MY457: Week 2 Seminar Guiding Questions

2025-01-30

Paper:

Paper: Zhang, N., Gereke, J., & Baldassarri, D. (2022). Everyday discrimination in public spaces: a field experiment in the Milan metro. *European Sociological Review*, 38(5), 679-693.

Guiding Questions:

1. **General**

- What is the purpose/relevance of this study? What research gap does this paper try to fill? Which exact causal question do the authors try to answer?
- Why do the authors conduct a field experiment? Or put differently: Why can we not just collect all "bench-sitting data" in the Italian tube system and then test for different "sitting-rates"?

2. **Measurement and design**

- What is the treatment? What is the outcome (variable)? Do the authors measure any covariates?
- What is the unit of analysis / what are the observations?
- What is the level of treatment assignment?
- Why do the authors use three (treatment/control) groups / different types of treatments (instead of two)?

3. **Internal validity**

- How would you assess whether the field experiment is (likely to be) internally valid? Do the authors provide supporting tests for the identifying assumption(s)?
- Do you have any key concerns about the internal validity of this experiment?
- Do the authors remove some observations? If so, why? If not, would you recommend doing so?

4. **Heterogeneity and mechanisms**

- According to the authors, what are the two competing theories that explain everyday discrimination? How do they test which one is (more likely to be) true?
- Which heterogeneous effects do the authors examine? Which other ones would you have assessed?

Final question:

How would you assess everyday discrimination? This could be an experiment or an observational study.