

Political discussion, media use and immigration

This survey taps into different concepts and dimensions relevant for the understanding of how interpersonal discussion and media use influence immigration attitudes and discussion behaviour. This survey contains a one-factorial experiment on exposure to interpersonal discussion on immigration (family reunification). Similar to previous studies on informal interpersonal discussion (e.g., Hayes, 2007; Noelle-Neumann, 1974, 1980), respondents were asked to imagine a discussion at a social gathering (a summery party). Respondents were randomly assigned to one of three different conditions. One condition covered arguments favourable toward immigration, one condition covered arguments unfavourable toward immigration, and one condition covered arguments favourable and unfavourable toward immigration.

Immigration (family reunification) was chosen as topic as it is one of the central issues in recent Danish politics (see Bjarnø, 2016; Green-Pedersen & Krøstrup, 2008). Immigration attitudes were measured both prior (general immigration) and following exposure (family reunification). Prior to exposure to the experiment general interpersonal discussion frequency and discussion agreement were measured (for a recent discussion on informal political discussion, see Schmitt-Beck & Lup, 2013). News use and perceptions (partisan bias) of news content was also measured prior to exposure.

Following exposure to the experimental stimulus respondents were asked how they would react to the informal interpersonal discussion presented in the experimental stimulus. This was done using an adapted version of the DUTCH-scale on conflict management (on the measure, see De Dreu, Evers, Beersma, Kluwer, & Nauta, 2001; on the theory in general, see e.g. Van de Vliert, 1997). Willingness to discuss was measured and party vote intentions were also measured following exposure.

Further variables in the survey include political interest (measured prior to the experimental component), need for evaluation (prior), need for cognition (prior), party preference in past general elections (prior), internal and external political efficacy (prior), political knowledge (post), geographical region (post), education (post), annual income (post).

References

- Bjarnø, C. (2016). *Evolution in Frames: Framing and Reframing of Policy Questions*. Aarhus: Politica.
- De Dreu, C. K. W., Evers, A., Beersma, B., Kluwer, E. S., & Nauta, A. (2001). A theory-based measure of conflict management strategies in the workplace. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 22(6), 645–668. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.107>
- Green-Pedersen, C., & Krogstrup, J. (2008). Immigration as a political issue in Denmark and Sweden. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47(5), 610–634. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2008.00777.x>
- Hayes, A. F. (2007). Exploring the Forms of Self-Censorship: On the Spiral of Silence and the Use of Opinion Expression Avoidance Strategies. *Journal of Communication*, 57(4), 785–802. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2007.00368.x>
- Noelle-Neumann, E. (1974). The Spiral of Silence: A Theory of Public Opinion. *Journal of Communication*, 24(2), 43–51.
- Noelle-Neumann, E. (1980). *Die Schweigespirale*. München: Piper.
- Schmitt-Beck, R., & Lup, O. (2013). Seeking the Soul of Democracy: A Review of Recent Research into Citizens' Political Talk Culture. *Swiss Political Science Review*, 19(4), 513–538.
- Van de Vliert, E. (1997). *Complex Interpersonal Conflict Behaviour: Theoretical Foundations*. Hove: Psychology Press.