A New Paradigm of Discrimination and Measures of Latino Linked Fate
Michael Herndon
University of Nebraska at Omaha, Department of Political Science
Duke University, Department of Political Science

Abstract

Linked fate has long been used as a measure of group consciousness and is an important component of group political behavior. Though applying linked fate to Latinos can be complicated because of a widely diverse set of nationalities and historical contexts, Latinos have shown signs of group cohesion under certain circumstances. Despite this, there is still a sizable gap exploring the theory of linked fate as it pertains to Latinos. Furthermore, there is a near-absence of literature that critically dissect the roles of different kinds of discrimination as they pertain to perceptions of linked fate amongst Latinos. There are distinct kinds of discrimination that have varying effects on people's psyches and are thus likely to have different effects on perceptions of linked fate. Using data from the 2006 Latino National Survey, this poster groups experiences of discrimination into two categories: political and social, and examines their varying effects on perceptions of linked fate for Latinos in the United States. Results reveal that social discrimination has a considerably stronger positive effect on perceptions of linked fate for Latinos in the United States.

Methods

Data and Independent Variable: To test my hypothesis I am using survey data from the 2006 Latino National Survey. Linked fate is my independent variable and is measured with the survey question: How much does your doing well depend on other Hispanics/Latinos doing well? Responses are on a 1-4 scale.

Dependent Variable: My dependent variables are social and political discrimination. For social discrimination, I use survey questions asking if the respondent has ever been discriminated against at a restaurant or at the workplace (each yes or no questions) and make a 0-2 index aggregating responses. Similarly, for political discrimination, I use survey questions asking if the respondent has ever been discriminated against by police or by housing and make another 0-2 index.

Cronbach's Alpha Test: To test the internal validity of my indices (making sure that the questions in each index are measuring the same concept), I conduct a Cronbach's Alpha Test. Results can range from a 0-1 scale with 1 being the highest internal consistency. My political discrimination index yielded a score of .38 and my social discrimination index yielded a score of .40. These scores are not ideal, but there are also only 2 items in each of the indices which is far from ideal.

Screencast: To test that my two indices are in fact measuring two distinct ideas, an explanatory factor test would be ideal, but I don’t have enough items in my indices. Instead, I create a screencast, which is more of a suggestion of how many variables to include in a model. The “elbow” of the plot suggests that there are two main variables at play which is consistent with our hypothesis.

Findings and Discussion

Below is the multivariable regression with all variables and controls. Social discrimination has a positive and significant relationship with linked fate at p < .005. Political discrimination has a positive, but not significant relationship with linked fate.

References


Discussion: These findings are important for two main reasons. First, finding that discrimination has a significant relationship with Latino linked fate is new. Second, finding that there is a key distinction between social and political discrimination for Latino linked fate further underlines Oskooii’s point in that research concerning discrimination ought to separate discrimination into political discrimination and social discrimination.

Oskooii’s original research was on Muslim-Americans and had opposite findings. In his research, political discrimination had a significant and stronger relationship with linked fate and not social discrimination. This research reinforces the notion that concepts like linked fate do not always operate in the same way across racial lines due the unique histories that every group has.

Future Research: A good start for future research exploring this topic is to include more items in each of the discrimination indices. Having broader indices would provide more internal validity and also allow for an explanatory factor analysis that would then allow us to test each index to make sure they are measuring distinct concepts.