

Explaining motivation to represent: how does descriptive representation lead to substantive representation of racial and ethnic minorities?

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ABSTRACT

Empirical studies show a link between substantive and descriptive representation of racial and ethnic minorities. However, our understanding of the mechanisms through which this association operates comes almost exclusively from normative arguments. This article examines three of these proposed mechanisms: two intrinsic mechanisms operationalised as perceptions of shared experience and a motivation to represent, and an extrinsic mechanism of electoral incentives. By doing so it moves on from documenting the link between descriptive and substantive representation to explaining it. Clear evidence is found that prospective minority representatives are influenced by all three motivations, to different extents, with a difference between minority candidates of different parties. Also, while the ethnic minority population of a constituency is usually associated with extrinsic motivation, it is found that it increases intrinsic motivation for representation among prospective minority representatives, suggesting these may be less distinct than is assumed in the normative literature.

KEYWORDS Descriptive representation; substantive representation; parliamentary candidates; ethnic minorities; racial minorities

The claim that, in certain circumstances, descriptive representation is linked to the substantive representation of historically excluded groups has been subject to empirical testing and is generally supported (Bratton and Haynie 1999; Burden 2007; Butler and Broockman 2011; Chaney 2015; Miller and Stokes 1963; Minta 2009; Preuhs 2006; Saalfeld and Bischof 2012; Swain 1993; Tate 2003). As this contemporary literature does not simplistically claim that 'any woman, black or Latino' representative will engage in substantive representation, there is an increasing need for a systematic inquiry to understand under what conditions and circumstances they will (Dovi 2002; Mansbridge 1999). The assumption of a link between descriptive and substantive representation often rests on the supposition that legislators are able, or indeed are motivated, to act for those individuals who share their politically salient characteristics. However, it is clearly possible

that minority representatives who advance minority interests may not necessarily do so because they are intrinsically motivated; they may also act for extrinsic reasons, such as presumed electoral rewards from ethnic minority constituents.

Despite these mechanisms gaining recognition, existing empirical research has struggled to disentangle and thus properly test the different possibilities. The majority of studies focus on the USA, which, while being one of the most salient settings for struggles for racial minority representation, presents an empirical difficulty. In the USA it is almost impossible to differentiate between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for black legislators using observational data because most black legislators represent minority-majority districts (Lublin 1999), something which is no longer the case in the UK (Sobolewska 2013). This issue of identification creates another empirical difficulty, that of direct measurement of motivations. The existing studies employ primarily indirect measures, using the distribution of representative outcomes, rather than more direct attitudinal measures, as proxies for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Butler and Broockman 2011; Saalfeld and Bischof 2012). Using a 2015 survey of parliamentary candidates (Campbell and van Heerde-Hudson 2015) containing attitudinal measures, our analysis differentiates between the two possible mechanisms of intrinsic motivation proposed in the theoretical literature: firstly, a sense of shared experience of racial prejudice and discrimination and, secondly, the sense of responsibility to represent minority voters. We can also assess what role electoral incentives play in the distribution of these attitudes, thus elaborating on whether representing minority voters in districts with a large proportion of ethnic minorities truly reflects a simple extrinsic motivation to represent, or in fact increases the intrinsic motivation to do so, through changing representatives' attitudes. Similarly, although the role of party affiliation and ideology has been shown to have an effect on the link between descriptive and substantive representation (Preuhs 2006; Saalfeld et al. 2011), this is also difficult to explore in the US context, as the majority of black legislators are Democrats. Again, in Britain this is not the case, with an almost even split between the two main parties in terms of ethnic diversity.¹

We find clear evidence for the proposed intrinsic mechanisms linking descriptive and substantive representation: minority candidates share a sense of common minority experiences, and feel a responsibility to represent minority voters, although this is moderated by political party. Left-wing and liberal parties' minority candidates are more intrinsically motivated to represent minorities. Additionally, the traditional indicator of extrinsic motivation, electoral incentives engendered by an ethnically diverse electorate, can work through increasing prospective representatives' intrinsic motivation. Those minority candidates standing in more ethnically diverse seats were more motivated than the ones standing in predominantly

white seats.

Theoretical mechanisms for substantive representation

The potential mechanisms underlying a link between descriptive and substantive representation are empirically under-researched but not under-theorised. There is a large body of literature seeking to discern these mechanisms. Those that are dominant in the literature are: a sense of shared experience; a motivation to represent; and electoral incentives. These have deep roots in the theoretical literature and imply both an intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to represent on the part of the descriptive representatives, although, as we will contend later, what appear to be extrinsic electoral incentives may in fact lead to a change in levels of intrinsic motivation.

Shared experience

In the US literature, shared experience is understood as a core mechanism binding members of the disadvantaged group across other divides such as economic or social inequality (Mansbridge 1999), and acting as a motivation for representatives from these groups to engage in substantive representation. Racial and ethnic minorities have a sense of shared experience because of historical and contemporary discrimination and from experiencing political mobilisation to overcome their group disadvantages. Thus, their group membership affects the course and quality of their lives and is politicised. Shared experience is the most frequently quoted theoretical mechanism for why descriptive representatives would be best placed to represent traditionally under-represented voters. In the USA, much research has examined shared experience, both between members of the disempowered groups, and between them and their representatives (Swain 1993). However, in the UK there is less research on this concept, although it has been shown to exist and influence political choices of ethnic minorities (Heath *et al.* 2013).

The difficulties in operationalising shared experience between members of racial and ethnic minority groups and their representatives originate in the inherent difficulty of operationalising any notion of shared experience between members of the same ethnic group (shared by the literature studying representation of women). First, experience is not homogenous among under-represented groups, especially among ethnic and racial minorities where it could be argued that there are no obvious commonalities, such as the realities of childbearing and child rearing shared by many women; but even for women, the assumption of commonality of experience is controversial (Celis 2012). To overcome this difficulty, this article will not rely on the

assumption of common experience, as is often done; nor will it attempt to measure those objectively using demographics, or socio-economic status, but instead it will use the *perception* of commonality of experience, best captured by the notion of linked fate (Burden 2007; Dawson 1994; Gay 2004; Mansbridge 1999, 2003; Whitby 1997).

Linked fate accounts for more than a sense of group solidarity or identity and is the understanding that individual opportunities and life chances are intrinsically linked to the group as a whole (Dawson 1994; Gay and Tate 1998). It involves a sense of acute awareness that what happens to the group is also something that affects the individual within the group and is explicitly applied to racial and ethnic minorities, usually African Americans, but increasingly to other ethnic minority groups (Junn and Masuoka 2008). The concept is applied to these groups with distinct histories of discrimination and experiences of prejudice and is consistent with some of the aspects of the earlier concept of group consciousness (Miller *et al.* 1981), particularly the sense of injustice at the group's position and a systemic explanation of it, as opposed to individualistic explanations. These two cognitive elements of the concept are crucial, as they enable political mobilisation and expression of distinct interests, and are a prerequisite for conscious acts of substantive representation. Those descriptive representatives that share this sense of injustice and a particular set of explanations for the injustice can articulate group interests and attempt to form trust-based relationships with other members of the group (Dovi 2002); these two cognitive mechanisms can thus enable shared experience to translate into substantive representation.

Using the concept of linked fate to operationalise shared experience may also help resolve an issue of measurement. Since the basis of the concept (Dawson 1994) rests on a history of racial discrimination as the preferred systemic explanation for group-based injustice, the perception that non-white people are held back by prejudice and discrimination is used as a measure of shared experience. Although the experience of being held back by racial discrimination can only be meaningfully shared by non-white candidates, we also asked white candidates if they agreed that non-white people are held back. The logic behind this is that the perception that their non-white constituents share common experiences of discrimination fulfils a similar cognitive role for white candidates as it does for minority prospective representatives: it enables them to recognise common political interests and a systemic – rather than individualistic – explanation for them, which can lead them to perceive a need to represent these interests substantively. A white representative who would not agree that their minority constituents share a common reality of prejudice is therefore less likely to represent their shared experience very much in parallel with minority representatives. Thus, while it is not implausible that white representatives perceive racial and ethnic minority groups as sharing distinct political agendas worth representing, we

hypothesise that candidates directly originating from these minorities will have a stronger perception of these issues.

H1 Ethnic minority candidates support the statement that non-whites are held back by prejudice more than white candidates, indicating that they have a sense of shared experience with ethnic minority voters.

Motivation to represent

The second most prominent theoretical mechanism linking substantive and descriptive representation is the greater willingness of ethnic minority representatives to represent ethnic minorities substantively. This is somewhat related to the idea of shared experience, and it may well be that feelings of solidarity and commonality among members of a group may foster a sense of duty to act for the group. However, they are conceptually distinct and correspond to two different mechanisms, proposed by Mansbridge (1999), through which substantive representation can happen. While shared experience can enable descriptive representatives to represent substantively in times where 'innovative thinking in contexts of uncrystallized ... interests' is needed (Mansbridge 1999: 628), willingness to represent is necessary for communication with fellow members of one's descriptive group, particularly in cases where such communication is not contained within the usual relationship of representation of one's voters. This second mechanism has been indirectly confirmed by studies showcasing surrogate representation, where representatives respond to concerns of racial and ethnic minority voters residing outside their own electoral district (Broockman 2013; Swain 1993). Since such representation requires a conscious expression of a desire to engage with fellow minorities regardless of their residency and specifically on the basis of their ethnicity, its existence has been interpreted as proof of representatives' intrinsic motivation to represent.²

Being able to ask about a motivation directly, and using a relatively larger and more diverse sample than has been possible to date, is therefore a rare opportunity to see if minority representatives' differential representational behaviours are backed up by a conscious realisation that, as descriptive representatives, they face the responsibility to engage in substantive representation. Measuring willingness to represent directly is clearly an improvement on using observable outcomes and assuming that they are the result of a motivation to represent, especially as representatives are usually very limited in how many tangible outcomes such as policy changes they can actually achieve (Meier *et al.* 2005; Saalfeld and Kyriakopoulou 2010; Welch and Hibbing 1984).

Measuring representational attitudes, rather than outcomes, can also help in operationalising the notoriously tricky concept of substantive representation.

A successful operationalisation of substantive representation would involve the development of objective measures of the group interests that are to be represented, about which there is no universal agreement (Dovi 2002). One way to overcome this problem is to focus on representative claims (Saward 2006, 2010), rather than making judgements about the quality of outcomes of substantive representation. This approach shifts the focus onto what claims politicians make about who they think they are representing and thus, in our case, their attitudinal sense of willingness or duty to represent. This also sidesteps another issue of measurement, especially in the UK, which is the practical limitation of what MPs can do and say in parliament, given the constraints imposed by the party whips, party control over resources, and other legislative limitations (for a discussion see Saalfeld *et al.* 2011). Measuring the intention to represent through a sense of duty and responsibility to do so among parliamentary candidates captures the moment before the intervention of such confounding influences and limitations. These considerations lead to the second hypothesis:

H2 Ethnic minority candidates will agree more strongly than white candidates that being an ethnic minority representative gives them a responsibility to represent ethnic minority voters.

Party ideology as moderator

The reason that party ideology might moderate the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation can partly be explained by the parties' different histories of descriptive representation, with the majority of countries conforming to the pattern that left-leaning and liberal parties lead on descriptive representation of ethnic and racial minorities (Bird *et al.* 2010; Kittilson and Tate 2004). In the US the lack of variance both in partisanship of representatives, but also in policy preferences of ethnic and racial minority voters, has led to many studies that measure substantive representation directly by whether a representative's roll-call vote records are liberal or conservative, thus equating left-leaning roll-call voting with substantive minority representation (Casellas and Leal 2010; Welch and Hibbing 1984). As we discussed earlier, in contemporary Britain the Labour and Conservative parties are almost evenly matched on ethnic minority representation, enabling us to study variations by party in more depth.

The prevalence of systemic explanations of inequality over individualistic ones, usually associated with parties of the left, is particularly relevant to our conceptualisation of shared experience, and is likely to vary by party ideology along the left–right spectrum. In the UK, Labour is traditionally the party associated with support for ethnic minorities, since the advent of post-war race and immigration politics (Norris *et al.* 1992). To date, Labour governments have passed all anti-discrimination legislation pertaining to

race and ethnicity and the party has, until recently, commanded over 90% support rates among ethnic minority voters (Heath *et al.* 2013). The Labour Party has formalised the incorporation of ethnic minority groups through a multicultural route, in which ethnic groups, and not individual voters, have become a basis of the party's engagement with minority communities (Garbaye 2008). This puts ethnicity, group experience of ethnicity, and group rights at the heart of Labour's approach to racial and ethnic difference. We also expect that, since the Labour Party has traditionally championed descriptive representation by electing ethnic minority representatives from the most ethnically diverse seats (Sobolewska 2013), the sense of motivation to represent will also be greater among minority Labour MPs.

Also leaning to the left on many issues, the Liberal Democrats too are ideologically multicultural in their approach to ethnic diversity. Although, in contrast to Labour, the Liberal Democrats have only had two minority MPs elected to date, this is usually blamed on the party's shortage of winnable seats (which also affects the party's female representation). The Liberal Democrats have however made many attempts to change this: they became the first party to publish an ethnic minority manifesto, introduce ethnic balance on their shortlists for candidates and debate all-minority shortlists (Sobolewska 2013). Therefore, while the party seemingly has a very bad record on descriptive representation, we expect that their attitudes towards representation might be more in line with Labour. We also include the Scottish National Party and the Greens in the group of left-leaning parties with ideologies of multiculturalism, despite their recent emergence and limited success with electing minority MPs. In contrast, the Conservative Party has sought to win support from some segments of the ethnic minority population through a colourblind approach (Sobolewska 2013). The best example was an electoral poster from the 1980s proclaiming 'Labour say he's black, Tories say he's British'. While this strategy failed to draw ethnic minority voters away from the Labour Party, it illustrates the party's instincts on this issue that can easily be extended to perceptions of and actual political representation. The representative style of minority Conservative MPs seem to confirm this: for example Adam Afriyie, the first black African Conservative MP, in tune with Conservative ideology, has declared his opposition to positive discrimination, stating 'The selection of candidates based on personal characteristics – that are arbitrary or merely in vogue – should not enjoy legal force if we believe in equality of opportunity' (Afriyie 2010). Although this trend reversed somewhat with the arrival of David Cameron as the Conservative leader in 2005, whose objective of party modernisation included addressing the issues of race diversity and discrimination more openly (Sobolewska 2013), it is unlikely that the reversal has been complete in this short period of time, or that it has disseminated throughout the party. Given the wide range of ethnic minority

candidates, some of whom represent the UK Independence Party (UKIP), a party thought by many to be racist or at least xenophobic (Ford *et al.* 2012), we expect that the relationship between the party affiliation of candidates may complicate the previously more straightforward relationship between ethnicity of candidates and representatives and their position on representation of ethnic minority interests. Since the vast majority of ethnic minority MPs in Britain (and elsewhere) have traditionally been elected by parties of the left, we posit that this may have driven the link between descriptive and substantive representation. However, given the normative mechanisms of representation, even minority candidates of the right-wing parties are expected to show some level of shared experience and responsibility to represent. Against this background, we propose a two-step hypothesis: firstly, that party affiliation with a party of the left will work in the same direction as ethnicity, making these candidates most motivated to represent; and secondly, that even when party affiliation with a party of the right works in the opposite direction to ethnicity, minority candidates of parties on the right will still exceed their white colleagues' levels of agreement with our representational attitudes items.

H3.1 Minority candidates from left-leaning parties will experience influences from both their ethnicity and left-wing ideology, thus becoming most motivated to represent.

H3.2 Minority candidates of right-wing parties will show a greater agreement with our representational attitudes than their non-minority right-wing colleagues, but less so than their left-wing peers.

Electoral incentives

Another proposed mechanism for explaining motivation to represent minorities substantively is a rational-choice mechanism, which, in contrast with the previously discussed intrinsic motivations, focuses on an extrinsic motivation. It emphasises the electoral calculus assumed to be behind the actions of vote-seeking representatives (Mansbridge 2003; Norris 2004) as they direct their finite resources to activities they believe will be most appealing to their constituents, with the aim of re-election. Thus, those in electoral districts with high concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities may see representing minority voters as an effective means of re-election. Many studies find that representatives seek to show that they are responsive to their constituents, and many now report their parliamentary activity on their own websites, including listing questions they have raised. Even before the internet, Franklin and Norton (1993) reported that 82% of British MPs said they would send reports of their parliamentary activity to the local press.

The electoral incentive proposed to drive representatives' behaviour is

termed by Mansbridge (2003) as ‘anticipatory’ representation, whereby representatives undertake activities, modifying their behaviour in a way that they *believe* voters will reward them for in the future. Consequently, representatives with a higher proportion of ethnic minorities in their district should be more responsive to them, expecting to be rewarded at election time. Although this effect has been hard to identify in the USA, due to the already mentioned effects of racial gerrymandering, some research found a relationship between the percentage of ethnic minorities in the seat and representatives’ voting behaviour (Casellas and Leal 2010; Welch and Hibbing 1984). In the UK, Saalfeld and Bischof (2012) looked at parliamentary questions in the House of Commons and found that although minority representatives were more likely to raise ethnic issues in parliament, *all* MPs were responsive to the ethnic make-up of their constituencies.

However, although the conclusion that responsiveness to minority voters’ interests in ethnically diverse seats constitutes an extrinsic motivation is both intuitively appealing and empirically sound, this is not necessarily the only possibility. The representative with a higher concentration of minority voters is more likely to hear from these voters. This makes it at least likely that the representative will be more responsive not out of electoral calculation, but due to preferential access to information about ethnic minority interests (Mansbridge 1999), which may in turn increase their level of concern with those interests. Although this article cannot exclude the possibility that extrinsic motivation operates among prospective candidates, as our data lack information on any representative outcomes and thus make it impossible to test the direct impact of electoral calculus on substantive representation, it can address the theoretical mechanism that offers an alternative to the usually assumed direct link between the demographics of the electoral district and substantive representation.

The possibility, which we want to test here, is that the demographic make-up of the district might in fact work through increasing the representatives’ levels of motivation to represent ethnic minority issues and their perception of shared experience of minorities, both intrinsic motivators of representation. The process envisaged here is one of internalisation, rather than of calculated reasoning. As a result, we propose that the ethnic demographic make-up of the electoral districts may impact on the levels of intrinsic motivation to represent, a possibility that to our knowledge has not been tested empirically. Again, what we expect here, as in the case of party ideology, is a moderating effect.

H4.1 Both a sense that non-white people are held back by prejudice and a sense that ethnic candidates have a responsibility to represent minorities will be stronger among candidates contesting electoral districts with a large ethnic minority presence.

H4.2 For ethnic minority candidates this effect will be stronger.

Data and methods

We use an anonymous postal survey of parliamentary candidates contesting seats in the 2015 UK elections, the Representative Audit of Britain (Campbell and van Heerde-Hudson 2015), to directly measure the levels and distribution of attitudes towards representation of British ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities in Britain are defined as non-white by the Census,³ and predominantly fall within the broad groups of South Asian (from the Indian subcontinent), Black Caribbean, Black African and other smaller groups. The RAB⁴ survey includes 1798 candidates who completed the survey from a total 3174 candidates that stood for election, giving a response rate of 56.6% (although some questions were not included in all versions of the questionnaire and thus have a lower response rate⁵). Of the estimated 230 ethnic minority candidates standing, 100 responded to the survey (Lamprinakou *et al.* 2016), giving a response rate for minority candidates of 43.5%. Although it can be argued that a sample size of 100 is relatively small, it is a fairly balanced sample of minority candidates in terms of seats contested and party affiliation. Of the 100 ethnic minority candidates who responded to the survey, 19 were Conservatives, 20 Labour, 29 Liberal Democrat, 13 UKIP, 18 Green and 1 SNP. Further, 61 were men and 39 women, 5 were incumbent MPs and 8 were subsequently elected as MPs in 2015. Thus, this data offers a reasonable spread, necessary for the purposes of this analysis.

In the RAB survey, all questions were asked to all candidates, regardless of race, providing the opportunity to compare ethnic minority and non-minority candidates' attitudes. Based on the theoretical literature discussed, the analysis includes two questions that can be used to measure shared experience and willingness to represent ethnic minorities. For shared experience, respondents were asked how far they agreed that 'non-white people are held back by prejudice and discrimination' on a five-point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Motivation to represent is measured by an item asking the respondent how much they agreed that 'being an ethnic minority candidate presents a responsibility to represent minorities' on an 11-point scale, from 0 'it is not a responsibility' to 10 'it is a responsibility'.

The electoral incentives hypothesis is tested using a measure of the proportion of ethnic minorities in the constituency. Using a cut-off of 20%, in line with existing literature (Sobolewska 2013), the seats with this proportion of minorities or more are thought to be sufficiently ethnically diverse to offer incentives for representation of ethnic minority interests (the analyses were

not sensitive to the cut-off chosen). In this article we are unable to offer any insights as to the extent of the influence of electoral incentives on substantive representative outcomes, but we have set out to test some of the theoretical possibilities around how this mechanism for representation may work, aside from the usually assumed electoral calculus. Specifically, we hypothesise that the ethnic make-up of electoral seats may influence the two intrinsic motivation attitudes. Of course, the electoral calculus on the part of the representatives (or in our case prospective representatives) may well dictate whom they choose to substantively represent *and* the kind of attitudes they express in public, thus making them hard to study. However, because we use an anonymous postal survey, removing the incentive to express false attitudes for electoral gains and minimising social desirability biases, without inducing interviewer effects, we are confident that the measures analysed capture intrinsic motivation; this allows us to test the possibility that (aside from any real electoral calculations) the ethnic make-up of a constituency may increase intrinsic motivation to represent.

Results and discussion

We start by considering our initial hypotheses using simple descriptive analysis, before we test them in multivariate regressions. Turning to H1 (Ethnic minority candidates have a stronger sense of shared experience of ethnicity and race than white candidates) first, we present our results in Table 1. We find that ethnic minority candidates show higher levels of agreement with the statement designed to measure the sense of shared experience, with twice as many as their white peers agreeing that non-whites are held back by prejudice and discrimination. This strongly suggests that they are displaying shared experience with minority voters. However, all candidates regardless of ethnicity agree that non-whites are held back by more than 60%. This is a particularly large proportion when compared to ethnic minority voters, for whom we only have reliable data from the 2010 Ethnic Minority British Election study. In that study only 45% of minority respondents expressed the sense of shared fate, although this did vary by ethnic group (Heath *et al.* 2013: 115). This again underlines that this item is a measure of a political attitude that serves as a mobilising factor among some minority voters (Dawson 1994), and clearly is more widespread among those minorities who are more politically engaged, of which parliamentary candidates are clearly an example.

These high levels of agreement, especially among white candidates, are striking. While it is possible that it is a strongly self-policed issue, perceived as socially (and politically) desirable, and thus social desirability bias may be responsible for this strong consensus, as indicated earlier this is unlikely to be an issue with an anonymous postal survey, unless these attitudes were

internalised. Another possibility is that candidates for Parliament are more likely to be drawn from society's elite, and be university educated (Lamprinakou *et al.* 2016). In this sample 77.5% of respondents who answered the question ($n = 1798$) attended university compared with 27% of the UK population.⁶ Since education has been shown to correlate with lower levels of prejudice, it is likely that their

Table 1. Responses to 'non-white people are held back by prejudice and discrimination' (shared experience) by ethnicity of candidates, category percentages.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N
ethnic minority candidates	0%	8.1%	12.2%	36.5%	43.2%	74
White candidates	5.9%	12.8%	15.5%	45.8%	20%	1428

Note: Data from representative audit of Britain parliamentary candidate study.

racial attitudes will be more liberal (Storm *et al.* 2017) and thus more sensitive to issues of racial discrimination than the voters, even those voters who may experience discrimination directly. However, despite the seeming consensus on this issue among all candidates, ethnic minority candidates show a much greater agreement with this item than white candidates, signalling a sense of shared experience, thus supporting H1.

Similarly, when we look at the candidates' sense of responsibility to represent ethnic minorities (H2: Ethnic minority candidates have greater sense that being of ethnic minority origin gives them a responsibility to represent minorities), we see that the intrinsic motivation to represent is again very high among minority candidates. Figure 1 shows that these candidates felt very strongly that ethnicity gave them a special responsibility to represent minority voters (skewness -0.977 , SE = 0.316), corresponding with the findings in the US literature that black legislators are more intrinsically motivated to provide representation for their in-group (Broockman 2013; Grose 2005; Swain 1993). The vast majority of minority candidates, 63%, agreed that their ethnicity gave them a responsibility to represent minorities (points 6–10), and 28% were at the most extreme end of agreement (points 9 and 10). However, 22% were closer to disagreeing (points 0–4), and as much as 9% of minority candidates placed themselves on the extreme of disagreeing (point 0).

White candidates' responses to the same question were less skewed (skewness = -0.293 , SE = 0.073) and less polarised. The largest single grouping of white candidates, 16%, responded at point 5 and only 29% of white candidates, almost half that of ethnic minority candidates, placed themselves closer to the end of the scale agreeing that candidates from an ethnic minority had a responsibility to represent minorities (points 6–10). Minority candidates responded more positively to the notion of responsibility (mean = 6.79) than white candidates (mean = 4.9). Next, we turn to see if this slight polarisation, among ethnic minority candidates in particular, can be explained by party affiliation and the parties' differential approaches to ethnicity and its representation.

We hypothesised that party ideology can impact on the relationship between candidates' ethnicity and their intrinsic motivation to represent (H3). In particular we expect that Labour and Liberal Democrat candidates will score higher than candidates of other parties. Table 2 demonstrates that, as hypothesised, there is considerable variation by party in candidates' support for both items. Firstly, looking at the perception that prejudice holds non-white people back, even though ethnic minority candidates are always *more* supportive of the notion that discrimination holds non-white people back, whatever the party, the levels of support and the gap between ethnic minority and white candidates vary substantially between parties.

The difference between ethnic minority and white candidates is starkest within right-wing parties, rather than left-leaning and liberal ones. Of Labour minority candidates, 92% agreed that discrimination holds non-white people back, and their white peers followed closely with 88% agreement. Minority Liberal Democrats had 90% agreement and their white counterparts were not far behind on 73%. In contrast, Conservative ethnic minority candidates had only a 50% rate of agreement, even below UKIP minority candidates (75%).

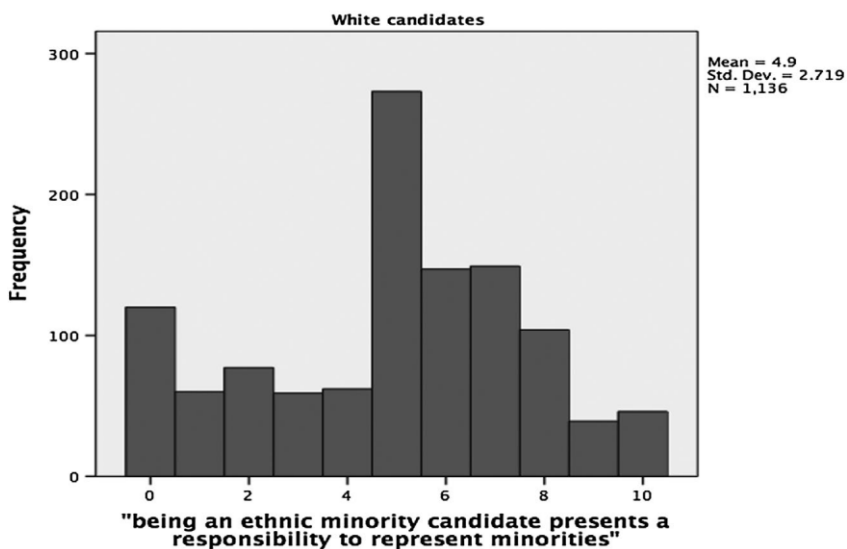
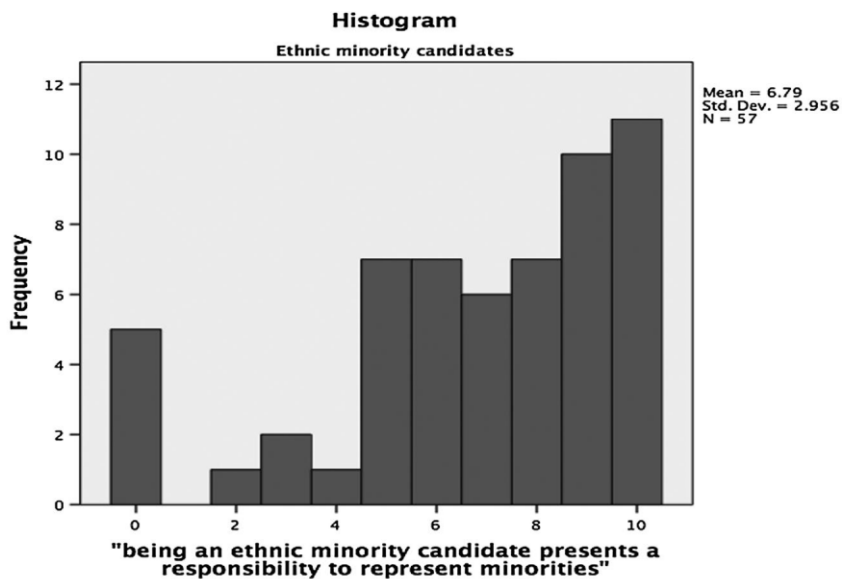


Figure 1. Frequency agreeing to the statement 'being an ethnic minority candidate presents a responsibility to represent minorities', all candidates, histogram. note: ethnic minority (skewness = -0.977 , se = 0.316 , kurtosis = 0.246 , se = 0.623); white (skewness -0.293 , se = 0.073 , kurtosis = -0.671 , se $+0.145$).

Table 2. Responses to ‘shared experience’, category percentages and ‘responsibility to represent’, mean values (0–10), by party and ethnicity of candidates.

Sense of shared experience				Responsibility to represent		
	Disagree/ Strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/ Strongly agree	<i>n</i>	Mean score on 0– 10 scale agree-ng it is a responsibility	<i>n</i>
<i>Labour</i>						
Minority candidates	0.0%	7.7%	92.4%	13	7.13	8
White candidates	3.5%	8.7%	87.9%	264	5.54	208
all candidates	3.2%	8.7%	88.0%	277	5.6	216
<i>Lib-Dem</i> **††						
Minority candidates	0.0%	10.0%	90.0%	20	6.53	17
White candidates	8.7%	18.4%	72.9%	369	4.74	303
all candidates	8.3%	18.0%	73.8%	389	4.84	320
<i>Conservative</i> *†						
Minority candidates	31.3%	18.8%	50.1%	16	6.83	12
White candidates	49.3%	25.9%	24.7%	158	4.18	116
all candidates	47.7%	25.3%	27.0%	174	4.43	128
<i>UKIP</i> *						
Minority candidates	8.3%	16.7%	75.0%	225	5.4	10
White candidates	66.2%	21.1%	12.7%	213	3.74	159
all candidates	63.1%	20.9%	16.0%	12	3.83	169

note: Data source, see table 1. shared experience χ^2 *significant $p = 0.001$. responsibility one Way anova. †significant $p = 0.001$. ††significant $p = 0.05$.

The gap between minorities and white Conservative candidates was 26% (beating Labour’s gap of 4% and Liberal Democrats’ gap of 17%). However, among UKIP candidates the polarisation by ethnicity is starkest, with a 62% gap in perceptions of white and minority candidates.

Looking at responsibility to represent, party affiliation matters again, but to a smaller degree. Support for responsibility to represent is highest among Labour candidates, followed by Liberal Democrats, Conservative and finally UKIP candidates scoring around 1 point lower than Labour candidates on average, and this difference is significant. Ethnicity is also important here and again the minority candidates of all parties are more in agreement with the two items measuring intrinsic motivation. Support for responsibility to represent among ethnic minority candidates of all parties is above the neutral value (5), but unlike the previous item, with the exception of UKIP minority candidates (mean 5.4), ethnicity seems to trump party, with the other three parties showing only very small differences in attitudes. Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat minority candidates in general are all motivated to represent their minority voters (means of 7, 6.83 and 6.53 respectively).

Again, this may point to the fact that the sense of shared experience is very much a political (and politicised) attitude (Dawson 1994) and the sense of responsibility does not lend itself to the influences of party ideology in the same fashion.

As hypothesised, there is a considerable disparity between parties on both measures of intrinsic motivation. We argued that this was due to the very different responses of British political parties to post-war racial and ethnic diversity and the model of incorporation they advocated (and subsequently which political appeal they chose to extend to the potential new voters). However, this difference is also most likely reflected in party choice of minority voters themselves, with the sense of the shared experience being an important predictor of party choice (Sanders *et al.* 2014). With the growing (albeit slowly) proportion of Indian voters choosing to support the Conservative Party, and as they do not have a strong sense of shared fate (Heath *et al.* 2013), we see that that voters also divide on this issue and thus parties may well be offering a good level of representation on it. An interesting result of this analysis, however, is that Liberal Democrats fall between Labour and Conservatives on the two different measures: while they are much closer to Labour in their perceptions on the role of prejudice, they are closer to Conservatives when it comes to responsibility to represent.

To make a start on testing H4.1, that both attitudes will be more positive 'among candidates contesting electoral districts with a large ethnic minority presence', Table 3 presents some descriptive statistics of candidates' responses to both attitudes by their ethnicity and the ethnic density of the constituency they are contesting. We include a measure of the proportion of ethnic minority residents in the constituency,⁷ in order to identify electoral districts where minority voters are sufficiently concentrated to influence the positions of candidates contesting those districts.

Candidates with a greater proportion of ethnic minority constituents respond slightly more positively to the question on prejudice holding non-white people back, with 6% more agreement than among those candidates standing in more ethnically white seats (H4.1). However, when we look at the ethnicity of candidates within these two types of seat, ethnicity again is the dominant influence (H4.2). While we already know that ethnic minority candidates in both groups agree more strongly than white candidates with the statement that ethnic minorities are held back by prejudice and discrimination, the demographic make-up of the seat seems to influence their opinion in a way that is not the case for their white counterparts. This is especially true with extreme agreement with the shared experience statement, as the percentage of candidates strongly agreeing with the statement goes up from 35% in less ethnically diverse seats to 53% in more diverse constituencies.

Table 3. percentage agreeing that non-whites are held back by discrimination (shared experience) and mean (0–10) agreement that ethnic minority representatives have a responsibility to represent minorities (responsibility to represent); by

ethnic density of constituency.	Shared experience						Responsibility to represent	
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	her agree nor disagree	Agree	trongly agree	<i>n</i>	Mean score on 0–10 scale agreeing it is a responsibility	<i>n</i>
<i>High ethnic density**†</i>								
all candidates	6.6%	13.6%	13.6%	40.1%	26.1%	272	5.17	212
Minority candidates	0%	9.4%	6.3%	31.3%	53.1%	32	7.36	28
White candidates	7.5%	14.2%	14.6%	41.3%	22.5%	240	4.84	184
<i>Low ethnic density††</i>								
all candidates	5.4%	12.4%	15.7%	46.5%	20.1%	1230	4.96	981
Minority candidates	0%	7.1%	16.7%	40.5%	35.7%	42	6.06	32
White candidates	5.6%	12.5%	15.7%	46.7%	19.5%	1188	4.92	949

Data see table 1 ethnic density calculated from the 2011 census. shared experience χ^2 .

**significant $p = 0.01$; responsibility one Way anova.

†significant $p = 0.001$.

††significant $p = 0.05$.

Table 4. odds ratio of agreeing that non-whites are held back by discrimination (shared experience) and ethnic minority representatives have a responsibility to represent minorities; calculated from ordinal logistic regression.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Non-white people are held back by prejudice</i>				
Minority candidate	2.59***	4.61***	2.91**	2.79***
High ethnic density		1.19	1.09	1.18
right wing		0.04***	0.04***	0.04***
minority candidate * high ethnic density			3.65*	
minority candidate * right wing	0.01	0.11	0.11	4.10*
nagelkerke r ²				0.11
n	1502	1502	1502	1502
<i>Responsibility to represent</i>				
Minority candidate	4.39***	3.95***	2.23*	3.66***
High ethnic density		1.10	0.98	1.09
right wing		0.44**	0.42**	0.42**
minority candidate * high ethnic density			3.97**	
minority candidate * right wing				1.28
nagelkerke r ²	0.02	0.06	0.07	0.06
n	1193	1193	1193	1193

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Turning to responsibility to represent, those in ethnically diverse seats also show a slightly more positive response. Again the ethnic minority candidates in both groups agree more strongly with their responsibility to represent than their white counterparts, but the make-up of the seat similarly seems to impact on their views only. White candidates by contrast are unmoved by the demographic make-up of their seat.

So far, all hypotheses receive some tentative support. However, to disentangle the relative impact of ethnicity, party and ethnic make-up of constituencies, we turn to a multivariate analysis. As the two intrinsic mechanism items were measured on an ordinal scale, the associations are examined using ordered logistic regression. The odds ratios were calculated by exponentiating the parameter estimates and the significance values were taken from the parameter estimates output. The proportional odds assumption was tested using the test of parallel lines. The correlation was measured using Nagelkerke's r^2 . Table 4 shows the odds ratios moving one point on a five-point scale, from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly agree', on the 'prejudice holds non-white people back' item; and shows the odds ratios moving one point on an 11-point scale (0–10), from disagreeing to agreeing with the 'responsibility to represent' item.

Using a step-wise approach, we first entered the ethnicity of the candidates alone, to assess whether introducing the other variables will diminish the size and importance of ethnicity. However, we see from the second column in both regression models that the effect of ethnicity survives controlling for party and ethnic composition in the multivariate model. Other predictors behave very much as we expected based on our descriptive analyses. Candidates from right-wing parties are much less likely to agree than those in left-leaning ones, with the odds ratios below 1 although the effects are much smaller. Being a right-wing party candidate was coded as UKIP and Conservative, but these results are robust to treating these two parties separately (as we see in the Appendix 1). However, the demographic make-up of the constituency is not statistically significant, perhaps reflecting the fact that, as we saw in Table 3, its effects were confined to minority candidates only.

Interaction effects were included, looking at whether party moderates the effect of ethnicity of candidates. There is a strong and significant positive interaction with party and minority origin for the 'non-white people are held back by prejudice' item, suggesting, as we saw in the bivariate analysis earlier, that minority candidates of right-leaning parties still display a sense of shared experience. For responsibility to represent, the interaction between candidates' ethnicity and a right-wing party has no significant effect, suggesting no meaningful impact of ethnicity on this item. For 'shared experience', the fact that the main effect of ethnicity is only slightly diminished by the inclusion of interaction with party suggests that the ethnic differences among left-wing parties remain significant too. The main effect of party also remains unchanged. Thus, while party has an effect on both white and minority candidates, ethnicity remains the main influence on the perception of shared experience for minority candidates. There was mixed support for H4, that candidates contesting ethnically diverse constituencies will feel more intrinsically motivated to represent them, with Table 3 suggesting that it might be the case for minority candidates only. Turning to multivariate models, we see that where the non-white population makes up 20% or more of the constituency, there is no statistically significant relationship for all candidates. However, considering the interactions between ethnicity of candidates and the ethnic density of seats confirms what we saw in Table 3, that ethnic minority candidates are more sensitive than white candidates to the ethnic make-up of the districts they contest. The strong positive correlation seems partly to account for some of the effect of ethnicity of the candidate in the first place (especially for the sense of responsibility to represent), suggesting that minority candidates may still be more often encountered in ethnically diverse seats (Sobolewska 2013). The fact that seeking to win in an ethnically diverse constituency is linked to a greater sense of shared experience and responsibility to represent among minority candidates, but not among their white counterparts, suggests that H4 only

holds for minority candidates. Thus, for minority candidates we can speak of internalised motivation over and above any rational choice calculations that may be taking place (and for which we cannot test).

Conclusion

Using survey data from ethnic minority and white candidates at the 2015 UK general election, this article empirically examines three of the most frequently posited theoretical mechanisms for why we should expect a link between descriptive and substantive representation of ethnic minorities. The three mechanisms we were able to elaborate on are: (1) ethnic minority candidates and voters had a unique sense of linked fate as a non-white minority group (intrinsic); (2) ethnic minority candidates felt a responsibility to represent ethnic minority interests (intrinsic); (3) ethnic minority candidates predominantly stood for election in districts with a large proportion of ethnic minorities and thus it was in their electoral interest to attend to minority representation (extrinsic). Although because of the limitations of our data we were not able to test directly for the presence of extrinsic motivation, we tested the possibility that districts with a large proportion of ethnic minorities influence levels of intrinsic motivations to represent, thus presenting more than a simple extrinsic cost–benefit transaction on the part of (prospective) representatives. We also tested the possibility that ethnic minority, and indeed white candidates of different parties will have different, ideologically motivated approaches to ethnic representation. This study used direct measurements of the two intrinsic motivations. These are able to capture both a sense of shared experience, measured by a sense that ethnic minorities are held back, and a responsibility to represent, measured by agreement that being an ethnic minority candidate confers a special responsibility to represent ethnic minorities. Using these direct measurements allows us to pinpoint the motivation mechanism, rather than inferring the mechanisms from outcomes. This allows us to test, distinct from each other, both sense of shared experience and responsibility to represent. However, the limitation of our lack of data on representational outcomes has been that apart from looking into how a seemingly extrinsic motivation can be internalised, we were unable to test the effects of extrinsic motivation directly.

We found that both intrinsic mechanisms for why ethnic minority candidates would want, or be able, to represent ethnic minorities in parliament received empirical support. Interestingly, we found that in fact white candidates of all mainstream parties also shared the perception that racial prejudice holds minorities back. This shared perspective between white and ethnic minority candidates may help explain why the gap in levels of substantive representation from minority and white parliamentarians in Britain has

previously been found to be very small (Saalfeld and Bischof 2012). However, in the case of white candidates it is difficult to interpret and may be a reflection of the sense that denying prejudice and discrimination may be politically incorrect, or it may reflect the general liberalism of political elites. However, the fact that on both measures minority candidates agreed with the items more than their white counterparts signals that they felt a sense of shared experience with other non-white people in Britain, and a strong sense of responsibility to represent ethnic minority voters.

We found persuasive evidence of the impact of party ideology. Candidates from parties of the left were more likely to support the notion that members of ethnic minority communities share the experience of being held back by prejudice and discrimination, whilst the reverse was true of candidates from parties of the right. We also found that the sense of responsibility varied by party, though to a lesser extent.

Finally, we found our hypothesis that ethnic make-up of electoral districts increases intrinsic motivation to represent rather than presenting a simple case of calculated self-interest from the representatives only received support for ethnic minority candidates. For them, seeking to represent an ethnically diverse seat increases their sense of shared fate and responsibility to represent minority voters. For the white candidates, no such attitudinal change takes place, suggesting that where effects of the demographics of districts were found to affect the representatives' behaviour (Saalfeld and Bischof 2012), it may well be a result of purely electoral calculus.

The most important contribution this article makes is the more detailed understanding of the intrinsic motivation behind descriptive representatives' willingness and ability to represent. The innovation is in distinguishing the two separate, but usually poorly differentiated mechanisms: shared experience and explicit (conscious) motivation to represent. Our sense that these two should be conceptually distinct is confirmed by our empirical finding that they had a different relationship with predictor variables such as party affiliation and ethnic make-up of the electoral district. Our article also indicates the complex nature of what is often assumed to be an extrinsic motivation to represent, linked to direct electoral incentives. Given the relationship between ethnic diversity of the constituency and the intrinsic measures of motivation, it is possible that apart from the obvious electoral advantages of representing ethnic minority voters well when they form a significant proportion of one's electorate, one other advantage that minority candidates who stand in ethnically diverse seats have is a greater opportunity to learn and appreciate the role that racial discrimination plays in their minority voters' lives.

It is significant that although the white candidates in our survey largely

agreed that ethnic minorities in Britain share an experience of being held back by racial discrimination and prejudice, for them this was an ideological point of view (influenced by their political party affiliation). It was not sensitive to being exposed to electoral competition in an ethnically diverse district. This suggests that ethnicity trumps all the other influences for ethnic minority candidates and supports the existence of a direct link between descriptive and substantive representation for candidates of all parties, and especially those with ethnic minority voters. These empirical results strongly support the normative arguments for increased descriptive representation.

These findings push forward the agenda of studying representation significantly, but they do suffer from a couple of limitations that need to be resolved in future research. Firstly, the difficulty of studying extrinsic motivation with attitudinal data, as we have done here, and intrinsic motivation with outcome data, as has been done elsewhere (Broockman 2013), is clear. Future studies of motivation to represent should attempt to study attitudes and outcomes together. Secondly, while our data include incumbents, and not just parliamentary candidates, we do not have sufficient numbers of ethnic minority MPs to investigate whether motivation operates differently for prospective and current representatives. It is possible that candidates are more optimistic about their ability to represent before they encounter the many limitations the role of a representative brings. Perhaps the incumbents are less beholden to their party ideology as they no longer rely to the same extent on their parties to get them elected. As the numbers of elected minority representatives increase, these questions might be a fruitful area of research in the future.

Notes

1. In the UK 41% of ethnic minority MPs are Conservative, 56% Labour. A similarly even distribution is present in the candidate survey we use: see the data section for details. Both parties have more South Asian MPs and candidates than black African and black Caribbean ones (see Sobolewska 2014). In fact, the only anomaly in the data is the lack of any Labour candidates from these groups, despite the much greater support for Labour from these ethnic minority groups. Ethnic minority is defined, as is usually the case in the UK in studies of descriptive representation.
2. In Britain surrogate representation is effectively prevented by a parliamentary convention that MPs do not respond to requests from those outside their parliamentary constituency.
3. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/.../primary...questions/ethnic-group.pdf>
4. The survey was in the field between March 2015 and March 2016.
5. The valid number of responses for the key variables in the analysis varies and is indicated in each table separately.
6. Census 2011 <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census-analysis/local-area-analysis-of-qualifications-across-england-and-wales/sty-qualification-levels.html>
7. Data taken from 2011 Census, ethnic density calculated as the number of non-white usual residents as a proportion of all usual residents in the constituency.

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Appendix 1

Table A1. Odds ratio of agreeing that non-whites are held back by discrimination (shared experience) and ethnic minorities have a responsibility to represent minorities, calculated from ordinal logistic regression.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Non-white people are held back by prejudice</i>				
Minority candidate	2.59***	3.29***	2.45**	3.43***
High ethnic density		1.05	0.99	1.05
conservative		0.17***	0.17***	0.17***
minority candidate * high ethnic density			2.11	0.83
minority candidate * conservative				
nagelkerke r^2	0.012	0.111	0.113	0.111
<i>n</i>	1502	1502	1502	1502
<i>Responsibility to represent</i>				
Minority candidate	4.39***	3.74***	2.26*	3.27***
High ethnic density		1.05	0.95	1.05
conservative		0.64**	0.64**	0.60**
minority candidate * high ethnic density			3.36*	2.32
minority candidate * conservative				
nagelkerke r^2	0.027	0.03	0.035	0.031
<i>n</i>	1193	1193	1193	1193

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.00$.