

Date: 19 Jan 2025
To: "Hussain Hadah" hussainhadah@gmail.com
cc: klaus.f.zimmermann@gmail.com
From: "Klaus F. Zimmermann" klaus.f.zimmermann@gmail.com
Subject: JOPE: Your manuscript entitled The Effect of Racial and Ethnic Attitudes on Asian Identity in the U.S

Ref.:
 Ms. No. JOPE-D-24-00822
 The Effect of Racial and Ethnic Attitudes on Asian Identity in the U.S
 Journal of Population Economics

Dear Hussain Hadah,

We have now received two referee reports (see below and attached) on your paper "The Effect of Racial and Ethnic Attitudes on Asian Identity in the U.S". Unfortunately, on the basis of these reports and of my own reading, I cannot accept your paper for publication in the Journal of Population Economics.

It is a pity that I cannot give you better news at this time. Please note that we receive very many high-quality papers and can only publish a few. I ask for your understanding and encourage you not to hesitate submitting your future research to the Journal. Hopefully, we can then provide you with a better result.

Best regards,

Klaus F. Zimmermann
 Editor-in-Chief
 Journal of Population Economics

Reviewers' comments:
 Reviewer #1: Refer to the attached file

Reviewer #2:
 Comment on JOPE-D-24-00822 "The effect of racial and ethnic attitudes on Asian identity in the U.S."

The paper examines the relationship between state-level bias and self-reported Asian identity among Asian immigrants in the U.S. Combining several data sets, the study finds a negative association between bias and self-reported Asian identity among first-, second-, and third-generation Asian immigrants.

I appreciate that the author stated clearly in the discussion that the findings in the study merely offer an estimate of the association, not a causal relationship. However, this also leads to a concern about the contribution of this study. Examination of the relationship between local attitudes towards immigrants and ethnic identity is not new. Many studies have examined the relationship, and some focused on the causal estimates using plausibly exogenous variation in random assignment. Thus, the contribution of the study needs to be more extensive. The potential contributions may include examining a specific ethnic group in the U.S. (i.e., the Asian immigrants) and conducting analyses on immigrants of multiple generations. I also have some comments on the empirical regularity of the study and hope they will help revise the paper.

1. The primary specification did not control for state fixed effects. The authors explain that this is because of a lack of within-state variation in bias. However, this leads to concern about potential omitted variables at the state level, which are correlated with both the bias measure and self-reported Asian identity.

2. Interpretation: The study claims that the main coefficient summarizes individuals' responsiveness to state-level bias changes. This does not seem right, given that it does not control for state-fixed effects.

3. The standard errors are clustered at the state level in the main analyses. Given the number of states, the estimation of the standard errors and thus inference may suffer the problem of a small number of clusters. This may require additional examination and discussion.

4. The paper reported the main estimates sometimes in figures while others in tables, confusing the presentation. I suggest reporting all the estimates in tables that are more transparent.

5. The paper stated on page 3 that "as the more economically successful Asian immigrants—educated and wealthy immigrants—may self-report Asian identity, economic research using subjective ethnic measure will underestimate White-Asian gaps in the most biased states." We need to provide support for this statement.

6. To construct a dataset of Asian immigrants, the study uses information on the place of birth, parent's place of birth, and place of birth of grandparents. The author claims these are objective Asian measures and can perfectly identify and construct a dataset of Asian immigrants. However, this information is self-reported. Depending on their self-identity, people may not reveal

their true place of birth.

7. The study restricted the sample to immigrants who are 17 years old and younger and still live with their parents between 2004 and 2021. More discussion is required to explain the reason for such restriction and the potential bias caused by the sample restriction.

8. In section 6, the study explores the empirical relationship between state-level bias and interracial marriages, as well as the migration patterns of second-generation Asian immigrants. They were taken as robustness checks to the primary analyses. However, they are not really robustness checks as they examine outcomes that are different from the primary analyses. The paper needs to explain clearly why such analyses were conducted, and the structure of the paper can be more compact.

9. The study uses the words "bias" and "prejudice" interchangeably. However, the two words have different meanings. Overall, the writing of the paper can be improved.

There is additional documentation related to this decision letter. To access the file(s), please click the link below. You may also login to the system and click the 'View Attachments' link in the Action column.

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