

**Group Conflict, Voting, and Legitimacy:
A Cross-National Perspective on Political Integration**

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1. Introduction

The question which factors constitute and create a good and satisfying democracy has been addressed from different perspectives and angles. Robert Dahl (1975) has probably given the most well known and parsimonious definition what constitutes democracy: free political competition, i.e. contestation, and the right to participate, i.e. inclusiveness. These, however, are formal criteria. Dahl has also highlighted that these formal rights become meaningful only by the content they are filled with. Only if competition is not only formally guaranteed but substantively meaningful real choices are possible. Only then, the division of labor between government and opposition and change in government makes sense.

This is what democracy is for: to mediate between different interests and provide generally accepted binding decisions. Differentiation of interest at the same time is the justification for democracy. Without differentiation, democracy would not be necessary.

From this some simple considerations follow: 1) conflict is not an evil for democracy, it is its essential constituan element; 2) different interests demand different political supply; 3) only if differentiation of political supply exist, choices are possible; only than democracy may be satisfying.

These are only some aspects. They concentrate on the supply-side of politics as one of the crucial factors constituting a democracy which might motivate people to participate, to make choices and to be satisfied. Furthermore, since it relates to choices, it relates to competition between offers of possible future supply. Thus, the analyses presented here concentrate on parties and party systems as the principle actors of political competition in democracies. The argument simply is, that only if there are choices for voters, 1) they have a reason to vote, 2) they can find an political offer compatible with their preferences, and hence 3) may be satisfied with the way their democracy works. The respective hypotheses will be specified below making use of group theory and the somewhat neglected perspective of electoral research on negative in addition to positive identification.

Analyses will be based on individual level data of voter's perceptions and behavior of 22 post election surveys in a first step and macro level analysis of these countries in a second step. Our data source is the CSES I- study¹.

1 <http://www.umich.edu/~nes/cses/cses.htm>

2. Theoretical Frame and Hypotheses

Research into the relationship between individuals and parties in election research has a long-established tradition – at least in theory. However, little use is made of it at least in comparative empirical research. Two different conceptions of relationships are connected to the two big centers of election research in the United States. The Columbia approach of Lazarsfeld and colleagues emphasizes *interactions* as constitutive elements of relationships and affiliations (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, 1954). In contrast, The Michigan conception emphasizes *identification* as the constitutive element. Both approaches center around the triad individual – group – politics (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960: 299). Whereas the Columbia approach is very much sociological, the Michigan approach is rather social-psychological.

Whatever the mechanisms constituting a relationship between individuals and parties, most often highlighted have been the positive aspects of the relationship, c.f. the concept of party identification.

In a positive sense, a party might serve as a reference point for individual orientation, i.e. the conscious self-selection of a particular group as reference point for evaluations and action. These mechanisms refer to the *positive* impact of groups on individual behavior, i.e. congruence between the group and the individual. This is, in a sense, the *Tocquevillean* approach to the relationship between group and individual. The concept of reference group includes, however, also a *negative* component. Individuals may form their attitudes and actions *in opposition* to a group toward which they are negative. Thus, references to groups, including parties, can be positive or negative. For an individual there may exist positive as well as negative reference groups (Merton 1962). This conception of group is closely related to a *conflict theoretical* approach (Coser 1968; Dahrendorf 1975, 1979).

In election research, Campbell et al. have pointed to this by saying that "the political party serves as the group toward which the individual may develop an identification, *positive or negative*, of some intensity" (Campbell et al. 1960: 122; emphasis added). However, the traditional research approach to party identification has concentrated on the positive affective aspects and impact on political action (Richardson 1991: 759). But it is known that voters quite often cast their vote against rather than for a candidate or party (V.O. Key 1960; Fiorina 1974; also Maggiotto/Piereson 1977). Crewe (1976) found quite strong support for the impact of *hostilities* on the vote in British elections. Maggiotto and Piereson (1977) have shown that the evaluation of the opposing party had an independent and systematic influence on the vote choice in US presidential elections. Richardson (1991) has demonstrated that the stability of party loyalties in Germany, Great Britain and The Netherlands is dependent on the perceived ideological

distance between ones own and the other parties. Stable loyalties and ideological distances show the same strength of impact on the vote decision. The strength as to which or both determines the vote varies according to the relevance and strength of political cleavages. It was highest in Great Britain and lowest in Germany.

Although congruent with the emphasis on *opposition* or *hostilities* as an explanatory factor of vote choice, the approaches differ in conceptual terms.

- Maggiotto and Piereson assume, that the concept of party identification includes negative attitudes toward the opposing party. "In focusing upon attitudes toward the opposition, therefore, we are not speaking of a notion that is clearly separable from partisan identification. The unmeasured construct, party identification, causes the enduring attitudes measured in our analysis: the sense of partisan attachment or loyalty ... and the degree of hostility harbored toward the opposition" (Maggiotto/Piereson 1977: 747, 763). In this approach opposition or hostility toward one group is based on a positive orientation toward another group. Hostility in this conception does not exist without positive orientation.
- Crewe differs from this approach since he does not assume that positive orientations toward groups are a necessary pre-condition for negative group references. His concept is more open in this regard. In Crewe's conception it is possible, that an individual can simultaneously develop hostilities without identification and identification without hostilities (Crewe 1976: 52).
- Richardsons concept is more complex. Relating his approach to the schema theory of Nisbet and Ross (1980) and Fiske (1982), he assumes that party loyalties are complex sets of attitudes interrelating group loyalties, ideologies, and values. "Party loyalties are a constrained cluster of interrelated bits of information, beliefs, and affective orientations stored in individual memory under a broad categorial label and retrieved in response to relevant stimuli" (Richardson 1991:753). Thus, inter-party affective hostility as well as any other inter-group opposition might influence behavior.

A general hypothesis on the impact of individual - group relations on voting behavior can assume that it is quite unlikely that individuals base their political decisions on a single dimension of belief, featuring either a positive identification or a feeling of hostility with respect to one group only. Rather, references are made to more than one group. These sets of references might be positive only, but it is quite likely that the most complex ones include negative references as well, i.e. identification plus opposition or hostilities. The more complex and constrained the sets of references, the stronger the impact on voting behavior. The complexity and constraint of reference sets is not only – and not even primarily a consequence of differentials in cognitive abilities, but rather is

built into the structure of the political systems². This assumption is of particular importance to comparative electoral research.

With regard to conflict and competition, in electoral research two dimensions stand out. The first is related to specific differences concerning political supply, i.e. differences in positions. This is the spatial dimension, connected to questions of party system polarization and spatial, i.e. rational voting and traditionally thought of in terms of party differentials.

The second dimension is more general and in contrast to a simple spatial rational more closely related to the somewhat more diffuse concept of group identification, although not identical. It is based on more generalized evaluations of possibly different aspects, not the spatial rational only, traditionally called party sympathy.

For both dimensions the following hypotheses can be formulated for the micro-level:

Indifference Hyp (Micro1):

If voters perceive no or little difference between parties in terms of positions and generalized evaluation, this leads to indifference due to lack of substantive choice. The behavioral implication is little mobilization, i.e. abstention, and if not abstention little possibility for a sincere choice, i.e. choice according utility (positional party differentials) or according general evaluation (evaluational party differentials). As a consequence, satisfaction with the working of democracy is rather low. Difference and conflict not mirrored in political competition is not conducive to democracy.

Choice-Hyp (Micro 2):

Since democracy and democratic elections institutions to mediate between interests, to resolve conflict and to implement binding decisions of the majority in a peaceful way, cornerstones of democracy are political opposition and the possibility of alternating governments. Thus political choices are high in demand. Total equality would not need democracy and would not need choices since all want the same. But differences in interest need real choices in order to find representation and to accept the majority principle, just because there is the possibility of substantially different government.

Thus difference must be reflected in the possibility of substantial choice. Real choices then are a motivation to participate in elections, provide the possibility to find a political offer close to ones own preferences (sincere decisions) and to have good reasons to be satisfied with the way democracy works. Thus moderate conflict mirrored in political competition is conducive to satisfaction with democracy.

² For a similar "supply side" explanation of political competence see Gordon and Segura (1997).

Hostility Hyp (Micro 3):

If offered political alternatives are very strongly in conflict, the feeling against the opposed alternative can even be a feeling of hostility. In this case, the alternative is not a real choice since it is too much in opposition to the interests of the voters. If there is no substantial, acceptable choice, the result is most likely demobilization. Hostilities contradict the principle of choice and thus are destructive for sincere decisions. If political supply, i.e. the party system does not offer acceptable alternatives, this is destructive for democracy, and as a first indication destructive for the satisfaction with the working of democracy.

A general hypothesis drawn from the concept of reference groups is that spatial evaluations, i.e. positional party differentials are not as important as generalized evaluations, i.e. evaluational party differentials, based on a more comprehensive and encompassing judgment. The reason just is that political supply is much more than content only. It also can be characterized in terms of competence, integrity, personal and organizational performance and the like. Utility considerations as in the spatial evaluation are only one dimension of judgement about political parties.

If these micro hypotheses can be regarded as valid, the expectation is that this also translates into the macro-level. The respective hypothesis is straight forward:

Macro Hyp 1:

Party systems which offer a too narrow supply suffer from lower voting participation, lower levels of sincere voting and lower levels of satisfaction with the working of democracy as compared to party systems offering choices. Party systems which are perceived as offering too strongly opposing alternatives suffer from the same problems as the ones with a too narrow supply side.

3. Micro Level Results

In order to evaluate the plausibility of the micro-hypotheses, measures of party differentials have been constructed for the spatial and the generalized dimension of perceptions of parties: positional differentials, and evaluational differentials.

Concerning the spatial dimension, three measures of differentials have been constructed:

- the absolute difference in left-right positions between the party closest and the second closest to the respondent in left-right terms (11 point left-right scale; range 1 to 10);
- the absolute difference between the party closest and the party being furthest away from the respondent in left-right terms (11 point left-right scale; range 1 to 10);
- the standardized mean of absolute differences between the party closest to the respondent and all other parties evaluated in left right terms (11 point left-right scale; range 1 to 10).

These three measures indicate the differentiation of political supply in terms of political positions. Furthermore, a measure of positive relationship will be introduced, too:

- the absolute difference in left-right positions between the respondent and the party closest (11 point left-right scale; in principle range 1 to 10; all values above seven coded to 7 due to very small numbers of cases).

Similar measures have been constructed for evaluational party differentials. Based on scales of party-liking, the following measures have been constructed:

- difference in rating between most and second most liked party (11 point scale, 0 = least; 10 = most liked, range 1 to 10);
- difference in rating of most and least liked party (11 point scale, 0 = least; 10 = most liked, range 1 to 10);
- standardized mean difference between most liked party and all other parties (11 point scale, 0 = least; 10 = most liked, range 1 to 10);.

These three measures indicate the differentiation in generalized evaluation of political supply. Again, a measure of positive relationship has also been constructed:

- Rating of the most liked party (11 point scale, 0 = least; 10 = most liked).

The dependent variables are *voting participation* (dummy yes = 1; else = 0); *sincere voting*, i.e. voting for the party with the smallest left-right distance to the respondent or the highest rating respectively; and satisfaction with the working of democracy (*democracy satisfaction*), coded 1 for "very satisfied", "somewhat satisfied", else 0.

According to micro-hypotheses 1 to 3 one would expect the relationship between party differentials in both dimensions to be related curve-linear to the dependent variables. Too little supply differentiation allows too little choice, moderate differentiation real choices, too high differentiation, i.e. hostility no realistic sincere choice. In order to test these hypotheses, descriptive bivariate analyses have been performed and then tested whether a polynomial fits the curves better than linear regressions (figures 1 to 3).

Figure 1: Positional and Evaluational Party Differentials and Voting Participation

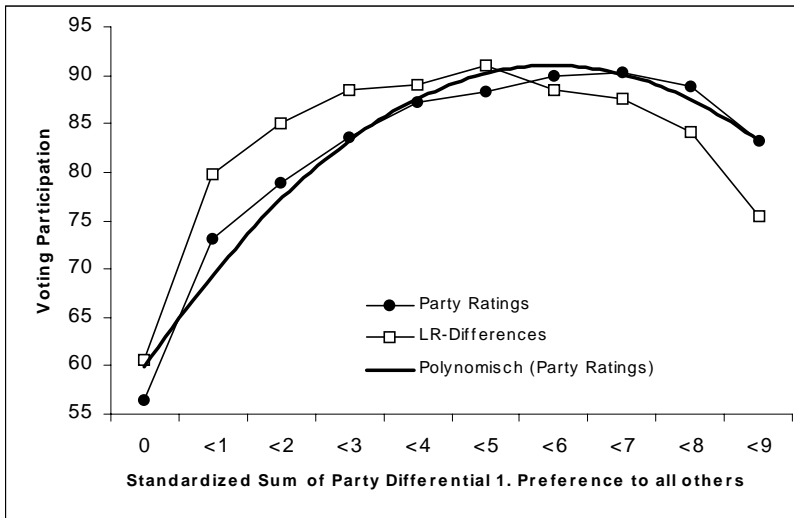
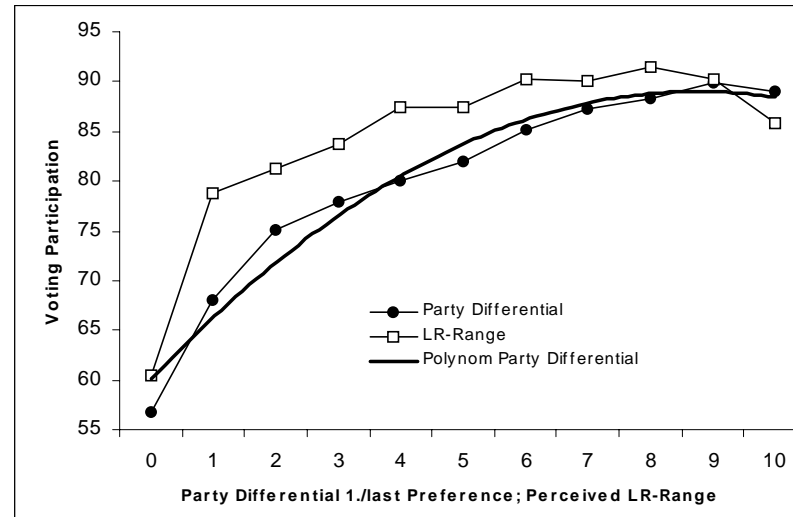
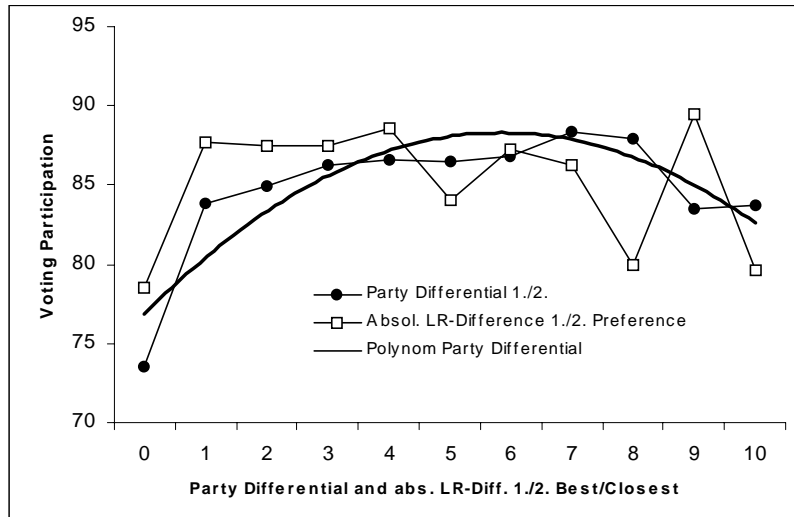


Figure 2: Positional and Evaluational Party Differentials and Sincere Voting

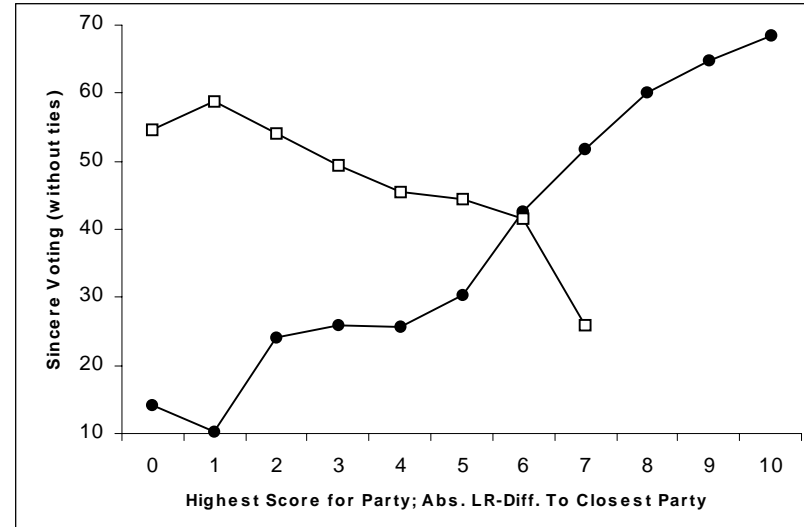
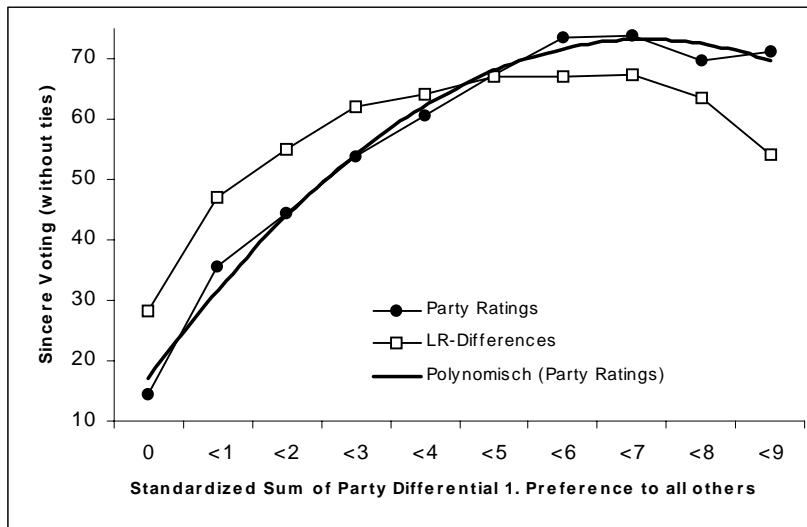
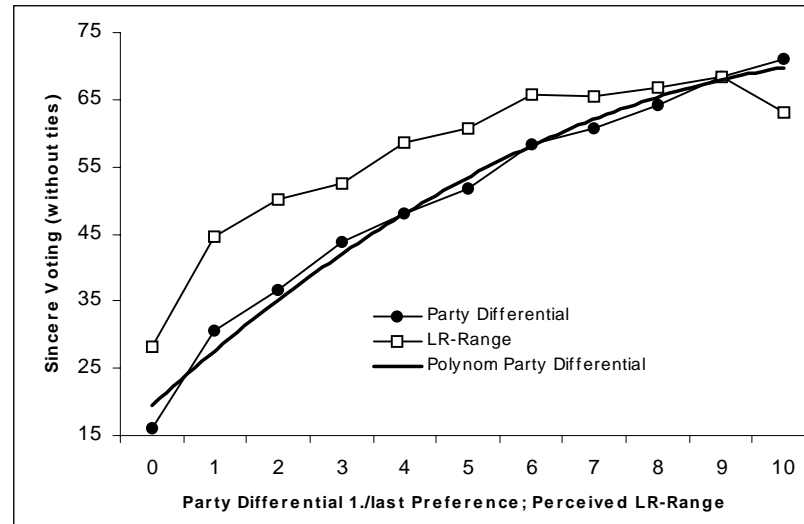
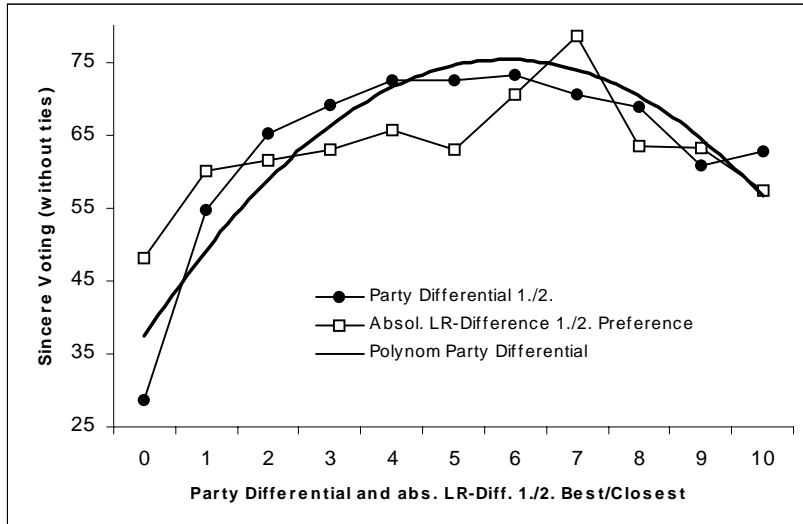
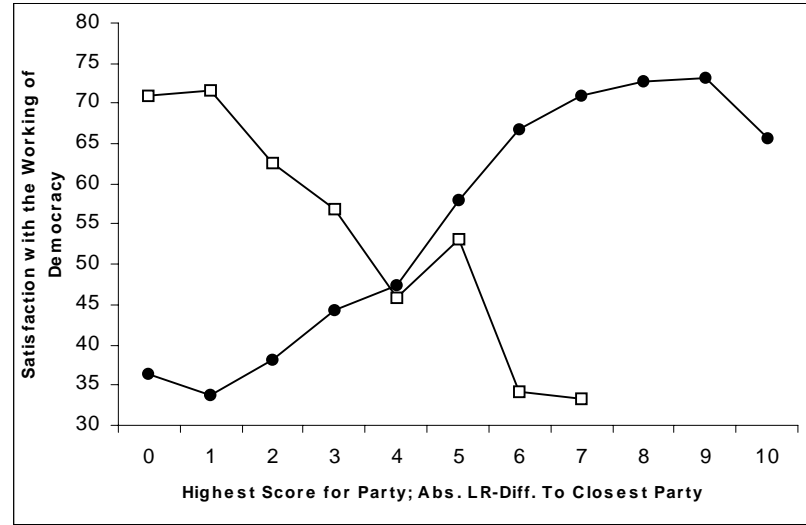
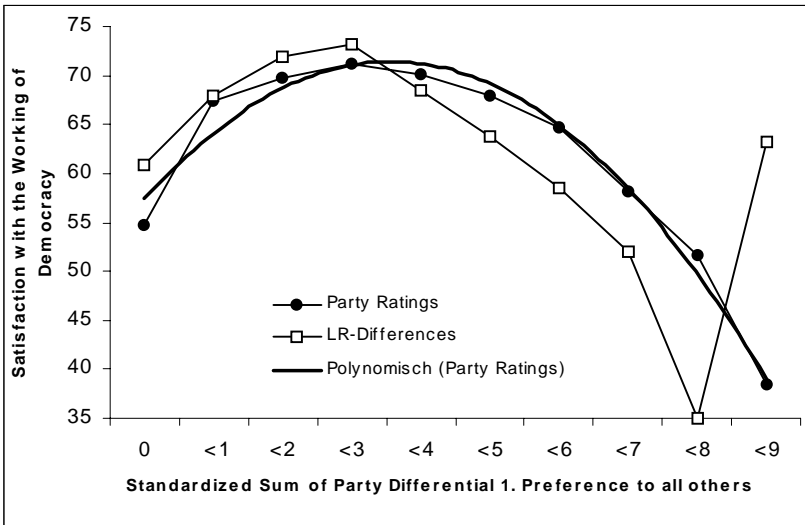
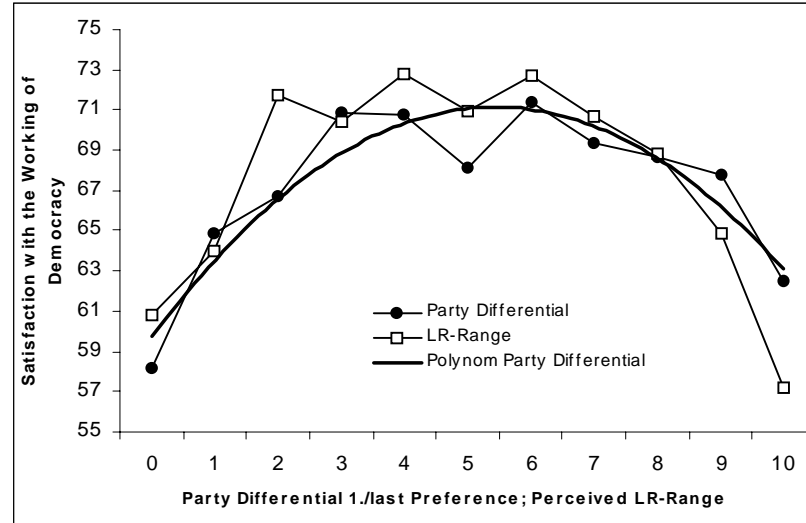
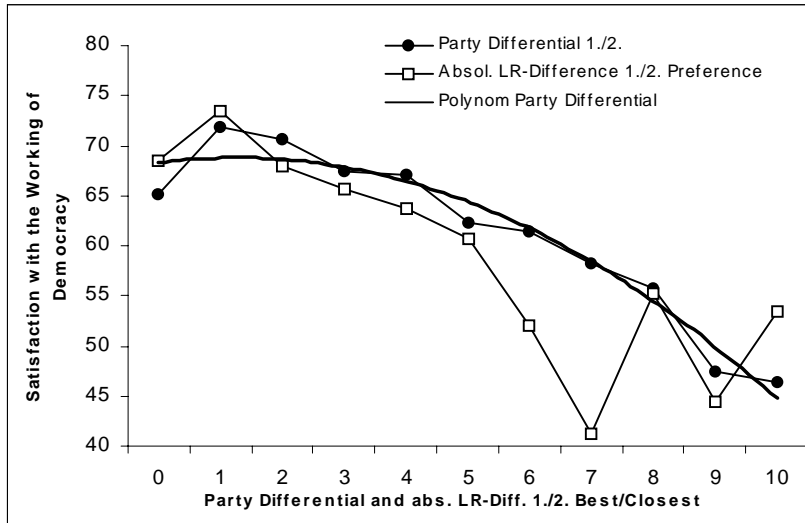


Figure 3: Positional and Evaluational Party Differentials and Democracy Satisfaction



A glance on figures 1-3 reveals the obvious. In all figures for party differentials, polynomial equations fit the curves much better than linear ones. Thus, the general assumption from micro-hypotheses 1-3 finds some confirmation in the data: if alternatives are too close, either positional or evaluational, there seems to be no real incentive for the voters to make a choice since there is no real alternative. Indifference thus goes along with lower voting participation, lower rates of sincere voting, and lower degrees of democracy satisfaction. A similar result produce party systems in which choices are perceived as too far apart.

In contrast, systems with medium range differentiation of political supply show the highest degree of voting participation, sincere voting, and democracy satisfaction. In any case, aggregate polynomial regression produces much higher portions of explained variance than linear ones (table 1).

Table 1: Aggregate Regression Results for Positional and Evaluational Party Differentials: Linear and Polynomial Models compared

	Left – Right			Ratings		
	Polynomial Equation	R2 poly	R2 linear	Polynomial Equation	R2 poly	R2 linear
Voting Participation						
- Diff. 1./2.	$y = -0,3334x^2 + 4,5721x + 72,631$	0,79	0,22	$y = -0,2295x^2 + 2,6283x + 79,92$	0,30	0,01
- Diff 1./last	$y = -0,3784x^2 + 7,3764x + 53,075$	0,97	0,85	$y = -0,5562x^2 + 8,6596x + 57,927$	0,89	0,55
- Mean Diff.	$y = -0,8681x^2 + 12,14x + 48,595$	0,97	0,56	$y = -1,0621x^2 + 12,768x + 53,628$	0,91	0,13
Sincere Voting						
- Diff. 1./2.	$y = -1,1x^2 + 15,11x + 23,421$	0,86	0,24	$y = -0,5883x^2 + 7,9624x + 42,414$	0,69	0,16
- Diff 1./last	$y = -0,3503x^2 + 9,23x + 10,666$	0,99	0,95	$y = -0,5861x^2 + 10,238x + 22,311$	0,97	0,77
- Mean Diff.	$y = -1,0845x^2 + 17,757x + 0,529$	0,99	0,80	$y = -1,3194x^2 + 17,36x + 12,54$	0,96	0,40
Democracy Satisfaction						
- Diff. 1./2.	$y = -0,3153x^2 + 1,4281x + 67,185$	0,95	0,82	$y = 0,144x^2 - 4,374x + 78,381$	0,73	0,71
- Diff 1./last	$y = -0,3873x^2 + 4,9825x + 55,122$	0,87	0,07	$y = -0,5398x^2 + 6,269x + 54,951$	0,93	0,01
- Mean Diff.	$y = -1,1009x^2 + 10,064x + 48,423$	0,97	0,34	$y = -0,8463x^2 + 8,1963x + 46,163$	0,39	0,33

Squared terms in all equations but one are negative, indicating that higher values of the independent variables cancel out the positive effects of all non-squared measures of positional and evaluational party differentials.

However, the hypothesis that the effect of generalized evaluations, i.e. evaluational party differentials, have a stronger impact than mere utility considerations, i.e. positional differentials, is – if at all – only weakly supported. In four out of nine pairs of equations, there is a substantial better explained variance for evaluational differentials ($> +10\%$), in four cases explained variance is at the same level, in one case positional differentials perform better than evaluational ones.

Different, non-relational measures, i.e. positive orientations like distance between respondent and party left-right term and simple party rating show a clear linear relationship: the smaller the distance and the better the rating, the more positively attracted are voters, thus they vote, can vote sincere, and are satisfied with the working of democracy in their countries (figures 1-3, bottom right).

Turning now to multivariate individual-level explanations, the expectation again is that equations including polynomial measures for the party differentials should perform better than pure linear equations. The first observation to make is that voting participation and sincere voting can be satisfactorily explained by models including evaluational and positional party differentials as well as party ratings for best liked and left-right distances to closest party (10 and 17 percent respectively). However, the same is not true for satisfaction with democracy: although in bivariate comparison, democracy satisfaction shows a similarly strong curvilinear relationship with the independent variables such as voting participation and sincere voting, in the multivariate model only 4 percent of the variance can be explained.

The second observation is that regression equations including in addition to the independent variables also squared terms perform somewhat better than linear models. As in the bivariate aggregate models the effects of the squared independent variables are all negative indicating the neutralization of positive effects of the independent variables as soon as they get larger. In terms of percent increase, polynomial models perform much better, but looking to percentage point differences in explained variance improvement is about 1 to 2 percentage points. This is not overwhelming, however, due to the not too strong explanatory capacity of the models altogether. The results of OLS regressions have been confirmed in structure by logistic regression for which Pseudo R²s are also presented in table 2.

A third observation is that significant effects of party differentials indicate their positive impact on voting participation and sincere voting. However, the same model applied to democracy satisfaction yields the opposite effects indicating that satisfaction with the way democracy works contrary to political behavior seems to be negatively affected by the perception of political conflict and difference.

Table 2: Regression of Voting Participation, Sincere Voting, and Democracy Satisfaction on Evaluative and Positional Party Differentials (OLS-Regression)

Independent	Dependent				
	Voting Participation (beta)	Sincere Voting (beta)	Democracy Satisfaction Model I (beta)	Democracy Satisfaction Model II (beta)	Democracy Satisfaction Model III (beta)
<i>Party Ratings:</i>					
- best liked	0,445	ns	0,456	0,443	0,438
- Diff.1./2. liked	ns	0,476	ns	ns	ns
- Diff. 1./least liked	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
- Eval-Diff	ns	ns	-0,116	-0,119	-0,122
<i>Left-Right Diff.:</i>					
- Closest Ego/Party	ns	0,033	-0,040	-0,042	-0,038
- Diff. Closest/2.	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
- Diff Closest/Least	0,171	0,145	-0,197	0,229	0,227
- LR-Supply-Diff.	ns	ns	ns	-0,080	-0,081
<i>Squared Independ.:</i>					
<i>Party Ratings:</i>					
- best liked	-0,280	0,114	-0,261	-0,252	-0,255
- Diff.1./2. liked	ns	-0,324	-0,066	-0,065	ns
- Diff. 1./least liked	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
- Eval-Diff	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
<i>Left-Right Diff.:</i>					
- Closest Ego/Party	-0,029	ns	-0,027	-0,025	-0,027
- Diff. Closest/2.	-0,031	ns	ns	ns	ns
- Diff Closest/Least	-0,127	-0,104	-0,197	-0,188	-0,186
- LR-Supply-Diff.	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Voting Participation				0,072	
Sincere Voting					0,100
R ² adj (OLS)	0,098	0,166	0,044	0,049	0,053
Pseudo R ² (Logistic Regression)*	0,090	0,130	0,036	0,40	0,043
- Increase by Polynomial in OLS	0,011	0,023	0,009		
- Increase by Polynomial in Logistic Repr.*	0,004	0,014	0,007		

ns: not significant at .05.

* Models also estimated with logistic regression. No important differences in the structure of the results to the OLS has been detected. OLS results presented here for better readability.

Two additional models of democracy satisfaction including as intervening variables political behavior, i.e. the decision to vote in elections and the sincere vote decision, show a little higher explanatory power but still explained variance is not above 5 percent in these models.

Thus, the hypothesis that structures of political competition offering choices and leading to participation and sincere decisions in elections translate also into satisfaction with the working of democracy seems only partially true. Explained variance of democracy satisfaction is only about half the size or lower compared to the behavioral dependent variables.

This also is a challenge for the macro hypothesis which assumed that the micro hypotheses also work at the aggregate level.

4. Macro Level Results

The macro hypothesis formulated here assumes that micro-level relationships translate into different aggregate levels of independent, and, more important, dependent variables. Thus, if there is an individual with a medium differentiation of party differentials, this should translate into participation in elections, sincere voting, and partially democracy satisfaction. A society with a mean of medium differentiation of party differentials thus should show high levels of voting participation, sincere voting, and democracy satisfaction.

Table 3: Correlations at the Country Aggregate Level

	Voting Participation	Sincere Voting	Democracy Satisfaction
<i>Party Ratings:</i>			
- best liked	,3964*	,5299**	,2708
- Diff.1./2. liked	,1318	,1057	-,1926
- Diff. 1./least liked	,2625	,3690	-,0379
- Eval-Diff	,3051	,4282**	,0046
<i>Left-Right Diff.:</i>			
- Closest Ego/Party	-,0972	-,2687	-,6600***
- Diff. Closest/2.	,1741	,0925	-,2874
- Diff Closest/Least	,1111	,2903	-,0291
- LR-Supply-Diff.	,1037	,2660	-,1061
<i>Voting Participation</i>			,2714
<i>Sincere Voting</i>			,5014**

* sig. >.10; ** sig. >.05; *** sig. >.01. Maximum number of cases: 21.

Correlations between the mean levels of independent variables and the mean level of dependent variables in the countries under investigation show that relationships are in the expected direction except for democracy satisfaction, which was already the case in micro level analyses. However, they are rather weak (table 3).

Only five correlations are significant at a modest 10 percent level or better of which only one refers to party differentials, two to party rating, one to left-right difference ego-party, and the fifth to the intervening role of sincere voting for democracy satisfaction.

Thus, although the relationships show the expected directions, results are not a significant confirmation of the hypothesis that party differentials matter at the macro-level. Furthermore, there is no indication that party differentials produce a curve-linear relationship with the dependent variables (see sincere voting in figure 4).

Inspecting the scatterplots of the strongest correlations somewhat in detail it is obvious that without Canada relationships would have been even weaker for electoral participation and sincere voting (figure 4).

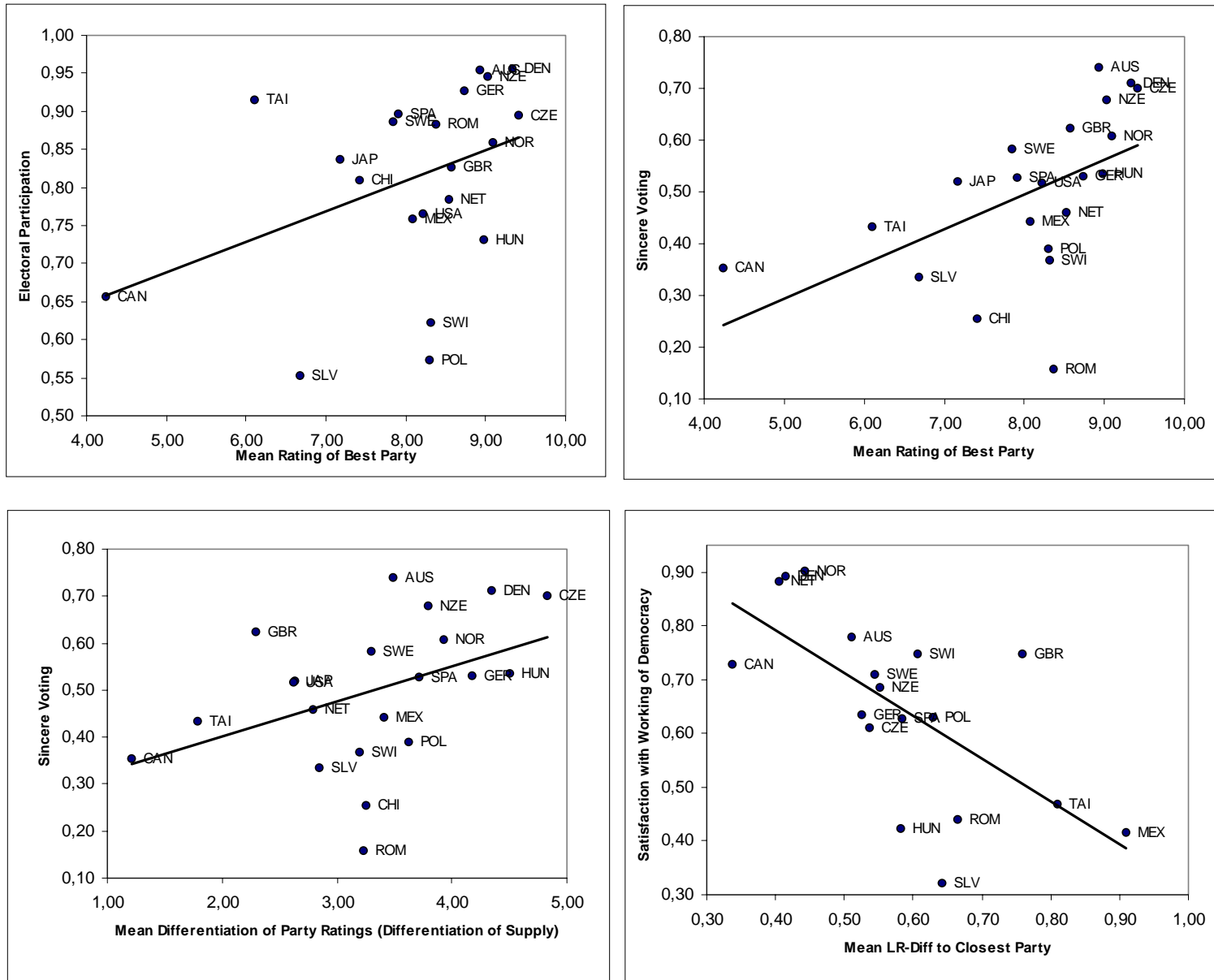
Thus, the expectation that individual level relationships translate into correlations of levels of independent and dependent variables for countries is not confirmed. From this some formal conclusions can be drawn with regard to the relation of micro- and macro-level. Since the micro-hypotheses hold up in case of behavioral dependent variables but the same results do not show up at the aggregate level this means that individual-level relationships may exist at different levels in the countries. If, for example, the micro-relationship is constituted in country A in the range of party differentials between 1 to 5 and a range of sincere voting of 50 to 70 percent, and in country B the range of differentials is from 3 to 7 and sincere voting again 50 to 70 percent, individual relationships would be confirmed in each country but not at the aggregate level. There would be, for example, two peaks of the curves, one at 3/70 the other at 5/70. This would cancel out the individual effects at the macro-level.

This formal observation together with the observation that the relationships between party differentials and behavioral measures do not translate into democracy satisfaction has also substantive implications.

5. Conclusions

It was argued here that democracy is an instrument to mediate between different interests and at the same time, different interests are the basis of democracy. Since mediation between different interests under democratic rule implies the acceptance of majority decisions as binding, the existence of opposition and the possibility of change in government are of crucial importance not only in formal but also substantive terms.

Figure 4: Best Correlates of Country Levels of Electoral Participation, Sincere Voting, and Democracy Satisfaction



In a democratic system, real acceptable *choices* must exist, they are the basis of democratic competition. Real substantial choices do not exist, it was argued, if alternatives are either too close producing indifference, or are too far apart producing hostilities. Thus, political supply offered must show a medium range of differentiation allowing for real choices. The expectation was, that party systems offering real choices, attract voters, give them a chance to make a sincere choice, and produce satisfaction with the way democracy works. It was assumed that this expectation holds up at the micro-level and the macro-level.

Results show that the expectation of a curvilinear relationship between the degree of differentiation of political supply and political behavior, i.e. voting participation and sincere voting, indeed holds up. However, this does not translate into relationships between aggregate levels of political supply and aggregate levels of behavior across countries. The implication of this finding is a rather simple one: Whatever the level and range of differentiation of supply within a system, a relationship is constituted with political behavior. What might be regarded as no possibility of choice in one country, since the range of alternatives would be regarded as either too narrow or too large could be regarded as real choices in another country. This means that not the absolute levels and the absolute ranges of differentiation of supply matter but the relative range within countries. The implication is that the individual relationships are more or less universal in the set of countries under investigation regardless of the different levels and ranges this relationship is constituted across countries. Thus, there is no cross-national universal level and range of differentiation of political supply conducive for political behavior (and democracy satisfaction). Voters evaluate their own system and what is considered small choice in one country may be just right in the other one.

Another conclusion can be drawn from the observation that differentiation of political supply and the resulting political behavior does not very strongly translate into satisfaction with the working of democracy. It shows that democracy is evaluated on more dimensions than that of political competition and political choices. This does not come as a surprise since from research it is well-known that performance evaluation at different levels have a strong impact on democracy satisfaction, namely government performance, more generalized democratic performance of the political system (like acceptance and protection of individual freedoms and human rights) as well as system performances, first of all of the economy. It is, however, crucial to notice that the structure of political competition which is at the heart of democracy has an impact, although small. Thus, not only performance, also choices matter.

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