

Socialization networks and the transmission of interethnic attitudes

Fabrizio Panebianco¹

*Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca, Dipartimento Economia, Metodi Quantitativi e Strategie di Impresa,
Piazza dell'Ateneo Nuovo 1, 20126, Milano, Italy*

Received 21 February 2012; final version received 19 August 2013; accepted 21 August 2013

Available online 9 September 2013

Abstract

This paper examines the dynamics of interethnic attitudes in a framework of intergenerational transmission of continuous cultural traits, where children are exposed to parental (vertical) and non-parental (oblique) socializations. Under very general conditions over oblique socialization, vertical socialization ensures convergence, while the structure of oblique socialization determines the steady state class. In particular, the presence of specific socialization schemes, namely, ethnocentrism, emulation, and reciprocity, produces different outcomes in terms of integration or attitude ranking. Further, the model is applied to the US case by examining the observed ranking of attitudes and obtaining predictions on the possible attitude patterns.

© 2013 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

JEL classification: D10; I20; J15; Z1

Keywords: Cultural transmission; Socialization networks; Cultural evolution; Ethnic integration; Attitudes

1. Introduction

Interethnic attitudes play an increasingly important role in influencing social interactions and economic choices in society. These attitudes impact actions ranging from job-hiring procedures

E-mail address: fabrizio.panebianco@unimib.it.

¹ I am truly grateful to Alberto Bisin, Sergio Currarini, Gonzalo Olcina, Luca Stanca, two anonymous referees, and one associate editor for the comments provided. I also thank Luigino Bruni, Vicente Calabuig, Elena Fumagalli, Piero Gottardi, Michael Pichler, Pier Luigi Sacco, and the participants at the seminars and conferences in which I presented this paper. The usual disclaimer applies. A preliminary version of this paper, titled “Driving While Black: A Theory for Interethnic Integration and Evolution of Prejudice”, has been circulated.

(see Bertrand and Mullainathan [5], Carlsson and Rooth [30] and Rooth [68]) and residential and school segregation (see Schelling [73,74], and several recent empirical studies²) to friendship network formation and homophily (see Currarini et al. [33,34], Bramoullé et al. [20]). To gain a better understanding of these phenomena, this paper examines the forces behind changes in, and the evolution of, interethnic attitudes. In particular, it focuses on three issues: first, the intergenerational transmission of interethnic attitudes, modeled as continuous cultural traits; second, the interplay between interethnic attitudes and the network of social influences to which agents are exposed; and third, the possible patterns of integration.

The study of intergenerational transmission of cultural traits focuses on the socialization process by which children acquire these traits. The analysis typically distinguishes between parental (vertical), non-parental (oblique), and peer (horizontal) socializations (see Cavalli Sforza and Feldman [31,32]). Bisin and Verdier [13,14] introduced these concepts into the economic debate within a formal utility-maximizing framework, studying the transmission of fixed cultural traits and the dynamics of groups' population shares. This framework, recently extended to a multi-trait distribution model (Bisin et al. [12]), has been extensively used to explain different economic behaviors, such as cooperation (see Bisin et al. [10]; Tabellini [82]; Calabuig and Olcina [28]) and corruption (Hauk and Saez-Marti [47]), to analyze the formation of oppositional identities, and to study religious intermarriages, ethnic identities, and labor market outcomes (Bisin et al. [11,6–8]). Bisin and Verdier [15] provide a recent review on cultural transmission theories and their use.

The application of this body of literature to the study of interethnic attitudes is not straightforward, since attitudes vary in intensity between generations,³ and hence, a model built for the transmission of fixed cultural traits can be restrictive. For this reason, I extend the standard setting to the case of continuous cultural traits that vary in intensity owing to a complex system of out-of-family social interactions (or socialization networks) that affects the transmission process. Very few studies within the literature of cultural evolution theoretically analyze the issue of traits varying in intensity. Bisin and Topa [9] first introduced the issue, and Brueckner and Smirnov [24,25] developed the idea, but without considering the distinction between vertical and oblique socialization processes. Vaughan [86] then introduced continuous cultural traits, considering a framework in which vertical and horizontal socializations are the result of a conformity game played by children. Pichler [63,64] provided an innovative contribution in which parents can choose the intensity of a cultural trait to transmit to their children. While Pichler analyzed the role of vertical socialization, I consider the complementary side of the story by focusing on the network of oblique socialization and its characteristics. My work also relates to theories of opinion formation in networks (DeGroot [39]; Golub and Jackson [45]). In particular, Büchel [26] also approached the role and structure of oblique socialization using the framework of the diffusion of opinions in DeMarzo et al. [40].

I develop the analysis in three steps. First, I build the theoretical model and study the convergence of attitudes to a long-run equilibrium. In particular, I introduce a general oblique

² See Borjas [19], Card and Rothstein [29], Cutler and Glaeser [35], Cutler et al. [36], Ross [69], Moody [55], Burgess et al. [27], Nechyba [57] and Söderström and Urusitalo [79].

³ Studies measuring the level and the changes of interethnic attitudes and tolerance indexes focused on opinion surveys (Golebiowska [43,44]) and have been developed especially in social psychology literature (Hagendoorn et al. [46]; Linstead and Strabac [53]; Berry [3]; Schalk-Soekar et al. [72]; Bar-Tal [1]) or by the use of psychometric techniques, starting from Bogardus [17,18], up to the more recent Hraba et al. [49], Randall and Delbridge [66], Lee et al. [50] and Parrillo and Donoghue [61].

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7359871>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7359871>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)