

Beliefs about Racial Discrimination

Pre-Analysis Plan III

Ingar Haaland* Christopher Roth†

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In a third round of data collection, we explore whether a political party prime increases polarization in policy views on affirmative action.

1 Introduction

We collect data on whether a political party prime increases polarization in policy views on affirmative action. In this document, we outline our plan for analysis of the data. This data collection supplements previous data collections described in Pre-Analysis Plan I and Pre-Analysis Plan II. The pre-analysis plans for all three data collections are uploaded to the same AEA RCT Registry trial.

2 Setting and sample size

We plan to collect 4000 respondents in collaboration with Research Now. The respondents first participate in a completely unrelated experiment about people's demand for redistribution of income. The respondents then participate in our experiment before they finish the survey.

*Department of Economics, NHH Norwegian School of Economics;
e-mail: Ingar.Haaland@nhh.no

†Institute on Behavior & Inequality; email: Chris.Roth@briq-institute.org

3 Experimental design

We randomize the subjects into a treatment group and a control group. Respondents in the treatment group receive a political prime about party views on black preference in hiring.

3.1 Instructions: Treatment group

A much debated issue is whether blacks and other racial minorities should get preference over equally qualified white candidates in getting a job. In contrast to the Democratic Party, the Republican Party generally opposes all forms of special treatment based on race. We are interested in what you think about this issue.

Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give qualified black and other racial minority candidates preference over equally qualified white candidates in getting a job?

Strongly support

Support

Neither support nor oppose

Oppose

Strongly oppose

3.2 Instructions: Control group

A much debated issue is whether blacks and other racial minorities should get preference over equally qualified white candidates in getting a job. We are interested in what you think about this issue.

Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give qualified black and other racial minority candidates preference over equally qualified white candidates in getting a job?

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4 Analysis

In our main specification, we investigate whether the treatment causes polarization in policy views between Republicans and Democrats. To test this question, we estimate the following OLS regression:

$$\text{black_pref}_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 R_i + \alpha_2 T_i + \alpha_3 R_i \times T_i + \alpha_4 \mathbf{x}_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where

- black_pref_i — individual i 's support for black preference in hiring. We code this variable from 1: Strongly oppose to 5: Strongly support and then standardize responses by subtracting the control group mean and dividing by the control group standard deviation for each observation.
- T_i — an indicator for whether i was in the treatment group.
- \mathbf{x}_i — a vector of controls.¹ We also report results without controls.
- ε_i — an individual-specific error term. We use robust error terms for inference.

The main coefficient of interest is α_3 ; that is, whether the treatments lead to polarization in beliefs between Republicans and Democrats.²

¹We include the following controls: gender (male/female), age (in years), and education (indicator for having at least “some college”).

²We omit respondents who self-identify as “Independents” from the regression; i.e., we only include respondents who self-identify as “Republicans” or “Democrats.” This means that the total number of respondents in the main regression is likely to be well below 4000.