Putting Australian Aid into Perspective

CHRISTOPHER HOY
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Outline

Motivation

Survey
- Descriptive statistics
- Characteristics associated with support
- Effect of information

Implications
Outline

Motivation

Survey

◦ Descriptive statistics
◦ Characteristics associated with support
◦ Effect of information

Implications
Motivation – Previous studies

Information provided to treatment group

Every year the Australian government provides aid money to poorer countries. Since 2013 Australia has reduced the amount of aid it gives. At the same time, some countries, such as the United Kingdom, have increased the aid they give. The United Kingdom now gives about 70 cents out of every $100 of its Gross National Income as aid (Gross National Income is a standard measure of the size of a country’s economy). By comparison Australia gives 25 cents out if every $100 of its Gross National Income as aid. Considering this, which of the following options best reflects your opinion about aid spending: [identical response categories to those used in the control question were provided].

Motivation – Previous studies

Information provided to treatment group

Every year the Australian government provides aid money to poorer countries. Since 2013 Australia has reduced the amount of aid it gives. At the same time, some countries, such as the United Kingdom, have increased the aid they give. The United Kingdom now gives about 70 cents out of every $100 of its Gross National Income as aid (Gross National Income is a standard measure of the size of a country’s economy). By comparison Australia gives 25 cents out if every $100 of its Gross National Income as aid. Considering this, which of the following options best reflects your opinion about aid spending: [identical response categories to those used in the control question were provided].

Effect of Information

Motivation - Australia’s rank in terms of Aid, Refugees and CO2 emissions across the richest 20 OECD countries
Outline

Motivation

Survey
  ◦ **Descriptive statistics**
  ◦ Characteristics associated with support
  ◦ Effect of information

Implications
Every year the Australian government provides aid money to poorer countries.

Which of the following options best reflects your opinion about aid spending:

A. The Australian government does not give enough aid;
B. The Australian government gives about the right amount of aid;
C. The Australian government gives too much aid;
D. I don't know
Survey questions - AID
Every year the Australian government provides refuge to people fleeing countries in conflict, such as Syria.

Which of the following options best reflects your opinion about the number of refugees Australia accepts:

A. Australia does not accept enough refugees;
B. Australia accepts about the right amount of refugees
C. Australia accepts too many refugees;
D. I don't know
Survey questions - REFUGEES
Survey questions – CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE

Which of the following options best reflects your opinion about Australia’s policies on climate change:

A. Australia is doing too little to address climate change;
B. Australia is doing about the right amount to address climate change
C. Australia is doing too much to address climate change;
D. I don't know
Survey questions – CLIMATE CHANGE
Outline

Motivation

Survey
  ◦ Descriptive statistics
  ◦ Characteristics associated with support
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Implications
## Characteristics associated with support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AID</th>
<th>REFUGEES</th>
<th>CLIMATE CHANGE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOR</strong></td>
<td>+ University education</td>
<td>+ University education</td>
<td>+ University education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vote for Coalition</td>
<td>- Vote for Coalition</td>
<td>- Vote for Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Over 45 years old</td>
<td>+ Over 45 years old</td>
<td>+ Richer Households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGAINST</strong></td>
<td>- University education</td>
<td>- University education</td>
<td>+ Over 45 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Vote for Coalition</td>
<td></td>
<td>+ Vote for Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Living in urban areas</td>
<td></td>
<td>+ Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distribution of support up

- **NEVER UP**: 52.8%
- **AID**:
  - 1.7%
- **REFUGEES**:
  - 0.8%
  - 1.5%
- **CLIMATE**:
  - 8.3%
  - 2.1%
  - 27.4%
  - 5.3%
Distribution of support up

- Rich
- University education
+ Coalition

AID: 1.7%
- Rich
- Coalition

REFUGEES: 1.5%

CLIMATE: 27.4%
+ Rich
- Coalition

NEVER UP: 52.8%
Distribution of support down

- AID: 27.6%
- Refugees: 13.0%
- Climate: 1.7%

NEVER DOWN: 40.0%
Distribution of support down

- AID
  - NEVER DOWN: 6.9%
  - University education: 7.4%
  - Coalition: 2.5%
- REFUGEES
  - NEVER DOWN: 13.0%
  - University education: 27.6%
  - Coalition: 1.0%
- CLIMATE
  - NEVER DOWN: 1.7%
Outline

Motivation

Survey
  ◦ Descriptive statistics
  ◦ Characteristics associated with support
  ◦ Effect of information

Implications
Information that was randomly provided to a subset of respondents

Aid

Australia currently ranks 15th out of 20 of the richest OECD countries in the world in terms of aid spending as a share of the economy, behind nations like the United Kingdom and Canada, and is set to fall to 19th out of 20 by 2020.

Refugees

Low and middle income countries host 84% of the world’s refugees. In Lebanon, 1 in every 6 people are refugees. In Australia, only 1 in every 1000 people are refugees. Even among rich nations, Australia hosts fewer refugees as a proportion of its population than 15 of the 20 richest OECD nations.

Climate Change

Australia is one of the largest emitters of carbon dioxide per person in the world, producing around 4 to 5 times the global average, while Australia’s emissions reduction targets are amongst the lowest for developed nations.
Information effect on increasing support

Aid

Refugee

Climate Change

(N = 525)  (N = 523) *

(N = 525)  (N = 523)

(N = 525)  (N = 523) *

Control  Treatment

Control  Treatment

Control  Treatment
Difference by political support (1)
Difference by political support (2)

Coalition

Not Coalition
Difference by location

Urban

Rural

(N = 437)  (N = 418) *
(N = 88)  (N = 104)

Control  Treatment

Control  Treatment
Difference by education*

**University**

**Not University**

(N = 195) (N = 182)

(N = 330) (N = 340)**

Control   Treatment

Control   Treatment

*Note: The significance level is indicated by **.
Difference by age*

Over 45

Under 45

(N = 276)  (N = 252)

(N = 249)  (N = 270)
Summary of relationship between respondent characteristics and level of support for aid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXISTING LEVEL OF SUPPORT</th>
<th>INFORMATION HAS AN EFFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLITICAL SUPPORT</strong></td>
<td>Non-coalition voters</td>
<td>Mixed (more of an effect on Coalition voters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GEOGRAPHY</strong></td>
<td>Urban areas</td>
<td>Urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong>*</td>
<td>University education</td>
<td>Less than university education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE</strong>*</td>
<td>People over 45</td>
<td>People 45 or under</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Implications
Implications

1. Diversity in who supports a range of ‘similar’ issues means a more nuanced approach to building public support is required

2. Levels of support for aid are low, however they can be increased through information about Australia’s place in the world

3. Information tends to boost support among non-coalition voters and reduce anti-aid sentiment among coalition voters

4. The effect of information is largely contained to people under the age of 45, with less than university education, who live in urban areas

5. There is huge potential to use this type of rigorous approach to learn how to boost public support for increasing aid
Difference between academic groups (2)

University

Not University
Difference between academic groups (3)

University

Not University
Difference between income groups

Rich

(N = 116)  (N = 112)

Control  Treatment

Poor

(N = 409)  (N = 410)

Control  Treatment
Difference by gender

Male

Female

(N = 273) (N = 239) (N = 252) (N = 283) **

Control Treatment Control Treatment
Difference by age (2)

### Over45

(N = 276)

(N = 252)

### Under45

(N = 249)

(N = 270)
Difference by age (3)

Over45

Under45

(N = 276)  (N = 252)

(N = 249)  (N = 270)