



The Hebrew University, Jerusalem

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Party Unification in Israel

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Abstract:

Union parties are intended in most cases to increase the strength of united parties in parliament and in the political arena in which they operate. However, many times, unifications do not increase the power of the parties who joined together and vice versa. If so, why did the parties continue to reunite? Behavioral and institutional incentives outlined in the literature, may explain some cases. Nevertheless, there are places such as Israel, where institutional incentives do not explain union parties, yet we see this phenomenon frequently. The fact that this social-political phenomenon continues to occur raises the question under what circumstances unification will pay off in terms of electoral parties? After an examination of all cases of political parties in unions according to our definition, we were able to produce a model that explains some significant cases through three main factors: the size of the parties, the extent to which they manage to centralize their ideology after the unification and the ideological distance between them. When we remove the ideological distance factor from the model, the results were even more significant, which explains the success of the union parties if they were able to center themselves after the unification, on condition that they were not large parties before the unification. The study presents different implications of the model and suggestions for further research in the field.

Theoretical Background

After consulting a vast amount of literature, it is apparent to us that the unification of political parties has not been studied in depth. The main concentrations of the studies that do exist however, deal with the main incentives that leads to the emergence of such unifications. Those unifications can be found in 3 categories. The first category takes the form of a complete merger in which all of the institutions of the political parties unite. The second category is known as “Pre-Electoral Coalitions,” in which two or more political parties run together within a shared list. Finally, the third category is known as “partial unifications” in which some of the separated identities of each political party are maintained by both sides. As such, this paper will examine all these patterns of unifications, as from the second elections in Israel. It should be noted that most of the unifications that were formed in Israel are derived from the second type.

The research in the field of party unification presents two types of incentives - institutional and behavioral. One of the main institutional incentives for party unification is the electoral system. Properties that create the elections to be less proportional might encourage unification. Such elements can be the electoral method (the way in which votes translated into seats in the parliament). The less proportional the electoral method, the more parties will unite (Golder, 2006). Another non-proportional element may be a high threshold that denies small parties from obtaining seats in the parliament. In such cases, small parties

will seek to achieve cooperation with other parties in order to gain more political power (Belanger& Godbout, 2010). In addition, there are some rules of parties' public funding, which can encourage the parties to unite. Such rules might prioritize bigger parties by giving them larger sums of public money (Belanger&Godbout, 2010).

There is a variety of behavioral incentives for the emergence of such coalitions, in addition to the institutional incentives. For example, parties that have a similar ideology will be more likely to unite (Golder, 2006). Sometimes the personal interests of the parties' leaders motivate them to initiate unification (Kim, 1997). Another behavioral incentive is the parties' necessity to rebrand themselves; this might be more likely in a complete multi-party merger (Belanger&Godbout, 2010). In addition, the willingness of parties to become a part of a governmental coalition in a parliamentary system might also encourage some parties to unite. These parties could not be a part of such coalition if they would run in the elections alone, whether because they are considered by the public as radical or because they do not have enough political power (הימין ריש, 2009). This leads us to the most common behavioral incentive for the unification of parties, i.e., the wish of increasing political power, which is accomplished by getting more electoral resources and voters (Belanger&Godbout, 2010, הימין ריש, 2009, Mair, 1990)

Mair (1990) conducted a quantitative-comparative research study in which he examined the mergers and separation of parties from 1945-1987 in Western democracies. He claims that the mergers and separations of parties are not necessarily electorally profitable. Furthermore, the intensity of the change of a party that merges with another, which led to electoral success is lower than the intensity of change of separations of parties, which will led to electoral success. In addition, the intensity of change of party merger that led to electoral failure is higher than the intensity of change of a parties' separation that led to electoral failure (Mair, 1990).

Israel is an example of a country which has little institutional incentives for the unification of parties. It has a proportional electoral method with a single electoral district, a low threshold, and public parties funding law which benefits with lone parties. However, we can find in Israel a vast amount of unification among political parties, mainly in the form of pre-electoral coalitions (שפירא, 2013). Therefore we might assume that the main incentive for the unifications of parties in such places as Israel is the wish to enlarge their political power.

Hence, the question we want to examine is *“is it electorally profitable for parties to unite in places with little institutional incentives such as Israel?”* Based on Mair's research, we assume that in most of the cases concerning the unification of political parties in Israel, the end result turned out to be not electorally

profitable. Consequently, the question that arises is – *“under what circumstances will party unification pay off in terms of electoral profit?”*

According to Ziderman (2013), parties that appeal to different target audiences will succeed to increase their political power. This is because the parties will compete for the same target population, they will not be able to attract new electoral votes to themselves, and the electoral success will be questionable. In addition, it can be assumed that only a party who could aggregate between different aspects could attract more voters, or will establish itself better than any other party in the race. However, addressing other audiences can also get the expression of different ideology. Therefore, to the activists of the party it will be difficult to accept the ideological concessions that they will have to sacrifice for their party to unite with another party different than theirs.

Further, as we explained, the parties would like to unite only if there will be a certain Ideological affinity (Golder, 2006). If we will take in consideration the fact that parties would need to address different supplementary target audiences, so there will be, necessarily, some ideological differences between them.

But our first assumption is that the larger the ideological distance between the parties, the less the unification will pay off electorally. In the interior party level, this hypothesis stems from the issue that party activists would agree and support the unification only if they accept the parties as ideologically compatible, because then they will not be required to make ideological concessions (Gshwend & Hooghe, 2008). At the level of the parties system, this hypothesis stemmed from the fact that it is not likely that different parties with similar ideological principles will manage to achieve something if they compete with each other. That is, in a competitive system, an absolute similarity between two parties will lead to the fact that parties will hold between them a war of attrition, so they recognize that unification would reduce competition between them, and therefore will pay off for them to unite eventually.

Another hypothesis relates to the size of the parties who seek to unite. By this hypothesis, unifications of small parties will benefit less electorally than unifications of large parties. That is because at best, such unification would allow the small parties to pass the threshold, but not necessarily position them as a significant factor in coalition negotiations (Zeigerman, 2013). In the level of the party system, one cannot explain how parties who had from the beginning low electoral strength, will be able to increase their electoral power significantly. In addition it is not sure that it was their purpose from the first place. It is reasonable to assume that the aim will be to maintain their potential maximum power or to avoid failure. From internal party, personal power struggles may make it difficult for electoral success in light of the union between the parties. That is, the possible realistic places will be few and contrary to the activity in a separate party; the amount of influence will be decreased.

In contrast, the unifications of large and small parties can be more successful electorally, because in the inner level party, big parties forming with smaller parties will succeed to preserve their activists, that is because it will take from them few concessions and the small party activists would get a chance to win a spot as part of a large party, that will make sure they get a proper representation. In the party level system, in terms of the large party, the united party will not change its nature significantly. In addition, in unification with a small party, the smaller party will eventually be “swallowed up” by the larger party, and this is the way that the larger party could succeed by on the one hand, neutralizing its political competitor, and on the other hand, not lose its nature (Zeigerman, 2013). Unifications of large parties will be even more electorally successful by uniting other larger parties so that they may eliminate their biggest rivals and avoid the competition. Both of the large parties will have access to the resources of the other large party. This united party may signal to the voters that there could not be an alternative to this united front.

The third hypothesis holds that as the consolidated parties succeed in placing the ideology of the united party toward the center of the ideological spectrum in relation to their previous ideology before the unification, they will have better electoral success. This hypothesis stems from the fact that in the level of party system, the parties asking to rebrand themselves by creating unification i.e. by Belanger & Godbout (2010), seek to get rid of their old image whether it was slightly radical right or left. Therefore, parties who will succeed in doing so will place themselves at the center and will gain electoral success. Explanation in the internal affairs of the party is that the party elite can indeed change the party’s platform without needing to unite and state the party in the political center and eventually try to win more electoral support and recruit more activists. However, the way the elite and leaders of the party determines the ideological platform depends at the base on the activists. Therefore unification of parties is a tool in the hands of the elite to centralize the party without having the need of activists (Zeigerman, 2013). The fact that the party will have new ideological elements based on its previous ideological concept along with the consolidation as a centralized party will allow it to turn to new audiences without losing the activists who supported them before. Our hypothesis is based on the assumption that most of the voters are located in the center as well as most of the swing votes (Downs, 1957).

Research method and data

In order to examine our research hypotheses we have analyzed all parties’ unifications in Israel, starting from the second Knesset elections. Even before the construction of an Israeli state (1948) there were political parties, mergers and splits; however we addressed only the elections after 1948. This is because

the electoral systems prior to the first Knesset elections were different in their nature from those after 1948. Party unification is defined as the connection of two or more parties for the purpose of running as a joint list, or total or partial merger. It should be noted that the analysis included only mergers of political parties who existed pre-term elections and have been represented or were close to pass the threshold. Meaning, we did not include in the analysis unifications of political parties or movements that had not yet been established parties or who had no representation in the Knesset before. In light of our definition, it was not possible to treat unifications that were made towards the first elections in 1949, because there was no point of comparison between the parties before or after the unification. Thus, the analysis included 22 cases of party unification (see Appendix 1).

The dependent variable, electoral gain, was defined as the increase in joint representation of parties who united in the elections. This variable was tested by comparing the number of seats that parties and their leaders had in the parliament prior the unification (running on their own or as a part of a different union), versus the number of seats in parliament won by the parties running together in the first elections after the unification. We did not use the percentage of votes or number of votes received by each party because some of the parties were part of a different unification; therefore there is no possibility to stand on the exact percentage of votes or number precisely for all cases. In order to build the index of political gain, we compiled the number of seats received by each of the parties comprising the union in previous elections ($a_1+a_2+\dots+a_x$). Then, we subtracted this data from the number of seats the merger had won in the first elections after the unification (b). Thus, the difference between them is the electoral gain (y), if the result is less than - 0; it is an electoral loss [$b - (a_1+a_2+\dots+a_x) = y$]

For example: Gahal party, in the election of the 6th Knesset (1965) was composed of Herut party and the Liberal Party. In the election of the 5th Knesset (1961), each one of those parties won 17 seats ($a_1=17$, $a_2=17$) and after the unification in 1965, the party won 25 seats ($b=25$). Hence, the party's electoral gain is -9 [$25-(17+17)=-9$].

The variable ranged from a loss of 13 seats (-13) to a gain of 14 seats. The mean of the electoral gain of the 22 chosen cases was -1.13, meaning, the parties who united lost 1.13 seats on average after the unification. The median of this variable was a loss of 1 seat and the standard deviation 6.93. It can be seen that 12 unifications turned out to be electoral loss, compared to 9 unifications that turned out as an electoral profit and one unification that did not lose or gain seats in the parliament (see appendix 1).

Another option to test the independent variable of electoral gain is to take into consideration the size of the party before the unification. Meaning, looking at the percentage of successes and failures given the electoral size before the unification. Hence this variable is tested using the number of seats won by the

united party compared to the achievements of the previous party (y_1 from the previous paragraph) in relation to the size of the parties before the joint unification ($a_1+a_2+\dots+a_x$): $[y_1 / (a_1+a_2+\dots+a_x)]*100=y_2$. The variable ranges between a gain of 140% to a loss of 50%, while the mean is of 2.96%, the median was a loss of 10% and standard deviation 45.7.

The first independent variable is the ideological distance between the parties that made up the unification. This variable was defined as the extent to which parties that made up the unification distinct from each other, in terms of views and positions on issues of religion and state, economy - society and security. To examine the ideological distance between the parties, we analyzed the party platforms of election campaigns before the unification under the same code page we created (see Appendix 2, Data attached in separate appendix). Each party was rated by statements concerning the three topics and the pre-unification platforms were coded by two judges. In all of the statements we found high reliability between the two judges - over 90% agreement by the index of Krippendorff's alpha, except two categories approached to 90% agreement (measures are detailed in Appendix 3). Throughout the reliability test, platform encodings of the parties after the unification were also included, as we will use them for the third variable.

Afterwards, we calculated the average of each party on every topic by the grades received for each statement. If no information was available about the platform specific statement, it was not included in the average calculation. To comply with the ideological distances of each of the subjects (religion and state, economy - Society and Security), we compiled the differences between the average score received by each party prior to consolidation and the average score that was received by each of the other parties that made up the unification, then the sum of the difference was divided by the number of parties. Eventually, we averaged the ideological distances in each subject and created a mutual measure that stands for the ideological distance between the parties prior the unification. The ideological distance ranges from 0.15 (smallest ideological distance between the parties that made up the unification) to 2.2 (biggest ideological distance between the parties that made up the unification). Then, we recoded the categories of the variable that ranged from 0 (small ideological distance) to 1 (large ideological distance), see Appendix 4. The mean of the ideological distance is 0.48, which means that the average was roughly in the middle (medium ideological distance). The Median was 0.53 and the standard deviation 0.28. Some of the parties, before the unification, had no reference to some of the issues and therefore it was not possible to stand on their ideological distance in some categories. For example, the Agudat Israel party (1951) did not discuss in its platform any historical sources about the security issue or the financial-social agenda. Similarly, the Black Panthers party did not discuss the security issue its platform either. Here there were two cases formed with missing values that related to the ideological distance of two unification party cases (Hazit Datit Turatit - 1955 and Hadash - 1977).

The second independent variable is the size of the parties that created the unification. This variable is defined as the structural figure of the parties regarding their sizes before the unification. In order to check the size of the parties we created a nominal variable consisting of three categories. 1= Unification of Small parties, 2= Unification of large parties with small parties, 3= Unification of large parties. The parties were coded according to the number of seats they won in the election prior the unification. Small parties were considered as parties with 5% (6 seats in the Knesset) or less of the seats, while large parties were considered as parties with more than 5% of the seats. In cases where the unification consisted of more than two parties, we addressed the size of the two largest parties. 10 of the cases were of small parties, 7 were of large and small parties and 5 of large parties (see Appendix 5). The median was category 2 unification of small and large parties. Of this variable we created two dummy variables; the first addressed small parties, therefore category 1 remains the same, while categories 2 and 3 were coded as 0. The second, addressed large parties, therefore, category 3 was coded as 1 while categories 1 and 2 were coded as 0.

The third independent variable, ideological centralization of the party was defined as the extent to which the unified party was able to put its ideology in the center of the ideological spectrum in relation to the ideology of the parties who compose it. For this purpose, we had to examine the party ideology after the unification. Similar to the first independent variable, we coded the platforms of the parties at the first election they ran as a unified party, calculated in each and every one of the subjects (religion and state, economy-society and security) its average score. We used the average calculation of the ideology of the parties prior to consolidation on each of the issues as it has been calculated for constructing the first independent variable, but this time we calculated the average score received by the two parties together. In the next step, we looked at the distances (by calculating the difference) of the average score of the parties on the continuum of ideological pre-consolidation and after, from the midpoint of the ideological index selected (for example, the ideology of religion and state ranged from 1 to 5 and so midpoint is 3, and ideology on economic issues - social and security index ranges from 1 to 4 and so midpoint is 2.5). Afterwards, we deduced the ideological distance from the center of every party, after the unification in each and every subject, of the distance calculated from the center - prior the unification. That is how we got measures that examine the extent to which the united party radicalized positions in each of the subjects, or moved closer to the center of the agenda presented by the parties prior to consolidation. So if it turns out that the score was negative, that means the party radicalized its positions from the center, while a positive score indicates the approach of the party to the center. On the next stage, we created a common variable, which consisted of a composition (not an average) of the centralization degree on each topic. This variable of centralization measured between the minimal score of -1.92 to a maximal score of

0.91. Only 5 cases out of 22 cases turned out higher than 0, so the party centralized slightly. The mean of the centralization variable was -0.44, the median -0.42 and the standard deviation of 0.74 (see Appendix 6).

Findings

First of all, if we examine the electoral gain or loss of the parties who united in Israel, we can see interesting data. First, as we presented, there are more cases in which unification has not been beneficial (12 to 9). Besides, when considering the gap between electoral gain and electoral loss, it can be seen that the greatest profit to whom party unification arrived in Israel is 14 seats, which belongs to the Maarach as it ran up to 1981 (the Labor Party and Mapam) along with Ratz. This in comparison to the highest electoral loss of 13 seats that belongs to IsraelAchat in the elections of 1999. In addition, the mean of the electoral gain in the cases of electoral loss is -5.91, while the mean of electoral gain in the cases of electoral profit is 5.11. This suggests that the strength of the loss may be greater than the strength of the profit, i.e. it becomes clear that in light of the findings regarding the parties which united in Israel, the parties wishing to unite have a bigger chance of losing and when they lose the loss is greater than the profit they make when they succeed. However, the difference is in less than one seat only. In addition four of the cases were of an electoral gain of only one seat.

In order to examine the hypotheses we ran a multivariate regression model using the ordinary least squares OLS (see table below). In addition, in order only to run the model itself, we changed the variable "ideological centralization", so that it will range from 0 to 1. We inserted into the model the dependent variable, which is the electoral profit (Y) and the independent variables, which is ideological distance between the parties prior to unification (X1), the ideological centralization of the united party (X2) small size parties (X3) and Large size parties (X4). The equation of the regression models that allow predicting the electoral using independent variables is:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.55 - 4.88X1 + 7.26X2 - 2.38X3 - 9.02X4$$

The constant coefficient of the equation is 0.55 and is not significant ($P > 0.05$). The coefficient, which relates to the slope of the first independent variable is -4.88. Hence, the increase in the standard minimum (smallest ideological distance) to a maximum (biggest ideological distance) of the ideological distance between the parties that build up the unification will lead to a loss of 4.88 seats if we hold the rest of the independent variables constant. The slope coefficient of the ideological distance variable is not significant ($P > 0.05$). The coefficient which relates the slope of the second independent variable is 7.26. Therefore the increase in the standard minimum (ideological polarization) to a maximum (largest ideological centralization) of the ideological centralization of the united party leads to an increase of 7.26 seats in the

electoral gain if we hold the rest of the independent variables constant. However the slope coefficient of ideological centralization variable is not significant. The Dummy variable slopes regarding size are -2.38 (for small parties) and -9.02 (for large parties). Therefore, if we hold the rest of the variables constant, unifications of large parties lead to a larger electoral loss of 8.47 seats compared to the other sizes of parties while unification of small parties leads to electoral loss of 1.83 seats, and unification of large and small parties leads to electoral gain of 0.55 seats. However, the only coefficient that is significant is regarding the large parties ($p < 0.05$) while the coefficient regarding to small parties is not significant ($P > 0.05$).

First Completed Regression Model

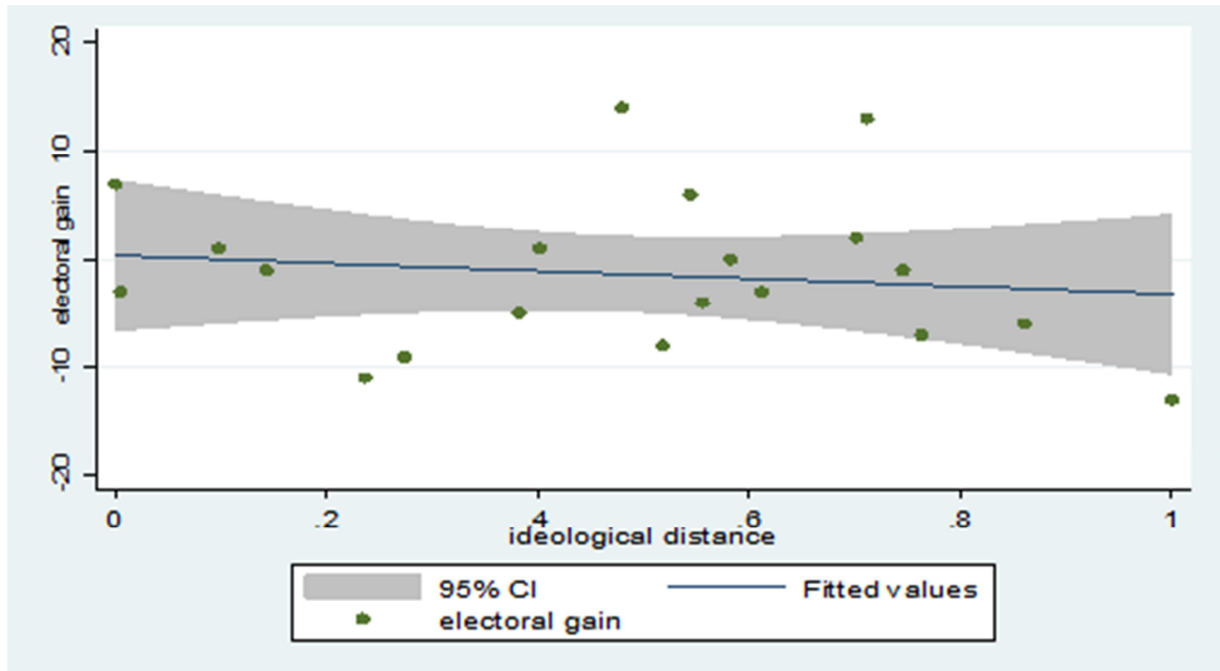
Independent Variables	Dependent Variable: Electoral Profit
Ideological Distance	-4.88 (-0.191)*
Ideological Centralization	7.26 (0.264)*
Unification of Small parties	-2.38 (-0.165)*
Unification of large parties	-9.02 (-0.55)***
Constant	0.55*
R ²	0.414**
N	20
* P>0.1 ** 0.05<P<0.1 *** P<0.05	

We examined standardized coefficients of each of them (beta) in order to compare the extent of their effects on the electoral gain. It indicates that the variable with the strongest influence on electoral profit is large party size, although the effect is opposite to our hypothesis ($\beta_4 = -0.55$). The second variable that effects electoral gain is the degree of centralization. ($\beta_2 = 0.264$).

According to the model, the ideological distance between the parties prior to the unification, the size of the parties, and the ideological centralization of the united party explains 41.4% of the variance in the electoral profit variable. The model is not significant but approaches to significance $P=0.07$ ($0.05 < P < 0.1$).

To examine why the model coefficients are not statistically significant while the model itself approaches significance, we examined whether there is multicollinearity between the independent variables. We found that the tolerance index of each variable was bigger than 0.1 ($tol > 0.1$) and therefore there is no multicollinearity between the variables (see Appendix 7).

As we expected, we found a negative effect on the ideological distance variable and positive effect on the ideological centralization variable on the dependent variable. However the effect of both of them was insignificant (graph 1). It indicates that we cannot reject the null hypotheses for both of the variables at a confidence level of 95%. Therefore, both of the hypotheses regarding the effect of ideological distance and ideological centralization were refuted by the first model. The relationship between electoral gains to ideological distance was indeed negative, but it was weaker than the relationship between other variables. However, concerning this variable we can see that extreme cases in particular show in a way the correlation. According to the index we have built, the smallest ideological distance (0) between the parties that made up the unification belongs to Habait Hayehudi party in 2013. It was a unification between Mafdal and Tkuma, which gained eventually 7 seats- the third best achievement of the cases. In contrast the highest ideological distance (1) belonged to Israel Achat which ran in 1999 and consisted from the coalition of the Labor party, Meimad and Gesher. This party lost 13 seats- the largest electoral loss.



Graph 1- Correlation between ideological distances to electoral gain.

As we expected, we found that the effect of the smaller size parties is negative compared to unification of small and large parties. However, the fact that the coefficient is not significant indicates that we cannot reject the null hypothesis at a confidence level of 95%. Therefore the hypothesis regarding the small size of the parties was refuted. While we expected to find a positive effect of unifications of large parties on the electoral gain, we found a significant inverse effect. This indicates that unifications of large parties with other large parties leads to a larger electoral loss than unification of small parties or small and large parties. This finding can be generalized to the whole population of parties unifications in a confidence level of 95%.

We can see the effect of larger party size by the examples bellow. All of the cases of unifications of large parties resulted with an electoral loss. Indeed the largest electoral loss (-13) was of Israel Achat, a unification of small and large parties (Gesher Meimad and the Labor Party). But the next four cases of the largest electoral loss were of unification of large parties. Halikud Beitenu in 2013 was a unification between Israel Beitenu and Halikud, two large parties in the 2009 elections (15 and 27 seats), together they lost 11 seats. Halikud- Gesher- Tzomet in 1996 elections was a unification of two large parties according to the 1992 elections (tzomet-8, Halikud and gesher-32), Together they lost 8 seats in 1996. Gahal in the 1965 elections was also a unification of two large parties (liberal- and Herut- 17 seats for each party); the unification resulted with a loss of 9 seats.

To improve the significance of the entire model and to create a model that we can deduce reality, we have decided to remove the variable of the ideological distance from the model. If we take the ideological distance variable out of the model and run the regression model with only the three independent variables (ideological centralization, small parties unifications and large parties unification), while the percentage of variance explained by the model decreases by three percent to 38.72%, the significance of the entire model improved (P=0.02) and the model become significant (P <0.05) see table below.

Second regression model- without ideological distance IDV

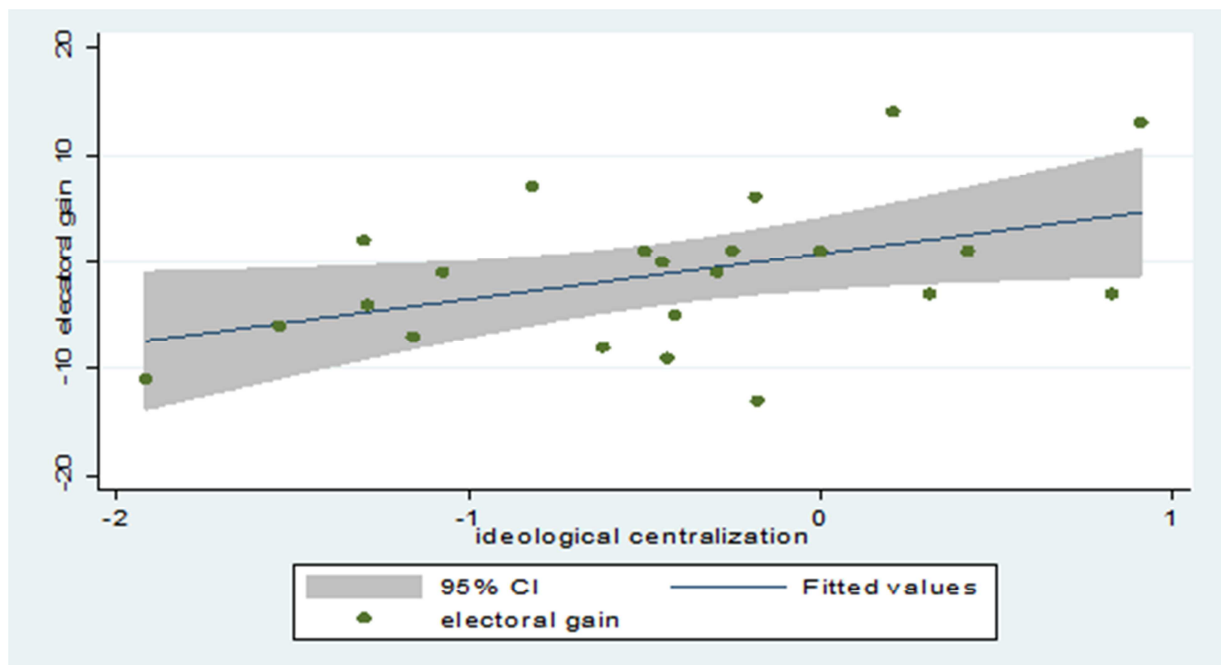
Independent Variables	Dependent Variable: Electoral Profit
Small parties	-1.47 (-0.108)*
Large parties	-8.03 (-0.496)***
Ideological Centralization	8.02 (0.302)**
Constant	-2.83*
R ²	0.3872***
N	22
* P>0.1 ** 0.05<P<0.1 in a one tail t-test *** P<0.05	

The new regression equation is: $\hat{Y} = -2.82 + 8.02X_2 - 1.47X_3 - 8.03X_4$

Here, the independent variable coefficients that relate to the large parties and small parties stays about the same (significant for the large parties and insignificant for the small). But in this model the coefficient of ideological centralization approaches significance in a one-tail t-test (0.05<P<0.1). Meaning, we can generalize the findings that related to it at a confidence level of 90%. The slope coefficient of ideological centralization become larger and remains positive. In other words, removing the ideological distance variable helps to increase the significance of the entire model and to verify the null hypothesis in a level of 90% regarding the ideological centralization.

Now we can see in graph 2 the effects of ideological centralization on the electoral gain. Analysis of the findings indicates that the parties who managed to centralize themselves (that is, the value of the centralization was bigger than 0) gain more seats, while as long as the parties radicalized their positions, the more they electorally lost. The extreme examples show the correlation between the two variables. By the index that we have built, the largest centralization of a party was 0.91, and it belongs to HaLikud-Achi party, from election 2009. This party gained 13 seats together. In contrast, the highest radicalization (-1.92) belongs to Halikud Beitenu in elections 2013, consisting of the consolidation of HaLikud and Israel Beitenu. This party lost 11 joint seats.

Graph 2- Correlation between Ideological Centralization to Electoral gain



Finally, we tried to run the regression with the electoral gain measured by the percentage of success regarding their shared size before the unification. However, the whole regression model was not significant ($p > 0.05$), and all of the coefficients were not significant.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this research we tested under what circumstances unification of parties in Israel turned out to be electorally profitable. This kind of study is important because we know that there are not enough institutional incentives for parties to cooperate together in Israel, therefore the main possible incentive is the electoral gain parties want to achieve as a result of the unification. Given that we have shown that

most unifications in Israel do not pay off electorally, it is notable that we still witness the existence of this phenomenon - even in the last elections, the growing importance of trying to explain when such a unification succeeds and when not.

We were able to create a model that explains a certain amount of the unification of political party cases throughout the variables included in our study hypotheses. Nevertheless, despite what we thought about the ideological distance between consolidated parties that would be the main variable to explain the electoral success, ultimately its exclusion from the model showed more meaningful results. That is, we were able to show that the size of the party (mainly large parties) and their ability to center ideology together explains when parties gain more electoral success.

However, all of our hypotheses were rejected to some degree. First, as we explained, the impact of the ideological distance on the electoral gain is small. Hence, there is no certainty that as big as the ideological distance between the parties, the more they lose electoral impact. This can be explained by Zeigermans' claim (2013) – in order for party unification to succeed, the parties should address various audiences in a complementary manner. Meaning, they should also as a whole, display ideology that does not contradict each other but also should focus on identifying sectors or different audiences. Largely, the separated parties should manage different subjects in order for the unification to succeed. In this paper, we have examined only their distance from one another in terms of three main important issues. However it might be that closeness or ideological distances are less important to the study of electoral gains accumulated by party unification, what more important are the differences between the parties on issues they highlight. Measure of ideological closeness can be a basis for the will of parties to unite, as claimed by Golder (2006), but it is not necessarily a guarantee of electoral success. Gshwend & Hooghe (2008) argued that separate party activists will not support the unification if perceive the party with whom they unite ideologically far from them, however, even if the party loses the support of its activists, it may be able to win the support of new voters in light of the totality that it displays.

In addition, the hypothesis concerning the size of the parties not only refuted but the opposite was found. That is, we found that unifications of large parties display a large electoral loss, however we cannot account if unifications of small parties or small and large parties will display a loss or electoral gain. So, in Israel, small parties that will choose to unite will still have a chance of having an electoral gain. It may be that unification of small parties allows them to present the unification as a central party, and thus attract more voters deem them a worthy alternative, especially in an election campaign with a very proportional elements, like in Israel. Additionally, we can suggest an explanation for this finding: when large parties unite, that means that their shared size is very big, meaning that they have reached the

maximum electoral impact they can get, therefore they have mostly better chances to lose than to gain more votes. Therefore, their incentive to unite might be that they want to avoid a failure than to enlarge their electoral achievements.

This finding is very interesting in light of the latest developments in the Israeli politics. The threshold increased as part of the new governance law, which may be expressed by small parties that will have difficulties to pass the new threshold and will seek to unite with each other. The law was largely designed to weaken the smaller parties and reduce the number of parties. However, the findings show that small parties will actually get a chance to increase their power in the merger, so if the expression of the new law will be setting up new subsidiary parties, the goal will probably not be achieved and the effectiveness of the small parties will rise with increasing political power.

This possibility reveals our definition of electoral gain to be methodologically weak. It is possible that if the parties would run separately in the same election in which merged, they would have gained less electoral achievements than those won running together. Meaning, the best comparison of what electoral gain is should be made between how much the united party actually gained, to how much could the parties have gained if they had run separately in the same elections, and not compared to previous elections. However, such testing cannot be done actually in relation to our data. Pre-election polls can indicate future accomplishment that parties may achieve but some unification are made long before the elections, then it is impossible to know how the voters would answer the polls if the parties ran separately. In other words, it is difficult for us to comply empirically with the prediction of the electoral achievements of each of the parties if they are running apart, so we chose to look at the achievements before the election.

The third hypothesis has been verified to some degree. We found a connection between electoral gains and the ability of the united party to centralize its ideology, comparing the ideology presented by the individual parties before the unification. However, this connection is almost significant, only if we take the ideological distance out of our analysis. That is why we can say with only 90% confidence that a party centralizing its ideology will gain more electoral impact. It is possible that the findings turned out to be not significant in the first model because of the small amount of cases included in the analysis. However, we considered all the possible cases in Israel and not a sample of them. Therefore it will be interesting to test the hypothesis with a larger number of cases, possibly by attaching more party unifications in other states similar to Israel in terms of institutional incentives, i.e., the proportional elements of the electoral system.

In addition to the refuted hypotheses, there are a number of possible weaknesses in our research method. First, to meet the ideological differences between the parties and to determine the extent of unified party centralization, we analyzed the separated party platforms along with the platforms after unification. However, using party platforms might have a large lack of data. Initially, not all parties had clear and accessible platforms. Therefore, using the coding page, we analyzed posters and statement papers presented at the election campaigns, and also secondary sources, which presented the parties. That is why there have been many times statements on coding page did not have a reference. Also we tested the party platforms in the first elections prior to unification but it is reasonable the party has history and throughout the history their positions on various issues has changed, and therefore loyalty to the party is not influenced by its ideology as expressed in the platform at the elections but under the identifications based on another aspect, for example - sociological.

Another problem related to the data analysis is the fact that we tested using the same code page statements regarding the parties operating in different time periods. It can be assumed that parties operating in different periods will seek to highlight various issues. To reduce this problem as much as possible, we tried to build the code page so that its statements will be general enough and the examination could be performed on all cases in a way that allows comparison between them. In addition, in the security issue, it can be stated in a much more clear way, on the certain time point that the views of the parties have changed, and therefore the parties who acted till this reach point (1967 war), were coded by different phrases, in comparison to the parties who acted after this time point.

Perhaps the electoral achievements of each party are affected by external factors that are not related to the unification. For example, a particular period or event that changed the important issues on the agenda and therefore the united party was no longer relevant or became more relevant. Meaning, there can be many variables that can explain electoral success which are not related unification itself. It is difficult to control all possible alternative explanations, but what guided us was poor theoretical literature regarding the unification of political parties and due to the methodological constraints, we chose to derive hypotheses concerning the variables found in the literature.

There are a number of further researches that can be obtained and will add additional insights and explanations, and perhaps will confirm the hypotheses we proposed. First, as we have suggested earlier, it is possible to make a comparative study. This study will add more cases of unifications to analyze from different countries with different institutional incentives similar to those prevailing in Israel. However, in this case we will have to determine various indicators that were proposed to examine the variables. To conduct research of this type, we can use data from the Manifesto Project which is a relatively reliable

measure by which we can compare political parties from different countries. The main disadvantage of this database is that it lacks the information on all the parties who united.

Another potential future research will use a different index to examine the ideology or the electoral profit. For instance, instead of basing on the party platforms to test the ideology, or to examine the election results in the elections that preceded the unification, we can use the pre-election surveys (such as the Israel election studies). First, it is necessary to find out what the positions are that support any political party ideologically and secondly, to try to predict how many seats those parties would have received if they ran separately. The problem with using the data of Israel election studies is that the data only exists from the election campaign of 1969, which reduces even further the amount of cases, which is poor in itself that can be treated. Second, election surveys have changed from time to time and therefore we cannot be confident that all the parties who took place on the unification will appear. A third problem, the use of surveys, does not always give a reliable answer since they are based on the perceptions of the respondents and their willingness to answer sincere answers.

Additionally, we can focus on each of the cases mentioned as a case study and examine whether the unification was the main explanation for the electoral outcome, whether it is profit or loss. That is to conduct a thorough and comprehensive study that will neutralize external influences on electoral results. Such a study will enable a focus on many factors, including the circumstances preceding the election and the union of parties together.

Summary

In conclusion, we can say that the issue of unification of parties requires further research in order to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the causes of unifications, due to the electoral failures which outweigh the successes. This study examined three main factors explaining the conditions under which unifications in terms of electoral profit is considered profitable: ideological distance between the parties' unification, size prior to unification, and the extent to which they manage to centralize their ideology. These factors are intended to explain parties' unifications where institutional incentives do not constitute sufficient grounds to unite, as in Israel. Our hypotheses were derived from the meager literature that exists on the subject, and that is one of the reasons the hypotheses were refuted. New hypotheses which are not based on existing literature may lead to different results and learn more about the subject. However, we may not decree general conclusions regarding party unification, and we may need to examine individual unification case studies to get real insight due to the nature of the Israeli political dynamic that experienced large changes frequently. We believe that this study can serve as a starting point for the study of this subject in depth and more meaningful.

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Appendix 1- The cases and the distribution of the dependent variable- electoral gain

Year	Party Unification	Parties United	Number of shared seats (separated)	Number of seats won running together	Electoral gain
1955	Hazit Leumit Meuhedet	Mizrahi+ Hapoel Hamizrahi	2+8=10	11 in 1955	1
1955	Hazit Datit Turatit	Agudat Israel+ Poalei Agudat Israel	3+2=5	6 in 1955	1
1965	Gahal	Herut+ The Liberal Party	17+17=34	25 in 1965	-9
1965	Maarach	Mapai+ Ahdut Haavoda	42+8=50	45 in 1965	-5
1969	Maarach	Mapam+ The Labor Party (Maarach 1965+Rafi)	8+45+10=63	56 in 1969	-7
1973	Likud	Gahal+ Hamerkaz Hahofshi+ The Great Israel Movement+ Hareshima Hamamlachtit	26+2+4+1=33	39 in 1973	6
1977	Hadash	Rakach+ The Black Panthers	4+0=4	5 in 1977	1
1981	Maarach	Maarach+Ratz	32+1=33	47 in 1981	14

1984	Maarach	Maarach 1981+ Independent Liberals	47+1=48	44 in 1984	-4
1992	Meretz	Mapam+ Shinui+ Ratz	3+2+5=10	12 in 1992	2
1992	Yahadut Hatura	Agudat Israel+ Degel Hatura	5+2=7	4 in 1992	-3
1996	Likud- Tzomet- Gesher	Likud+ Tzomet	32+8=40	32 in 1996	-8
1999	Israel Achat	The Labor Party+ Gesher+ Meimad	34+5=39	26 in 1999	-13
1999	HaIchud Haleumi	Tkuma+ Herut+ Moledet	2+3+2=7	4 in 1999	-3
2003	Hadash- Ta'al	Hadash+ Ta'al	3+1=4	3 in 2003	-1
2003	HaIchud Haleumi	Tkuma+Moledet+Israel Beitenu	1+2+4=7	7 in 2003	0
2003	Meretz- The Democratic Choice- Shachar	Meretz+ The Democratic Choice	10+2=12	6 in 2003	-6
2006	Ichud Leumi- Mafdal	Moledet+ Tkuma+ Mafdal	2+2+6=10	9 in 2006	-1
2006	Raam-Taal	Raam+Taal	2+1=3	4 in 2006	1

2009	Likud-Achi	Likud+ Achi	12+2=14	27 in 2009	13
2013	HaBait Hayehudi	Mafdal+ Tkuma	3+2=5	12 in 2013	7
2013	HaLikud- Beitenu	Likud+ Israel Beitenu	27+15=42	31 in 2013	-11
					Mean: -1.13

Appendix 2- The coding page

דף קידוד זה, נועד לסווג את המפלגות על פי האידיאולוגיה שלהן בתחומי יחסי דת ומדינה, בטחון ומדיניות-כלכלית חברתית. המטרה בסיווג היא לעמוד על המרחק האידיאולוגי בין המפלגות טרם האיחוד ולבדוק מה המידה בה המפלגות, לאחר האיחוד, הפנו את האידיאולוגיה שלהן למרכז. לצורך כך יקודדו מצעי המפלגות אשר הרכיבו את האיחוד ומצעי המפלגות לאחר האיחוד. אי לכך, יש לקחת בחשבון כי לא לכל המפלגות שהתאחדו קיים מצע זמין או נגיש לניתוח, נכון לתקופה בה פעלו. על כן, במידה ולא נמצא, מצע נפעיל את הקידוד על מידע אלטרנטיבי לגבי המפלגות כדוגמת: כרזות מאותן מערכות בחירות בהן פעלו, חומר מן הספרות הכתובה, מצעי המפלגות בשנים מוקדמות או מאוחרות יותר (לפי הקיים בנמצא), מידע מהעיתונות הכתובה באותה תקופה שבה פעלו, דברי נציגי המפלגות בראיונות או התבטאויות מצוטטות. בשל ההבדלים בין הפריטים המקודדים אין לנו דרך מהימנה לבחון ולהשוות את בולטות ההיגדים ולכן נתמקד בתוכן ולא בצורה.

הסבר למקודד: על המקודד לקרוא את המצע פעמיים; פעם אחת בשלמותו, ובפעם השנייה בקריאה מעמיקה בה יתמקד בנושאים הנבחרים במחקר, היינו: בטחון, יחסי דת ומדינה ומדיניות כלכלית חברתית. במידה ולא קיים מצע יפנה המקודד לכל פריטי הניתוח הקיימים בנמצא הנוגעים לכל מפלגה וידרג כל אחד מההיגדים הנ"ל:

A. היכן ניתן למקם את המפלגה לאור המסרים המוזכרים במצע בנוגע ליחסי הדת ומדינה:

A1. באיזו מידה מדגישה המפלגה ערכי דת ומסורת-

1. במידה רבה מאד. 2. במידה רבה. 3. במידה בינונית. 4. כמעט ולא מדגישה. 5. לא מדגישה כלל. 99. אין התייחסות/ מידע.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים שחלק הארי בהם ידון בערכי המסורת והדת (בין אם הדת היהודית או דת אחרת) יקודדו כמי שמדגישות במידה רבה מאד את הערכים הללו. ערכי דת ומסורת יהיו למשל התייחסויות לספר הקדוש של אותה דת, האמונה באל או קיום מצוות הקשורות לדת. לדוגמא, אמירות כגון "אנו מאמינים כי התורה ניתנה לנו על ידי הקב"ה והיא אורך חיינו ואורך ימינו, בזכותה אנו קיימים כעם ובזכות קיומה על ידינו הובטחה לנו הארץ שהובטחה לאבותינו..." יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. מצעים שלא יכלו כלל התייחסות לערכי דת גם אם לא באזכור יקודדו לפי

קטגוריה 5. מצעים שירמזו על ערכים דתיים ועל קשר כלשהו למסורת אך יעסקו בזה בחלק קטן במצע רק בתחילתו או במשפט קטן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. מצעים אשר יכילו סעיפים או מספר משפטים המתייחסים לנושא יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3. פריטים אשר יכילו פרק התייחסות לנושא דת ומדינה יקודדו על פי קטגוריה 2.

A2. באיזו מידה תומכת המפלגה בשילוב ערכי הדת או המסורת במוסדות ציבוריים-

1. תמיכה מלאה. 2. תמיכה מסויגת. 3. לא תומכת ולא מתנגדת. 4. התנגדות מסויגת. 5. התנגדות מלאה.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים שיספקו אמירות של המפלגה התומכות בשילוב של ערכי דת או מסורת במוסדות ציבור שונים כמו חינוך, תרבות, חוקים וכדומה יקודדו כמי שתומכות תמיכה מלאה. למשל "החינוך במדינה לכל שלביו חייב להיות מבוסס על האמונה באלוהי ישראל ותורתו". יחד עם אמירות נוספות כמו "נמשיך לשמור על כך שבכל המוסדות הציבוריים יתנהלו מטבחים כשרים". לחילופין מצעים או פריטים שיהיו בהם אמירות כנגד שילוב הדת או בעד הוצאת ערכם דתיים ממוסדות ציבור קיימים יקודדו כהתנגדות מלאה אלא אם יהיו בעד שילוב ערכי דת במוסדות ספציפיים ואז תוגדר עמדתן כהתנגדות מסויגת. מצעים שלא יתייחסו לשילוב ערכי דת במוסדות ציבוריים ולא ירמזו על כך יחשבו כמי שלא מתנגדים ולא תומכים ולכן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3.

A3. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת בפתיחת עסקים ומקומות עבודה בשבת?

1. התנגדות מלאה. 2. התנגדות מסויגת. 3. לא תומכת ולא מתנגדת. 4. תמיכה מסויגת. 5. תמיכה מלאה.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים שיכילו התייחסויות מפורשות לשמירה על השבת במקומות ציבוריים אך גם בעסקים פרטיים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה. בתוך כך יכולות להיכלל גם אמירות כלליות לגבי שמירה על השבת מבלי לציין היכן יש לשמור עליה ובאילו נושאים. 1. מצעים או פריטים שיכילו אמירות הנוגעות לשמירה על השבת בין אם בכלליות או ספציפית לגבי עסקים אך ישולבו בהם תנאים- למשל רק במקומות מוגדרים עם אוכלוסיה דתית יסווגו לפי קטגוריה 2. מצעים שיכילו אמירות הנוגעות באופן ישיר למתן חופש תעסוקה בשבת יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 5. מצעים שיכילו אמירות הנוגעות לחופש תעסוקה בשבת אך רק בתנאים ובמקומות מסויימים למשל יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. לדוגמא האמירה "אנו מתנגדים לכל כפייה דתית בקיום התחבורה הציבורית, ופעילות ספורט, בידור ותרבות בשבתות וחגים" יקודד לפי קטגוריה 5. מצעים שלא יכילו אמירות הנוגעות לשמירה על השבת יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3.

A4. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת בהנהגת נישואין אזרחיים (בנוסף לנישואין דתיים)?

1. התנגדות מלאה. 2. התנגדות מסויגת. 3. לא תומכת ולא מתנגדת. 4. תמיכה מסויגת. 5. תמיכה מלאה.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים שיכילו התייחסויות מפורשות לשימור מעמדה של הרבנות למשל בנוגע ליחסי אישות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. מצעים או פריטים שיכילו אמירות המבקשות באופן ישיר חופש בכל הקשור ליחסי אישות או אף התייחסויות מפורשות להנהגת נישואין אזרחיים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 5. אם המצעים יכילו אמירות המבקשות לשמר את מעמדה של הרבנות בנוגע ליחסי אישות אך יציבו תנאים מסויימים שבהם זה מתקיים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 2. מצעים שיכילו אמירות הדורשות להנהיג באופן ישיר חופש בנוגע ליחסי אישות והנהגת נישואין אזרחיים אך יבקשו במקביל לשמר את מוסדות הרבנות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. מצעים שלא יכילו התייחסות מפורשת בכל הנוגע ליחסי אישות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3. למשל האמירה "המערך יפעל לפתרון בעיות בתחום המעמד האישי הגורמות סבל לגברים ונשים יהודים בישראל, מונעות מהם להקים משפחה ומעמידות מכשולים בפני עליה" יחד עם אמירות כמו "המערך יבטיח שהמוסדות הדתיים יפעלו במסגרת החוק" יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. לעומת זאת אמירות כמו "דגש מיוחד יינתן

לטיפול בשאלות הרגישות בתחומי אישות ומשפחה ובמציאת פתרונות לבעיות אלו בתהליך מזורז ומועדף. זאת- לטובת הנוגעים בדבר, ולחיוזוק המערכת הממלכתית הרבנית הנוהגת על פי דין תורה" תקודד לפי קטגוריה 1.

B. היכן ניתן למקם את המפלגה לאור המסרים המוזכרים במצע בנוגע למדיניות כלכלית-חברתית:

B1. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת במעורבות הממשלה בשוק בנושאים כלכליים-חברתיים-

1. התנגדות רבה להתערבות המדינה בשוק. 2. התנגדות חלקית להתערבות המדינה בשוק. 3. תמיכה חלקית בהתערבות המדינה בשוק. 4. תמיכה מלאה בהתערבות המדינה בשוק. 99. אין התייחסות/מידע.

הסבר: מצעים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות למדינה לקחת חלק יותר פעיל מבחינת ההתנהלות הכלכלית במדינה יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. מצעים או פריטים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות למדינה שלא לקחת חלק פעיל בהתנהלות הכלכלית כלומר יתמכו בשוק חופשי לחלוטין יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. לדוגמא אמירה שתיחשב כהתנגדות להתערבות המדינה בשוק היא: " לא יוקם מפעל ממשלתי חדש ולא יורחב... שחרורו של המשק מן התלות המתמדת ברשות... ביטול פיקוחים כובלים והכבדות בירוקרטיות". ואמירה התומכת בהתערבות המדינה בשוק היא: "פיתוח המשק על כל תחומיו וקידום החברה הישראלית ייעשו על פי תכנית רב שנתית של תכנון כולל שבו יושם דגש על התכנון החברתי ויוצבו יעדים לקידום הכלכלה הלאומית.". אם יהיו מספר אמירות שתייחסו לתמיכה בהתערבות ולצידן במצע יופיעו מספר אמירות שתייחסו להתנגדות להתערבות אז מה שייקבע לפי איזו קטגוריה תקודד המפלגה יהיה מספר האמירות בעד מול מספר האמירות נגד כך שאם רוב האמירות יהיו בעד תקודד המפלגה לפי קטגוריה 3 ואם רוב האמירות יהיו נגד תקודד המפלגה לפי קטגוריה 2.

B2. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת במתן קצבאות לאוכלוסיות שונות-

1. התנגדות רבה למתן קצבאות. 2. התנגדות חלקית למתן קצבאות. 3. תמיכה חלקית במתן קצבאות. 4. תמיכה מלאה במתן קצבאות. 99. אין התייחסות/מידע.

הסבר: מצעים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות למדינה לתת קצבאות לאוכלוסיות שונות למשל עבור קשישים, ילדים וכו' יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. מצעים או פריטים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות למדינה להפסיק את מתן קצבאות לאוכלוסיות שונות או להפחיתן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. אם המצע או הפריט יכילו אמירות מעורבות לגבי מתן קצבאות לאוכלוסיות שונות כלומר יתמכו במתן קצבאות לאוכלוסיות מסוימות ולאחרות יתנגדו, הן יקודדו כקטגוריה 2 או 3 לפי מספר האמירות. כך שאם רוב האמירות יהיו בעד הגדלת קצבאות לאוכלוסיות שונות הן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3. ואם רוב האמירות יהיו נגד הגדלת קצבאות לאוכלוסיות שונות הן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 2. אמירות בעד מתן קצבאות יהיו "התנועה תתנגד לשחיקת בקצבאות הביטוח הלאומי המשולמות לקשישים" או "התנועה תפעל לחשיקת חוק המבטיח סיוע נאות למשפחות שיוגדרו מתחת לקו העוני". אמירות נגד מתן קצבאות יהיו "אסור שהמדינה תסבסד את כולם ללא הבחנה" או "מדיניות הרווחה חייבת להתרכז בצרכים אמיתיים".

B3. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת בגביית מיסים דיפרנציאלית-

1. התנגדות לגביית מיסים דיפרנציאלית. 2. התנגדות חלקית לגביית מיסים דיפרנציאלית. 3. תמיכה חלקית בגביית מיסים דיפרנציאלית. 4. תמיכה מלאה בגביית מיסים דיפרנציאלית. 99. אין התייחסות/מידע.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות לגביית מיסים שוויונית או לגביית מיסים דומה לבעלי הכנסות גבוהות או נמוכות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. מצעים או פריטים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות לגביית מיסים על פי גובה ההכנסה יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. מצעים או פריטים שיהיו בהן אמירות שיטענו לגבי כל אחת מהאפשרויות הללו יחד עם הסתייגות מסוימת יקודדו לפי קטגוריות 2 ו-3 בהתאם.

B4. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת בהגדלת התמיכה התקציבית של המדינה בתחומים חברתיים-כלכליים-

1. תמיכה מלאה בהפחתת התמיכה התקציבית בתחומים שונים. 2. תמיכה חלקית בהפחתת התמיכה התקציבית בתחומים שונים. 3. תמיכה חלקית בהרחבת התמיכה התקציבית בתחומים שונים. 4. תמיכה מלאה בהרחבת התמיכה התקציבית בתחומים שונים. 99. אין התייחסות/מידע.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות למדינה להרחיב את התמיכה התקציבית בתחומים חברתיים-כלכליים שונים כדוגמת חינוך, תרבות, בריאות ועוד יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4. מצעים או פריטים שיכילו רק אמירות הקוראות למדינה להפחית את התמיכה התקציבית בתחומים חברתיים כלכליים שונים כדוגמת חינוך תרבות בריאות וכיוצא בזה, יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. אם המצע או הפריט יכילו אמירות מעורבות לגבי הרחבת התמיכה בנושאים שונים והפחתת התמיכה בנושאים אחרים יקודדו תחת קטגוריה 2 או 3 לפי מספר האמירות הנוגעות להפחתת התמיכה לעומת הגדלת התמיכה. כך שאם רוב האמירות יהיו בעד הרחבת התמיכה בתחומים חברתיים כלכליים מסוימים הן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3. ואם רוב האמירות יהיו נגד הרחבת התמיכה התקציבית בתחומים חברתיים כלכליים הן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 2. לדוגמה אמירות בעד הרחבת התמיכה התקציבית יהיו יבקשו מהמדינה לקחת על עצמה התחייבויות שמוכן מאליו שידרשו הגדלת תקציב למשל "הבטחת דיור" או "הרחבת סל התרופות" לעומת אמירות אחרות שידרשו "ריסון של ההוצאות הממשלתיות".

C. היכן ניתן למקם את המפלגה לאור המסרים המוזכרים במצע בנוגע לנושא הביטחוני מדיני-

בחלק זה יש לענות על השאלות הנוגעות לסעיף "לפני 1967" במידה ומדובר על מפלגות ומצעים שהתקיימו לפני מלחמת ששת הימים, וסיפוח שטחי יהודה, שומרון, עזה והגולן. ובמידה ומדובר על מפלגות ומצעים שהתקיימו לאחר מלחמת ששת הימים, יש לענות על השאלות הנוגעות ל"אחרי 1967".

לפני 1967-

C1. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת בנקיטת פעולות אקטיביות למען בטחון המדינה?-

1. תמיכה בפעולות אקטיביסטיות ויזומות. 2. תמיכה בפעולות אקטיביות רק במידה וישראל תותקף. 3. תמיכה במדיניות מבליגה באופן מוגבל. 4. תמיכה במדיניות מבליגה באופן מוחלט. 99. אין התייחסות/מידע.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים אשר יכילו אמירות הקוראות לנקיטת פעולות יזומות נגד מדינות ערב למען הגברת ההרתעה והביטחון יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. מצעים או פריטים שיכילו אמירות התומכות בפעולות כאלו רק כתגובות למשל לפעולות איבה שמגיעות ממדינות ערב או ארגונים בתמיכתן יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 2 (למשל: "בעוד אויבי ישראל מקיימים עמנו מצב מלחמה חייבת ישראל לשמור לעצמה במלואה את הזכות להגנה לאומית עצמית"). מצעים או פריטים שיכילו אמירות שתומכות בסבלנות מוגבלת כלפי פעולות של מדינות ערב/נספחיהן ובעד מדיניות מבליגה אך לא בכל מחיר יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3 למשל (עם כל היות חפצנו אדיר בשלום עם מדינות ערב חייבים אנו לעמוד הכן ערים ודרוכים על משמר בטחוננו). מצעים או פריטים שיתמכו במדיניות סובלנית מוחלטות למשל אמירות שידברו על איפוק בכדי לשמור על הסיכוי לשלום או הידברות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4 (לדוגמה: "בעד מאמצים מתמידים לקידום השלום

עם העמים השכנים בדרך של מו"מ וללא תנאים מודמים תוך כיבוד השלמות הטריטוריאלית והריבונות הלאומית של כל מדינה" או "נגד התגרות מלחמתית באיזור".

C2. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת בקיום שיחות או יחסים עם מדינות ערביות?-

1. כלל לא. 2. במידה מועטה. 3. במידה רבה. 4. במידה רבה מאוד. 99. אין התייחסות/מידע.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים אשר יכילו אמירות אשר יתנגדו בכל תוקף לקיום יחסים או שיחות עם מדינות ערביות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1. מצעים/פריטים שיש בהן אמירות המתייחסות בהסתייגות לקיום יחסים או שיחות עם מדינות ערב יוגדרו לפי קטגוריה 2 (למשל "עם כל נכונותנו לשלום אל נחדל מלהתריע על הניצול של סבל במחנות הפליטים כלף של לחץ מדיני טפל ואיום מתמיד לעברנו"). פריטים שיכילו אמירות הפותחות צוהר לקיום יחסים דיפלומטיים עם מדינות ערביות יסווגו בקטגוריה (למשל "מדינות ערב השכנות אינן רוצות להשלים עם קיומנו בכל זאת אנחנו נעמוד בנכונותנו לחתור לשלום צודק וליציבות אמת במזרח התיכון" 3. מצעים או פריטים שיש בהן אמירות התומכות באופן בלתי מסויג ואקטיבי ביצירת יחסים דיפלומטיים תוך נכונות להגיע לפשרות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4.

אחרי 1967 (הבעיה הפלסטינית)-

C3. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת ברעיון ארץ ישראל השלמה?-

1. במידה רבה. 2. תומכת במידה בינונית. 3. במידה מועטה. 4. כלל לא.

הסבר: מצעים או פריטים שיכילו אמירות אשר תומכות באופן מוחלט וברור ללא הסתייגות ברעיון ארץ ישראל השלמה יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1 (למשל: "המפלגה שואפת להגשים את חזון הישיבה לארץ ישראל הארץ המובטחת לעם היהודי"). פריטים שיכילו אמירות אשר תומכות ברעיון ארץ ישראל השלמה אך עם הסתייגויות למשל הנוגעות לפרגמטיזם או להכרה במציאות יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 2 (למשל: "זכותנו לארץ ישראל אינה ניתנת לערעור. ומיד אחר כך הממשלה תחתור למניעת שפיכות דמים ולהשגת שלום. יש לנסות ולפעול במסגרת ההסכמים הבינלאומיים להקפאת החימוש באיזור"). פריטים שיכילו אמירות המתנגדות באופן מוחלט וגלוי לרעיון ארץ ישראל השלמה יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4 (למשל: "המשך הכיבוש הוא הסיבה העיקרית להיעדר שלום ובטחון ולסכנה המתמדת של חידוש המלחמה").

C4. באיזו מידה המפלגה תומכת בשליטה צבאית בשטחים בביטחון?-

1. במידה רבה. 2. תומכת במידה בינונית. 3. במידה מועטה. 4. בכלל לא.

הסבר: פריטים המכילים אמירות התומכות באופן גלוי וברור בשליטה צבאית בשטחים מנימוקים ביטחוניים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1 (למשל: "כוחות הבטחון יפעלו להגנת אזרחי המדינה ותושביה בכל מקום שפעולתם תידרש על פי הנסיבות"). פריטים המכילים אמירות אשר תומכות בשליטה צבאית על השטחים עם הסתייגויות מסוימות או מציבות לכך תנאים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 2 "התנגדות לרעיון המדינה הפלשתינית אך תמיכה באוטונומיה מוגבלת לערים פלשתיניות". פריטים שמכילים אמירות המתנגדות לשליטה הצבאית אך מכירות בצרכים ביטחוניים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3 (למשל: "נחדש את התהליך המדיני על בסיס הסכמי אוסלו ועם זאת לא נתפשר על בטחונה של מדינת ישראל"). פריטים שמכילים התנגדות או הסתייגות ברורה וגלויה לשליטה הצבאית בשטחים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4 (למשל: "ניאבק להפסקת פעולות הדיכוי בשטחים...").

C5. באיזו מידה תומכת המפלגה במתן שטחים תמורת שלום?

1. בכלל לא 2. במידה מועטה 3. תומכת במידה בינונית. 4. במידה רבה

הסבר: פריטים המכילים אמירות המתנגדות באופן גלוי ומוחלט לפשרות המערבות החזרת שטחים במסגרת הסכם שלום יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 1 (למשל: התנגדות להסכמי אוסלו או לפינוי שטחים). פריטים המכילים אמירות אשר מציינות כי הן נגד פינוי שטחים או פינוי יישובים יהודים מהשטחים אך מוכנות לקיים מו"מ יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 2 "נכונות להגיע לפשרה טריטוריאלית". פריטים המכילים אמירות אשר מוכנות לקבל פינוי יישובים יהודיים לצורך קידום תהליך השלום או מסכימות לפינוי יישובים כלשהם בתנאים מסוימים יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 3 (למשל: "בעד קיום התהליך המדיני, אך נגד חזרה לקווי 1967"). פריטים המכילים אמירות אשר תומכות באופן מפורש ברור וגלוי בפינוי יישובים יהודיים או בחזרה לקווי 1967 לצורך קידום תהליך השלום יקודדו לפי קטגוריה 4 (למשל: "קווי יוני 1967 יהיו גבולות השלום המוכרים והבטוחים בין מדינת ישראל למדינה הפלסטינית").

Appendix 3- Reliability test for the statements of the coding page

Statements	N cases	N decisions	Reliability
A1-Religious Values	73	146	0.963
A2- Religion in Institutions	73	146	0.918
A3- Sabbath	73	146	0.986
A4- Marriage	73	146	0.994
B1- Government Intervention	73	146	0.927
B2- Allowances	73	146	0.899
B3- Taxes	73	146	0.938
B4- Government Investments	73	146	0.898
C1- Actions for Security- Before 1967	16	32	0.911
C2- Relations With Arabs- Before 1967	16	32	0.911

C3- Greater Israel- After 1967	57	114	0.922
C4- Army Control over the Occupies territories- After 1967	57	114	0.902
C5- Territories for Peace- After 1967	57	114	0.948

Appendix 4- Distribution of the first independent variable- Ideological distance

Party Unification	Ideological Distance- Security	Ideological Distance- Socio- Economic	Ideological Distance- State and Religion	Computed Ideological Distance
Hazit Leumit Meuhedet 1955	0.357	0	0	0.097
Hazit Datit Turatit 1955	Missing value	Missing value	0	Missing value
Gahal 1965	0.178	0.55	0	0.273
Maarach 1965	0.535	0.272	0.15	0.382
Maarach 1969	0.95	0.621	0.192	0.762
Likud 1973	0	1	0.301	0.543
Hadash 1977	Missing value	0	0	Missing value

Maarach 1981	0.478	0.235	0.451	0.479
Maarach1984	0.357	0.668	0.301	0.555
Meretz 1992	0.164	0.47	1	0.701
Yahadut Hatura 1992	0	0.16	0	0.004
Likud- Tzomet- Gesher 1996	0.357	0.588	0.301	0.518
Israel Achat 1999	1	0.47	0.795	1
HaIchud Haleumi 1999	0.235	0.414	0.795	0.611
Hadash-Ta'al 2003	0	0	0.451	0.142
HaIchud Haleumi 2003	0.357	0.423	0.602	0.582
Meretz- The Democratic Choice- Shachar 2003	0.714	0.352	0.903	0.86
Ichud Leumi- Mafdal 2006	0.117	0.705	0.903	0.745

Raam-Taal 2006	0	0	1	0.401
Likud-Achi 2009	0.357	0.545	0.753	0.711
HaBait Hayehudi 2013	0	0.15	0	0
HaLikud- Beitenu 2013	0.114	0.235	0.301	0.236
Mean	0.31	0.37	0.41	0.48

Appendix 5- Distribution of the second independent variable- Size of parties prior the unification

Party Unification	Parties United	Number of shared seats (separated)	
Hazit Leumit Meuhedet 1955	Mizrahi+ Hapoel Hamizrahi	2+8=10	Small+Large
Hazit Datit Turatit 1955	Agudat Israel+ Poalei Agudat Israel	3+2=5	Small
Gahal 1965	Herut+ The Liberal Party	17+17=34	Large
Maarach 1965	Mapai+ Ahdut Haavoda	42+8=50	Large
Maarach 1969	Mapam+ The Labor Party (Maarach 1965+Rafi)	8+45+10=63	Large
Likud 1973	Gahal+ Hamerkaz Hahofshi+ The Great Israel Movement+	26+2+4+1=33	Small+Large

	Hareshima Hamamlachtit		
Hadash 1977	Rakach+ The Black Panthers	4+0=4	Small
Maarach 1981	Maarach+Ratz	32+1=33	Small+Large
Maarach1984	Maarach 1981+ Independent Liberals	47+1=48	Small+Large
Meretz 1992	Mapam+ Shinui+ Ratz	3+2+5=10	Small
Yahadut Hatura 1992	Agudat Israel+ Degel Hatura	5+2=7	Small
Likud-Tzomet- Gesher 1996	Likud+ Tzomet	32+8=40	Large
Israel Achat 1999	The Labor Party+ Gesher+ Meimad	34+5=39	Small+Large
HaIchud Haleumi 1999	Tkuma+ Herut+ Moledet	2+3+2=7	Small
Hadash-Ta'al 2003	Hadash+ Ta'al	3+1=4	Small
HaIchud Haleumi 2003	Tkuma+Moledet+Israel Beitenu	1+2+4=7	Small
Meretz- The Democratic Choice- Shachar 2003	Meretz+ The Democratic Choice	10+2=12	Small+Large
Ichud Leumi-Mafdal 2006	Moledet+ Tkuma+ Mafdal	2+2+6=10	Small
Raam-Taal 2006	Raam+Taal	2+1=3	Small
Likud-Achi 2009	Likud+ Achi	12+2=14	Small+Large

HaBait Hayehudi 2013	Mafdal+ Tkuma	3+2=5	Small
HaLikud-Beitenu 2013	Likud+ Israel Beitenu	27+15=42	Large

Appendix 6- Distribution of the third independent variable- Ideological centralization

Party Unification	Ideological Centralization- Security	Ideological Centralization- Socio-Economics	Ideological Centralization- State and Religion	Computed Ideological Centralization
Hazit Leumit Meuhedet 1955	-0.5	0	0	-0.5
Hazit Datit Turatit 1955	1	-1.25	0	-0.25
Gahal 1965	0.15	0.415	-1	-0.435
Maarach 1965	-0.25	-0.29	0.125	-0.415
Maarach 1969	-0.68	-0.31	-0.17	-1.16
Likud 1973	0	-0.31	0.125	-0.185
Hadash 1977	0	0.67	-0.25	0.42
Maarach 1981	0.33	-0.5	0.375	0.205
Maarach 1984	-0.83	-0.71	0.25	-1.29
Meretz 1992	-0.13	-0.67	-0.5	-1.3
Yahadut Hatura 1992	0	0.83	0	0.83
Likud-Tzomet-Gesher 1996	0	0.38	-1	-0.62
Israel Achat 1999	-0.36	0	0.18	-0.18
HaIchud	-0.16	-0.05	0.52	0.31

Haleumi 1999				
Hadash-Ta'al 2003	0	-0.42	0.125	-0.295
HaIchud Haleumi 2003	0	-0.45	0	-0.45
Meretz- The Democratic Choice-Shachar 2003	-1	-0.04	-0.5	-1.54
Ichud Leumi- Mafdal 2006	-0.165	-1.41	0.5	-1.075
Raam-Taal 2006	0	0	0	0
Likud-Achi 2009	-0.17	0.33	0.75	0.91
HaBait Hayehudi 2013	0	0.18	-1	-0.82
HaLikud- Beitenu 2013	-0.42	-0.5	-1	-1.92
Mean	-0.14	-0.18	-0.11	-0.44

Appendix 7- Multi-collinearity test

Variable	Tolerance
Ideological Distance	0.849
Ideological Centralization	0.856
Unifications of Small parties	0.693
Unifications of Large parties	0.652