



The People Lab

NUDGING DIVERSITY: FIELD EXPERIMENTS IN POLICE RECRUITMENT

Elizabeth Linos



NAS - March 2021

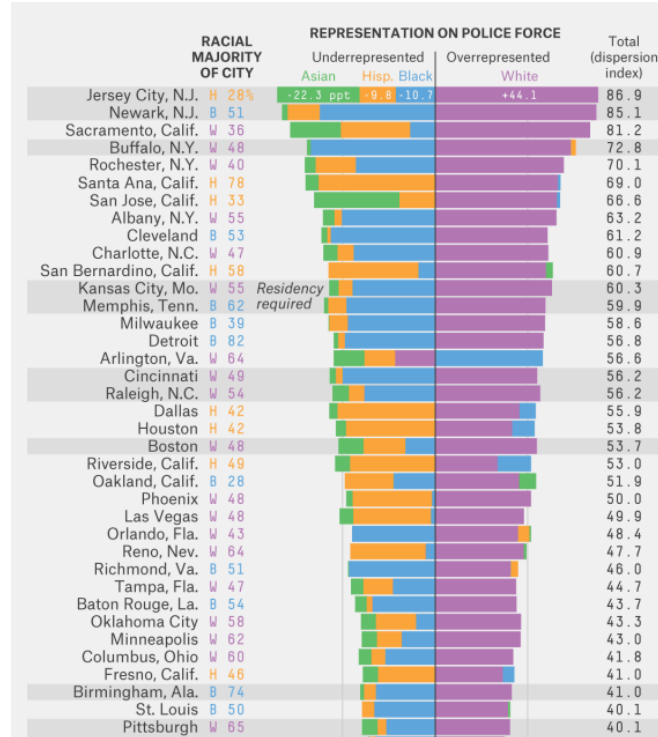
The Challenge

Civil Service

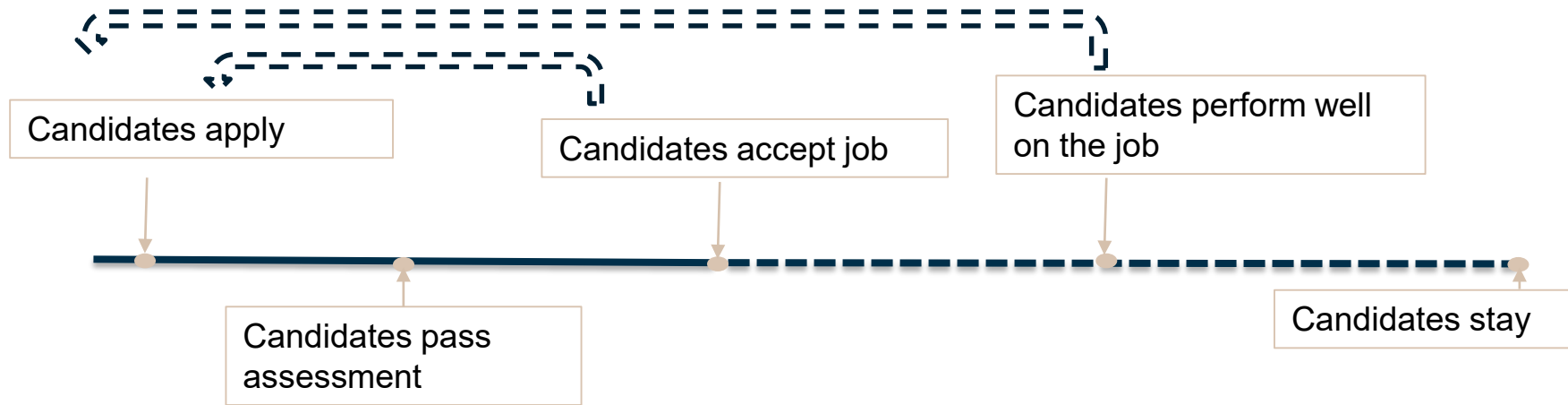
- “Human capital crisis” (Light, 2000; Lewis & Frank, 2002)
- “Ticking time bomb” (Neal, 2016)

Police

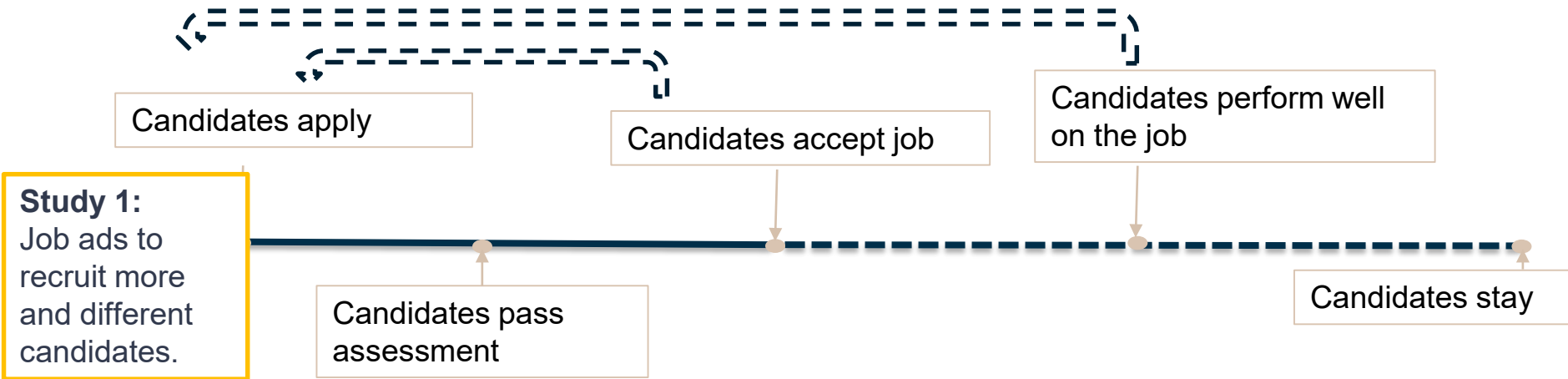
- Representative bureaucracy (Bradbury and Kellough, 2011)
- Symbolic representation (Theobald and Markel, 2013)



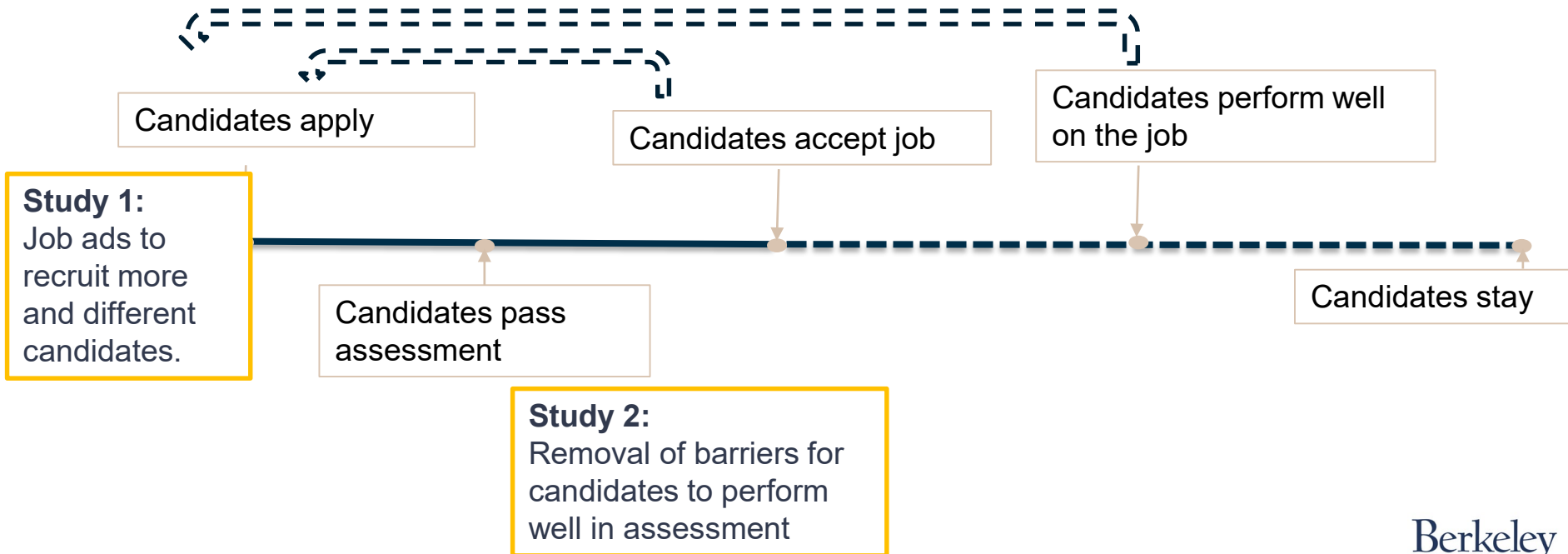
Breaking down the process



Breaking down the process



Breaking down the process



Study 1: What might attract (other) people to public service jobs?

ASA Model

- ✓ Focus on public service motivation (PSM) (Perry and Wise, 1990)

Yet...

- ✓ Attracting **new** and **different** people may require moving beyond “service” message.



Job ad is an **opportunity** to highlight
(a) *unique* (b) *realistic* (c) *non-trivial* traits of the job.

The Setting: Chattanooga, TN

Police:

78% white and 93% male.

City:

56% white, 35% black

(US Census Bureau, 2014).

Previous efforts:

existing network, referral programs

This samples:

Registered voters (n=20,000)



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Service

Are you ready to serve?

Apply to be a police officer today!



Paid for and approved by the City of Chattanooga

Hi <First Name>,

We're hiring new police recruits and I hope you consider applying.

I love being part of the police because I feel I can really make a difference in Chattanooga.

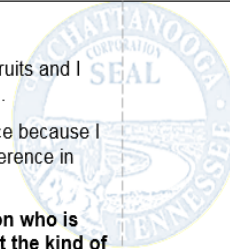
If you're the kind of person who is ready to serve, you're just the kind of person we're looking for.

To apply, just go to bit.do/CPDserve and submit before March 28, 2016.

Good luck!

Warlie Johnson

Police Officer, Chattanooga Police Department



<Full Name>

<Owner Address>

Impact

What would it mean to you?

Apply to be a police officer today!



Paid for and approved by the City of Chattanooga

Hi <First Name>,

We're hiring new police recruits and I hope you consider applying.

I love being part of the police because I feel I can really make a difference in Chattanooga.

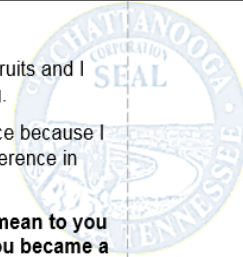
Just think what it would mean to you and your community if you became a police officer.

To apply, just go to bit.do/CPDdifference and submit before March 28, 2016.

Good luck!

Warlie Johnson

Police Officer, Chattanooga Police Department



<Full Name>

<Owner Address>

Challenge

Are you up for the challenge?

Apply to be a police officer today!



Paid for and approved by the City of Chattanooga

Hi <First Name>,

We're hiring new police recruits and I hope you consider applying.

I love being part of the police because you never know what to expect: it's challenging but rewarding work!

If you're the kind of person who thrives in challenging environments, you're just the kind of person we're looking for.

To apply, go to bit.do/CPDBeChallenged and submit before March 28, 2016.

Good luck!

Warlie Johnson

Police Officer, Chattanooga Police Department

<Full Name>

<Owner Address>

Challenge

Looking for a long-term career?

Apply to be a police officer today!



Paid for and approved by the City of Chattanooga

Hi <First Name>,

We're hiring new police recruits and I hope you consider applying.

I love being part of the police because I'm constantly developing my skills: this isn't just a job, it's a career.

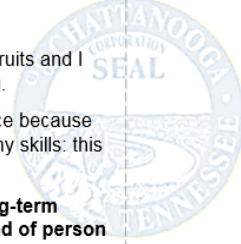
If you're looking for a long-term career, you're just the kind of person we're looking for.

To apply, just go to bit.do/CPDcareer and submit before March 28, 2016.

Good luck!

Worlie Johnson

Police Officer, Chattanooga Police Department



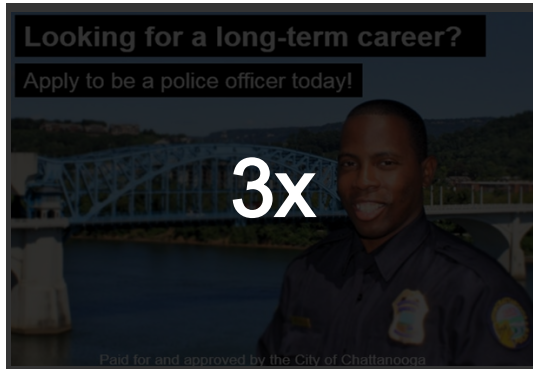
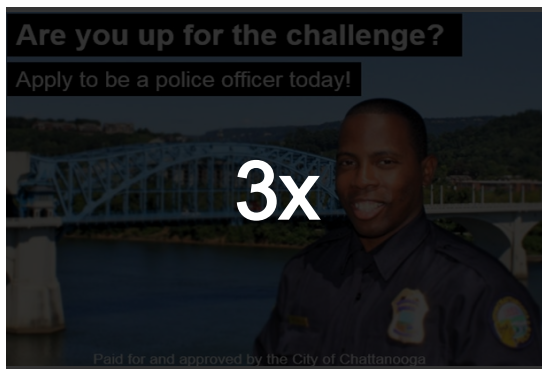
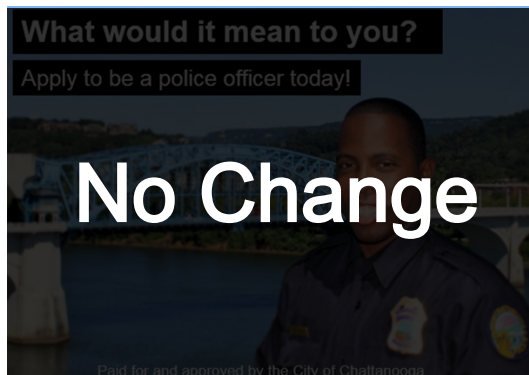
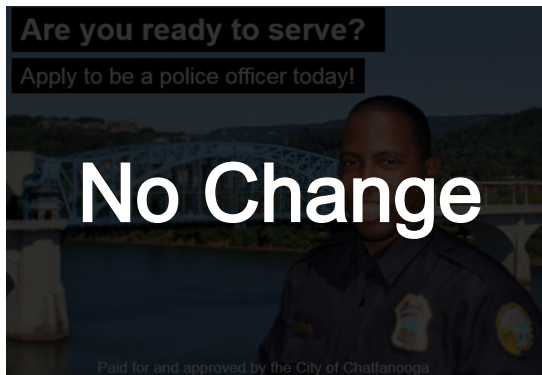
<Full Name>

<Owner Address>

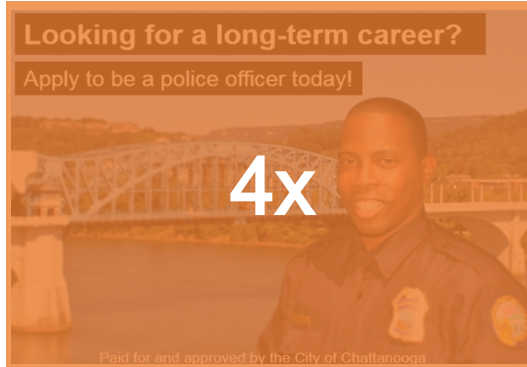
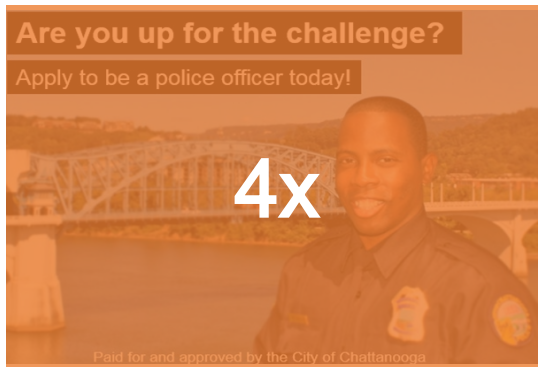
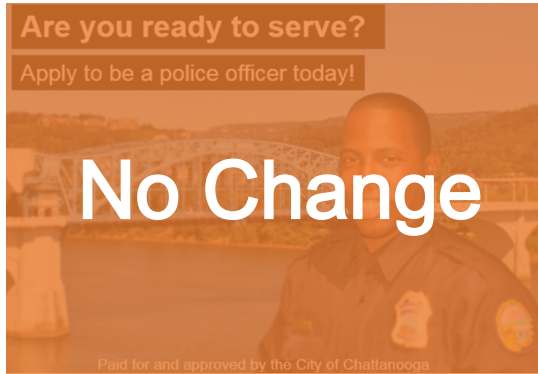
Can we nudge diversity?



Can we nudge diversity?



Can we nudge diversity? (People of color)



Robustness

Does it work elsewhere?

- Replications in over 20 police jurisdictions.

Are we getting the right people?

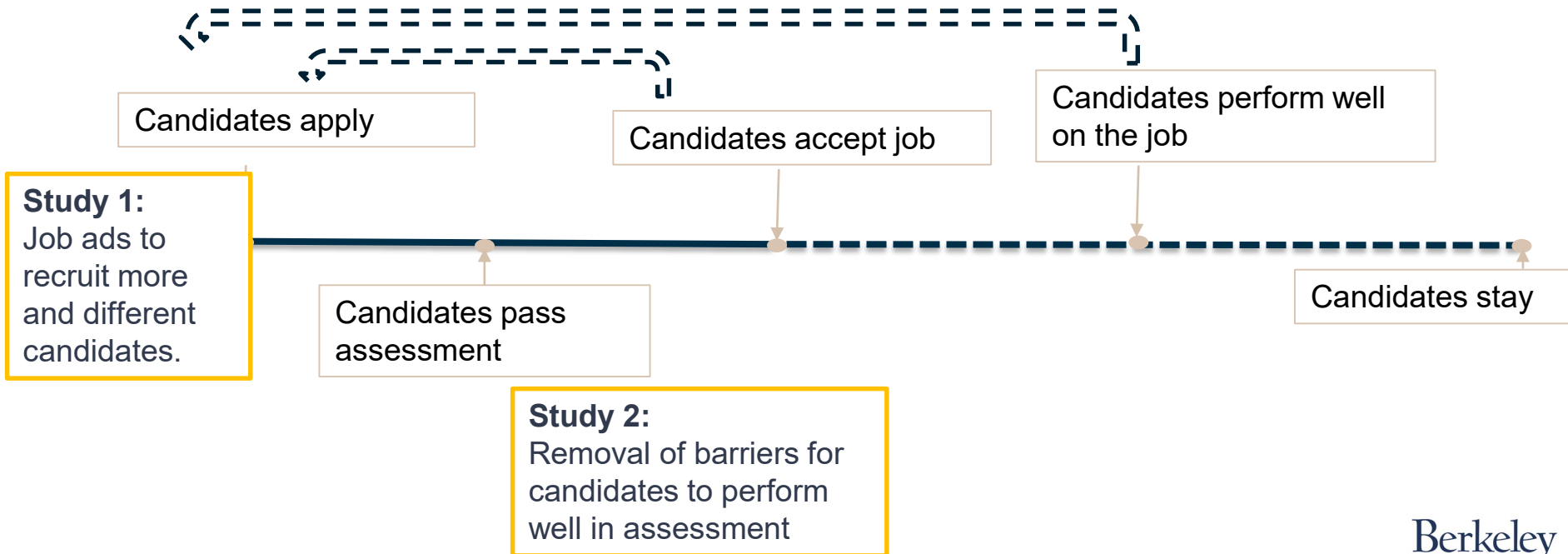
- No statistical difference in test scores.
- No statistical difference in drop outs

What we don't know...

- How many stay past Police Academy?
- How does recruitment channel affect engagement and burnout over time?



Study 2: So you got people to apply....

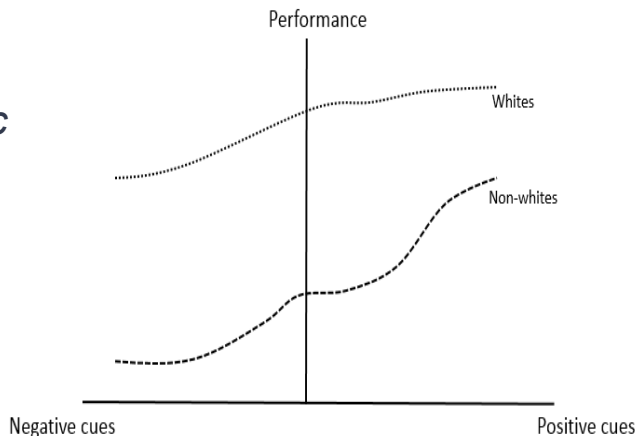


Study 2: What affects the candidate experience?

Stereotype threat

(Steele and Aronson, 1995)

Internalizing *relevant context-specific* stereotype.



Belonging Uncertainty

(Walton & Cohen, 2007)

“people of socially stigmatized groups are more uncertain of the quality of their social bonds and thus more sensitive to issues of social belonging”



The Setting: Avon & Somerset, UK

Police: 2.5 % BME

City: 6.8 % BME

SJT

- ✓ Communication and Empathy,
- ✓ Customer Focused Decision Making,
- ✓ Openness to Change and Adaptability, and
- ✓ Relationship Building and Community



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This experiment: change email
introducing SJT (n=1673)

Control email

Dear [Candidate],

[...]

You have been invited to complete the following online assessment:

** Police Constable Situational Judgement Test*

[...]

*Please note there is **no appeals process** for this stage.*

*If you have any queries about **why you have been asked** to take the assessment, please contact the administrator*

[...]

Treatment email

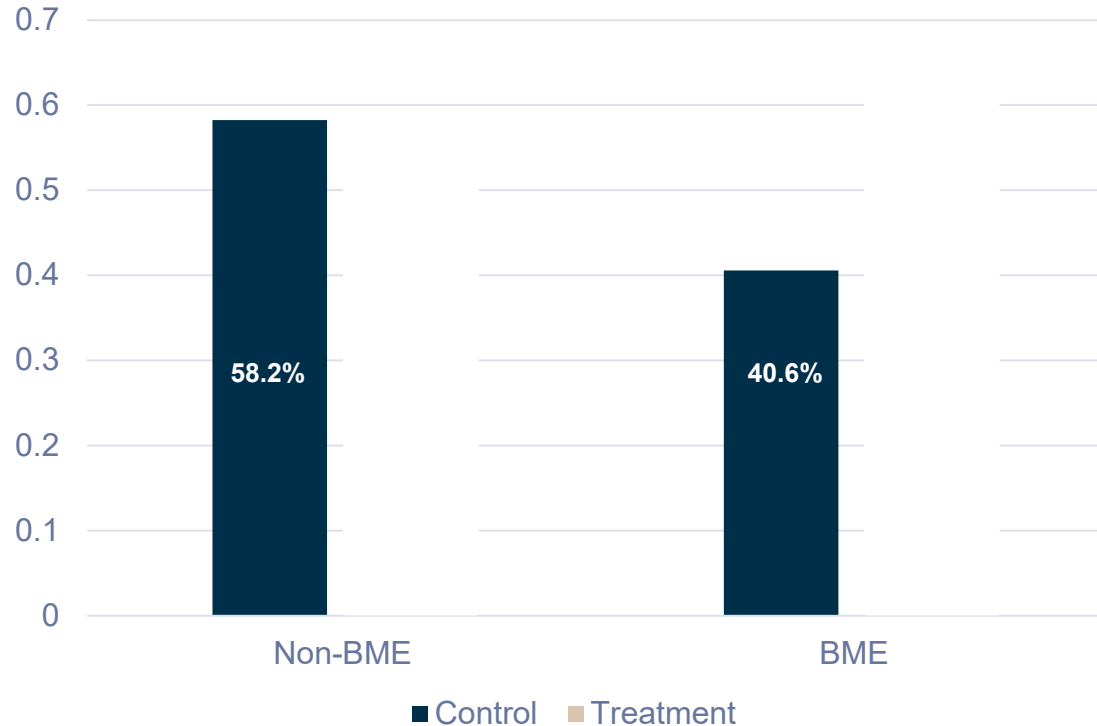
Dear [Candidate],

***Congratulations!** You **successfully** completed the Behaviour Style Questionnaire and **have been selected** to participate in the next stage [...]*

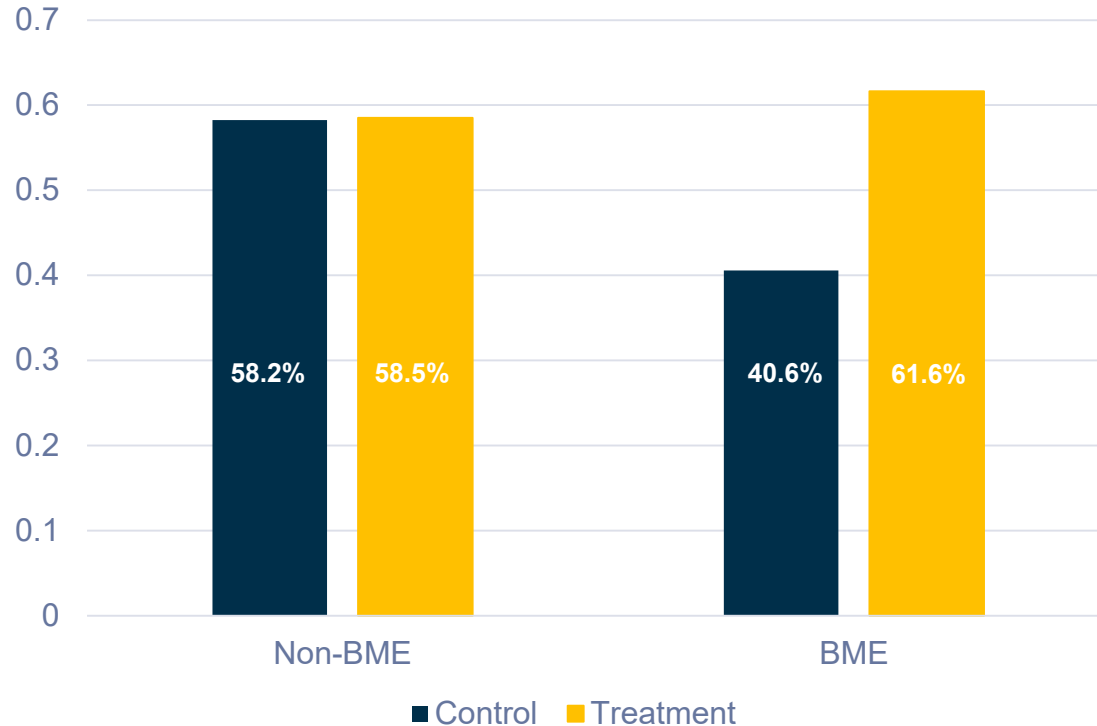
*Before you start the test, I'd like you **to take some time** to think about why you want to be a police constable. For example, **what is it about being a police constable that means the most to you and your community?***

***When you're ready,** you can access the assessment website here [...]*

Probability of Passing the Test



Probability of Passing the Test



Robustness

What is not causing the effect?

- *Not* caused by different people taking the test
- *Not* caused by more time spent on test
- *Not* caused by more preparation time

What may be causing the effect?

- Improved answers in each area
- Most change on “Communication and Empathy” category

Next steps

- Replication!
- How does this apply to in-person testing?




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THANK YOU!

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peoplelab.berkeley.edu



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Study 1: Main Regression

Table 4. Impact of Each Treatment Arm on Applications

Variables	(1) Applied	(2) Applied	(3) Applied
Challenge	0.00392** (0.00160)	0.00332* (0.00175)	0.00701** (0.00330)
Service	0.00111 (0.00121)	0.00118 (0.00124)	0.00361 (0.00269)
Impact	0.00232* (0.00139)	0.00179 (0.00142)	0.00234 (0.00241)
Career	0.00352** (0.00155)	0.00189 (0.00141)	0.00702** (0.00331)
Male		0.00296*** (0.000959)	0.00368*** (0.000860)
White		-0.000861 (0.00103)	0.000729 (0.00101)
Age		-0.000376*** (8.57e-05)	-0.000377*** (8.54e-05)
Male × Challenge		0.00125 (0.00344)	
Male × Service		-8.03e-05 (0.00268)	
Male × Impact		0.00114 (0.00306)	
Male × Career		0.00392 (0.00350)	
White × Challenge			-0.00489 (0.00371)
White × Service			-0.00378 (0.00294)
White × Impact			-0.000121 (0.00296)
White × Career			-0.00541 (0.00369)
Constant	0.00210*** (0.000419)	0.0114*** (0.00352)	0.0109*** (0.00400)
Observations	21,878	21,804	21,804
R ²	0.001	0.004	0.004

Note: This table shows the impact of individual postcards on the probability of applying to become a police officer. All regressions include dummy variables for ZIP code, not shown here. Columns 3 and 4 explore the interaction between treatment arms and gender and race, respectively. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < .1$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$.

Study 2: Main Regression

TABLE 4 Probability of passing the test

Variables	(1) Probability of passing	(2) Probability of passing	(3) Probability of passing
Treat	0.0213 (0.0247)	0.206** (0.0804)	0.220** (0.0855)
Treat * White		-0.204** (0.0851)	-0.219** (0.0900)
White		0.177*** (0.0623)	0.215*** (0.0649)
Age category			0.0103 (0.0221)
Male			-0.0459* (0.0263)
Observations	1,601	1,593	1,572

Robust standard errors in parentheses.

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

Note: This table presents the marginal effects of a logit model on the probability of passing the SJT test.