DO VOTERS PREFER GENDER STEREOTYPIC CANDIDATES?
EVIDENCE FROM A CONJOINT SURVEY EXPERIMENT IN JAPAN

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VOTERS OFTEN HAVE STEREOTYPED VIEWS TOWARD MEN AND WOMEN IN POLITICS. WOMEN, FOR INSTANCE, ARE FREQUENTLY TYPECAST AS BEING MORE LIBERAL AND HAVING LESS LEADERSHIP QUALITIES THAN MEN. IN ORDER TO SURVIVE ELECTORAL COMPETITION, THEREFORE, FEMALE CANDIDATES MAY NEED TO AVOID CONFORMING TO THEIR GENDER STEREOTYPIC IMAGE. YET, WE KNOW LITTLE ABOUT WHETHER AND TO WHAT EXTENT FEMALE CANDIDATES ARE REWARDED OR PUNISHED WHEN THEY DEVIATE FROM THEIR GENDER STEREOTYPIC IMAGE. USING A CONJOINT SURVEY EXPERIMENT IN JAPAN, WE SHOW THAT FEMALE CANDIDATES ARE DISADVANTAGED COMPARED TO MALE CANDIDATES; FURTHERMORE, THEY COULD SUFFER AROUND A 5-PERCENTAGE POINT PENALTY WHEN THEIR POLICY EXPERTISE DIVERGES FROM GENDER STEREOTYPES. OUR RESULTS IMPLY THAT FEMALE CANDIDATES FACE A DIFFICULT DILEMMA BECAUSE AVOIDING SUCH NEGATIVE SANCTIONS BY PLAYING THEIR GENDER ROLE MAY RESULT IN PRODUCING A POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER GENDER-BASED PREJUDICE AGAINST THEMSELVES.

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