-9).

identified party, and the higher value suggests that their vote choice is in accord with their partisanship. If the function of the PID is inhibited by our experimental treatment, the average perceived ideological distance of a treatment group should be observed larger than that of a control group, and the probability of voting for an identified party of a treatment group is lower than that of a control group.

Independent variables

It is often suggested that the direction of identity and its strength are at a different dimension (Greene 2004; Weisberg and Greene 2003: 85, 108-109), but stronger partisans are always more likely to vote for the identified party. In addition, the close party questions may be an insufficient or inadequate measurement of partisanship. Thus following Greene (2002; 2004), the strength of PID is measured by the Identification with a Psychological Group (IDPG) scale.[8] The IDPG scale is composed of two factors, "shared experiences" and "shared characteristics" (Mael and Tetrick 1992: 816-817), and four questions (two for each factor) are used to measure both dimensions of the strength of PID in our experiment. Because the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (not shown here, but available upon request) yields a single dimension, a single standardized scale of strength of PID is created by simply adding the score of the four items and dividing the maximum score (12) so that it ranges from zero (weakest) to one (strongest identification). The strength of non-partisanship and office workers identities are also measured, factor analyzed, and standardized in the same manner using the same IDPG question formats.

Our main independent variables are two experimental treatments. After the direction and strength of PID is measured, those who answered that they feel closest/closer to either LDP or DPJ are randomly divided into one of three groups: 1) an identity stimulus group (ISG), 2) a policy stimulus group (PSG), and 3) a control group. Participants in ISG receive visual information (two pie charts) which suggests, "typical partisans of the party you feel close to are disproportionally composed of other occupational groups than office workers like you." All the manipulated pie charts visually contrast office workers as a majority occupational category group in general to office workers as a minority within the same partisan group as the participants have chosen in the "close party" question. Participants in PSG are asked to read a short (a half-page) news article from *Nikkei Shimbun* (one of the major newspapers in Japan), which provides negative implications of

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[8] For a pioneering work which adopted a similar measurement in Japan, see Hirano (2002).

the tax policy by an identified party for typical office workers (LDP), or preferential taxation for outgroup members (farmers, DPJ). Both stimuli are common in discouraging partisans to feel ideologically closer to, or to vote for the identified party, but they are different in conceptually important manner. While the identity stimulus tries to interfere PID by SID by painting the image of the prototypical partisans as dissimilar outgroup members of their SID, the policy stimulus tries to discourage ingroup members by an unpopular tax policy (programmatic appeal).

In order to make sure that the participants of either experimental group receive and understand the contents of the stimulus, a simple quiz is devised on the same page in which the identity/policy stimulus is provided. For ISG, the assigned participants are asked to choose one correct answer out of four choices that best describes what the chart signifies. The right answer, "*while the share of the office workers among all the working persons are the largest (roughly 40%), their share in the LDP partisans is 15%, which is smaller than the share of the self-employed,*"[9] tries to make an impression that the majority of the ingroup members of the respondents' PID are composed of outgroup members in terms of occupational category.[10] Other false answers from A to C are also designed to make this impression by contrasting the occupational category within a partisan group. A correct answer is presented in the next page after participants finalize their answer.

Similarly, the participants in PSG are asked to choose a correct answer out of four choices that best describes the contents of the article, and the correct answer is displayed in the next page after they finalize their answer. We used all the participants' answers, including those who answered the question incorrectly, because excluding them would bias the causal inferences of the stimuli's influence on the subsequent answers, assuming that we have the symmetric percentage of participants in a control group who would not potentially follow our direction.[11] The relevant part of the questions used in this experiment

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[9] The share of office workers in DPJ participants is 18%.

[10] We could successfully devise this stimulus by calculating the proportion of strong party supporters by occupational category using *21 seiki nihonjin no seiji shakai ishiki chōsa* [Survey of the social and political attitudes of Japanese in the 21st century] (Waseda University, 21COE-GLOPE 2005). Although the presentation of the composition ratio of partisans by occupational categories is elaborated, all the data used in the surveys are based on the actual data from academic and government surveys or news.

[11] The rate of choosing a correct answer was 65.8% for ISG and 69.6% for PSG. The results with excluding the participants with incorrect answers produced almost the same or even clearer results.

and the flow chart (structure of the experiment) are presented in Appendices.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics of relevant variables are briefly reported in Table 1 and 2. In order to compare and check differences between the samples in our survey and those in a randomly sampled national survey, Table 1 also reports the percentage of close party of office workers and their reported voting behavior of the 2007 election in the post-election survey of *Waseda CAPI/PAPI 2007*, which was conducted from August 22nd to September 17th (Waseda University 2007). First thing to notice on the difference is that our survey has more office workers who feel close to DPJ (hereafter "DPJ partisans," about 30%) and casted their PR vote for DPJ (hereafter "DPJ voters," 43%) than the *Waseda CAPI/PAPI 2007* survey (18% and 36% respectively). Although this difference does not substantively change our main result, it can be attributed to a number of factors, including a bias in representativeness of our samples, and slight differences in question wordings and in the definition of office workers between two surveys.

[Table 1 and 2 about here]

More importantly, in both surveys disproportionally higher percentage (80%) of DPJ partisans answer that they voted for or would vote for DPJ than that of LDP partisans, if there is an election the next day. The higher "loyalty" of DPJ partisans can be found even in the 2005 election, whose electoral context was totally different (a landslide LDP victory).[12] While this difference in loyalty requires some explanation, because the unobserved causes of differences in loyalty may interact with our experimental treatments, a dummy variable of DPJ is introduced in the following analysis.

Third, Table 2 shows that the average strength of PID measured by IDPG is relatively weaker (.26 across partisans), but it is moderately correlated with the strength of

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[12] The same statistics as those of 2007 are replicated using the 2005 post-election survey by using the nation-wide post-election survey conducted by Waseda 21COE-GLOPE 2005 (results are not shown here but available upon request). According to them, about 88% of DPJ partisans answered that they voted for DPJ, compared to 62% of LDP partisans voted for LDP.

SID as an office worker (on average, $R = .30$). The overall strength of PID of .26 is not only weaker than the similarly measured strength of office worker SID (.39 on average), but also weak in general as a group identity (if you answer all four IDPG items negatively, the score does not exceed .33. See Appendix for question wordings). A positive correlation between them suggests that those with a stronger PID also tend to have a stronger office worker SID. There is an interesting variation in correlation coefficients across partisans, in which the higher correlation is observed for DPJ and JCP partisans, while the lower is found for LDP, *Kōmei* and SDP partisans. These leave different implications for our prediction of the experimental effects: The relatively stronger office worker SID than PID may suggest that the office worker SID has a good chance to win the "identity race" and reduces the probability of voting for the identified party by actively suppressing the function of PID, if the identity interference occurs. The positive correlation however, implies that the identity interference itself is unlikely to occur, especially for DPJ partisans, because having a strong PID does not normally exclude having a strong office worker SID.

Experimental effects
1. Perceived ideological distance
    Traditionally, ANOVA or ANCOVA model is often used for the analysis of experimental effects, but since the overall results are almost the same, OLS regression model is used for the analysis of ideological distance for an ease of interpretation, and a logistic model is used for the binary dependent variable of voting intention.

[Table 3 and Figure 1 about here]

    Two models in Table 3 show both experimental effects on the perceived ideological distance between self and identified party. Because the dependent variable measures the perceived distance, positive coefficient signifies farther distance, and negative one suggests closer distance to the identified party. For example, the coefficient of -2.11 of a control variable, strength of PID in model 1 means that the LDP or DPJ partisans who have the strongest PID (=1.0) place themselves and party in closer positions than the partisans who have the weakest PID (=0.0) did by about 2 units on average. Our research interest is in the direction and impacts of our experimental treatments (ISG and PSG).
    The first model shows a direct, positive statistically significant effect of our

identity stimulus (ISG), suggesting that the perceived ideological distance of ISG is larger than that of the control group roughly by a half unit (.56). However, the second model including an interaction term with a dummy variable of DPJ partisans (ISG*DPJ) suggests that this stimulus works differently between LDP and DPJ partisans.[13] As Figure 1 graphically depicts this difference, our identity stimulus significantly increased the perceived ideological distance among LDP partisans (roughly by 1 unit), but it did only slight so among DPJ partisans (by about .3 unit, but the interaction effect itself is still statistically significant $p<.04$). A similar heterogeneous effect of identity stimulus between LDP and DPJ partisans recurs in the next analysis of their voting intention, and in both cases, our identity stimulus changed the participants' perception of their political landscape or behavior among LDP partisans significantly, even though it does not tell them about the policy contents, candidate characteristics or any other politically relevant issues (scandals, political events, etc.). The theoretical underpinning of this change is that identity interference by an office worker SID made partisans to suppress the perceived similarities in norms and characteristics with other partisans, resulting in ideologically distancing themselves farther away from the identified party.

On the other hand, our policy stimulus did not significantly change the perceived ideological distance among partisans either directly or interactively, although the direction of the effect is the same as that of identity stimulus, and its p-values are marginally above the 10% level ($p=.13$ and .12). Other than the analysis in Table 3, we tested many other interactions with PSG, but none of them are found to be statistically or substantively significant. Indeed, our policy stimuli may have been irrelevant or weaker, or some respondents in PSG did not comply with our request to read and understand the news article, despite our effort with the quiz device. Many other explanations are possible for why our policy stimulus did not make more perceived ideological distance (tax policy was not important in the 2007 election; tax issue is not mapped in a liberal-conservative ideological dimension; our policy). But at least the results suggest that many partisans would pay decent attention to, and care who they are and what other partisans are like in determining their political perceptions as much as they would do so to policy contents and other politically relevant information.

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[13] Many other possible interaction effects, including ISG and strength of PID are tested, but none of them are statistically significant.

[Table 4, Figure 2 and Figure 3 about here]

2. Vote intention

Finally, two models in Table 4 show direct and interaction effects of our experimental treatments on voting intention among LDP and DPJ partisans, and Figure 2 and 3 show predicted probabilities for an identified party (LDP or DPJ) based on the second model. Compared to the previous analysis, no direct experimental effects are confirmed in the first model (*p*=.59 for ISG and *p*=.85 for PSG). This suggests that voting is more resistant to identity interference than the perceptions of ideological distance. Model 2 introduces a three-way interaction effect of ISG, strength of PID and a DPJ dummy, because the treatment effects vary depending on the strength of PID and partisanship (LDP or DPJ). As for LDP partisans, the negative coefficient of ISG (-1.61) suggests that they are less likely to vote for LDP, when the strength of their PID takes the value of zero.[14] In other words, when the strength of LDP partisanships is weakest, LDP partisans in ISG are significantly less likely to vote for LDP than those in a control group by about 18% points (*p*=.04). However, this tendency completely disappears, and is even reversed when the strength of PID is at around 2.5. Thus the interaction term PID*ISG captures the difference in steepness of two curves of ISG and a control group illustrated in Figure 2: the predicted probability of LDP partisans' vote intention for LDP in a control group moderately increases as its strength increases, whereas the probability of ISG increases more rapidly, as the difference in coefficients captures, 4.24 < 6.20. What this implies is that the identity interference of PID by office worker SID decreased their support for LDP only if their partisanship is weak, and that the stronger LDP partisans are resistant to such an interference on their vote choice, and they become even more prone to vote for PID (for example, the differences in probability for moderately strong LDP partisans [.5 of strength of PID] between ISG and a control group is .93-.73 = 20% points).

The story for DPJ is different. As already discussed in the previous section with the descriptive statistics, the probability of DPJ partisans' voting for DPJ is much higher than in that of LDP partisans. The coefficient of DPJ partisan dummy (1.59) shows this difference between two control groups between DPJ and LDP partisans, when their strengths of PID take a value of zero. More in concrete, the predicted probability of voting

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[14] For the detail of correct interpretation of interaction effect, see Brambor, Clark and Golder (2005: 66-73).

for an identified party of this group is about 24% for LDP and 61% for DPJ partisans. Contrary to the case of LDP partisans, Figure 3 suggests that the effect of identity stimulus on their voting intention for DPJ is positive, when their partisanship is weakest (81% for ISG), but this effect disappears as the strength of partisanship increases, suggested by the negative effect of the three-way interaction term.[15] Considering that our identity stimulus did not strongly influence the perception of ideological distance to DPJ among DPJ partisans in the previous analysis, it can be inferred that our identity interference did not occur among DPJ voters.[16] Possible explanations of why identity interference may not have occurred for DPJ partisans are discussed more in detail in the following section.

Lastly, no significant interaction effects on voting intention of partisans are found with our policy stimulus. To repeat, respondents in PSG may not digest the meaning of the news article, or the impact of such information on their vote choice may be too weak. But this illuminates the importance of our identity stimulus. The results suggest that the information about the composition of ingroup partisan members may even change voting behavior, because of the identity interference.

Discussions and implications

In this paper, we asked whether the identity interference of PID by SID would suppress the function of one of the identities, and change partisans' political perceptions and behavior as a result. In our online survey experiment of Japanese office workers, we find our identity stimulus increases the perceived ideological distance between their position and that of the identified party especially among LDP partisans, and it decreases the probability of voting for LDP among weaker partisans, while the same stimulus increases the probability among stronger LDP partisans and weaker DPJ partisans.

The differences in our experimental effects between LDP and DPJ partisans

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[15] Although the impacts are weaker than those for LDP partisans, we confirm this in a separate analysis which restricted the samples only to DPJ partisans.
[16] On this note, some readers may be curious whether the probability of voting for the identified party is different by the degree of the perceived ideological distance. We confirmed this by introducing the variable in a separate ancillary analysis (the closer the distance, the more likely to vote for the party, with all the other independent variables including ISG statistically significant), but such a model obviously suffers a post-treatment bias, because the perceived ideological distance is measured after the experimental treatment.

require explanations, although they are not beyond speculation. Other than questioning the validity of our experimental treatments, at least two explanations are possible. First, identity interference did not occur among DPJ partisans, because the association of two identities is so strong that DPJ partisans discounted our identity stimulus. This is plausible, when the correlation between the strength of PID and SID is stronger among DPJ partisans than LDP partisans, and when proportionally more DPJ partisans are office workers compared to LDP partisans. In this case, an implication would be that partisans would be more immune to identity stimulus, when the partisans are more associated with an identity or membership of a particular social group.

A different explanation is possible based on the particular political context of the 2007 election. Following some literatures that confirm a bandwagon or conformity effect, when a party or candidate is expected to win at a larger margin (Lavrakas, Holley, and Miller 1991: 166-175; Coleman 2004; in Japan, Miyake 2001), DPJ partisans may have been more confident in supporting DPJ, after they see the land slide victory of DPJ. If this is true, a bandwagon effect would cancel out the effect of identity interference.

Finally, implications of our research and directions of new research are discussed. Multiple identities of voters can be potential sources of group-based action (Huddy 2003: 515). Voters may change their policy preferences depending on which identity they represent, who are the other ingroup members of that identity, and who support that position. Thus our experimental settings and effect can be applied to many cases in voters' daily-life situations: when the poll results of a party support by some group background is presented disproportionally; when political leaders refer to a particular social group as their main and substantive supporters; when partisan voters watch some news reporting many other partisans members in the rally meeting are composed of different social backgrounds from theirs; and so on. Accordingly, our results can fruitfully be applicable to analyze the effect of political information by media and politicians, which often make social identities salient. In any case, we hope that more studies will be conducted on the effect of multiple identity interactions on political perceptions and behavior in near future.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Percentage of partisans and Vote Choice*

	Our experimental survey				Waseda CAPI/PAPI 2007 post-election survey**		
	Close party	PR vote in 2007	Vote if election tomorrow	Willing to vote for the "close party"	Close party	PR vote in 2007	Voted for the "close party"
LDP	20.3	12.3	12.2	45.5	16.4	17.5	53.1
DPJ	30.3	42.2	42.8	79.7	17.6	36.0	75.0
Komei	3.0	2.9	1.8	48.4	6.5	7.6	69.2
JCP	3.7	3.1	2.7	47.4	3.3	4.6	70.0
SDP	1.6	2.0	1.1	25.0	1.8	4.1	54.6
Other parties	2.6	4.3	4.8	77.8	1.2	4.1	71.4
None of the above	31.0	-	-	-	51.7	-	-
Don't want to answer	2.6	-	9.6	-	0.8	2.9	-
Don't know	4.9	-	-	-	0.4	1.0	-
Abstention	-	25.5	17.1	-	-	22.1	-
Others (blank vote)	-	7.8	8.0	-	-	4.1	-
N	1028	1028	1028	632	604	589	277

* Entries are percentages.

** Samples are restricted to employees of non-public sector to represent "office workers."

Source: Waseda University (2007).

Table 2. Strength of PID and SID and Their Correlation.

Close party	Strength of PID*	Strength of office worker identity*	Correlation	
LDP	.23	.40	.16	†
DPJ	.26	.41	.35	†
Komei	.39	.44	.17	
JCP	.25	.38	.54	†
SDP	.26	.36	-.09	
Other parties	.33	.39	.69	†
None of the above (non-partisans)	.22	.36	.54	†
Don't know	-	.38	-	
Don't want to answer	-	.41	-	
Average**	.26	.41	.30	†
N (Partisans only)	584	651	558	
N (Including non-partisans)	859	931	815	

* Entries are standardized score of IDPG, ranging from 0 to 1.

** The average excludes non-partisans, DK, and those who did not answer.

† Statistically significant at $p<.05$

Table 3. OLS Regression of Perceived Ideological Distance

	Model 1			Model 2		
	Coef.	(s.e.)	p	Coef.	(s.e.)	p
Strength of PID	-2.11	(.47)	.000	-2.13	(.47)	.000
Identity stimulus group (ISG)	.56	(.22)	.012	1.07	(.33)	.001
Policy stimulus group (PSG)	.32	(.21)	.134	.34	(.21)	.115
DPJ partisan dummy	-.42	(.19)	.025	-.17	(.22)	.454
ISG*DPJ				-.83	(.40)	.038
Constant	2.47	(.22)	.000	2.31	(.24)	.000
F statistic	8.75			7.92		
Adjusted R^2	.066			.073		
N	438			438		

Table 4. Logistic Regression of LDP and DPJ Partisans' Vote Choice*

	Model 1			Model 2		
	Coef.	(s.e.)	*p*	Coef.	(s.e.)	*p*
Strength of PID	4.30	(.64)	.000	4.24	(.99)	.000
Identity stimulus group (ISG)	.14	(.26)	.588	-1.61	(.78)	.039
Policy stimulus group (PSG)	.05	(.25)	.850	.05	(.25)	.840
DPJ partisan dummy	1.67	(.21)	.000	1.59	(.40)	.000
PID*ISG				6.20	(2.71)	.022
PID*DPJ				-.37	(1.46)	.801
ISG*DPJ				2.61	(.94)	.006
PID*ISG*DPJ				-9.19	(3.32)	.006
Constant	-1.21	(.25)	.000	-1.13	(.32)	.001
Log likelihood	-273.2			-266.4		
LR	120.5			134.1		
Count R^2	.758			.762		
Cox-Snell R^2	.207			.227		
N	520			520		

* Dependent variable, *y*=1 if the party of the vote choice is the same as the PID, and *y*=0 if otherwise.

Switching voters' identities

Figure 1. Predicted Ideological Distance between Self and the Identified Party
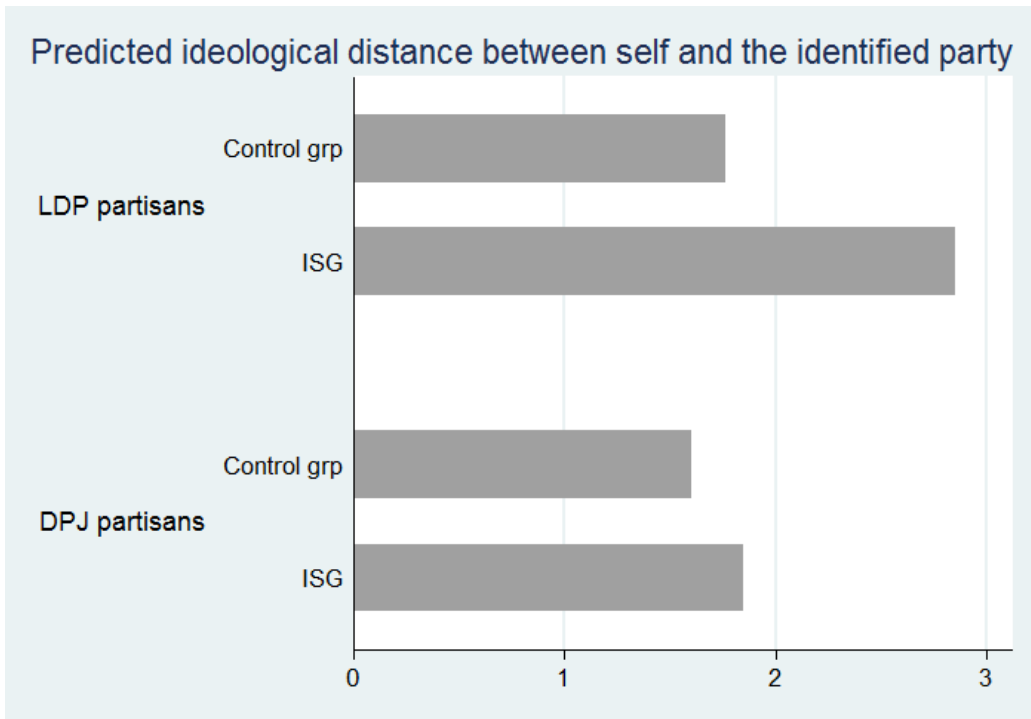

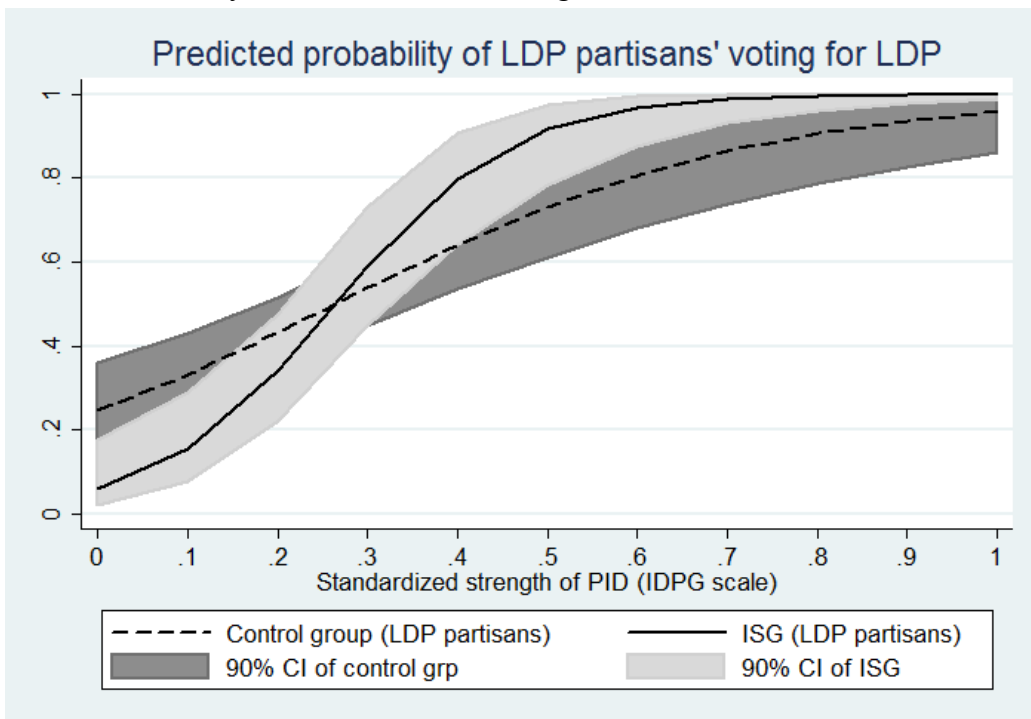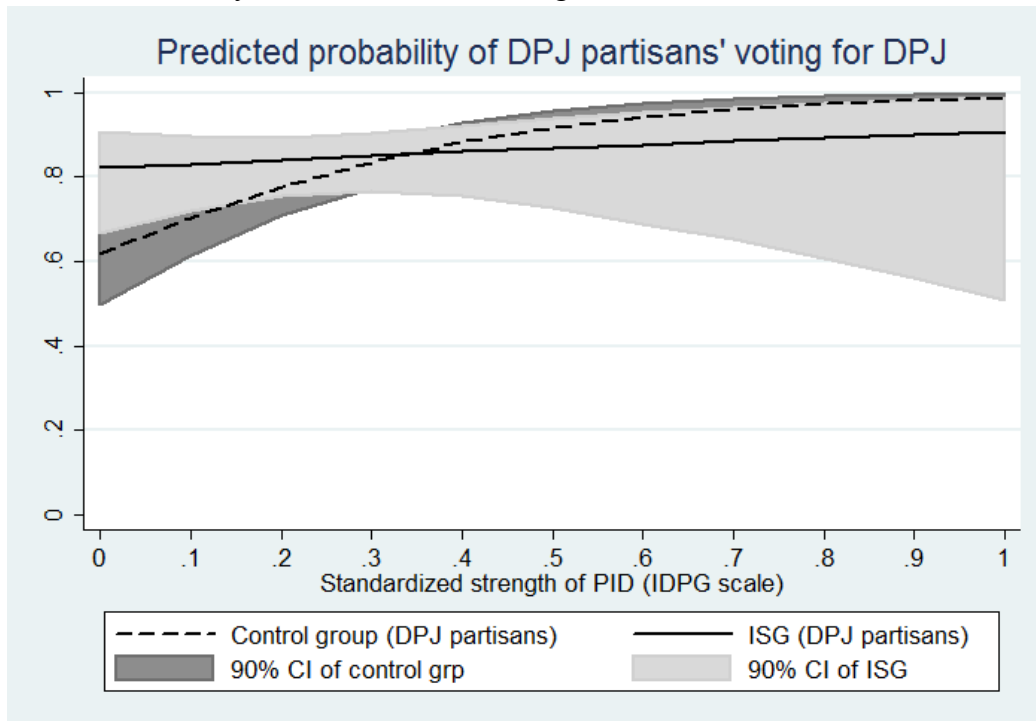Figure 2. Predicted Probability of LDP Partisans' voting for LDP

Figure 3. Predicted Probability of DPJ Partisans' voting for DPJ

Appendix 1: Question wordings.

Q1. Strength of SID as office workers (IDPG scale)

"Please choose one answer that best describes your feeling for each sentence in the following."

       1A. "If a media story in criticizes office workers, I feel embarrassed, or angry."

       1B. "When someone criticizes office workers, it sounds like a personal insult."

       1C. "I have a number of qualities typical of office workers."

       1D. Office workers' successes in general are also my successes."

Answer items: 0. "Strongly disagree," 1. "Disagree" 2. "Agree" 3. "Strongly agree" and "Don't know" (missing), and the strength of office worker SID scale is created by summing the score and dividing it by 12.

Q2. PR vote in the 2007 Sangiin (House of Councillors) election.

"Did you go to vote in the *Sangiin* election last month? *Sangiin* has prefectural-level districts and nation-wide PR districts. Which party did you vote in the PR system?"

Answer items: 1. "LDP" 2. "DPJ" 3. ""Kōmei" 4. "JCP" 5. "SDP" 6. "PNP" 7. "NPN" 8. "Other party" 9. "Did not vote/could not go to vote" 10. "Other (ie: bland votes; don't remember)."[*]

Q3. Close party 1.

"Do you have a party which you usually feel close to? If so, please choose one."

Answer items are the same as **Q2** except: 9. "None of the above" 10. "Don't know" 11. "Don't want to answer." Those who choose #1 to #7 are directed to **Q4**. Answer #8 to **Q6**. Answers from #9 to #11 to **Q3SQ**.[*]

Q3SQ. Close party 2.

"Then do you have a party that you feel a little closer to one of the following political parties? If any, which one is it? Please choose one."

Answer items are the same as **Q2** except: 9. "No parties are felt close (non-partisan)" 10. "Don't know" 11. "Don't want to answer." Those who choose #8, #10 and #11 are directed to **Q6**.[*]

Q4. Strength of PID in IDPG scale (Replace "*x*" with the identified party answered in **Q3**).

"You answered *x* in the Q3. Please choose an answer that best describes your feeling for each item in the following."

       4A. "If a media story criticizes *x*, I would feel embarrassed or angry."

---

[*] Answer items from #6 to #8 are grouped in Table 1 and 2.

4B. "When someone criticizes *x*, it sounds like a personal insult."

4C. "I have a number of qualities typical of partisans of *x*."

4D. "*X*'s successes are my successes."

Answer items are the same as **Q1**. The strength of PID scale is created by summing the score and dividing it by 12.

Q5. Experimental treatments.

Experimental manipulations are introduced. If the answers in **Q3** are:

1-3) LDP, DPJ or Kōmei: Randomly assigned to either ISG, PSG or a control group (skip to **Q6**).

4-5 and 9) JCP, SDP or nonpartisans: Randomly assigned to either ISG or a control group (**Q6**).

6-8, 10-11) Other partisans, DK, not answered: Skip to **Q6**.

Q5PSG_LDP. Policy stimulus for LDP.

"The following is a headline and an excerpt of a newspaper article on the government policy. Please choose an answer that you think best summarizes the article in the following."

The Household Budget in Japan:

Survey of the current situation. More income but with more tax and social insurance burdens

(Abbreviated)

Is the "reduced net income" like this a typical case of average households in Japan? According to the estimate by Mie Ido, a public consultant on social and labor insurance, their net income of average office workers has reduced in the recent 4 years. Assuming that their yearly income stays the same, the expected increase in tax and social insurance fee in 2007 is about ¥114,000 for the households with annual income of ¥5 million, ¥182,000 for the households with ¥7 million, and ¥319,000 for the household with ¥10 million.

Here is how it turned out. First, "the special exemption for spouse" for the wife with the salary below ¥1.03 million (maximum ¥380,000) was abolished in 2004, increasing the tax burden for her husband. Second, the fixed-rate tax cut for income and residential tax was reduced by half last year (maximum ¥290,000), and will be completely abolished this year. This virtually means a tax increase, for example of more than ¥80,000 in two years for a typical household of a spouse and two children with annual income of ¥7 million. Further, the Welfare Pension fee is to increase yearly by 0.354% since 2004 (employees cover half of it due to the split-half payment with the business owners). This means less than ¥40,000 increase of the welfare cost for the household with annual income of ¥7 million. This increase continues until 2017.

(Source: *Nippon Keizai Shimbun.* January 7th, 2007)

Switching voters' identities

Answer items:

A. "The abolishment of the fixed-rate tax cut in the government's budget reform, as well as the increase of the social insurance fee resulted in the actual tax increase for many households of office workers." [Correct answer]

B. "The government's active welfare policy, which intended to reduce the income gap, increased the tax burden of the Japanese people."

C. "The government reduced the wasteful spending by its budget reform, which resulted in reducing the tax burden of the Japanese people."

D. "Because the government increased the income tax rate for companies and higher income groups to reduce the income gap, the actual gap between rich and poor was reduced."

After answering the question, display:

"The fixed-rate tax cut, adopted as an economic policy in 1998 was abolished this year. This increased the income, residential tax and the social insurance fee, which is determined according to the amount of tax, resulting in the actual increase of burden for many households of office workers."

Q5PSG_DPJ. Policy stimulus for DPJ.

"The following is a headline and an excerpt of a newspaper article on the DPJ's policy. Please choose an answer that you think best summarizes the article in the following."

LDP and DPJ shouldn't blow out the dim light of reform

Economic policy was not a salient issue in the last *Sangiin* election, although many reforms are needed now to revitalize the economy, achieve the "small government" and have a long-term economic growth. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe leaves economic reform to the hands of bureaucrats, and shows no strong intention to break down the wall of vested interests. Democratic Party of Japan, used to appeal its reform plan, now gained farmers' support by handouts-like farm subsidies in the last election. LDP and DPJ should not blow out the dim light of reform lit under the Koizumi government. Ozawa Ichiro, the leader of the opposition party (DPJ) ran for the election in a single member district of farming area, and gained support by proposing a household income insurance plan for farmers. His plan does not lead to increase the agricultural productivity, but the farmers who supported his plan should not be blamed…. (Abbreviated).

Further, other than the household income insurance plan, DPJ under Ozawa proposed some ear candies for many voters, including the child allowance of ¥26,000 per month. Its economic revitalization policy focuses on medium and small business, and proposes an abolishment of the security treatment for individual customers of accommodation loans by government-affiliated financial institutions. These are not constructive plans that can reform the current economic structure fitted to the increasing international competition.

Answer items:

A. "In its policy manifesto of the *Sangiin* election last month, DPJ decided to supply subsidies to farmers in order to strengthen its electoral base of rural areas, where the DPS has been said to be weak." [Correct answer]

B. "DPJ included a policy pledge of active welfare policies to reduce the income difference by increasing tax burden of the people."

C. "DPJ's policy pledge includes reducing the social welfare cost by a thorough budget reform, as well as reducing the tax burden of the people."

D. "In its policy manifesto of the *Sangiin* election last month, DPJ decided to increase the tax for the higher income group to reduce the income gap."

After answering the question, display:

"The major electoral base for DPJ has been urban areas in the past, but Ichiro Ozawa, the leader of DPJ, proposed a subsidy to farmers by an household income insurance plan in its policy manifesto of the *Sangiin* election last month to increase electoral support in rural areas."
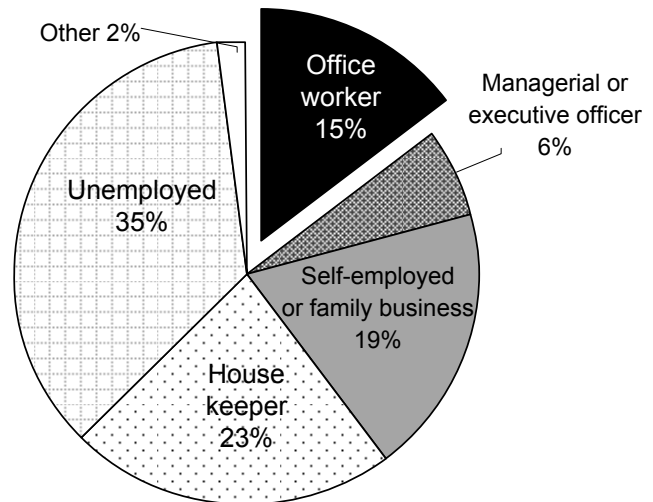
Q5ISG_LDP. Identity stimulus for LDP.

"The following is a pie chart that shows the composition of LDP partisans by occupation. Please choose an answer that you think best represents the chart in the following."

Figure 1. Share of office workers of all the working persons
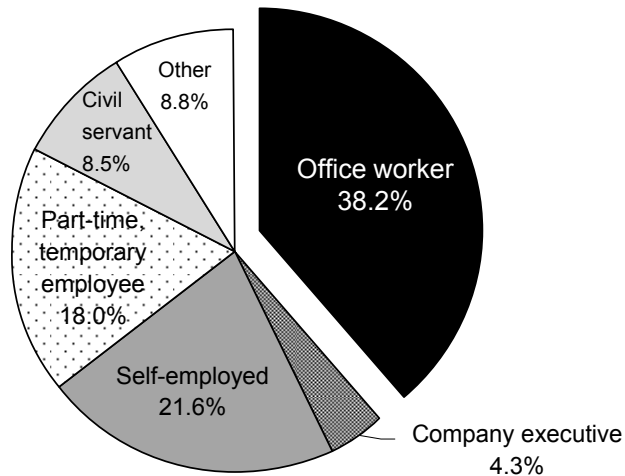
Figure 2. Composition of active LDP supporters by occupation

Source: Sōmusho Tōkeikyoku. (2005). *Shūgyō kōzō kihon chōsa.*

Source: *21 seiki nihonjin no seiji shakai ishiki chōsa*

Answer items:

A. "The share of office workers is the biggest in both charts of all the working persons and of the active LDP partisans."

B. "The share of the civil servants of all the working persons is as large as the office workers."

C. "The share of occupational types of the active LDP partisans, from the largest to the smallest, is unemployed > housewives > self-employed > others > managerial or executive officers > office workers."

D. "The share of office workers of all the working persons is the largest (roughly 40%), while its share of the LDP partisans is 15%, which is smaller than the share of the self-employed." [correct answer]

After answering the question, display:

"According to the public opinion poll, LDP supporters are composed of many self-employed, employees in agriculture, forestry and fishery industry, and managerial/executive officers. The share of office workers has increased after the Koizumi administration, but composes of a little more than 10%."

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Q5ISG_DPJ. Identity stimulus for DPJ.

"Below is a pie chart that shows the composition of DPJ partisans by occupation. Please choose an answer that you think best represents the chart in the following."

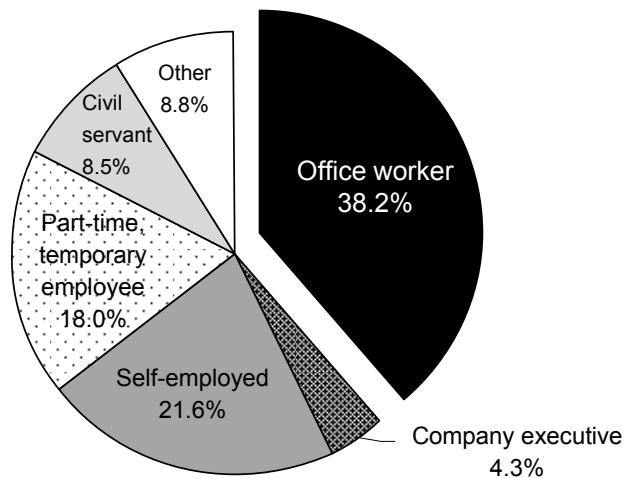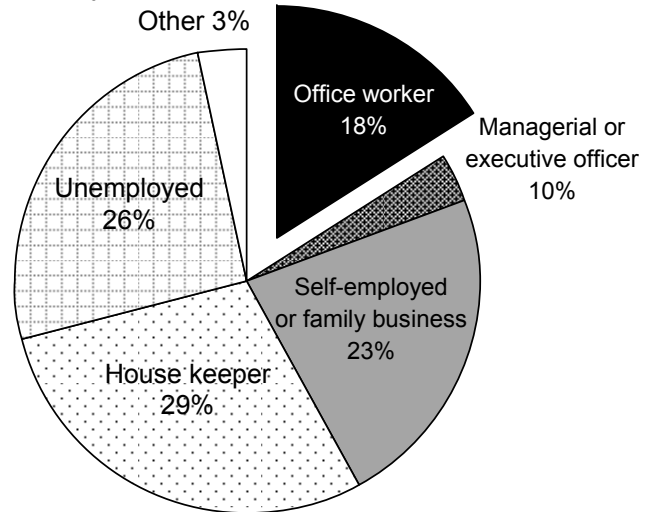Figure 1. Share of office workers of all the working persons

Figure 2. Composition of active DPJ supporters by occupation

Source: Sōmusho Tōkeikyoku. (2005). *Shūgyō kōzō kihon chōsa.*

Source: *21 seiki nihonjin no seiji shakai ishiki chōsa*

Answer items:

A. "The share of office workers is the biggest in both charts of all the working persons and of the active DPJ partisans."

B. "The share of the civil servants of all the working persons is as large as the office workers."

C. "The share of occupational types of the active DPJ partisans, from the largest to the smallest, is unemployed > housewives > self-employed > others > office workers."

D. "The share of office workers of all the working persons is the largest (roughly 40%), while its share of DPJ partisans is 18%, which is smaller than the share of the self-employed." [Correct answer]

After answering the question, display:

"According to the public opinion polls, about the half of DPJ supporters are composed of self-employed and family business, and about 50% of them are unemployed, while the share of office workers composes only less than 20%."

Q6. Vote intention.

"If there is an election tomorrow, would you go to vote? If yes, which party would you vote for?"

Answer items are the same as **Q2** except: 9. "Don't go to vote" and 10. "Other (i.e. blank vote).

Q7. Political ideology.

"Some people use words 'conservative' and 'liberal' to describe political stance. If 0 means very liberal and 10 means very conservative, what score do you think best describes the following? Choose a number from 0 to 10 for each."

　　　　7A. "Your political stance."
　　　　7B. "LDP's political stance."
　　　　7C. "DPJ's political stance."

Answer items: The respondents can choose a number from 0 to 10, or "Don't know."

Appendix 2: Flowchart of the experiment

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  QPre. Enrollment survey: Demographic and other questions
└ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┘
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Q1. Strength of SID as office workers (IDPG)

Q2. PR vote in the *Sangiin* election

Q3. Close party 1 and 2

Q4. Strength of PID (IDPG)

Q5. Experimental treatments

LDP/DPJ/Kōmei partisans	SDP/JCP partisans, non-partisans	Other partisans, DK, not answered

Policy stimulus	ID stimulus (a1)	No Stimulus
Identified party's policy doesn't benefit the office workers.	Most members of the identified party (or non-partisans) are not office workers	(Controlled group)

Q6. Vote intention

Q7. Political ideology