

Appendix – For Online Publication Only

Misperceiving Economic Success: Experimental Evidence on Meritocratic Beliefs and Inequality Acceptance

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A.1 List of Covariates

- Gender (Male / Female / Other / I prefer not to say)
- Age (in years)
- Marital status (Single / Married)
- Education (Not completed high school/ High school/ Some college/ 2-year college degree/ 4-year college degree/ Masters degree/ Doctoral degree/ Professional degree (JD, MD))
- Ethnicity (White/European-American / Black/African-American / Asian/Asian-American/Pacific Islander / Hispanic/Latino / Other)
- Number of household members
- Political beliefs (Strongly liberal / Moderately liberal / Slightly liberal / Slightly conservative / Moderately conservative / Strongly conservative)
- Political party identification (Democratic Party/ Republican Party/ Other)
- US residence (Yes / No)
- Home state (list of US states)
- Employment status (Full-time employee / Part-time employee / Self-employed or small business owner / Unemployed and looking for work / Student / Not in labor force)
- Household income (\$0 - \$9,999 / \$10,000 - \$14,999 / \$15,000 - \$19,999 / \$20,000 - \$29,999 / \$30,000 - \$39,999 / \$40,000 - \$49,999 / \$50,000 - \$74,999 / \$75,000 - \$99,999 / \$100,000 - \$124,999 / \$125,000 - \$149,999 / \$150,000 - \$199,999 / \$200,000 and more)

A.2 Details on Study Implementation

We used Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to recruit workers to complete a work assignment and survey in summer 2019. We offered a relatively high flat payment of \$0.75 and promised additional payments (participants could expect to earn \$1.50). Considering the average study duration of 10 minutes, incentives were substantially above the hourly minimum wage in all US states in 2019.

To address concerns about data quality, in particular due to automated responses (bots) and inattention (Chmielewski and Kucker, 2020; Ahler, Roush and Sood, 2019), we took several precautionary measures. First, we limited participation to MTurkers based in the US who had performed more than 1000 Human Intelligence Tasks (HITs) and had an acceptance rate of at least 98%. Second, we used a simplified CAPTCHA (adding two numbers) to screen for bots, i.e. only participants that correctly answered this question could access our survey. Additionally, the letter sequences in the work assignment were in a non-machine-readable format, providing an extra layer of protection against bots. Third, to minimize inattention due to multitasking and switching between several HITs, we requested that participants should exclusively work on our HIT, and stated that they have a total of 20 minutes to complete the HIT, that there are timeouts on each question, and that any payment is conditional on completing the HIT within the time limit.

There are also some practical challenges associated with running experiments on an online platform such as MTurk. First, participants typically do not arrive at the same time. While we designed our experiment such that the survey and the work assignment could be completed independently, the bonus payment required a comparison of the work performance between the two participants. For this reason, every participant entered a virtual waiting room before the announcement of the bonus payment. If a suitable matching partner was already available, participants were immediately matched and could then work independently through the rest of the survey. If no matching partner was available, participants had to wait for a minimum of three minutes. As soon as a suitable matching partner arrived in the waiting room, they were matched.¹

Second, we aimed to minimize the risk of participants dropping out before completing the survey. Despite numerous possibilities for dropping out voluntarily or involuntarily (e.g. if no matching partner is available), internal validity is only threatened by dropouts after the announcement of the bonus payment (which depends on the random work assignment). As long as

¹Participants had the possibility to end the survey after three minutes (if no suitable matching partner had arrived), in which case they only received the base payment. Alternatively, they could continue waiting until they were matched (but they ran the risk of exceeding the HIT time limit, in which case they received no payment).

such dropouts are random across the treatment, our treatment estimates remain unbiased (as is the case, as shown in Section 2 and Table A1). Nevertheless, we took some steps to minimize this risk ex-ante and informed participants that they would not receive any payment *and* no HIT approval if they dropped out due to a timeout. Evidence suggests that these are sensible requirements, as MTurkers are sensitive to rejections (a low approval rate prevents them from participating in HITs that require a high approval rate, see Hara et al. (2018)).

A.3 Impact of Information about Task Difficulty on Inequality Acceptance

In Section 3.5, we have shown that a sizable fraction of participants displayed a positive willingness to pay for information about task difficulty. We now examine whether obtaining information about task difficulty and the opponents' scores leads to a revised view on inequality. All participants who received the information (approx. 25 percent of the whole sample) and a random subset of the remaining participants (approx. 50 percent) had the possibility to reconsider their implemented inequality ($N=1,130$).² In a slight deviation from our pre-analysis plan, we look here at the likelihood of participants changing their inequality acceptance *and* the magnitude of a change.³ In all regression specifications, we include our standard controls and additionally control for WTP, as participants with a higher WTP have a higher probability of receiving the information. In other words, receiving information is only random after conditioning on WTP.

Table A8 displays the results. Conditional on WTP, receiving information increases the likelihood of revising the implemented inequality by 8 points (a 27 percent change, column 1). The estimate remains unchanged once we control for treatment status (column 2). Splitting the sample along political orientation reveals that receiving information about task difficulty had an impact among liberals only (column 3), but not among conservatives (column 4). In the remaining columns of Table A8, we examine the magnitude of these changes in inequality acceptance. Again, we see that receiving information about task difficulty leads to larger changes in inequality acceptance than not receiving information (about 4 points, see column 5). Controlling for treatment status indicates that changes are smaller in the *Easy Task*. In the last two columns, we again split the sample by political orientation and show that liberals ultimately drive the observed effects.

²Participants were unaware of this possibility when stating their WTP for information about task difficulty.

³In the pre-analysis plan, we proposed to look only at the revision of inequality acceptance.

Next, we explore the robustness of these results. The effect of receiving information about task difficulty may depend on participants' prior beliefs about task difficulty. For example, a participant who is relatively certain about having worked on the *Hard Task* will not be too surprised to learn that she was, in fact, assigned to the *Hard Task*, thus making her less likely to revise the implemented inequality. To capture this effect and to account for the fact that a subset of participants received no information and therefore could not update their beliefs, we estimate the following regression model:

$$Y_i = \beta_1 \cdot \left(100 - b_i^{posterior}\right) \cdot R_i + \beta_2 \cdot \left(100 - b_i^{posterior}\right) + WTP_i + \gamma \mathbf{X} + \varepsilon_i$$

where Y_i is an indicator for revising the implemented inequality (or not), or the absolute value of the change in inequality. $b_i^{posterior}$ is the posterior belief about task difficulty, and R_i is a binary variable, indicating whether a participant received information or not. The parameter of interest is β_1 , which shows the causal effect (conditional on WTP) of receiving information on task difficulty, i.e. the effect of learning that the likelihood of being in the *hard/Easy Task* is 1 percentage point higher than previously thought. The variable $\left(100 - b_i^{posterior}\right)$ controls for non-random variation in misperceptions about the task difficulty, which ensures that β_1 is identified by random variation in receiving information about task difficulty. This analysis is exploratory, as it was not specified in our pre-analysis plan.

In Table A9, column 1, we see that the information shock does not affect the likelihood of changing the implemented inequality. The coefficient is close to zero and precisely estimated. Controlling for treatment status (column 2) reveals that participants in the *Easy Task* are less likely to revise the implemented inequality. This negative effect on inequality acceptance exists among liberals and conservatives (columns 3 and 4). In contrast to these results, the information shock has a significant and positive effect on the size of change in inequality. Learning that the task difficulty is 10 percentage points higher than previously thought results in a 3.5-point larger magnitude of change (column 5). This is sizable given that the average bias is about 33 percentage points. Again, controlling for the treatment status reveals that changes are smaller in the *Easy Task*. If we differentiate between political views, we see that liberals drive the effect of correcting misperceptions on inequality acceptance. They react strongly to the information shock (column 7), while conservatives do not react at all (column 8). To summarize, the information shock has no influence on the decision to revise implemented inequality; however, if participants revise their

inequality acceptance, changes are larger for liberals who experienced a greater information shock.

A.4 Locus of Control

A person's locus of control (LoC) describes the degree to which they feel to have control over the outcomes in their life. We elicit LoC with a 7-item battery listed below, measured on a 7-point scale (1=Disagree strongly – 7=Agree strongly).

1. I have little control over the things that happen to me.
2. There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have.
3. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life.
4. I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life.
5. Sometimes I feel that I'm being pushed around in life.
6. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me.
7. I can do just about anything I really set my mind to do.

Following (Cobb-Clark and Schurer, 2013), we summarize the responses in a single measure that ranges between seven (full control over life, i.e. internal LoC) and 49 (no control over life, i.e. external LoC). This single measure (LoC-Index) is constructed by summing the responses to the five external items (1–5), subtracting the sum of responses to the two internal items (6–7) and adding 16. Specifically,

$$LoC - Index_i = \sum_{j=1}^5 eLoC_{i,j} + \sum_{j=6}^7 iLoC_{i,j} + 16 \quad (1)$$

This index is therefore increasing in external control tendencies and is bounded between 7 (internal) and 49 (external).

We begin our analysis by looking at the relationship between political orientation and locus of control. Table A10 presents this correlation: liberals are more likely to believe life outcomes are the result of fate or luck, and therefore beyond one's control. We also observe that LoC is associated with meritocratic beliefs (see Table A11). That is, a higher external LoC is associated with a lower belief in the importance of effort for achieving success in both the *Easy Task* and *Hard Task*. Both

findings are consistent with the finding that liberals are less likely to believe that the bonus payment results from effort (see Table A7). In Table A12, we regress inequality acceptance on our treatment, LoC, and the interaction of the two and find no measurable effect of LoC on inequality acceptance. Finally, in Table A13 we combine the first-stage (Table A11) and reduced-form results (Table A12) in a 2-stage analysis and reproduce the results from Table 3.

A.5 Additional Figures

Figure A1: Examples for the Two Tasks

(a) Easy Task

Tasks

Time left to complete this page: 2:49

Task: 2 - Correct: 1

URwsU

Enter the code you see in the picture above:

enter

(b) Hard Task

Tasks

Time left to complete this page: 2:58

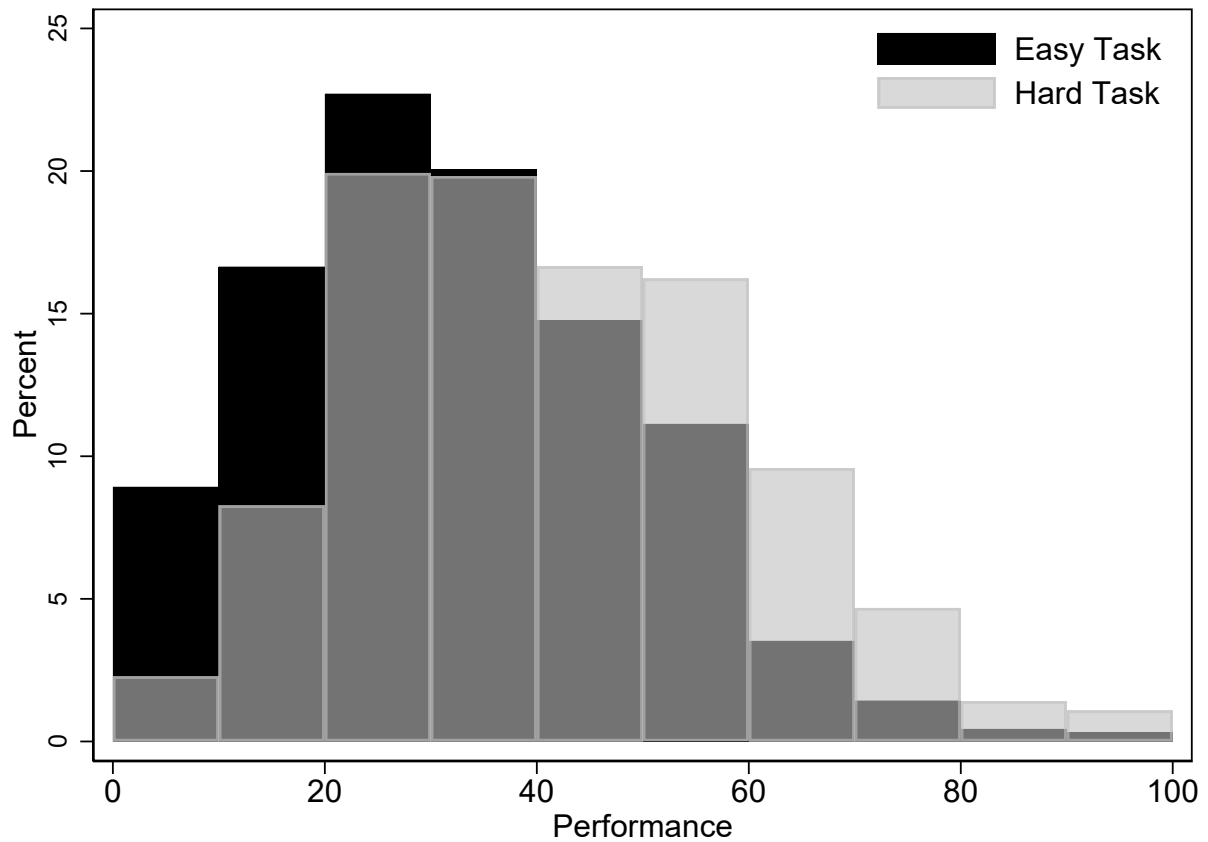
Task: 1 - Correct: 0

vkiRpsXxelszzKv

Enter the code you see in the picture above:

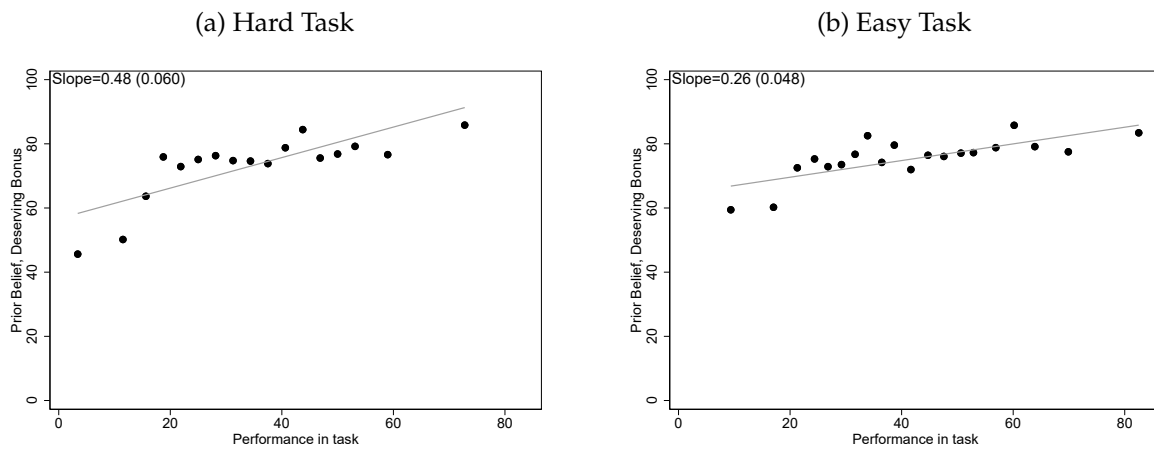
enter

Figure A2: Distribution of Performance



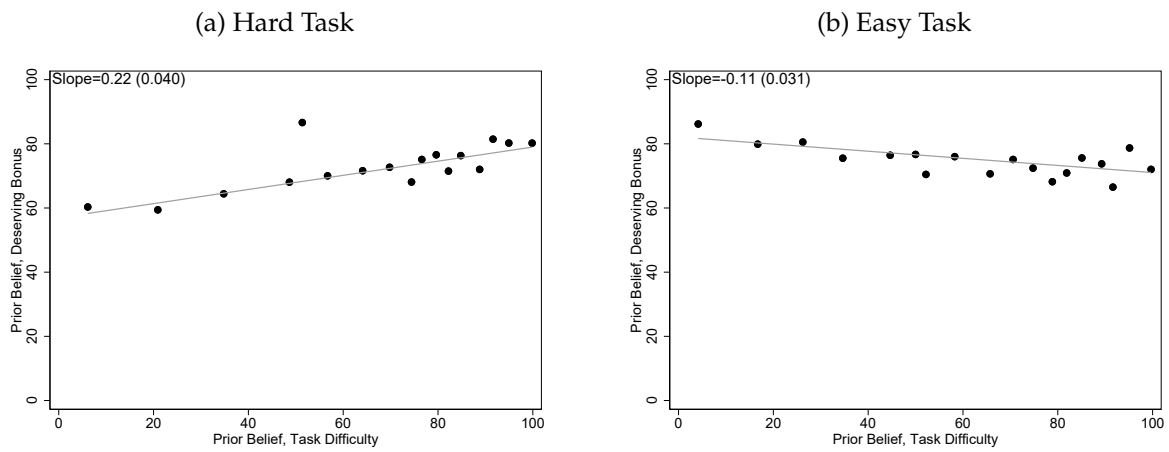
Notes: Histograms showing the distribution of performance separated by *Easy Task* and *Hard task* (N=1,825). Task performances in the two tasks are rescaled to have a common scale (ranging from 0-100) by taking the ratio of the difference between the actual score and the minimum score and the difference between the maximum and the minimum score multiplied by the upper limit of the rescaled variable (100).

Figure A3: Relationship between Task Performance and Prior Belief about Deservingness



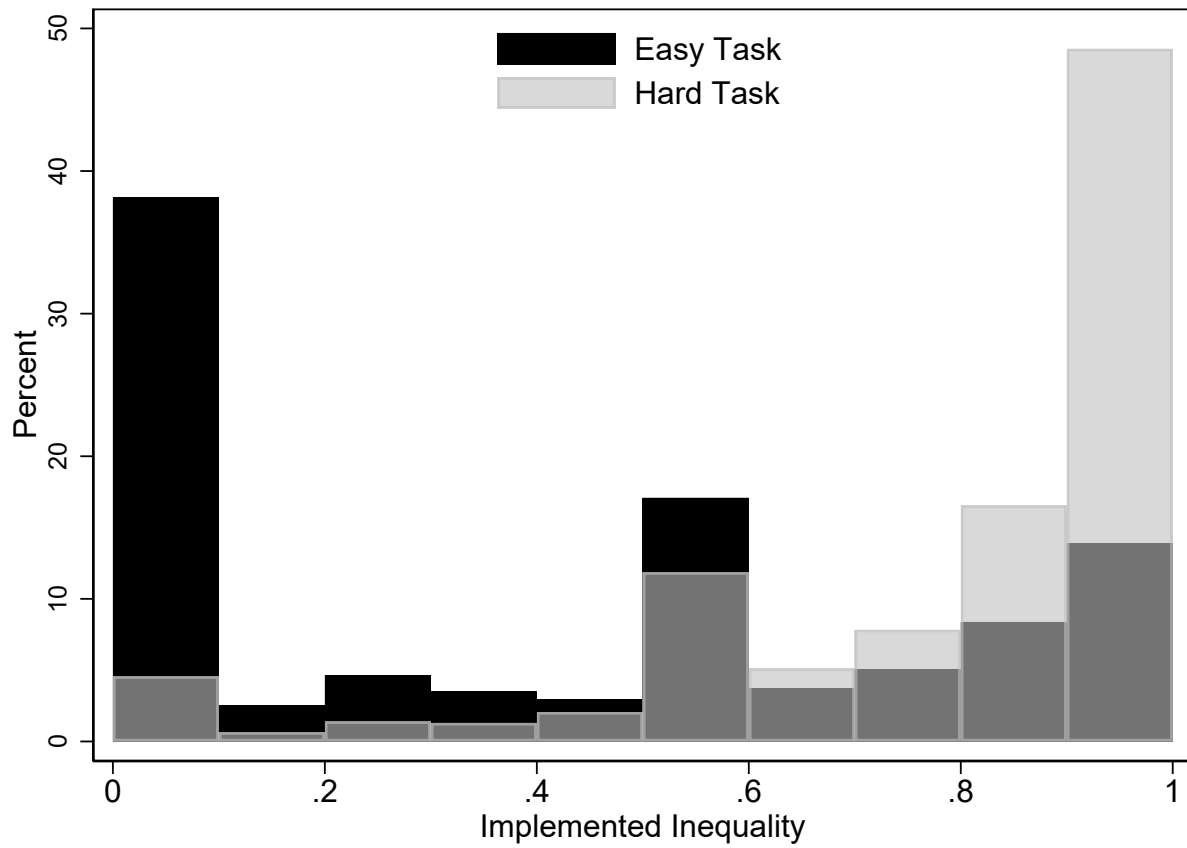
Notes: Binned scatterplots of the relationship between Task Performance and Prior Belief, Deserving Bonus, which is elicited before the revelation of the bonus payment. The left panel shows the distribution for the *Hard Task* and the right panel for the *Easy Task*. Task performances in the two tasks are rescaled to have a common scale (ranging from 0-100) by taking the ratio of the difference between the actual score and the minimum score and the difference between the maximum and the minimum score multiplied by the upper limit of the rescaled variable (100).

Figure A4: Relationship between Priors about Task Difficulty and Deservingness



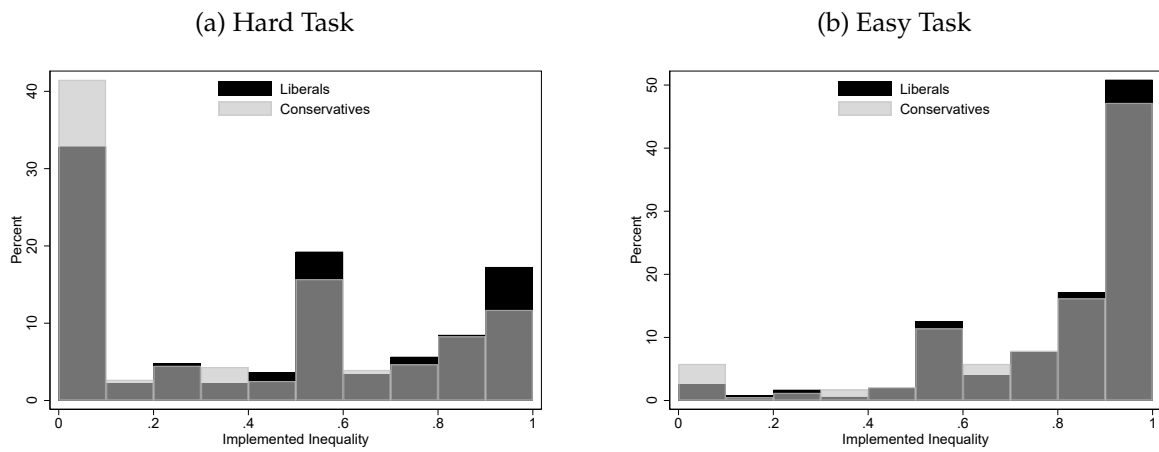
Notes: Binned scatterplots of the relationship between Prior belief, Task Difficulty and Prior Belief, Deserving Bonus. Both beliefs are elicited before the revelation of the bonus payment. The left panel shows the distribution for the *Hard Task* and the right panel for the *Easy Task*.

Figure A5: Distribution of Inequality Acceptance in the Hard and Easy Task



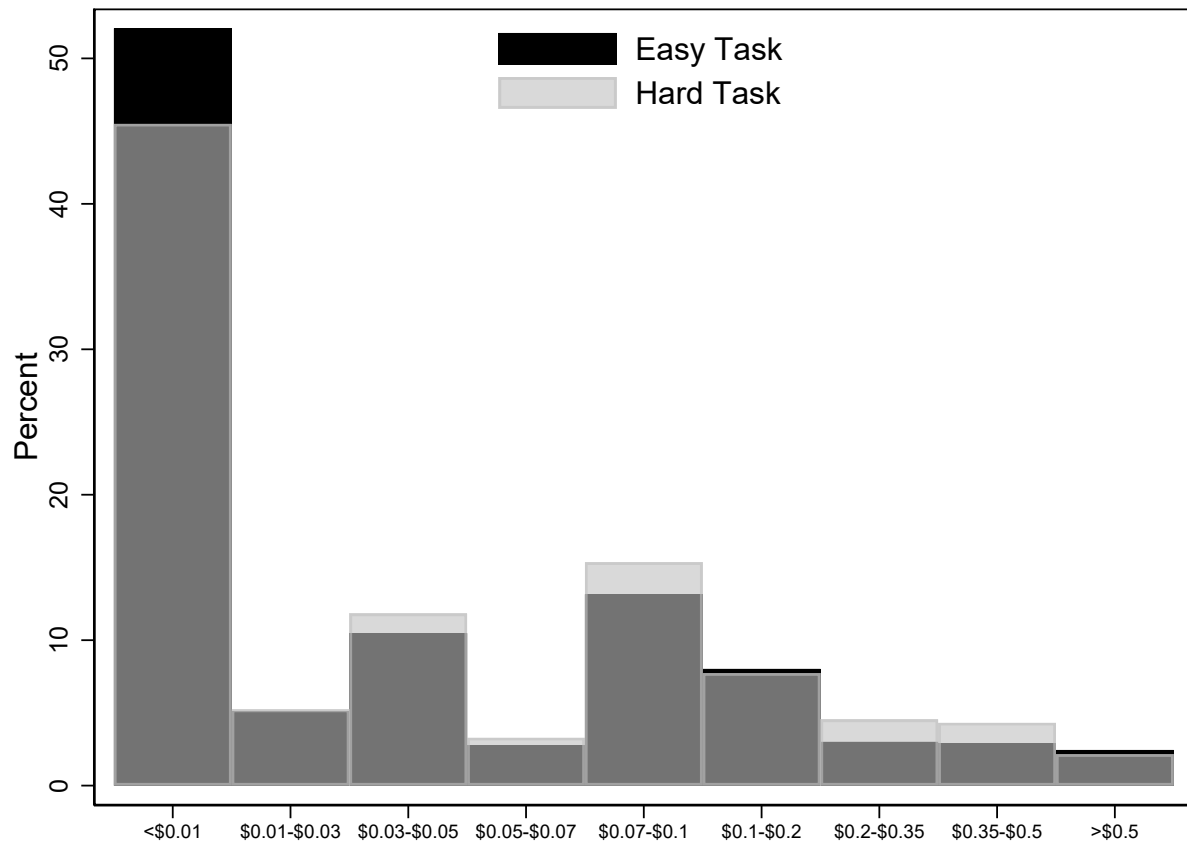
Notes: Histograms showing the distribution of inequality acceptance separated by *Easy Task* and *Hard task* (N=1,825).

Figure A6: Distribution of Inequality Acceptance by Political Orientation



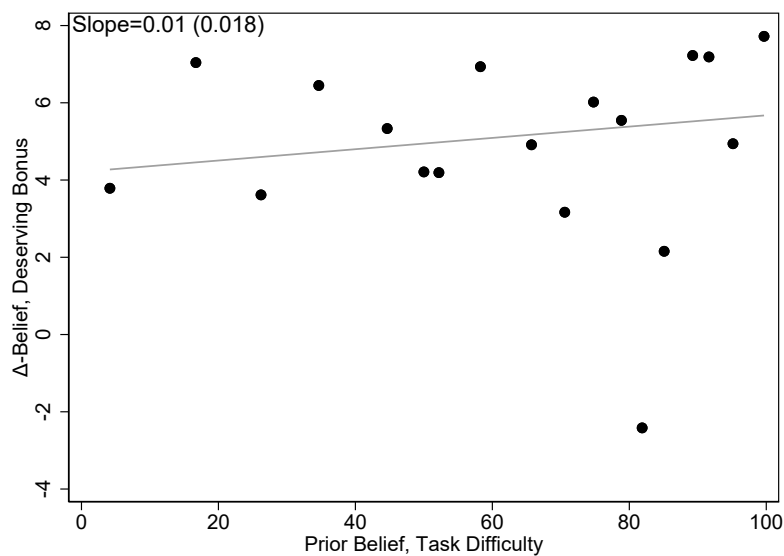
Notes: Histograms showing the distribution of inequality acceptance separated by treatment and political orientation. The left panel shows the distribution for the *Hard Task* and the right panel for the *Easy Task* (N=1,825).

Figure A7: Willingness-to-Pay for Information on Task Difficulty



Notes: The figure shows the distribution of participants' willingness to pay (WTP) for information about the task difficulty (using all participants with consistent answers: N=1,776), separated by condition. The black bars indicate the WTP in the *Easy Task* and the overlaying gray bars the WTP in the *Hard Task*. An amount smaller than \$0.01 indicates that the participant always preferred money over information and vice versa for an amount larger than \$0.50.

Figure A8: Relationship between Priors about Task Difficulty and Change in Perceived Deservingness



Notes: Binned scatterplots of the relationship between Prior belief, Task Difficulty and Δ -Belief, Deserving Bonus (difference between posterior and prior beliefs about deservingness) in the *Easy Task*. Prior beliefs are elicited before and posterior beliefs after the revelation of the bonus payment.

A.6 Additional Tables

Table A1: Regression: Dropout on Easy Task

	Dropout	
	(1)	(2)
<i>Easy Task</i>	-0.015 (0.013)	-0.018 (0.012)
Constant	0.097*** (0.009)	0.007 (0.009)
Observations	2026	1993
Controls	No	No
R-squared	0.001	0.001

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. “*Easy Task*” is an indicator for participants randomly assigned to the *Easy Task*. Column 1 considers all participants who start with the work assignment and column 2 considers all participants who remained after learning about the bonus payment.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A2: Balance between No-Dropouts and Dropouts

Variable	(1) Study sample Mean/SD	(2) Dropouts Mean/SD	T-test P-value (1)-(2)
L-o-C-Index	4.042 (0.581)	4.016 (0.686)	0.548
Age	39.167 (12.406)	37.653 (11.661)	0.098*
Female (in %)	52.438 (49.954)	45.050 (49.878)	0.046**
White (in %)	76.658 (42.313)	73.267 (44.366)	0.282
Married (in %)	45.205 (49.783)	41.584 (49.409)	0.326
People in Household	2.660 (1.425)	2.698 (1.372)	0.720
Full-Time Employed (in %)	61.370 (48.703)	67.822 (46.832)	0.073*
Part-Time Employed (in %)	11.342 (31.720)	11.386 (31.843)	0.985
Self-Employed (in %)	11.123 (31.451)	8.911 (28.561)	0.339
Not-in-Labor-Force (in %)	9.753 (29.677)	5.941 (23.697)	0.078*
Income (in \$)	64784.932 (42589.057)	62202.970 (40993.245)	0.412
Strongly Liberal (in %)	18.137 (38.543)	15.842 (36.604)	0.420
Moderately Liberal (in %)	22.301 (41.638)	24.752 (43.265)	0.429
Slightly Liberal (in %)	21.041 (40.771)	21.287 (41.035)	0.935
Slightly Conservative (in %)	20.274 (40.215)	19.307 (39.569)	0.745
Moderately Conservative (in %)	12.658 (33.259)	13.861 (34.640)	0.627
Strongly Conservative (in %)	5.589 (22.977)	4.950 (21.746)	0.706
Democrats (in %)	52.877 (49.931)	54.455 (49.925)	0.670
Republicans (in %)	28.274 (45.045)	25.743 (43.830)	0.447
No/ Other Political Party (in %)	18.849 (39.121)	19.802 (39.950)	0.743
Northeast Region (in %)	19.045 (39.244)	21.782 (41.379)	0.350
South Region (in %)	38.364 (48.601)	37.624 (48.564)	0.837
Midwest Region (in %)	20.746 (40.527)	18.812 (39.178)	0.519
West Region (in %)	21.844 (41.296)	21.782 (41.379)	0.984
Only High school Degree (in %)	8.986 (28.606)	7.426 (26.284)	0.459
Only Some College (in %)	24.274 (42.886)	21.287 (41.035)	0.346
2-Year College Degree (in %)	12.219 (32.760)	12.376 (33.013)	0.948
4-Year College Degree (in %)	38.356 (48.639)	45.050 (49.878)	0.064*
Master Degree (in %)	12.219 (32.760)	11.386 (31.843)	0.731
Doc/Professional Degree (in %)	3.671 (18.811)	1.980 (13.967)	0.215
N	1825	202	
F-test of joint significance (F-statistic)			0.728
F-test, number of observations			2027

Notes: The table shows average (std. dev.) of covariates by dropout status (columns 1–2). Column 3 shows p-values from t-test for differences between *Easy Task* and *Hard Task*. F-statistic is from a test of joint significance of all covariates.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A3: Comparison of Demographics of Study Sample and U.S. Population

Variable	Study Sample	U.S. Population
Median Age (in years)	36.0	38.2
Female (in %)	52.4	50.8
White (in %)	76.7	60.4
Married (in %)	45.21	49.78
People in Household	2.66	2.52
Median Household Income (in \$)	62,500	61,937
Bachelor's degree or higher (in %)	68.7	32.6
Northeast Region (in %)	19.0	17.1
Midwest Region (in %)	20.8	20.8
West Region (in %)	21.8	23.9
South Region (in %)	38.4	38.4

Notes: Data on U.S. Population comes from the U.S. Census Bureau (<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>): Data on median age, white, married, household income, education is from 2018 and data on gender, people in household and region is from 2019.

Table A4: Summary Statistics and Balance between Easy and Hard task

Variable	(1) Hard task Mean/SD	(2) Easy task Mean/SD	T-test P-value (1)-(2)
L-o-C-Index	4.064 (0.596)	4.020 (0.565)	0.111
Age	39.295 (12.403)	39.040 (12.415)	0.661
Female (in %)	53.142 (49.929)	51.743 (49.997)	0.550
White (in %)	75.744 (42.887)	77.560 (41.741)	0.360
Married (in %)	46.968 (49.936)	43.464 (49.598)	0.133
People in Household	2.627 (1.367)	2.693 (1.479)	0.326
Full-Time Employed (in %)	61.632 (48.655)	61.111 (48.776)	0.819
Part-Time Employed (in %)	10.805 (31.061)	11.874 (32.365)	0.472
Self-Employed (in %)	12.569 (33.168)	9.695 (29.605)	0.051*
Not-in-Labor-Force (in %)	9.592 (29.464)	9.913 (29.900)	0.817
Income (in \$)	64812.569 (41972.517)	64757.625 (43212.434)	0.978
Strongly Liberal (in %)	17.641 (38.138)	18.627 (38.954)	0.585
Moderately Liberal (in %)	21.499 (41.105)	23.094 (42.166)	0.414
Slightly Liberal (in %)	21.940 (41.407)	20.153 (40.136)	0.349
Slightly Conservative (in %)	19.956 (39.989)	20.588 (40.457)	0.737
Moderately Conservative (in %)	12.900 (33.538)	12.418 (32.997)	0.757
Strongly Conservative (in %)	6.064 (23.880)	5.120 (22.052)	0.380
Democrats (in %)	52.701 (49.955)	53.050 (49.934)	0.881
Republicans (in %)	28.335 (45.087)	28.214 (45.028)	0.954
No/ Other Political Party (in %)	18.964 (39.223)	18.736 (39.042)	0.901
Northeast Region (in %)	20.418 (40.311)	17.689 (38.134)	0.137
South Region (in %)	38.080 (48.558)	38.646 (48.667)	0.804
Midwest Region (in %)	20.199 (40.148)	21.287 (40.912)	0.567
West Region (in %)	21.303 (40.944)	22.379 (41.656)	0.578
Only High school Degree (in %)	9.592 (29.464)	8.388 (27.736)	0.369
Only Some College (in %)	23.705 (42.550)	24.837 (43.230)	0.573
2-Year College Degree (in %)	12.900 (33.538)	11.547 (31.976)	0.378
4-Year College Degree (in %)	37.376 (48.407)	39.325 (48.874)	0.392
Master Degree (in %)	12.238 (32.791)	12.200 (32.747)	0.980
Doc/Professional Degree (in %)	4.190 (20.046)	3.159 (17.500)	0.242
N	907	918	
F-test of joint significance (F-stat)			1.149
F-test, number of observations			1825

Notes: The table shows average (std. dev.) of covariates by treatment status (columns 1–2). Column 3 shows p-values from t-test for differences between *Easy Task* and *Hard Task*. F-statistic is from a test of joint significance of all covariates.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A5: Work Performance by Task Difficulty (Treatment)

	Mean	S.D.	P₁₀	P₅₀	P₉₀
<i>Hard Task</i>	10.25	5.45	4	10	17
<i>Easy Task</i>	34.86	15.47	16	33	56

Notes: Mean, standard deviation (S.D.) and the 10th, 50th, and 90th percentile of correctly typed letter sequences by treatment

Table A6: Regression: Change in Beliefs about Work Assignment (Posterior – Prior)

	Δ -Task Difficulty		Δ -Relative Performance		Δ -Deserving	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Easy Task</i>	-5.672*** (0.934)	-5.668*** (0.936)	10.324*** (0.713)	10.252*** (0.717)	10.943*** (0.882)	10.768*** (0.882)
Constant	3.538*** (0.683)	-5.104 (7.514)	-4.223*** (0.530)	-1.409 (5.833)	-5.811*** (0.710)	-8.638 (6.995)
Observations	1,825	1,822	1,825	1,822	1,825	1,822
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
R-squared	0.02	0.02	0.10	0.11	0.08	0.08

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. “ Δ ” is the difference between posterior and prior beliefs. Beliefs are elicited before the bonus payment (prior) and after the bonus payment (posterior). All beliefs are measured on a scale from 0 – 100: “Prior Belief, Task Difficulty:” likelihood of performing in the *Hard Task* in %; “Prior Belief, Relative Performance:” perceived number of participants performing the same task with a lower score; “Prior Belief, Deserving Bonus:” deserving the \$2 bonus payment in %. “*Easy Task*” is an indicator for participants randomly assigned to the *Easy Task*. Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and a set of indicator variables for white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Midwest, West).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A7: Regression: First Stage – Effects on Meritocratic Beliefs

	Effort Determines Success		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Easy Task</i>	16.213***/# (1.355)	16.358***/# (2.123)	16.465***/# (2.126)
Liberal		-3.905* (2.184)	-4.014* (2.216)
Liberal* <i>Easy Task</i>		-0.185 (2.752)	0.081 (2.751)
Constant	54.054*** (1.072)	56.439*** (1.691)	40.207*** (10.422)
Observations	1,825	1,825	1,822
Controls	No	No	Yes
R-squared	0.07	0.08	0.09

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. Meritocratic Beliefs (“Effort Determines Success:”) are elicited after the bonus payment (posterior) and are measured on a scale from 0 – 100: likelihood that the \$2 bonus payment depends on exerted effort in %. “*Easy Task*” is an indicator for random assignment to the *Easy Task*. “Liberal” is an indicator for participants who self-identified as strongly liberal, moderately liberal and slightly liberal. Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and a set of indicator variables for white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Midwest, West).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; # indicates significance, when using the two-stage linear step-up procedure by Benjamini, Krieger and Yekutieli (2006) that controls for a false discovery rate at $q=0.05$ for the treatment variable *Easy Task*.

Table A8: Regression: Revising Inequality Acceptance

	Change Inequality				Δ -Inequality			
	(1) All	(2) All	(3) Lib.	(4) Cons.	(5) All	(6) All	(7) Lib.	(8) Cons.
Received Info	0.081**/# (0.036)	0.077**/# (0.036)	0.101**/# (0.046)	0.054 (0.060)	0.039**/# (0.013)	0.037**/# (0.013)	0.040**/# (0.013)	0.042 (0.026)
<i>Easy Task</i>		-0.047 (0.029)	-0.023 (0.036)	-0.071 (0.048)		-0.026*** (0.009)	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.049*** (0.018)
WTP	0.278* (0.149)	0.278* (0.148)	0.404* (0.206)	0.079 (0.217)	0.019 (0.050)	0.018 (0.049)	0.022 (0.053)	-0.010 (0.090)
Constant	0.609*** (0.221)	0.631*** (0.221)	0.394 (0.282)	0.882** (0.379)	0.022 (0.068)	0.034 (0.068)	-0.057 (0.075)	0.149 (0.135)
Observations	1094	1094	681	413	1094	1094	681	413
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
R-squared	0.047	0.049	0.061	0.064	0.035	0.042	0.049	0.063

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. The sample includes all participants who had the opportunity to reconsider the implemented inequality, i.e. all participants who received information about the task difficulty and a random subset of participants who did not receive this information. “Change Inequality” is an indicator for revising the initially implemented inequality and “ Δ -Inequality” is the absolute difference between the initially implemented inequality and the revised inequality. “Received Info” is an indicator for participants who received information about the task difficulty and the performance of the other participant. “*Easy Task*” is an indicator for participants randomly assigned to the *Easy Task*. “Liberal” is an indicator for participants who self-identified as strongly liberal, moderately liberal and slightly liberal. “WTP” (in cents) is the willingness to pay for receiving information about the task difficulty and the score of the other participant, categorized in 9 intervals [0, 1]; [1, 3]; [3, 5]; [5, 7]; [7, 10]; [10, 20]; [20, 35]; [35, 50]; [50, ∞). Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and dummy variables indicating white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Midwest, West).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; # indicates significance, when using the two-stage linear step-up procedure by Benjamini, Krieger and Yekutieli (2006) that controls for a false discovery rate at $q=0.05$ for *Received Info*.

Table A9: Regression: Misperception about Task Difficulty and Revising Inequality Acceptance

	Change Inequality				Δ-Inequality			
	(1) All	(2) All	(3) Lib.	(4) Cons.	(5) All	(6) All	(7) Lib.	(8) Cons.
Misperception*Received Info	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.036** (0.016)	0.034** (0.016)	0.043** (0.017)	0.030 (0.034)
Misperception	-0.000 (0.000)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.043*** (0.014)	-0.025 (0.017)	-0.029 (0.019)	-0.029 (0.030)
Easy Task		-0.087*** (0.033)	-0.071* (0.043)	-0.098* (0.054)		-2.393** (1.099)	-0.706 (1.203)	-4.204** (2.053)
WTP	0.344** (0.136)	0.343** (0.134)	0.547*** (0.185)	0.082 (0.200)	6.735 (4.530)	6.708 (4.483)	7.511 (5.090)	5.438 (7.870)
Constant	0.610*** (0.221)	0.601*** (0.221)	0.340 (0.278)	0.844** (0.378)	7.294 (6.986)	7.056 (6.965)	-2.720 (7.461)	19.628 (13.776)
Observations	1128	1128	694	434	1128	1128	694	434
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
R-squared	0.041	0.047	0.059	0.066	0.031	0.036	0.042	0.055

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. Sample consists of all participants who received information about the task difficulty and a random subset of participants who did not receive this information. “Change Inequality” is an indicator for revising the initially implemented inequality and “ Δ -Inequality” is the absolute difference between the initially implemented and the revised inequality acceptance. “Misperception” indicates the difference between the actual task difficulty and the posterior belief about task difficulty in percentage points. “Received Info” is an indicator for participants who received information about the task difficulty and the performance of the other participant. “*Easy Task*” is an indicator for participants randomly assigned to the *Easy Task*. “WTP” (in cents) is the willingness to pay for receiving information about the task difficulty and the score of the other participant, categorized in 9 intervals [0, 1]; [1, 3]; [3, 5]; [5, 7]; [7, 10]; [10, 20]; [20, 35]; [35, 50]; [50, ∞). Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and dummy variables indicating white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Midwest, West). Columns labeled “All” uses all data and columns labeled “Lib.” (“Cons.”) restricts the sample to liberals (conservatives).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A10: Regression: Locus of Control and Political Views

	Locus of Control (LoC)	
	(1)	(2)
Liberal	1.308*** (0.438)	1.084** (0.443)
Constant	20.145*** (0.341)	49.977*** (3.370)
Observations	1,825	1,822
Controls	No	Yes
R-squared	0.00	0.07

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. “Locus of Control” is the degree to which one feels to have control over one’s life outcomes and ranges between 7 (full control over life or internal LoC) and 49 (no control over life or external LoC). “Liberal” is an indicator for participants who self-identified as strongly liberal, moderately liberal and slightly liberal. Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and dummy variables indicating white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Mid-west, West).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A11: Regression: Meritocratic Beliefs and Locus of Control

	Effort Determines Success		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Easy Task</i>	16.213*** (1.355)	16.866*** (3.489)	16.681*** (3.492)
LoC		-0.289** (0.121)	-0.260** (0.123)
LoC* <i>Easy Task</i>		-0.037 (0.154)	-0.015 (0.155)
Constant	54.054*** (1.072)	60.166*** (2.799)	50.286*** (11.016)
Observations	1,825	1,825	1,822
Controls	No	No	Yes
R-squared	0.07	0.08	0.09

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. Meritocratic Beliefs (“Effort Determines Success:”) are elicited after the bonus payment (posterior) and are measured on a scale from 0 – 100: likelihood that the \$2 bonus payment depends on exerted effort in %. “*Easy Task*” is an indicator for participants randomly assigned to the *Easy Task*. “LoC” is the degree to which one feels to have control over one’s life outcomes and ranges between 7 (full control over life or internal LoC) and 49 (no control over life or external LoC). Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and dummy variables indicating white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Mid-west, West).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A12: Regression: Inequality Acceptance and Locus of Control

	Inequality Acceptance					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Easy Task</i>	0.395*** (0.015)	0.394*** (0.015)	0.395*** (0.015)	0.394*** (0.015)	0.435*** (0.039)	0.433*** (0.039)
LoC			-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)
<i>Easy Task</i> *LoC					-0.002 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
Constant	0.398*** (0.012)	0.279** (0.114)	0.411*** (0.022)	0.310** (0.122)	0.391*** (0.032)	0.297** (0.123)
Observations	1825	1822	1825	1822	1825	1822
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
R-squared	0.272	0.277	0.272	0.277	0.273	0.277

Notes: OLS-regressions with robust standard errors in parentheses. “Inequality Acceptance” is the implemented inequality in a group, measured on a scale from 0 to 1. “*Easy Task*” is an indicator for participants randomly assigned to the *Easy Task*. “LoC” is the degree to which one feels to have control over one’s life outcomes and ranges between 7 (full control over life or internal LoC) and 49 (no control over life or external LoC). Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and dummy variables indicating white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Mid-west, West).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A13: Regression: Two-Stage Estimates of Inequality Acceptance

	All subjects		Internal LoC		External LoC	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Effort Determines Success	0.026***# (0.002)	0.026***# (0.002)	0.027***# (0.003)	0.026***# (0.003)	0.025***# (0.003)	0.024***# (0.003)
Observations	1825	1822	897	895	928	927
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
F-statistic	123.49	127.15	64.16	65.88	59.17	61.50

Notes: Two-stage estimates of the effects of meritocratic beliefs on inequality acceptance. The first stage estimates the impact of the exogenous work assignment on meritocratic beliefs and the second stage uses variation in meritocratic beliefs induced by the exogenous work assignment (controlling for perceived task difficulty, deservingness, and relative performance) to estimate the effect of meritocratic beliefs on inequality acceptance. “Inequality Acceptance” is the implemented inequality in a group, measured on a scale from 0 to 1. “Effort Determines Success” is the likelihood that the \$2 bonus payment depends on exerted effort in %. Columns 1-2 include the whole sample, columns 3-4 restrict the sample to participants with an external locus of control (External LoC) and columns 5-6 to participants with an internal locus of control (Internal LoC). “LoC” is the degree to which one feels to have control over one’s life outcomes and ranges between 7 (full control over life or internal LoC) and 49 (no control over life or external LoC). We use the median LoC score to split the sample into external and internal LoC. Controls include sex, age, household size, log income and dummy variables indicating white/European-American ethnicity, college degree, working, married and U.S.-regions (North, East, South, Mid-west, West).

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; # indicates significance, when using the two-stage linear step-up procedure by Benjamini, Krieger and Yekutieli (2006) that controls for a false discovery rate at $q=0.05$.

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