

Racialized Images of Immigrant Origin Groups and Their Political Implications:
Evidence from the United States and Britain

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Abstract

Recent evidence indicates that anti-immigration attitudes among natives have a “racial hue” as they at least partially derive from aversion toward prevalent immigrant groups. Building upon this result, I argue that there is variation in the degree to which natives think of stereotypically immigrant groups in racial terms, and that this variation has implications for attitudes toward immigration. I also develop novel instruments to measure racialization of immigrant origin groups. Using original survey studies carried out in the United States and Britain, I demonstrate that respondents in the two countries indeed tend to think of the stereotypically immigrant groups in racial terms. Further, individual differences in racialized images of immigrant origin groups are associated with group-specific prejudice, opinions about immigration, and partisan affect. Altogether, this study is the first focused attempt to measure the specifically racial component of mass stereotypes about immigration and show its importance for politically relevant attitudes.

A recurring topic in both scholarly and public debate about the contemporary anti-immigrant backlash in the United States and Western Europe concerns the role of racial animosity. The argument that racist sentiments underlie preferences for strict immigration policy and enforcement is commonly expressed by left-leaning political figures, activist groups, and media outlets. Existing social scientific evidence, however, remains ambiguous with respect to this claim. On the one hand, strong correlation between public opposition to immigration and individual-level orientations responsible for racial prejudice, such as ethnocentrism, is well recognized (for a review, see Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014). On the other hand, survey experiments that manipulate immigrant race directly often find that it has little to no effect on immigration policy opinions or readiness to admit individual immigrants—especially when compared to other relevant characteristics, such as language proficiency, level of assimilation, and skills (Hopkins 2015; Ostfeld 2017; Valentino et al. 2019). At the same time, racially charged stereotypes may still indirectly structure immigration policy preferences: for instance, high-skilled immigrants might be preferred because they violate the beliefs about prevalent non-white immigrant groups as low-skilled (Newman and Malhotra 2018).

In this paper, I contribute to the ongoing debate in the literature by proposing and validating a novel approach to measuring the cognitive link between race and immigration that individuals might have. My measurement strategy draws upon recent work on human cognition in politics that emphasizes the role of imagination in how people make sense of the political world (Petersen and Aaroe 2013). Like other political categories, “immigrants” are imagined by voters who think about them in more concrete social and demographic attributes (Blinder 2015). Given that humans primarily rely on visual stimuli when collecting and storing information (Stokes and Biggs 2015), race should play an important role in popular images of immigration.

However, up to now the degree to which voters ascribe racial characteristics to immigrants have never been directly measured, so that its distribution and correlates are effectively unknown.

Following these insights, I develop a method to measure the direction and strength of the cognitive associations between race and stereotypically immigrant groups based on an original modification of the implicit association test. In two original survey studies carried out in the United States and Britain, I investigate how these associations relate to the political outcomes of interest such as anti-immigrant prejudice, policy opinions, partisan affect, and support for candidates. My results demonstrate that racialized images of immigrant origin groups among natives vary in content, and that this variation is relevant for immigration policy opinions and other political attitudes.

Race and Immigration: The Contested Null Result

Anti-immigration attitudes are known to powerfully correlate with group-specific prejudice, explicit racism, and ethnocentrism (Burns and Gimpel 2000; Clark and Legge 1997; Kinder and Kam 2009). At the same time, recent attempts to causally isolate the effect of immigrants' race on natives' attitudes toward immigration produced mixed results. Several studies have manipulated the race of individual immigrants using visual stimuli but found almost no impact on support for immigration policy. For instance, when Americans are asked about support for an immigration amnesty proposal after being exposed to a video of an unauthorized immigrant speaking in favor of the policy, the immigrant's skin tone does not have an effect (Hopkins 2015). Likewise, exposure to immigrants with Afrocentric facial features does not affect support for allowing the immigrants to stay in the U.S. or attitudes toward immigration more generally (Ostfeld 2017).¹ An analogous hypothesis has been tested in 11 developed democracies and

¹ Ostfeld does find a small but significant effect of immigrants' facial features on one of the three dependent variables: perceived social distance.

revealed no impact of immigrants' skin color on natives' readiness to admit them (Valentino et al. 2019). In a similar vein, immigrants' country of origin—a characteristic that might serve as a cue for race—also appears much less powerful for immigration attitudes than often assumed (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2015).

The null experimental findings concerning the effect of immigrants' race on attitudes toward immigration are contested in the discipline. There are studies suggesting that immigration policy preferences are not completely race-neutral—even though immigrants' race is not directly manipulated using visual stimuli. Cultural, not economic threat is consistently found to be the most important predictor of anti-immigration attitudes in Europe (Sides and Citrin 2007; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior 2004). Voters in Swiss naturalization referenda punish potential citizens of non-European origin, even after being provided with other relevant information about them such as immigration history, skills, and language proficiency (Hainmueller and Hangartner 2013). In the U.S., negative attitudes toward the two major immigrant groups—Hispanics and Asians—strongly predict opposition to immigration reform and perception of immigration as harmful (Citrin et al. 1997; Valentino, Brader, and Jardina 2013). White Americans, while being ready to accept members of most immigrant groups as neighbors and friends, continue to see non-white immigrants as culturally and symbolically different (Schachter 2016). Mentioning Latinos in news about costs of immigration provokes emotional responses and boosts anti-immigrant attitudes among white Americans—compared to when Europeans are featured (Brader, Valentino, and Suhay 2008). Most recently, preference for high-skilled immigrants has been demonstrated to mask prejudice toward prevalent immigrant groups perceived as low-skilled, such as Latinos in the U.S. (Newman and Malhotra 2018).

Prejudice also appears to dominate white Americans' attitudes toward groups that migrate for non-economic reasons, such as Syrian refugees (Nassar 2020).

Overall, literature on public attitudes toward immigration have amassed a large amount of evidence indirectly supporting the centrality of racial animosity in anti-immigrant sentiments. However, an extremely important link in the chain is missed so far: the degree to which natives think of immigrant origins in racial terms has never been measured. As a result, it is difficult to unambiguously attribute opposition toward specific immigrant origins specifically to racial prejudice. Origin of a potential immigrant might inform guesses about characteristics other than race and skill such as language, culture, religion, and willingness to assimilate. For instance, Anglos' attitudes to Hispanics are strongly affected by concerns related to culture and language (Citrin, Reingold, and Green 1990; Newman, Hartman, and Taber 2012). Origin can even cue commitment to legal entry and abiding the law as illegal immigration is strongly linked to Latinos in the minds of white Americans (Flores and Schachter 2018).

In this paper, I make the first step toward resolving this controversy by proposing an individual-level measure of the cognitive linkage between race and specific immigrant origins. Then, I use this measure to demonstrate presence of racial prejudice as a distinct motive in rejecting non-European immigrants by implementing two critical tests. First, there should exist essential variance in the degree to which natives think of immigrant origins in racial terms. Second, those who think of prevalent immigrant groups as racially distinct (non-white) should express stronger prejudice toward these groups and be more negative toward immigration.

The Cognitive Nature of the Race–Immigration Linkage

Since the foundational works on the nature of mass opinion, it has been argued that political world is too large and too distant from most voters who, in order to make sense of politics, have

to rely on “images in their heads” (Lippmann 1922). Recently, a theoretical framework for the role of imagination in politics that can be used in empirical research on political behavior has been proposed (Petersen and Aaroe 2013). The theory is based on the idea that individuals form mental representations (images) of politically relevant categories, such as welfare recipients, and come up with policy opinions based on these images.

This approach should be applicable to the politics of immigration since “immigrants” is an abstract category that most voters have only scant and inconsistent knowledge about (Blinder 2015; Citrin and Sides 2008). Therefore, individuals should develop simplified mental representations of immigrants as a category focusing on its defining features. In case of immigration, one of such features is origin: for instance, there is extensive evidence that immigrants to the U.S. in the last two decades have been predominantly represented as coming from Latin America (Branton et al. 2011; Hartman, Newman, and Bell 2014; Valentino, Brader, and Jardina 2013).

Even though immigrant origin bundles together a lot of essential traits, it is often assumed to have a commonly accepted racial meaning. Following this assumption, results showing that attitudes toward individual immigrants are affected by their origin group memberships—on top of some other relevant variables, such as skill or legal status—have been used to claim presence of racial prejudice. However, there are essential disagreements with regard to racial interpretations of the origin categories. For instance, the perceived position of immigrants from Latin America in the U.S. racial order is a matter of contention within the Latino community as well as within wider society (Frank, Redstone Akresh, and Lu 2010). This contention perfectly corresponds to the core idea of the cognitive approach to public opinion formation: there exist important interpersonal differences in mental images of politically relevant

social categories. In other words, the degree to which individuals ascribe meanings—including racial ones—to categories like immigrant origins should differ from person to person.

To understand how the racialized images of immigrant origin groups are stored in memory—and, respectively, how they can be measured—I build upon insights from the social cognition literature. It is well established that people tend to think of others in terms of categories, i.e. sets or classes of individuals defined by information about members' essential features or attributes (Macrae and Bodenhausen 2000). This knowledge is stored in human memory in the form of networks that connect categories and attributes as nodes with cognitive associations as edges (Moskowitz 2005). The primary role of these mental associations is to decrease the cognitive effort in processing the overwhelming amount of incoming information. Associations between social categories and attributes allow people to read available information about others and make guesses with respect to characteristics of interest that are not accessible.

Within this model of human memory, racialized images of immigrant origin groups can be understood in terms of cognitive associations. An origin category (such as Hispanics/Latinos) can be linked to a racialized attribute (such as a specific phenotypic trait used for racial categorization). An association like this is characterized by both direction and intensity: one can think of a specific immigrant origin as relatively more distant from or proximate to natives (i.e., whites/Anglos in the U.S.) and this perception can be either strong or weak. Describing racialized mental representations of immigrant origin groups and exploring their political relevance, therefore, requires measuring these cognitive associations.

Measuring Racialized Images of Immigrant Origin Groups

The most straightforward method of measuring the cognitive associations linking immigrant origin groups and racialized attributes is simply to ask respondents about them. However, this

measurement strategy has a number of limitations. First, it is unclear whether the associations of interest exist and operate on explicit or implicit level of cognition (Lodge and Taber 2013), so that people may not be consciously aware of them. Second, even if these associations are acknowledged by respondents, explicit measures can be characterized by both random measurement error related to ambiguity of questions and essential response biases, such as social desirability. These concerns are definitely relevant here due to the abstract character of measured associations and sensitivity of race and immigration as a topic.

Among a number of popular measures developed to capture unconscious elements of cognition, I rely on the implicit association test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, and Schwartz 1998). The IAT is a computer-based task that requires users to rapidly classify stimuli representing two target categories (e.g., “insect” and “flower”) and a bipolar attribute (e.g., pleasant vs. unpleasant feelings). Most existing applications of the IAT, including in politics of immigration (Perez 2010), have been focused on measuring implicit attitudes. However, the key measurement principle of the IAT is more general: fast pairings (low response latencies) are interpreted as more strongly associated in memory than slow pairings (high response latencies). Therefore, the IAT architecture makes an almost perfect tool to measure cognitive associations by recording reaction times to association-consistent (fast) versus association-inconsistent (slow) pairs.² This tool can be used to measure associations between origin groups (stereotypically immigrant vs. stereotypically native) and almost any unidimensional attribute (including racialized traits), not necessarily an affectively charged one.

Another difficulty involves choosing the attributes that are both central to the racialized images of immigrant origin groups that individuals might have and can be represented in terms

² The specific IAT procedure used is described in Study 1 design section.

of the IAT stimuli. It requires operationalizing race, which remains a vaguely defined concept in the social sciences. In the most general sense, the term “race” can refer to any social grouping as soon as it is based on members’ physical similarities (Barnshaw 2008). Practically, race in social research is defined through closed sets of categories borrowed from national statistics (such as the U.S. Census) or existing surveys. However, this approach has problems related to its non-exhaustive nature as well as potentially important divisions within the categories. Here, I use the “bundle of sticks” definition: race is a socially and politically constructed phenomenon consisting of multiple interrelated dimensions that, nevertheless, can be disaggregated and analyzed separately (Sen and Wasow 2016).

Among several dimensions that constitute race as a social category, I specifically concentrate on light vs. dark skin color.³ I do so for several reasons. First, I follow the survey-experimental studies that manipulated race of potential immigrants specifically using skin color (Hopkins 2015; Valentino et al. 2019). Second, skin color has been demonstrated to serve as possibly the single most powerful criterion for racial categorization (Dunham et al. 2015; Maddox and Gray 2002). Third, unlike some other traits linked to race in the “bundle of sticks” model, like dialect or neighborhood, skin color is a purely phenotypic trait devoid of any inherent social meaning. Finally, due to its unidimensional character, skin color lightness vs. darkness can be easily represented in terms of the IAT stimuli.

In the empirical part of the paper, I use the method based on the IAT architecture to measure racialized images of two specific groups—Hispanics in the U.S. and Arab Muslims in Britain—that are (a) often seen as stereotypical immigrants in the respective countries and (b) originally defined on non-racial bases such as place of origin, language, and/or religion. Since

³ Even though human skin color can vary on multiple dimensions, the lightness vs. darkness one is widely considered to be the most socially consequential (Dixon and Telles 2017).

bias against dark skin tone is well documented across modern societies (Dixon and Telles 2017; Maddox 2004; Messing, Jabon, and Plaut 2016), I expect that perceptions of immigrant origin groups as darker-skinned are associated with negative opinions about immigration among natives.

Study 1: United States

In Study 1, I measure racialized images of Hispanics/Latinos the United States. This choice is based on two considerations. First, Americans' preferences with regard to immigration are heavily influenced by attitudes toward Latinos indicating that immigrants to the U.S. are commonly perceived as coming from Latin America (Valentino, Brader, and Jardina 2013). Second, U.S. respondents perceive the same face as darker-skinned when it is assigned with a distinctively Hispanic name vs. a non-Hispanic one—in other words, the category “Hispanic” is currently racialized even though it has been originally defined in terms of origin (Garcia and Abrascal 2016). My goals in Study 1 are to replicate these findings using the IAT-based measure and extend them by testing whether racialized images of Hispanics are associated with individual-level political attitudes, most importantly with opposition to immigration.

Data and Method

I recruited the study participants using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk is a convenient and inexpensive way of obtaining high-quality survey data that also tends to be more diverse compared to common convenience samples, such as ones consisting of college students (Berinsky, Huber, and 2012). In June 2017, I carried out a web-based survey implemented on the Qualtrics platform. The analyzed sample includes only respondents who have answered the survey from the U.S., have unique IP addresses, and show acceptable error rates in the IAT component (less than 30%). This leaves me with 446 valid cases out of 503 submitted

questionnaires. The sample is highly educated, with nearly half having Bachelor's degrees or higher (49.2%). The modal age is between 25 and 34 years. Ideologically, the sample is predominantly left-wing, with 48.6% of respondents being liberal.

The survey consists of three parts. Respondents start by answering questions about their attitudes toward Hispanics and opinions on immigration. Then, they are asked to rate their feelings toward the Democratic Party and the Republican Party as well as direction and strength of partisan identity. After completing this block of questions, respondents are redirected to the IAT page. The IAT component of the survey is administered using Inquisit Web software.⁴ After completing the IAT, respondents are automatically redirected to answer the final block of questions that includes demographics and the 7-point ideology scale.

Racialized images of Hispanics vis-a-vis Anglos are measured using an original modification of the IAT. It uses the standard IAT architecture that consists of seven blocks. In the first block, a respondent is asked to categorize names as either Hispanic or Anglo (English).⁵ Specifically, a participant sees a screen with the words “Hispanic name” in the top left corner and the words “English name” in the top right corner. Names belonging to the two categories randomly appear in the center of the screen and a respondent is asked to quickly sort them by pressing pre-defined left- or right-hand key. In the second block, the same sorting procedure is done for the face stimuli and the “Dark-skin face” and “Light-skin face” categories. In the third block, respondents are asked to perform a combined sorting task that includes both name and face stimuli appearing in the center of the screen. This time, task screen has the words “Hispanic name or Dark-skin face” in the left corner and the words “English name or Light-skin face” in the right corner. The fourth block repeats the combined sorting task from the third block but with

⁴ <https://www.millisecond.com/products/inquisit5/weboverview.aspx>

⁵ In the IAT, I use the term “English” rather than “Anglo” to make sure that it would be familiar to all participants.

more twice stimuli to be sorted. The fifth block repeats the task from the first block but the positions of the target categories in the screen are reversed: “Hispanic name” appears in the top right corner and “English name” appears in the top left corner. The sixth and seventh blocks repeat tasks from blocks three and four respectively with changed pairings. Specifically, the words “Hispanic name or Light-skin face” appear in the top right corner and the words “English name or Dark-skin face” appear in the top left corner. Using recorded response latencies, Inquisit Web software calculates the IAT D-scores that reflect stronger associations between Hispanic names and dark-skinned faces for positive values, and vice versa.

The survey also includes an embedded survey experiment, in which respondents are asked about likelihood of supporting an unnamed Representative running for re-election in the 2018 midterms. A Representative is randomly presented as either supporting or opposing a bipartisan compromise on immigration involving funding the border wall construction and limited amnesty for immigrants who are in the country illegally. Depending on respondents’ partisanship, a Representative is described as either liberal or conservative on immigration: Democrats are asked about support for a liberal Representative whereas Republicans are asked about a conservative one.⁶

Results

Figure 1 presents their empirical distributions of implicit racialized images, measured via IAT D-scores, in the studied sample. Theoretically, they can range from -2 (fastest association of Hispanic names with light-skinned faces and Anglo names with dark-skinned faces) to 2 (fastest association of Hispanic names with dark-skinned faces and Anglo names with light-skinned faces). The D-score of 0 indicates no difference in speed of associating Hispanic names with

⁶ See Online Appendix for survey items, experimental conditions, IAT stimuli, and sample IAT screens.

light-skinned faces and Anglo names with dark-skinned faces. The distribution is unimodal, with the mode situated close to the D-score of 1 indicating a moderately strong pro-stereotypical racialized image, i.e. Hispanics being perceived as darker-skinned than Anglos. Overall, the mean is significantly different from zero ($m = 0.74, p < .001$). Furthermore, positive D-scores indicating faster associations of Hispanic names with dark-skinned faces and Anglo names with light-skinned faces, rather than vice versa, are observed for 96% of respondents in the sample. Differences in D-score distributions between Democrats and Republicans are relatively small. Overall, it is possible to state that the pro-stereotypical racialized image of Hispanics is almost universally shared within the sample.⁷

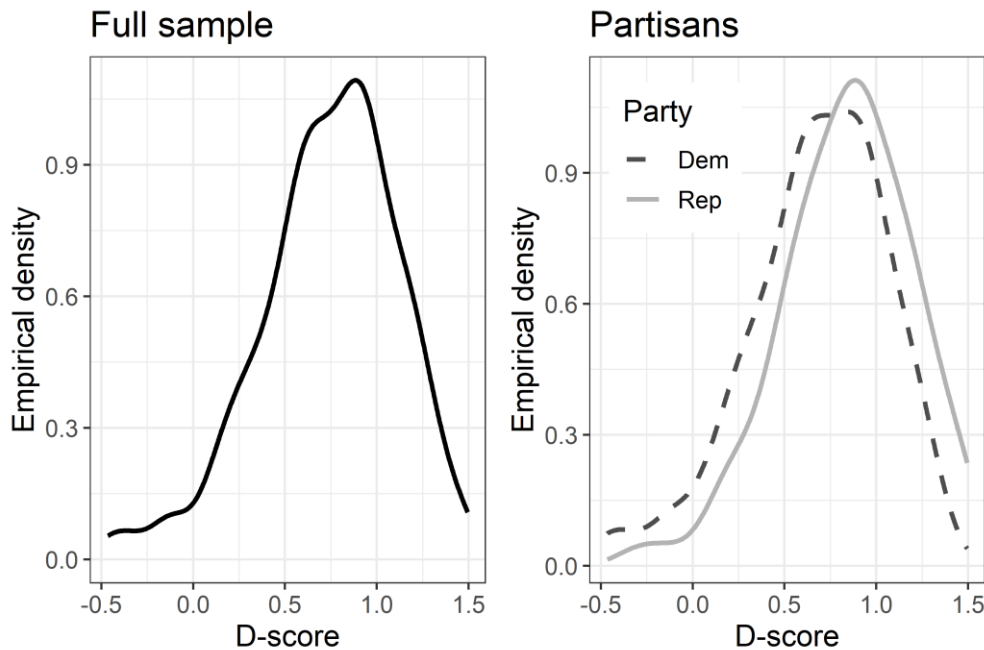


Figure 1. Observed distributions of implicit racialized images of Hispanics measured via IAT D-scores in the full U.S. sample (left) and among self-identified Democrats and Republicans (right) Greater D-score = stronger pro-stereotypical racialized image, i.e. faster association of Hispanic names with dark-skinned faces and Anglo names with light-skinned faces

⁷ Since counter-stereotypical racialized images—Hispanics being perceived as lighter-skinned than Anglos—are effectively absent in the studied sample, I use the term “racialized images” throughout the paper only referring to the pro-stereotypical ones.

With an individual-level measure of racialized images, it is possible to investigate their attitudinal and ideological correlates. Results are presented in Figure 2. Racialization of Hispanics is positively and significantly associated with anti-Hispanic attitudes and opposition to immigration. It also shows a significant relationship to the 7-point partisanship measure: respondents who see Hispanics as non-white are more likely to identify as Republicans. In terms of partisan affect, having racialized images of Hispanics is strongly and negatively related to the Democratic feeling thermometer but unrelated to the Republican feeling thermometer. No significant association with symbolic ideology is found: self-identified liberals and conservatives hold racialized images of Hispanics to approximately the same degree.

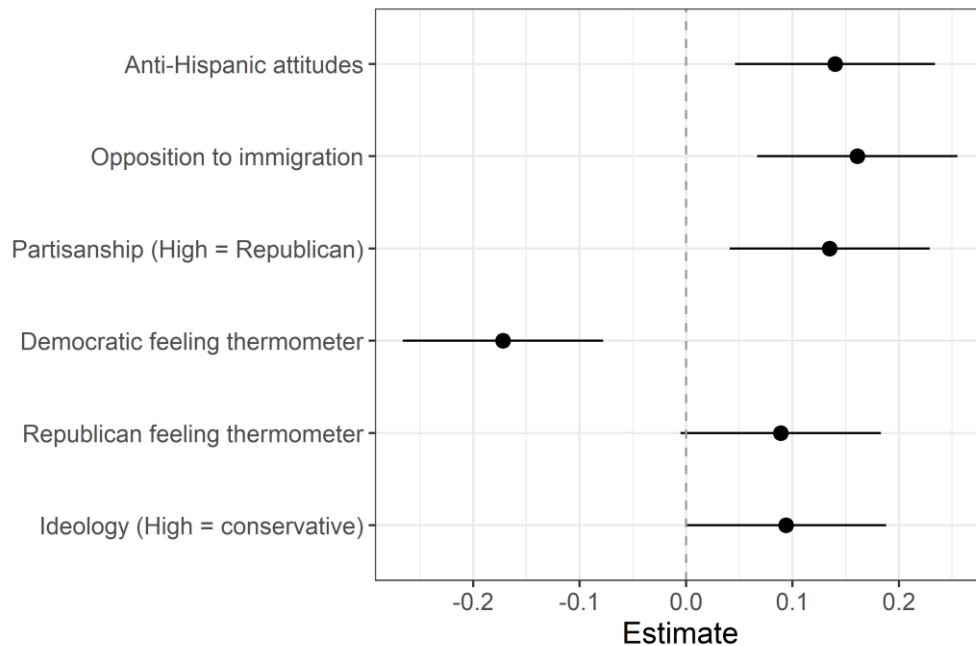


Figure 2. Covariates of racialized images of Hispanics
Standardized bivariate OLS regression coefficients with corresponding 95% confidence intervals

Finally, I investigate the political consequences of implicit racialized images of Hispanics using an embedded survey-experiment on support for a Representative depending on the candidate's readiness to compromise. Results are presented in Figure 3. On average, partisans

express significant preference for a non-compromising Representative vs. a compromising one. This preference seems to be stronger among Republicans but the difference is not statistically significant. To investigate potential heterogeneity of these effects, I split the two partisan groups by images of Hispanics that respondents have: those with D-scores below the modal value (weak racialized images) and above the modal value (strong racialized images). Among Democrats, there is an interesting difference between respondents along this dimension: the treatment effect is positive and significant for those with weak racialized images but effectively zero (and insignificant) for those with strong racialized images. In other words, Democrats who think about Hispanics in racial terms are indifferent with respect to the immigration compromise whereas those who do not strive for an unconditional amnesty. The number of Republicans in the sample is too small to detect significant effects when they are split by strength of racialized images. Effects' magnitudes in two Republican sub-groups, however, are rather close.

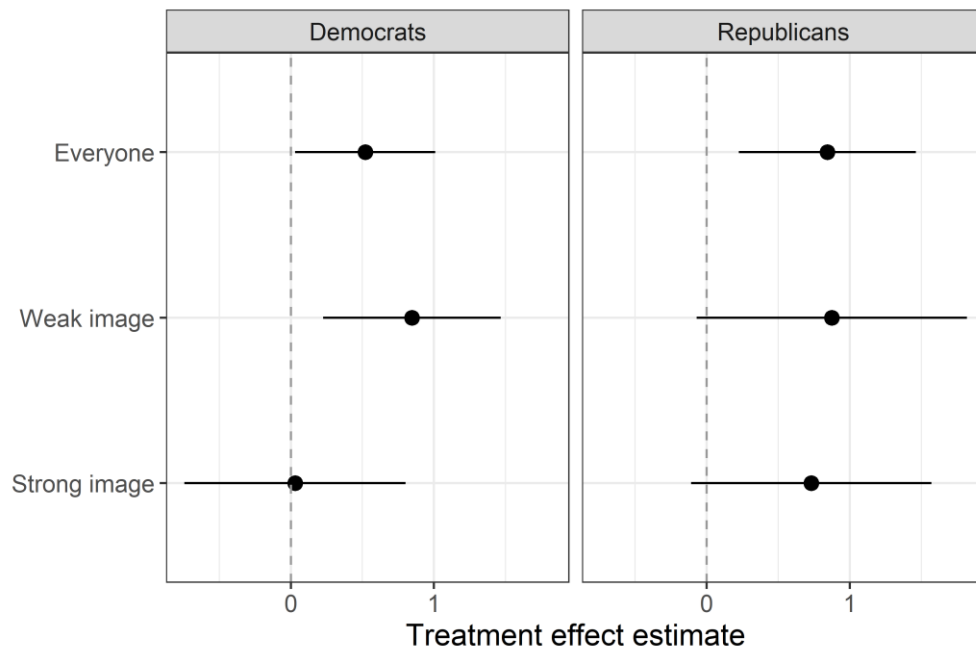


Figure 3. Differences in support for a non-compromising vs. a compromising Representative by partisanship and strength of racialized images of Hispanics
Treatment estimates with corresponding 95% confidence intervals

Discussion

The goal of Study 1 has been to measure implicit racialized images of a stereotypically immigrant group and investigate their political relevance using Hispanics/Latinos in the U.S. as an example. Results of the analysis strongly indicate that respondents hold the assumed cognitive associations and that they are related to the political outcomes of interest in the expected direction. Respondents tend to have pro-stereotypical racialized images: on average, they associate Hispanic names with dark-skinned faces and Anglo names with light-skinned faces. Individual differences in these images are correlated with anti-Hispanic attitudes, opposition to immigration, and partisanship. In an embedded survey experiment, partisans prefer to elect Representatives committed to the party agenda—amnesty for Democrats and border wall for Republicans—but this is not the case for Democrats who think about Hispanics in racial terms. Altogether, results of Study 1 confirm that Americans’ perceptions of Hispanics as racially distinct from Anglos have important implications for group attitudes, opinions on immigration, and partisan loyalty. However, Study 1 measures implicit racialized images but not explicit ones and concentrates on a single country. I address these limitations in Study 2.

Study 2: Britain

In Study 2, I measure racialized images of Arab Muslims in Britain.⁸ In my choice of the stereotypically immigrant group, I again followed results reported in existing studies. Anti-immigration attitudes and immigrant discrimination in Europe is well known to be largely driven by perceived threat associated specifically with Islam and Muslims (Adida, Laitin, and Valfort 2016; Helbling and Traunmueller 2018; Simonsen and Bonikowski 2020). Also, Muslims, despite being a social group defined by religion, seem to be racialized: for instance, analysis of

⁸ The sampling frame did not include Northern Ireland.

British print media demonstrates a strong overlap in representation of categories “Muslim” and “non-white” (Amer and Howarth 2018). My goals in Study 2 are to replicate results of Study 1 in a different political context and also extend them by adding an explicit measure of racialized images.

Data and Method

I recruited the study participants using Prolific, a crowdsourcing platform similar to MTurk but oriented at academic researchers and over-representing West Europeans as potential respondents. A recent comparison suggests that, on average, Prolific participants are also less experienced survey takers than ones on MTurk platform (Peer et al. 2017). In December 2017, I carried out a web-based survey designed and implemented on the Qualtrics platform. I used pre-screening allowed by Prolific so that only British nationals born in Britain whose first language was English could participate in the study. As in Study 1, only respondents who have answered the survey from Britain, have unique IP addresses, and show acceptable error rates in the IAT component are kept in the sample. In total, 571 are included in the analysis. The analyzed sample, similar to the U.S. one, is highly educated, with nearly half having Bachelor’s degrees or higher (49.7%). The mean age is approximately 38 years. Ideologically, the sample is again predominantly left-wing, with 53.4% of respondents identifying as left-to-center.

The survey includes questions on attitudes toward Islam and Muslims, opinions on immigration, feelings toward the four national parties in the UK, the 10-point left–right ideology scale, the IAT task, and standard demographic questions. Attitudes to Islam and Muslims are measured using a shortened version of the Islamophobia scale by Imhoff and Recker (2012). Respondents are asked about their feelings toward the following parties: the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, the Liberal Democrats (Lib Dems), and the UK Independence Party (UKIP).

The IAT component of the survey is administered using the survey-based IAT tool (Carpenter et al. 2019). It allows running the IAT directly on Qualtrics using JavaScript, so completing the survey did not require any redirections between platforms. The IAT target categories are represented by Arab Muslim vs. Anglo Christian sounding names.⁹ The overall IAT procedure and the stimuli for race/skin color are similar to Study 1.

I also include an explicit measure of racialized images into the survey. To measure explicit racialized images, I ask respondents to estimate complexion of immigrants from two regions: Middle East and Eastern Europe. As the response scale, I use the 6-point numerical classification for human skin color based on sensitivity to ultraviolet light (Fitzpatrick 1988). The scale also contains verbal descriptions of the six categories: since colors can be presented differently on respondents' computer screens, having text anchors should increase measurement reliability. These questions are asked immediately after the IAT.¹⁰

Results

Figure 4 presents empirical distributions of the racialized images of Arab Muslims in the British sample. The left panel displays estimated density of implicit images measured as IAT D-scores. Just as in the case of Hispanics in the U.S., the distribution is unimodal, with the mode situated close to the D-score of 1 that indicates a moderately strong pro-stereotypical racialized image, i.e. Muslims are perceived as darker-skinned than Christians. Mean is significantly different from zero ($m = 0.90, p < .001$). Furthermore, more than 99% of respondents in the sample have positive D-scores indicating faster associations of Muslim names with dark-skinned faces and Christian names with light-skinned faces.

⁹ To decrease respondents' cognitive load, the categories are designated as simply "Muslim" and "Christian" within the IAT task.

¹⁰ See Online Appendix for survey items, Fitzpatrick skin color scale, IAT stimuli, and sample IAT screens.

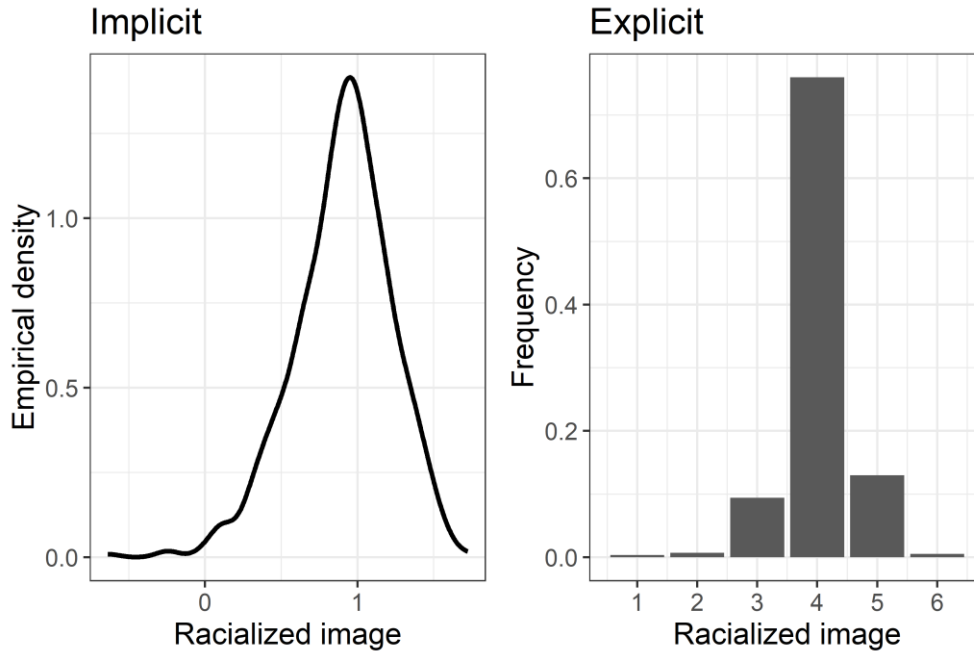


Figure 4. Distributions of implicit (left) and explicit (right) racialized images of Arab Muslims in the British sample

The right panel of Figure 4 presents histogram of explicit racialized images of “people from the Middle East” corresponding to the six values of the Fitzpatrick skin color scale. The distribution is concentrated at the value of 4 (mid brown skin). Approximately 76% of respondents choose this answer option. Non-trivial shares of respondents also select values 3 (medium white skin) and 5 (dark brown skin). Other response categories are almost empty. The estimated mean is extremely close to the mode of 4 ($m = 4.02, p < .001$). Altogether, respondents exhibit a relatively large degree of consensus on the explicit measure of racialized images although non-trivial variance in responses is observed as well.

Figure 5 presents estimated relationships between the two measures of racialized images of Arab Muslims and the political covariates. Both implicit and explicit racialized images are significantly related to the key outcomes of interest: group-specific prejudice (Islamophobia) and anti-immigration attitudes. Implicit racialized images are also significantly related to positive affect toward UKIP, the major radical right and anti-immigrant party in Britain, and self-reported

right-wing ideology. Neither of the two measures is significantly associated with feelings towards the three mainstream parties: Labour, Conservative, or Lib Dems.

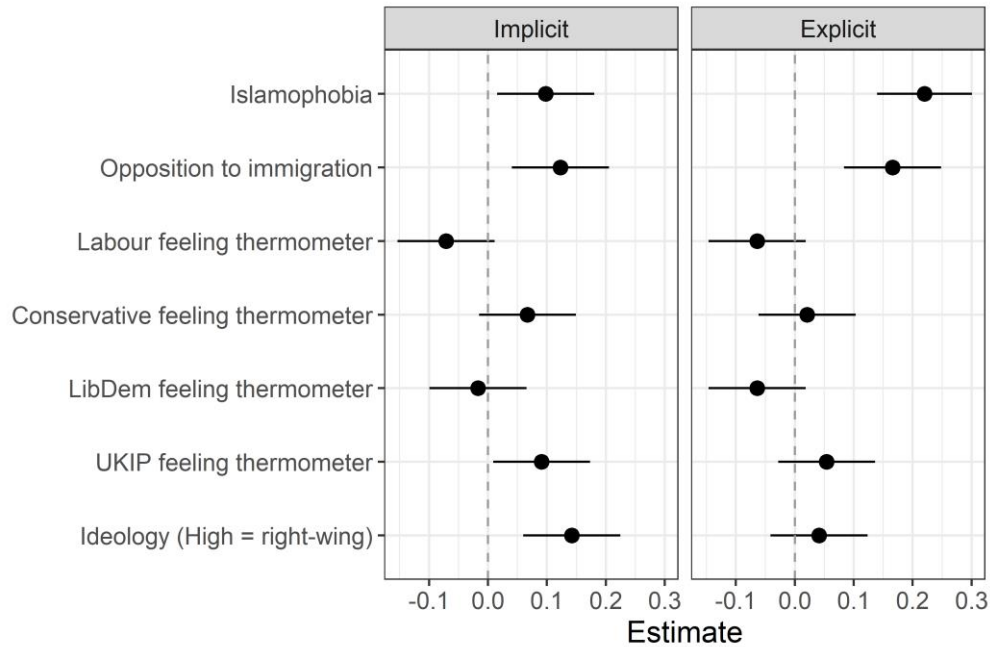


Figure 5. Covariates of implicit (left) and explicit (right) racialized images of Arab Muslims
Standardized bivariate OLS regression coefficients with corresponding 95% confidence intervals

Since the distribution of explicit racialized images is heavily concentrated at the three central values, I conduct a robustness check in order to ensure that the estimated relationships are not driven by a handful of observations at the remaining extreme values. Specifically, I trichotomize the variable by collapsing all respondents into three categories: lower than the mode, modal answer, and greater than the mode. Then, I compare those who choose the modal value of 4 to the other two categories in terms of opposition to immigration using three different methods: simple mean comparison, linear regression with controls, and propensity score matching.¹¹ It is necessary to note that I use the matching technique without making any

¹¹ The overlap assumption was satisfied, i.e. any respondent had a positive probability to be in each of the conditions. See Online Appendix for overlap plots.

causality assumptions—I just employ it as an easily implemented non-parametric comparison method. Estimates are presented in Figure 6. Independently of the comparison method, the relationship between racialized images and opposition to immigration is driven exclusively by those perceive people from the Middle East as darker-skinned. Associating Middle Easterners with lighter skin tones than the modal response has no effect. Estimated difference in anti-immigrant attitudes between the modal value and those with pro-stereotypical racialized images is substantively large: more than 1 on the 10-point scale for all comparison methods.

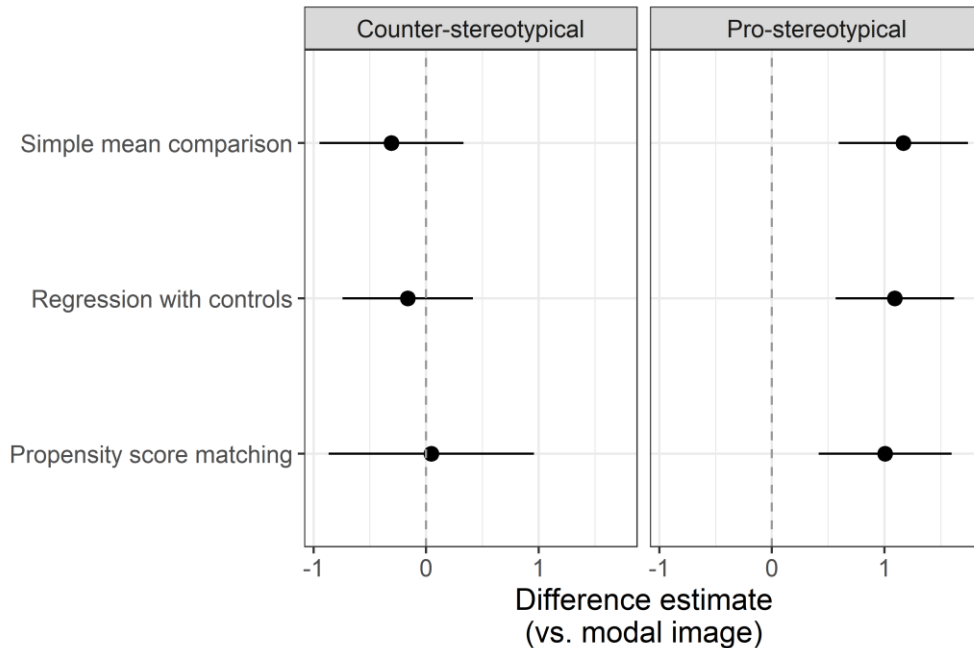


Figure 6. Explicit racialized images of Arab Muslims and anti-immigration attitudes
Estimated differences vs. the modal racialized image with 95% confidence intervals

Finally, I run a variant of a placebo test to understand whether racialized images and their effects are group-specific. If the proposed model is correct, respondents should hold cognitive associations linking different attributes of Arab Muslims as a group: region of origin (Middle East), religion (Islam), and race (darker skin compared to white British). Racialized images of other groups seen as stereotypical immigrants in Britain, such as East Europeans, should be

irrelevant for this particular associative network. To see whether these theoretical assumptions realize in the data, I estimate a regression model predicting Islamophobia with racialized images of both Middle Easterners and East Europeans controlling for left–right ideology, age, gender, and education.¹² Results are presented in Figure 7. Racialization of people from the Middle East strongly and significantly predicts Islamophobia whereas racialization of East Europeans does not. In other words, associative networks are indeed group-specific and racialized images are related only to relevant out-group prejudice.

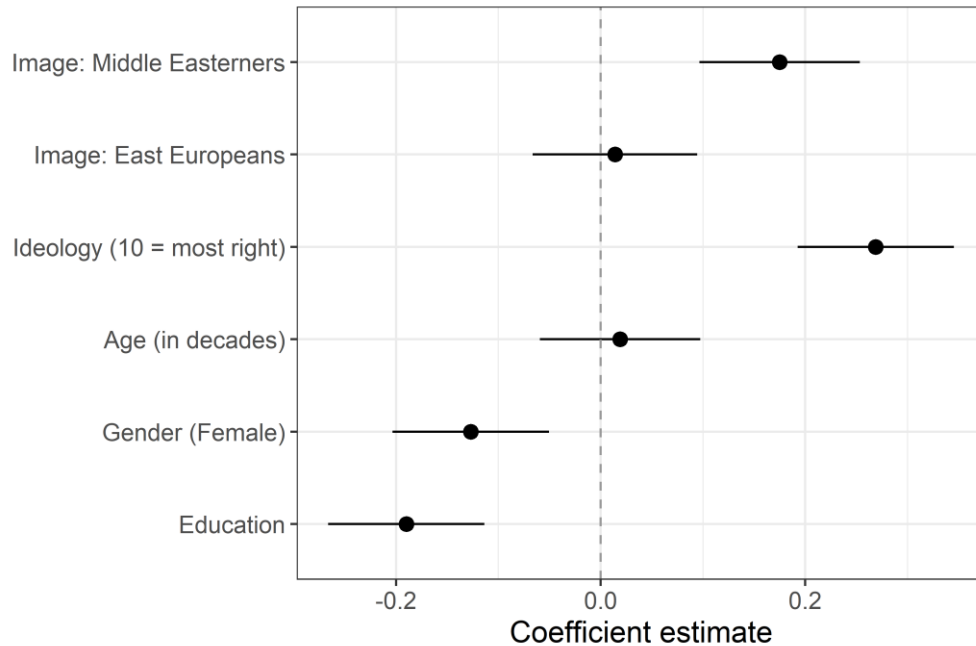


Figure 7. Regression results predicting Islamophobia with explicit racialized images of Middle Easterners and East Europeans
Standardized OLS regression coefficients with 95% confidence intervals

It is also important to note that the effect of explicit racialized image of Arab Muslims on Islamophobia is relatively large in terms of magnitude. It is almost as strong as—or at least not significantly weaker than—the effects of political ideology and education and remains

¹² See Online Appendix for the distribution of explicit racialized images of East Europeans.

statistically significant even after controlling for these variables. In other words, hostility toward Muslims among British respondents is clearly underlain by racial animosity toward people from the Middle East—even when expressed in seemingly race-neutral terms.

Discussion

Study 2 has replicated the results of Study 1 using a different country (Britain) and a different stereotypically immigrant group (Arab Muslims). It strongly confirms the basic findings: respondents think about stereotypically immigrant groups in racial terms and this pattern of thinking is related to opinions on immigration in general and other political attitudes.

Respondents who think of Muslims and people from the Middle East as dark-skinned are Islamophobic, perceive immigration as harmful, and self-identify as ideologically right-wing.

These relationships are present independently of whether implicit or explicit measures of racialized images are concerned. Results also confirm the group-specific character of cognitive associations: racialization of people from the Middle East is related to Islamophobia, whereas racialization of a different stereotypically immigrant group in Britain, East Europeans, is not.

Conclusion

Recent experimental studies on public attitudes toward immigration have provoked an essential controversy in the discipline by being unable to establish the direct causal effect of immigrants' race on opinions of natives—contrary to the well-known powerful observational relationship between opposition to immigration and ethnocentrism. In this paper, I make an important contribution to this debate by developing a new method to measure racialized images of immigrant origin groups that individual respondents hold. Building upon insights from the literature in social cognition, I propose to define these images as mental linkages between categories (origin groups) and attributes (racialized traits, such as skin color). Then, I design an

instrument to measure the direction and strength of these linkages using an innovative modification of the implicit association test (IAT) architecture. Using this method, I measure the racialized images of the stereotypically immigrant groups in the U.S. and Britain, and estimate the relationships between these images and opinions on immigration.

Evidence from Studies 1 and 2 confirms that members of the public in the U.S. and Britain hold racialized images of the stereotypically immigrant groups in the two countries: Hispanics and Arab Muslims respectively. Moreover, I demonstrate that individual differences in racialized images of these immigrant groups are significantly related to group-specific prejudice, opposition to immigration, and support for right-wing political parties. According to presented evidence, racialized images of immigrant origin groups seem to exist and operate on both implicit and explicit levels of cognition. Finally, in agreement with the proposed associative model, consequences of these images are group-specific rather than general.

Results presented in the paper have some limitations related to its methodology and scope—that can be potentially addressed in future research. First, despite using experimental and quasi-experimental techniques in my analysis, I do not directly engage with the question whether racialized images of immigrant origin groups are causally prior with respect to attitudes toward immigration. Similar to many other psychological variables, such as personality traits, mental representations of social categories cannot be randomly assigned or manipulated by researchers. Second, my empirical studies focus specifically on cognitive associations between immigrant origin groups and race—due to prominence of this topic in the current scholarly debate. Nevertheless, the proposed measurement method based on the IAT architecture can be used to investigate other potentially relevant dimensions of popular images of immigration. Third, it might be of interest to investigate the role of traits used for racial categorizations other than skin

color, such as physiognomy, in how stereotypically immigrant groups are imagined by natives. In doing so, however, researchers should consider an important limitation of the IAT as a measurement instrument: the task is relatively long and cognitively demanding, making it impractical to include more than one into any single survey.

Despite these limitations, results reported in this paper bear direct relevance for one the most important political problems of our time: mass migration and integration of immigrants into the receiving societies. Recent experimental findings tend to be positive by demonstrating that natives' attitudes toward immigration is only weakly, if at all, affected by immigrants' race. By applying a direct individual-level measure for racialized images of stereotypically immigrant groups and estimating their relationships to anti-immigration attitudes, my study allows to partially re-evaluate this claim. In two original survey studies, I document presence of consistent racialized images of Hispanics in the U.S. and Arab Muslims in Britain as well as relationships between these images and a host of essential political outcomes. Altogether, my results confirm presence of an important racial component in public attitudes toward immigration. I also demonstrate that this phenomenon is not confined to the U.S. and can be found in other developed democracies that experience political conflict around the immigration issue.

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Online Appendix

Study 1: United States

Opposition to immigration

“We have some questions about what you think would happen if the U.S. permits more immigrants to come to this country. Please rate how likely, in your opinion, each of the following effects would be.”

- Immigration will increase economic growth for the nation as a whole (reverse)
- Immigration will decrease wages and the standards of living for the average American worker
- Immigrants will enrich the cultural life in the communities where they choose to live (reverse)
- Immigration will make it harder to keep the country united
- Immigration will lead to further terrorist attacks
- Immigration will cause crime to increase in many communities

Question order randomized.

Answers coded from 1 = *Extremely likely* to 7 = *Extremely unlikely*.

Anti-Hispanic attitudes

“Please indicate how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements.”

- In general, Hispanics do not work hard enough to learn English and adapt to American culture
- People in the United States should be more welcoming to Hispanics (reversed)

- Hispanics in this country are not treated fairly for the contributions that they make (reversed)
- Violent crimes committed by Hispanics receive less attention in the media than they should

Question order randomized.

Answers coded from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 7 = *Strongly agree*.

Partisan feeling thermometers

“Now we would like to get your feelings towards the two main political parties in the U.S. Please rate each party using a scale that runs from 0 to 10, where 0 means strongly dislike and 10 means strongly like.”

- How do you feel about the Democratic Party?
- How do you feel about the Republican Party?

Question order randomized.

Partisanship

- Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an independent, or what?
- Would you call yourself a strong [Democrat/Republican] or a not very strong [Democrat/Republican]?
- Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?

Survey experiment

“We would like your opinion about a candidate who might run for re-election to Congress in 2018. This representative is a fairly [liberal Democrat/conservative Republican] when it comes to immigration and border security policy. In negotiations, this person is [willing to make certain

concessions/not willing to make any concessions]. Specifically, the representative [supports/opposes] a bipartisan immigration policy that includes amnesty for illegal immigrants but would also make it easier to construct the border wall. How likely would you be to support this candidate in the election?”

Answers coded from 1 = *Extremely likely* to 7 = *Extremely unlikely*.

IAT: origin (name) stimuli

Hispanic names: Ximena, Mariana, Gabriela, Lucia, Ramona, Camila, Santiago, Diego, Miguel, Alejandro, Juan, Jose

Anglo names: Mary, Elizabeth, Jennifer, Susan, Emily, Margaret, James, John, Robert, Michael, William, David

IAT: “race”/skin tone (face) stimuli

Link to face stimuli: <https://www.projectimplicit.net/stimuli.html>

IAT: sample face stimuli


The same face is represented in light and dark skin.



IAT: sample screen (pro-stereotypic sorting, face stimulus)

English name
or
Light-skin face

Hispanic name
or
Dark-skin face



If you make an error, a red X will appear. Press the other key to continue.

IAT: sample screen (counter-stereotypic sorting, name stimulus)

English name
or
Dark-skin face

Hispanic name
or
Light-skin face

Susan

If you make an error, a red X will appear. Press the other key to continue.

Ideology

“We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a 7-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?”

Study 2: Britain

Anti-immigration attitudes

“Please answer several questions about immigration to Britain from other countries.”

- Would you say it is generally bad or good for Britain's economy that people come to live here from other countries?

Answers coded from 0 = *Bad for economy* to 10 = *Good for economy*.

- Would you say that Britain's cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?

Answers coded from 0 = *Cultural life undermined* to 10 = *Cultural life enriched*.

- Is Britain made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?

Answers coded from 0 = *Worse place to live* to 10 = *Better place to live*.

Question order randomized.

Islamophobia

“Please answer the following questions about Islam and Muslims. There are no correct or incorrect answers – please just be honest in your responses.”

- The Islamic world is backward and unresponsive to new realities.
- It is wrong to characterize the entire Islamic world as one single uniform formation.
(reversed)
- Islam shares the same universal ethical principles as other major world religions.
(reversed)
- Islam is an archaic, out-of-date religion that is unable to adjust to the present.
- Compared to other religious and philosophical approaches, Islam is rather primitive.
- It is wrong to claim that a clash of cultures exists between Islam and the West. (reversed)
- Islam has an aggressive side that predisposes it toward terrorism.
- Islam is a religion rather than a political ideology, and thus Islam itself has nothing to do with politics or war. (reversed)

Question order randomized.

Answers coded from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*.

Partisan feeling thermometers

“Using a scale that runs from 0 to 10, where 0 means strongly dislike and 10 means strongly like, how do you feel about the following political parties?”

- Labour
- Conservatives
- Liberal Democrats
- United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)

Question order randomized.

Ideology

“In politics people sometimes talk of “left” and “right.” Where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?”

Explicit racialized images

“As you know, people who come to live here from other countries display a wide variety of physical attributes. One of these is skin color. In this question, we ask you to assess the skin color of people from some regions of the world using the scale below. This is a 6-point scale, ranging from 1 to 6, with 1 representing very light skin and 6 representing very dark skin. When answering the question, think about a typical immigrant from each region.”

- People from the Middle East
- People from Eastern Europe

IAT: origin (name) stimuli

Arab Muslim names: Mohamed, Omar, Ahmed, Yousouf, Hamza, Khalid, Hussein, Usman, Fatima, Salma, Zeinab, Aisha

Anglo Christian names: Jack, Harry, George, William, Oscar, Michael, Charlie, Jacob, Amelia, Olivia, Emily, Grace


IAT: “race”/skin tone (face) stimuli

Same as in Study 1

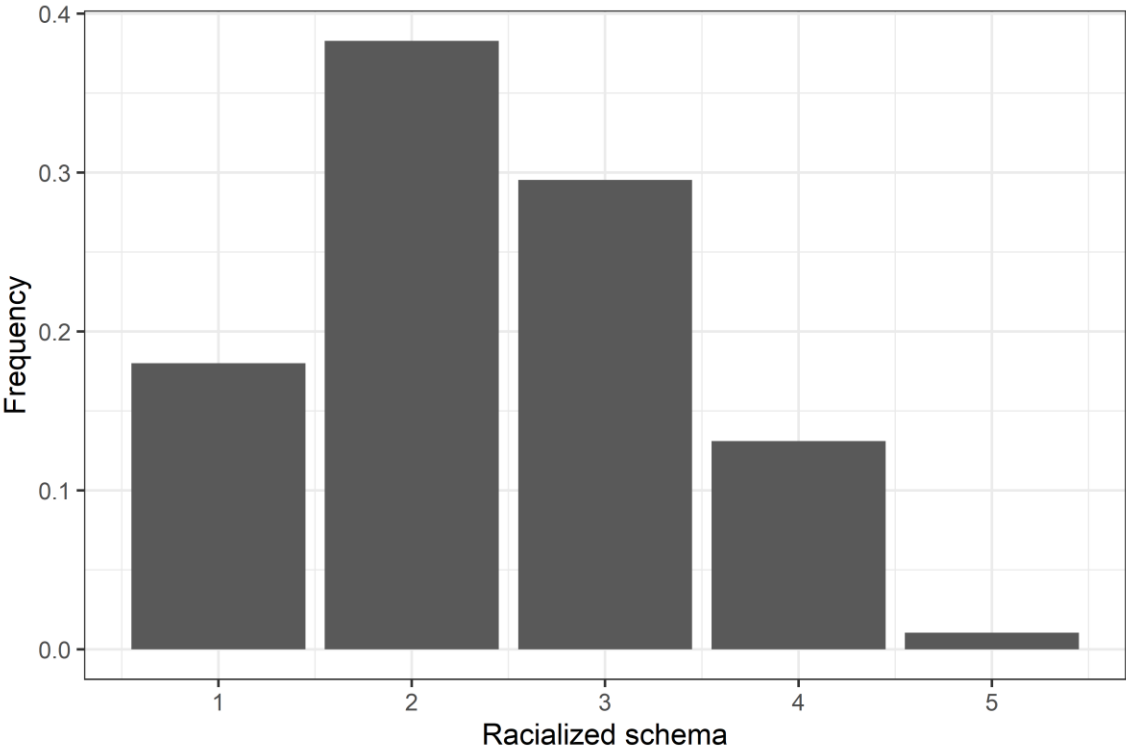
IAT: sample screen (pro-stereotypic sorting, name stimulus)

Muslim name or Dark-skin face	Christian name or Light-skin face
Usman	

IAT: sample screen (counter-stereotypic sorting, face stimulus)

Muslim name or Light-skin face	Christian name or Dark-skin face
	

Empirical distribution of explicit racialized images of East Europeans



Overlap plots for propensity score matching

Neither plot indicates too much probability mass near 0 or 1, and the estimated densities have most of their respective masses in regions in which they overlap each other. Thus, there is no evidence that the overlap assumption is violated.

