Pre-analysis plan update:

Racial Discrimination in Seeking Advice

Vojtěch Bartoš, Ulrich Glogowsky, Johannes Rincke

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MOTIVATION

This document is an update to the PAP from May 27, 2021 (AEARCTR-0007737), lastly updated on November 12, 2021.

Background: Our first study from May 11, 2020 (AEARCTR-0005812) demonstrated, on average, the lack of statistical and taste-based discrimination in seeking advice on Mturk. One potential explanation is that the population might be highly polarized. Particularly, while some people might discriminate (white-favoring individuals), others might not care at all (egalitarians), or even show minority-favoring behavior (black-favoring individuals). An analysis of average treatment effects could mask this heterogeneity. Along these lines, in a follow-up study, registered on May 27, 2021, we analyzed the distribution of "discrimination types" on Mturk, exploiting a simple classification task. Indeed, we found that the Mturk population is highly heterogeneous: white-favoring, black-favoring, and egalitarian individuals are represented in the sample. Furthermore, according to our classification, Democrats or Liberals tend to be black-favoring, while Republicans are rather white-favoring. Our data, however, does not allow us to study if this heterogeneity also exists in discrimination in advice-seeking (we only see it in the classification task).

Goal: Based on these insights, our next step is to trace out the heterogeneity in discriminatory behavior in advice-seeking (considering the Mturk population). Particularly, we will study if the heterogeneity along ***individuals' political views*** also persists in our main experiment. In a nutshell, we classify individuals into those with "very conservative," "non-extreme," and "very liberal views." We then study the treatment effect heterogeneity concerning this variable.

The reasons for why we focus on political views are as follows:

1. Racial discrimination is a pervasive phenomenon, but it is not entirely clear whether it is prevalent in all parts of society. Specifically, given the political polarization in the US, it is natural to expect that discriminatory behavior centers on the extremes of the political spectrum. Our paper aims to test this hypothesis by studying the heterogeneity in discriminatory behavior along individuals' political views.
2. By focusing on political views, we study the heterogeneity in a variable that is not only politically relevant but also widely available. Therefore, we can not only discuss our results against the background of the political debate in the US, but also link them to a vast literature. An alternative would have been to classify participants based on our "classification task" and study the heterogeneity in this dimension. While we will elicit the classification data as a robustness check, this strategy would have generated more specific results.

3. Although the Mturk sample is not a national representative sample, by focusing on political views, we can link our results to a more representative population. To that end, we will construct the distribution of the political-views variable for a national representative sample. We will then re-weight our results to represent the population (with respect to this variable).

DESGIN

Overview of the design: Our design combines our two previous studies (AEARCTR-0007737 and AEARCTR-000581). First, we invite participants for our main experiment on discrimination in seeking advice described in AEARCTR-000581. Second, we invite the same participants for our classification survey described in AEARCTR-0007737. This classification task allows us to analyze if the results on discrimination (including the heterogeneity) also persist in a different domain.

SAMPLE

Data provider: We will collect our data on Mturk, using the services of CloudResearch. Relying on this service has at least three benefits: First, they screen Mturk participants in several dimensions to ensure high data quality. Individuals in their so-called "CloudResearch approved participants" sample have passed many attention and engagement checks. Their demographics also have been cross-checked. Second, CloudResearch collects demographics for its sample. Most importantly, they elicit political views using a standard question. This feature is helpful for our purpose: we do not have to elicit political views on our own, but we can use existing data that have been earlier. Hence, participants cannot know that we study the heterogeneity in political views, limiting demand effects. Third, CloudResearch also offers several tools to optimize the data collection process.

Sample: We use the "CloudResearch approved participants" sample and restrict our sample to individuals living in the US.

Political views variable: CloudResearch elicits political views using the following standard question: "How would you describe your political views?". The response categories are "very conservative," "conservative," "moderate," "liberal," and "very liberal."

Sample: In total, we plan to recruit 3,000 participants for our experiment. As described, we expect that "discriminatory" and "minority-favoring" behavior centers on the extremes of the distribution of political views. To be sufficiently powered (see previous PAP for power analysis), we need 1,000 participants per category in which we run our analysis. We, hence, plan to recruit 1,000 "very conservative" individuals and 1,000 "very liberal" participants. We also build a third category for the "non-extreme individuals," consisting of subjects classifying themselves as "conservative," "moderate," or "liberal." We recruit 1,002 individuals in the category of "non-extreme individuals" (334 per response category).

HYPOTHESES AND ANALYSIS

Hypotheses: We formulate three hypotheses:

- H1: On average, very conservative individuals show discriminatory behavior.

- H2: On average, very liberal individuals show minority-favoring behavior.
- H3: On average, non-extreme individuals neither show discriminatory nor minority-favoring behavior.

Main analysis: Our main analysis consists of several steps:

1. We will run the full analysis described in the PAP of the main study on racial discrimination in seeking advice (AEARCTR-0005812) for each "political view type" (i.e., separately for the samples of very conservative, very liberal, and non-extreme individuals).
2. We will pool all the data together, re-weight our sample to the Mturk population (to account for the fact that we over-sampled "very conservative" and "very liberal" individuals), and repeat the analysis registered in AEARCTR-0005812 for the weighted sample.
3. We will also re-weight our data to a national representative sample and repeat the analysis. Specifically, we will construct representative sample weights from the survey "American National Election Studies," considering the dimensions: (a) gender, (b) age, (c) race, (d) education, and (e) political views.

Secondary analysis: The secondary analysis relies on data from our classification task AEARCTR-0007737. Particularly, we will split the sample by individuals' political views. We will then analyze the share and distribution of types (i.e., white-favoring individuals, egalitarians, and black-favoring individuals) within each political view category. This step also allows us to examine if the heterogeneity in discrimination also persists in a different domain. Sample: The analysis will be done on the full sample of subjects who completed the classification task (which is a subset of the sample of individuals who completed the main study). We will test for non-random attrition.

FURTHER NOTES ON AEARCTR-0008563

As outlined in our PAP AEARCTR-0008563, previously, we planned to cooperate with access panels (opt-in panels) to collect data for representative samples. Initially, signed a contract with Dynata, and we even started to run pre-tests. However, during the pre-tests, Dynata realized that they were unable to run our study (they were unable to recruit a sufficient number of representative subjects). Thus, we had to abort our cooperation with Dynata. After this attempt, we contacted several alternative access panels, but none could guarantee the sample size needed for studies that are as long as ours. Hence, we could not conduct the study pre-registered in AEARCTR-0008563.