

Polarized Over National Pride and Social Prejudice: A Tale of Two Groups Far Right Supply Shock, Beliefs, Revealed

Preferences and Demand Response

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Abstract

This paper borrows elements from different branches of social sciences (sociology, social psychology, behavioural economics, economic history, and political economy) in an attempt to propose and test -using data from the Spanish elections- one mechanism by which supply of populist radical right parties, given the cultural cleavage structure, is argued to cultivate demand, filling an ongoing gap in the political sciences literature. The paper argues that a populist radical right supply shock lowers the cost of the social stigma associated with the revelation of preferences on social issues that were *ex-ante* believed to go against the social (elite and mass) consensus by updating the beliefs of the prejudiced with regards to the potential size of their group within the society; and subsequently, their motivation to internally and externally control prejudice. This, in turn, is argued to potentially lower the cost of voting for PRRPs, and feed into their support. To construct the argument, the paper utilizes the exogenous far-right shock in Spain that took place in a regional election to argue that it shook the public debate on contemporary consensus regarding social issues, lowered beliefs regarding elite consensus, increased perceptions of polarization, and causally induced revelation of prejudiced preferences aligned with the social views adopted by the radical right. The paper argues that this had led to adjusting perceptions regarding the group size of the prejudiced, inducing further support for the far-right on the national level. On the theoretical side, the paper builds its main mechanism in the light of the sociological, psychological and political economic literature, taken forward to develop a game-theoretic framework to establish the mechanism. On the empirical side, Interaction models with Instrumentation (IV) capturing average and heterogeneous treatment effects (subject to heterogeneity in priors, and the context and the informational values of the signals), and the BME approach to Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD) with a discrete running variable

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only taking few distinct values (mass points) are used to establish for the causal effect of an exogenous regional-level supply shock on the revealed preferences of both the prejudiced and the tolerant, subsequent increase in affective polarization and effects on national-level voting behaviour, and further revelation of prejudice as a result.

Keywords: Media and ties, Political Economy, Social Movements, Social Psychology, Spillover effects