

MY457: Seminar 5 Guiding Questions

2025-03-27

Paper:

Paper: Dahl, G.B., Lu, R. and Mullins, W., 2022. Partisan fertility and presidential elections. *American Economic Review: Insights*, 4(4), pp.473-490.

Guiding Questions:

1. General

- What is the primary causal question of interest?
- Conceptually, what is the causal variable, and what is the primary outcome?
- Explain the causal inference problem. Why can the authors not just collect one year's worth of data on partisan vote-share and their outcomes of interest, and run bivariate regressions?

2. Data structure and research design

- Explain the data structure. What is the unit of analysis and what are the observations?
- Describe the treatment group variables (G_i) and the actual treatment variables (Z_{it}).
- What are the key assumptions underpinning the design? How do the authors assess the credibility of their design? Is this convincing? Can you think of any other tests that might be useful?
- Do you have any concerns about the design?

3. Interpretation

- What type of difference-in-differences design is this?
- What is the estimand targeted by this design? Is that a useful quantity?
- Do you have any concerns about the quantity targeted by this design?