Ethnic Minority Voting on the 2010 UK General Election

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Sections

- Ethnic minority voting compared with white people's voting, 2011
- Why do people vote the way they do? Possible sources of party preference
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  - Partisanship/Party Identification
  - Valence (performance delivery)
  - (Ideological) Position
- Ethnic Minority-specific explanatory and control variables
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Ethnic Minority and White Party Choice Patterns in 2010

Percentage Reported Vote shares for Different Ethnic Groups in the 2010 UK General Election

	White	All Ethnic Minorities	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Caribbean	African
Labour	31	68	61	60	72	78	87
Conservative	37	16	24	13	18	9	6
Lib-Dem	22	14	13	25	9	12	6
Other	11	2	2	3	1	2	1
N (unweighted)	2805	2787	587	668	270	597	524
N of voters	2125	1768	409	449	185	371	298

Cell entries (excluding Ns) are column percentages. Sources: for whites, BES 2010; for ethnic minorities, EMBES 2010

Among Indians, Labour voting is: E African 39%; Hindu 51%; Sikh 73% Muslim 74%

Very clear pattern, consistent with all previous evidence: EM voters in the UK are overwhelmingly pro-Labour – much more so than their white counterparts; but East African Asians (Hindus & Sikhs) most like white people.

Possible Sources of EM Vote Choice – Social Class

Relationship between Vote and Manual/Non-Manual Occupational Class, 2010; White and Ethnic Minority Voters Compared

	White (BES) Respondents		Ethnic Minority (EMBES) Respondents	
	Non Manual	*Manual*	*Non Manual*	*Manual*
Labour	24	36	68	73
Conservative	44	34	15	13
Liberal Democrat	26	21	15	13
Other	6	9	2	1
N	*2125*		*1768*	

Cell entries (excluding Ns) are column percentages. Sources: for whites, BES 2010; for ethnic minorities, EMBES 2010

Generally, ethnic minority voters vote Labour largely **regardless** of their social class rather than **because** of it. There is an exception...see later

Possible Sources of EM Vote Choice – Partisanship

	White	All EM	Indi-an	Pakist-ani	Bangl-adeshi	Carib-bean	Afri-can
Partisanship							
Labour Identifers (%)	30	58	52	53	58	67	71
Conservative Identifiers (%)	29	10	17	8	8	7	4
Lib-Dem Identifiers (%)	11	10	9	16	8	5	6

- Labour Partisanship disproportionately high among EM voters
- Obvious historical explanation: Labour governments responsible for all major legislation that has advanced or protected ethnic minority rights
    - Race Relations Acts 1965, 1968 and 1976
    - Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
    - Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Plus: frequent opposition – variously camouflaged – of rightwing Conservative politicians to non-white immigration into the UK

Possible Sources of EM Vote Choice – Valence or Likely Performance Delivery

Valence Measures	White	All EM	Indi-an	Pakist -ani	Bangl-adeshi	Carib-bean	Afri-can
Likes Brown (0-10)	4.4	5.9	5.7	5.5	5.9	5.5	7.1
Likes Cameron (0-10)	5.2	4.8	5.3	4.8	5.1	3.8	4.5
Likes Clegg (0-10)	5.0	4.8	5.0	5.1	4.9	3.9	4.8
Lab best most important problem (%)	18	39	33	33	34	43	57
Cons best most important problem (%)	32	18	24	16	16	13	12
LD best most important problem (%)	5	6	5	9	6	4	4

- Labour leader strongly preferred among EM voters, in comparison with white voters, who preferred Cameron
- Labour clearly best on handling most important problem for EM voters; Conservatives for whites
- Again, probably reflects long term historical experience

Possible Sources of EM Vote Choice – Ideological Position/Proximity on Tax/Spend

Averages on 0-10 scales	White	All EM	Indi-an	Pakist-ani	Bangl-adeshi	Carib-bean	Afri-can
Tax/Spend – self	5.9	5.3	5.1	5.3	5.3	5.6	5.6
Tax/Spend – Labour	5.8	5.7	5.4	5.7	5.5	5.8	6.0
Tax/Spend – Conservative	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.0	4.8
Tax/Spend – LD	5.5	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.0

Using the 0 to 10 scale on this card, where the end marked 0 means that government should **cut taxes and spend much less on health and social services**, and the end marked 10 means that government should **raise taxes a lot and spend much more on health and social services**, where would you place [yourself/party name] on this scale? [10 means raise taxes and spend more]

- On Tax/Spend – how much state activity do you want in the area of health and social services? – the average white voter is closer to Labour; the average EM voter is closer to Conservatives/LDs
- Implies ideological proximity on Tax/Spend not particularly important for EM voters' vote choices

Possible Sources of EM Vote Choice – Ideological Position/Proximity on Crime/Rights

Averages on 0-10 scales	White	All EM	Indi-an	Pakist-ani	Bangl-adeshi	Carib-bean	Afri-can
Authoritarian/Liberal – self	3.3	4.0	4.2	4.2	3.8	3.9	3.8
Authoritarian/Liberal – Labour	5.1	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.6	3.7
Authoritarian/Liberal – Conservative	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.1	3.9	3.8
Authoritarian/Liberal – LD	4.8	3.0	2.7	3.3	2.9	3.1	3.0

Some people think that **reducing crime** is more important than **protecting the rights of people accused** of committing crimes. Other people think that protecting the rights of accused people, regardless of whether they have been convicted of committing a crime, is more important than reducing crime. On the 0-10 scale, where would you place [yourself/party name] on this scale? [10 means protect rights]

- White voters closest to Conservatives on Crime/Rights, but even Con are too soft
- EM voters, apart from Bangladeshis, are closest to **Conservatives**
- Again, suggests that ideological proximity is **not** a key source of EM vote choice

Possible Sources of EM Vote Choice – EM specifics

	All EM	Indian	Pakist-ani	Bangla-deshi	Carib-bean	African
EM-Specific Explanatory Variables						
They Reject Me – egocentric						
Personal experience of discrimination	36	31	28	26	49	39
They Reject Me – sociotropic						
Minorities are held back by prejudice and discrimination [a]	46	41	36	44	56	53
There is prejudice against ethnic minorities in the UK	57	53	48	47	72	59
Relative deprivation experienced by people from my ethnic group [b]	57	48	53	56	66	60
EM-Specific Control Variables						
I Reject Them						
Personally prejudiced against whites	15	12	22	18	10	14
Ethnic-Religious Identity						
Feel black/Asian not British	31	27	24	29	37	48
Feel [own religion] not British	37	31	49	52	19	47
Ethnic-Religious Solidarity						
Great deal in common with co-ethnics	46	40	40	40	53	57
Great deal in common with co-religionists	49	45	48	46	43	61
Cultural Integration						
High participation British cultural practices	57	68	36	17	77	62

Conclusions: Results of Statistical Models (1)

EM voters look **very similar to white voters** in terms of the way that their vote choices are affected by **Partisanship**, **Valence** (Party leader assessments; Party Best on Most Important Issue) and **Ideological Positions** (Tax/Spend being the most important for Labour and Conservative voting). **Levels** of these things vary but their **effects** on vote choice are virtually identical.

'**They Reject Me – Egocentric**', i.e. direct experience of discrimination, **reduces Labour support** (Labour was the incumbent government, so it was punished when the individual felt discriminated against)

'**They Reject Me – Sociotropic**', i.e. the individual's sense of discrimination against her/his own EM group, **increases Labour support** and **reduces Conservative** support. Sociotropic perceptions of discrimination **trigger the general sense** that Labour is more supportive of EM rights and interests; while the Conservatives are seen as less supportive .

Conclusions: Results of Statistical Models (2)

Participation in British Cultural practices tends to make EM voters look **more like white voters** in their party choice calculations – **high participation** in these practices tends to **reduce support for Labour** and to increase it for the Conservatives

There is an important **interaction** between perceptions of **Sociotropic Discrimination** and participation in British **cultural practices**.

For those who **participate extensively** in these practices, the **positive effects** of **Sociotropic Discrimination** on voting Labour are even **stronger**.

In other words, if I adopt British culture the feeling of rejection associated with the sense that my group is discriminated against makes me even more likely to vote Labour and less likely to support the other parties.

Finally, there **is** a small effect of **social class on EM party choice** – like their white counterparts, EM professionals/managers are more likely to vote Conservative, net of all other effects