

Introduction

In previous research, Lenz (2013) uncovers that voters actually choose a politician and imitate that politician's policy views. This relationship is also known as "Follow the Leader" where someone is more likely to follow a politician because of their personal bias and connection to them despite changes in policy attitude. If this is true, then a person may be more inclined to follow guidelines when their preferred candidate is in office.

Theory

I hypothesize that Republicans will be even less likely to follow COVID-19 safety measures after the 2020 Presidential Election when Trump is no longer president.

Hypotheses

H1: Republicans are Even Less Likely to Social Distance After the 2020 Presidential Election

H2: Republicans are Even Less Likely to Wear a Mask After the 2020 Presidential Election

H3: Republicans are Even Less Likely to View Returning to Their Pre-Coronavirus Life as a Risk After the 2020 Presidential Election

Methods

IV: Party Affiliation (measured if someone identified as Republican)

DV's: Attitudes towards COVID-19 safety precautions (measured by social distancing, wearing a mask, and perceived risk to returning to pre-covid life)

CV: Age (18-29), Race (white), Gender (male)

Data Source: Axios/Ipsos Coronavirus Index Waves 9, 14, 25, 38, 40, 42

Figure 1 and Figure 2 demonstrate a difference-in-difference regression where the "treatment group", Republicans, are observed in terms of social distancing, before and after the 2020 Presidential Election, also known as the "intervention."

Are Republicans Less Likely to Follow COVID-19 Safety Precautions After the 2020 Presidential Election?

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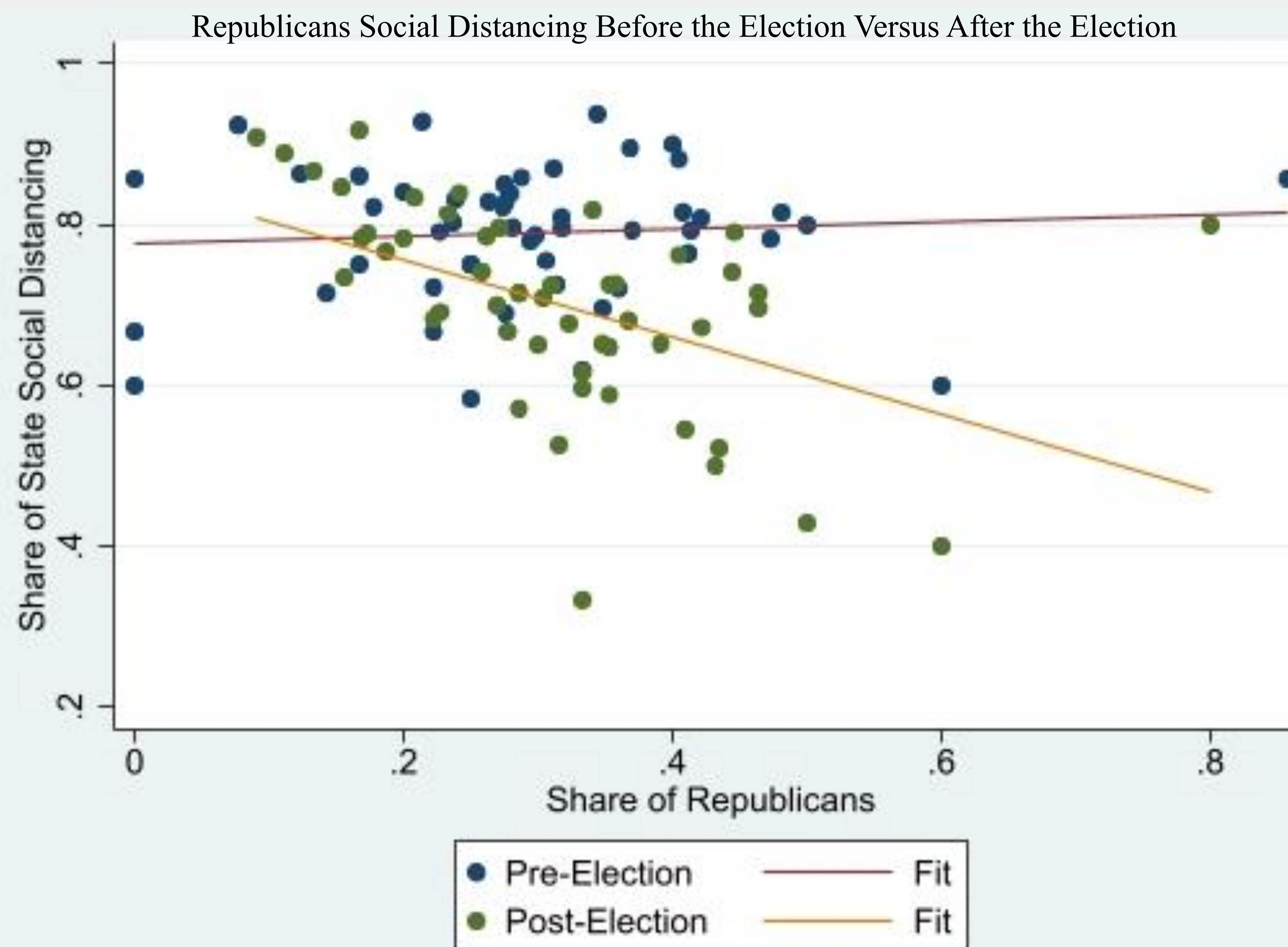


Figure 1

Yes, Republicans are Less Likely to Follow Social Distancing Post Trump Administration

Results

- While Trump was in office, **Republicans were 0.12 less likely to social distance than Democrats and Independents. When Trump was no longer in office, Republicans participated in social distancing 0.08 less than when Trump was president**
 - Both of these results have p-values less than 0.05, making them *both statistically significant*.
 - There is also a statistically significant relationship between people ages 18-29, people who identify as male, and white people indicating that they generally are all less likely to social distance
- When testing if Republicans were less likely to wear masks and if they perceived returning to their pre-coronavirus life as less of a risk, the relationships were both statistically insignificant.

	(1) Social Distanc
Republican	-0.12*** (0.02)
After Election	-0.06*** (0.01)
DID estimate: Repu	-0.08*** (0.02)
18-29 Years Old	-0.06*** (0.01)
Male	-0.03** (0.01)
White	-0.06*** (0.01)
Constant	0.91*** (0.01)
Observations	6124

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 2

Discussion

- Pre-Election: Republicans were generally less likely to follow COVID-19 safety measures
 - Could be a reflection of Trump's disbelief in the virus and its severity causing members of the shared party to assume similar beliefs
- Post-Election: Republicans participated even less in social distancing
 - Could be attributed to my theory that they are more likely to follow directions when the administration in office is also Republican
- This research is useful when discussing the future of COVID-19, specifically the attitudes towards vaccination
- Health officials must consider the role that partisanship might play in public health matters and decision-making