

## Review of “The Impact of Hispanic Last Names and Identity on Labor Market Outcomes”

### Summary

The paper aims to examine discrimination against Hispanics in the labor market. For this purpose, the paper uses a strategy similar to Rubinstein and Brenner (2014), which compares children from inter-ethnic marriages. In particular, the empirical strategy compares inter-ethnic children with a Spanish-sounding surname (Hispanic father and White mother) with inter-ethnic children with a White-sounding surname (White father and Hispanic mother). The research design aims to focus on individuals who should be similar in all respects relevant to labor market outcomes but differ only on how the labor market perceives their ethnicity (signalled by their Hispanic or White-sounding surname).

The findings show an unconditional earnings gap of 5 log points. When controlling for education, the two groups do not statistically differ in earnings.

### Recommendation

The research question is interesting. However, the empirical strategy needs to be more convincing. The summary statistics suggest that the treatment group (those born from Hispanic fathers and White mothers) fare worse in the labor market and have lower educational attainments. When controlling for education, the earnings of the two groups are not statistically different. This cannot be interpreted as a lack of discrimination in the labor market or discrimination in educational achievement. In addition, a discussion of the unobservables is completely missing. For these reasons, I would not support the publication of this paper in this journal. Below, I provide more detailed comments and suggestions.

### Comments

- Summary statistics in Table 4 are pretty mixed between husbands and wives. This complicates the interpretation of what to expect and the interpretation of the results. In the text, it feels like you are trying to suggest that the selection on observables should indicate that children with Spanish-sounding surnames should have higher education (and thus possibly higher wages?), but data says the opposite. It feels like there might be a claim suggesting the presence of discrimination in educational attainment. However, it isn't easy to tell. The claim that mothers might be more relevant in the human capital accumulation of their children should be supported by references.
- A discussion on the selection on unobservables is entirely missing, despite its relevance.
- If data allows, the summary statistics should focus more on pre-market factors. An analysis of the sorting into occupations/industries can be interesting.
- The tables presenting the summary statistics and the analysis results should refer to the same sample. The number of observations across tables is a bit confusing.
- In the text, the vector of controls of equation 1 includes age and number of hours worked. However, Table 6 also controls for education and parental background. These variables should be described better in the text, and the age groups should be clarified as well.
- As the number of observations drastically reduces in Table 6, it can be insightful to provide statistics on the cell size (number of hours worked group, state, year, age group, education group, and parental background).