

Abstract

Polarization and partisan bias have recently been increasing in America, and have been found to influence a large variety of behaviors. A study conducted by Flores and Van Boven (in prep) examined the influence of partisan bias on prosocial behavior and found that while people expect partisan bias to influence prosocial behavior, it does not seem to influence actual prosocial behavior. The present study examines whether or not people's attitudes toward charitable organizations (ACO) and attitudes toward helping others (AHO) moderate the relationship between partisan bias and prosocial behavior. It does so by examining whether or not scores on an ACO/AHO scale moderate the amount of effort participants display on a charitable task that is supposedly sponsored by either a co-partisan, counter-partisan or control organization. 143 undergraduates at the University of Colorado worked on a charitable task with a co-partisan, counter-partisan or control sponsor and completed ACO/AHO scales. As composite ACO/AHO scores decreased, people exhibited more effort toward counter-partisan sponsors relative to co-partisan sponsors. This suggests that ACO/AHO may moderate the relationship between participants' partisan relationship to the sponsor and effort on the charitable task, but that it does so in a direction that does not illustrate partisan bias in prosocial behavior.