

# The Impact of Same-Race Teachers on Student Behavioral Outcomes<sup>\*</sup>

Bohdana Kurylo<sup>†</sup>

CERGE-EI

June 2021

## Abstract

Previous papers on the impacts of same-race teachers have documented that students taught by same-race teachers improve their performance on state exams. However, little is known about whether the positive impact extends beyond test scores to student behavioral outcomes. Using the random assignment of teachers to the U.S. public schools within the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project, I show that same-race teachers increase the effectiveness of communications with Black students. I find that this effect is driven by better teacher explanations and consequent improved student understanding, which aligns with the literature about culturally relevant pedagogy. Additionally, I do not find empirical evidence supporting two alternative explanations for the positive effects of a same-race teacher on communication: *i*) higher general communication ability of Black teachers and *ii*) more teacher attention directed towards same-race students.

Understanding the impacts of same-race teachers is of great importance, as student behavioral outcomes predict their success in the long-term perspective. Further, the findings may also suggest that training non-minority teachers in using culturally relevant pedagogy may improve the performance of disadvantaged minority students in the short-term by complementing diversification of the teacher labor force.

**JEL Codes:** I20, I21, J15

**Keywords:** same-race teacher, teacher-student communication, teacher expectations, student beliefs

---

<sup>\*</sup> This study was supported by the Charles University GAUK project No. 314119. I thank Nikolas Mittag for the valuable supervision and guidance. I am thankful for the useful comments and suggestions to Randall K. Filer, Stepan Jurajda, Daniel Munich, Mariola Pytlikova, and Jan Zapal. All remaining errors are my own.

CERGE-EI, a joint workplace of Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education, Charles University<sup>†</sup> and the Economics Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Politických veznu 7, 111 21 Prague, Czech Republic.