INTERSECTIONS OF RACE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

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Introduction

This research explores how individuals' race and income relate to their perspectives on climate change policies. Previous studies reveal significant racial influences on policy support, challenging assumptions about environmental concerns among people of color. However, little is known about how income groups within races perceive climate change policies.

Research Question
How do attitudes towards climate change policies vary among different races and income brackets? Can one's race predict their views on climate change policies?

Measures

Explantory Variables
- Race: White, African American, Asian, Native
- Income: 1. <20,000, 2. 20,000-40,000, 3. 40,000-60,000, 4. 60,000-80,000, 5. 80,000-100,000, 6. >100,000

Response Variables:
- Support for clean coal: State government should increase support for clean coal technology (Options: Support, Oppose)
- Support for fossil fuel tax increase: State government should increase support for clean coal technology (Options: Support, Oppose)
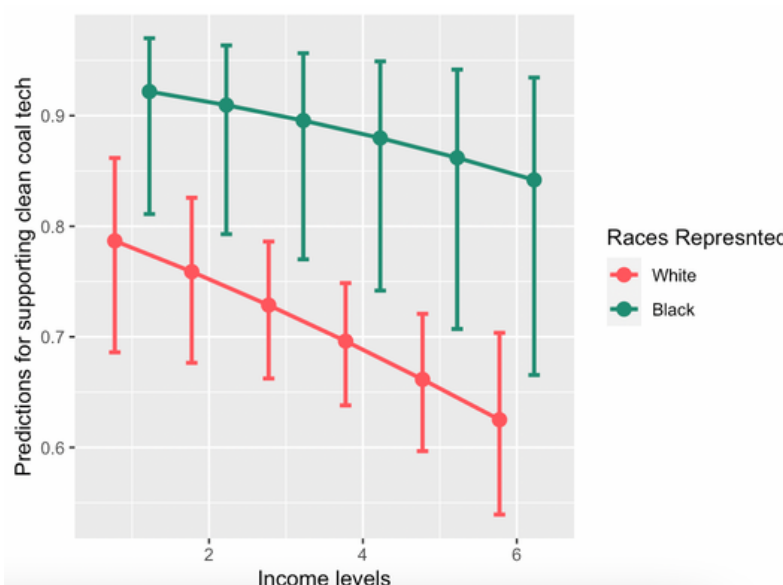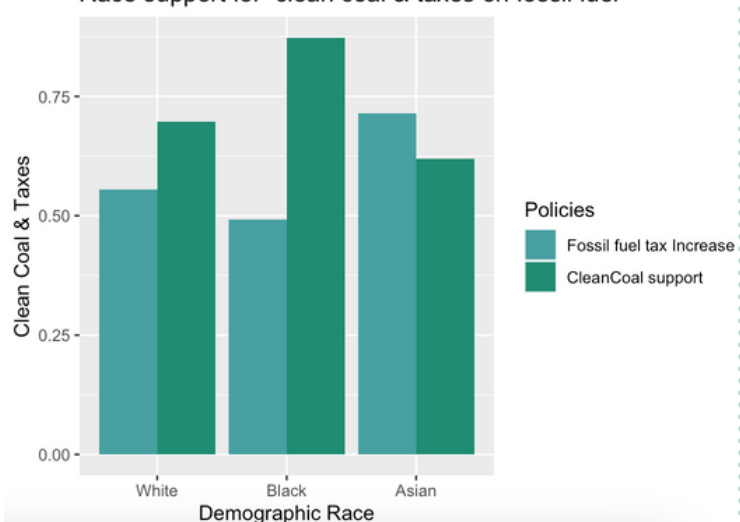
Methods:
- Conducted National Surveys on Energy and Environment (NSEE)
- Sample: Represents the U.S. adult population surveyed via phone
- Intended to capture diverse perspectives across races and incomes
- Included categories in the sample: White, African American, Hispanic, Latino, Asian, Native American, Mixed race, Other, Hispanic/Latino, Mixed race and other, Not sure
- Total sample size: 929 participants

Predicted outcome
- People of color (POC) may be more likely to support policies combatting climate change compared to white individuals. This could be influenced by their experiences with environmental injustices, greater vulnerability to environmental issues, and cultural values emphasizing sustainability.
- While individual opinions vary, there is a trend suggesting higher overall support for climate change combat policies within POC communities.

Race support for clean coal & taxes on fossil fuel

Major Findings
- African-American individuals show 1.14 times higher odds than White/Caucasian counterparts for supporting clean coal (p-value = 0.0446).
- For each incerrase income level (i.e a 20,000) the log-odds of endorsing increased state government support for clean coal technology decreases by about 15% s (p-value = 0.0446). This suggests that there might be a potential association between income and the likelihood of endorsing increased support for clean coal technology.

Discussion/Implications

My research findings align closely with the insights from the literature review, specifically with authors who challenged the misconception that people of color are less concerned about climate-related issues due to socioeconomic status or cultural differences. This alignment underscores the pivotal role of race as a significant determinant in shaping attitudes toward environmental policies, reinforcing the central theme of my research question. The implications of these findings emphasize the ongoing necessity for targeted communication strategies to sustain public concern, particularly given my exploration of attitudes across diverse racial demographics over time.Policymakers can leverage this understanding to develop more inclusive and effective strategies for addressing climate change, fostering meaningful conversations that bridge divides between diverse racial communities. Ultimately, the focus on race in this research contributes valuable insights that carry practical implications for shaping policies that are not only environmentally effective but also considerate of diverse racial perspectives and experiences.

References

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