



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

Identity Priming in Campaigning: Field Experimental Evidence from Female Candidates in Germany

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Motivation

- Voters may use descriptive stereotypes to form perceptions about candidates in situations where they have limited information; and politicians are aware of this and can highlight relevant identities to garner support from specific groups of voters.
- Running as a woman is important to many female candidates and they need to talk about that with voters.

Research Question

- Does emphasizing social identities affect the effectiveness of women candidate's campaign messages?
- Two pre-registered field experiments embedded in three-wave online panel surveys in two German state elections.
- Treatment consists of campaign postcards (impersonal contact) and door-to-door canvassing by the candidate (personal contact).

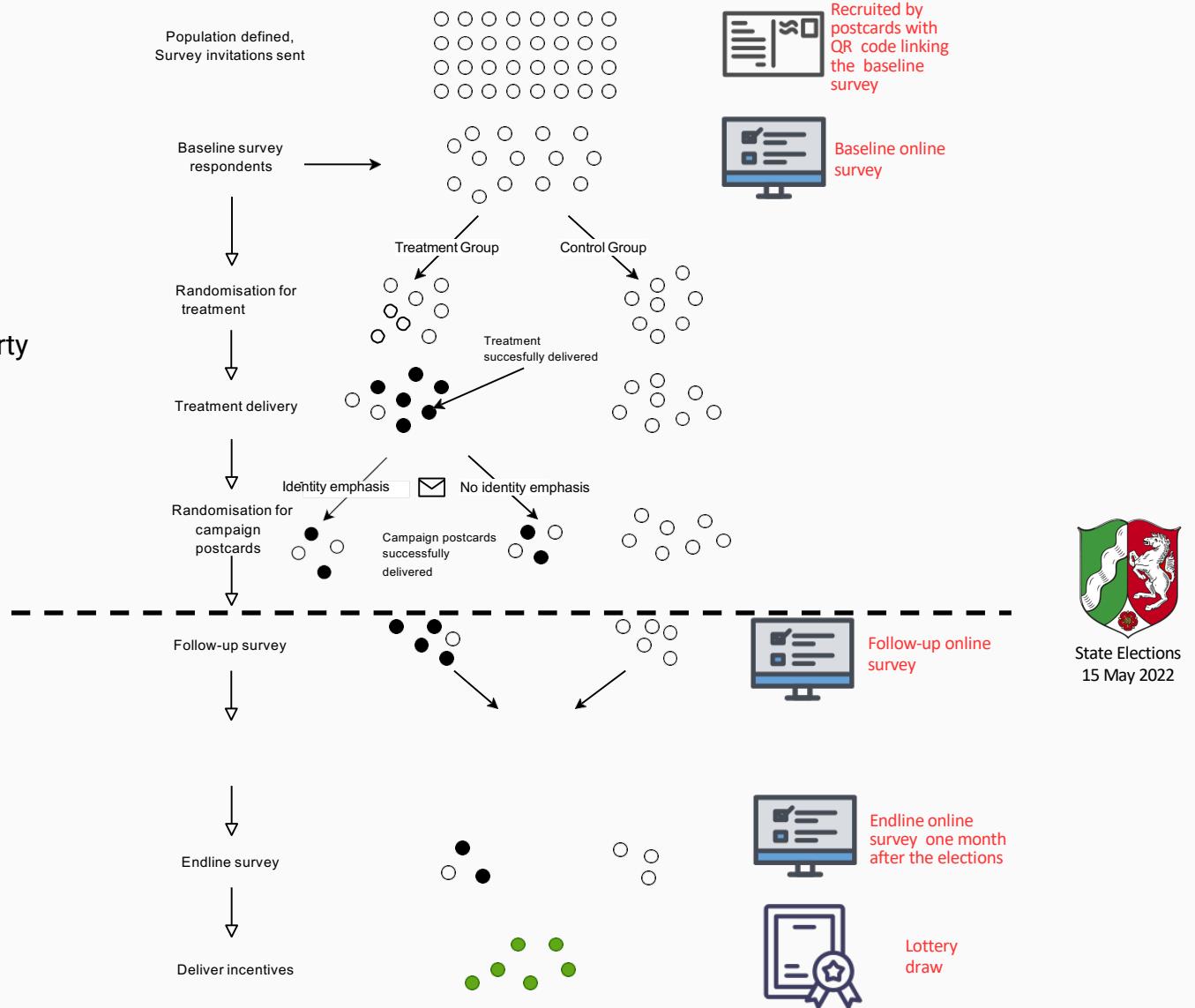
Design

Experimental Design

Three-wave panel based on Broockman, Kalla and Sekhon, 2018

Outcome Variables:

- Candidate name recognition
- Positive feelings toward the candidate and the party
- Self-reported vote choice for the candidate and the party



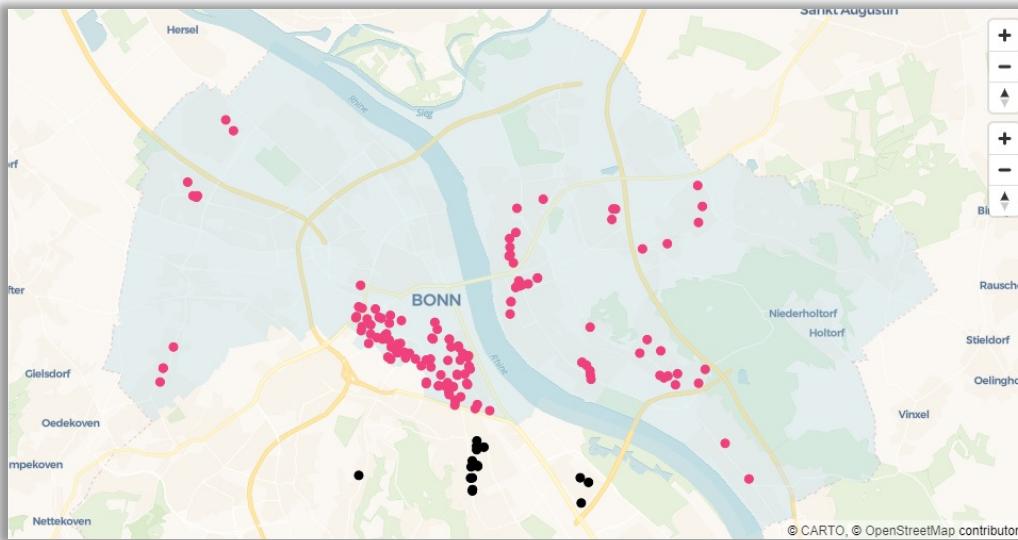
Experimental Design

Experiment 1: 170 Bonn residents took part in the study

Invitation to participate in the study



Places of residence of the participants



● = Place of residence in the constituency (participants)

● = Place of residence not in the constituency (reason for exclusion)

Experimental Design

Bonn



Berlin

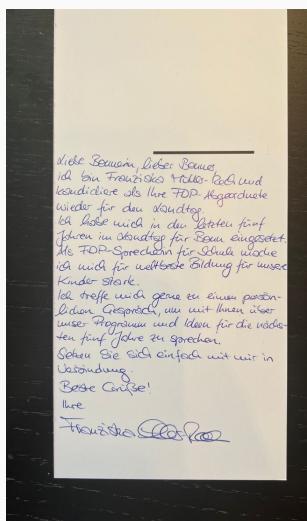
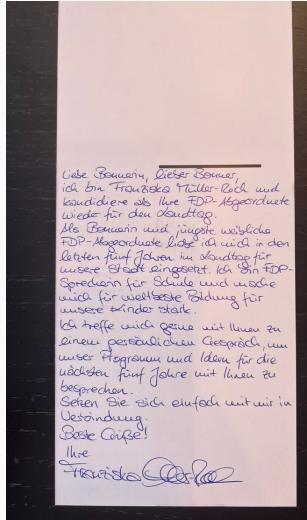


Experimental Design

The candidate invested time in personal campaigning



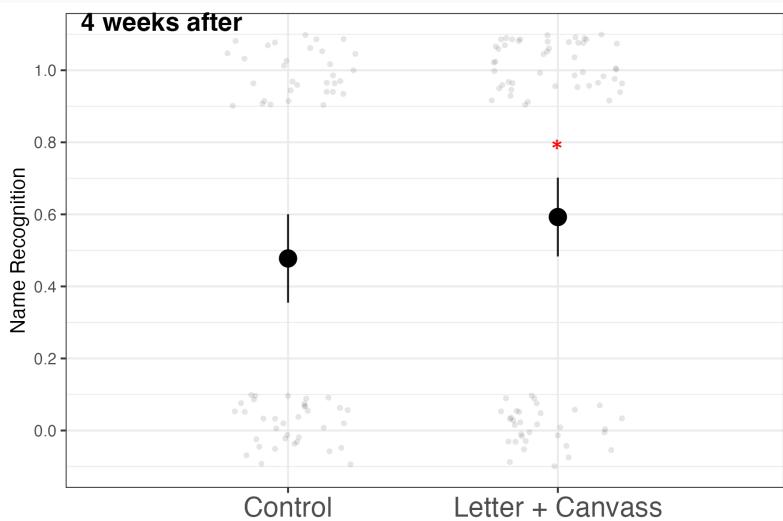
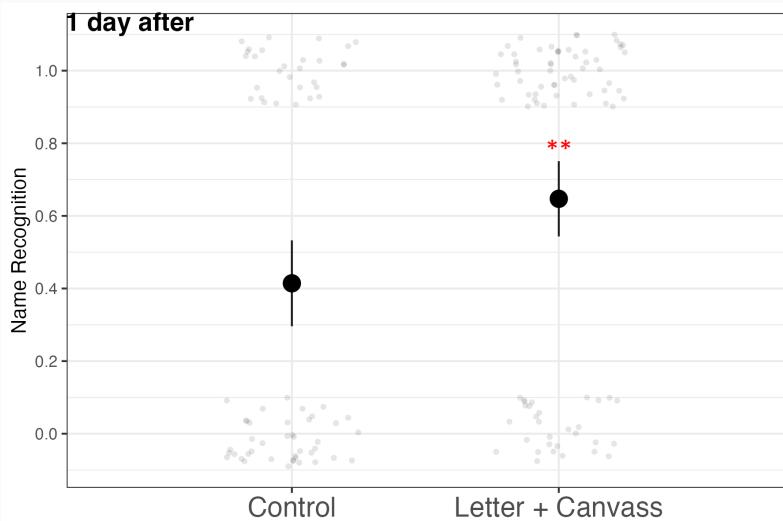
Liebe Bewohner, lieber Bewohner,
Ich bin Franziska Müller-Rech und
ich kandidiere als Ihre FDP-Abgeordnete
wieder für den Landtag.
Ich habe mich in den letzten fünf
Jahren im Landtag für Bonn einge-
setzt. Als FDP-Sprecherin für Schule
wurde ich auch für die Verbesserung
der Bildung unserer Kinder stark.
Ich treffe mich gerne mit Ihnen zu
einem persönlichen Gespräch, um Ihnen
zuzuhören und zu erfahren, was Sie
von Ihrer Landtagsabgeordneten er-
warten. Sagen Sie sich einfach mit
mir in Verbindung.
Beste Grüße!
Franziska Müller-Rech



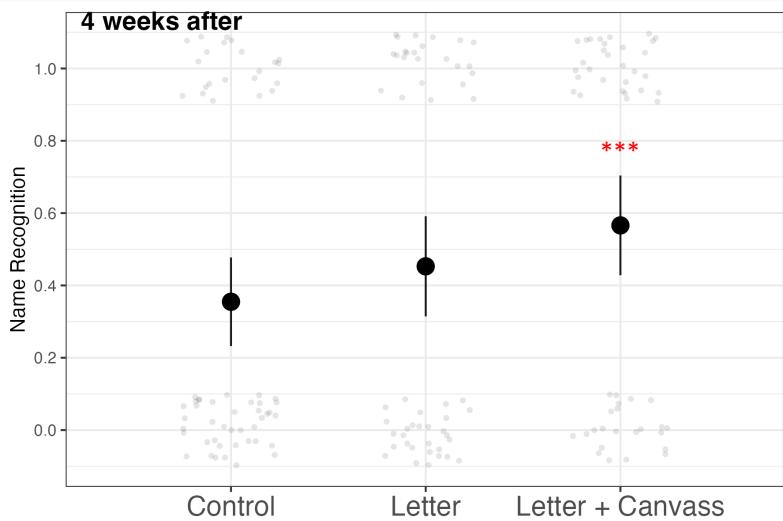
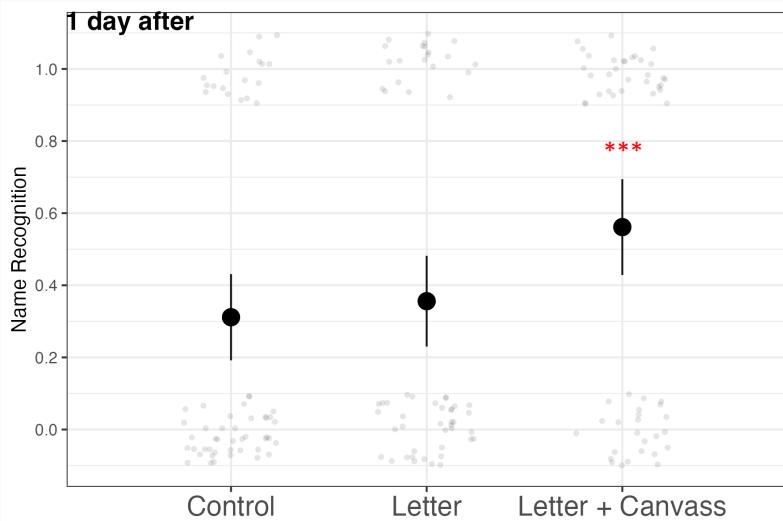
Results

Name Recognition

Bonn



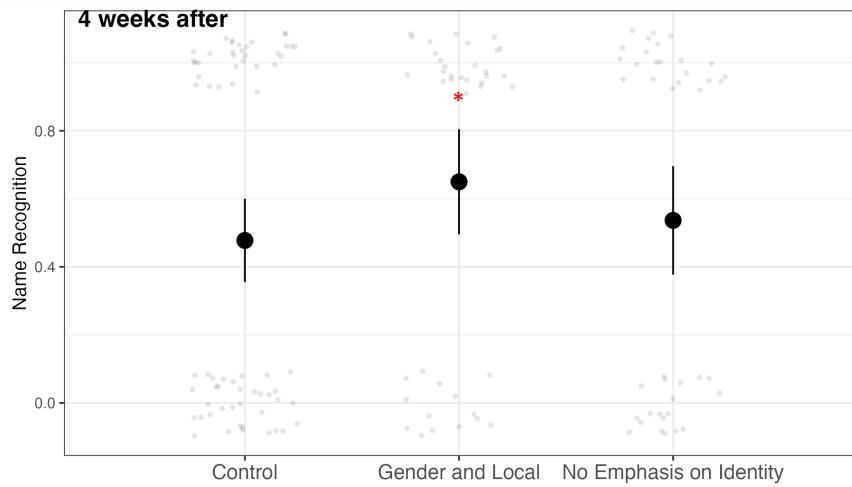
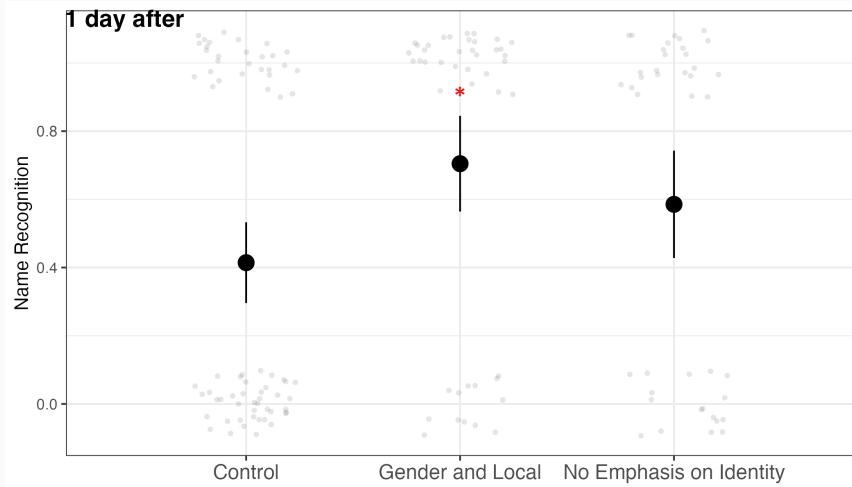
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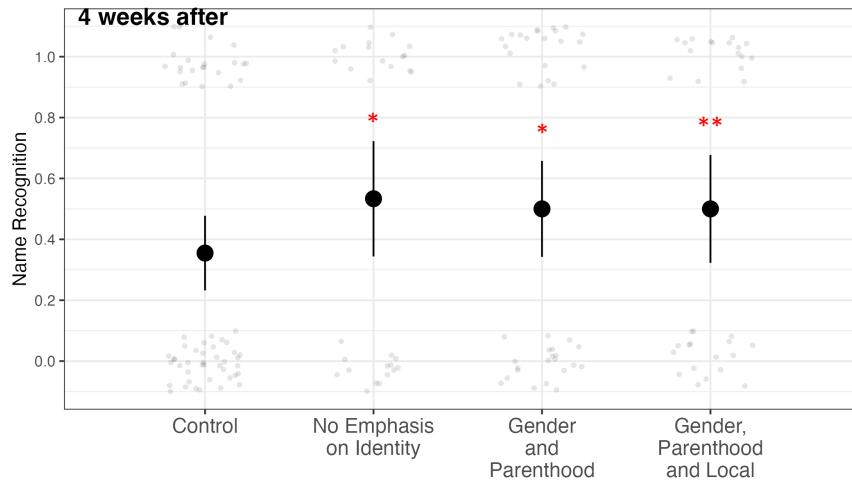
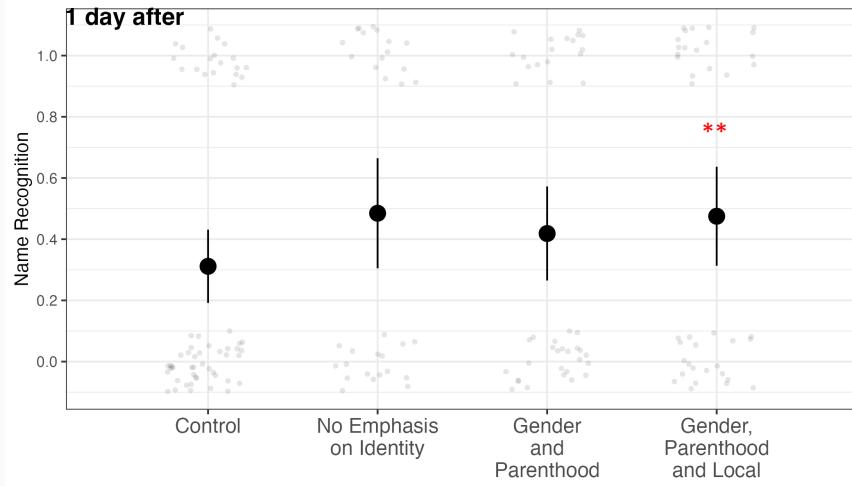
Results

Name Recognition - Identity Emphasis

Bonn



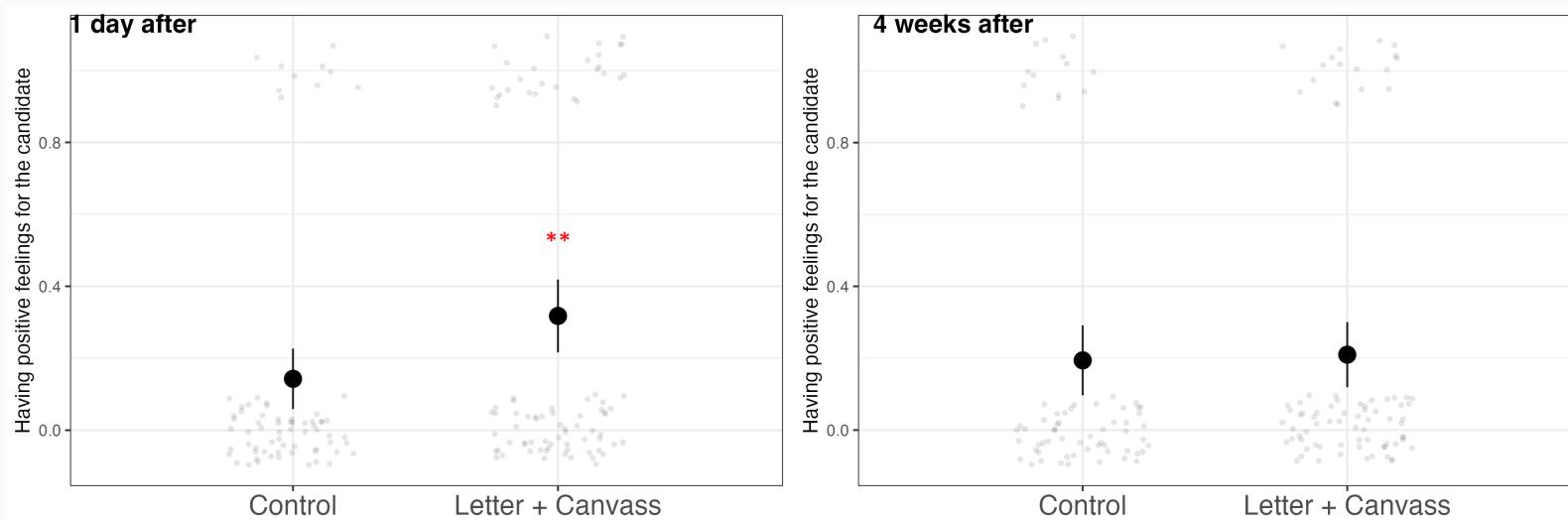
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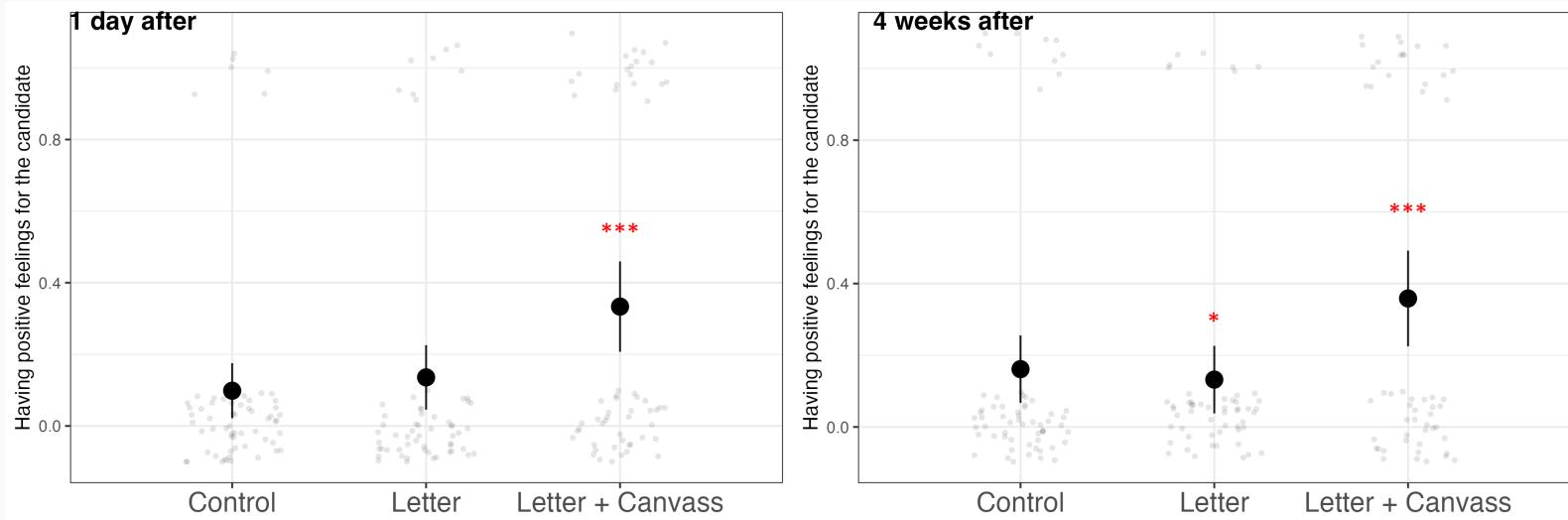
Results

Feeling

Bonn



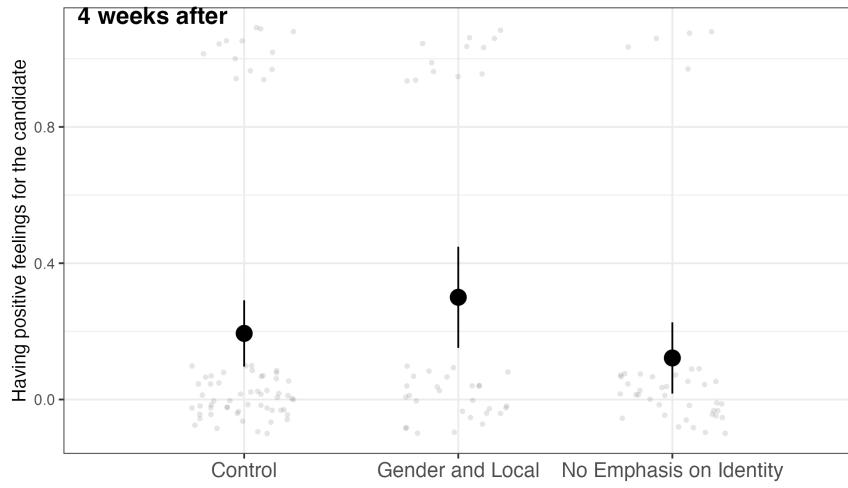
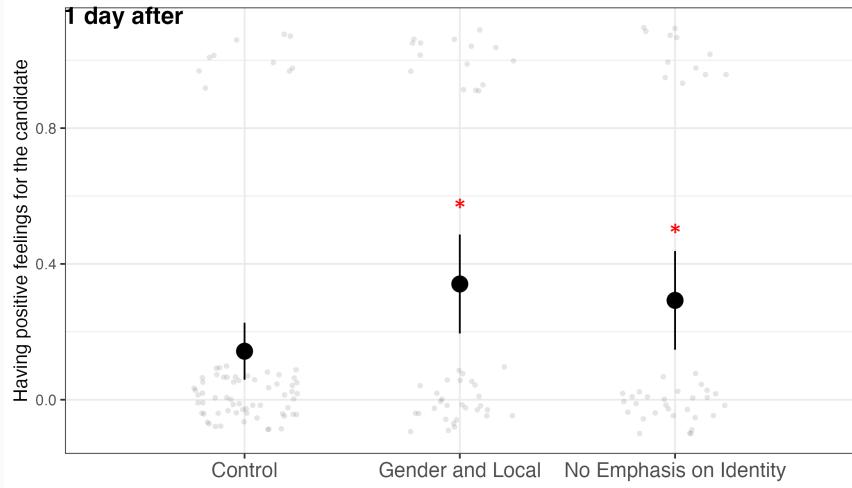
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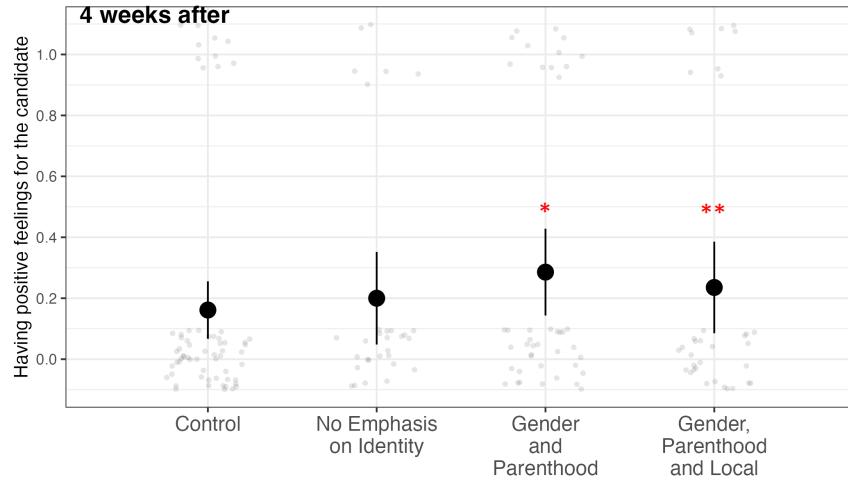
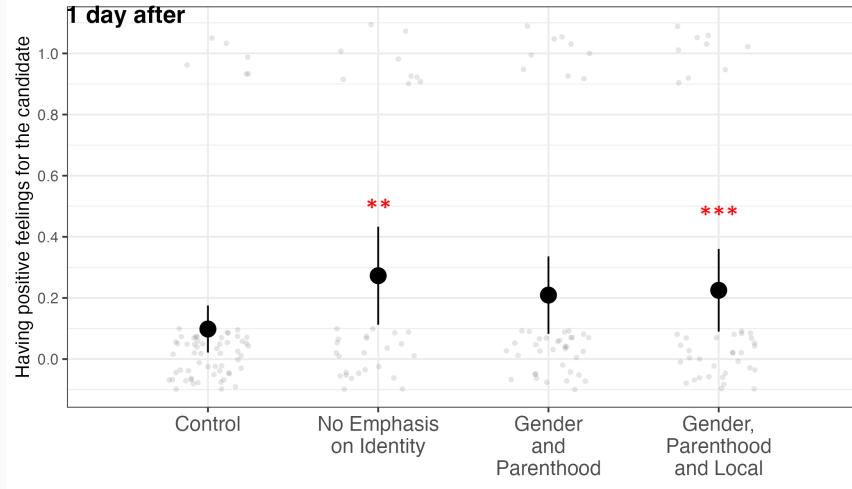
Results

Feeling - Identity Emphasis

Bonn



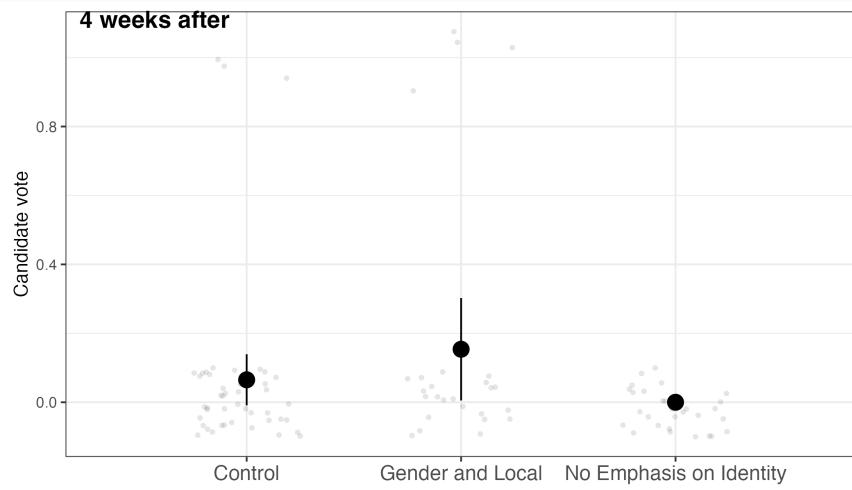
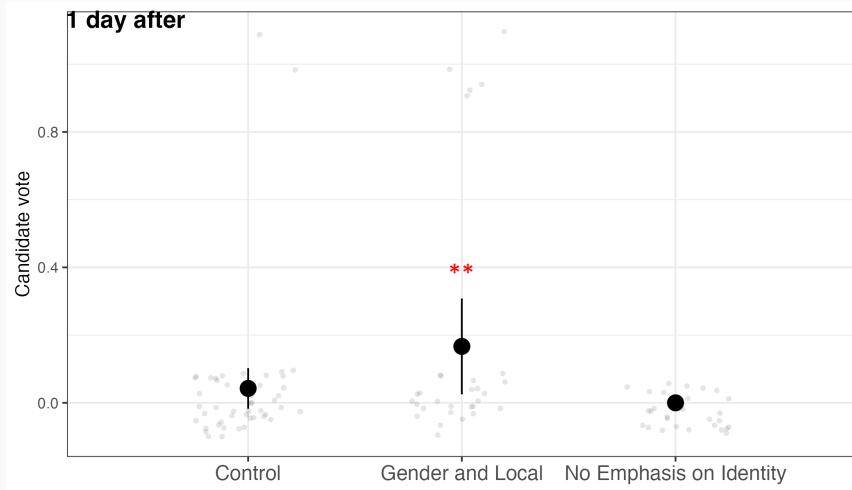
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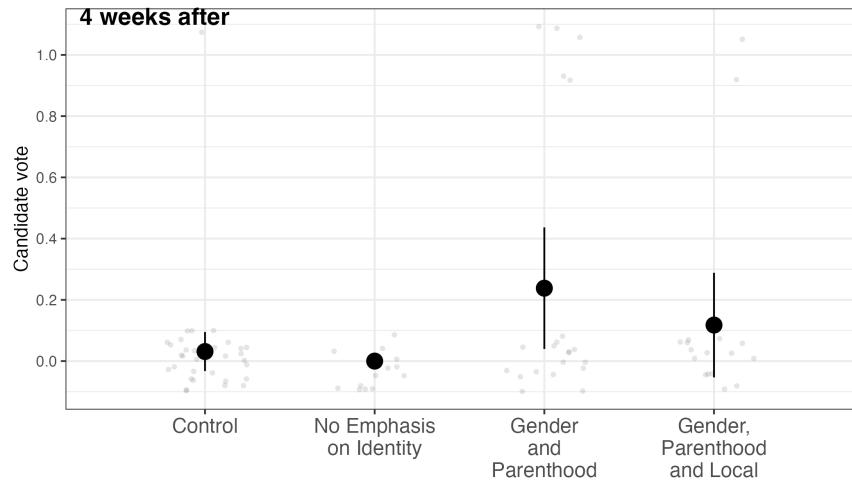
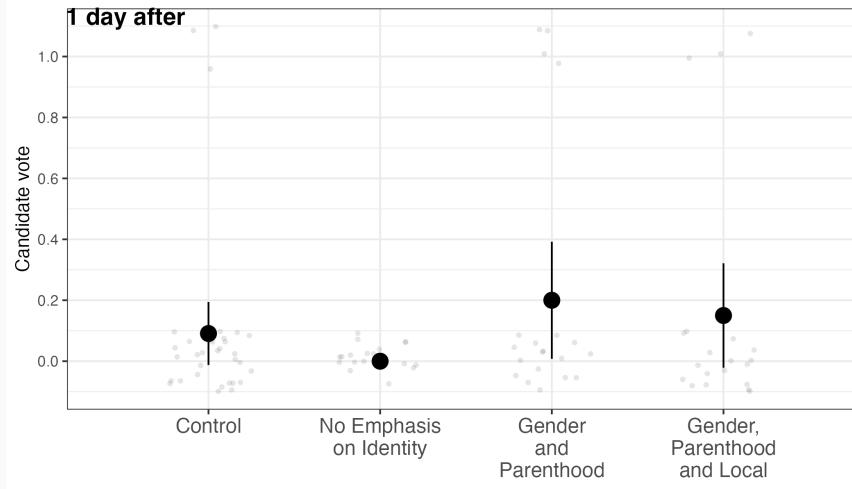
Results

Vote - Identity Emphasis

Bonn



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Conclusion

- Panel-designs are an effective and efficient method to measure field-experimental outcomes in non-US settings.
- Women candidates as persuaders can influence voter evaluations to their benefit.
- Emphasising women candidates' intersectional identities can be an effective message.
- We do not find consistent evidence that aligned identities moderate these campaign effects.



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Thank you for listening.

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