RANKING BAD: THE CHEMISTRY OF RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

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Contents

Abstract

Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) demonstrated that BIPOC candidates – those identified as Black, Asian, or Hispanic – consistently faced disadvantages in ranked-choice voting (RCV) elections, regardless of whether they occurred in high or low-information contexts – where candidates' party labels were known or unknown. Through partial replication and extension of their methodology, this study examines variations in Canadian voter support for candidates across racial and ethnic lines in hypothetical RCV scenarios, assessing the effectiveness of partisan cues in counteracting biases against Black, Asian, and Indigenous candidates. Our findings indicate that BIPOC candidates experience similar disadvantages in Canadian RCV elections, with voters engaging in negative partisanship and affinity voting behaviours across the political spectrum. However, the inclusion of candidates' party labels appears to neutralize these biases. As a preliminary exploration, this study sheds light on the complex interplay between electoral systems, information dissemination, and voter biases in the Canadian context, laying the foundation for further research into how partisan cues might mitigate BIPOC candidate disadvantages in Canadian elections.

Introduction

The availability of information in electoral settings can profoundly shape voter behaviour, distinguishing high-information elections – marked by campaigns with publicly visible candidates and widespread media recognition – from their low-information counterparts – e.g., city council elections (Crowder-Meyer et al. 2023, 3). In these high-information contexts, voters are armed with a plethora of relevant political cues – e.g., candidate policies and party affiliations – to inform their decision-making at the ballots (McDermott 1997, 271). Despite this information richness, voters may still cast votes for reasons beyond their ideological leanings; for example, when influenced by negative partisanship – a defensive reaction to perceived threats from rival political entities – voters may cast ballots *against* parties and candidates they oppose rather than for those they support (Medeiros & Noël 2013). However, high-information elections ostensibly foster more deliberate System 2 decision-making, allowing voters to thoroughly process available information before voting (Alvarez et al. 2018, 1013; Kahneman 2011, 27).

Conversely, in low-information election settings, voters typically lack explicit party affiliations and in-depth profiles of candidates (Alvarez et al. 2018, 1013-14; McGregor et al. 2017, 137). This dearth of information can influence their electoral decision-making, leading them to rely on heuristics – efficient cognitive shortcuts used to simplify challenging decisions (Dancey & Sheagley 2012, 312). In these settings, voters may further rely on superficial factors when making their selections – e.g., a candidate's appearance, ethnicity or gender – rather than the substantive evaluation of candidates' policy positions (Fraga & Hassell 2020; Blackman & Jackson 2019; Crowder-Meyer et al. 2018; Brown et al. 1993).

Municipal elections exemplify a unique low-information environment where traditional political cues, such as party affiliations, are often less visible. In these contexts, research

indicates that voters may rely more on in-group biases and racial cues to inform their decisions (Kirkland & Coppock 2017, 575; Sigelman et al. 1995, 28-29). Seemingly, with scarce information available, voters may unconsciously gravitate towards candidates who share their own racial or ethnic background – a phenomenon known as affinity voting (Bird et al. 2016, 359). Alternatively, this environment can amplify biases against candidates from racial outgroups (Terkildsen 1993). Whether the product of limited information or personal prejudice, these dynamics undoubtedly skew the fairness of municipal election outcomes.

Collectively, these insights have ignited discussions on whether electoral reforms could address voter bias and improve representational fairness (Crowder-Meyer et al. 2023). For instance, RCV elections have been implemented in various jurisdictions, requiring voters to prioritize candidates rather than selecting a single contender (Santucci 2021, 344-45). Proponents of RCV have argued that in environments rich in information, RCV ballots might lessen the impact of racial biases and political polarization – potentially fostering a more diverse field of candidates (Tolbert & Kuznetsova 2021). Nonetheless, complexity theorists suggest that an overload of selection options could exacerbate biases due to increased informational demands and voter fatigue (Crowder-Meyer et al. 2018, 510). Ultimately, the efficacy of RCV in diminishing partisan hostility and enhancing candidate diversity remains a subject warranting further investigation.

Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) designed an experimental study to explore this issue, juxtaposing RCV with the prototypical “single-choice” plurality rule – the predominant voting format in US elections. Aiming to determine whether “ranked-choice” elections could reduce the impact of heuristics and biases in voting behaviour, the researchers engaged 1935 respondents to participate in an online hypothetical election scenario – displayed in either RCV or plurality

format. Their findings revealed that the voting format did not alter respondents' biases; regardless of whether candidates were identified by their party affiliation, candidates of marginalized racial groups – whose group membership was inferred by names of Black, Asian, or Hispanic origin – faced consistent disadvantages compared to their White counterparts. Seemingly, this pattern conforms to the observable resilience of voters' perceptual biases and heuristic-driven behaviour in the American electoral context (Chirco & Buchanan 2023; Bejarano et al. 2020).

In light of these findings, our present study delves into Canadian municipal electoral dynamics – a field marked by a scarcity of research (McGregor et al. 2016, 311). Adopting Crowder-Meyer et al.'s (2023) experimental approach, we aim to dissect how voter support for candidates varies across racial and ethnic lines within a hypothetical RCV-only scenario. Specifically, we hope to ascertain if the inclusion of partisan cues can alleviate potential disadvantages against a spectrum of BIPOC candidates drawn from the Canadian milieu. Moreover, we explore whether voters' subsequent rankings in RCV elections – those beyond their primary candidate preferences – might disclose latent negative partisanship, which remains experimentally undetectable when analyzing first-choice selections alone. Given its unique demographic composition – characterized by a smaller Black population (Black & Erickson 2006, 544) and a long history of discrimination against Indigenous communities (Beauvais 2021; Canadian Public Health Association 2018; Gismondi 2017) – we believe Canada provides a compelling context to investigate how Canadian voter preferences may differ from those in the American electorate.

Central to our inquiry are the following questions:

- How does RCV influence Canadian voter support for BIPOC candidates?

- Can partisan cues impact voter biases against BIPOC candidates in Canada?
- Does the ideological orientation of Canadian voters manifest as negative partisanship in their ranking choices?

Hypotheses

To scrutinize whether voter support varies across different racial and ethnic groups and if the introduction of partisan cues can attenuate inherent biases against minority candidates, we examine the following hypotheses:

- **H1**: Canadian voters are less likely to support BIPOC candidates than White candidates – consistent with American voters' preferences observed in Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023).
- **H2**: Providing partisan labels to voters will decrease the candidate preference gap between White and BIPOC candidates.
- **H3**: Canadian Conservative voters will exhibit a higher tendency towards negative partisanship than Liberal voters – as evidenced by their secondary rankings diverging from their ideological preferences.

The objectives of this study are multifaceted: by partially replicating and extending the methodologies of Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) through a similarly structured online conjoint design survey, we aspire to provide electoral candidates, strategists, and policymakers with actionable insights into navigating voter biases – thereby informing strategies that could bolster more equitable democratic participation. Moreover, although political scientists have significantly advanced the frontier of research transparency – notably, having developed rigorous standards for research documentation and reproducible computational methodologies to examine social phenomena – the marked scarcity of replication efforts poses challenges to validating and building upon empirical knowledge within the discipline (Brodeur et al. 2024). Thus, this study

represents a modest yet deliberate attempt to contribute to the ongoing transformation of political science into a more self-correcting discipline – by enhancing the reliability of its scientific contributions.

Methods

To investigate the impact of ranked-choice elections on voter preferences for candidates from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds – within a Canadian election context – we utilized a conjoint experiment design administered online via Qualtrics (see Table 1). Specifically, candidate attributes – race and partisanship – were systematically altered within a simulated municipal election scenario to identify the impact of candidate information availability on electoral support across demographic lines.

Table 1

Conjoint Design Set Up – Qualtrics Sample, February 2024

Attribute	Possible Values
Electoral Rule	Ranked-Choice Voting
Race	White, Black, Indigenous, Asian
Gender	Female
Partisanship	Nothing, NDP, Liberal, Conservative, PPC

Note. Notable refinements to Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) methodologies: respondents participated in only RCV election scenarios, with candidate gender limited to "Female." Candidate partisan affiliation was adjusted to encompass Canadian political parties – those best reflecting sequential steps on the left-right ideological spectrum. The "Hispanic" candidate race was replaced by "Indigenous" to reflect Canada's demography and historical context.

Ethics

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the University of Toronto's Social Sciences, Humanities and Education REB (RIS Human Protocol Number 46013).

Sample

Employing a convenience sampling method – reflective of the study's pragmatic constraints – we initially engaged 218 Canadian respondents. Web links and QR codes were distributed by word-of-mouth across the University of Toronto Scarborough campus – predominantly within the Political Science, Psychology, and Statistics departments. Participants were also encouraged to share the survey with their broader social networks. In addition, the survey was actively promoted (in person) at high-traffic public spaces close to the recruiter – specifically, North York Centre, Fairview Mall, and Centerpoint Mall – to engage additional respondents beyond the university setting. As a token of appreciation, participants were given the opportunity to enter a draw for one of five $25 Amazon gift cards upon completing the survey.

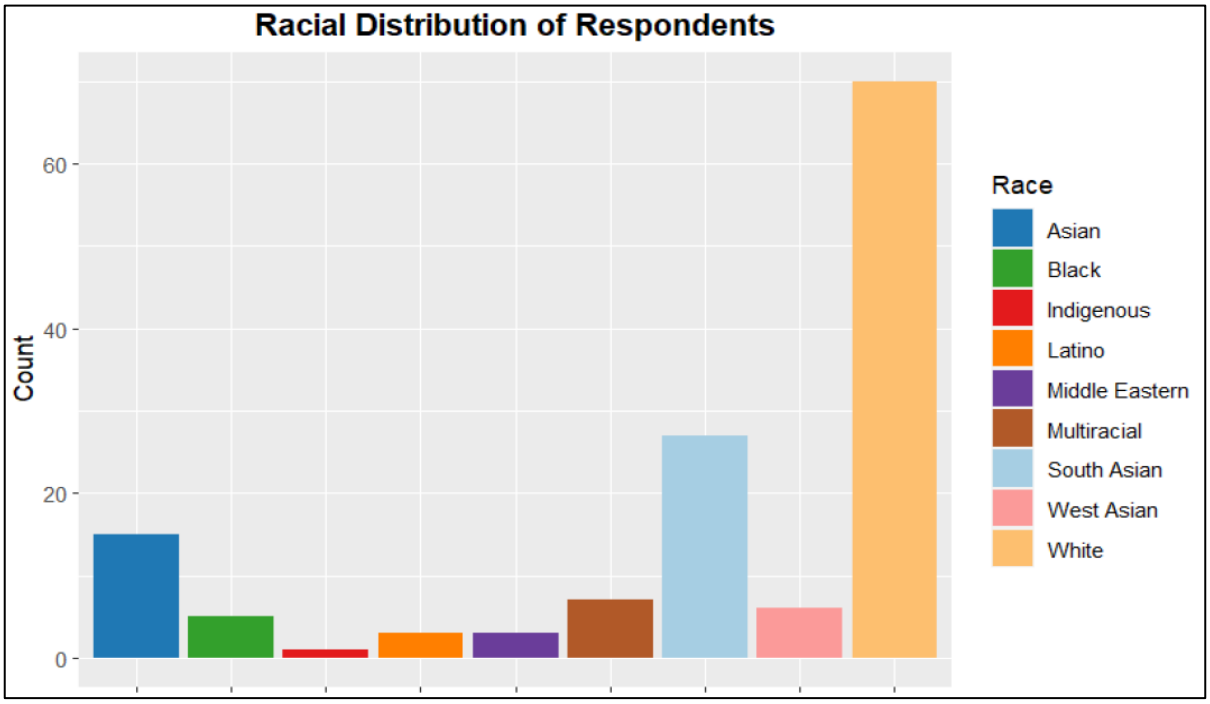
Pre-Processing

The initial respondent pool of 218 was reduced to an effective sample size of 137 voting-eligible adults, necessitated by participant attrition due to incomplete experimental responses (N = 48), failure to pass attention checks (N = 4), and instances of ineligibility to vote in Canadian elections (N = 29). Consequently, the final study cohort comprised 62 males, 73 females, and 2 non-binary individuals, with participants ages 18 to 65 years and older (μ_{age} = 34.96, see Table 2). Notably, the vast majority of respondents were situated in Ontario (~92%). For the purpose of comparing negative partisanship dynamics (H3), we note that the study cohort contained a sufficient number of self-identified Conservatives (N = 42) and Liberals (N = 42).

Though structurally aligned with the ethnic identification categories found in the Canadian Census (Statistics Canada 2023), we note that the sample's racial and ethnic distribution did not fully reflect the full diversity of the Canadian electorate (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Bar Chart of Respondent Race



Note. Demographic identifiers in this study align with the categorizations utilized by Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023). Specifically, the "Asian" category includes Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Japanese ethnicities. Similarly, "Middle Eastern" and "Arab" designations have been merged. Notably, the Canadian Census indicates the following demographic composition: White (69.8%), South Asian (7.1%), Indigenous (5%), Chinese (4.7%), Black (4.3%), Filipino (2.6%), Arab (1.9%), Latin American (1.6%), Southeast Asian (1.1%), West Asian (1%), Korean (0.6%), Japanese (0.3%), and Multiracial/Other, excluding Métis (3.2%) (Statistics Canada, 2023).

Table 2

Age Cohorts of Respondents

Age Range	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Undisclosed
Count	51	28	52	17	7	6	3

Note. This table delineates the distribution of survey respondents across various age cohorts. The "Undisclosed" category represents participants who opted not to reveal their age.

Procedures

To ensure methodological alignment with Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) and adapt to the Canadian electoral landscape, we adjusted our survey's language and demographic classifications to mirror those outlined in the Canadian Election Study (CES) (Stephenson et al. 2022) – deviating from the original study design only as necessary. In further consideration of

Canada's population demography and long history of discrimination against Indigenous communities, we replaced the "Hispanic" candidate category – the fourth racial category for candidates present in the original study. Likewise, we integrated the Beauvais' (2021) Short Indigenous Resentment Scale into the questionnaire – a measure designed to assess Canadian perspectives on Indigenous rights and concerns – which prompted respondents to indicate their agreement with four statements derived from the CES (e.g., "Aboriginals are getting too demanding in their push for land rights."

At the survey's outset, respondents completed an informed consent process establishing the requirements and ethical guidelines for study participation and withdrawal. Subsequently, qualified participants provided standard demographic details and disclosed their political affiliations. Prior to the experimental portion, we assessed participants' perspectives on race, gender, and feminism, maintaining fidelity to the structure and content utilized by Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023).

Anticipating participants' unfamiliarity with RCV – due to its limited application in Canada – we presented respondents with comprehensive visual slides to familiarize voters with the ranked-choice mechanism. Subsequently, we assessed respondents' comprehension of the election format with a preliminary RCV exercise – specifically, asking participants to rank four candidates in an order specified by a prompt – to ensure voters were comfortable with Qualtrics' ranking procedures and ready for the experimental tasks (all participants in our effective sample correctly ranked the candidates during the comprehension task).

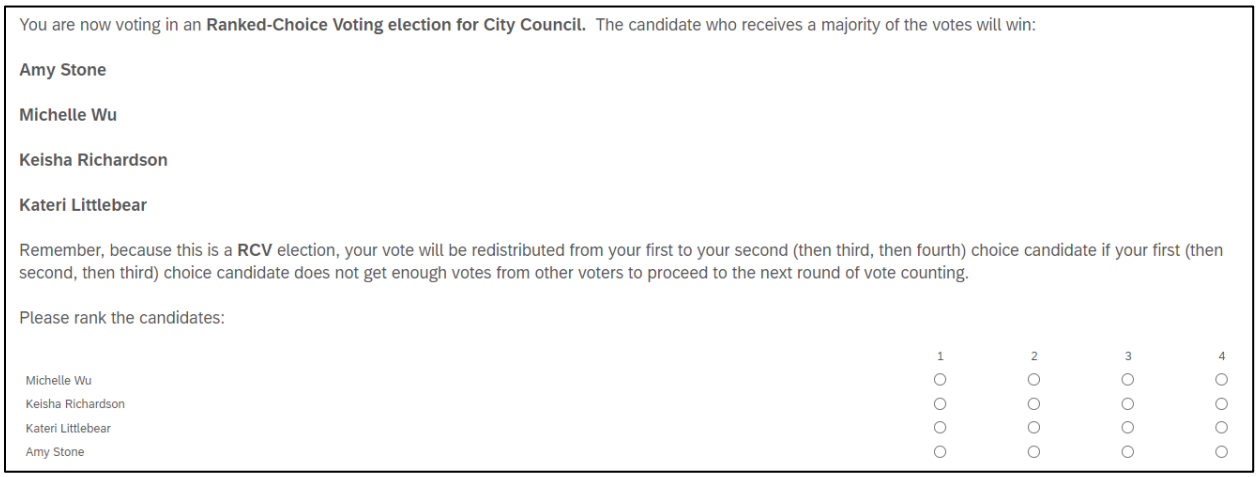
During the experimental phase, participants assumed the role of voters in a hypothetical municipal election, tasked with ranking four female candidates for local governmental positions (i.e., Mayor, city councillor). Specifically, candidates' names – appearing via the random

assignment of two name sets – reflected distinct racial characteristics. Participants encountered either the first or second name set absent party affiliation ("No-Label" condition, see Figure 2), followed by the latter set introducing candidates in a "Label" condition (party affiliation randomized). Ultimately, these scenarios, adopted from Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023), simulated the strategic decision-making inherent to RCV elections, with variations based on the provision of partisanship information and differing sets of candidate names (see Table 4).

Whereas real-world RCV elections do not typically require a complete ranking of all candidates – allowing for partial rankings that could result in plurality-like outcomes – our survey was encoded with a Qualtrics "forced-choice decision" mandating participants rank all four candidates presented. This choice, motivated by research suggesting candidates of colour might encounter systemic secondary biases in RCV systems (Crowder-Meyer et al. 2023), enabled the exploration of negative partisanship dynamics within our sample.

Figure 2

Experimental Ranked-Choice Election: No-Label Condition



Note. Initially, participants were prompted to rank four candidates in the "No-Label" condition – in either a mayoral or city council (randomized) RCV election. One of two name sets is randomly presented. Subsequently, the "Label" condition appears with the alternative name set and election type (e.g., city council follows mayoral or vice versa). In the Label condition, candidates' party affiliation is present (e.g., "Amy Stone is affiliated with the Liberal party").

Consistent with research indicating that voters infer race from distinctive names rather than other attributes – e.g., socioeconomic status (Butler & Homola 2017) – we selected names for candidates that were indicative of their race, drawing from Crowder-Meyer et al.'s (2023) validated list (see Table 4). As per the original study, Asian candidate surnames indicated their ethnicity, whereas first names signalled Black candidates' ethnicity. To ensure our novel Indigenous name combinations signalled ethnicity accurately, we consulted with an Indigenous Political Science scholar at the University of Toronto Scarborough, who guided us on appropriate first name-surname combinations that would appear "obviously Indigenous" to respondents (C. Cowie, personal communication, January 17, 2024).

Consistent with Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023), our primary outcome of interest was the probability that a candidate, characterized by specific attributes – i.e., race (No Label and Label conditions) and partisanship (Label condition) – is "selected" as the primary choice (1st) by participants. Secondarily, we operationalize negative partisanship as instances where Conservative voters ranked the Liberal candidate in the last position (4th), and vice versa, due to the closer ideological distance between these parties compared to other selection options (e.g., the Liberal party represents an ideologically closer option to Conservatives than the NDP party).

Table 3

Party Labels for RCV Candidates

Condition	Party Affiliation			
No-Label	None			
Label	NDP	Liberal	Conservative	PPC

Note. The Label condition displayed candidates' affiliation with a single political party (randomized). The chosen parties best reflect sequential steps on the left-right ideological spectrum (from NDP to PPC).

Table 4

Candidate Names

Name Set	Name	Gender	First Name	Surname
Set 1	Asian	Female	Julie	Chang
	Black	Female	Latoya	Butler
	Indigenous	Female	Winona	Yellowfeather
	White	Female	Wendy	Burns
Set 2	Asian	Female	Michelle	Wu
	Black	Female	Keisha	Richardson
	Indigenous	Female	Kateri	Littlebear
	White	Female	Amy	Stone

Note. This table details the names presented to participants in each election task. Given our time and resource constraints, we presented participants with a shortened list of female-only candidate options.

Results & Analysis

RCV Elections

We conducted an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis to examine the effects of predictors on candidate selection, utilizing the R statistical software package – adopting the exact methodology outlined by Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023). Specifically, by utilizing the OLS coefficients to produce the Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCE) – quantifying the influence of altering attributes (all else being equal) on selection probability – our analyses reveal the impact of candidate attributes on selection likelihood (see Figure 3).

No-Label Condition

In our experiment's low-information "No-Label" condition, we found that most BIPOC candidates are subject to notable penalization – aligning with our original hypothesis (H1).

Specifically, Asian candidates were less likely to be selected as the primary choice, suffering a selection penalization of approximately 15.3 percentage points compared to their White counterparts (β = -0.15328, $p < .05$). Comparatively, Black candidates experienced a more pronounced penalization, having a 22.6 percentage point reduction in the likelihood of being ranked first (β = -0.22628, $p < .05$). In contrast, the penalization of Indigenous candidates appeared to be negligible and not statistically significant (β = -0.08029, p = 0.11964).

Ultimately, though our coefficients are much larger than those found in Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) – likely a product of small sample size dynamics – the patterns observed among Canadian voters mirror those identified in the original study's analysis of RCV elections within the American electorate (see Figure 3). Comparatively, Black candidates were less likely to be ranked first by approximately 11 percentage points – when compared to White candidates. Similarly, the original study authors found Asian candidates were less likely to be ranked first by approximately 7 percentage points.

Label Condition

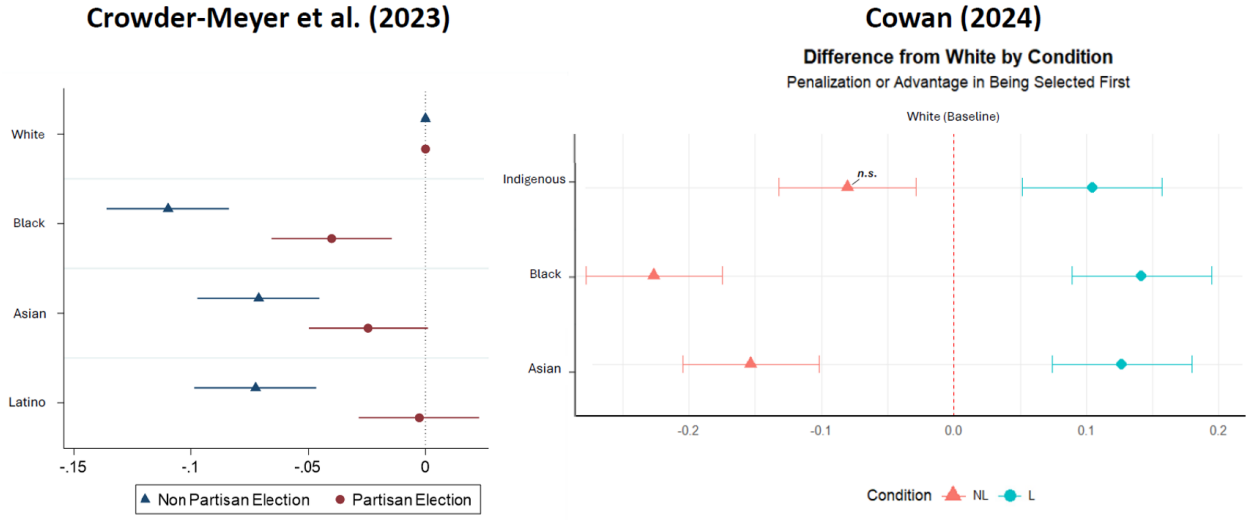
In the high-information "Label" condition, we introduced a relevant political cue – party labels (see Table 3) – to examine their potential to redirect voter focus away from racial cues (H2).

Our OLS regression results revealed a notable shift (see Figure 3): Asian candidates experienced a positive adjustment (β = 0.12687, $p < .05$), indicating an increased likelihood of being selected as the first choice by approximately 12.7 percentage points relative to White candidates. Similarly, Black candidates gained a 14.2 percentage point increase in the probability of being ranked first (β = 0.14179, $p < .05$). Likewise, Indigenous candidates also benefitted

from the introduction of party labels, gaining a 10.4 percentage point improvement in their selection likelihood compared to their White opponents ($\beta = 0.10448$, $p < .05$).

Figure 3

Comparison of Studies' AMCE by Candidate Selection



Note. The *x*-axis values display the AMCE of race/race-partisanship on candidate selection: "the increase [or decrease] in population probability that a profile would be chosen if the component was changed" (Crowder-Meyer et al., 2023). Noticeably, in the original study, BIPOC candidates were penalized in both partisan and non-partisan elections (though party labels help). In the present study, BIPOC candidates show penalization (Indigenous not statistically significant), but these effects are neutralized in the presence of party labels. Instead, in the Label condition, BIPOC membership is presented as advantageous compared to White ethnicity. Adapted from Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023).

Ultimately, these results starkly contrast our findings in the No-Label Condition – to reiterate, BIPOC candidates faced marked penalizations – and those of the original study authors (though the effect maintains similar directionality). Whereas Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) found that Black and Asian candidates' disadvantage penalties were reduced but still visible with the introduction of partisan cues, our findings demonstrate that partisan cues seemingly obliterate the racial penalization against BIPOC candidates within our sample. This shift suggests that Canadian voters utilize partisan labels as a critical heuristic in their decision-making process, circumventing racial biases in favour of more politically pertinent information.

Negative Partisanship

We applied the Fisher's Exact Test – appropriate for the analyses of small frequency contingency tables – to evaluate negative partisanship (H3) among our Conservative and Liberal participants ($N_{Conservative}$ = 42, $N_{Liberal}$ = 42). Given that approximately 25 percent of supporters from each group ranked rival party candidates as their least desirable choice (4^{th}), a non-significant outcome was unsurprising: Fisher's Exact Test yielded an odds ratio of approximately 1.144, indicating no discernible difference in negative partisanship behaviours between Conservative and Liberal voters in our study sample (p = 1.00). This outcome could imply a lack of disparity in negative partisanship rates between Conservative and Liberal voters or simply reflect the analytical constraints imposed by our limited sample size.

Affinity Voting

In an extension of our core analyses, we explored the phenomenon of affinity voting within our sample – specifically, a voter's propensity to favour candidates sharing their racial or ethnic background (Bird et al. 2016). The original study authors discerned that racial bias in candidate selection predominantly manifested among White respondents – especially those with moderate to conservative ideologies – surmising that these biases could stem from in-group affinity, racial animus, or the perception that candidates of colour are "ideologically liberal" (Crowder-Meyer et al. 2023). Thus, we ran a logistic regression on participant racial subgroups of the No-Label condition to test these dynamics within our dataset.

Our logistic regression revealed that self-identified White conservative voters (N = 42) exhibited a statistically significant preference for White candidates as their primary choice (β = 1.1638, $p < .05$). This finding suggests a strong influence of racial affinity on their voting behaviour, echoing Crowder-Meyer et al.'s (2023) anticipated patterns of affinity voting.

Interestingly, when assessing the broader group of White participants in our sample ($N = 70$), the regression coefficient revealed an insubstantial influence on their predilection for White candidates ($\beta = 0.1833$, $p = .6062$).

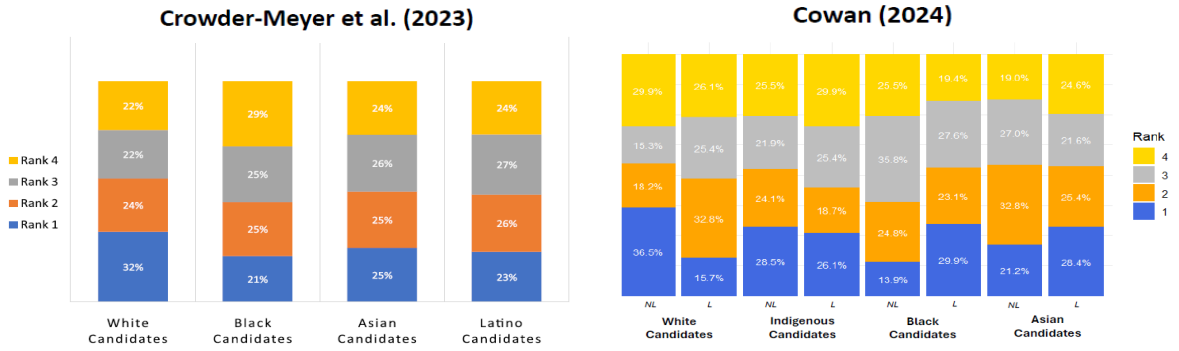
Conversely, the expected patterns of ethnic solidarity did not hold for self-identified Asian voters within our sample ($N = 15$). Our analysis found no significant affinity effect among this group ($\beta = 0.3442$, $p = .582$), potentially indicating a more complex interplay of factors that guide their electoral preferences transcending racial identification (though we interpret this finding cautiously due to the small sample size).

Finally, a pattern of affinity voting emerged among self-identified Black voters, who demonstrated a higher likelihood of selecting Black candidates as their first choice ($p < .05$). Though Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) suggest this pattern underscores the salience of racial identity in the electoral decisions of Black voters – likely reflecting a desire for representation and policy interests that resonate with their community's needs – our findings should be interpreted with caution given our small sample size ($N = 5$).

Overall, our findings lend some support to Crowder-Meyer et al.'s (2023) insights on the in-group dynamics of candidate selection. The marked preference for White candidates among White Conservative voters may point to a confluence of racial and ideological biases – necessitating further exploration. In contrast, the patterns among Asian and Black voters indicate varied responses to the cues available in such electoral settings.

Figure 4

Comparing RCV Ranking Proportions by Candidate Race



Note. Adapted from Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023). Figure 4 compares the distribution of rankings by candidate race in RCV elections.

Discussion & Limitations

Our exploration into the dynamics of ranked-choice elections – guided by the experimental research of Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) – reveals nuanced insights into Canadian voter behaviour and biases. We substantiate the persistence of racial biases across electoral formats, noting the systemic disadvantages faced by BIPOC candidates in our experimental paradigm. Interestingly, the integration of partisan cues – demonstrated to have a neutralizing effect on respondents' biases – served as a statistically significant mechanism for mitigating disadvantages experienced by candidates at the polls. Thus, in contexts where information is scarce, the potential of partisan cues to guide voter preferences toward more diverse candidates could precipitate the reevaluation of future electoral strategies to foster more equitable representation. Undoubtedly, further research is necessary to delineate these effects.

In addition, the phenomenon of affinity voting, especially pronounced among White conservative voters in our sample, reflects a complex interplay between racial identity and political ideology – underscoring the multifaceted nature of electoral decisions. Coupled with our investigation into negative partisanship – although not yielding significant findings – these

findings contribute to the academic discourse on voter behaviour – emphasizing the need to examine these phenomena within Canada's electoral landscape.

Despite these contributions, our study's findings – while informative – are bound by several limitations that temper their generalizability. Primarily, the convenience sampling method and the concentration of respondents from academic settings in Ontario cannot fully capture the diversity of the Canadian electorate – necessitating caution when extrapolating our findings beyond our sample. Future research could benefit from employing a broader, more representative sample – akin to Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) – to enhance the applicability of these insights.

In addition, the hypothetical nature of our RCV scenarios, although constructed to mirror Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023), may not fully encapsulate the complexities of real-world electoral behaviour. Moreover, the relatively small sample size, especially within specific racial subgroups, restricts our ability to draw definitive conclusions about the prevalence of affinity voting and the universal effectiveness of partisan cues. Addressing these limitations through large-scale empirical research could help substantiate and expand our findings.

Conclusion

Ultimately, juxtaposing our findings with those of Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) offers a multifaceted view of the challenges and opportunities inherent in modern electoral systems. Though the original study authors discovered that RCV election rules do not inherently solve the issue of racial penalization, our findings collectively suggest that incorporating partisanship and additional informational cues in low-information elections could serve as a simple, practical approach to promoting a more inclusive democracy.

Though our comparative analysis is small in scale – and limited by our sample's composition – we offer our study as a proof of concept aimed at sparking future endeavours to examine the interplay between electoral systems, information dissemination, and voter biases. Ultimately, though Crowder-Meyer et al. (2023) suggest their findings demonstrate that the RCV format "does not provide a clear remedy [for the election of BIPOC candidates] to plurality elections" (15), the authors have provided us with the opportunity to replicate their findings in the Canadian context and contribute towards the validation of experimental Political Science research.

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