Appendix: Voting *Against* Autocracy

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Contents

1 The Model: Proofs and Further Details

Expressive turnout: The derivation below provides details of the claim that the expressive turnout assumption that we employ implies the abstention interval in inequality (1) in the paper. Specifically, we assume that if citizen i prefers candidate 1 to candidate 2, $x_i \geq x^*(D_1^-)$, turns out to vote (for candidate 1), and candidate j wins, she obtains the payoff

$$u_{ij} + \rho(u_{i1} - u_{i2}) - c \,.$$

Suppose that candidate 1 wins the election with the probability p. Then the expected payoff from turning out to vote for candidate 1 for citizen i who prefers candidate 1 to candidate 2 is

$$p\left[u_{i1} + \rho(u_{i1} - u_{i2}) - c\right] + (1 - p)\left[u_{i2} + \rho(u_{i1} - u_{i2}) - c\right],$$

which simplifies to

$$pu_{i1} + (1 - p)u_{i2} + \rho(u_{i1} - u_{i2}) - c \,.$$

By contrast, citizen i's expected payoff from abstaining is

$$pu_{i1} + (1 - p)u_{i2} \,.$$

Citizen i thus prefers to turn out to vote if

$$\rho(u_{i1} - u_{i2}) - c \geq 0 \,,$$

which yields the result presented in the paper.

Voters' ideal points and the mechanism of punishment: In the main text, we characterize whether and how each citizen punishes candidate 1's violation of democratic principles in terms the difference Δu_i in citizen i's payoff from the two candidates, $u_{i1} - u_{i2}$, when candidate 1 complies with democratic principles. Here we characterize it in terms of citizen i's ideal point x_i. Let

$$
\begin{aligned}
x^*(D_1^- = 0) &= \frac{x_1 + x_2}{2} \,, \\
x^*(D_1^- = 1) &= \frac{x_1 + x_2}{2} + \frac{\delta_i}{2\alpha_i(x_1 - x_2)} \,, \text{and} \\
a &= \frac{c}{2\alpha_i\rho(x_1 - x_2)} \,.
\end{aligned}
$$

Then we have:

Backlash: These are citizens x_i who abstain if $D_1^- = 0$ but turn out to vote for candidate 2 if $D_1^- = 1$,

$$x^*(D_1^- = 0) - a < x_i \leq \min\left\{x^*(D_1^- = 0) + a, x^*(D_1^- = 1) - a\right\}.$$

Vote switching: These are citizens x_i who vote for candidate 1 if $D_1^- = 0$ but vote for candidate 2 if $D_1^- = 1$,

$$x^*(D_1^- = 0) + a < x_i \leq x^*(D_1^- = 1) - a.$$

Disengagement: These are citizens x_i who vote for candidate 1 if $D_1^- = 0$ but abstain if $D_1^- = 1$,

$$\max\left\{x^*(D_1^- = 0) + a, x^*(D_1^- = 1) - a\right\} < x_i \leq x^*(D_1^- = 1) + a.$$
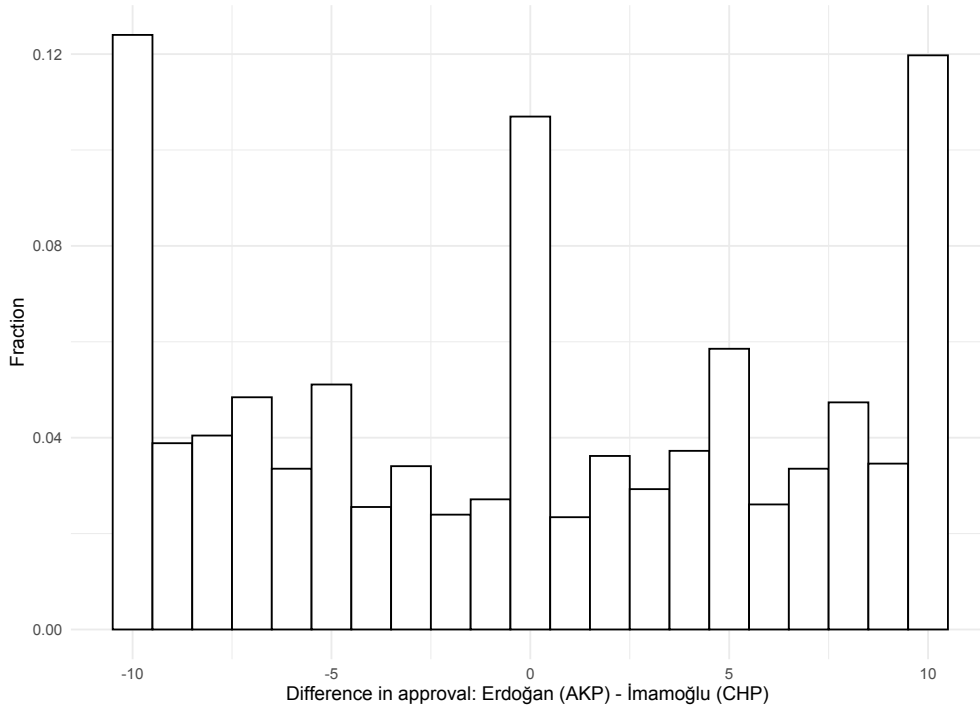
Figure 2.1: The distribution of the approval difference between President Erdoğan (AKP) and the CHP's mayoral candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu

2 The Model: Empirical Support for Key Assumptions

2.1 Turnout and Latent Candidate Support

A key implication of our assumption that the primary driver of turnout is a citizen's desire to express support for her favored candidate is that turnout will be highest among those who see a large difference between the two candidates; by contrast, those who see little difference between the candidates will abstain.

The plots in Figures 2.2 and 2.3 provide evidence for this prediction. The data come from a survey conducted after the 2019 Turkish local election on a nationally representative sample of 2,027 Turkish citizens. Our measure of the difference that respondents see between candidates is based on the question "What do you think about the politicians that I will mention now? Can you rate them on a scale between 0 and 10? 0 corresponds to a politician that you do not like at all, 10 corresponds to a politician that you like very much." Of the candidates rated, the difference in the respondents' approval of President Erdoğan (AKP) and the CHP's mayoral candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu reflects most closely the choices voters faced in the 2019 Istanbul mayoral race.[1] Figures 2.1 plots its distribution.

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[1]This survey did not ask about approval for the AKP's candidate in the Istanbul mayoral race Binali

Figure 2.2: The difference in a respondent's approval of Erdoğan and İmamoğlu and the vote for the AKP, CHP, or abstention in the 2019 Turkish local election

Figure 2.2 shows the fraction of respondents who reported voting for the AKP, CHP, or abstaining in the 2019 local election by their Erdoğan-İmamoğlu approval difference. Consistent with the theoretical framework in section 2 of the paper, the fraction of respondents corresponding to those turning out and voting for either the AKP or the CHP is monotonic in the Erdoğan-İmamoğlu approval difference – the fraction of respondents who voted for the AKP is increasing in the approval difference; the opposite holds for the fraction who voted for the CHP. Meanwhile and consistent with our predictions, the fraction of respondents who abstained is largest at intermediate levels of the approval difference.

Figure 2.3 displays the same pattern while differentiating between Erdoğan's and İmamoğlu's approval. Note especially that abstention took place primarily among respondents who saw little difference between the two candidates – regardless of the absolute level of approval they expressed for each candidate separately (i.e. abstainers occur along the 45 degree diagonal).
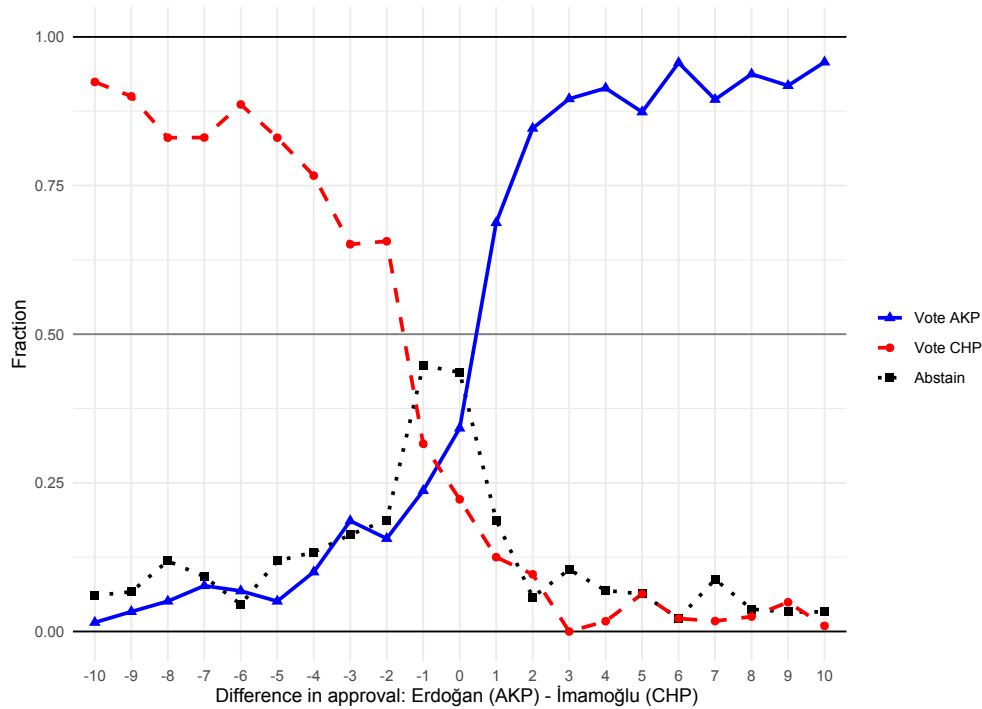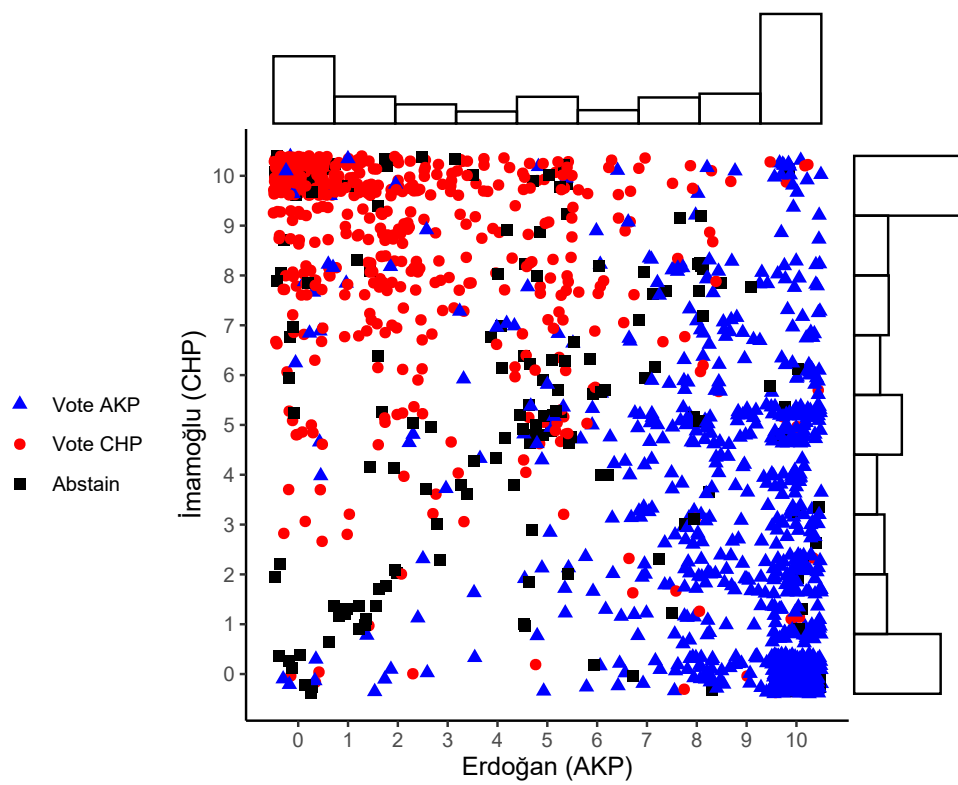

Yıldırım.

Figure 2.3: A respondent's approval of Erdoğan, İmamoğlu, and the vote for the AKP, CHP, or abstention in the 2019 Turkish local election

3 The 2019 Istanbul Mayoral Election: Qualitative Background and Evidence

3.1 The Annulment and the Integrity of Elections in Turkey

Here we provide further details for why the Electoral Commission's (YSK) decision to annul the March 2019 Istanbul mayoral election and order its rerun represents an unprecedented violation of electoral integrity in Turkey under the AKP. To preview: i) there is no evidence that the improper chairing of some ballot box committees affected the election outcome; ii) in deciding to annul the election, the YSK used a stricter standard than in the past; iii) the YSK selectively annulled only one of four concurrent elections, even though all were administered under the same procedures.

Background: Up to 2019, electoral fairness under the AKP's government has been compromised primarily by pre-election manipulation and there was no evidence of systematic election-day fraud[2] or attempts to overturn election outcomes ex-post. For instance, the OSCE's election observation report on the 2018 presidential and parliamentary elections stated that "voters had a genuine choice despite the lack of conditions for contestants to compete on an equal basis. The incumbent president and his party enjoyed a notable advantage, also reflected in excessive coverage by government-affiliated public and private media...Election day procedures were generally followed, although important legally prescribed steps were often omitted during counting and tabulation."[3]

An observer report by the Council of Europe (The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities) for the 2019 local elections echoed this distinction between an unfair playing field favoring the government before the election and an impartial administration of the vote on election day. The report stated that "as consequence of the technical proficiency of the election administration in Turkey, the Congress Delegation saw professionally organised elections in the majority of polling stations visited on 31 March and 23 June 2019" (p. 22). But it emphasized in its recommendations that "the framework conditions for ensuring a level playing field for all contestants and genuine media freedom have proved weak in these elections and thus have led to questions from the Congress Delegation regarding democratic media plurality and conditions that are

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[2]Areas with a large Kurdish population in the south-east of the country are an exception to this assessment; see esp. Mebane 2016.

[3]The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, "Turkey, Early Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, 24 June 2018: Final Report", 21 September 2018.

objectively fair to all political parties and candidates in all respects" (p. 2).[4]

The YSK's decision: YSK's 7-4 decision to repeat the election rested on two technical points.[5] First, the YSK found violations of the statutory provision that the ballot box committees (sandık kurulları), whose members count votes and certify results for each ballot box, be chaired by civil servants. Ballot box committees are appointed by district election boards (ilçe seçim kurulları), which form the lowest rank of the YSK hierarchy at the provincial level. On March 31, YSK determined that 754 ballot box committees (of more than 31,000) in Istanbul were chaired by non-civil servants. Second, the YSK found that preliminary vote count tables (sayım döküm cetvelleri), which are used to record votes before final certifying documents are compiled, were left empty in 18 ballot boxes and unsigned in 90 others.

In their final verdict, the justices noted that the district election boards provided unsatisfactory explanations for the improperly appointed ballot box committees, and that the total number of votes cast at the ballot boxes under scrutiny exceeded Ekrem İmamoğlu's margin of victory. This, the 7-4 majority held, gave reason to assume that the outcome was unduly influenced. The majority verdict further noted several ballot boxes where votes were cast in the name of deceased, incarcerated or mentally incapacitated voters. But notably, the YSK verdict did not include any mention of direct vote theft, as alleged by the AKP's candidate Binali Yıldırım after the March 31 vote.

Objections raised by dissenting YSK justices: The chief YSK justice Sadi Güven's dissent in the final verdict became a focal point of the criticisms levied at the majority decision. Güven argued that if no appeals were made about the formation of ballot box committees in the legal time frame before the election, objections raised afterwards cannot be taken into consideration, and stated that even if there had been improprieties in that regard, it could not be deduced that these influenced the outcome. Güven stressed that all the district election boards that made the improper appointments had both AKP and CHP members serving on them, and that both parties had observers certifying the results at nearly all the ballot boxes where committee chairs were improperly appointed or where preliminary vote count tables were left empty or

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[4]The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, "Final report on Local elections in Turkey and Mayoral re-run in Istanbul (31 March and 23 June 2019)." 31 October 2019.

[5]"Yüksek Seçim Kurulunun 31 Mart 2019 tarihinde yapılan İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediye Başkanlığı seçiminin iptaline ve seçimin yenilenmesine ilişkin 2019/4219 sayılı kararı" ["YSK verdict 2019/4219 regarding the annulment and re-run of the Istanbul Metropolitan Mayoral Election held on March 31, 2019"], May 6, 2019.

unsigned. He dismissed the idea that an improperly appointed chair could influence the vote count in a seven-person ballot box committee where five of the members are party representatives.

Justice Cengiz Topaktaş argued in his dissent that there was no evidence of a concerted effort to influence election results in favor of one party. He noted that the improper appointment of non-civil servants by itself could not be grounds for canceling the election, since the statute that governs committee selection allows for the appointment of suitable non-civil servants in cases where both the primary and the substitute appointees are absent. He further argued that YSK's emphasis on the improperly compiled preliminary vote count tables in this case contradicted its own verdict in the 2017 constitutional referendum, where the justices ruled – on election day – that votes without an official seal should still be counted as valid not to place the burden of administrative errors on voters. That verdict was criticized by the opposition as a last-minute effort to help the AKP-favored "Yes" side in a very narrow vote.[6]

Justices Kürşat Hamurcu and Yunus Aykın raised similar points, stressing the lack of evidence that the improperly appointed chairs influenced the outcome in full view of party representatives. Aykın cited cases where YSK refused to annul results in response to similar objections.

All dissenting justices agreed that the irregularities were not enough to determine the result and that the majority verdict unduly placed the burden of inconsequential administrative errors on voters, whose expressed preferences were being discarded with the decision to annul the election.

Departures from precedent: When the YSK first released its verdict to rerun the election without a detailed justification, objections were raised that many of the improperly appointed, non-civil servant members of ballot box committees also served in the general elections on June 24, 2018, which the ruling AKP won. By the same logic, Ekrem İmamoğlu and others argued that the results of the 2018 general election should have also been voided.[7]

In interviews with BBC Turkish, several ballot box committee members who served on March 31, 2019 despite not being civil servants claimed that either they or other colleagues had served in the same role in past elections, without any issues.[8] In the

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[6] "Kılıçdaroğlu: Bu seçim mühürsüz bir seçimdir." ["Kılıçdaroğlu: This is election is an unsealed election."], *CNN Türk*, April 18, 2017.

[7] "Her şey çok güzel olacak" ["Everything will be very good"], *Hürriyet*, May 7, 2019.

[8] Mahmut Hamsici, "İstanbul seçimleri: Kamu görevlisi olmayan sandık kurulu başkanları ve üyeleri

complete justification they later provided, the YSK argued that no evaluation was made regarding the 2018 general election because no objection had been filed through official channels at the time.[9]

The selective annulment of the mayoral race: Elections for district mayors, district municipal councils and the provincial municipal council were held concurrently with the metropolitan mayoral election, and the votes were counted and certified by the same ballot box committees that the YSK deemed improperly appointed. The YSK nonetheless certified the other three elections (in which the AKP performed significantly better than in the mayoral race.) This decision was criticized by the Union of Turkish Bar Associations[10] and commentators.[11]

The CHP unsuccessfully petitioned the YSK to annul both the June 24, 2018 general elections and the district level elections held on March 31, 2019, on the grounds that the same improprieties were present in these elections as well. Pro-AKP media countered this charge by noting that the margins in other elections were not as narrow, so that irregularities that affected the outcome of one election may not have impacted another.[12]

For a further discussion of the inconsistencies in the YSK's ruling with evidence from the election, see especially Abdullah Aydogan, "Electoral irregularities benefited Turkey's ruling party, not the opposition", *The Washington Post*, May 10, 2019 and Murat Somer, "Turkish Democracy Is Still Alive", *Foreign Policy*, June 19, 2019.[13]

3.2 Public political pressure to annul by the governing AKP

President Erdoğan initially appeared to concede, saying on election night that while the voters may have handed the metropolitan mayoralty to the opposition, votes district councils had still gone in their favor.[14] As the controversy over the count intensified, he spoke out in

anlatıyor" ["Istanbul elections: Ballot box committee chairs and members who were not public officials speak out"], *BBC Türkçe*, May 12, 2019.

[9]YSK verdict 2019/4219.

[10]Oya Artmutçu, "TBB: YSK takvimine niye uymadı?" ["TBB: Why did the YSK not abide by its calendar?"], *Hürriyet*, May 8, 2019.

[11]Sedat Ergin, "YSK'nın kararı ve demokratik sabır" ["YSK's verdict and democratic patience"], *Hürriyet*, May 8, 2019.

[12]"Neden sadece İstanbul seçimleri iptal edildi?" ["Why were only the Istanbul elections annulled?"], *Sabah*, May 8, 2019.

[13]For a journalistic coverage of the inconsistencies in the YSK's ruling, see Carlotta Gall, "Turkey Orders New Election for Istanbul Mayor, in Setback for Opposition," *The New York Times*, May 6, 2019.

[14]Tuvan Gümrükçü and Ece Toksabay, "Erdoğan appears to concede Istanbul defeat after Ankara loss", *Reuters*, March 30, 2019.

favor of his party's appeal but mainly stressed that the YSK would act as the final arbiter and that their decision would be respected.[15] He later became more forceful in his remarks, arguing two days before the announcement of the final verdict that a re-run of the election is what the people wanted and ordering one would clear the YSK's reputation.[16]

The pro-government newspaper Yeni Akit reported prior to the verdict that Erdoğan believed an AKP victory would be certain in a re-run, drawing a parallel between the Istanbul race and the 2015 general election. In the latter, the AKP called for an early election in November 2015 after a disappointing showing in June 2015, and indeed regained a single-party parliamentary majority.[17]

Erdoğan's pronouncements were alleged by some to have amounted to undue political pressure on the YSK prior to its final verdict.[18]

Once the YSK ruling was announced, its defenders claimed that by annulling and ordering a re-run of the Istanbul mayoral race, the YSK was in fact safeguarding Turkish democracy and ensuring that the election outcome reflects the will of the majority of Istanbulites, as we mention in the introduction of the main text. The examples below document this line of defense.

1. President Erdoğan, in his first statement following the YSK verdict: "It was declared that AK Party lost this election by a margin of 25-28 thousand. Because of our subservience to the national will, we were ready to react to the results with respect. A completely different picture emerged in the following hours and days with the appeals our friends filed about vote count records, district combination records, spoiled votes. We saw that the will of 15 thousand people who voted for AK Party has been hijacked. While some of these mistakes were inadvertent, it is certain that a significant portion was intentional. These mistakes and errors have not been made at the same rate for different parties; only in AK Party's votes is there a noticeable difference...Behind every appeal we have made, there is undeniable, concrete evidence. If the margin had not been almost cut in half, the situation would not have come to this. But we cannot ignore the blatant lawlessness, and more importantly a hijacking of will...Dear friends, if we do not hold these hijackers of the national will accountable for what has been

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[15]"Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'dan İstanbul açıklaması: Bazıları değil neredeyse bütünü usulsüz." ["Statement on İstanbul from President Erdoğan: Not some but nearly all of it is improper."] *NTV*, April 8, 2019.

[16]"Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Vatandaş seçimin yenilenmesini istiyor." ["President Erdoğan: The citizens want this election to be repeated."] *TRT Haber*, May 4, 2019.

[17]"Başkan Erdoğan: Seçim yenilenirse İstanbul'u kazanırız" ["President Erdoğan: If the election is repeated we would win Istanbul"], *Yeni Akit*, May 2, 2019.

[18]Can Ataklı, "Erdoğan'ın sözleri YSK'ya talimat gibidir" ["Erdoğan's words are like a directive to the YSK"], *Sözcü*, May 4, 2019

done, the nation will hold us accountable."[19]

2. When asked by a citizen at a Ramadan event "Why was the election cancelled?", the AKP's mayoral candidate Binali Yıldırım gave a succinct reply: "Very simple, because they stole it."[20]

3. The President's Director of Communications Fahrettin Altun's statement to the Associated Press in response to the YSK verdict: "The YSK verdict regarding the repeat of the İstanbul elections must be viewed as an effort for the election results to truly reflect the national will. In that regard, the verdict is a victory for our democracy."[21]

4. AKP spokesman Ömer Çelik in response to the verdict: "The only aim here, which transcends the interests of parties, is that our citizen's vote is not wasted, that the national will is reflected clearly. This is not a matter of protecting AK Party's or any other party's interests. This is a matter for the vote of our citizens, who are always the winner and never the loser in democracy, to be seen clearly."[22]

3.3   The Opposition's Strategy

The opposition's initial reaction to the verdict was critical, accusing the governing AKP of subverting the YSK (and the electoral process) to overturn its defeat.

1. After the conclusion of the CHP's executive board meeting following the YSK ruling, the CHP press secretary Faik Oztrak said: "YSK, by accepting the ruling party's completely unsubstantiated appeals and annulling the election, has rejected its raison d'être...The dirty game being played by those who were voted in to avoid being voted out has been approved of by a subservient gang inside YSK. With this decision, a blow has been dealt to elections, democracy's last stronghold of legitimacy."[23]

2. Ekrem İmamoğlu, a speech at Beylikduzu Yasam Valley: "With different appeals and excuses every day they have tried to influence and threaten YSK. And they bowed down

[19] "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'dan YSK'nın İstanbul kararı ile ilgili ilk açıklama" ["First statement from President Erdoğan regarding YSK's İstanbul verdict"], *Hürriyet*, May 7 2019.

[20] "Yıldırım'dan 'Seçim neden iptal edildi sorusuna yanıt': Çok basit çünkü çaldılar" ["Answer from Yıldırım to the question 'Why was the election cancelled?': Very simple, because they stole it"], *Independent Türkçe*, May 12, 2019.

[21] "Altun: YSK'nin kararı milli iradeyi doğru yansıtma çabası olarak görülmeli" ["Altun: YSK's verdict must be seen as an effort to truly reflect the national will"], *Anadolu Agency*, May 7, 2019.

[22] "Çelik: Milletin iradesine başvurmak yegane pusulamızdır" ["Çelik: Consulting the nation's will is our only compass"], *CNN Türk*, May 6, 2019.

[23] "Kılıçdaroğlu: Haklılığımıza gölge düşürmeyeceğiz" ["Kilicdaroglu: We will not let our rightfulness be overshadowed"], *Hürriyet*, May 7 2019.

to it. Now YSK announces, that it supposedly annulled the elections in light of extraordinary contentions regarding the balloting committees. With the same committees you chose the President in the June elections last year; you have made a referendum; the constitution was amended. In that case the constitution is questionable, and so is the Presidential election... The decision makers in this country may be in negligence, error and even treachery, but we will never give up. In this process, I encourage all to come to our side in the name of democracy." [24]

As analyzed in detail by Wuthrich and Ingleby, İmamoğlu's subsequent strategy emphasized an inclusive, non-confrontational approach toward the AKP's supporters with "a focus on bread-and-butter issues that could unite voters across opposing political camps" (p.25) and the signalling of respect for the AKP's supporters' conservative, religious leanings by attending Friday prayers and Ramadan meals (p. 33).[25] The political rationale was to appeal to the AKP's base in spite of an otherwise highly polarized landscape. This is consistent with the paper's theoretical analysis, according to which a reduction in the perceived distance between the candidates' policy platforms brings into focus differences in the candidates' commitment to democracy.

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[24] "Her şey çok güzel olacak" ["Everything is going to be great"], *Hürriyet*, May 7 2019.
[25] Wuthrich and Ingleby (2020).

4 The 2019 Istanbul Mayoral Election: Quantitative Analysis

4.1 Neighborhood-level Analysis: Descriptive Summaries

The histograms in Figure 4.4 summarize the neighborhood-level distribution of March 2019 AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention as a fraction of registered voters. The histograms in Figure 4.5 and the plots in Figure 4.6 summarize the neighborhood-level distribution of shifts between March and June 2019 in the AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention as a fraction of registered voters.

Figure 4.4: Neighborhood-level distribution of March 2019 the AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention as a fraction of registered voters

Figure 4.5: Neighborhood-level distribution of shifts between March and June 2019 in the AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention as a fraction of registered voters
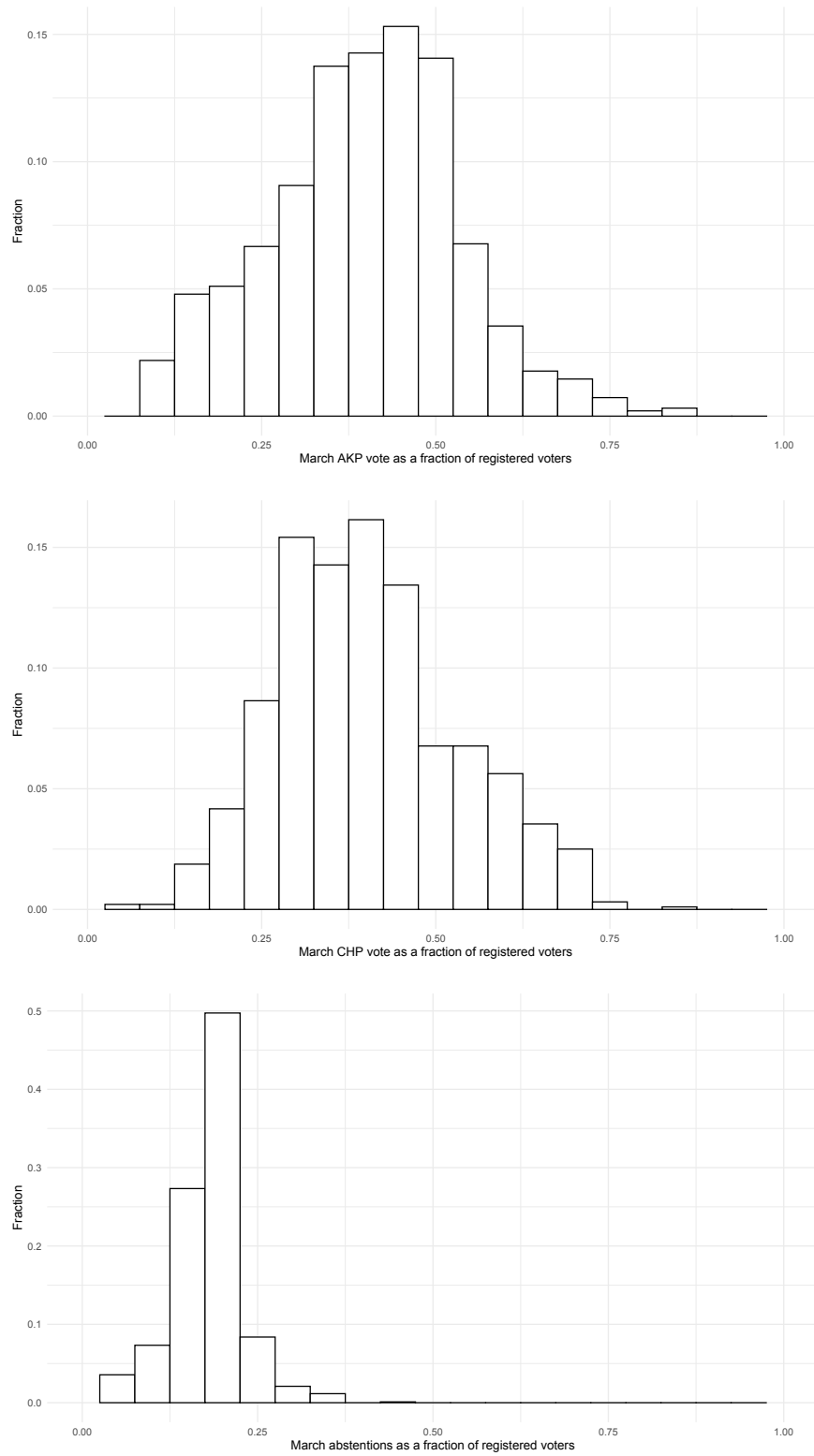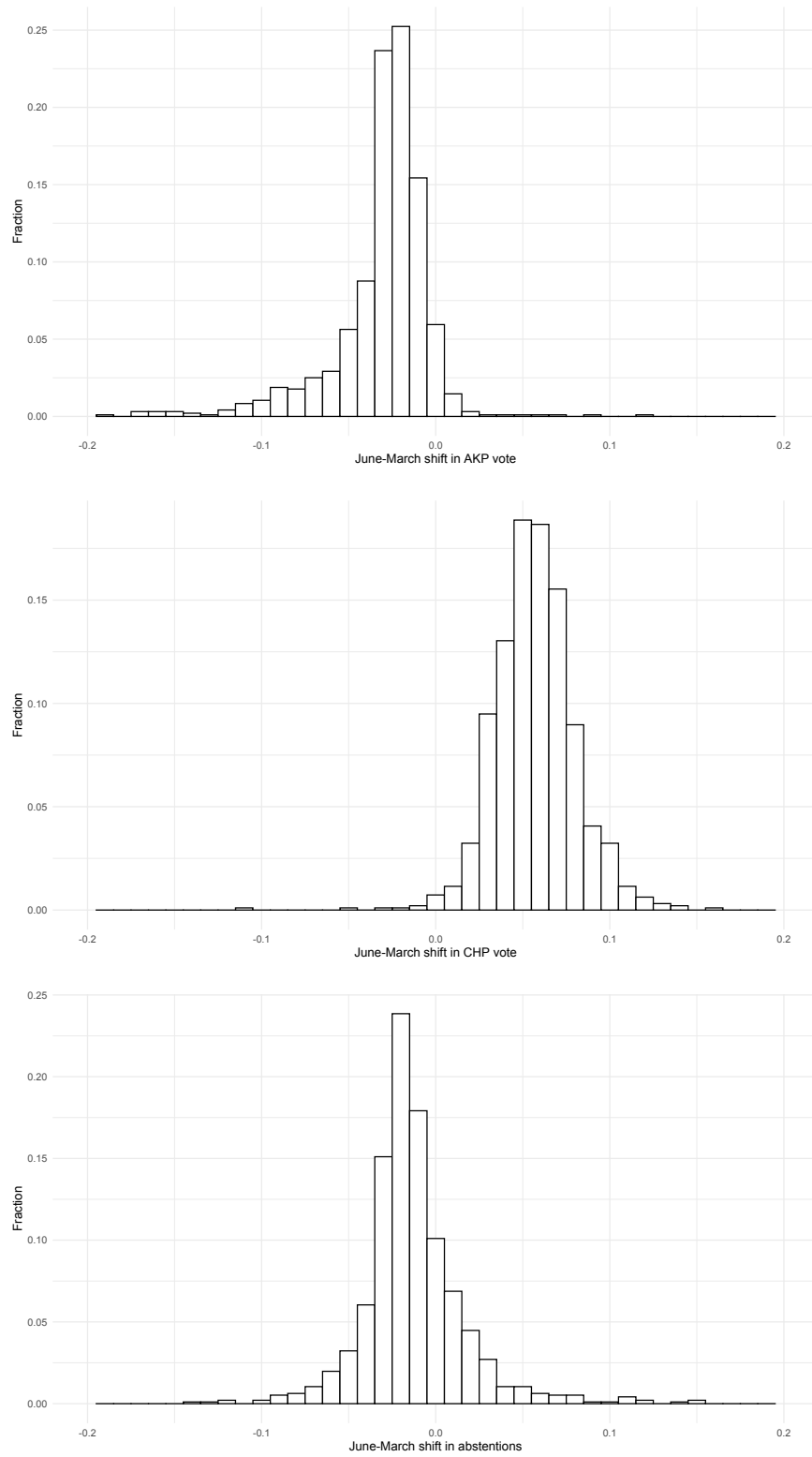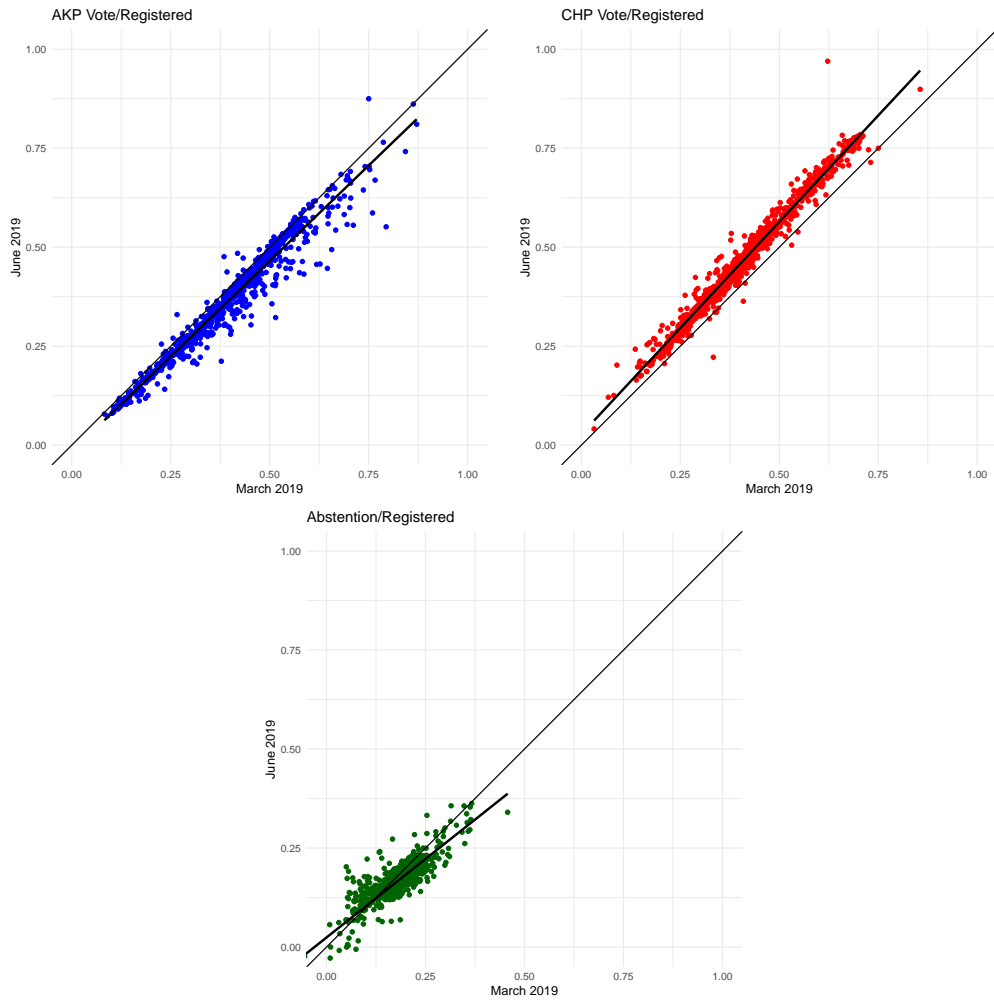
Figure 4.6: Neighborhood-level distribution of the March and June 2019 AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention as a fraction of registered voters

4.2   Neighborhood-level Analysis: Patterns and Significance

We conduct the simulation-based test of the null hypothesis of no difference between the March and June neighborhood-level election outcomes as follows. For each neighborhood j,

1. we take the March fraction of citizens that voted for the AKP, the CHP, and abstained as the null outcome probabilities p_j^{AKP}, p_j^{CHP}, p_j^{ABS};

2. we generate 100,000 draws from a multinomial distribution with the probability parameters p_j^{AKP}, p_j^{CHP}, p_j^{ABS} and the number of trials N_j corresponding to the number of registered voters in j;

3. using these draws, we calculate the centiles of the June fraction of citizens that voted for the AKP, the CHP, and abstained;

4. we say that a June outcome in neighborhood j departs significantly from its March outcome if any centile of the June fraction of citizens that voted for the AKP, the CHP, or abstained falls below the 2.5th or above 97.5th percentile of the simulated draws;

5. we categorize all neighborhoods into the rows in Table 1 in the main text.

Figure 4.7 complements Table 1 in the main text graphically. It shows the distribution of neighborhood-level outcome shifts that point to vote-switching (top), backlash (middle), and disengagement (bottom). The "no or other difference" category groups outcome shifts that are either not statistically significant or point in a direction different than the one marked in red (triangles).
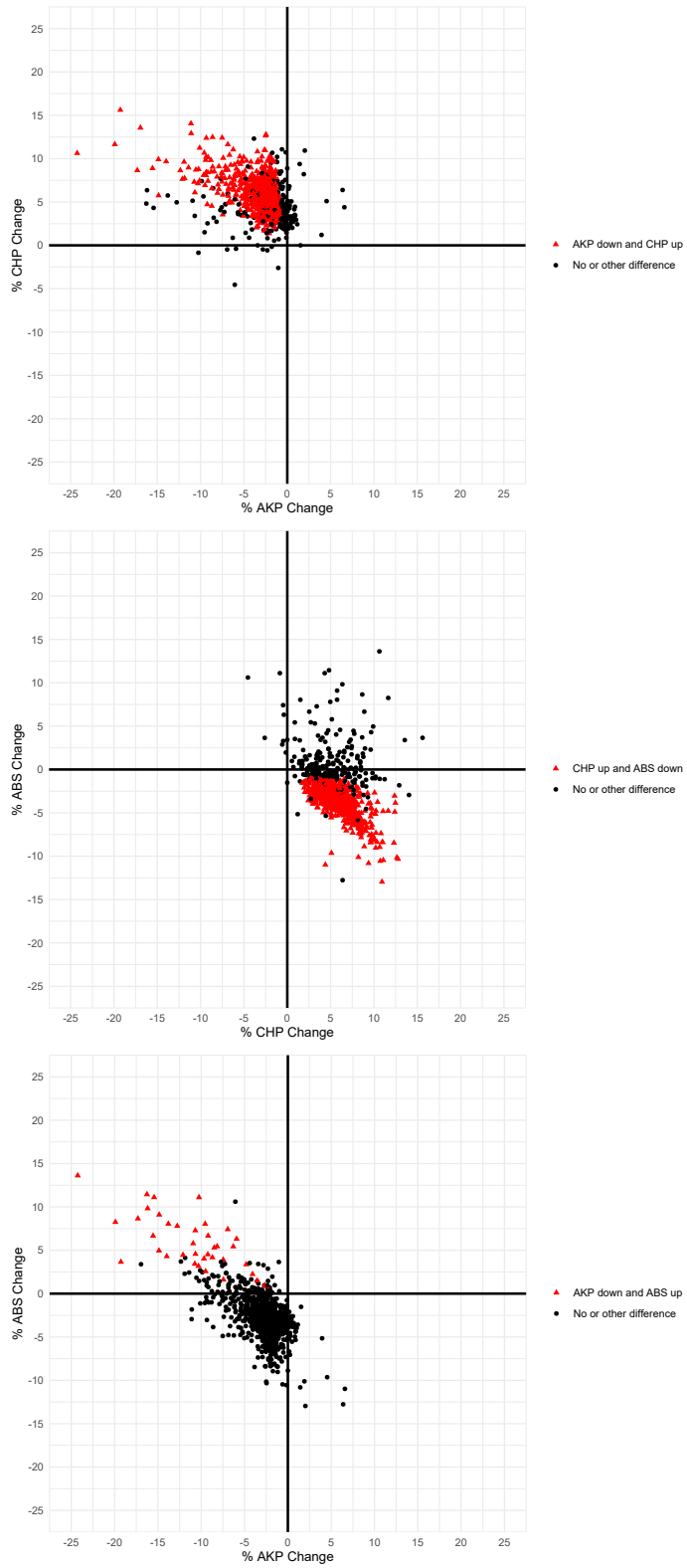
Figure 4.7: The distribution of neighborhood-level outcome shifts that point to vote-switching (top), backlash (middle), and disengagement (bottom)

4.3 Neighborhood-level Patterns and Individual-level Behavior

As we explain in the main text, by combining the constraints in (A.1) with the requirement that the joint probabilities π_{mj} as well as the marginal proportions v_m^M and v_j^J in (A.2) sum to 1, we obtain the following system equations:

$$
\begin{aligned}
v_m^M &= \pi_{m1} + \pi_{m2} + \pi_{m3} \quad \text{for } m \in \{1,2,3\}, \\
v_j^J &= \pi_{1j} + \pi_{2j} + \pi_{3j} \quad \text{for } j \in \{1,2,3\}.
\end{aligned}
\tag{A.1}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
\sum_{\text{All } (m,j)} \pi_{mj} &= 1, \\
\sum_{\text{All } m} v_m^M &= 1, \\
\sum_{\text{All } j} v_j^J &= 1.
\end{aligned}
\tag{A.2}
$$

This system of equations can be reduced to the following set of equalities

$$
\begin{aligned}
\pi_{13} &= v_1^M - \pi_{11} - \pi_{12}, \\
\pi_{23} &= v_2^M - \pi_{21} - \pi_{22}, \\
\pi_{31} &= v_1^J - \pi_{11} - \pi_{21}, \\
\pi_{32} &= v_2^J - \pi_{12} - \pi_{22}.
\end{aligned}
\tag{A.3}
$$

Substituting the appropriate probabilities in (A.3) into the expressions defining the three punishment mechanisms, we obtain

$$
\begin{aligned}
\Delta_B &= \pi_{32} - \pi_{23} \\
&= v_2^J - v_2^M - (\pi_{12} - \pi_{21}) \\
&= v_2^J - v_2^M - \Delta_{VS}.
\end{aligned}
$$

and

$$
\begin{aligned}
\Delta_D &= \pi_{13} - \pi_{31} \\
&= v_1^M - v_1^J - (\pi_{12} - \pi_{21}) \\
&= v_1^M - v_1^J - \Delta_{VS}.
\end{aligned}
$$

4.4 Neighborhood-level Correlates of Punishment

Only a small set of covariates is available at the neighborhood level: the average age, population density (population per 1,000 m^2), the share of college educated, and housing prices (the Turkish Lira price per m^2, a proxy for neighborhood-level income). We scraped these covariates from the website Mahallem İstanbul (https://www.mahallemistanbul.com), which compiles them from administrative data.

We estimate a parallel of the model in (6) in the main text,

$$\text{Log}(j\text{'s share of registered voters}) = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 D_1^- + \ldots \beta_k x_{ik} \cdots + \ldots \gamma_k x_{ik} D_1^- \cdots + \epsilon_i, \quad (A.4)$$

where i indexes neighborhoods, j refers the AKP, the CHP, or abstentions, k to covariates, and D_1^- is a binary treatment indicator that differentiates between March ($D_1^- = 0$) and June ($D_1^- = 1$) outcomes.

Results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.1. Recall that the α coefficients estimate the (logged) vote shares and the effect on them of the AKP's attempt to overturn the Istanbul race at baseline levels of the covariates; the β_ks estimate the association between covariate k and March vote shares; and the γ_ks estimate how the difference between June and March vote shares due to the AKP's attempt to overturn the election varies with respondent covariates.

	Log(AKP/Registered)			Log(CHP/Registered)			Log(Abstentions/Registered)			Log(AKP's Two-Party Vote Share)		
	α	β	γ	α	β	γ	α	β	γ	α	β	γ
Intercept	-0.101			-1.656***			-1.366***			0.164		
	(0.254)			(0.257)			(0.105)			(0.244)		
D^-	0.154**			0.035			-0.071			0.143*		
	(0.070)			(0.021)			(0.055)			(0.069)		
Average age		-0.014	-0.007**		0.013	0.003***		-0.011**	0.002		-0.016*	-0.007**
		(0.009)	(0.002)		(0.009)	(0.001)		(0.004)	(0.002)		(0.008)	(0.002)
% college educated		-0.002	0.001***		0.000	0.000*		0.004***	-0.001***		-0.001	0.000
		(0.001)	(0.000)		(0.001)	(0.000)		(0.001)	(0.000)		(0.001)	(0.000)
Population density		0.011	0.005***		-0.013**	0.002*		0.010	-0.011***		0.012*	0.002*
		(0.008)	(0.001)		(0.006)	(0.001)		(0.008)	(0.003)		(0.006)	(0.001)
Housing prices		-0.025***	-0.001		0.017***	-0.001***		0.003	-0.005***		-0.024***	-0.002***
		(0.002)	(0.001)		(0.002)	(0.000)		(0.002)	(0.001)		(0.002)	(0.001)
Respondents	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810
R^2	0.584	0.584	0.584	0.464	0.464	0.464	0.291	0.291	0.291	0.613	0.613	0.613

Note: Standard errors clustered by district; ***$p < 0.01$; **$p < 0.05$; *$p < 0.1$.

Table 4.1: Election results: Heterogeneity in punishment by neighborhood-level covariates

Post-stratification Scheme	March 2019 (%)			June 2019 (%)		
	AKP	CHP	ABS	AKP	CHP	ABS
	39.32	39.45	21.24	37.24	44.86	17.90
1. Raw data	48.06	48.15	3.79	45.22	53.00	1.78
2. Demographics (age x gender x education)	46.67	49.09	4.25	43.99	54.17	1.84
3. 2018 legislative election margins	44.25	49.06	6.69	42.13	54.30	3.57
4. 2019 mayoral election margins	39.32	39.45	21.24	37.24	44.86	17.90
5. 2018 legislative election margins and 2019 mayoral election margins	39.32	39.45	21.24	37.24	44.86	17.90
6. Demographics, 2018 legislative, and 2019 mayoral election margins	39.32	39.45	21.24	37.24	44.86	17.90

Table 5.2: Alternative post-stratification schemes for the 2019 mayoral election surveys

5 Election surveys

The survey data examined in section 4 of the paper combines proprietary surveys conducted by the survey agencies Konda and Sonar during the two weeks prior to the June poll. The Konda survey was conducting during June 15-16, 2019 on a sample of 3,498 adult residents of Istanbul; the Sonar survey was conducted during 8–11 June, 2019 on a sample of 3,000 adult residents of Istanbul.

In their raw versions, both surveys perform well on matching the actual March and June AKP-CHP two-party vote share. Both, however, significantly undersample abstentions (by a factor between 7 and 15) and, to a lesser degree, third-party voters. This undersampling of abstaining voters compromises an accurate estimation of the two turnout mechanisms, backlash and disengagement, which are defined as transitions in and out of abstention.

We therefore calibrated the merged data from both surveys using the *joint* distribution of age, gender, and education (i.e. post-stratification proper) and the marginal distributions of vote choices and turnout in the 2018 legislative and the 2019 March and June mayoral elections (via iterative proportional fitting, a.k.a. raking.) Data on the joint distribution of age, gender, and education were obtained from the National Education Statistics of the Turkish Statistical Institute (https://biruni.tuik.gov.tr/medas/?kn=130&locale=tr); results of the 2018 legislative and 2019 mayoral elections come from the Turkish Electoral Commission (https://sonuc.ysk.gov.tr/sorgu).

Table 5.2 explores alternative post-stratification schemes for the 2019 mayoral election surveys. The percentages at the top of the table show the actual 2019 election outcomes, classifying those who voted for a third-party candidate or blank as abstaining (as we do in the analysis presented in the main text, see below for details on alternative ways of classifying

these voters). We see that the post-stratification scheme that approximates the 2019 Istanbul electorate most closely while incorporating as much as of the available information as possible (without compromising that approximation) is one that employs demographic data as well as the margins from the 2018 legislative and the 2019 March and June mayoral election margins (row 6).

5.0.1 Estimates of Vote Switching, Backlash, and Disengagement

The estimates of vote switching, backlash, and disengagement presented are based on the post-stratified survey sample and computed using the expressions in (3) in the main text.

In order to construct the joint distribution of respondents' March and June choices, we treated respondents who voted or intended to vote for third-party candidates or blank as abstaining (because these voters effectively abstained from the main contest between the AKP and CHP candidates). We dropped from our analysis those respondents who were undecided at the time of the surveys about the candidate they intended to vote for in the June re-run (because we do not know how they voted).

Third-party voters make up .9% and .41% of the raw data in March and June, respectively. After post-stratifying, these percentages closely correspond to the election totals, 1.98% and .58%. Undecided respondents account for 6.03% of the raw June data.

Table 5.3 shows that the findings in the main text are robust to how we handle undecided and third-party voters. We treat third-party voters as either abstaining or as a separate vote choice. We either drop the June undecided from the analysis or assume, respectively, that they abstained, voted for the AKP, CHP, or a third party candidate.

Results presented in the paper are based on classification 1. We see that classifying the undecided as voting in June entirely for the AKP results in a somewhat higher estimate of vote switching and a somewhat lower estimate of backlash; meanwhile, classifying them as voting for the CHP results in a higher estimate of backlash and disengagement. The latter is the only classification that yields a statistically significant level of disengagement.

5.0.2 Heterogeneity by socio-economic and political covariates

The main constraint on the number of covariates that can be included in this analysis is their "pre-treatment" status: among the available covariates, we only consider those that could not have been affected by the AKP's attempt to overturn the March election. This is plausible for two sets of covariates:

1. **durable personal characteristics**: age (four cohorts: 18-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51+), sex, education (a 3-point scale: "less than high school", "high school", "college or

	Classification		Estimates		
	Third-party Voters	Undecided	Vote switching	Backlash	Disengagement
1.	Abstain	Dropped	1.862	3.552	0.228
			$(1.369, 2.372)$	$(3.029, 4.088)$	$(-0.292, 0.748)$
2.	Abstain	Abstain	1.866	3.549	0.213
			$(1.382, 2.367)$	$(2.850, 4.250)$	$(-0.380, 0.812)$
3.	Abstain	AKP	2.322	3.088	-0.242
			$(1.745, 2.919)$	$(2.608, 3.593)$	$(-0.881, 0.397)$
4.	Abstain	CHP	1.513	3.899	0.561
			$(1.002, 2.038)$	$(3.351, 4.457)$	$(0.052, 1.054)$
5.	Differentiated	Dropped	1.859	3.192	0.474
			$(1.350, 2.354)$	$(2.682, 3.723)$	$(-0.018, 0.985)$
6.	Differentiated	Abstain	1.868	3.134	0.513
			$(1.399, 2.249)$	$(2.470, 3.818)$	$(-0.069, 1.088)$
7.	Differentiated	AKP	2.324	2.766	0.121
			$(1.727, 2.919)$	$(2.297, 3.230)$	$(-0.518, 0.743)$
8.	Differentiated	CHP	1.516	3.477	0.799
			$(1.002, 2.038)$	$(2.954, 4.025)$	$(0.311, 1.278)$
9.	Differentiated	Third-party	1.867	3.170	0.423
			$(1.382, 2.367)$	$(2.677, 3.679)$	$(-0.069, 0.916)$

95% bootstrap confidence intervals in parentheses

Table 5.3: The three mechanisms of punishment under alternative classification schemes for undecided and third-party voters

higher"), ethnicity (Turkish or other), religious identification (Sunni Muslim or other), degree of religiosity (a 4-point scale: "none", "low", "medium", "high"); dummies coding whether the respondent was born in Istanbul, is a state employee, student, or unemployed; and monthly income (four categories: 0-2k, 2-4k, 4-6k, 6k+, all in Turkish Lira);

2. **actions taken by the respondent prior the March 2019 election**: vote-choice in the 2018 parliamentary election (AKP, CHP, or other).

6 Candidate-choice Experiments

The candidate-choice experiments were part of the 2018 Turkish Election Study (the pre-election wave, May-June 2019) and a survey conducted in the aftermath of the 2019 Turkish local elections (June-August 2019). Both surveys aimed at a nationally representative sample of Turkish adults; respondents were interviewed in person by the survey agency Frekans.

The candidate-choice experiments were introduced by the statement "In an election, we rarely get to vote for the candidate we would like. Suppose that the two candidates whose characteristics I will show you on this card are running for parliament in your district. Which of these two candidates would you vote for?" Each respondent was first asked whether they would vote for candidate 1, candidate 2, or abstain. This is our main outcome of interest. Those who abstained faced the follow up question "which of the two candidates would you vote for, if you had to choose?" Finally, depending on the experiment, the respondent was asked a question about which of the candidate would "work harder for the poor", "work harder to protect secularism in Turkey", or "is more competent."

Below we provide further details for the candidate-choice scenarios that included party labels. These most closely resemble the choices that voters faced in the Istanbul election.

6.1 Experimental Undemocratic Positions and their Parallels in Turkish Politics under the AKP

A key design criterion for the undemocratic positions that appear in the candidate-choice experiments is that they either have been or could be plausibly adopted by real-world candidates. To support this criterion, we provide below specific examples of real-world practices that approximate our experimental undemocratic positions.

"If we win, we should cut government spending in districts that did not vote for our party"

- On the day of his victory in the 2019 mayoral election for the 19 Mayıs district of Samsun, AKP candidate Osman Topaloğlu said, "You do not give your vote but still get concrete roads, from now on that is over. From now on, those who give their vote will get the best service, those who do not will get it last."[26]

- The incumbent CHP candidate for Hatay mayor in the 2019 municipal elections, Lütfü Savaş, scolded the residents of the Derekuyu neighborhood who were complaining of

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[26]İsmail Akduman, "AKP'li başkan: Oy vermeyen hizmet alamayacak" ["AKP mayor: Those who do not give their vote will not get service"], *Sözcü*, April 4, 2019.

mud and puddles: "You don't give the vote, yet you still talk. Why am I obligated? You give the vote; we give the service." In the 2014 municipal elections, the AKP received 231 votes in Derekuyu, while the CHP received 80 votes.[27]

- Before the mayoral elections in 2014, the incumbent AKP candidate for the mayor of the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, Melih Gökçek, said, "Everyone says 'the services should begin from Kızılcahamam, from Haymana...' Then where am I supposed to begin? We determined there should not be an injustice. So, I came up with a measure. See for yourselves, is it fair? Whichever district, in percentage terms, gives the most votes to the AK Party, I will begin to provide services from that district."[28]

- For a comprehensive analysis of local spending, patronage politics, and support for the AKP, see Gürakar and Meyersson 2016 and Marschall et al. 2016.

"If we win, we should fire government employees who did not vote for our party"

- Civil servants ("devlet memurları") accredited under Statute 657 are afforded an extensive degree of job security and can only be removed under extraordinary circumstances. But the government also employs contract workers ("sözleşmeli işçiler") who perform a wide range of administrative and support duties but are not granted the status and job protections of civil servants.

- Some local governments who changed hands between parties in 2019 were accused of terminating contract workers for partisan reasons. Nuri Başkapan, a contract worker for the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, claimed that he was fired for donating 50 Turkish liras to Ekrem İmamoğlu's campaign and criticizing the AKP and the YSK verdict on social media. Başkapan said that his superiors informed him about these reasons.[29] Birol Durmuş, another contract worker for the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, alleged that he was fired by the new CHP administration for his partisan sympathies, and that 80 of his colleagues were treated similarly. He biked from İstanbul to the CHP headquarters in Ankara in protest.[30]

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[27]"Oy yoksa hizmet yok!" ["No vote, no service!"], *Yeni Şafak*, March 2, 2019.

[28]"Gökçek: Hizmeti oy oranı yüksek ilçeden başlatacağım" ["I will begin the services from the district with the highest vote share"], *Hürriyet*, February 24, 2014.

[29]Hacı Bişkin, "İmamoğlu'na bağış yaptığı için İBB'den atılan Başkapan: İşime geri dönmek istiyorum" ["Başkapan, who was fired from the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality for donating to İmamoğlu: I want to return to my job"], *Gazete Duvar*, June 27, 2019.

[30]"İBB'de işçi kıyımı sürüyor! AK Parti ile ilgili paylaşım yaptığı için işten çıkarıldı" ["The worker purge at İstanbul Metropolitan Mayoralty continues! He was fired for sharing a post about AKP"], *Sabah*, January 28, 2021.

- In 2016, the AKP government floated a public sector reform that would unite civil servants and contract workers under a single legal status and strip protections for the former, citing, among other factors, the difficulties faced in removing civil servants who were linked to Fethullah Gülen.[31]

"If we win, we should appoint new judges in place of those who are prejudiced against [the AKP, CHP]"

- From its early days in office, the AKP government frequently criticized the judiciary on grounds that it was a "tutelary" ("vesayet") organ obstructing a democratically elected government.[32] After narrowly avoiding a ban by the Constitutional Court in 2008, the AKP government carried out sweeping judicial reforms with the constitutional amendments that were passed by referenda in 2010 and 2017. These changed the composition of and the selection process for the Constitutional Court and the Council of Judges and Prosecutors, which oversees judicial appointments.

- The CHP was especially forceful in its criticism of the YSK after the verdict to re-run the Istanbul mayoral race. Chairman Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu branded the justices who voted with the majority "The gang of 7", saying "Wherever you derive your power from, your power cannot affect us because we derive our power from the people. Those who derive their power from the Palace [President Erdoğan] will answer for it one day."[33] He was subsequently censured by the YSK in a unanimous vote.

- The pro-government and the opposition camps both view the judiciary as either having been biased against them in the past (the AKP) or biased against them at the moment (the opposition). This makes this experimental position plausible for both government and opposition supporters.

6.2   The Candidate Choice Experiment, 2019

The survey was administered to a nationally representative sample of Turkish adults between 24 June, 2019 and 2 August, 2019, in the aftermath of the re-run of the Istanbul mayoral race (23 June 2019).

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[31]Volkan Yanardağ, "Hükümet, Devlet Memurları Kanunu'nu değiştirmek istiyor" ["The government wants to amend the Civil Servants Statute"], *HaberTürk Gazete*, August 11, 2016.

[32]"Yargı vesayeti sistemi kilitliyor" ["Judicial tutelage is blocking the system"], *Yeni Şafak*, January 14, 2010.

[33]"Kılıçdaroğlu'ndan YSK hakimlerine sert sözler: Hakim dediğin adam, satılık adam değildir" ["Harsh words from Kılıçdaroğlu about YSK judges: The man you call a judge cannot be for sale"], *Sözcü*, July 3, 2019.

6.2.1 The "Democracy around the World Battery"

In order to verify that our respondents understand what democracy is and – especially – what it is *not*, we administered a battery of democratic and undemocratic practices *prior* to the candidate choice experiment. Crucially, the practices included items that would later appear as undemocratic positions adopted by our experimental candidates. In order to avoid priming respondents by the Turkish context, we introduced the battery early in the survey (with the experiments separated from the battery by several minutes of unrelated questions) by the statement "Countries around the world differ in how democratic they are. In the next several questions, we will list government practices from various countries around the world. We are interested in how democratic you consider those practices to be. Use a scale where 0 means "not at all democratic" and 10 means "completely democratic."

Figure 6.8 plots the distribution of ratings for two items from the battery that aim to mirror the two undemocratic experimental positions that we consider, "we should fire government employees who did not vote for our party" (2019) and "we should appoint new judges in place of those who are prejudiced against the AKP" (2018), and one that mirrors the AKP's attempt to overturn its defeat in Istanbul, "the incumbent president refused to step down from office after a narrow election defeat". As with the mean ratings for the entire battery presented in the main text, the vast majority of Turkish citizens correctly rate the positions that mirror our experimental treatments as undemocratic.
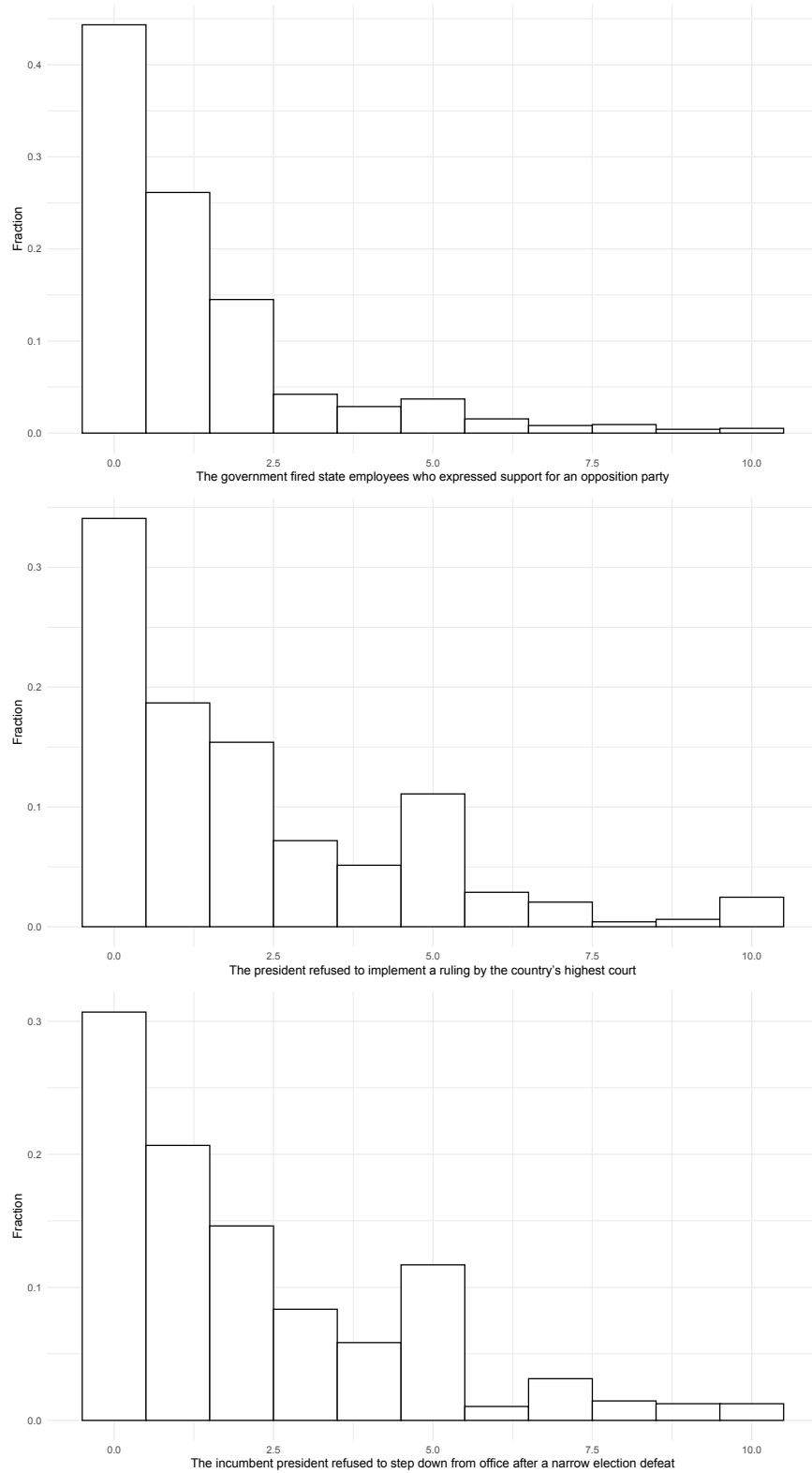
Figure 6.8: The distribution of ratings from the "democracy around the world" battery for the two experimental undemocratic positions (top two panels) and the item that mirrors the AKP's attempt to overturn its defeat in Istanbul (bottom panel)

6.2.2 Heterogeneity by the Erdoğan (AKP)-İmamoğlu (CHP) approval difference

The horizontal axes in plots in Figures 5 and 6 in the main text are based the difference in approval of President Erdoğan (AKP) and the CHP's mayoral candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu. Our use of this metric is implied by our theoretical framework: Recall from Section 2 in the main text that whether a citizen punishes a violation of democratic principles by vote switching, backlash, or disengagement is a function of the difference $u_{i1} - u_{i2}$ in citizen i's payoff from the two candidates.

The approval difference is based on the question "What do you think about the politicians that I will mention now? Can you rate them on a scale between 0 and 10? 0 corresponds to a politician that you do not like at all, 10 corresponds to a politician that you like very much." Of the candidates rated, the difference in the respondents' approval of President Erdoğan (AKP) and the CHP's mayoral candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu reflects most closely the choices voters faced in the 2019 Istanbul mayoral race.[34]

6.2.3 Heterogeneity by socio-economic covariates

Figures 6.9-6.13 plot heterogeneity in the effect of the AKP's candidate's undemocratic position on the AKP candidate's two-party vote share, AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention by the respondents' age; whether the respondent is a student, unemployment, state employed; wealth (measured by the ownership of a range of household items); religiosity, whether the respondent speaks Kurdish, the respondent's personal finances today compared to a year ago, and interest in politics.

Figures 6.14-6.18 plot heterogeneity in the effect of the AKP's candidate's undemocratic position on the shift in the AKP candidate's two-party vote share, AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention by the same set of covariates.

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[34]This survey did not ask about approval for the AKP's candidate in the Istanbul mayoral race Binali Yıldırım.

Figure 6.9: Vote shares: Heterogeneity

Figure 6.10: Vote shares: Heterogeneity

Wealth

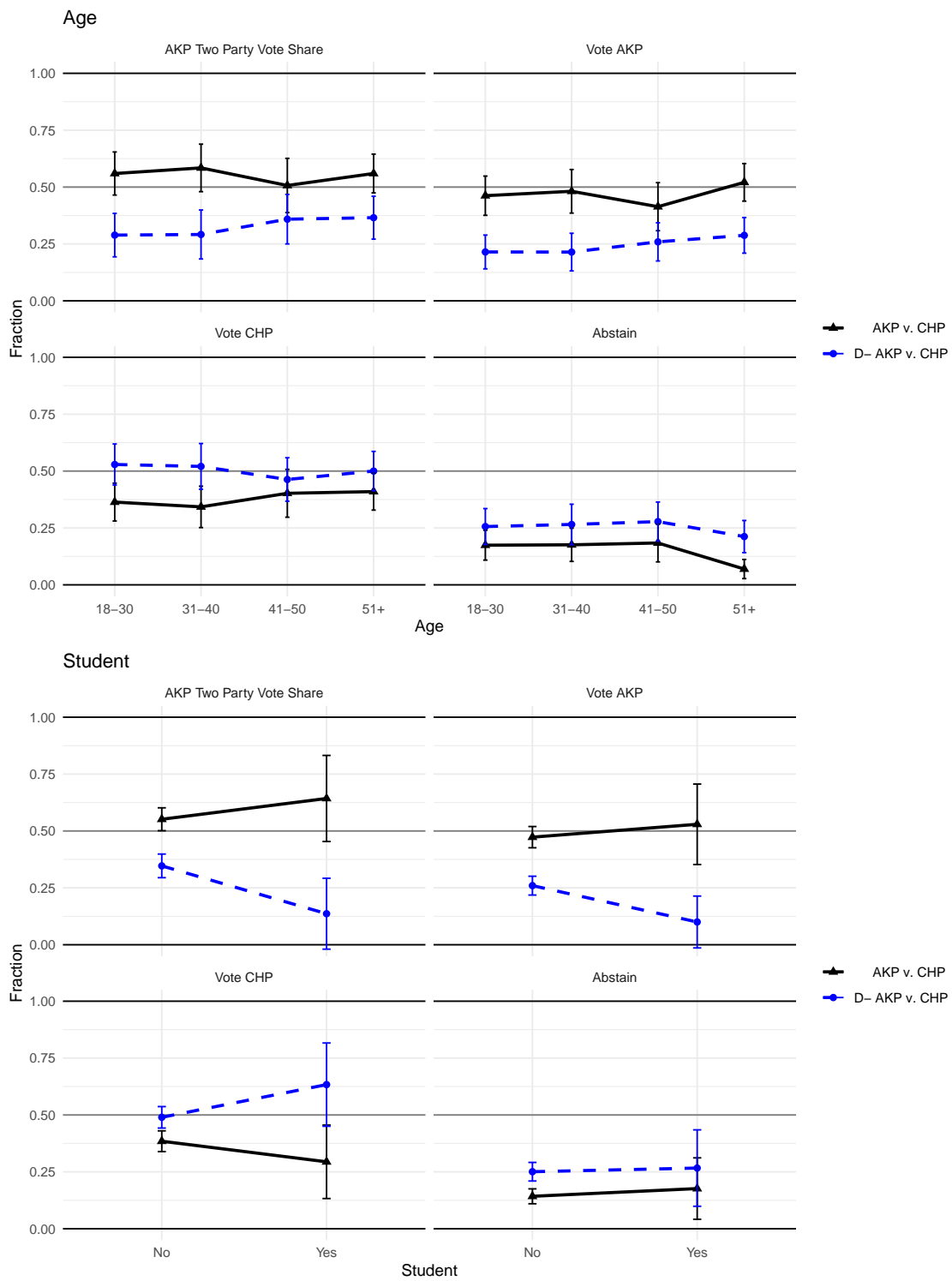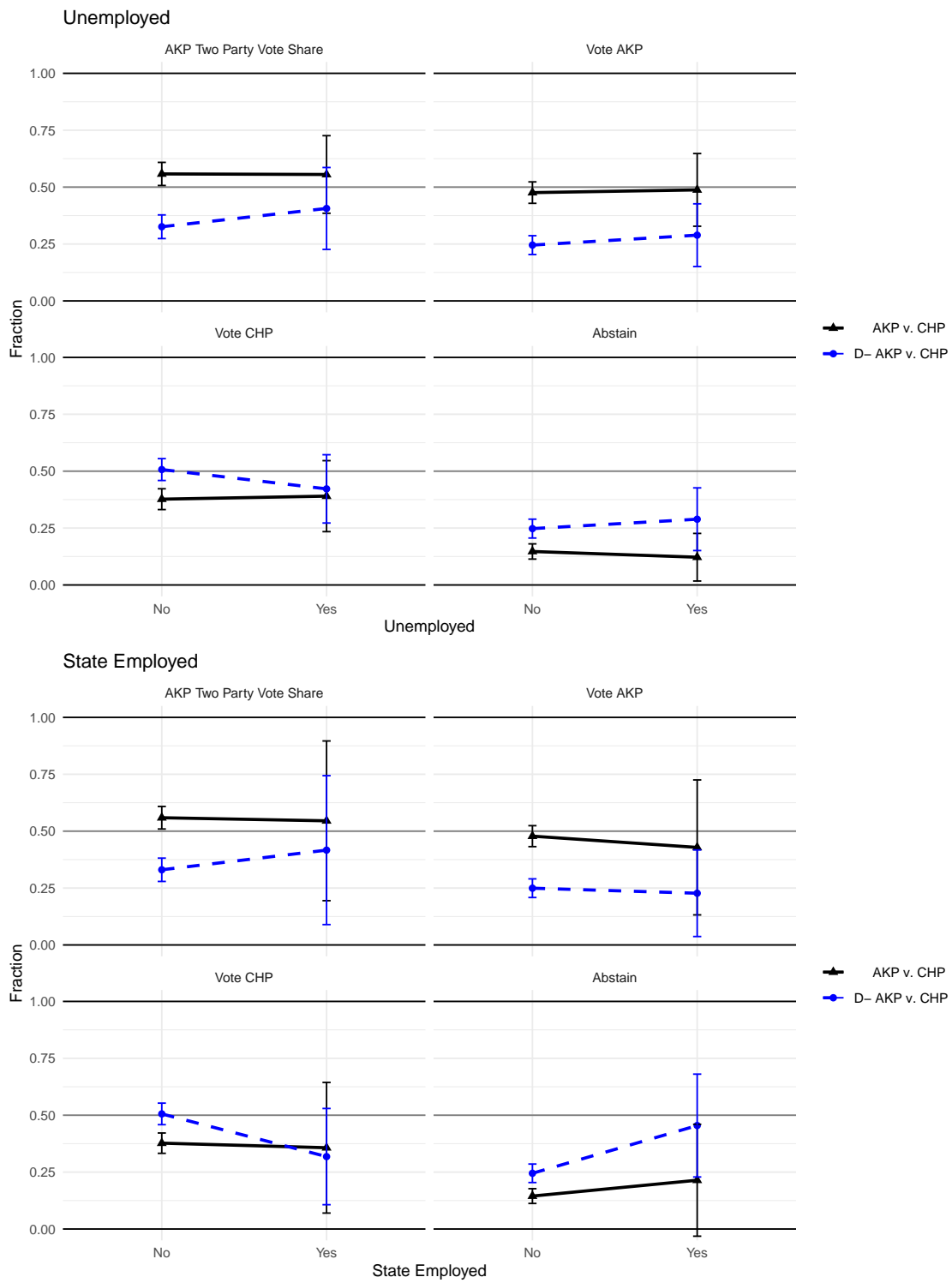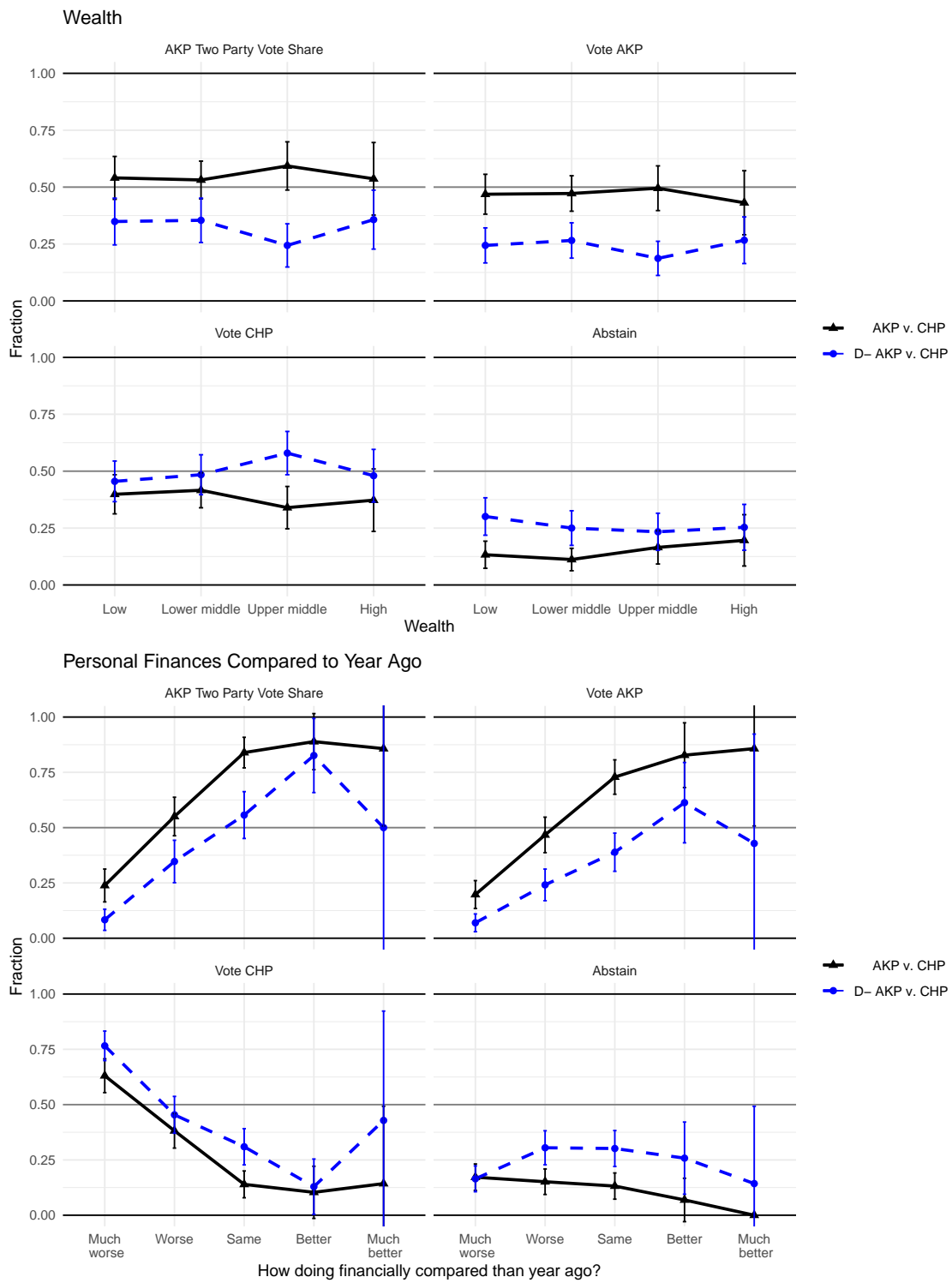Personal Finances Compared to Year Ago

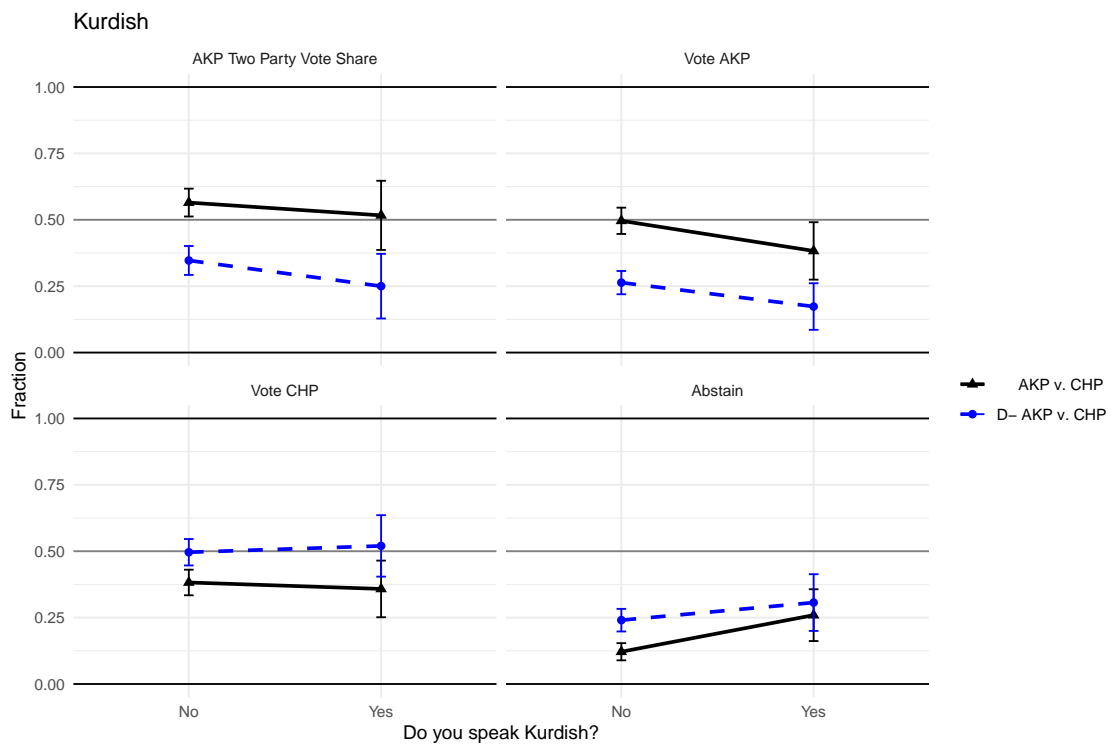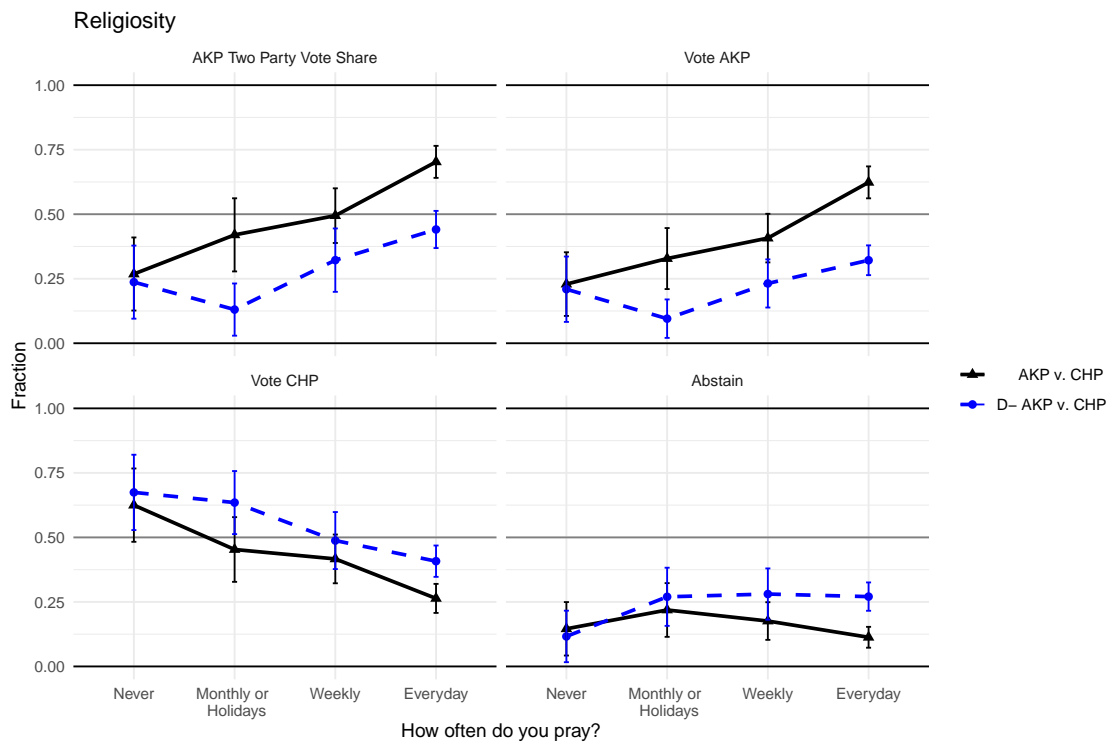
Figure 6.11: Vote shares: Heterogeneity
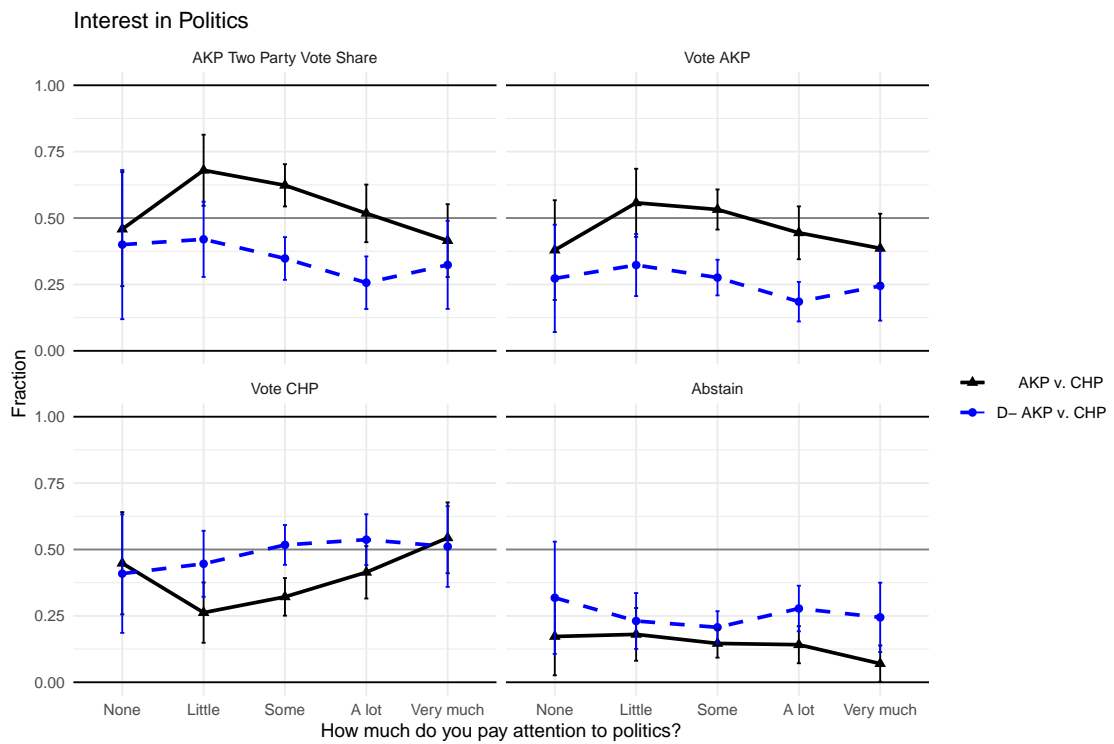
Figure 6.12: Vote shares: Heterogeneity

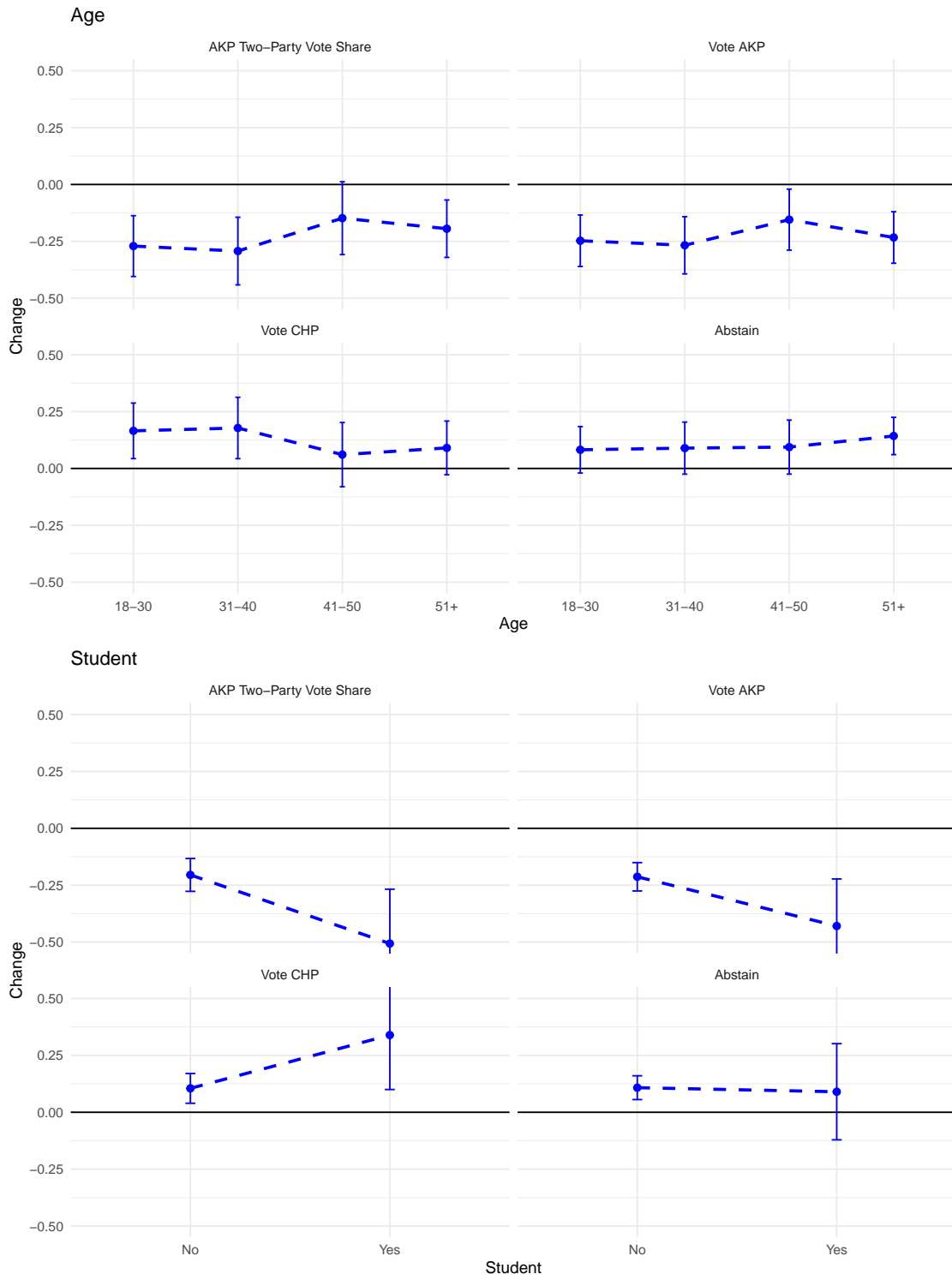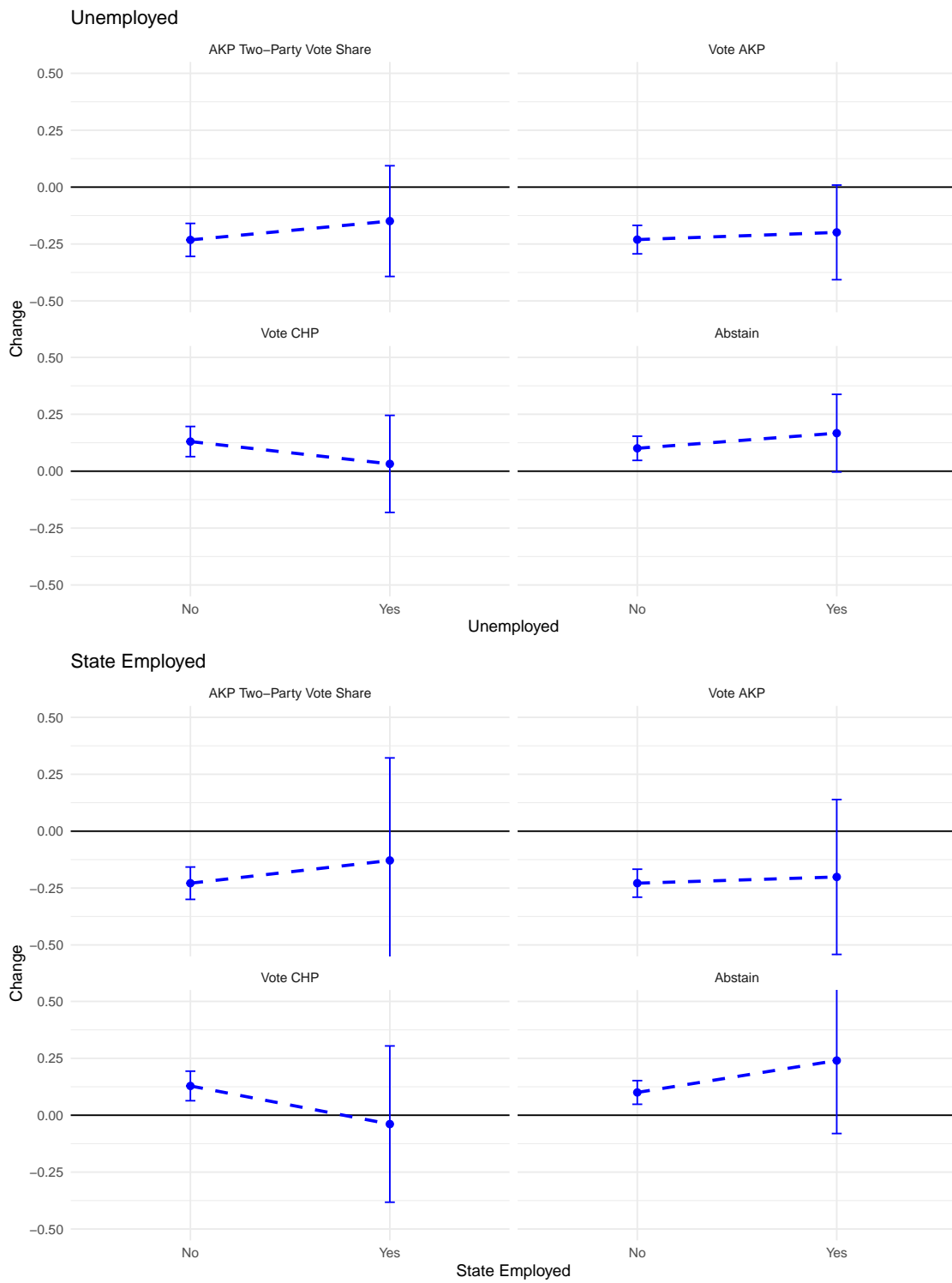Figure 6.13: Vote shares: Heterogeneity

Figure 6.14: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity

Figure 6.15: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity

Wealth

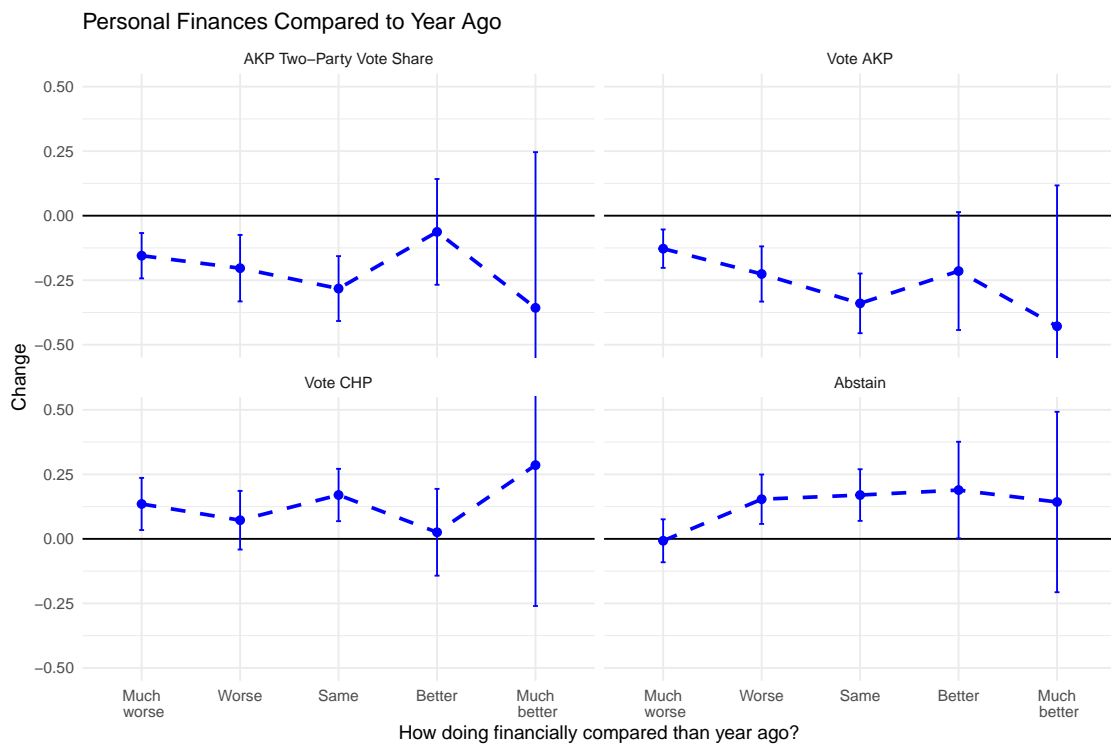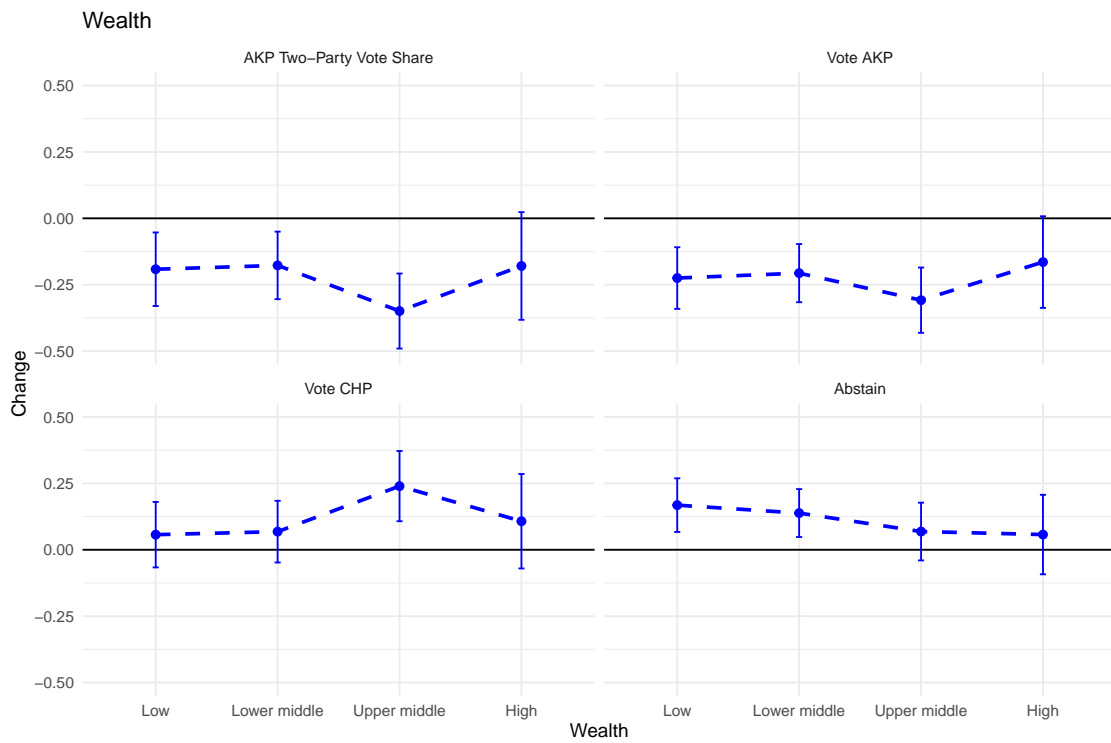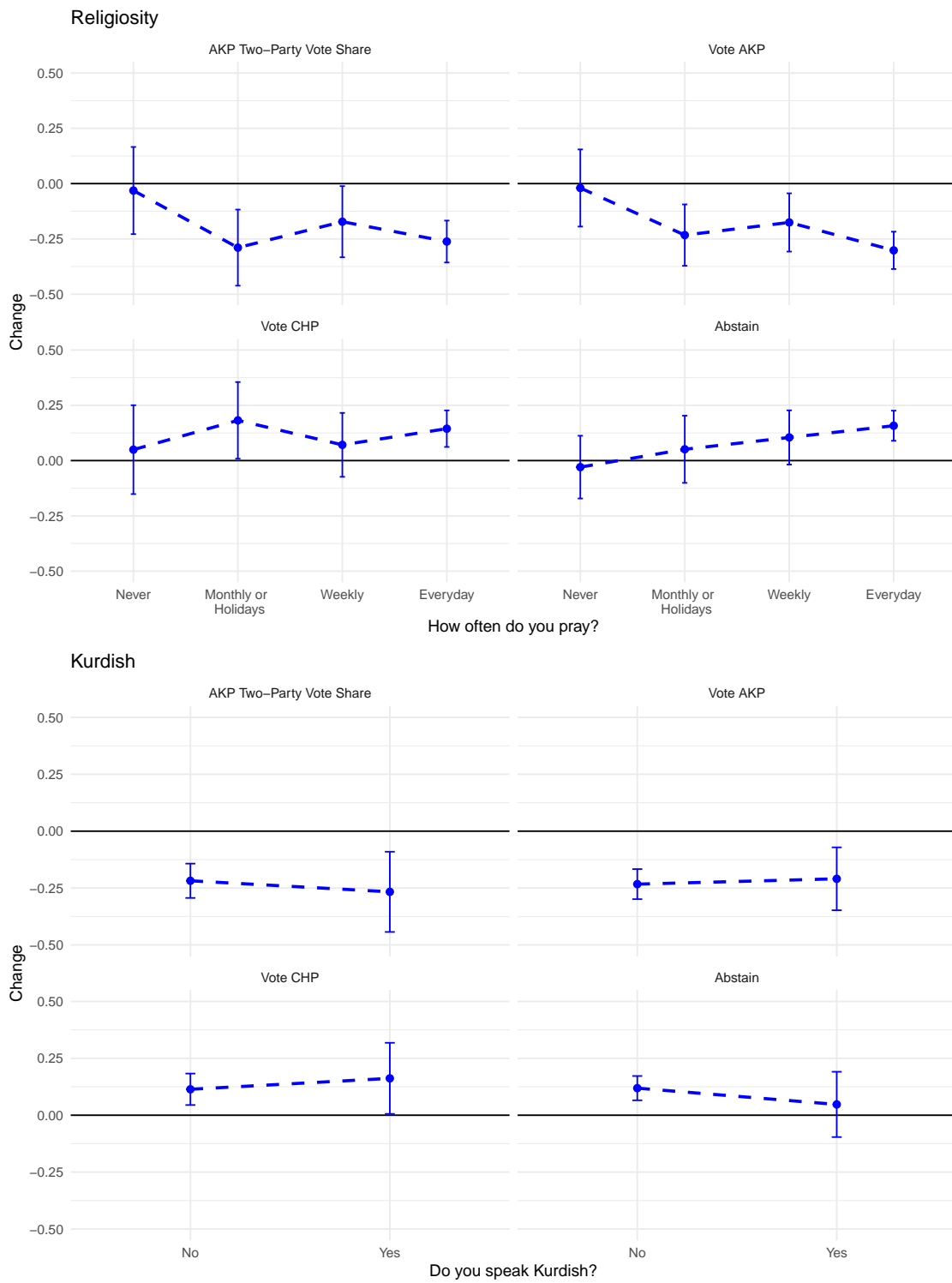Personal Finances Compared to Year Ago

Figure 6.16: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity

Figure 6.17: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity
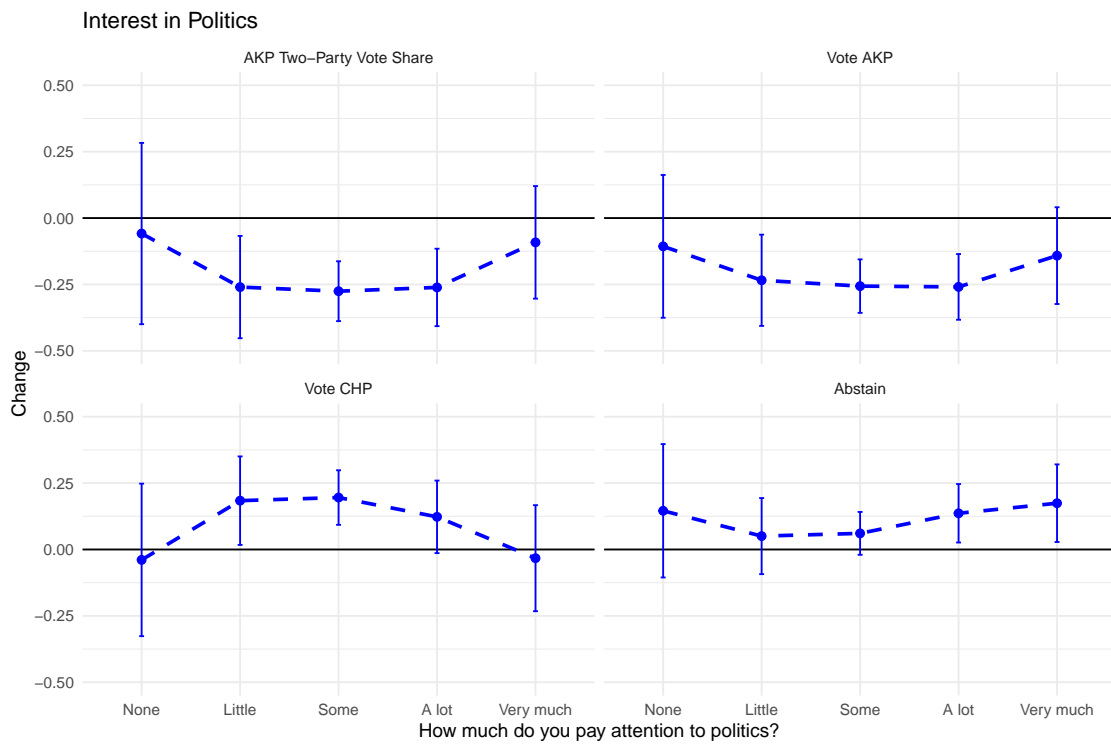
Figure 6.18: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity

	Vote AKP	Vote CHP	Abstain	AKP's Vote Share
AKP vs. CHP	62.78	17.79	19.43	77.92
	(55.78, 69.79)	(12.27, 32.31)	(13.92, 24.93)	(71.15, 84.69)
D⁻AKP vs. CHP	45.28	25.04	29.96	64.39
	(36.95, 53.60)	(17.0, 33.07)	(23.85, 35.52)	(53.41, 75.38)
Difference	-17.51	7.25	10.26	-13.53
	(-25.27, -9.74)	(-0.49, 14.98)	(3.25, 17.27)	(-23.49,-3.56)

Table 6.4: Candidate-Choice Experiments, 2018

6.3 The Candidate-Choice Experiment, 2018

The 2018 survey was administered to a nationally representative sample of Turkish adults between 7 May, 2018 and 14 June, 2018, prior to the 2018 Turkish general election (24 June 2018). The candidates were described by three political attributes – their political party, a policy position, and a democracy position – and three demographic attributes – age, gender, and profession. In terms of demographics, candidate 1 was described as a 53 years old male who worked as a lawyer for 15 years; candidate 2 was a 37 years old male who worked as a doctor for 7 years. In terms of their political attributes, candidate 1 was from the AKP and supported allowing head coverings in public schools; candidate 2 was from the CHP and supported banning head coverings in public schools. The only difference between the control and the treatment conditions was that in the treatment condition, candidate 1 said "we should appoint new judges in place of those who are prejudiced against the AKP."

Table 6.4 parallels Table 5 in the paper; it presents aggregate changes in the candidates' vote shares. Figure 6.19 parallels Figure 5 in the paper; it plots the changes in the fraction of respondents who voted for the AKP (top), the CHP (middle), and abstained (bottom) by the respondents' intended vote in the 2018 parliamentary election – the chief axis of political conflict at the time of this experiment.

Figures 6.20-6.23 plot heterogeneity in the effect of the AKP's candidate's undemocratic position on the AKP candidate's two-party vote share, AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention by the respondents' education, age, whether the respondent is a student, unemployment, income level, religiosity, and whether the respondent speaks Kurdish. Figures 6.24-6.27 plot heterogeneity in the effect of the AKP's candidate's undemocratic position on the shift in the AKP candidate's two-party vote share, AKP vote, CHP vote, and abstention by the same set of covariates.
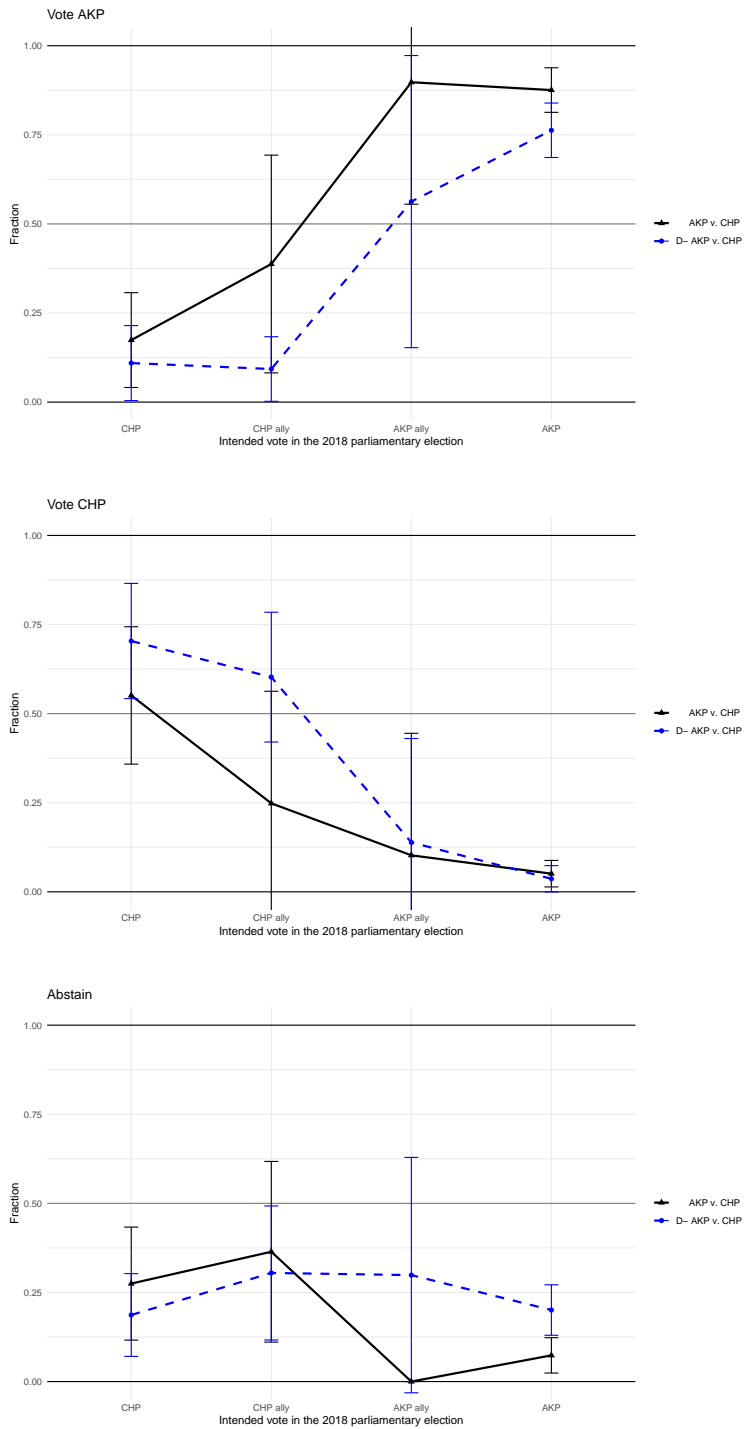
Figure 6.19: Candidate-Choice Experiments, 2018: Vote for the AKP, CHP, and abstention by the respondents' intended vote in the 2018 parliamentary election
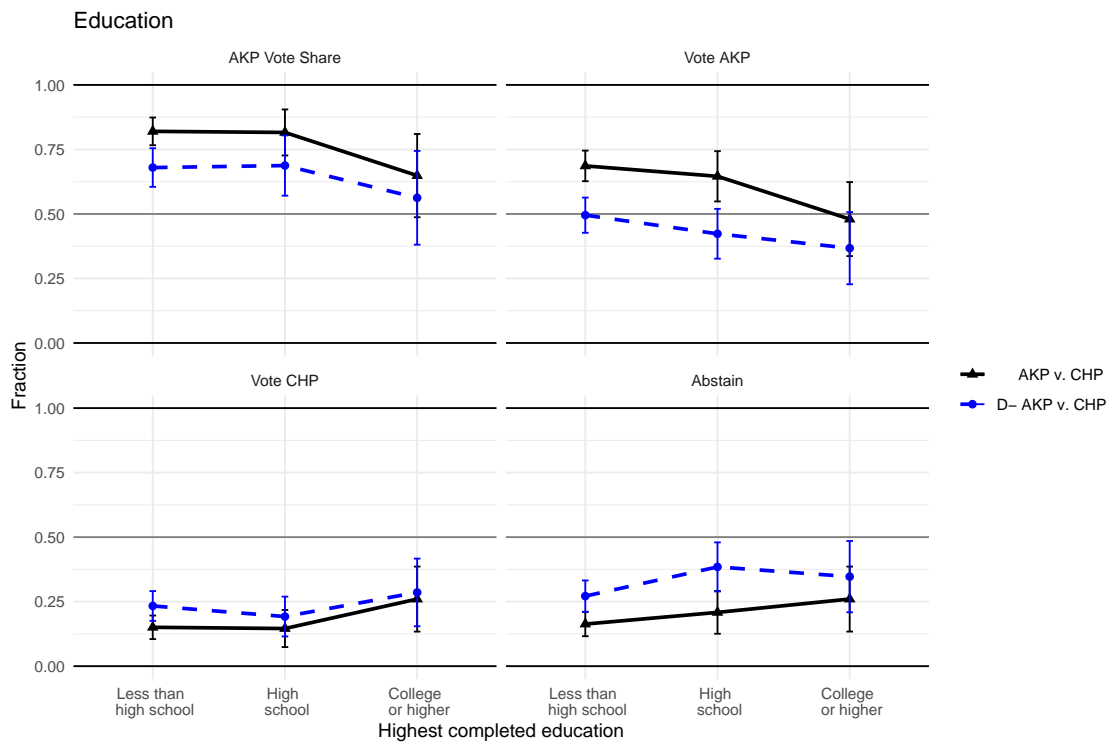
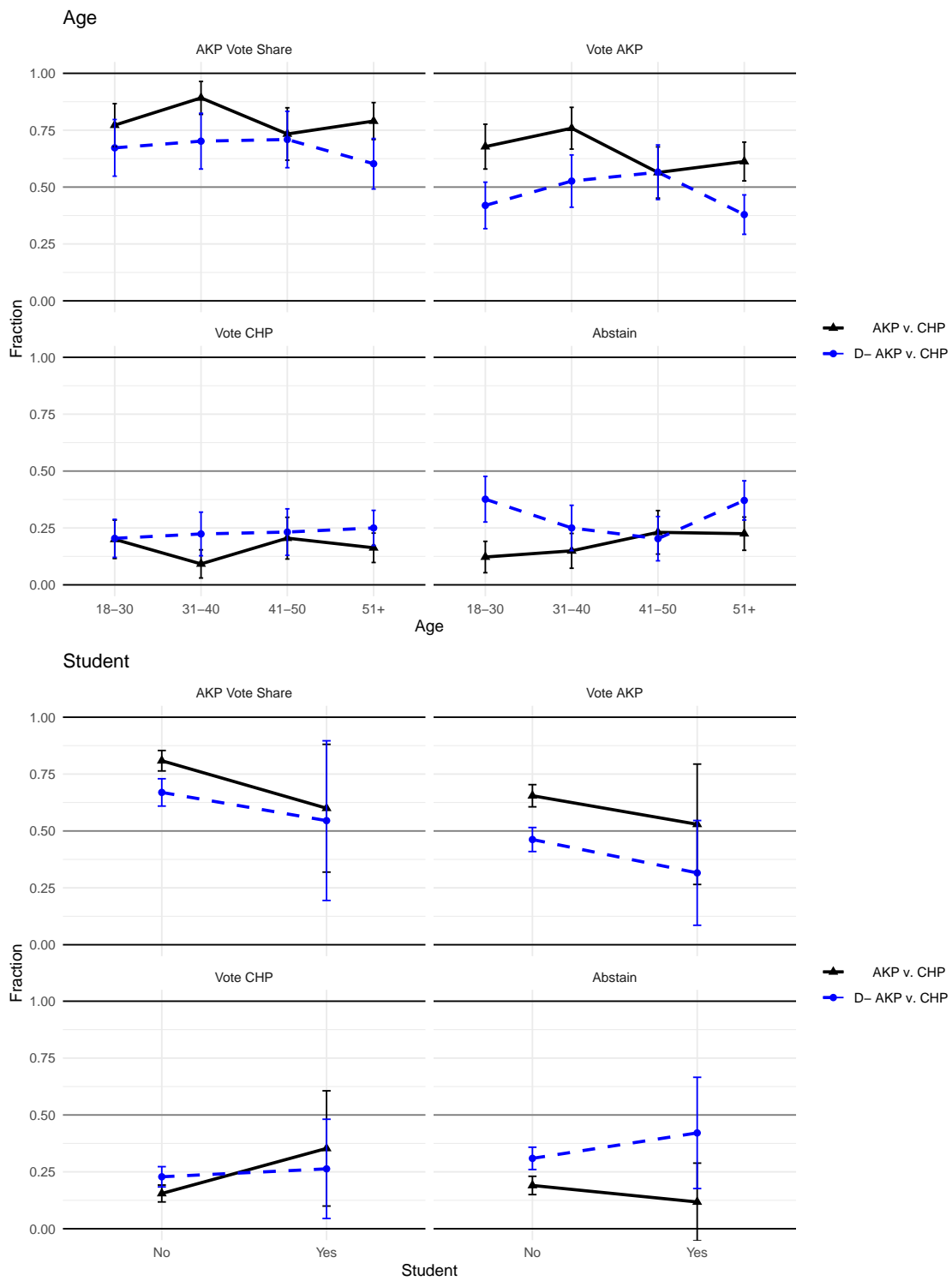Figure 6.20: Vote shares: Heterogeneity, 2018
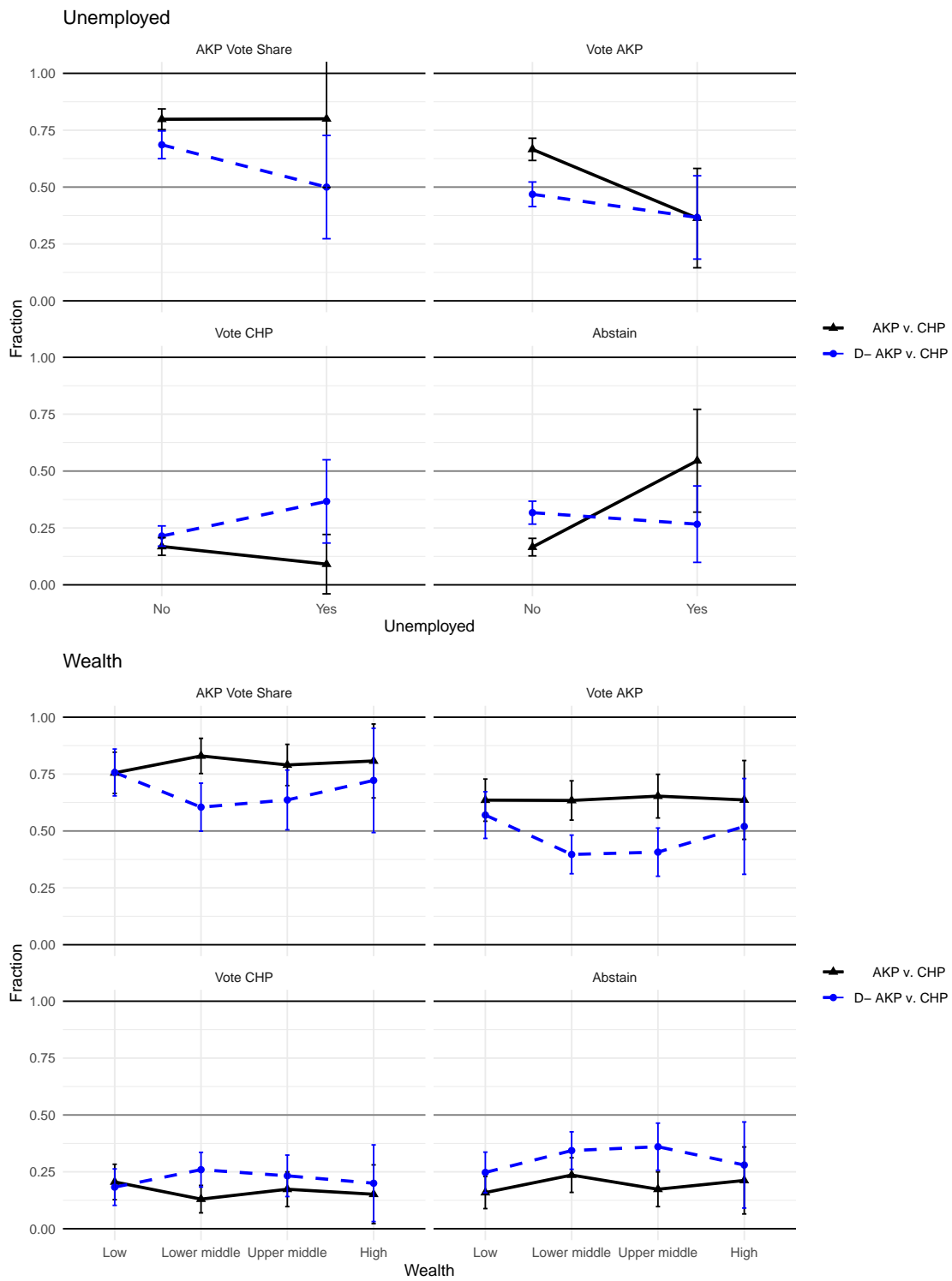
Figure 6.21: Vote shares: Heterogeneity, 2018

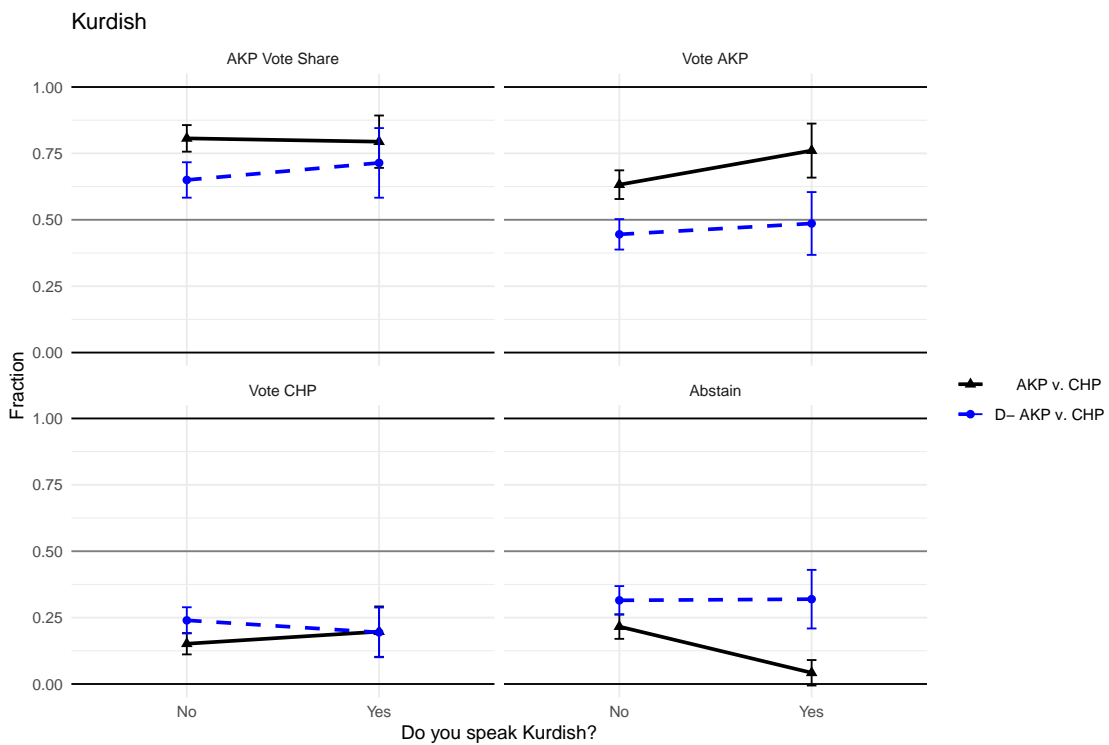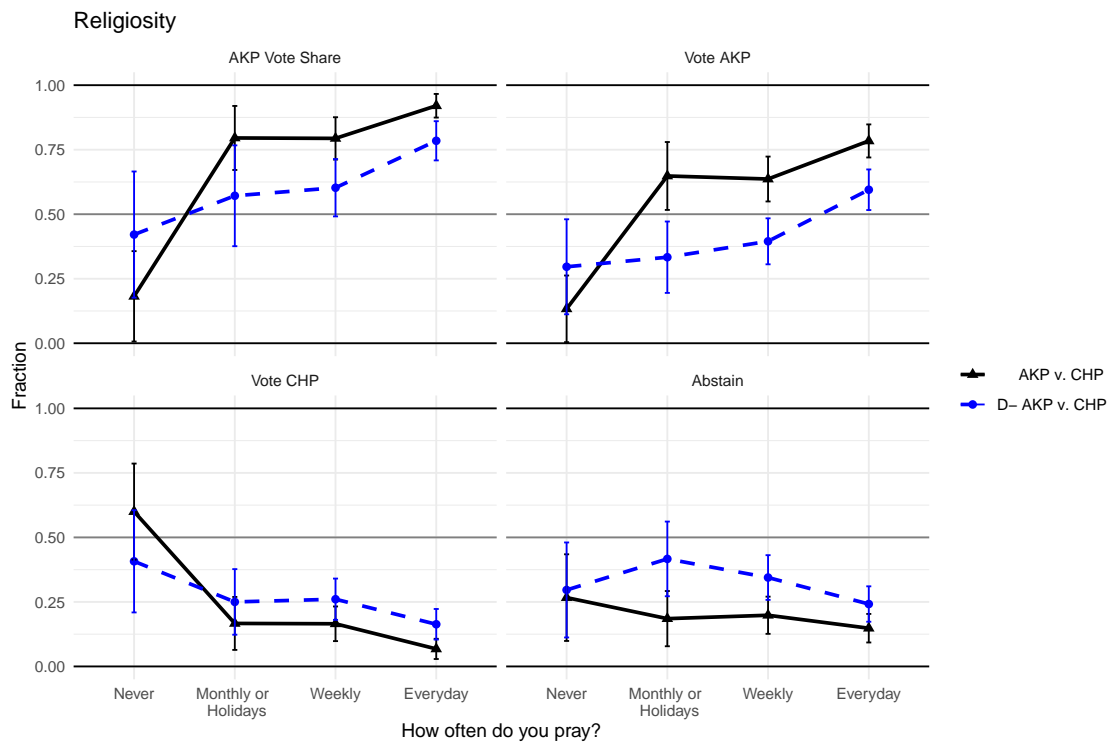Figure 6.22: Vote shares: Heterogeneity, 2018

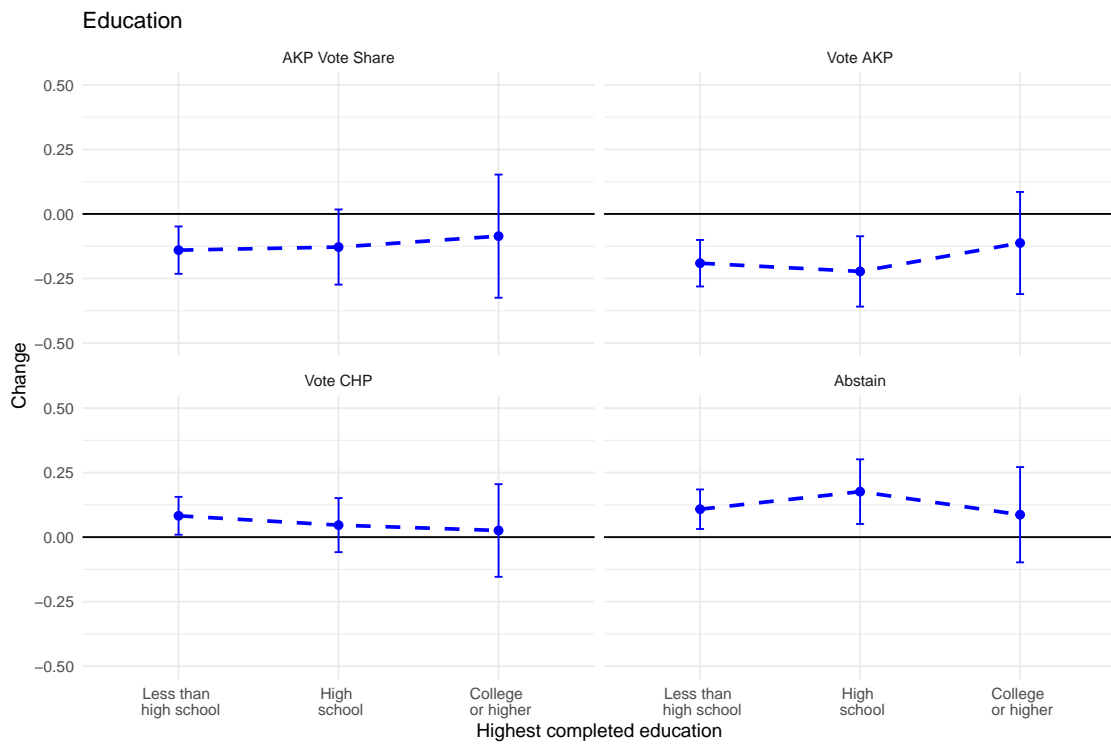Figure 6.23: Vote shares: Heterogeneity, 2018
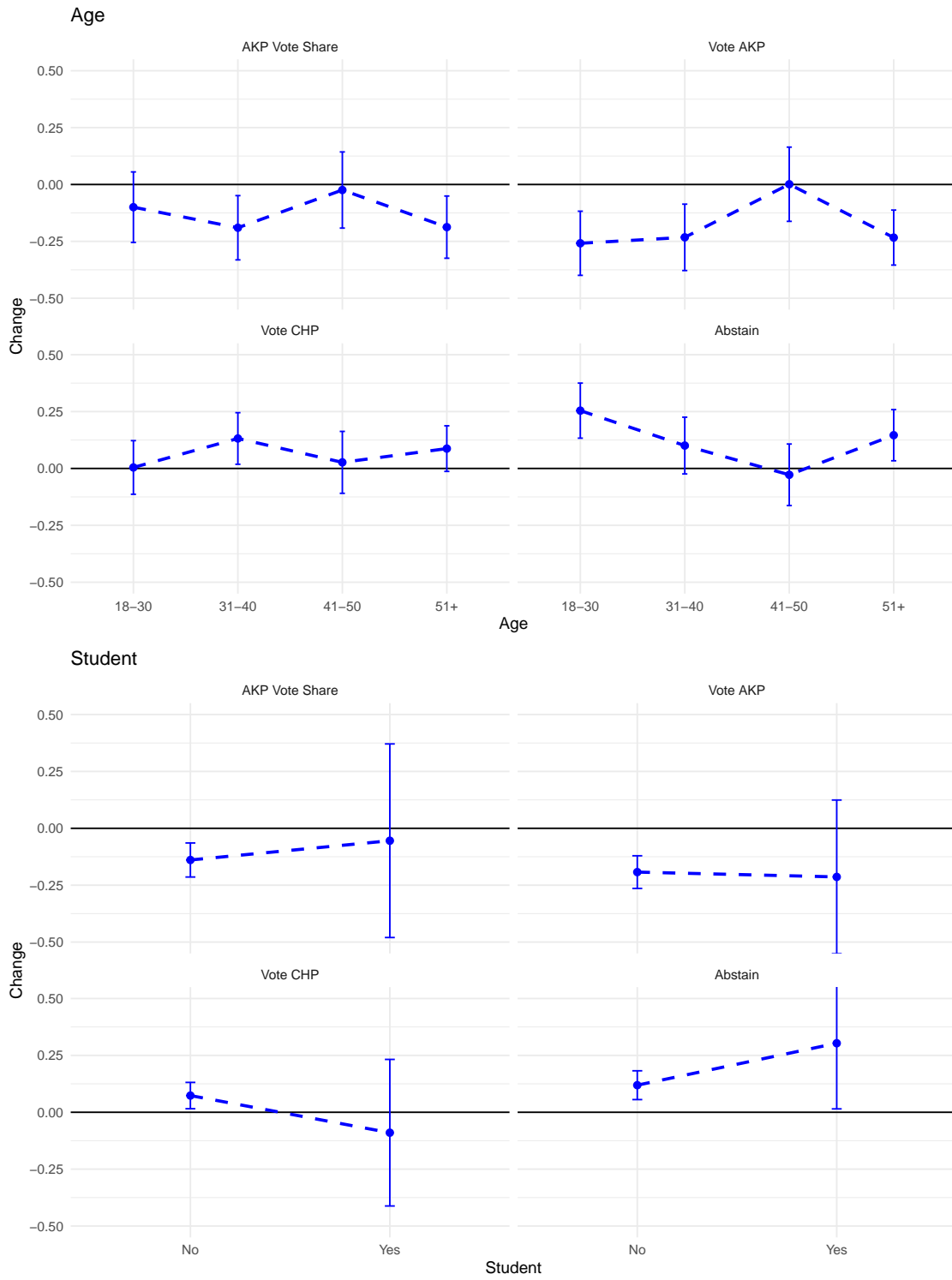
Figure 6.24: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity, 2018

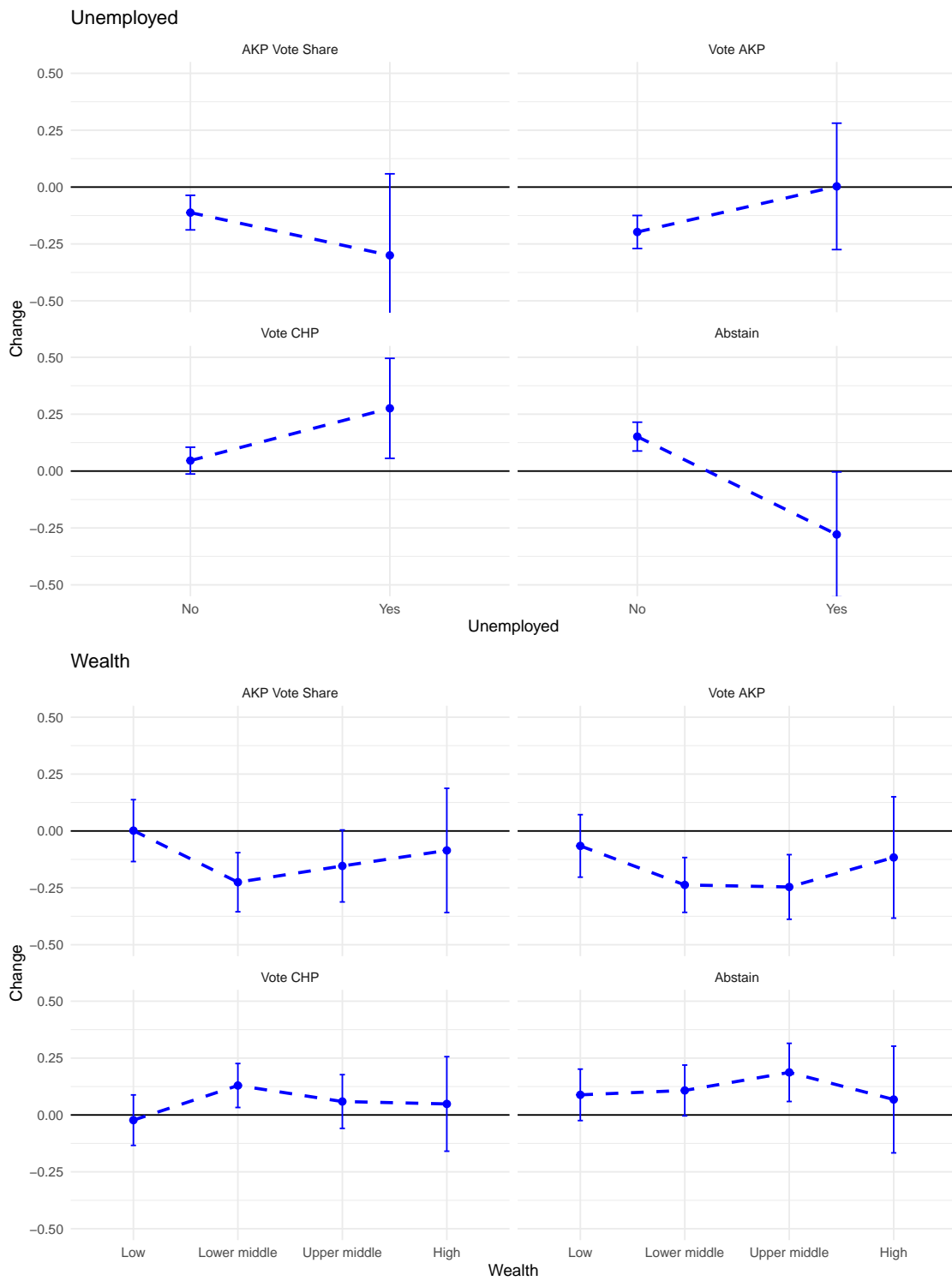Figure 6.25: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity, 2018
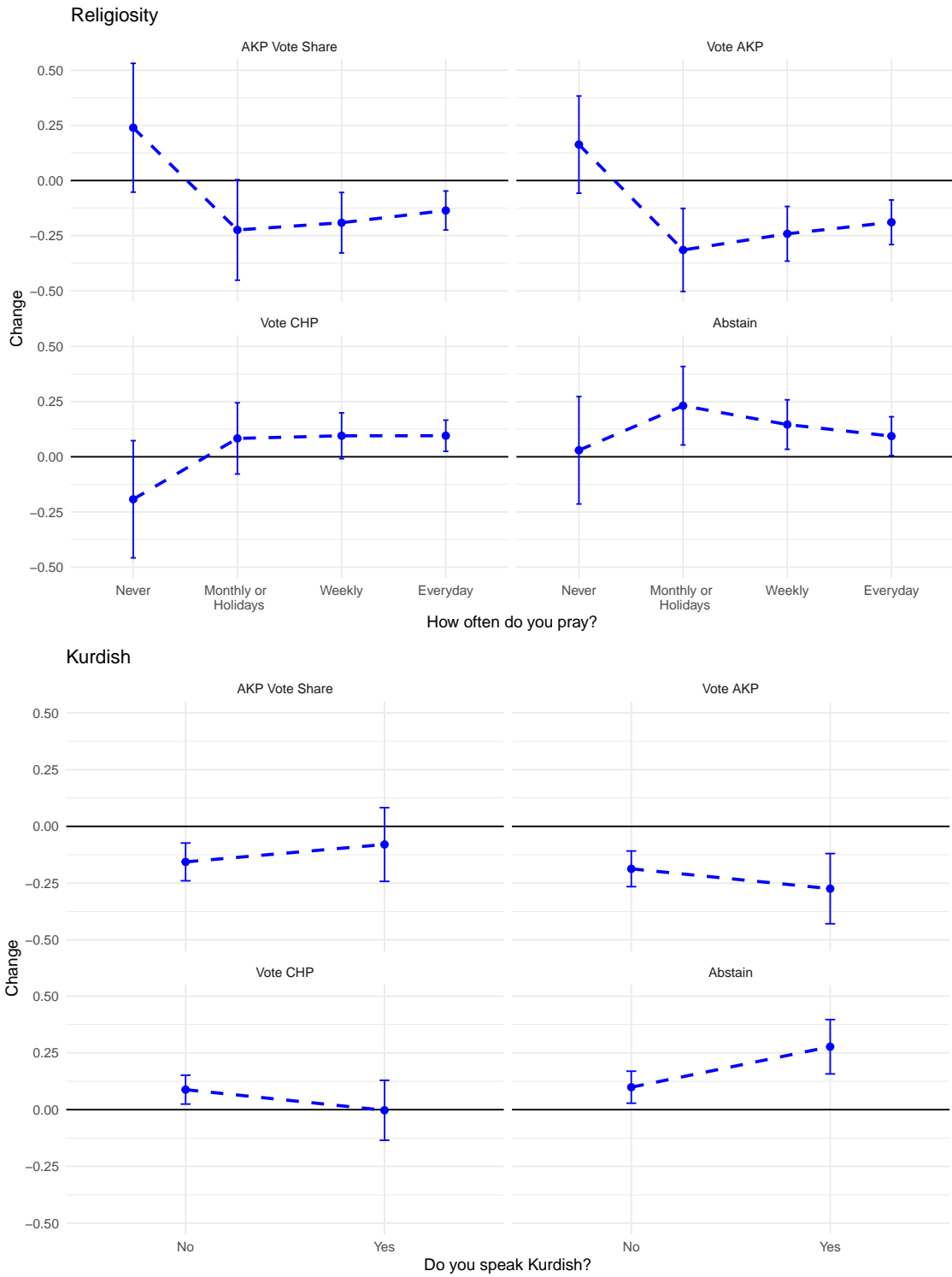
Figure 6.26: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity, 2018

Figure 6.27: Vote shifts: Heterogeneity, 2018

7 Alternative Explanations

Our causal interpretation of the difference between the outcomes of the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral elections is that it reflects the voters' punishment of the AKP's attempt to overturn its defeat in March rather than some other factor. An equivalent statement of this assumption emphasizing the counterfactual is this: had the AKP *not* attempted to overturn the election but a new poll was nonetheless conducted in June, the outcome of that election would be about the same as the outcome in March.[35]

Throughout the paper we have emphasized several features of the 2019 Istanbul mayoral race that support our causal interpretation: the same, large electorate chose between the same pair of major candidates within the span of fewer than three months, with no other major, politically consequential development during that period. The sections below present further qualitative and quantitative support for our causal interpretation.

7.1 A Qualitative Assessment of Plausible Alternative Explanations

In order identify plausible alternative explanations, we reviewed all articles covering the Istanbul mayoral election in the Turkish newspapers *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, and *Sözcü* and all articles covering Turkey in the daily *The Financial Times* and the weekly *The Economist* throughout the period March-July 2019. We chose Hürriyet, Sabah, and Sözcü because they consistently score among the top five Turkish newspapers in terms of their circulation and cover the spectrum of Turkish political attitudes. We chose *The Financial Times* and *The Economist* because i) they have a good coverage of Turkey; ii) they cover both political and economic news, with the latter being a major predictor of vote choice in Turkey;[36] and iii) they are international publications and therefore focus on the most important developments in Turkey.

Our survey of the three major Turkish newspaper identifies the following set of explanations for the difference between the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral election outcomes:

1. Most articles attributed the AKP's resounding defeat in the June re-run of the race to the AKP's questionable grounds for the re-run and its unwillingness to accept the March defeat. Note that some pro-government commentators list this as the primary

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[35]Our analysis in sections 3 and 4 in the main text mirrored this interpretation by examining exclusively within-neighborhood and within-respondent changes, with each unit's March outcomes serving as its own baseline. The effects we detected therefore cannot be attributed to any time-invariant, unit-level factors.

[36]See Aytaç 2020.

factor while insisting that the March election was flawed and a re-run justified. The following quotes illustrate the content and tone of these analyses:

(a) "The nation could not tolerate the cancelling of the elections. It saw it as an affront to its own will. It voiced its objection to the YSK verdict at the ballot box. And this time, it said Ekrem İmamoğlu not by of a thousandth, but by a margin of 8 percent."[37]

(b) "REASON ONE: They could not convince the public that "There are rightful and reasonable justifications for the re-run of the election." REASON TWO: By gifting Ekrem İmamoğlu, who had won with a very small margin, the mantle of a "victim", they helped him win with a much larger margin... REASON SIX: By putting forward the view that "Even if İmamoğlu wins he will be removed from office" out of nowhere... they made the gravest mistake. REASON SEVEN: By saying "Even if we do not win, we will have tried one more time"...they could not calculate what a loss would cost them."[38]

(c) "Our people have shown that they do not turn a blind eye to victimization. It has been revealed how important the language and tone of both sides during the campaign have been. The last-minute tactics have created a problem of "believability". These have been understood as "Everything for the election" and backfired."[39]

(d) "It has been determined and proved by all relevant committees that there had been serious improprieties in the March 31 elections, and the re-run decision has been based on that. Regardless, the Millet Alliance has worked the "victimization" excuse very well, and this has produced a convincing result on the electorate. At this point, blaming this side for embracing this argument and making it their strongest propaganda point despite its falsity is not useful."[40]

(e) "The real losers are those who wanted the election to be renewed rather than accept the results of the March 31 election. This way, Ekrem İmamoğlu has been put in the position of a victim and the Istanbul voter has been angered. The abstaining AK Party voters who some call "the disgruntled" did not change their attitude. This should cause deep internal discussion and searches within the AK

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[37]Abdulkadir Selvi, "Seçimden öte anlam taşıyor" ["It carries more meaning than an election"], *Hürriyet*, 24 June 2019.

[38]Ahmet Hakan, "AK Parti'nin seçim yenilgisinin 7 nedeni" ["7 reasons for AK Party's election defeat"], *Hürriyet*, 24 June 2019.

[39]Hande Firat, "İstanbul seçimlerine dair..." ["About the Istanbul elections"], *Hürriyet*, 25 June 2019.

[40]Sebnem Bursali, "23 Haziran diyor ki..." ["June 23 says..."], *Sabah*, 23 June 2019.

Party."[41]

(f) "The voter observes his loyalty to the principle that those who came to power with an election should be removed from power with an election, regardless of party differences. This indicates democratic maturity. He does not want suspicion to be aroused about the ballot box, the rules and institutions."[42]

(g) "'There are those who interpret CHP's alliance candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu's winning of the Istanbul Metropolitan Mayoralty as a triumph of our democracy...But this evaluation is exaggerated in Turkey, where a political atmosphere in which victories by "right-conservative" parties are considered a "problem" can still be felt...There must be those of you who say that YSK's decision to renew the March 31 elections played a part in this exaggerated evaluation. And it is correct. Because the strongest argument that accounts for the 800 thousand vote difference between the two elections is that the voters did not buy the renewal of the elections...Is not the fact that the backlash shaped by the perception this legal verdict was unjust was reflected on the administration on June 23 the clearest evidence that an anti-democratic mechanism was not at work?"[43]

(h) "The lessons that are drawn from this result will decide the fate of the 2023 general elections. . . Turkey has shown the strength of its democracy. Our country solved its political competition by going to the polls once again. Despite the polemics throughout the campaign two positive languages and promises competed. On the ruling party there was election fatigue, and, on the opposition, there was the feeling of victimization from the cancellation of March 31 elections...Playing the "My mandate was taken from me" argument well and positioning himself above the parties allowed [Ekrem İmamoğlu] to reach the floating votes on the center right."[44]

(i) "An explosion of anger against Erdoğan came out of the ballot box...We were about to lose hope that those who came with an election would go with an election. They were bending and twisting democracy...A white revolution has occurred. The religionist line has lost. Democracy has won. The Republic has returned to fore."[45]

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[41]Mehmet Barlas, "Her seçimin bir galibi bir de bu yolda galip sayılan mağlubu vardır" ["Every election has one winner and one loser that is considered a winner for the cause"], *Sabah*, 25 June 2019.

[42]Okan Muderrisoglu,, "2023'e odaklanmak ama nasıl?" ["Focusing on 2023 but how?"], *Sabah*, 25 June 2019.

[43]Melih Altinok, "Keşke başarılı olsa..." ["I wish he would succeed..."], *Sabah*, 26 June 2019.

[44]Burhanettin Duran, "23 Haziran dersleri" ["June 23 lessons..."], *Sabah*, 25 June 2019.

[45]Necati Dogru, "Umut kazandı" ["Hope won!"], *Sözcü*, 24 June 2019.

(j) "I was certain that Ekrem İmamoğlu, who had been wronged would win the Istanbul election, but honestly I did not expect such a margin! This is an event that will never be forgotten in the history of democracy...it is the people's conscience, its sense of justice. The answer of the voter to the unfairness, to the cancelling of a mandate! In the end the winner is Turkey, it is democracy."[46]

2. Several articles attributed the AKP's June defeat to İmamoğlu's inclusive, non-confrontational approach during the campaign, echoing Wuthrich and Ingleby's analysis of the opposition's strategy:[47]

(a) "Everything aside, İmamoğlu winning so many votes in Istanbul is worthy of special consideration. How did he pull it off? He pulled it off, sir, because he was not like a CHP politician. Indeed, he distanced himself from all factors that would have been reminiscent of CHP as best as he could."[48]

(b) "In Fatih, a woman I know who worked as a ballot box official sent me a curious text on Sunday night: "I worked at a ballot box where the voters included fully-veiled women. İmamoğlu came out on top in that box." This election broke down the "identity barriers" that once seemed unbreakable in Istanbul.[49]

(c) "Though the Saadet Party had gained 224 thousand votes in the district municipal councils on March 31, its metropolitan mayoral candidate Necdet Gokcinar had only gotten 103 thousand votes... Moreover, last Sunday Gokcinar's votes declined from 103 thousand to 47 thousand. In any event, we can infer that three quarters of the 200 thousand potential SP voters have turned to candidates outside of the party. It would not be wrong to suggest that the SP base has favored İmamoğlu more than Yildirim due to the negative campaign they were subjected to by AK Party... In conclusion, we can say that Ekrem İmamoğlu's demonstration of the ability to win votes from every section has played a decisive role in his great success.[50]

(d) "The winner of the elections on Sunday is of course İmamoğlu. Furthermore, he has won with a margin that lets us forget the controversial result in March 31. İmamoğlu entered this election as the CHP candidate. But his words were

[46]Rahmi Turan, "Toplumun vicdanı" ["The people's conscience"], *Sözcü*, 24 June 2019.
[47]Wuthrich and Ingleby 2020.
[48]Rauf Tamer, "Özetlersek" ["If we summarize"], *Hürriyet*, 24 June 2019.
[49]Ertugrul Ozkok, "Fatih'i, Üsküdar'ı, Eyüp'ü kaybeden nereyi kaybeder" ["Who loses Fatih, Uskudar and Eyup would lose where else"], *Hürriyet*, 25 June 2019.
[50]Sedat Ergin, "İstanbul seçiminin oy dinamikleri" ["The voting dynamics of the Istanbul Election"], *Hürriyet*, 26 June 2019.

different than those of conventional CHP politicians. He offered swimming pools segregated by gender, announced that alcohol will not be served at social facilities [run by the municipality]. Thus, it was İmamoğlu's, rather than CHP's victory."[51]

3. A few articles attributed the AKP's June defeat to the worsening economic conditions:

   (a) "When I speak to some AK Party supporters, I see this evaluation being made. "This result is a result of the crisis in the economy." It is true to an extent. Indeed, the Metropol study shows this clearly. The two subjects that the people consider to be a problem today are 1-The economy: 48.6 percent 2-Unemployment: 15.6 percent...But beware...while 61.6 percent said "the economy" when the same question was asked last April, this figure declined in June...Relatedly, the complaint about unemployment has risen only 2 points."[52] (*Note the correspondence between this assessment and our quantitative analysis of the association between economic indicators and support for the AKP in the next subsection.*)

4. A small number of articles blamed the AKP for two incidents that were seen as politically backfiring.

   The first set concerned what many saw as the government's last-ditch effort to attract the Kurdish vote in Istanbul. On June 21, the PKK's imprisoned leader Abdullah Öcalan was allowed to release a letter urging Kurds to maintain neutrality in the Istanbul election. His brother, Osman Öcalan, also appeared on the state-run TV channel TRT days before the election and spoke out against İmamoğlu. These interventions were meant to undercut the Kurdish opposition party HDP that had supported İmamoğlu, but do note appear to have had a discernible effect on the Kurdish vote. This was interpreted as a signal that Öcalan's sway on the Kurdish voters had been eroded in favor of the HDP, despite the cult of personality surrounding him as the leader of the Kurdish separatist insurgency.[53]

   The second incident occurred just before the June election when, on a trip to the Black Sea region, İmamoğlu was barred from using the VIP section of the Ordu Airport under orders from the province's centrally appointed governor. Footage of İmamoğlu reportedly insulting the governor after the incident emerged, and the governor threatened legal action. President Erdoğan intervened in the controversy and stated that

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[51]Mehmet Barlas, "Her seçimin bir galibi bir de bu yolda galip sayılan mağlubu vardır" ["Every election has one winner and one loser that is considered a winner for the cause"], *Sabah*, 25 June 2019.

[52]Ertugrul Ozkok, "Alttaki 3 soruya 4 yıl cevap verecek" ["The three questions below will be answered by the next four years"], *Hürriyet*, 26 June 2019.

[53]Ayşe Sayin, "Öcalan's 'neutral line' message lead to a split in HDP or will Kurdish voters change their attitude?", *BBC News Turkey*, 21 June 2019.

the courts' could "block İmamoğlu". While this claim was legally baseless, many interpreted it as a threat that Erdoğan would find an excuse to depose İmamoğlu if he were to win a second time.[54]

In total, *The Financial Times* and *The Economist* published, respectively, 31 and 8 articles focusing on Turkey. We classified each by its main topic:

1. 15 articles covered political developments, especially the aftermath of the March local elections and the controversy around the re-run of the Istanbul race. A small number also included a few sentences about the economic roots (see below) of AKP's poor performance in the March election.

2. 13 articles focused on the Turkish economy, examining the structural changes needed in light of the 2018 currency crisis (11 articles) or US steel tariffs against Turkey (2 articles).

3. 5 articles covered both political developments and the economy. These articles almost universally identified the 2018 currency crisis and its reverberations (negative economic growth, inflation, and an increase in unemployment) as the main cause of the AKP's poor performance in the March 2019 local election.

4. 5 articles focused on foreign policy, especially the decision by Turkey to purchase a Russian missile defense system and the objections to it by the United States.

In sum, based on the journalistic coverage reviewed above, most articles published in the immediate aftermath of the June poll are consistent with our arguments and attributed the outcome to the voters' outrage with the AKP's attempt to overturn its March defeat.

The most plausible alternative explanation for the difference between the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral election outcomes is an economic downturn. Crucially, almost all articles above invoke economic factors when explaining the AKP's poor performance in the March 2019 nationwide local election, not when anticipating or explaining the outcome of the June 2019 Istanbul re-run. Nonetheless, given the prominence of economic factors in journalistic coverage and research on economic voting in Turkey,[55] we begin by examining the potential role of the economy in our assessment of alternative explanations for the difference between the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral elections.

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[54] "Erdoğan: Yargı kararı İmamoğlu'nun önünü kesebilir" ["Erdoğan: Judicial decision may block İmamoğlu"], https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/politika/2019/06/19/erdogandan-ahmet-kaya-vaadi-mezari-getiririz, 21 June 2019.
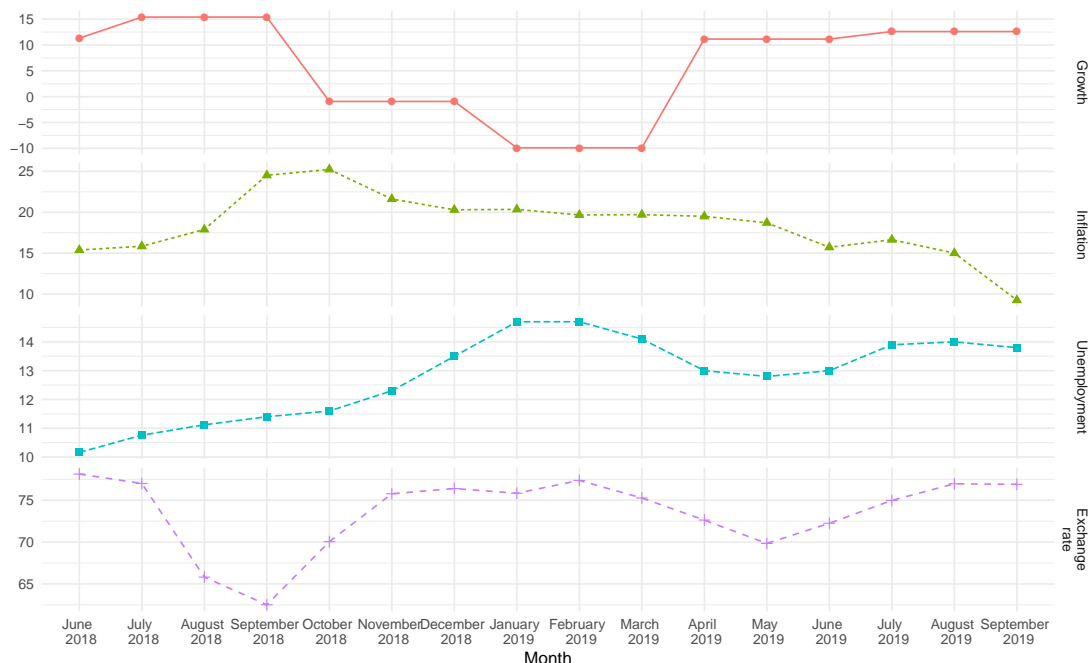
[55] See Aytaç 2020.

Figure 7.28: Economic indicators: June 2018-September 2019

7.2 Alternative I: Was is the Economy?

Based on our qualitative assessment of plausible alternative explanations, we now examine whether the *change* between the outcome of the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral polls reflects not voters' punishment of the AKP's attempt to overturn its defeat in March but rather a continuing economic downturn.

We focus on four economic indicators, each of which has figured prominently in reports about Turkey's economy between the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral elections: the Turkish lira exchange rate (CPI based real effective exchange rate, monthly), GDP growth (by-income-method at current prices, quarterly), unemployment rate (monthly), and inflation (CPI based year-on-year, monthly).[56]

Table 7.5 lists summary statistics for the four economic indicators; Figure 7.28 plots the temporal trends in these indicators for the period June 2018 to September 2019. Consistent with our discussion of the 2018 currency crisis in the preceding section, most indicators begin to worsen in late summer and fall 2018 with a partial recovery by winter and spring 2019. For the period April-May 2019, which is our main interest, one indicator gets somewhat worse (the exchange rate) while the rest improves relative to the period immediately prior to March 2019 (GDP growth, unemployment, inflation). By June 2019, all indicators with

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[56]These were obtained from the websites of the Turkish Statistical Institute and the Turkish Central Bank.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	25th centile	75th centile	Max
Exchange rate	16	73.61	4.50	62.51	71.70	76.92	78.13
Growth	16	6.02	9.68	-9.89	-0.93	12.60	15.40
Inflation	16	18.46	3.90	9.26	15.82	20.31	25.24
Unemployment	16	12.80	1.43	10.16	11.55	13.93	14.70

Table 7.5: Economic indicators: Descriptive statistics

the exception of the exchange rate have improved relative to their levels at the time of the 2018 currency crisis and its immediate aftermath (fall-winter 2018).

In order to assess the potential impact of these economic indicators on the difference between the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral election outcome, we regress individual-level, survey measured political preferences for the AKP-MHP and CHP-İYİ coalitions on a dummy for Istanbul and the four economic indicators, both separately and jointly. Political preferences are based on the question "Which party would you vote for if a parliamentary election were held today?" and are available for 12 out of the 16 months throughout this period for all of Turkey and for an additional month, June 2019, for Istanbul only.

Table 7.6 summarizes the association between the four economic indicators and voter support for the AKP-MHP and CHP-İYİ coalitions. The latter is coded as 1 if the respondent indicated support for either the AKP or MHP, -1 if she supported the CHP or İYİ, and 0 if she was undecided or said she would abstain.[57] We see that, throughout, support for the AKP-MHP coalition is smaller in Istanbul than the rest of Turkey and the only significant economic predictors of support for the AKP-MHP coalition are unemployment and inflation, although only the former remains significant in a model with all indicators. Even when significant, the sign on the coefficient for inflation is in the wrong direction – implying that higher inflation helps the incumbent AKP-MHP coalition. This contradicts established models of economic voting and historical evidence about the relationship between inflation and support for the incumbent AKP.[58]

We therefore focus on unemployment as a the most plausible alternative economic explanation for the difference between the outcome of the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral polls. Consistent with past research, the negative sign on the coefficient for unemployment implies that an increase in unemployment decreases support for the incumbent AKP-MHP coalition. Crucially however, because unemployment actually declined from 14.1% to 13%

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[57]The conclusions of this analysis do not change under alternative formulations of the dependent variable (e.g. a separate dummy for each coalition) or estimation approaches (the binary or ordered logit instead of OLS).

[58]Aytaç 2020.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	0.295**	0.211***	0.496***	0.043	0.150
	(0.132)	(0.022)	(0.071)	(0.048)	(0.499)
Istanbul	−0.095**	−0.091**	−0.092**	−0.084*	−0.075*
	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.042)
Exchange rate	−0.001				0.004
	(0.002)				(0.004)
Growth		−0.001*			−0.002
		(0.001)			(0.002)
Unemployment			−0.023***		−0.031***
			(0.005)		(0.009)
Inflation				0.009***	0.008
				(0.002)	(0.005)
N observations	34599	34599	34599	34599	34599
N clusters	254	254	254	254	254

$^{***}p < 0.01;\ ^{**}p < 0.05;\ ^{*}p < 0.1$

Table 7.6: Economic indicators and support for the AKP-MHP versus the CHP-İYİ coalitions (standard errors clustered at the district level)

between March and June 2019, our estimates imply that support for the AKP-MHP coalition should have increased rather than decreased during this period. Specifically, the 1.1% improvement in the unemployment rate predicts a 2.51 unit improvement in our measure of the AKP-MHP coalition's support in Istanbul.[59] By contrast, the actual shift we observe in the data is a 10.49 decline. That is, the most plausible economic voting model predicts a shift in the AKP-MHP coalition's vote share between March and June 2019 in a direction opposite to the one that we observe in the data.

These estimates allow us to benchmark the magnitude of an economic downturn that would result in a decrease in support for the incumbent AKP-MHP coalition that we observe between March and June 2019. Within the three-month period, unemployment would have to increase by 4.6% from 14.1% to 19.7%. A shift of this magnitude has not occurred during the AKP's 17 years in power. The three closest periods are the 2008-09 financial crisis, when unemployment increased within a three-month period by 3.8% (from 10.3% to 14.1%) and 3.2% (from 11.6% to 14.8%) between October/November 2008 and January/February 2009, and the 2018 currency crisis when unemployment increased by 3.1% from 11.6% to 14.7% between October 2018 and January 2019.

In sum, of the four economic indicators, only unemployment predicts support for the AKP-MHP coalition during this period in a manner that is both statistically significant and

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[59]The 95% confidence interval for this prediction is $(2.37, 2.65)$.

consistent with established models of economic voting. However, because unemployment actually declined between March and June 2019, our estimates imply that support for the AKP-MHP coalition should have increased rather than decreased during this period. That is, the most plausible economic voting model predicts a shift in the AKP candidate's vote share in a direction that is *opposite* to the one that occurred.

7.3   Alternative II: A Heightened Perception of Pivotality?

A second alternative explanatory factor that we consider is a heightened perception of pivotality: the possibility that the key change between March and June 2019 was an increase voters' perception of their electoral pivotality. In the spirit of classic instrumental models of turnout,[60] the close March election outcome may have incentivized greater turnout in the June election because voters became more aware of their potential to cast a decisive vote.

This alternative explanation for the difference between the outcome of the March and June 2019 Istanbul polls is implausible for a number of reasons:

1. Information available before the March election in the form of widely publicized public opinion surveys correspondents to the actual results. That is, publicly available information indicated that the election was going to be a close one, which is what occurred. We compared 13 public opinion surveys conducted in Istanbul prior to the March election with samples ranging from 2,161 to 16,500 respondents.[61] Six of these surveys were conducted in March (i.e. within a month before the election) and range from a 0.9% margin of victory for the AKP to 1.6% margin of victory for the CHP with a margin of error ranging from 0.76% to 2.09%; they average to a 0.33% margin of victory for the CHP. The actual March result was a CHP victory by a 0.16% margin. In fact, the actual March result lies within the margin of error of all five of the six March polls for which their sample size is available. In sum, based on a range of publicly available polls, the CHP candidate's narrow March victory should have not been a surprise and, in turn, is unlikely to have substantially changed voters' perception of their pivotality.

2. If the close March election outcome indeed increased voters' perception of their own pivotality, then we would expect an overall increase in turnout with a symmetrical behavior among the supporters of the two candidates (again, following the predictions of the classic, pivotality-based models of turnout). As we discuss in the main text, this was not the case. Rather, consistent with the arguments we advanced, the change in

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[60]Riker and Ordeshook 1968.

[61]For a list, see for instance the Wikipedia page "Opinion polling for the 2019 Turkish local elections".

turnout between March and June was large and positive in March CHP strongholds and decreasing in March AKP vote share.[62]

Figure 7.29 provides further evidence that this pattern obtains regardless of the measure of turnout one employs. The left column plots neighborhood-level turnout in March and June 2019; the right column plots turnout change between June and March 2019 (right). The horizontal axis plots the AKP's neighborhood-level two-party vote share in the March 2019. The top row defines turnout as the number of valid votes cast as a share of registered voters – the standard measure of turnout in political science. The middle row defines turnout as the number of all votes cast as a share of registered voters, including those that were invalid (e.g. spoiled ballots) – this is the measure of turnout employed by Turkish authorities. The bottom row defines turnout as the combined vote for the two major candidates as a share of registered voters (i.e. any vote other than for the AKP or CHP candidates counts as abstention). This is a metric of turnout that we employ in the paper.

3. Finally, estimates presented in the main text imply that a significant share of changes in individual-electoral behavior were due to vote-switching (rather than due to shifts in turnout). Arguments based on pivotality alone fail to account for vote-switching.

## 7.4 Counterfactual Spatial and Temporal Trends

Our analysis above fails to find support for economic factors or a change in voters' perception of pivotality as plausible alternative explanations for the difference between the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral election outcomes. Could some other factor, one that our qualitative assessment of plausible alternative explanations missed, account for that difference?

A key counterfactual implication of our causal interpretation of the 2019 Istanbul mayoral race is this: had the AKP *not* attempted to overturn the election but a new poll was nonetheless conducted in June, the outcome of that election would be the same as in March – save for the randomness inherent in elections. Survey data on political preferences that disaggregate Istanbul and the rest of Turkey for the period immediately before, between, and after the March and June Istanbul mayoral elections allow us to probe the soundness of our causal interpretation by examining two of its implications, one temporal and one spatial. Specifically, if the AKP's June defeat indeed reflects voters' punishment of its attempt to
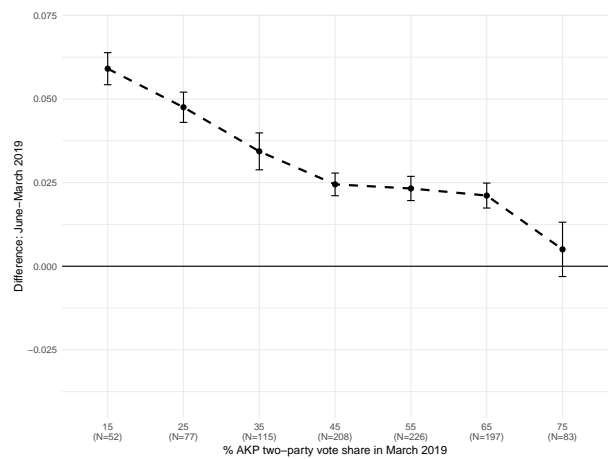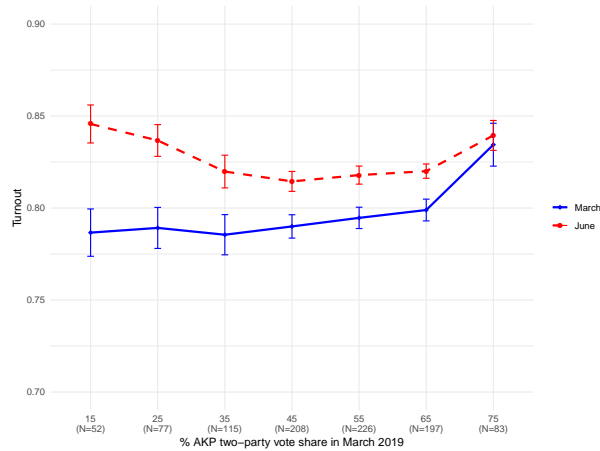
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[62]The city-wide March turnout was 83.94%, with higher rates in AKP strongholds; June turnout was 84.51%, with somewhat higher rates in CHP strongholds.
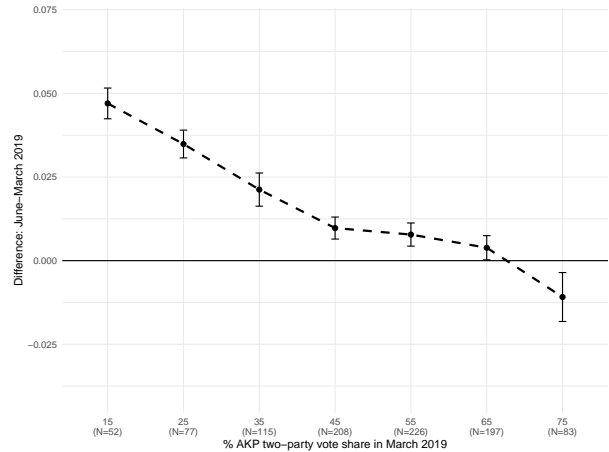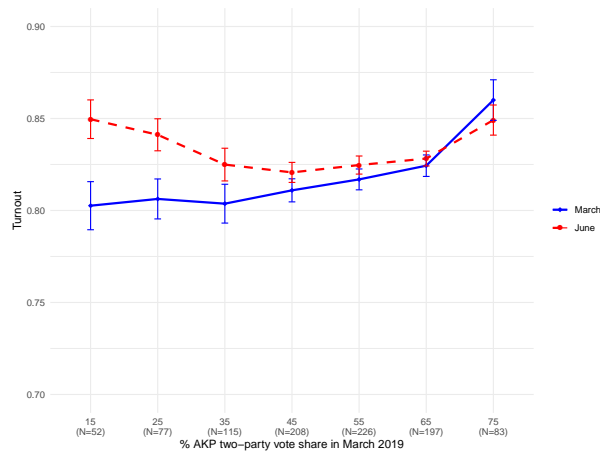
(a) Turnout: valid votes as a share of registered voters
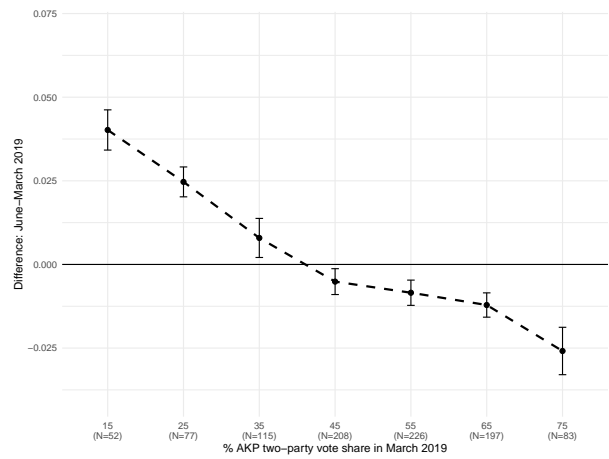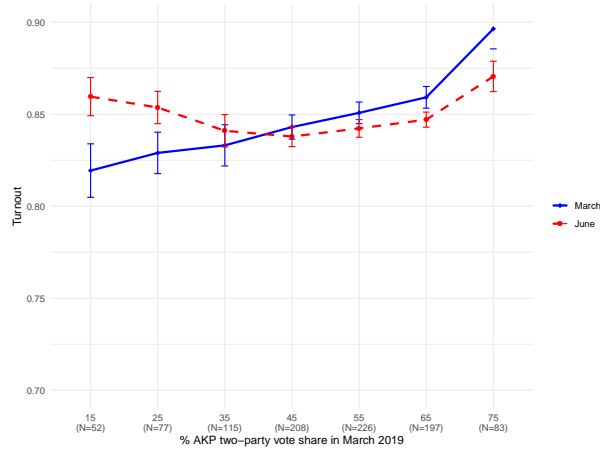
(b) Turnout: all votes as a share of registered voters

(c) Turnout: votes for the two major candidates as a share of registered voters

Figure 7.29: Neighborhood-level turnout in March and June 2019 (left) and turnout change between June and March 2019 (right) for three measures of turnout
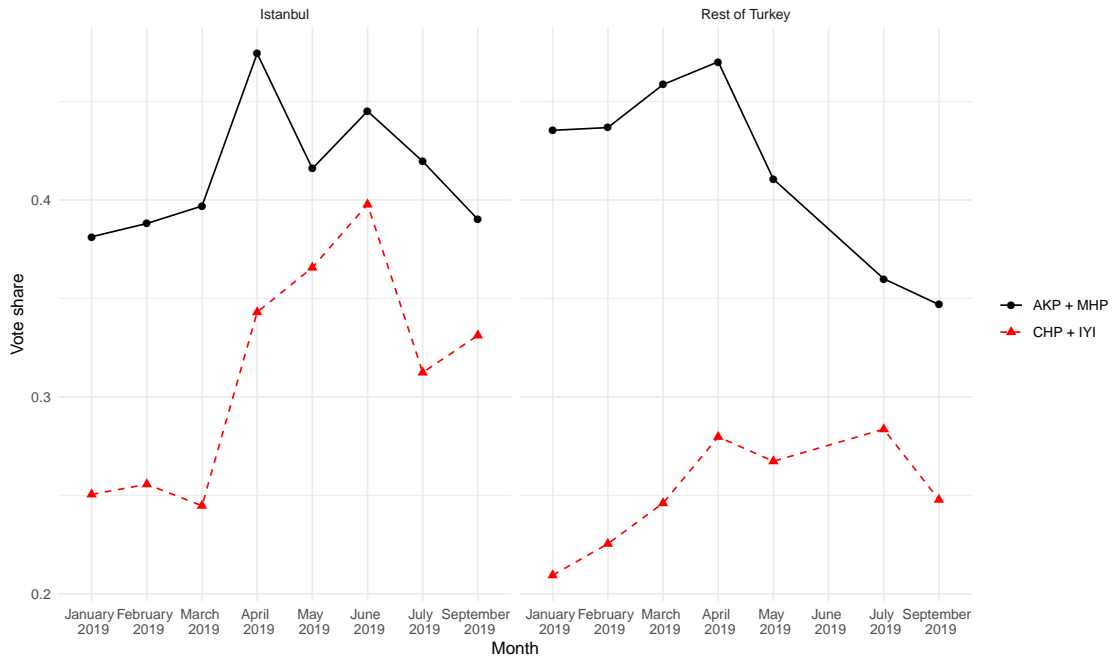
Figure 7.30: Support for the AKP-MHP and CHP-İYİ coalitions for the period January - September 2019 in Istanbul (left) and the rest of Turkey (right)

overturn the Istanbul election, then the resulting a decline in the AKP's popularity and the concomitant increase in the CHP's popularity should

1. occur only after the YSK's ruling on 6 May 2019 that the election will be re-run;

2. be more pronounced in Istanbul than the rest of Turkey.

Figure 7.30 plots the support for the AKP-MHP and CHP-İYİ coalitions for the period January - September 2019, separately for Istanbul and the rest of Turkey. Just like earlier, this metric is based on the question "Which party would you vote for if a parliamentary election were held today?" The plotted shares correspond to each coalition's share of the total preference stated (including those who plan to abstain or are undecided). The advantage of this question is that it is the only standard political preference question that gets asked on a regular basis over time and across Turkey. It thus allows for reliable spatial and temporal comparisons.[63]

We see that for the AKP-MHP coalition, popularity trends in Istanbul mostly mirror those in the rest of Turkey throughout the period January - September 2019: an increase in support throughout the period January - March 2019 with a peak in April 2019 – in the

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[63]Note that the plot for Istanbul includes an additional data point for June 2019 – this is the only month when the survey was conducted in Istanbul but not in the rest of Turkey.

immediate aftermath of the local election and most likely reflecting popularity gains due to the campaign for the March 31st local election. Thereafter, support for the AKP-MHP coalition mostly declines.

The dynamics of support for the CHP-İYİ coalition is different. Trends in Istanbul parallel those in the rest of Turkey throughout January - March 2019, but diverge immediately thereafter: we see a sharp increase in support for the CHP-İYİ coalition in April and a further increases in May and June. Data from June 2019, which are only available for Istanbul indicate that CHP+İYİ's support continued to climb to 39.8%. This trend sharply reverses once the Istanbul election is over, in July and September 2019.

In sum, using party popularity trends in the rest of Turkey as a baseline, we see i) a sharp increase in Istanbul in the relative popularity CHP-İYİ coalition (but not the AKP-MHP coalition) and ii) this increase occurs during the period April and June 2019 (and declines sharply thereafter). These patterns are consistent with our interpretation of an increase in the support for the CHP mayoral candidate as the voters' punishment of the AKP's attempt to overturn its March defeat in Istanbul.

Table 7.7 summarizes these trends quantitatively, in the form of a difference-in-differences analysis. We take the March 2019 survey measures as our pre-treatment, control outcomes (this is the last nationwide survey before the March 2019 local election) and the May 2019 survey measures as our treatment outcomes (this is the last nationwide survey before the June 2019 re-run of the Istanbul mayoral race). The same comparison in the rest of Turkey, where the popularity of the two coalitions is unlikely to be affected by the Istanbul re-run to the same extent, serves as a benchmark that accounts for alternative, unobserved factors that may be affecting political preferences throughout Turkey between March and May 2019. In turn, the difference between the two outcomes in Istanbul versus the rest of Turkey serves as an estimate of the causal impact of the AKP's attempt to overturn its March defeat on party preferences.

We see that the main statistically significant difference corresponds to the CHP-İYİ coalition's support: It rose by 10% but only in Istanbul and only in May 2019.[64] By this estimate, the chief consequence of the AKP's attempt to overturn its March defeat in Istanbul was to convert more abstaining, undecided, and third-party voters to the CHP-İYİ coalition.

In sum, the result of this analysis are consistent with our interpretation of the change between the March and June 2019 Istanbul mayoral polls as voters' punishment of the AKP's attempt to overturn its defeat. Our examination of the temporal and spatial dynamics of

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[64]The intercept corresponds to each coalition's support in the rest of Turkey in March 2019. The borderline significant coefficient on Istanbul implies that the AKP-MHP coalition's March support was 6.2% smaller in Istanbul than the rest of Turkey.

	AKP-MHP	CHP-İYİ
Intercept	0.459***	0.246***
	(0.028)	(0.021)
May 2019	−0.048	0.021
	(0.029)	(0.022)
Istanbul	−0.062*	−0.001
	(0.035)	(0.034)
Istanbul x May 2019	0.067	0.100**
	(0.050)	(0.048)
N observations	5302	5302
N clusters	135	135

$^{***}p < 0.01;\ ^{**}p < 0.05;\ ^{*}p < 0.1$

Table 7.7: A difference-in-differences analysis (standard errors clustered at the district level)

the support for the AKP-MHP and CHP-İYİ coalitions in Istanbul versus the rest of Turkey does not eliminate the possibility of an alternative, yet to be identified factor but it does circumscribe the nature of any such plausible alternative: If these trends were due to an alternative, unobserved factor, that factor would have to be present i) in Istanbul only, ii) coincide with the period May-June 2019, iii) favor only the CHP's mayoral candidate.

8 Using Ancillary Assumptions to Identify Punishment Mechanisms from Aggregate Data

One approach to identifying individual-level punishment mechanisms from aggregate election data is to adopt additional, plausible assumptions. Here we explore the implications of one such assumption, which we refer to as the "status quo bias" assumption:

Status Quo Bias Assumption: *Among the joint distributions π_{mj} consistent with the election outcomes v_m^M and v_j^J, only consider those that entail the smallest change in individual voter behavior.*

This assumption has two realistic, politically appealing consequences: First, it eliminates unnecessary vote shifts. Among the probabilities π_{mj} consistent with the March and June outcomes, there will generally be a range that implies mutually offsetting transitions between any two or three outcomes. For instance, any zero vote shift between the AKP and the CHP can also be explained as a positive vote shift from the AKP to the CHP that is exactly offset by a vote shift in the opposite direction (i.e. $\pi_{12} = \pi_{21}$ for both $\pi_{12}, \pi_{21} > 0$). The status quo assumption assumes away such superfluous vote shifts.

Second, the status quo assumption implies that if a change between the two elections can be accounted for equally well by both a combination of mechanisms and a single mechanism, we will focus on the latter. For instance, consider an outcome where a decrease in the AKP's vote total occurs in conjunction with an increase in the CHP's vote total but no change in abstention. This can be accounted for by vote switching alone, by a combination of backlash and disengagement that evens out to yield the positive vote shift observed, or by a combination of all three mechanisms. The status quo assumption privileges the first, simplest of these explanations.

We implement this approach by choosing among the probabilities π_{mj} consistent with the March and June outcomes those that minimize the sum of total shifts between the two elections. This is equivalent to maximizing the sum of the diagonal elements of the joint probability distribution of the March and June outcomes subject to a set of probability

constraints,

$$\underset{\pi_{11},\pi_{22},\pi_{33}}{\text{maximize}} \quad \pi_{11} + \pi_{22} + \pi_{33}$$

$$\text{subject to} \quad 0 \leq \pi_{ab} \leq 1,$$

$$\sum_{\text{All } (m,j)} \pi_{mj} = 1,$$

$$\sum_{\text{All } m} v_m^M = 1, \tag{A.5}$$

$$\sum_{\text{All } j} v_j^J = 1,$$

$$v_m^M = \pi_{m1} + \pi_{m2} + \pi_{m3} \quad \text{for } m \in \{1,2,3\},$$

$$v_j^J = \pi_{1j} + \pi_{2j} + \pi_{3j} \quad \text{for } j \in \{1,2,3\}.$$

The first set of constraints restricts transition probabilities to their natural range; the remaining equality constraints are implied by the construction of the joint probability distribution of the March and June outcomes and its relation to marginal vote shares.

8.1 Estimates of the Mechanisms of Punishment based on the Status Quo Bias Assumption

The last row in Table 8.9 summarizes the aggregate, Istanbul-wide estimates of the three mechanisms by the above procedure.[65] We see that the city-wide shift in the election outcome is attributed primarily to vote-switching and backlash; the estimated magnitude of disengagement is statistically indistinguishable from zero.

Table 8.9 explores the implications of the status quo assumption further by presenting estimates of the probabilities π_{mj} for four neighborhoods, each of which exemplifies a subset of the data. The first is a "median" neighborhood: this neighborhood is closest to the Istanbul median on key electoral features.[66] We see that between the March and June elections, the AKP's vote declined by 2%, the CHP's vote increased by 6%, and the abstention rate declined by 4%. As summarized in Table 8.9, these changes are attributed to vote-switching and backlash alone: 2.88% of voters switched from voting for the AKP to voting for the CHP, and 3.36% of those who abstained in March turned out to vote for the CHP in June.

The next three estimates in Table 8.8 exemplify neighborhoods whose electoral shifts point to vote switching, backlash, and disengagement alone. As Table 8.9 shows, vote shifts

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[65]This is the average of the three mechanisms for all Istanbul neighborhoods weighed by each neighborhood's number of registered voters.

[66]These features are the number of registered voters, March vote choices, and vote shifts between the March and June elections.

"Median" neighborhood	AKP	CHP	ABS	
AKP	.36	.03	0	.39
CHP	0	.41	0	.41
ABS	0	.03	.17	.20
	.37	.47	.16	

"Vote switching" neighborhood	AKP	CHP	ABS	
AKP	.39	.02	0	.41
CHP	0	.36	0	.36
ABS	0	0	.22	.22
	.39	.39	.22	

"Backlash" neighborhood	AKP	CHP	ABS	
AKP	.31	0	0	.31
CHP	0	.48	0	.48
ABS	0	.04	.16	.20
	.31	.52	.17	

"Disengagement" neighborhood	AKP	CHP	ABS	
AKP	.63	0	.06	.69
CHP	0	.21	0	.21
ABS	0	0	.1	.10
	.63	.21	.16	

Table 8.8: Election results: Estimates for four exemplar neighborhoods

	Vote switching Δ_V	Backlash Δ_B	Disengagement Δ_D
"Median" neighborhood	2.88 (1.40, 4.39)	3.36 (2.15, 4.54)	0 (0, 0)
"Vote switching" neighborhood	2.53 (1.37, 3.32)	0 (0, 0.84)	0.02 (0, 0.92)
"Backlash" neighborhood	0 (0, 0.69)	3.92 (3.13, 4.41)	-0.03 (-0.75, 0)
"Disengagement" neighborhood	0 (0, 3.06)	-0.39 (-3.94, 0)	5.92 (1.78, 8.68)
Istanbul overall	2.08 (2.05, 2.12)	3.34 (3.29, 3.35)	0.00 (-0.02, 0.00)

Table 8.9: Election results: Estimates of the three mechanisms for the four exemplar neighborhoods and Istanbul

in all three exemplars are indeed attributed almost exclusively to the mechanisms indicated by the outcomes.
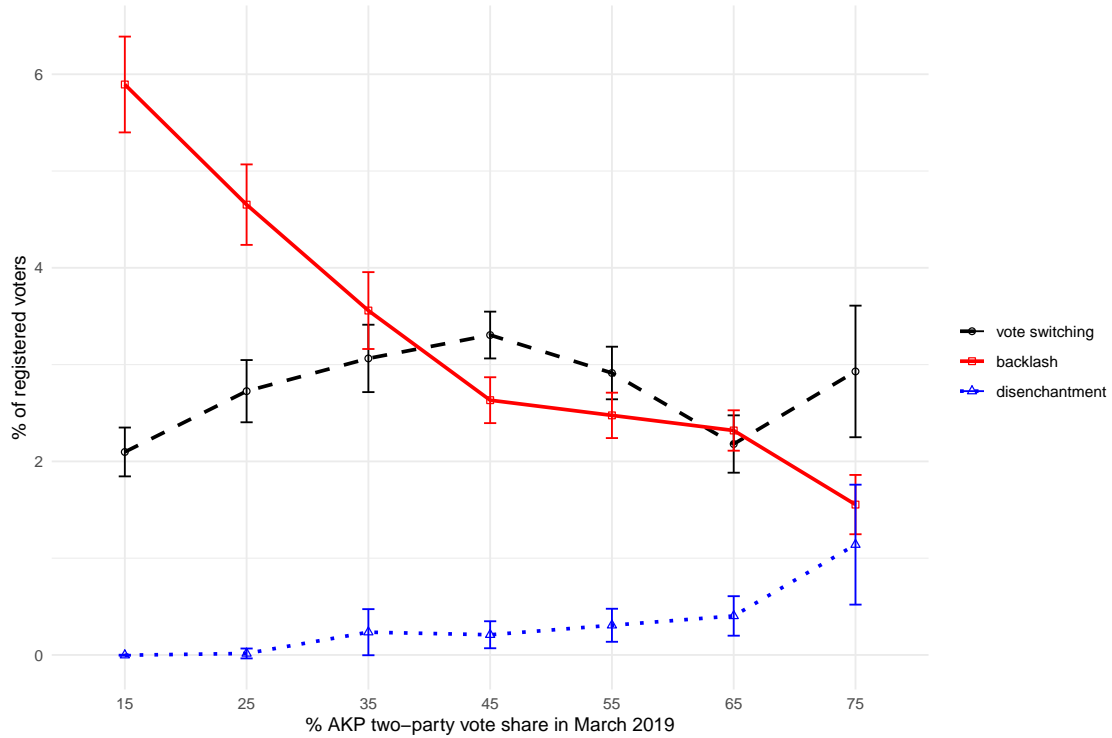
Figure 8.31: Election results: Vote switching, backlash, and disengagement by neighborhood-level partisanship

8.1.1 Election results: Vote switching, backlash, and disengagement by neighborhood-level partisanship

Figure 8.31 plots the magnitude of each mechanism by the AKP's March two-party vote share. Consistent with our framework in section 2 in the main text, we see that as we move from CHP to AKP strongholds, both the absolute and relative magnitude of punishment shifts from backlash to vote switching to disengagement.

A key prediction of our model is this pattern arises from voters with different (relative) intensity of support for the two candidates. However, the election data that we examine here is aggregated at the neighborhood level. As a result, we only get to observe each neighborhood's margin of victory but not whether that margin is due to i) more partisan voters, or ii) a greater proportion of moderates leaning toward one of the two parties. For instance, neighborhoods with a larger AKP margin of victory could arise because they consist of i) stronger AKP supporters, or ii) a mix of weak partisans that is more favorable for the AKP.

Only if i) holds, does the aggregated neighborhood-level evidence provide support for our theoretical expectations. To examine whether this is indeed the case, we combine individual-level data from the between-election surveys that we examined in section 4 of the main text
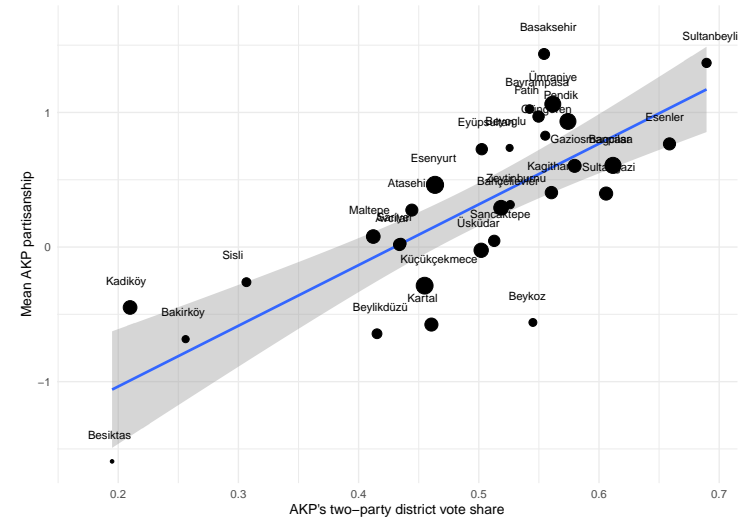
with aggregate-level election results.

We present two analyses of the relationship between individual-level partisanship and aggregate-level election results. The first is based on pre-treatment measures, i.e. based on survey measures and real-world behavior that occurred before the AKP attempted to overturn the result of the Istanbul mayoral election. We measure individual-level partisanship by partitioning voters into five groups based on their vote choice in the 2018 parliamentary election and the March 2019 local election: strong AKP or CHP partisans if they voted for the same party in both elections, weak partisans if they voted for the AKP or CHP in one of the elections but voted for a third party or candidate in the other election, and "other partisans" otherwise.

Panel (a) in Figure 8.32 plots the distribution of partisanship in our survey sample. Panel (b) in Figure 8.32 plots the association between the March 2019 election outcome and average district-level partisanship by district. The horizontal axis plots the AKP's district-level two-party vote share in the March 2019 mayoral race; the average district-level partisanship is computed by assigning the values -2, -1, 0, 1, 2 to strong CHP, weak CHP, other, weak AKP, strong AKP partisans, respectively. Keeping the horizontal axis the same, panel (c) plots the partisan composition of each district and panel (d) plots only the district share of strong AKP and CHP partisans only. We see throughout that more one-sided vote shares indeed tend to occur in districts with stronger partisans, supporting claim i) above.
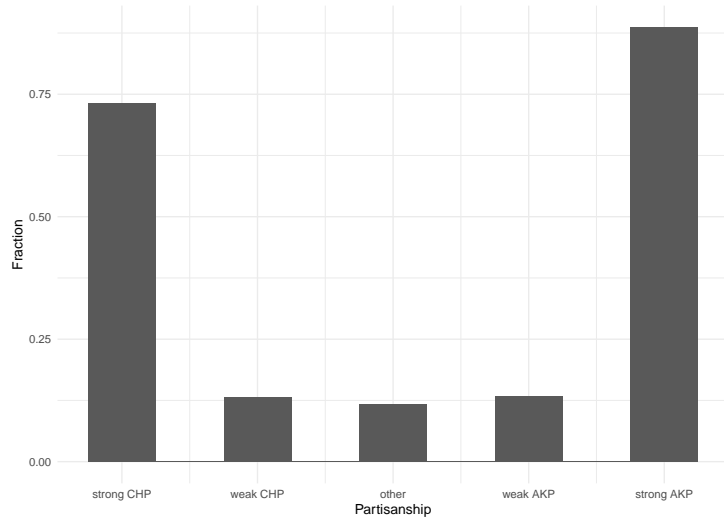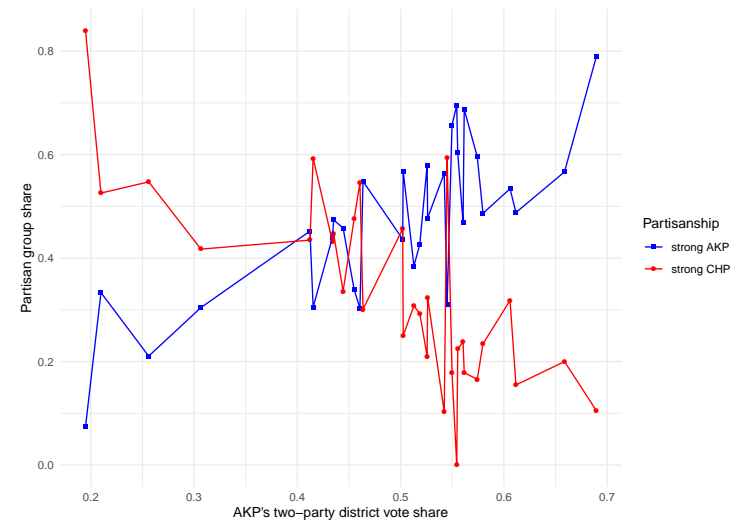
(a) The distribution of partisanship

(b) The association between average partisanship and election results across districts (point size is proportional to the number of registered voters per district)
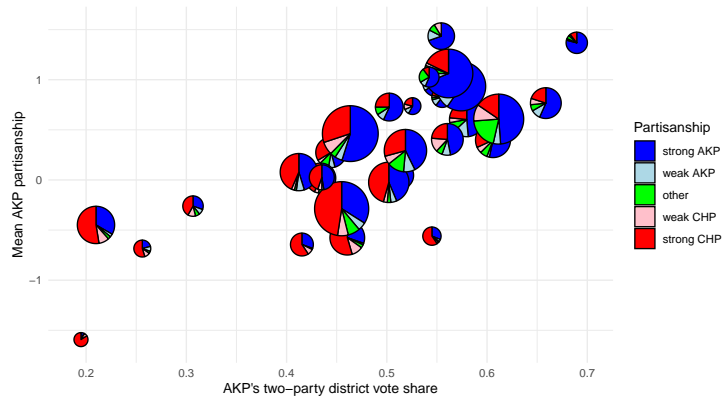
(c) The partisan composition of each district (point size is proportional to the number of registered voters per district)
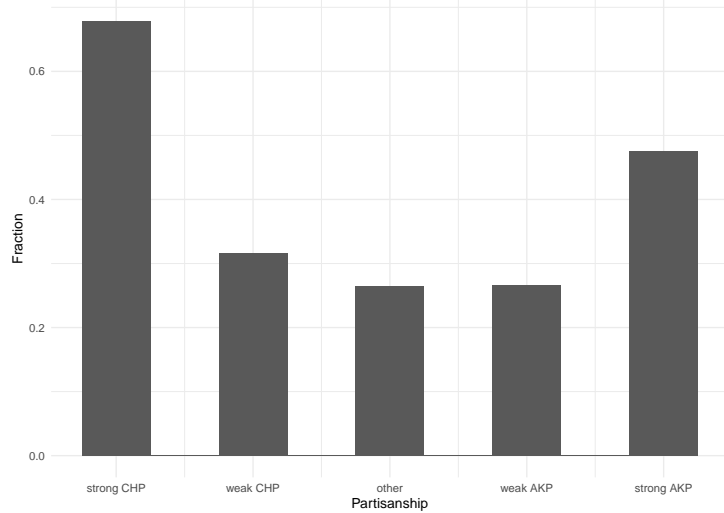

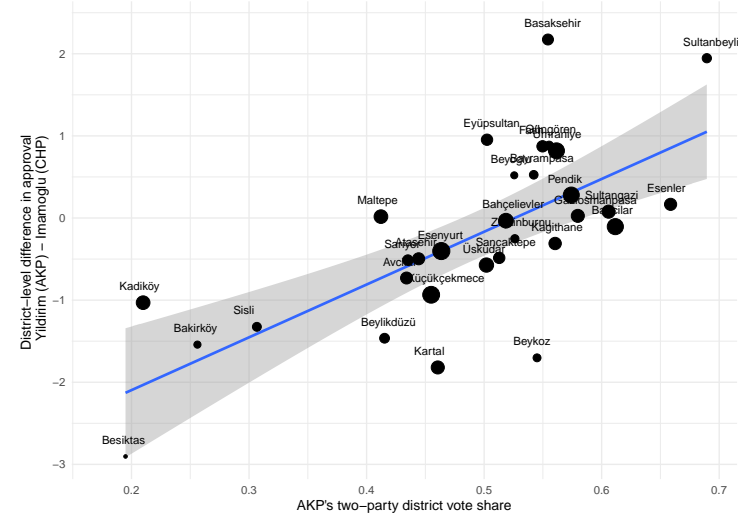(d) The share of strong AKP and CHP partisans in a district"

Figure 8.32: The association between individual-level partisanship and aggregate election results by district (pre-treatment indicators)

The second analysis of the relationship between individual-level partisanship and aggregate level election results is based on post-treatment measures, i.e. based on survey measures and real-world behavior that occurred after the AKP attempted to overturn the result of the Istanbul mayoral election. Note that our theory implies that neighborhood-level margins of victory will correlate with individual-level partisanship both pre- and post-treatment. We measure individual-level partisanship by a respondent's relative approval of the two candidates in the election immediately before the June re-run of the election. We take the difference of the respondent's approval of each candidate on a 1-5 scale and code the respondent as a strong AKP (CHP) partisan if that difference is 4 or 3 (-4 or -3), weak AKP (CHP) partisan if that difference is 2 or 1 (-2 or -1), and "other partisan" otherwise.

Panel (a) in Figure 8.33 plots the distribution of partisanship based on this measure. Panel (b) in Figure 8.33 plots the association between the March 2019 election outcome and average district-level partisanship by district. The horizontal axis plots the AKP's district-level two-party vote share in the March 2019 mayoral race; the average district-level partisanship based is computed by assigning the values -2, -1, 0, 1, 2 to strong CHP, weak CHP, other, weak AKP, strong AKP partisans, respectively. Keeping the horizontal axis the same, panel (c) plots the partisan composition of each district and panel (d) plots only the district share of strong AKP and CHP partisans only. We see throughout that more one-sided vote shares tend to occur in districts with stronger partisans.
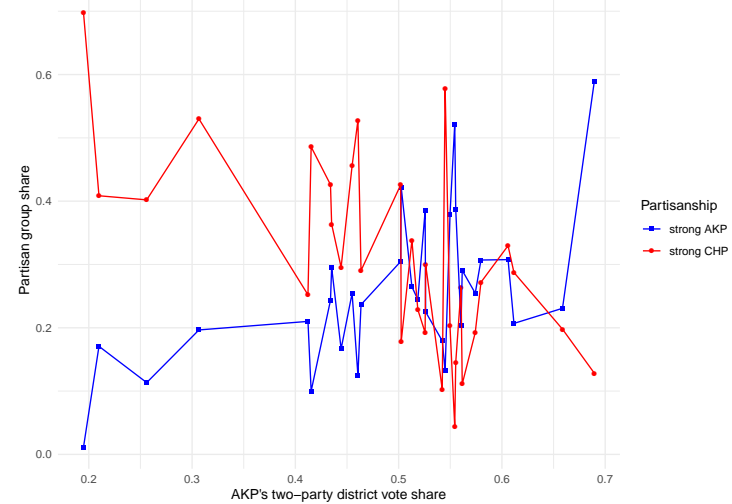
(a) The distribution of partisanship

(b) The association between average partisanship and election results across districts (point size is proportional to the number of registered voters per district)
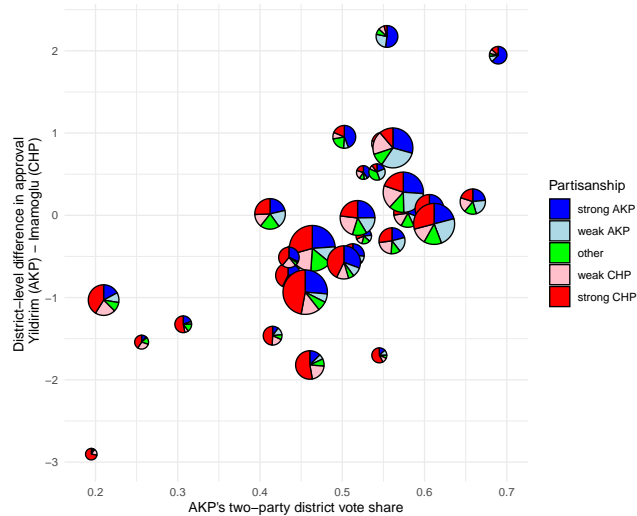
(c) The partisan composition of each district (point size is proportional to the number of registered voters per district)

(d) The share of strong AKP and CHP partisans in a district

Figure 8.33: The association between individual-level partisanship and aggregate election results by district (post-treatment indicators)

8.1.2 Candidate-Choice Experiments: Vote switching, backlash, and disengagement by the Erdoğan-İmamoğlu approval differential

To apply to our experimental data the methodology developed in this section, we treat respondents' choices in the *AKP vs. CHP* and *D^-AKP vs. CHP* experimental conditions as analogues of the March and June outcomes in the Istanbul mayoral election and estimate vote switching, backlash, and disengagement using the procedure outlined in (A.5). Figure 8.34 plots the estimated magnitude of each of these punishment mechanisms for the five subgroups defined by the Erdoğan-İmamoğlu approval differential.

Consistent with the framework in section 2 in the main text, we see that backlash – although negligible in magnitude – occurs exclusively among supporters of the opposition candidate. By contrast, disengagement is both substantial in magnitude and increases in Erdoğan's approval advantage, with its highest levels at the right end of the approval scale. Vote switching, meanwhile, is largest among those who are indifferent between Erdoğan and İmamoğlu. When we weight these estimates by each subgroup's share in the sample, the overall magnitudes of vote switching, backlash, and disengagement are 10.04, 1.30, and 13.76, respectively.[67]

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[67]The corresponding 95% bootstrap percentile confidence intervals are $(5.89, 13.45)$, $(-0.92, 3.29)$, and $(9.94, 17.72)$.
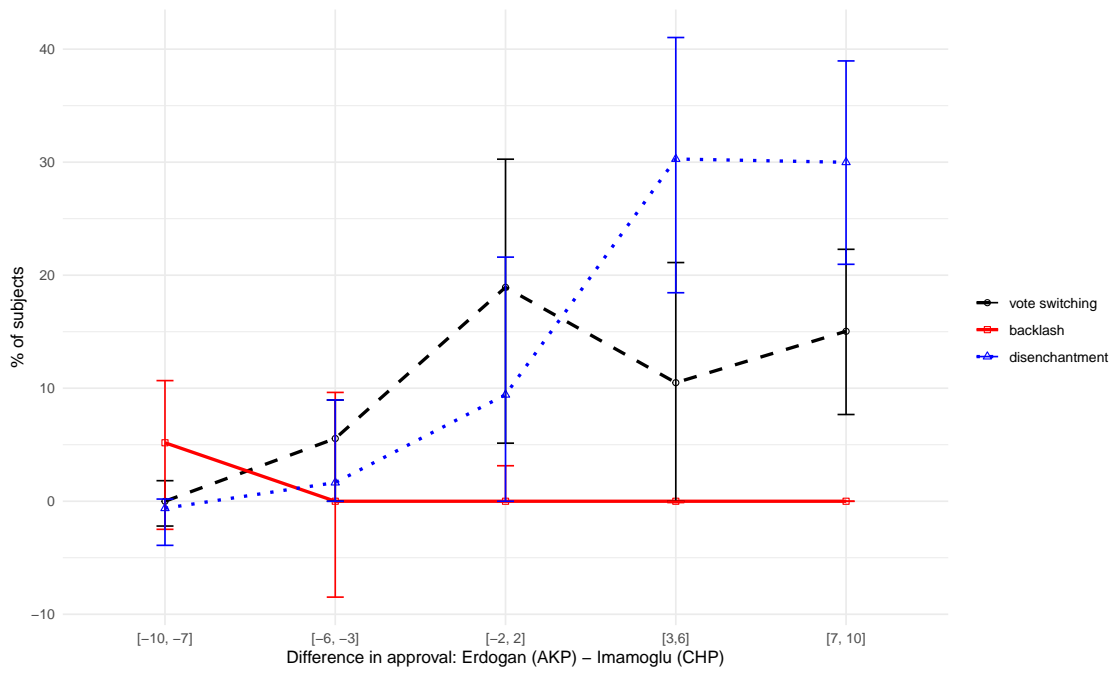
Figure 8.34: Candidate-choice experiments, 2019: Vote switching, backlash, and disengagement by the difference in respondents' approval of President Erdoğan (AKP) and the CHP's mayoral candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu

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