

War Time Military Service Can Affect Partisan Preferences[†]

Anna Getmansky[‡]

Chagai M. Weiss[§]

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Abstract

Does war-time military service affect partisan preferences? We argue that military service increases the salience and potential costs of war. Therefore, soldiers who serve during mis-managed wars will associate the ruling party with incompetence and be less likely to support the ruling party in the future. To test our argument we analyze almost 50 years of Israeli National Election Surveys. Employing a regression discontinuity design, we show that compared with respondents who were too young to serve in the Yom Kippur war, respondents just old enough to serve, report lower support for the Labor party well after the war ends. This effect is likely driven by soldiers' unwillingness to support a party which they associate with security incompetence. We further show that the negative effect of military service does not materialize in well managed wars, contributing to the literatures on the political consequences of war and attitude formation.

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[‡]Department of International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science.
✉: A.Getmansky@lse.ac.uk, 🌐: sites.google.com/view/annagetmansky.

[§]Department of Political Science, UW – Madison, and Middle East Initiative, Harvard Kennedy School. ✉: cmweiss3@wisc.edu, 🌐: www.chagaimweiss.com

Does war-time military service affect soldiers' partisan preferences? A robust literature in political science considers the general effects of wars and their costs on public support for incumbents (Gartner and Segura 1998; Baker and O'neal 2001; Boettcher and Cobb 2009; Karol and Miguel 2007; Berinsky 2007). Other studies document how participation in war, and specifically combat experiences, can shape political participation and conflict-related preferences (MacLean and Elder 2007; Blattman 2009; Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015; Bauer et al. 2016; Littman 2018; Costalli and Ruggeri 2019). However, there is limited evidence regarding the extent to which military service at times of war affects partisan preferences, and specifically soldiers' long-term support for the political party overseeing a war effort.

Identifying whether military service at times of war affects individual level partisan preferences is important for several reasons. First, answers to this question can inform our understanding of the short- and long-term political consequences of war. This is especially the case in Israel, as well as 60 other countries (Grewal and Cebul Forthcoming), where some form of conscription is mandated by law, and political backlash informs leaders willingness to use force (Tomz et al. 2020). Second, evidence regarding the effects of war time military service on partisan preferences, contributes to the literature on stability and change in partisanship and other political attitudes, providing insight about the conditions under which voters translate personal experiences, oftentimes obtained during impressionable years, into information that shapes their long-term political preferences (Krosnick and Alwin 1989; Sears and Valentino 1997; Osborne, Sears and Valentino 2011; Aguilar, Balcells and Cebolla-Boado 2011; Margalit 2013; Aksoy, Eichengreen and Saka 2020; Dinas and Northmore-Ball 2020; Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2020).

Theories relating to personal experiences and self-interest might suggest that military service during war will lead soldiers to withdraw support from the incumbent party managing the war effort (Erickson and Stoker 2011; Horowitz and Levendusky 2011). In contrast, other work which identifies links between conflict experiences and nationalism (Baker and O'neal 2001), hawkish attitudes (Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015), and in-group identification (Littman 2018), might suggest that voters reward parties who oversee a war. Finally, studies on war and domes-

tic accountability would suggest that the effects of military service at times of war, might vary conditional on war dynamics (Gartner 2008a), costs (Karol and Miguel 2007), and leader performance (Croco 2011). It follows, that the effects of military service during war may cut both ways. Therefore, theory and evidence are needed to determine whether, how, and under what conditions, military service during interstate war affect soldiers' partisan preferences.

To address this gap, we build on previous literatures linking personal experiences with political preferences (Sears and Valentino 1997; Erickson and Stoker 2011; Margalit 2013; Carreri and Teso 2016), and develop a framework to explain why and under what conditions serving in the military at times of war affects soldiers' long term partisan preferences. We argue that serving in the military increases the salience of a war, as well as its potential costs for soldiers. Therefore, we expect that soldiers will pay especially close attention to war dynamics, and use wars as a heuristic informing their personal inferences regarding party valence and competence in the long-run.

Theoretically, we distinguish between *successful wars* and *blunder wars*. The former are wars that are managed competently, involving appropriate levels of preparedness and achieving their goals at acceptable costs. The latter are wars that involve either a loss or a victory, at a very high cost due to incompetent management of the war effort. Based on this distinction, we argue that if a ruling party mismanages a war effort, soldiers serving in the military at times of war, for whom war is extremely salient, will associate the ruling party with security incompetence, and be less likely to support the party long into the future.

To test the observable implications of our theory, we turn to the Israeli case and focus on the political effects of military service in the Yom Kippur war—a paradigmatic blunder war (Eriksson 2013). We leverage the fact that military service is mandatory in Israel, as well as the fact that age determines eligibility for mandatory military service, and employ a regression discontinuity design (RDD) to analyze almost 50 years of the Israeli National Election Survey (INES). Following recent RDD applications in political science (Cavaille and Marshall 2019), we compare the partisan preferences of survey respondents who were just too young to participate in the Yom Kippur war (i.e. below the age of 18), with the political preferences of survey respondents just old enough to

participate in the war (i.e. above the age of 18).

We demonstrate that survey respondents who likely served as soldiers during the 1973 Yom Kippur war, report over a tenth of a standard deviation decrease in support for the labor party, in seventeen waves of the INES from 1977-2019. The magnitude of our local average treatment effect (LATE) is equivalent to about a third of the general decline in support for the Labor party between 1977 and 2019. We argue, and provide evidence that our empirical approach which relies on an age-based discontinuity without measuring military service directly, likely yields a lower-bound estimate of the effects of war time military service on support for the Labor party. Moreover, we leverage additional age discontinuities, to demonstrate that respondents just old enough to complete their mandatory military service (compared with respondents still required to serve in mandatory service), as well as respondents' just old enough to be exempt of mandatory reserve service (compared with respondents still required to serve in mandatory reserve service), report higher levels of support for the Labor party. This further confirms our main theoretical argument that military service during the Yom Kippur war reduced support for the Labor party.

To further establish the mechanism driving our effect we examine a series of recurring survey items from the INES. Our additional results are in line with our theoretical expectation, which suggests that wars serve as a heuristic influencing soldiers' perceptions of party competence and valance. Indeed, we demonstrate that respondents old enough to participate in the Yom Kippur war are less likely to perceive the Labor party as a party which is competent to address security issues. To further establish our theory, we replicate our empirical design by focusing on participation in the 1967 Six Day War — A war which is widely considered to be a successful operation. We show that military service during the 1967 war, where leader incompetence was far less prevalent, did not affect support for the Labor party.

We make three contributions to existing literatures. First, we build on previous studies which focused primarily on the effects of wars on mass-support for incumbents ([Gartner and Segura 1998](#); [Karol and Miguel 2007](#); [Berinsky 2007](#)), and turn to consider whether wars have additional effects on soldiers' partisan preferences. We emphasize that military service renders interstate war a more

salient and costly event. In turn, we demonstrate that military service during a mismanaged war has a durable long-term effect on the partisan preferences of soldiers well after the war concludes.

Second, we extend previous studies that focus on the effect of participation in combat on conflict related attitudes (Blattman 2009; Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015; Littman 2018), and shed light on the effects of general military service experiences during war, on partisan preferences. Our findings suggest that the general experience of being a soldier during a blunder war impacted soldiers' voting preferences, and reduced long-term support for the Labor party in Israel.

Finally, we contribute to the literature on attitude formation and change in response to personal lived experiences (Krosnick and Alwin 1989; Sears and Valentino 1997; Erickson and Stoker 2011; Osborne, Sears and Valentino 2011; Margalit 2013; Aksoy, Eichengreen and Saka 2020). Early theoretical frameworks (Krosnick and Alwin 1989; Sears and Valentino 1997), and recent studies on the effects of exposure to adverse experiences, suggest that personal events can shape short (Margalit 2013; Erickson and Stoker 2011), and long-term attitudes and policy preferences (Carreri and Teso 2016). We build on these studies, and demonstrate that military service at times of war can have long-term effects on soldiers' partisan preferences, if a war is mismanaged.

What Do We Know about the Effect of Wars on Attitudes and Behaviors

The Effects of War on the General Public

A rich literature investigates how the general public responds to interstate wars. Some studies, suggest that wars increase public support for incumbents during extreme crises (Baker and O'neal 2001). Other studies emphasize that as wars become more costly, citizens are more likely to support their leaders and the war effort, in order to redeem the resources that had already been invested in a given war (Boettcher and Cobb 2009; Renshon 2015). In line with these theories, some existing evidence points to a positive relationship between military casualties and incumbent vote-share (Koch 2011).

In contrast, other studies suggest that citizens are sensitive to the high costs of war, and tend to withdraw support from incumbents that get involved in costly wars (Gartner, Segura and Wilkening

1997; Gartner and Segura 1998; Kriner and Shen 2007; Getmansky and Weiss 2020). In line with these theories, there is evidence to suggest that exposure to the costs of violence (Hintson and Vaishnav 2021), and specifically exposure to military casualties—especially if they are on the rise (Gartner and Segura 1998; Gartner 2008b), has a negative effect on support for incumbents. More so, local casualties have been shown to reduce electoral support for incumbent leaders and parties (Karol and Miguel 2007; Kriner and Shen 2007; Getmansky and Weiss 2020).

Lastly, other studies emphasize that the effects of war on public support for incumbents are conditional on contextual features. For example, there is evidence to suggest that elite discourse shapes domestic support for war (Berinsky 2007). Other work emphasizes that a war's eventual outcome determines mass responses to conflict (Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler 2006; Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995; Croco 2011), and voters support for incumbent's is conditional on the success of a given military operation.

The Effects of War on Soldiers

For the most part, the literature identifying the effects of wars on political preferences has focused on the general public. However, a growing literature considers how *participating* in war shapes soldiers' social outcomes and political preferences. Focusing on economic and social outcomes, multiple studies show that participation in the Vietnam war significantly decreased veterans' earnings (Angrist 1990), and increased their propensity to engage in violence (Beckham, Moore and Reynolds 2000), years after the war ended. Other studies suggest that the threat of recruitment to military service in the U.S. during the Vietnam war, led draft-eligible men to adopt liberal and anti-war positions (Erickson and Stoker 2011), but these effects did not endure in the long term (Green, Davenport and Hanson 2019).

In contrast to the pacifying effects of *potential* combat exposure (Erickson and Stoker 2011; Horowitz and Levendusky 2011), analyses identifying the effects of *actual* combat experiences reveal strikingly different patterns. Indeed, across a wide range of contexts, there is evidence that past participation in combat hardens attitudes against the out-group, decreases support for negotiation and compromise, and makes ex-combatants more likely to identify with their in-group, and

vote for more hawkish parties (Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015; Littman 2018).¹ More so, there is evidence to suggest that individuals who were involved in combat and witnessed violence first-hand, exhibit more active involvement in politics in the post-combat period (Teigen 2006; Blattman 2009). In addition, at the group level, combat experience has been shown to increase organizational skills and ability to make credible threats regarding the use of future violence (Jha and Wilkinson 2012).

Taken together, these studies suggest that the threat of recruitment to war, and actual participation in combat, might affect individual attitudes and behaviors. These effects are thought to be driven by multiple mechanisms relating to self-interest (Erickson and Stoker 2011; Horowitz and Levendusky 2011), as well as the experience of violence, and socialization in armed forces (Blattman 2009; Horowitz and Stam 2014; Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015). However, despite advances in the literature, it remains unclear whether, why, and under what conditions the experience of military service at times of war affects soldiers' partisan preferences in the long run. To shed light on this question, we lay out a theoretical framework which explains why, how, and under what conditions, military service during an interstate war might affect soldiers' political preferences.

Theoretical Framework

The starting point of our theoretical framework is that serving in the military increases the salience and potential costs of war. We expect war to be more salient and costly for soldiers (compared to the general population), because soldiers are enlisted in the organization most involved in maintaining the war effort, and they are more likely to suffer from the costs of war. Since military service increases the salience of war, and often takes part during impressionable years, we expect individuals to draw on their personal experience, to inform their partisan preferences.

More specifically, when serving in the military during a war, soldiers gain an opportunity to learn about the preparation, execution, and outcomes of military policies. While both citizens and

¹Though see Horowitz and Stam (2014), which suggest that the effects of military experience on leaders' tendency to engage in conflict, varies by experience type, and can have a pacifying effect.

soldiers can learn about the war-time performance of a leading party, military service increases the salience and personal importance of this type of information. We therefore expect soldiers to leverage their evaluation of a leading party's management of a war effort, as a general heuristic informing their beliefs about a party's competence and valence.

We acknowledge that military service in different types of wars may provide soldiers with diverging experiences and information. Accordingly, we distinguish between successful wars and blunder wars, and develop our main theoretical expectations around the latter type of wars. Since blunder wars often entail lack of preparedness, inadequate investment in the military, and poor execution of military plans, they provide soldiers with salient negative information regarding the valence and competence of the leading party.

Research in social psychology and behavioral economics demonstrates that individuals exposed to risky environments adapt risk averse attitudes and behaviors (Kim and Lee 2014; Zhang, Brennan and Lo 2014; He and Hong 2018). This research suggests that people develop general preferences, based on past experiences. Building on such insights, we expect soldiers who serve in the military during blunder wars to use the information they gain during a war as a heuristic, informing their general beliefs about the leading political party.

Accordingly, the main observable implication of our theory is that military service during a blunder war will reduce soldiers' support for the party associated with the war effort. We expect this main effect to be driven by soldiers re-evaluation of the party's security related competence, as well as their increased preferences to avoid future blunder wars. Therefore, a second set of observable implications of our theory is that military service during a blunder war decreases soldiers' beliefs that the incumbent is qualified to deal with security issues, and increases their support for policies which secure preparedness and competence in future wars.

Lastly, we expect that participation in successful wars will not reduce soldiers' support for the party managing the war effort – since such wars do not provide negative information regarding the party in question. We are agnostic as to whether such wars have positive or null effects. This is since on the one hand successful wars may provide soldiers with positive information regarding

the party's competence and valience, and this information may increase support for an incumbent. However, other war experiences, such as exposure to human-loss, may have negative effects which counterbalance the effects of positive information regarding incumbent competence. In such a case, the overall effect of participating in a successful war may be null.

Research Design

Case Selection

To test our theoretical expectations, we turn to Israel, and focus on the effects of serving in the military during the Yom Kippur war—a paradigmatic blunder war (Eriksson 2013). The Yom Kippur war began with a surprise Egyptian-Syrian attack against Israel on October 6, 1973, during the Jewish day of atonement. Israeli leadership fully realized the threat of war only eleven hours before its onset (Kam 1988, 23). Accordingly, there were no preparations for combat up until a few hours before the Syrian and Egyptian attacks (Betts 1982, 77-78). However, on the morning of October 6, when the threat of war was fully-apparent, the army revised its assessment and began preparing for war with full-mobilization of Israeli reserves (Mintz and Schneiderman 2018; McDermott and Bar-Joseph 2017).

The Israeli military paid a high price for the government's incompetence and lack of preparedness. In the first 36 hours, which were largely fought by soldiers in mandatory service, Israel sustained heavy losses, including the death of 724 soldiers (Bar-Joseph 2005, 225). Ultimately, Israel succeeded in pushing the Egyptian and Syrian forces back, and fighting ceased in the end of October. Militarily, Israel was in control of more territory than it controlled prior to the outbreak of the fighting, but the country paid a heavy toll with over 2,200 soldiers killed, and 7,251 injured. The unanticipated attack, together with the heavy initial losses in the war, traumatized many Israelis, and shook their confidence in the invincibility of the Israeli army (Eriksson 2013, 29). In Israel, the failure to anticipate the attack is often referred to as “the blunder” (*ha-mehdal*) (Bar-Joseph 2005, 6).

Our focus on the political consequences of participation in the Yom Kippur war is motivated

by three reasons. First, despite Israel's eventual victory, the war effort was plagued with mismanagement. Indeed, politicians incompetence manifested in their unwillingness to allow early mobilization, resulting in high battlefield costs (Bar-Joseph 2005). It follows that the Yom Kippur war is a suitable case for our theory, which focuses on wars that can reveal the ruling party's incompetence. Second, unlike many military campaigns which span long-periods of time, and involve multiple incumbent governments, the Yom Kippur war was short and directly associated with a single ruling party – the Labor party. This attribute of the war, allows us to consider how military service during the war shaped attitudes towards a single ruling party, years after the war was concluded. Lastly, the short nature of the Yom Kippur war, combined with wide-spread age-based mandatory conscription in Israel, serve as the base for our identification strategy, which we now turn to describe.

Identification Strategy

Identifying the effects of military service on political attitudes is challenging, since political attitudes may drive selection into the military, rather than result as a consequence of military experiences. To sidestep this challenge we focus on Israel where a mandatory draft requires men over the age of eighteen to enlist into the military (Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015). As we further discuss in Section D of our appendix, almost 70% of all men born 1955, who turned eighteen in 1973, were enlisted in the military. Therefore, we adapt a regression discontinuity design leveraging a sharp age cutoff, which determined Israeli citizens' probability of serving in the military during the Yom Kippur war.²

As shown in Equation 1, any Israeli who was younger than eighteen in 1973 did not serve in the military during the war. In contrast, Israelis older than 18 in 1973 were eligible to serve in the military during the war, either as part of their mandatory service, or as part of reserve duties (for further discussion, see Section D in the appendix). More so, men over the age of eighteen were

²Age-based regression discontinuity designs have been used in the past to recover the effects of national reforms on attitudes and other personal outcomes (Brunello, Fort and Weber 2009; Cavaille and Marshall 2019).

very likely to participate in the war, due to mass-mobilization of reserve forces (Bar-Joseph 2005).

$$Eligibility\ to\ Participate\ in\ War = \begin{cases} \text{Yes if age in 1973} \geq 18 \\ \text{No if age in 1973} < 18 \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

We leverage the discontinuity described in Equation 1 in order to compare Israelis which are similar in many regards, but different in their eligibility to serve in the military in 1973 during the Yom Kippur war. Specifically, employing data from seventeen waves of the INES, we test whether respondents who were just old enough to serve in the military during the war, report lower levels of support for the Labor party, when compared with respondents who were too young to serve in the military during the war.

Data

Our data includes responses to seventeen waves of the INES (1977-2019). We leverage a series of recurring survey items from these surveys, which constitute our variables for all empirical analyses. Specifically, our main outcome of interest is respondents' self-reported vote choice. We further leverage questions regarding party evaluation, policy preferences, ideology, and personal economic standings to provide evidence in support of our theorized mechanism and rule out alternative explanations. An elaborate description of the surveys we use, and the coding of variables is provided in Section A of the appendix. Descriptive statistics of all variables employed in our analyses are reported in Table A2 of the appendix.

Identifying Assumptions

Our central identifying assumption relates to the continuity of the conditional expectation of counterfactual outcomes in the running variable (McCrary 2008). This assumption would be violated in an instance where survey respondents would sort themselves endogenously around the discontinuity threshold (Cattaneo, Idrobo and Titiunik 2019), by manipulating their age in order to select into or out-of military service. Sorting around the age discontinuity in this case is highly unlikely. Indeed, survey respondents participating in INES during the years 1977-2019, have no reason to

manipulate their age, in a way that would result in endogenous sorting around our discontinuity. We support this identifying assumption with a McCrary test, reported in Figure A2 of our appendix. This figure demonstrates that our running variable (age in 1973) is continuous around our discontinuity (age 18 in 1973) (McCrary 2008).

To further probe the validity of our design, we implement a placebo test demonstrating that alternative age cutoffs around the discontinuity yield imprecise estimates (Figure A3).³ More so, though not a necessary condition for our identification strategy (De la Cuesta and Imai 2016), we show that several demographic variables are continuous around the discontinuity (Table A3). These diagnostics which we report in the appendix, increase our confidence in our RDD approach and its underlying assumptions.⁴

Estimation Strategy

Our main specification identifies the local average treatment effect of military service during the Yom Kippur war, by estimating the model in Equation 2. In this model, y_{it} is a survey response from respondent i at time t , f is a linear function of our running variable – respondents’ age in 1973. This function, which is a local linear regression estimated with a triangular kernel and the optimal bandwidth selection method proposed by Cattaneo, Idrobo and Titiunik (2019), allows us to identify the parameter β – representing the effect of being just older than 18 in 1973, and thus being likely to participate in the Yom Kippur war.

$$y_{it} = \beta_{\text{participation}} + f(x_i) + e_{it} \quad (2)$$

One limitation of our data and empirical approach is that we do not measure participation in

³Though, as we explain in our Robustness Checks Section, there is a positive and precisely estimated effect of the discontinuity at age 22, suggesting that respondents’ just old enough to finish their military service are *more likely* to support the Labor party, providing further evidence to support our argument that military service has a negative effect on support for Labor.

⁴A final concern for our approach is selective attrition as a consequence of battle-deaths, if deaths correlate with partisanship. However, like Green, Davenport and Hanson (2019), we do not expect this to be consequential for our inference, given the small share of battle-deaths to eligible soldiers.

the Yom Kippur war directly. We believe this to be a reasonable approach given the fact that conscription to the military in Israel is mandatory. Indeed, as we discuss in Section D of our appendix, recruitment to the military amongst the 1955 cohort which turned 18 in 1973 was very high, and mobilization of eligible adults during the Yom Kippur war as part of mandatory and reserve service was widespread (Bar-Joseph 2005).

However, our analytical approach raises two concerns. The first concern relates to measurement error in our treatment, since not all respondents over the age of 18 in 1973, which we consider as part of treatment group, served in the military during the Yom Kippur war. The second concern relates to cohort-based confounders, which may serve as alternative explanations to our main theorized effect. In our robustness checks, we alleviate both concerns.

We argue that measurement error in this case introduces a downward bias. Thus we construe our findings as a conservative lower-bound estimate. We substantiate this claim in our robustness checks in two main ways. First, we demonstrate that our main effects are driven primarily by male respondents – a demographic group most likely to serve in the military during the war. Second, leveraging the fact that respondents over the age of 54 were not eligible to take part in reserve military service (Security Service Law, Amendment 7 1971), we demonstrate that subsetting our data to include only respondents who were younger than 54 in 1973, and thus reducing the number of “untreated subjects” on the right side of the discontinuity (i.e. the treatment group) increases the precision of our estimates. Together both these additional analyses demonstrate that the consideration of *all respondents* over the age of 18 as treated respondents, regardless of whether they served in the military, likely reduces the magnitude of our effects sizes, leading us to draw more conservative inferences.

We further rule out concerns regarding other cohort-experiences as alternative explanations, by identifying null effects for Female respondents who were less likely to participate in the war, and immigrants who were not living in Israel at the time of the war. This exercise suggests that alternative cohort effects, are unlikely driving our main finding. Instead, based on our robustness checks, we argue that the LATE we now turn to describe, is likely driven by respondents who

served as soldiers during the 1973 war.

Results

In Table 1 we report the local average treatment effect of eligibility to serve in the military during the Yom Kippur war on four outcomes: support for the Labor and Likud parties, self reported undecided vote choice, and self-reported intention not to vote. In line with our theoretical expectation, we demonstrate that military service during the Yom Kippur war reduced support for the Labor party amongst respondents surveyed up to 46 years after the war was concluded. Interestingly, in our main specification, reduced support for the Labor party does not translate into increased support for the main competing party – the Likud, nor does it translate into decreases in turnout. Instead, it appears that eligibility to serve in the military during the Yom Kippur war increased the probability of Israelis to report uncertainty regarding their preferred party. It follows, that soldiers who served in the military during the Yom-Kippur war developed “less stable” political preferences, becoming undecided voters who can potentially be persuaded to vote for a host of different political parties, in any given election.

Table 1: RD Estimates – The Effects of Participation in 1973 War

	Labor	Likud	Undecided	No Vote
	-0.057	0.031	0.055	0.005
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.022)	(0.012)
Bandwidth	10	9	8	9
Obs.	16962	16962	16962	16962

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal, bandwidths and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

We visualize our main effect of military service on support for Labor in Figure 1. Our local average treatment effect is slightly larger than a tenth of a standard deviation, and similar in magnitude to about a third of the overall decline for the Labor party between 1977 and 2019. In Section C.3 of the appendix, we re-run our main model, gradually omitting survey waves which are closer to 1973, to examine whether the effects of participation are primarily short- or long-term effects. We find suggestive evidence that the Yom Kippur war had long-term durable effects on

soldiers' political preferences.

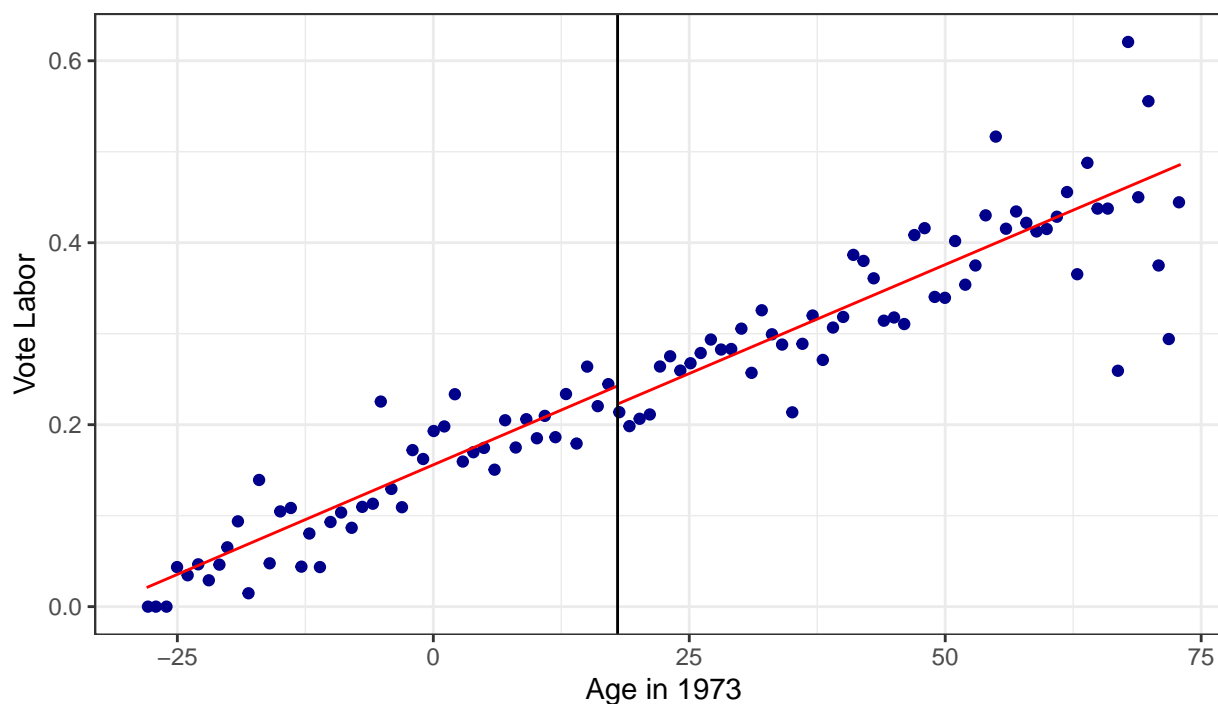


Figure 1: **Regression Discontinuity Plot** - Negative local average treatment effect of eligibility to participate in war on support for Labor party.

Robustness Checks

A central concern regarding the analyses reported in Table 1 relates to the fact that we do not measure respondents' participation in war directly. Instead, we rely on an age-cutoff to differentiate between survey respondents who likely served or did not serve in the military during the Yom Kippur war. Doing so introduces measurement error in our treatment which should bias our point estimates towards zero. In Section C.1 of the appendix we substantiate this argument, by demonstrating that our main effects are driven by native male survey respondents — the demographic most likely to serve in the military during the Yom Kippur war. In contrast, models focusing on female or immigrant who moved to Israel post 1973, yield smaller and imprecisely estimated coefficients (see Table A4). We further substantiate this intuition by demonstrating that filtering from our sample respondents over the age of 54, which were exempt from military reserve service

in 1973, but are considered to be treated in our main specification, increases the magnitude and precision of our point estimates (see Table A5).

These additional results address concerns regarding measurement error. More specifically, results from Table A4 where we estimate our models focusing on male, female and immigrant subsamples, further reduce concerns regarding alternative cohort effects which may confound our main estimate. In other words, if cohort effects such as high-school graduation or eligibility to vote in national elections were driving our main estimates, then all models focusing on male, female, and immigrant survey respondents should yield in precisely estimated effects, in similar magnitude to our main effect from Table 1. However, the fact that our effects are driven by male respondents—those most likely to serve in the military in 1973 conditional on being over the age of 18—enhances our confidence that our effects reported in Table 1, are driven by military service *per se*.

To provide further evidence that military service is driving our main effect, in Figure A3 we estimate 21 models with different age cutoffs ranging between 8-28. Notably, there are only two cutoffs which yield precisely estimated effects. The first, as reported in Table 1, is age 18, suggesting that respondents just old enough to serve in the military are less likely to support the Labor party. However, we also find a *positive* and precisely estimated effect at the age 22 cutoff, suggesting that respondents just old enough to complete their mandatory military service before the war erupted, are *more* likely to support the Labor party, when compared with respondents who were still committed to mandatory military service.

Finally, we leverage another age discontinuity relating to Men's exemption from reserve military service, which at the time was set at age 54 ([Security Service Law, Amendemtn 7 1971](#)). In Figure A4, we further estimate 10 models with different age cutoffs ranging between ages 50-60. The only precisely estimated effect we find is around age 54, suggesting that respondents just old enough to be exempt from reserve military service are more likely to vote for Labor. We construe the patterns reported in Figures A3-A4, as further evidence that our main negative effect is driven by soldiers conscripted in military service during the Yom Kippur war. In light of the war and their

military service, such soldiers are less likely to support the Labor party.

In addition to the analyses above, we further consider the sensitivity of our results to alternative modeling specifications. First, in Table A6, we adapt a second order polynomial function. Second, in Table A7, we estimate our models with alternative kernel functions used to construct the local-polynomial estimator. Third, in Table A8 we estimate our model extracting one survey wave at a time. Fourth, in Table A9 we report additional models which include cycle fixed-effects and cluster errors at the cycle level. Lastly, in Table A10, we estimate additional models controlling for pre-treatment variables, including: age, education, ethnicity, and religiosity. Across all additional models, our main results remain consistent.

Mechanism

The evidence reported in Table 1, confirms our main theoretical expectation that the experience of military service during a blunder war reduces support for the political party overseeing the war effort. However, this finding may be driven by multiple mechanisms. We argue that long-term decreased support for the ruling party, is driven by soldiers' associating the ruling party with incompetence in security affairs, and internalizing the costs of lack of preparation for interstate war. As a test of this mechanism, we consider two recurring questions from the INES, which ask respondents to: i) evaluate parties in terms of their competence to address security affairs, and ii) express whether they believe Israel should prepare for war or engage in peace negotiations, to ensure its citizens' safety.

Based on our theoretical framework, we expect that military service during the Yom Kippur war will lead respondents' to: i) update and adapt less-favorable views regarding Labor security competence and valence with regards to security affairs, and ii) prefer military preparedness over peace negotiations, to ensure Israel's safety. These preference would address the negative consequences of the Yom Kippur war, which resulted from lack of perpetration and the Labor party's unwillingness to mobilize forces at an earlier stage before the Egyptian-Syrian surprise attack.

The first two columns in Table 2 are in line with our theoretical expectation. First, in column 1, we demonstrate that respondents who were just old enough to serve as soldiers during the Yom

Kippur war, are less likely to agree that the Labor party is the most suited party to address Israel's security affairs. We visualize these effects in Figure 2. Second, we show that respondents who were just old enough to serve in the war, are more likely to prefer perpetration for war, rather than engagement in peace negotiations, as a means to assure Israeli security (see column 2 of Table 2, as well as Figure 3). Together, these results emphasize that respondents who likely served as soldiers during the Yom Kippur war, have internalized the costs of military unpreparedness, and associate the Labor party which was unprepared for the Yom Kippur war, as less competent to deal with security issues.

Table 2: RD Estimates – Potential Mechanisms

	Labor Security	Prepare War	Ideology	Right	Left	Spending	HH Rooms	HH Members
	-0.072	0.118	-0.175	0.019	-0.041	-0.04	0.126	-0.136
	(0.039)	(0.055)	(0.124)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.088)	(0.077)	(0.112)
Band	8	7	8	10	8	12	11	9
Obs.	12557	6879	13890	14957	13890	9932	15542	15693

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal bandwidths, and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

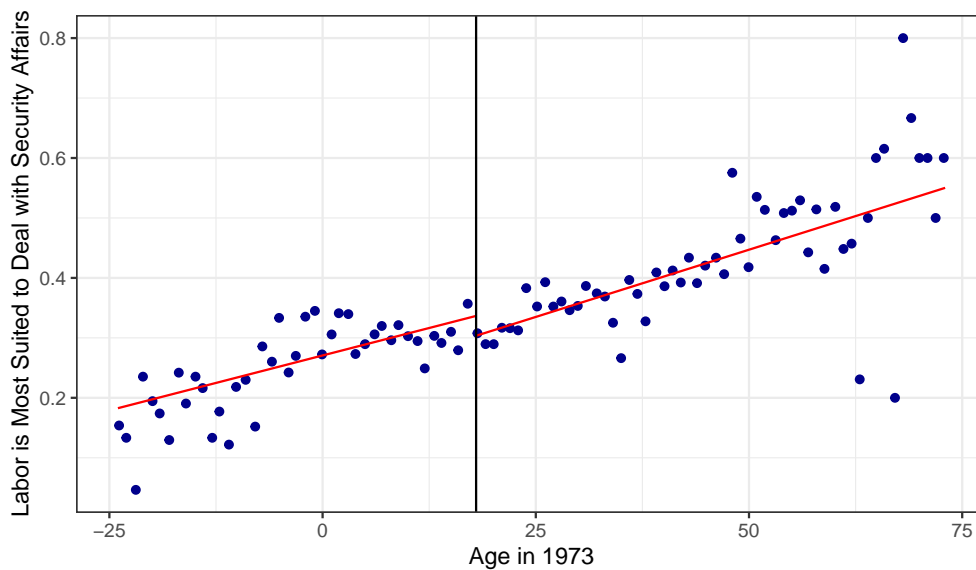


Figure 2: **Regression Discontinuity Plot** - Negative local average treatment effect of eligibility to participate in war on belief that Labor is most competent to address security affairs.

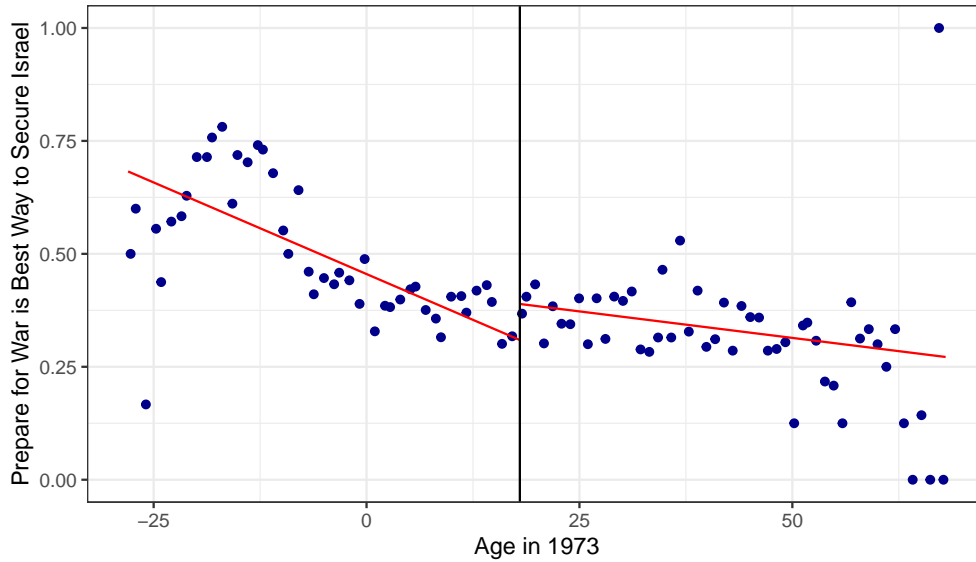


Figure 3: **Regression Discontinuity Plot** - Positive local average treatment effect of eligibility to participate in war on stating perpetration for war as a best policy to assure Israeli security.

In Table 2, we further rule out two alternative mechanisms relating to ideological change, and self-interest, which could potentially explain why serving in the military during a blunder war might lead to reduced long-term support for the Labor party. In the second, third, and fourth columns of Table 2, we demonstrate that participating in the 1973 war did not impact Israelis' ideological standings (measured through a 7 point ideology scale), or tendency to identify as right- (left-) wing partisans. Similarly, in the final three columns of Table 2, we demonstrate that participating in the war did not impact respondents' economic well-being, measured by household spending, number of rooms in respondents' household, or number of people in respondents' household. These additional analyses lend further credibility to our main theoretical argument by which decreased support for incumbents is a result of soldiers' updated perceptions regarding the Labor party's competence and valence in security affairs, which led to long term changes in their political preferences.

Scope Conditions: Participating in Successful Wars does not affect Political Preferences

A key component of our theoretical framework is that military service during wars can impact soldiers' long term support for the ruling party, because military service renders wars more salient

and costly, and therefore soldiers are more likely to pay attention to war dynamics, and use the war as a heuristic informing their partisan preferences. In other words, if soldiers witness a mismanaged war, they are likely to use the war as a “learning experience”, and draw inferences from the war about the valence and competence of the party leading the war effort.

Accordingly, we expect that military service during war will lead soldiers to withdraw support from ruling parties, in cases of blunder wars where the ruling party’s incompetence, is revealed during the war, and made salient to soldiers by virtue of their military service. However, participation in successful wars should not lead to negative effects, because such wars do not reveal negative information regarding incumbent parties’ competence and valence, and therefore soldiers are less likely to use such wars as a heuristic informing their partisan preferences.

To empirically examine this scope condition of our theory we replicate our analyses while focusing on eligibility to serve in the military during a successful war fought by the same incumbent Labor party six years prior to the Yom Kippur war. By identifying the effects of eligibility to participate in the 1967 war, we seek to demonstrate that serving in the military during a time of war in and of itself does not have negative effects on support for the ruling party. Instead, only military service in blunder wars lead soldiers to withdraw support from incumbents.

In our additional analyses we employ a similar identification strategy and model, but recode the running variable and discontinuity cutoff as described in Equation 3:

$$Eligibility\ to\ Participate\ in\ War = \begin{cases} \text{Yes if age in 1967} \geq 18 \\ \text{No if age in 1967} < 18 \end{cases} \quad (3)$$

We report our main results regarding the effects of participation in the 1967 War in Table 3. The point estimate on support for the ruling Labor party is positive, but as expected – substantively small, and imprecisely estimated. We therefore interpret this to suggest that participation in successful interstate wars does not affect soldiers’ political preferences. Indeed, across all other outcomes, we do not find any statistically or substantively significant impact of military service on other political preferences.

Table 3: RD Estimates – The Effects of Conscription Eligibility in 1967

	Labor	Likud	Undecided	No Vote
	0.016 (0.023)	0.007 (0.025)	0.008 (0.017)	0.01 (0.011)
Bandwidth	14	12	15	11
Obs.	16962	16962	16962	16962

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal bandwidths, and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Conclusion

In this paper, we consider whether military service during interstate war affects soldiers’ support for the ruling party overseeing the war effort. Building on research regarding the electoral effects of conflict, and theories regarding the impact of personal experiences on partisan preferences, we propose a series of expectations regarding how, why, and when serving in the military at times of interstate war can lead soldiers to withdraw support from the ruling party. Employing a regression discontinuity design, we demonstrate that survey respondents who likely served in the military during the 1973 Yom Kippur war, report over a tenth of a standard deviation decrease in support for the Labor party in seventeen waves of the INES from 1977-2019. The magnitude of this effect is equivalent to about a third of the general decline in support for the Labor party between 1977 and 2019, and persists well after the war has concluded.

We argue, and provide suggestive evidence that our main effects are driven by soldiers’ re-evaluation of the Labor party’s competence to deal with security threats, and increased support for policies which secure preparedness for conflict and avoid future blunders. We further rule out two alternative mechanisms relating to ideological change and decreases in personal well-being as a consequence of serving in the military during the war. Lastly, in line with our theoretical expectations, we demonstrate that serving in the military during successful (rather than blunder) wars, does not affect partisan preferences. Together, our evidence provides strong empirical support for our argument that wars can have profound consequences for soldiers’ partisan preferences, if a war is mismanaged.

We contribute to the existing literature in three central ways. First, we build on studies which consider the effects of war and its casualties on mass-support for incumbents ([Gartner and Segura 1998](#); [Boettcher and Cobb 2009](#); [Kriner and Shen 2012](#); [Koch 2011](#); [Karol and Miguel 2007](#); [Berinsky 2007](#)), and demonstrate that in addition to the short-term effects of war on *public* support for incumbents, participation in war can have a long-term negative effect on *soldiers'* support for the ruling party managing the war effort. Second, we contribute to the conflict literature which identifies the effects of wars on conflict related attitudes and social outcomes ([Blattman 2009](#); [Erickson and Stoker 2011](#); [Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015](#); [Littman 2018](#); [Angrist 1990](#)), by demonstrating that the experience of serving in the military during a war, can lead soldiers' to update their partisan preference, and reduce support for a party overseeing a mismanaged war. Lastly, we contribute to literature on the formation of political and partisan attitudes ([Krosnick and Alwin 1989](#); [Sears and Valentino 1997](#); [Erickson and Stoker 2011](#); [Osborne, Sears and Valentino 2011](#); [Aguilar, Balcells and Cebolla-Boado 2011](#); [Margalit 2013](#); [Aksoy, Eichengreen and Saka 2020](#); [Dinas and Northmore-Ball 2020](#); [Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2020](#)), by demonstrating that military service at times of war can have long-term effects on soldiers' partisan preferences, if a war is mismanaged.

In addition, our evidence provides important insights for scholars of Israeli politics, who seek to understand the ongoing decline of support for the Labor party in Israel. As we demonstrate in [Figure 4](#), public support for Labor declined from 25% in 1977 to 6% in 2019. This decline is remarkable for a party which has held office since the founding of the Israeli state, until four years following the Yom Kippur war. The findings in this paper, suggest that one reason for the decline of the Labor party relates to the incompetence that voters ascribed to the party, as a result of the mismanaged Yom Kippur war. Indeed, the magnitude of the negative LATE of eligibility to serve in the military during the war on support for Labor, is equivalent to a third of the overall decline in support for Labor between 1977 and 2019.

Despite the contributions of this paper, our findings are not without limitation. First, like other RDD applications ([Cavaille and Marshall 2019](#)), we do not measure actual service directly, but

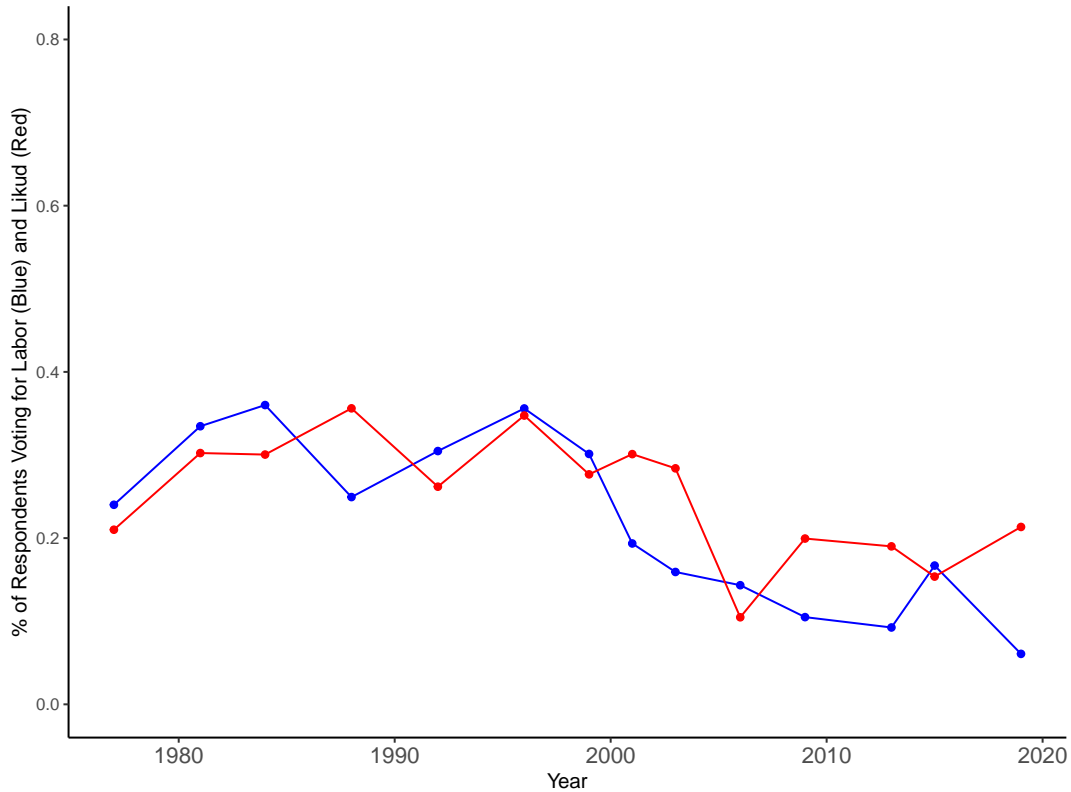


Figure 4: Average Support for Likud (red) and Labor (blue) Over Time

rely instead on an age-cutoff determining eligibility to participate in the war. As we argue and demonstrate above, this approach likely leads us to *underestimate* the true effect of serving in the military during the war, on long-term support for the Labor party. That said, future research may leverage other empirical strategies in order to provide additional evidence regarding the effects of war on soldiers’ support for incumbents.

Second, our outcomes are primarily focused on self-reported rather than revealed preferences. We believe these shifts in public opinion to be important in and of themselves, given evidence of leader’s responsiveness to public opinion (Tomz et al. 2020). However, future research might consider focusing on behaviors such as party registration, to determine the extent to which serving in the military during a war affects soldiers’ partisan behaviors.

Lastly, like other studies which consider the effects of war on mass-support for incumbents (Gartner and Segura 1998; Gartner 2008a; Kriner and Shen 2007; Karol and Miguel 2007), or the experience of combat on soldiers attitudes and behaviors (Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik

2015; Blattman 2009),⁵ our evidence is drawn from a single country. We provide empirical support for our theoretically motivated scope conditions with an additional examination of the 1967 war. However, like any empirical study, future research should establish the generalizability of our findings in additional countries and wars (McDermott 2011).

⁵Though see Littman (2018) for a multi-site investigation in Uganda and Liberia.

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War Experiences Can Shape Soldiers' Support for Incumbents

Online Appendix

A	INES Survey	SI-1
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A INES Survey

In our analyses we consider recurring questions from 17 waves on the Israeli National Election Study (INES) conducted in Israel between 1977-2019. As reported in Table A1, our data includes 19,613 survey responses. Descriptive statistics for all variables employed in our analyses are presented in Table A2. Note that for some variables (e.g. War over Peace) do not recur in all waves, and thus are reported as missing in some waves.

Table A1: Observations Per Wave

	Wave	Observations
1	1977	1,372
2	1981	1,249
3	1981B	1,075
4	1981C	1,237
5	1984	1,259
6	1988	873
7	1988B	416
8	1992	1,192
9	1996	1,168
10	1999	1,075
11	2001	1,249
12	2003	1,083
13	2006	1,194
14	2009	1,037
15	2013	1,457
16	2015	1,330
17	2019	1,347

Table A2: Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Age 1973	19,258	18.937	19.719	-28.000	87.000
Vote Labor	19,449	0.224	0.417	0.000	1.000
Vote Likud	19,449	0.257	0.437	0.000	1.000
Undecided	19,449	0.136	0.343	0.000	1.000
No Vote	19,449	0.036	0.186	0.000	1.000
Male	18,134	0.502	0.500	0.000	1.000
Education	18,909	1.114	0.762	0.000	2.000
Religiosity	19,387	0.913	0.952	0.000	3.000
Ashkenazi	19,319	0.387	0.487	0.000	1.000
Ideology	16,217	3.409	1.753	1.000	7.000
Right Wing	17,292	0.481	0.500	0.000	1.000
Left Wing	16,217	0.255	0.436	0.000	1.000
Labor Security	14,708	0.307	0.461	0.000	1.000
War over Peace	8,008	0.417	0.493	0.000	1.000
HH Spending	11,873	2.899	1.215	1.000	5.000
Rooms in HH	17,892	3.676	1.270	0.000	32.000
People in HH	18,071	3.768	1.902	0.000	50.000

Labor Security is a variable taking the value of 1, if a respondent believes that the Labor party is best suited to handle security issues. Labor Economics is a variable taking the value of 1, if a respondent believes that the Labor party is best suited to handle economic issues. War over Peace is a variable taking the value of 1, if a respondent believes that the best way to protect Israel is to prepare for war.

A.1 Coding Main Variables

Our main running variable is respondents Age in 1973. To create this variables we took respondents age when responding to a given survey, and calculated their age in 1973. This variable takes negative values for respondents born after 1973. We plot the distribution of the our running variable, by survey wave, in Figure A1.

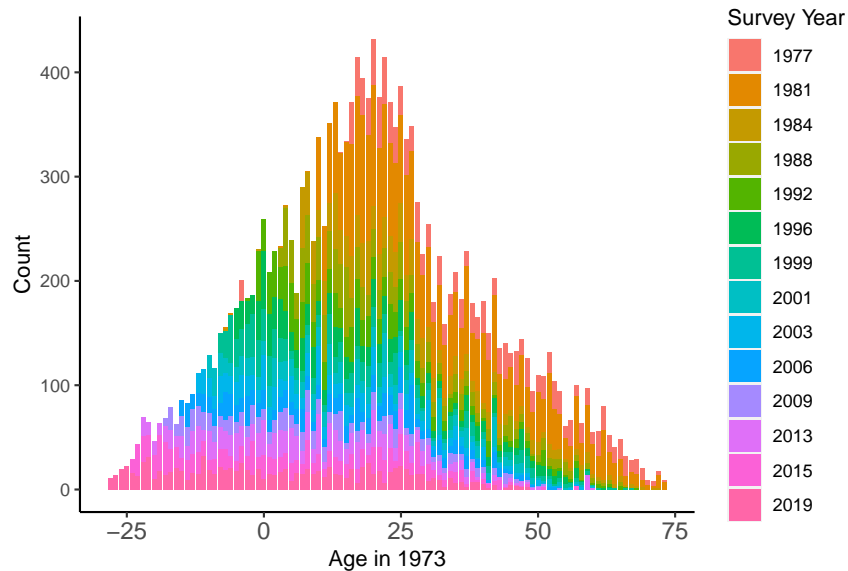


Figure A1: **Distribution of Running Variable by Survey Year**

Our main outcome of interest is respondents self-reported vote share in an upcoming election. To create this question, we leverage the following question, which asks:

- If the Knesset elections were to take place today, which party list would you vote for?

Our `Vote Labor` variable takes a value of 1 if respondents report they will vote for the Labor party, and 0 otherwise. Our `Vote Likud` variable takes a value of 1 if respondents report they will vote for the Likud party, and 0 otherwise. Our `No Vote` variable takes a value of 1 if respondents report they will not vote, and 0 otherwise. Lastly, our `Undecided` variable takes a value of 1 if respondents report they are undecided, and 0 otherwise.

As noted in the main text, our two-main outcome relating to mechanisms leverage the following questions which ask:

- In order to secure its safety, should Israel prepare for war or engage in peace negotiations
 - Possible answers include: Prepare for war, engage in peace negotiations, or do both.
- What party [leader] is better suited to deal with security affairs
 - Possible answers include main large parties (in some waves leaders) competing for Knesset

We code our first variable War over Peace as 1, if respondents state that the best way to secure safety is by preparing for war, and 0 otherwise. In addition, we code our Labor Security as 1, if respondents state that Labor is most suited to deal with security affairs, and 0 otherwise. Our Ideology variable is based on a question which asks respondents:

- There is much talk about left and right in politics. Where would you rank yourself along a left-right continuum, where 1 is the right end and 7 is the left end?

In the few waves where the ideology scale presented to respondents was not a 1:7 scale, we recoded responses into a 1:7 scale for consistency sake. Our Left Wing variable codes as 1 any respondent who reports a value higher than 3 on the Ideology scale. Similarly, our Right Wing variable codes as 1 any respondent who reports a value lower than 4 on the Ideology scale. Lastly, our economic standing measures regarding household spending, rooms in household, and people in household, as well as our gender, ethnicity, religiosity, and education measures are based on standard demographic questions from the INES.

B RDD Diagnostics

In Figure A2 we report results from a diagnostic test proposed by McCrary (2008). This figure provides a formal test to rule out the possibility of manipulation and selection in our running variable. As reported in Figure A2, the marginal density of our running variable (age in 1978), is continuous around age 18, reducing concerns regarding endogenous sorting around our threshold.

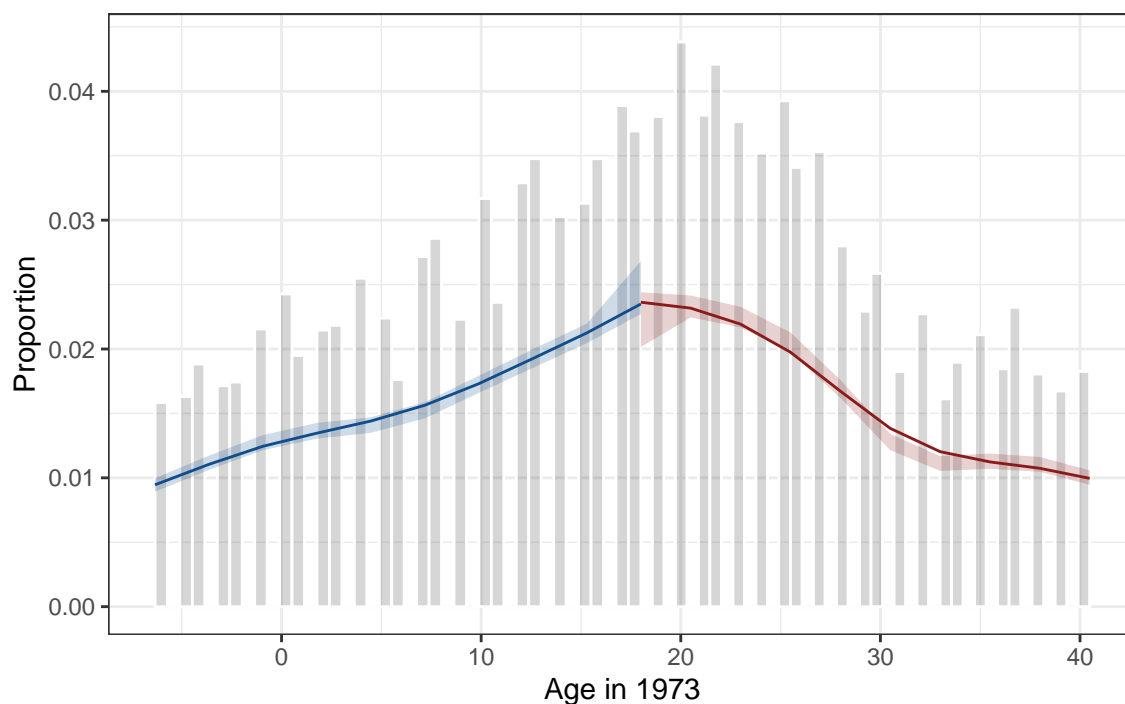


Figure A2: **McCrary Density Test** - This figure and its associated test, suggests that there is not sorting around the cutoff of our running variable.

In Figure A3 we run several placebo tests, to consider the possibility that similar effects emerge when focusing on arbitrary age-cutoffs. Specifically, we consider a cutoff which compares support for Labor amongst respondents just over or below ages 8-28. Interestingly, the results reported in Figure A3 yield only two precisely estimated effects (shaded in red). The first precisely estimated effect is the negative point estimate reported in Table 1, relating to the negative effect of eligibility to serve in the military during the Yom Kippur war (age 18), on support for Labor. The second precisely estimated effect is a positive point estimate, at age 22. We interpret this positive point estimate as evidence that respondents just old enough to complete their three year mandatory military service before the war erupted, are *more* likely to support the Labor party, because they were less likely to serve in the military during the war.

In Figure A4 we further estimate 10 models with age cutoffs ranging between 50-60. We find that the only precisely estimated effect from these models is around the age of 54. We attribute this precisely estimated effect to exemption age from reserve military service. In other words,

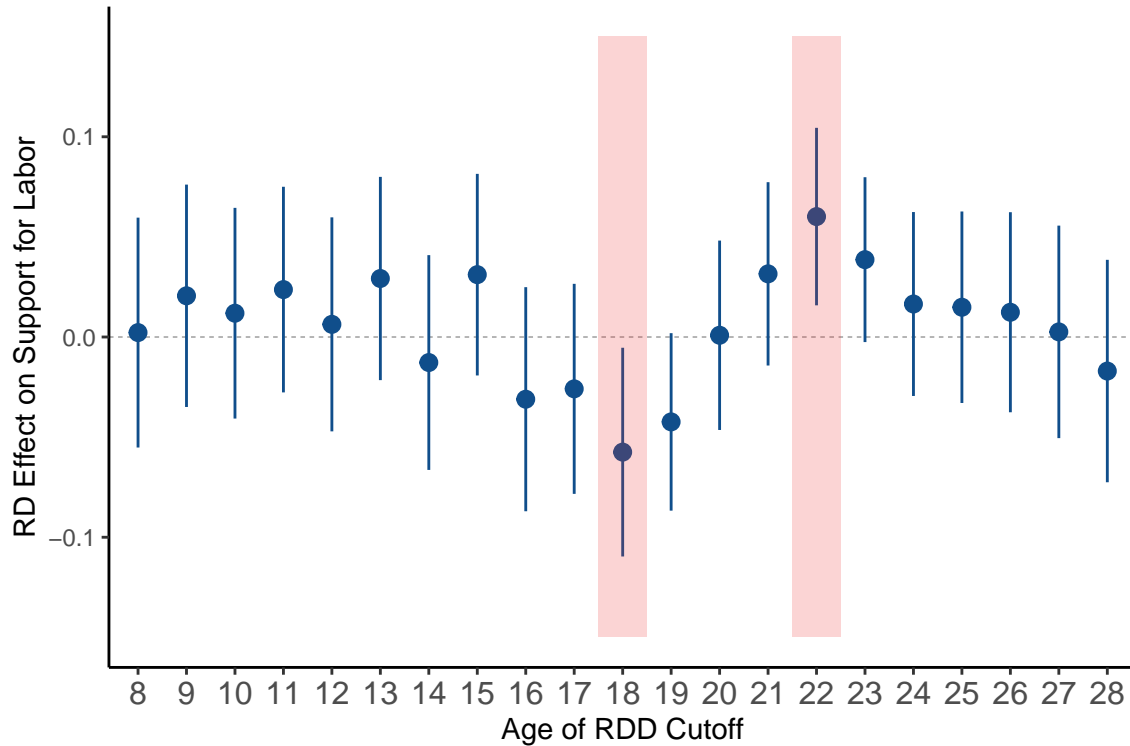


Figure A3: **RD Estimates Using Alternative Cutoff Points** - This figure contrasts the negative and significant RD effects for the 1955 cohort, with other cohorts around the discontinuity. The figure demonstrates that respondents just old enough to serve in the military report lower support for Labor, and respondents just old enough to be exempt from mandatory service report higher support for Labor.

respondents just old enough to be exempt from reserve military service are more likely to vote for Labor. Taken together, we construe the patterns reported in Figures A3-A4, as further evidence that our main negative effect is driven by soldiers conscripted in military service during the Yom Kippur war. In light of the war and the incompetence revealed by the Labor party, such soldiers are less likely to support the Labor party well after the war concluded.

Lastly, In Table A3 we consider the extent to which several covariates are continuous around the discontinuity. As noted by De la Cuesta and Imai (2016), such continuity, which some refer to as balance, is not a necessary condition for our design to be valid. Regardless, it appears that subjects around the continuity are similar in terms of education and religiosity. However, it appears that treated respondents in our sample are less likely to be of Ashkenazi descent.

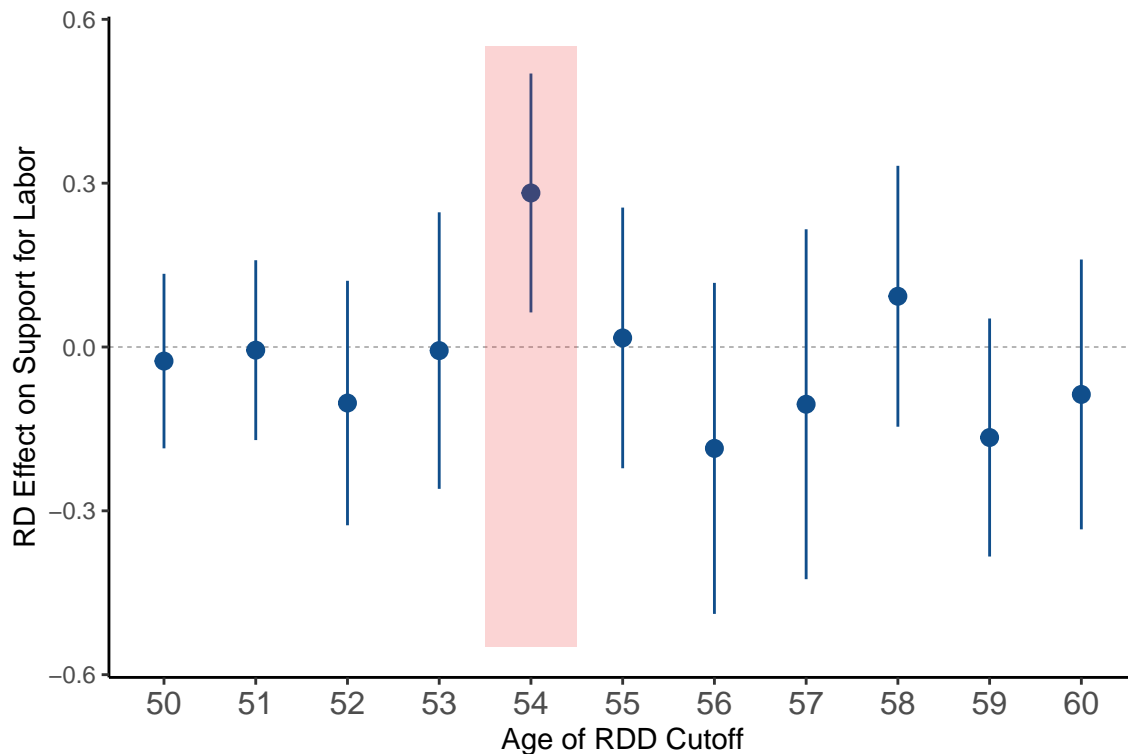


Figure A4: **RD Estimates Using Alternative Cutoff Points II** - This figure demonstrates that male respondents just old enough to be exempt from reserve duty report higher levels of support for Labor.

Table A3: Demographic Differences Around the Discontinuity

	Education	Religiosity	Ashkenazi
	0.027	0.034	-0.103
	(0.081)	(0.057)	(0.037)
Bandwidth	8	10	5
Obs.	16474	16919	16828

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal bandwidths, and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

C Robustness Checks

C.1 Ruling Out Concerns Regarding Measurement Error and Cohort Effects

A central concern regarding the analyses reported in Table 1 relates to the fact that we do not measure respondents' participation in war directly. Instead, we rely on an age-cutoff to differentiate

between survey respondents who participated or did not participate in the Yom Kippur war. In the main text we argue that our approach introduces measurement error in our treatment. We expect this measurement error to bias our point estimates towards zero. This is since, respondents' too young to participate in the war could not have served in the military, whereas respondents old enough to participate in the war did not necessarily serve in the military. It follows that some respondents which we consider to have participated in the war, and expect to report lower-support for the incumbent party, may have not participated in the war, and may have not changed their evaluation of the incumbent.

To substantiate our argument regarding downward bias introduced in light of potential measurement error, in Table A4 we replicate our main models on three sub-samples of the INES: male respondents, female respondents, and respondents who immigrated to Israel after 1973. These models include two outcomes: support for labor and self-reported undecidedness.

We have reason to believe that men who were older than 18 in 1973, were more likely than women who were older than 18 in 1973, to serve in the military during the war. Accordingly our point estimate should be significant and larger amongst our male sample, when compared with the female sample. More so, men who were older than 18 in 1973, were more likely to participate in the war, when compared with immigrants who moved to Israel after 1973 and are not included in our main sample. Accordingly, the point estimate amongst our immigrant sub-sample should be insignificant and close to zero.

Table A4: RD Estimates – The Effects of Conscription Eligibility in 1973 by Subgroups

	Labor	Labor	Labor	Undecided	Undecided	Undecided
	-0.071	-0.048	-0.008	0.081	0.01	0.034
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.048)	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.051)
Bandwidth	9	11	15	10	13	16
Sample	Male	Female	Immigrant	Male	Female	Immigrant
Obs.	7813	7699	2124	7813	7699	2142

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal bandwidths and a triangular kernel, Robust standard errors in parentheses.

The findings in Table A4 confirm our expectations. When estimating our main models amongst

male survey respondent the point estimate of our average treatment effect on support for Labor increases substantially from a tenth of a standard deviation, to a seventeenth of a standard deviation. Similar patterns emerge with regards to our undecidedness outcome.

We interpret the increased point estimates in our male-only sample to suggest that the inclusion of “treated” subjects who are less-likely to serve in the military in 1973 (i.e. non-compliers), introduces downward-bias in our main estimates. Indeed, the point estimates in models which focus on female survey respondents are smaller and estimated imprecisely. Likewise, models focusing on our immigrant sub-sample yield very small estimates with high uncertainty.

These additional models help address concerns regarding measurement error. However, they also reduce concerns regarding alternative cohort effects which may be confounding our main estimate. In other words, if cohort effects such as high-school graduation or eligibility to vote in national elections are driving our main estimates, than all models reported in Table A4 should result in precisely estimated effects, in similar magnitude to our main effect from Table 1. However, the fact that our effects are driven by male respondents—those most likely to serve in the military in 1973 conditional on being over the age of 18— enhances our confidence that the negative effects on support for the Labor incumbent party are driven by participation in interstate war.

Table A5: RD Estimates – The Effects of Participation in 1973 War (Omiting Respondents 54+)

	Labor	Likud	Undecided	No Vote
	-0.06	0.032	0.055	-0.004
	(0.024)	(0.032)	(0.023)	(0.010)
Bandwidth	10	8	8	15
Obs.	16004	16004	16004	16004

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal, bandwidths and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

C.2 Alternative RDD Specifications

In this section, we consider the robustness of our result to several alternative specifications. First, in Table A6 we demonstrate the robustness of our findings when employing a second order polynomial. Second, In table A7, we employ Uniform and Epechnikov Kernels. Doing so, does not

substantially change our main findings.

Table A6: The Effects of Conscription Eligibility in 1973 – (2nd Order Polynomial)

	Labor	Likud	Undecided	No Vote
	-0.057	0.041	0.062	0.007
	(0.027)	(0.035)	(0.026)	(0.014)
Bandwidth	10	14	13	15
Obs.	16962	16962	16962	16962

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal bandwidths, and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Table A7: The Effects of Conscription Eligibility in 1973 – (Alternative Kernel Functions)

	Labor	Labor	Likud	Likud	Undecided	Undecided	No Vote	No Vote
	-0.06	-0.062	0.029	0.029	0.058	0.054	0.007	0.014
	(0.027)	(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.021)	(0.02)	(0.014)	(0.016)
Bandwidth	9	8	9	7	8	8	15	10
Kernel	Epanechnikov	Uniform	Epanechnikov	Uniform	Epanechnikov	Uniform	Epanechnikov	Uniform
Obs.	16962	16962	16962	16962	16962	16962	16962	16962

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal bandwidths. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

In Table A8 we seek to rule out the possibility that our results are driven by a particular survey wave. To do so, we omit one wave at a time and our estimate our model with one missing year of survey data. Despite reductions in sample size, our results remain similar. In Table A9 we consider models with a survey-wave fixed-effect, where we cluster our errors by wave. Our results are robust to these additional models. Finally, in Table A10, we consider additional models, controlling for pre-treatment covariates, including: age, education, religiosity, and ethnicity. Point estimates from these models yield similar results. Indeed, including controls increases the magnitude of our estimates, and when doing so, we further identify a positive effect of serving in the military, on support for the Likud party.

C.3 Long Term Effects

In this final section we consider the extent to which our main effect, which pools 17 survey waves from the years 1977-2019, is likely to be a long term effect. To do so, we estimate our original

Table A8: RD Estimates – Omit One Year from Sample

	77	81	84	88	92	96	99	01	03	06	09	13	15	19
	-0.061	-0.062	-0.057	-0.059	-0.056	-0.05	-0.055	-0.059	-0.059	-0.062	-0.056	-0.059	-0.056	-0.05
	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.028)
Bandwidth	9	9	9	10	10	11	14	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
Obs.	15596	13519	15804	15763	15889	15903	16026	16032	16152	16055	16190	15794	15908	15875

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal bandwidths, and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Each column omits survey respondents from one INES wave.

Table A9: RD Estimates – The Effects of Participation in 1973 War (Accounting for Cycle)

	Labor	Likud	Undecided	No Vote
	0.05	0.027	0.05	0.001
	(0.019)	(0.029)	(0.019)	(0.013)
Bandwidth	9	7	9	10
Fixed-Effect	Cycle	Cycle	Cycle	Cycle
Cluster	Cycle	Cycle	Cycle	Cycle
Obs.	16962	16962	16962	16962

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal, bandwidths and a triangular kernel. Models include cycle fixed-effects, and robust standard errors clustered by cycle in parentheses.

Table A10: RD Estimates – The Effects of Participation in 1973 War (with Controls)

	Labor	Likud	Undecided	No Vote
	-0.054	0.053	0.034	0.001
	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.019)	(0.013)
Bandwidth	14	11	13	11
Obs.	14507	14507	14507	14507

Regression discontinuity models with MSE optimal, bandwidths and a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Controls include gender, religiosity, ethnicity, and education.

models, but gradually omit survey waves one year at a time. Omitting waves reduces our statistical power, and naturally increases the uncertainty of our models, when compared to the pooled full sample model. However, doing so, and examining the magnitude of point estimates provides some insight into the durability of the effects we identify, and the extent to which they may manifest amongst survey respondents years after the war was concluded.

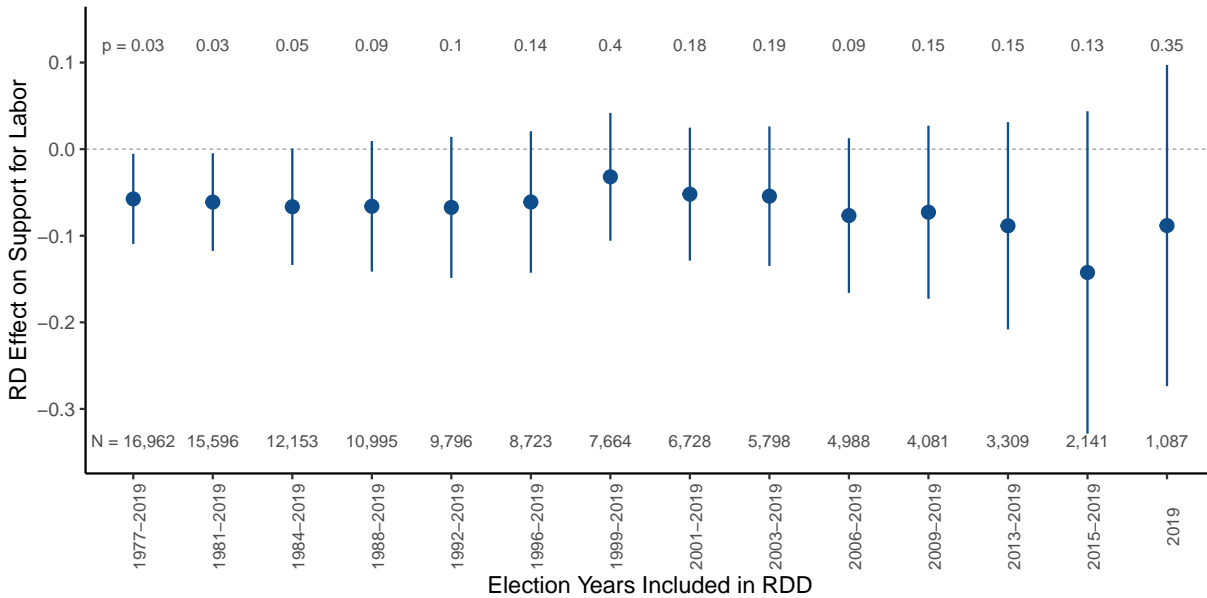


Figure A5: **Point estimates from 14 RDD models** - In these models we gradually omit survey waves, in order to consider the long-term effects of war participation on our main outcome – Support for Labor.

We report the results from these additional RDD models in Figure A5. The point estimates of these models remain rather consistent, when omitting survey waves. However, as expected the standard errors of models with fewer observations are indeed wider – limiting our ability in some instances to reject null hypotheses at conventional levels of statistical significance. However, we interpret the rather stable point estimates across models, and the p values which in many models approach conventional levels of statistical significance, to suggest that participation in the Yom Kippur war had a durable negative effect on Israeli soldiers’ support for the Labor party.

D Military Conscription and Mobilization in 1973

A central underlying assumption in our empirical analysis, is that respondents, and especially male respondents who were at the age 18 in 1973, were more likely to serve as soldiers during the Yom Kippur war. Mandatory military service in the Israeli case ([Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015](#)), as well as previous documentation of mass-mobilization during the Yom Kippur war ([Safrai 2019](#)), warrant this assumption as to be plausible. However, to gain more insight on recruitment and mobilization in 1973, we filed a FOIA request, asking the Israeli military's spokesman to provide details regarding the share of Israeli citizens in the 1955 cohort who were recruited to the military during 1973. We also asked for information regarding the share of military reserve soldiers who were enlisted to serve in the military during the 1973 war.

We present the response from the Israeli military's spokesman in [Figure A6](#). The formal response notes that almost 70% of men born in 1955 were enlisted for military service in 1973. Since this figure includes Arab citizens, the share of military service amongst Jews (the population which we focus on), is likely higher. Similarly, the response from the military's spokesman confirms that during 1973, the military engaged in mass mobilization, recruiting 82% of eligible reserve soldiers throughout the year.

The spokesman emphasizes that these numbers are based on old records which were hand coded, and therefore their precision should be considered with caution. However, the general insights from the response reported in [Figure A6](#), emphasize that the probability of serving in the military, conditional on being over the age of 18 in 1973, was substantively high especially for men, and that mobilization amongst eligible reserve soldiers was very high as well. Together, these points provide further intuition regarding the suitability of our empirical approach.

לישראל	ההגנה	צבא
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המידע	חופש	תא
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תשפ"א	סיון	כ"ו
2021	מאי	31



לכבוד,
אנה גיטמנסקי

הנדון: **בקשתך למידע בנושא גיוס במלחמת יום כיפור**
שלך: בקשתך מתאריך 18 באפריל 2021

1. בקשתך בנושא שבנדון התקבלה בצה"ל והועברה להתייחסות הגורמים המקצועיים. להלן התייחסות צה"ל לבקשתך.
2. להלן אחוזי הגיוס בעבור שנת הלידה 1955 (ששנת הגיוס העיקרית שלה היא 1973):
גברים – 68.9%
נשים – 44.17%
3. מתוך כלל המשרתים בסוג שירות מילואים, 82% זומנו למילואים פעילים במהלך שנת 1973. לא ניתן להוציא את הנתונים בפילוח לפי שירות מילואים בתקופת המלחמה בלבד.
4. יצוין כי הנתונים המובאים מתבססים על נתונים ישנים ושהוזנו באופן ידני, ומאז שהוזנו, הוכנסו למערכת הממוחשבת. על כן, הנתונים עלולים להיות לא מדויקים.
5. בברכה,

סא"ל מיקה
רע"ן אסטרטגיה
ב/דובר צה"ל והממונה על חופש המידע בצה"ל
ליפשיץ
ומבצעים

Figure A6: **Response to FOIA from the Israeli Military's spokesman** - This response details that 68.9% of male and 44.17% of female citizens born in 1955 were recruited to the Israeli military. In addition, 82% of eligible reserve soldiers were mobilized for service in 1973.