

MY457: Week 2 Seminar Guiding Questions

2025-01-29

Paper:

Paper: Zhang, N., Gereke, J., & Baldassarri, D. (2022). Everyday discrimination in public spaces: a field experiment in the Milan metro. *European Sociological Review*, 38(5), 679-693.

Guiding Questions:

1 General a. What is the purpose/relevance of this study? What research gap does this paper try to fill? Which exact causal question do the authors try to answer? b. Why do the authors conduct a field experiment? Or put differently: Why can we not just collect all “bench-sitting data” in the Italian tube system and then test for different “sitting-rates”?

2 Measurement and design a. What is the treatment? What is the outcome (variable)? Do the authors measure any covariates? b. What is the unit of analysis / what are the observations? c. What is the level of treatment assignment? d. Why do the authors use three (treatment/control) groups / different types of treatments (instead of two)?

3 Internal validity a. How would you assess whether the field experiment is (likely to be) internally valid? Do the authors provide supporting tests for the identifying assumption(s)? b. Do you have any key concerns about the internal validity of this experiment? c. Do the authors remove some observations? If so, why? If not, would you recommend doing so?

4 Heterogeneity and mechanisms a. According to the authors, what are the two competing theories that explain everyday discrimination? How do they test which one is (more likely to be) true? b. Which heterogeneous effects do the authors examine? Which other ones would you have assessed?

Final question:

How would you assess everyday discrimination? This could be an experiment or an observational study.