

THE PUBLIC PURPOSE

— ★ *presents* ★ —

**PARADOXES,
PARADIGMS
& JUSTICE.**



**THE FALL 2020 EDITION OF
THE PUBLIC PURPOSE JOURNAL**

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

About the Journal:

The Public Purpose is a peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal presenting the work of American University graduate students from the Departments of Government; Justice, Law, and Criminology; and Public Administration and Policy. Founded in 2003, The Public Purpose is supported by the SPA Graduate Council. In addition to an annual print journal, The Public Purpose also manages a public policy blog (thepublicpurpose.com). The journal is entirely student run and currently has a staff of about 20 students.

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The Public Purpose

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Note:

These pieces were initially collected and edited by the 2019-2020 staff of the Public Purpose Journal in the Spring of 2020 in hopes of releasing our annual print publication. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we had to delay the release of the 2019-2020 print publication and change it to a digital publication. The Fall 2020 PPJ Team would like to extend a huge thank you to the 2019-2020 staff of the Public Purpose Journal and authors who contributed to making this journal become a reality despite the COVID-19 public health pandemic.

FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to present the 18th edition of the Public Purpose Journal. The Public Purpose is an academic journal led by graduate students in American University's School of Public Affairs. We strive to publish work that contributes to the literature of our disciplines. These papers reflect outstanding work on the topics of public policy, public administration, government, justice, law, criminology and terrorism studies. As a student run organization, we are grateful to the Graduate Student Council and the Dean's office for their support.

The papers published here show the range of important topics that our graduate students are tackling in their classes. From analyzing significant domestic policy issues, to reflecting on international events that have affected the global climate of democracy, the work of our students highlighted here show the great depth of issues American University students are passionate about. Our theme, Paradoxes, Paradigms and Justice, is used as a framework to connect our most important topics learned in class to recent events.

As a school committed to public service excellence, we continue to strive for innovation in public policy and administration through learning experiences in and outside the classroom. The work of the Public Purpose Journal to showcase our student's work through a peer review process which allows students to complement their graduate education with co-curricular opportunities. We thank our student writers, editors, and production staff members for their hard work. Additionally, we thank our staff for their work behind-the-scenes and their dedication to the mission of the journal.

Sincerely,

Arsene Frederic, Sandra Mansour, and Erin Williams

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THE PUBLIC PURPOSE

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Health Disparities Experienced by LGBTQ+ Older Adults

By Hannah Diamond
Master of Public Policy

Executive Summary

LGBTQ+ older adults experience health disparities at higher rates than their heteronormative peers. This memo explores interventions aimed at improving health outcomes for LGBTQ+ older adults in long-term care facilities. Specific options include maintaining the status quo, mandating cultural competency trainings for both staff and peers within long-term care facilities, and expanding upon the definition of sex discrimination within Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act.

Utilization of analytical tools, specifically a causal loop diagram, problem definition framework, market failure frameworks, a logic model equipped with assumptions and risks, as well as an outcomes matrix, assist the reader in both understanding specific vulnerabilities that contribute to poor health outcomes for this population, as well as the rationale behind the suggested policy options.

It is predicted that cultural competency training is the most effective policy to reduce the rate of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) based discrimination from both staff and peers, increase SOGI reporting from queer older adults themselves, and ultimately improve health outcomes. Although expanding the legal definition of sex discrimination provides enhanced legal protections that would both reduce discrimination rates and increase SOGI reporting, this option does not equip staff with the education needed to develop tailored health services for queer older adults.

Introduction: Problem Definition and Market Failures

Despite the significant number of LGBTQ+ older adults, as well as future estimates for increased growth, this population remains invisible to much of society (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Kim, 2017, p. 3). Existing research indicates that older adults who identify as LGBTQ+ have poorer health outcomes than their heteronormative peers. Specifically, LGBTQ+ older adults experience “increased prevalence of smoking, poorer mental health and increased functional limitations” (Emlet & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2017, p. 1). Health disparities result in poorer quality of life and shortened life expectancies for this population.

LGBTQ+ older adults live in communities across the United States; researchers estimate that 2.4% of older Americans identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). This percentage encompasses 2.7 million people over the age of 50, with 1.1 million over the age of 65 (Molinari & McSweeney-Feld, 2017, p. 481). U.S. Census data denotes an increase in LGBT older adults: “by 2060, the number of older adults who self-identify as LGBT will reach 20 million” (p. 473). ‘LGBTQ+ older adult’ is an umbrella categorization; failing to divide this heading into smaller subcategories prevents the reader from understanding behavioral factors that contribute to poor health. It is important to understand that various identities within the LGBTQ+ umbrella are more vulnerable than others, with trans, bisexual (Emlet & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2017, p. 1), and older adults of color (SAGE; Movement Advancement Project, 2017, p. 3) experiencing the greatest health disparities. The historical events experienced by older adults, dictated in large part by government action and corresponding societal stigma, contribute to an LGBTQ+ older adult’s level of trust pertaining to healthcare providers, peers, and society at large (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Kim, 2017, p. 3).

Discrimination in long-term care settings has profound implications on the health of LGBTQ+ older adults. Amongst existing research, survey data indicates that 20% of LGBT older adults have been denied medical care (LGBT Older Adults, 2010, p. 9) due to SOGI. Research suggests that fear of discrimination within a healthcare setting is linked to “poorer general health and an increase in disability and depression”

(Emlet & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2017, p. 1). The healthcare industry's inability to address the needs of LGBTQ+ older adults exemplifies the market failure of barriers to entry; this failure prohibits a significant market from accessing healthcare services needed to prevent both the onset and severity of illness.

Research conveys that 23% of LGBTQ+ older adults have experienced physical or verbal abuse from their peers, while an additional 14% reported experiencing abuse from staff (LGBT Older Adults, 2010, p. 9). Due to fear of discrimination, LGBTQ+ older adults are less likely to disclose their sexual orientation to both peers and healthcare providers. Underreporting of identity results in the market failure of information asymmetry; as a result of this failure, LGBTQ+ older adults are less likely to receive the services and support they need for their specific identities. Additionally, because they have not disclosed their status, the LGBTQ+ older adult population remains difficult to quantify. The government's failure to target this population, due to the population's invisibility, makes advocating for research funding and systemic change increasingly challenging.

LGBTQ+ older adults experience heightened levels of financial insecurity. Prior to the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 2015, LGBTQ+ older adults were unable to access benefits such as a partner's Social Security or pension. If a partner passed away prior to 2015, the surviving spouse still may not be able to access their partner's benefits. Many LGBTQ+ older adults, due to discriminatory workplace practices, suffer from lower than average earnings (SAGE; Movement Advancement Project, 2017, pp. 10-12). Approximately 26% of older adults ages 65 and older live at or below 200% of the federal poverty line (Emlet C. A, 2016, p. 3).

LGBTQ+ older adults have less social and familial support than their peers; "population studies indicate that LGBTQ+ older adults have more limited family ties; lesbian, gay, and bisexual elders are less likely to be married than heterosexual adults, less likely to have a child, and more likely to live alone" (Molinari & McSweeney-Feld, 2017, p. 481). Due to limited social support, this population experiences high levels of social isolation, which research suggests is a direct link to increased levels of cognitive decline and depression. As a consequence of morbidities associated with social isolation, combined with limited income, LGBTQ+ older adults experience increased risk of nursing home placement (Molinari & McSweeney-Feld, 2017, p. 481).

LGBTQ+ older adults encompass one of the most vulnerable population groups within American society. Lack of equal opportunity, caused by discrimination, has resulted in the distributive justice failure of inequity of outcome for LGBT older adults. Research shows that LGBTQ+ older adults experience higher rates of mental illness and morbidities than their peers. This inequity is caused by the negative health implications of poverty, inadequate accessibility measures on behalf of service providers, and fear-based behavioral modifications from LGBTQ+ older adults themselves.

Policy Options

The outcomes matrix is an evaluative tool utilized by policy analysts to directly compare potential policy options; criteria within the matrix, composed of both conceptual and operational measures, provide targets for option comparison. The first policy option, maintenance of the status quo, acts as a control to better understand the impact of proposed policy interventions. The status quo would introduce no additional interventions to reduce health disparities amongst LGBTQ+ older adults. For the purposes of this memo, due to the severity of the health disparities discussed, the status quo was not considered as a realistic policy option.

The second policy option would expand upon existing legal protections defined within Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act. Federal law does not explicitly prohibit discrimination based upon gender identity and sexual orientation (Prohibited Employment Policies/Practices, n.d). However, specific to healthcare, Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) establishes "that an individual shall not be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination" due to sex by any federally funded or monitored health program (Office for Civil Rights, 2018). The existing law

prohibits discrimination based upon gender identity, an individual's sex, and sex stereotyping. The law indicates that discrimination based upon sexual orientation is a potential form of sexual stereotyping; cases are evaluated on an individual basis to determine whether they meet the criteria for sex stereotyping, which the law prohibits (Office for Civil Rights, 2018). In order to ensure adequate protections, the law must be amended to explicitly include sexual orientation as a form of sex discrimination.

The third policy option will mandate that both direct care workers and residents within long-term care facilities participate in audience specific, cultural competency training about SOGI and the unique needs of LGBTQ+ older adults. Although Section 1557 of the ACA prohibits discrimination based upon gender identity, reporting from LGBTQ+ older adults indicate that discrimination continues to occur within long-term care settings (LGBT Older Adults, 2010, p. 9). To ensure adequate protections, this policy option expands upon existing training requirements for direct care workers within Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) contracted facilities; previous requirements did not explicitly include materials on the unique needs of LGBTQ+ older adults (CMS, 2016, p. 502).

SAGECare is the training and consulting division of Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE), the country's largest and oldest advocacy organization on behalf of LGBTQ+ older adults. SAGECare has championed the use of cultural competency trainings to improve quality of life for queer older adults (SAGECare, 2019). SAGECare trainings focus on improving interactions with queer older adults, and subject specific topics such as the health needs of queer older adults, prevention of bullying between older adults, information about minority populations within the LGBTQ+ umbrella, and overall bias prevention. It is important to note that the existing SAGECare trainings directly address areas previously outlined within the problem definition. Due to the organization's comprehension of the challenges faced by queer older adults, it is suggested that cultural competency trainings follow best practices established by SAGECare.

Policy Evaluation

The logic model, an additional tool used by analysts, depicts the best-case scenario of an intervention. In combination with the option's associated assumptions and risks, the logic model assists analysts in understanding potential policy pitfalls. The accompanying logic model shown in Appendix B outlines the use of cultural competency training as a method to improve health outcomes amongst LGBTQ+ older adults.

The logic model asserts that recipients of cultural competency training will learn the material, and as a result of their learning, will provide inclusive health services to LGBTQ+ older adults. The model also determines that trainings will reduce SOGI based discrimination, as ideally, previous prejudice will be addressed, internally grappled with, and dispelled.

The model assumes that as a result of cultural competency training, that trainees will pay attention, retain, and modify their behaviors. It is assumed that recipients possess the evaluative skills needed to identify their own prejudices, and then have the motivation to integrate the material into their daily lives. If risks surrounding the training are actualized, recipients will fail to learn, and/or act upon learned material, resulting in a lack of behavioral change. As a result, rates of discrimination will not decrease, and healthcare services will not become more inclusive. Because a behavioral change must occur for discrimination rates to be reduced, this critical and evaluative measure has been included as an effectiveness criteria within the shell of the corresponding outcomes matrix.

If behavioral modifications do occur, the logic model assumes that these will benefit queer older adults. It is possible, however, that the training could produce a negative backlash; instead of benefiting older adults, training recipients could deepen their prejudice towards the target population, and levels of

discrimination could increase. Therefore, the potential for increased discrimination is considered a side effect and is captured within the evaluative shell of the outcomes matrix.

The logic models states that if healthcare services become more inclusive, due to a positive behavioral change, then LGBTQ+ older adults will not be denied services due to SOGI. The model also asserts that if LGBTQ+ older adults get the specific services required by their identities (a feat made possible by a positive behavioral change amongst trainees), then morbidity rates amongst the target population will decrease. Yet another evaluative tool of a policy's impact, the measure of decreased morbidity rates is included as an effectiveness criteria within the outcomes matrix shell.

Decreasing morbidity rates hinges on the assumption that long-term care staff are the sole determinants of care provisions for residents. Insurance companies are one of the key determinants of care, as they have the ultimate ability to decide which services will be covered. This is especially true for low income populations. Because the insurance provider is outside the scope of the training recipient population, it is possible that services will be denied even if the healthcare facility is making an earnest effort to provide inclusive care.

If discrimination rates decrease, the logic model states that LGBTQ+ older adults will be more likely to disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity to healthcare providers. The model assumes that discrimination is the sole factor of lower disclosure rates amongst queer older adults. This assumption negates the fact that other factors, such as lived experience, could have a greater impact on one's decision not to disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity. The risk associated with this assumption is continued underreporting of SOGI.

Theoretically, if risks surrounding reporting are not actualized, increased availability of SOGI data will equip researchers and advocates with the quantitative material needed to enhance advocacy efforts. Reporting of SOGI data, an effectiveness criteria, will allow researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the population's needs. Utilizing this data, researchers will be able to focus their analysis on methods for improved quality of care. Availability of data will demonstrate to politicians that queer older adults live within their jurisdictions, and consequently need their advocacy. Even if the data becomes available, the logic model assumes that researchers and advocates will use the data to improve conditions for queer older adults. The model functions under the assumption that researchers will analyze the data to improve health outcomes for this population group. This model also assumes that, upon receipt of the data, politicians and people in power will alter their own behaviors and advocacy priorities. Unfortunately, even with the existence of data, politicians may not alter their advocacy priorities and researchers may choose not to analyze the needs of queer older adults. People of color, bisexual, and transgender persons experience the greatest health disparities amongst LGBTQ+ older adults. The equity criteria of the outcomes matrix shell include operational measures aimed at capturing this policy's effect on vulnerable populations.

Policy Comparison

Predicting the potential effectiveness of cultural competency training requires an understanding of the cultural competence field. Within healthcare, cultural and linguistic competence are considered essential to "access, utilization, and quality of care" (Goode et al., 2016, p. 7). However, existing research on the effectiveness of culturally competent care to improve health outcomes is limited (Truong et al., 2016, p. 2). A review of published articles on cultural competency from 2000 through 2012 established a weak association between cultural competence interventions and improved patient outcomes (Truong et al., 2014, p. 15). Evaluative challenges, specifically a lack of a standardized definition of cultural competent care and inadequate evaluative tools, hinder researchers' ability to understand whether intervention methods (trainings) are effective (Henderson et al., 2018, p. 1) for reducing health disparities.

Therefore, it is challenging for analysts to predict whether cultural competency trainings will reduce discrimination rates and improve health outcomes.

However, researchers discovered a positive relationship between cultural competence interventions and improved patient satisfaction and health outcomes among the few studies that possess data both before and after interventions, and have participated in thorough evaluations (Truong et al., 2014, p. 8). Using this research as a foundation for future predictions, training models, such as those already established by SAGECare, will both decrease overall discrimination rates and improve health outcomes for LGBTQ+ older adults (SAGECare, 2019). Specifically, if a patient's overall satisfaction is a direct reflection of the patient's evaluation of both staff and services received, it is understandable that increased satisfaction would include decreased discrimination rates from both staff and peers. And if discrimination rates decrease, it is believed that SOGI reporting will increase amongst queer older adults. Additionally, as a result of cultural competency trainings, staff will be educated about the specific health needs of queer older adults and therefore better equipped to deliver tailored health services for this population.

Analysis of annual reports to Congress from the Office of Civil Rights was conducted to predict the potential impact of an expanded definition of sex discrimination. The Office of Civil Rights is responsible for investigating discrimination reports, and if criteria are met, opening cases that constitute the legal definition of discrimination (HHS, 2016). Prior to implementation of the ACA, an Office of Civil Rights annual report from year 2012 noted that a mere thirteen discrimination cases were opened (Department of Homeland Security, 2012, p. 33). Following the implementation of the majority of the ACA in 2014, opened discrimination cases increased to twenty-seven in 2014, twenty in 2015, thirty-one cases in 2016, and thirty cases in 2017 (Department of Homeland Security, 2013 p. 29, 2014 p. 24, 2015 p. 33, 2016 p. 31, 2017 p. 36). The nearly 225% increase in reporting between 2012 and 2017 demonstrates that Section 1557 of the ACA has increased discrimination reporting and is an effective means of protection.

Therefore, it is probable that by expanding the legal definition of sex discrimination to include sexual orientation, discrimination reporting would increase, and overall rates of SOGI based discrimination would consequently decrease. Due to decreased discrimination rates, denial of services because of SOGI will decrease, and health outcomes will improve for LGBTQ+ older adults. However, major limitations exist concerning expanding the definition of sex discrimination. Older adults experience gender discrimination at rates much higher than the reports opened by the Office of Civil Rights. Therefore, even if the definition of sex discrimination is expanded to provide more robust protections, accessibility barriers surrounding filing a discrimination complaint may prove to be insurmountable. It is feared that difficulties would be incurred at a disproportionate rate amongst the most vulnerable individuals within the LGBTQ+ older adult umbrella.

Although the expanded definition will provide enhanced legal protections that will ultimately reduce SOGI based care denials, this policy option will provide staff with no additional knowledge of the unique health needs of queer older adults. Therefore, although enhanced legal protection will decrease discrimination from staff and peers, nuanced care needs for this population may not be realized. As a result, health disparities will continue to exist.

Costs

Evaluative costs, both to establish and maintain the policy, are captured within the shell of the outcomes matrix. According to the most recent Centers for Medicare and Medicaid publicly available data, it is estimated that 15,634 nursing homes existed in 2015 (CMS, 2015, p. 1). On average, it is estimated that each nursing facility will need at least four hours of in person SAGECare training per year. With an understanding that four hours of training costs \$2500 (Abrahms, 2016), this amounts to a total

start up cost of \$39 million. Per existing nursing regulations, this option maintains the current practice of having long-term care facilities incur all costs associated with establishing and administering trainings (CMS, 2016, p. 502). For comparison, set up costs associated with expanding the existing ACA definition would include costs associated with lobbying, litigating, and advocating for the definition's augmentation. CMS is currently tasked with regulating and implementing regulation for CMS contracted nursing homes. State survey, licensing and certification agencies ensure compliance on a state level. These agencies frequently report to CMS about each nursing home's compliance. If adherence is a concern, CMS and the state agencies work together to mitigate the issue (Walshe, 2001). Similarly, the Office of Civil Rights is tasked with ensuring compliance for Section 1557 of the ACA. Therefore, additional staff for CMS, state level agencies, and the Office of Civil rights will be needed to ensure compliance with both policy options. The cost of additional staff would be incurred by both federal and state governments.

Conclusion / Recommendation

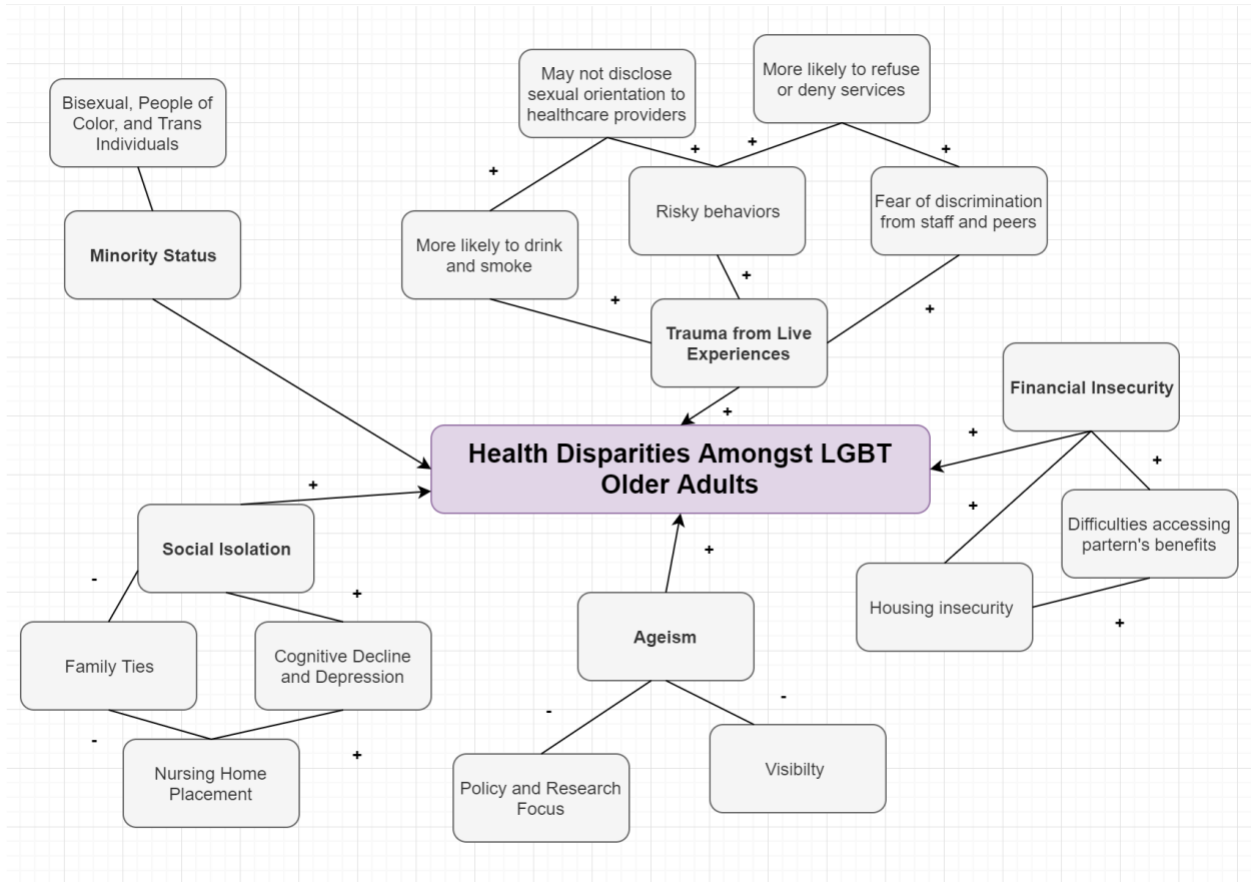
Cultural competency training should become mandatory for both peers and staff within long-term care facilities to reduce health disparities amongst LGBTQ+ older adults. Cultural competency training will reduce the rate of SOGI based discrimination from both staff and peers, increase SOGI reporting from queer older adults themselves, and ultimately improve health outcomes for LGBTQ+ older adults. It is believed that the SAGECare specific cultural competency training option most directly addresses the systemic factors that contribute to health disparities amongst LGBTQ+ older adults. Due to the limited amount of research surrounding cultural competence and improved health outcomes, there exists the need for more robust data and evaluative tools. Therefore, it will be required that data is gathered on both patient satisfaction and health status prior to the intervention. Once cultural competency training has been implemented, a standardized and inclusive evaluative tool should be utilized across all intervention sites to allow for further analysis of the intervention's effectiveness.

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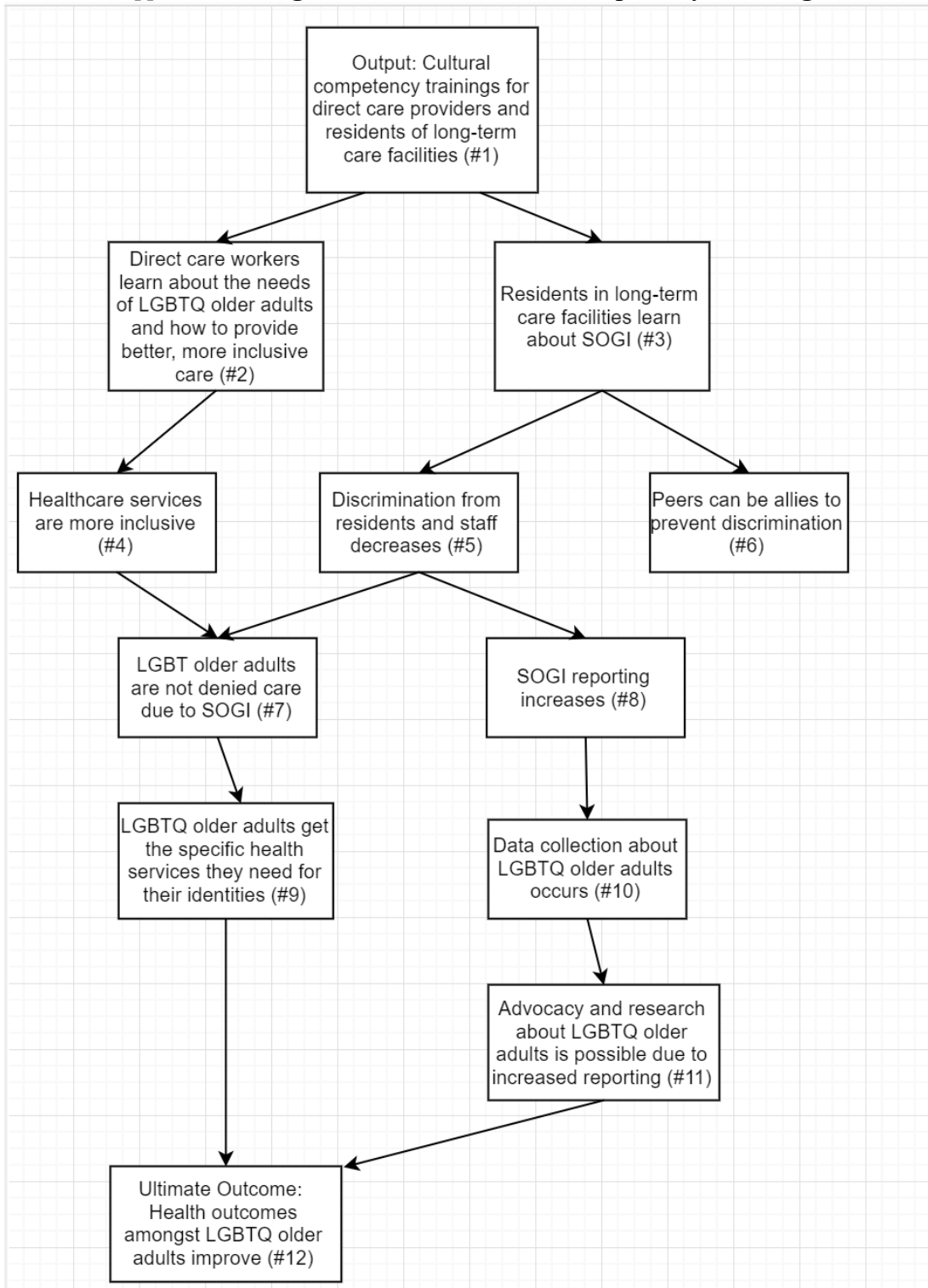
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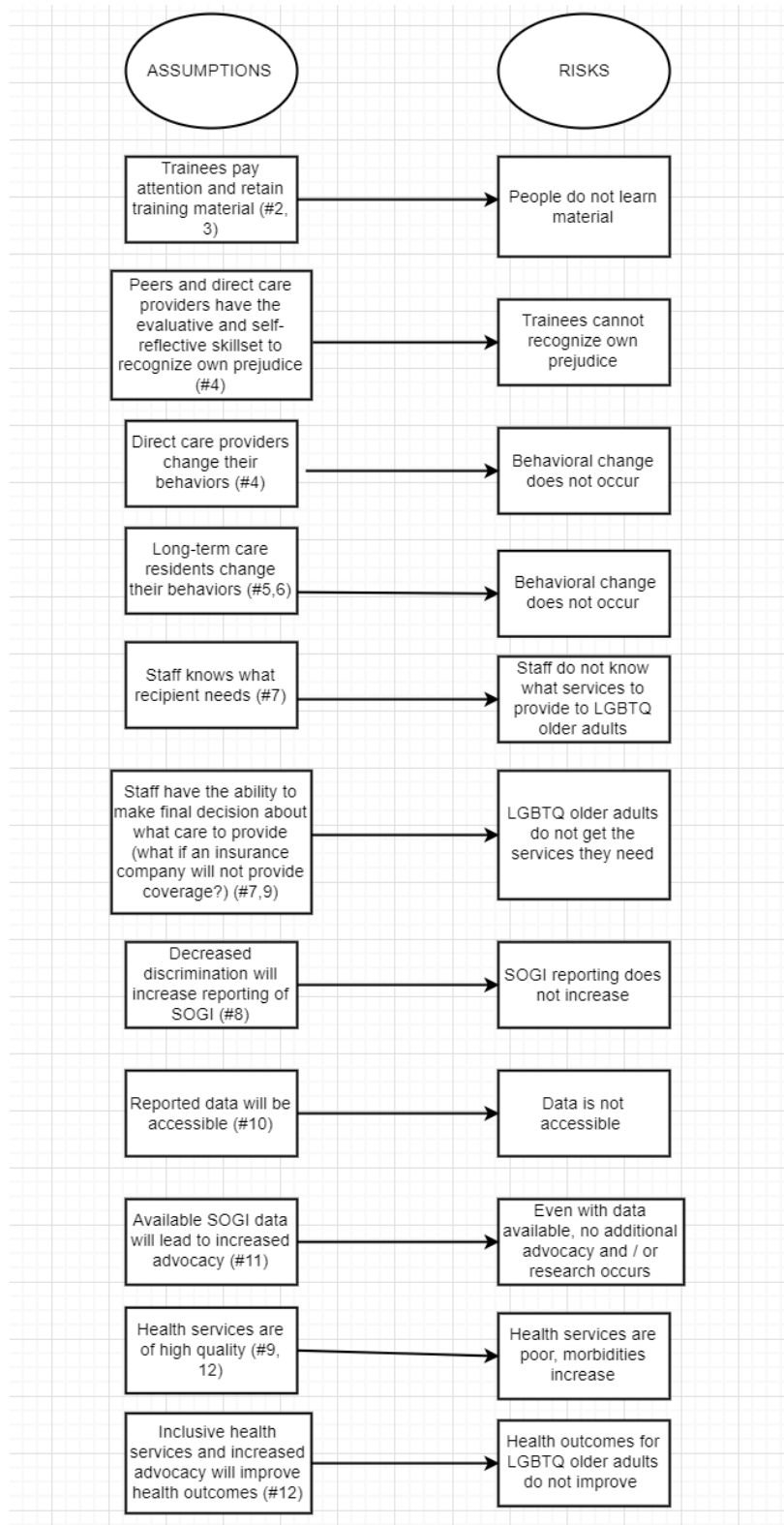
Appendix A - Causal Loop Diagram



Appendix B - Logic Model for Cultural Competency Trainings



Appendix B Continued - Assumptions and Risks for Logic Model



Appendix C - Outcomes Matrix

GOAL	CRITERIA	POLICY OPTION #1	POLICY OPTION #2	POLICY OPTION #3
		STATUS QUO	MANDATE CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAININGS FOR DIRECT CARE WORKERS AND RESIDENTS OF LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES	SEXUAL ORIENTATION AS A FORM OF SEX DISCRIMINATION WITHIN SECTION 1557 OF THE ACA
EFFECTIVENESS	SOGI DISCRIMINATION (-)	23% of queer older adults has experienced SOGI based discrimination from peers; 14% from staff	Discrimination (-)	Discrimination (-)
	SOGI REPORTING (+)	Underreporting of SOGI information	Reporting (+)	Reporting (+)
	MORBIDITY RATES (-)	Increased prevalence of smoking, poorer mental health, and increased functional limitations	Morbidity Rates (-)	Uncertain May decrease due to discrimination (-). Effectiveness Limited due to lack of additional knowledge for staff
EQUITY	Effect on people of color, trans older adults, and bisexual older adults	Marginalized populations most vulnerable to discrimination and receipt of insufficient care	Morbidity Rates (-) due to tailored health services specific to individual's identities	Enhanced legal protections Effectiveness limited by accessibility challenges
COST	SETUP COSTS	None	15634 (# of nursing homes) x \$2500 (cost of 4 hours of SAGECare training)= \$39 million	Lobbying, litigating, and advocacy costs
	MAINTENANCE COSTS	None	Additional staff for CMS and state survey, licensing and certification agencies	Additional staff for Office of Civil Rights
SIDE EFFECTS	DISCRIMINATION (-)	No change	Initial backlash could discrimination (+) Fear of CMS penalty will reduce rates overtime	Initial backlash could discrimination (+) Legal protections should decrease rates overtime
	# OF PEER ALLIES INCREASE (+)	No change	# of allies (+)	# of allies remains the same

Can A Higher Minimum Wage Rate Help Close The Persistent Racial Wage And Earnings Gaps?

By Kimberly McKee
Master of Public Policy

Abstract

In this paper, I estimate the effect of minimum wage increases on the racial wage and earnings gaps between black and white workers in the United States, during the years 2000 to 2004. Using fixed-effects and a state-year trend model, I find that an increase to the minimum wage is associated with a 3.6% increase in black workers' wages, almost double the increase experienced by white men, suggesting a narrowing of the racial wage gap. Conversely, white workers' overall earnings increased by 1.1%, compared to only 0.78% for black workers. This result suggests that the minimum wage does not reduce overall racial economic disparities. I conclude that the overall benefits workers may receive from minimum wage increases are likely to be concentrated among white men.

Introduction

Inequality and racial disparities have been long-standing issues in the United States, but two movements over the past decade have shown a rising consciousness around these issues, along with increasing grassroots activism to address them. Six years ago, the Black Lives Matter movement began (Black, n.d.) and brought with it a changing national discourse regarding inequality between black and white Americans. Just one year earlier the "Fight for \$15" formed as a movement to raise minimum wage rates to a "living wage" (Fight, n.d.). A snapshot of how these two issues intersect can be seen in the following statistics: African Americans make up about 13% of the US population (U.S. Census, n.d.) but they are about 23% of the US population that is poor (Kaiser, 2019). A person working full-time while making the federal minimum wage, \$7.25, will only earn a little more than the poverty level for a single adult (ASPA, n.d.). African American workers are disproportionately impacted by the low minimum wage (Huizar & Gebreselassie, 2016).

This memo explores whether increasing the minimum wage in the early 2000s improved the economic well-being of low-wage workers while reducing racial economic gaps. To answer this question, I tested whether prior state-level minimum wage increases have narrowed the income gap between black and white Americans. I analyzed the differences in income, as measured by hourly wages and weekly earnings, between workers of different races during the period from 2000 to 2004. During this time, the federal government maintained its minimum level at \$5.15 per hour, yet 12 states implemented their own increases, allowing for comparisons at the point of implementation (see figure 1 and table 1).

Figure 1: Map of States that Increased their Effective Minimum Wage, 2000-2004

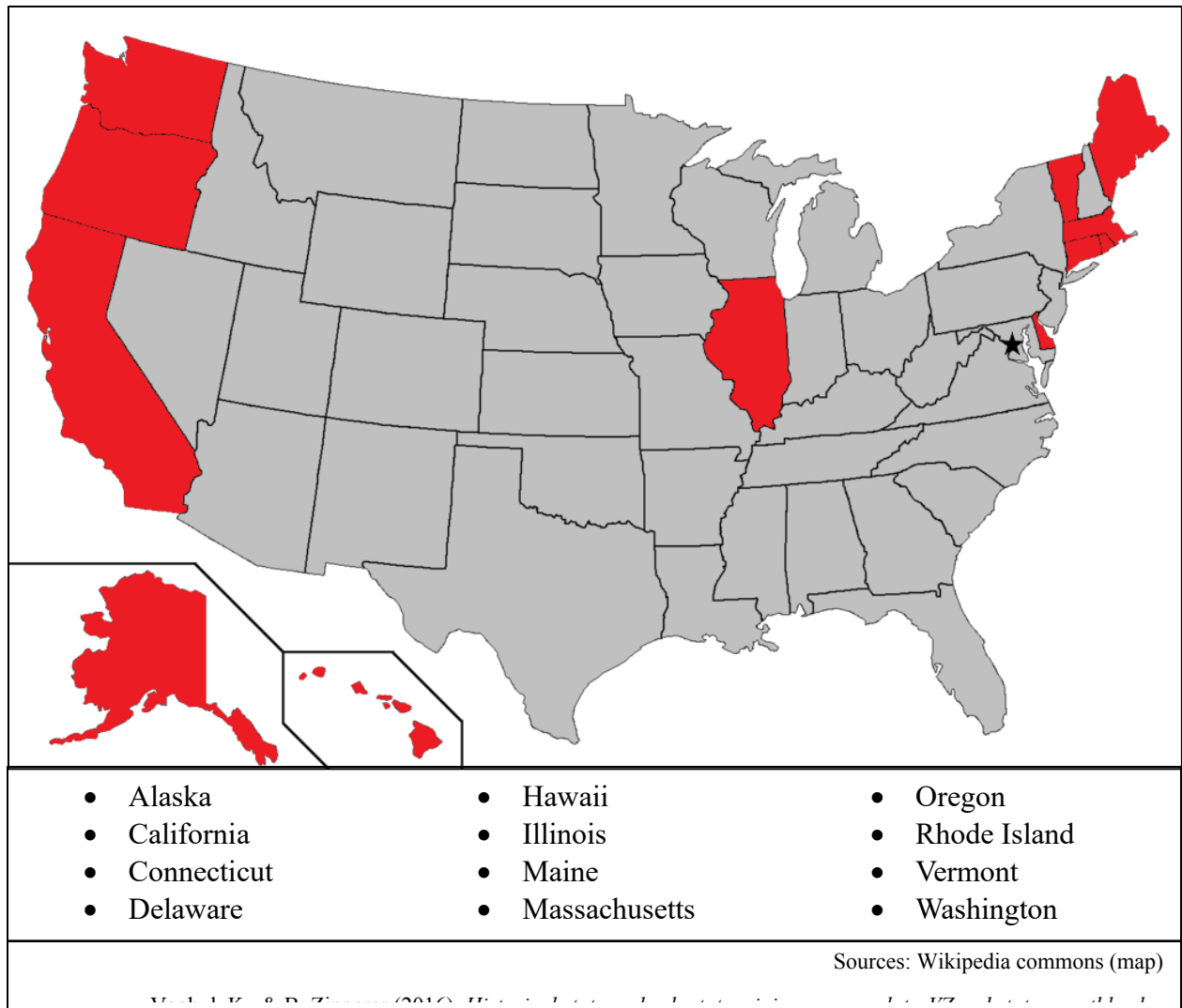


Table 1: Schedule of Effective Minimum Wage Increases for Treatment States, 2000-2004

State	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total Increases
Alaska	—	—	—	\$1.50	—	1
California	—	\$0.50	\$0.50	—	—	2
Connecticut	—	\$0.25	\$0.30	\$0.20	\$0.20	4
Delaware	\$0.50 (October)	—	—	—	—	1
Hawaii	—	—	\$0.50	\$0.50	—	2
Illinois	—	—	—	—	\$0.35	1
Maine	—	—	\$0.60	\$0.50	\$0.10 (October)	3

Massachusetts	—	\$0.75	—	—	—	1
Oregon	—	—	—	\$0.40	\$0.15	2
Rhode Island	\$0.50 (September)	—	—	—	\$0.60	2
Vermont	—	\$0.50	—	—	\$0.50	2
Washington	—	\$0.22	\$0.18	\$0.11	\$0.15	4

Note: All minimum wage increases were enacted in January of each year, unless otherwise noted in parentheses. The bolded cells indicate the first year the state implemented their first increase for the sample period. The minimum wage increases in this table are the nominal, effective increases that each state implemented.

Source: Vaghul and Zipperer (2016)

I hypothesized, first, that the minimum wage increases would decrease the difference in hourly wages between races. If a state increased its minimum wage, it would push wages up at the low end of the income distribution but not directly affect wages above the new minimum. Because black workers generally earn less than white workers (Hernandez et al., 2019), with over half of black workers but only a third of white workers paid less than \$15 per hour, lifting the wage floor could move the wages of black workers closer to where wages are for white workers, at least in the short-term. Second, I hypothesized that minimum wage increases would widen the overall earnings gap through disparate impacts to work hours. If increased wages cause businesses to lower their payroll expenses, they may decide to lower workers' hours or lay-off workers, offsetting workers' increased wages. Those most vulnerable to such staffing decisions will likely be people of color and other historically marginalized populations (Kalev, 2014). Therefore, the costs of government-mandated higher wages will likely be borne by black workers' decreased total earnings.

Using a difference-in-differences methodology, I found evidence to support both of my hypotheses. Wages increased over the sample period for both white and black workers, with whites' wages increasing by a larger percentage by 2004, while accounting for inflation. The implementation, however, is associated with a larger increase to black workers' wages. At the same time, after accounting for inflation and the way that earnings were already trending, white workers experienced a greater positive effect to their overall weekly earnings associated with an increase to the minimum wage than did black workers, expanding the racial earnings gap. I conclude that evidence offers support to both of my hypotheses and that the minimum wage is likely not the best tool for narrowing racial economic gaps. The body of this memo is divided into four sections. Section I offers a background on how the minimum wage and racial wage gap relate. It also surveys current literature on the impact of the minimum wage on workers' employment and their economic outcomes. Section II explains the data and methodology used in this study. Section III of the memo presents my results. Finally, Section IV concludes the paper and reflects on a few policy implications.

Background

Minimum Wage and the Racial Wage Gap

The federal minimum wage was originally established by The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 for the "maintenance of the minimum standard of living necessary for health, efficiency, and general well-being of workers" (DOL, n.d.). Over time, the federal minimum level has not kept up with this standard. Originally, the law set the level to \$0.25 per hour (or \$9,040 a year in 2017 dollars; CPI, n.d.). The minimum wage then slowly increased over the years, until it peaked in real terms at \$1.60 per hour in 1968 (\$20,600 a year in 2017 dollars). However, since 1968 the effective rate has been falling. It is currently set at \$7.25 per hour, or about \$15,000 per year (in 2017 dollars) for a full-time worker (Zipperer, 2018).

The current state of the minimum wage is a concern for this study because, as Wilson (2016) explained, "minimum wage laws have a lot to do with patterns in black-white wage inequality at the

lower end of the wage distribution” (p.4), because the proportion of all black workers making minimum wage is larger than the proportion of white workers earning the same. In other words, as the minimum wage has failed to keep up with inflation, its low rate has disproportionately impacted African American workers. In 2016, more than 1 out of 5 African Americans were living in poverty in the U.S., compared to less than 1 out of 10 whites (Gould & Schieder, 2018). This disparity is consistent with the fact that more than half of African Americans make less than \$15 per hour (Huizar & Gebreselassie, 2016), compared to only about 36% of whites (Zillman, 2015).

Dube (2017) found evidence that increasing the minimum wage improved family incomes for those in the bottom 20% of US households, which includes a disproportionate percentage of black families. Similarly, the Economic Policy Institute found that increasing the minimum wage by 10% lowers poverty rates among black and Hispanic Americans (Zipperer, 2018). These two studies indicate that higher minimum wage rates can improve the economic situation of black workers. I used these findings as the basis of my study, to explore how minimum wage increases impact the economic situation of black workers in relation to that of white workers.

The Minimum Wage Debate

While researchers on racial wage differences advocate for raising the minimum wage, minimum wage experts have long debated the minimum wage’s true effect on workers’ overall earnings and on their unemployment rates. Its supporters see it as a tool for ensuring that workers are paid a fair wage for their labor. Its critics, though, view it as an ill-conceived idea that distorts the market, driving up prices for consumers while ultimately harming workers. The arguments have carried over to questions about what sample to use and what methodology to employ. While these debates have not been fully settled, current research has tended toward indicating that minimum wage increases are likely to have no effect or a very slight positive effect for the average low-wage worker, though the most vulnerable among them may be the ones bearing the brunt of any negative effects.

In 2015 and 2016, the city of Seattle enacted two minimum wage increases, first from \$9.47 to \$11 per hour, then from \$11 to \$13 per hour. Jardim et al. (2017) and Reich, Allegretto, and Godoey (2017) both used synthetic controls to analyze the impact of these increases on the city’s workers, yet their results differed. Jardim et al. (2017) used a sample of all low-wage workers and found that the first increase had no real impact on their earnings. The second increase, though, did: low-wage workers experienced a 6.6% decrease in their income. Reich, Allegretto, and Godoey, on the other hand, limited their research to the food service industry, since it “is an intense user of minimum wage workers,” arguing that “if wage and employment effects occur, they should be detectable in this industry” (2017, 2). In contrast to Jardim et al.’s findings, Reich, Allegretto, and Godoey found that the minimum wage increases had a positive effect on wages and no effect on employment levels. The two studies’ contrasting results are reconciled if one considers that while the minimum wage positively impacted restaurant workers, other industries experienced greater negative effects.

Just one year later, though, Jardim et al. (2018) revisited their study. This time they used a difference-in-differences-in-differences approach. Their new study revealed two interesting insights. First, they found that Seattle’s low-wage workers experienced “Ashenfelter dips” just before the first minimum wage increase. These dips are unexpected declines in the variable of interest shortly before a treatment goes into effect, leading to misleading results by overstating the effect size (Ashenfelter, 1978). Second, contrary to their previous study, they found that low-wage workers experienced a slight benefit to their overall earnings from mandated increases.

Neumark, Schweitzer, and Wascher (2004) also studied the impact of minimum wage increases on all low-wage workers, though they used a national sample spanning from 1979 through 1997. Similar to Jardim et al.’s results, Neumark, Schweitzer, and Wascher found that workers may have experienced some boost to their earnings in the short-term; however, within two years those gains were erased. They also found that in the first year there was a negative impact to low-wage employment levels. The authors balanced their findings by theorizing that “employers [were] first laying off part-time workers, reducing fixed costs of labor, and then later adjusting hours downward” (p.443). Therefore, the target population,

low-wage workers, were ultimately harmed by the increases. It is important to note, though, that Neumark, Schweitzer, and Wascher's study relied heavily on lagged effects, an approach not taken in my study.

Dube, Lester, and Reich (2010) took a completely unique approach to answering the question of minimum wage effects by using a cross-border methodology. Looking at other research from the field, the authors contended that previous methods produced unreliable results. Instead, they claimed that their method, matching counties from states who had increased their minimum wage at least once with bordering counties from states that did not, eliminated "spurious negative effects due to spatial heterogeneity...and omitted variable bias" (p. 945). Utilizing this cross-state discontinuity design, the authors analyzed the impact of higher minimum wages on restaurant workers nationwide. Their results showed a positive impact on workers' wages, while not detecting any cost to job numbers. The Dube, Lester, and Reich approach is a very compelling one as it is more able to compare workers who are closer to being equal in expectation and should be explored further. Unfortunately, the scope of this paper does not allow for a similar strategy.

Data and Methodology

The Data

My data is from the Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted by the Census Bureau (Flood et al., 2018). I used monthly data from the years 2000 through 2004, resulting in 60 units of time. One of the benefits of this time period is the stability in the federal minimum wage, at \$5.15 per hour, contrasted by several states increasing the minimum wage rates for their residents. During this five-year period there were two cities, San Francisco and Santa Fe, that raised their minimum wage above their state levels in 2004. Because I was focusing on the minimum wage at the state-level, I did not include their new minimum wage level, instead coding them according to their state's rate.

I limited the sample to only non-Hispanic white and non-Hispanic black men, following the data selection of much of the literature on racial wage gaps, such as Beyer and Charles (2018) and Chandra (2003). I further limited my sample to adult men without a bachelor's degree or higher. The reasoning behind this is that people who do not have bachelor's degrees tend to work in lower paying jobs than those with advanced degrees (Torpey, 2018; Ross and Bateman, 2019). Additionally, I restricted my sample to only civilians and eliminated the self-employed or unpaid family workers. Finally, I adjusted all wage and earnings data to 2004 dollars to account for inflation.

Minimum Wage Laws

During the years 2000 through 2004, the federal minimum wage was set at \$5.15 per hour and had been at that level since the second half of 1997 (DOL, n.d.). At the same time, though, states were able to set their own minimums. However, if the state's rate was set below the federal level then the federal rate was the effective rate for the state. For example, in 2000 Kansas had their minimum wage rate set at \$2.65 (DOL, n.d.). Because it was below the federal standard, workers in Kansas earned at least the federal rate of \$5.15. Thus, Kansas' nominal minimum was \$2.65 but its effective minimum was \$5.15. During the period being examined in this study, there were 12 states that increased their effective minimum wage: Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington (Vaghul & Zipperer, 2016). These states are considered treated states, because they received the "treatment" of at least one minimum wage increase (see Figure 1 for a map of the treated states). My study is centered around the impact of just the first minimum wage increase on workers' wages and earnings in each. Connecticut and Massachusetts entered the sample period with a new minimum wage rate, having raised theirs in January 2000, but because the sample also starts with January 2000, their new rate did not constitute a change during the study period and so was not considered a "first increase."

The remaining states are ones that did not raise their effective minimum wage during the time period of 2000 through 2004. Because they did not receive the "treatment" of a minimum wage increase, they acted

as my control group. All of the control states had effective minimum wages equal to the federal level, except for the District of Columbia (DC). Although DC had a minimum wage level that was above the federal level, it is still considered part of the control group because it did not change its minimum during the sampled time period.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 offer a look at the differences between the treatment and control groups. States were divided into two categories: those who increased their minimum wages at some point between 2000 and 2004 (the treatment group), and those who did not (the control group). The median population for the control group (5.5 million) was higher than in the treatment group (3.6 million). The group of control states also had a higher median GDP and a lower median unemployment rate. In other words, on average, the control states had more people living in them and a better performing economy than the treated states.

Tables 3a and b reflect how earned income changed over time, from 2000 to 2004. For the control states, both white and black working men's hours at their primary jobs decreased by almost the same amount, 1.4% and 1.5% respectively, from 2000 to 2004. The hourly wages for men of both races increased over the same time period, again by around the same rate. The weekly racial earnings gap between the two groups of men, though, expanded by 0.7 percentage points from 2000 to 2004.

For states that enacted minimum wage increases the result was similar — a larger racial earnings gap at the end of the sample period — but the effect was larger. For men in these states, the earnings gap was driven by disparate effects on both hours worked and hourly wages. Both sets of men experienced reductions in their weekly work hours, but black men's hours were cut by more. At the same time, white and black men, on average, were paid more in 2004 than they were in 2000, even when adjusted for inflation; but wages grew by a larger percentage of their previous pay for white men, about 2.5%, compared to 1.7% for black men. Ultimately, the difference in earnings between white and black men increased by 0.9 percentage points. My first hypothesis, regarding the racial wage gap, is not supported by these statistics, but my hypothesis regarding the racial earnings wage potentially is.

Finally, the labor force participation rates from 2000 to 2004 dropped more for black men than for white men, and more for men in treated states than in control states. Among white men in states that did not change their effective minimum wage rate, participation rates in the labor market dropped 1.88 percentage points from 2000 to 2004. In the states that enacted a minimum wage increase, their rates dropped by 2.57 percentage points. Among black men, the cut to their labor force participation was deeper. In the control states, 2.18 percentage fewer men were active in the labor force at the end of the sample period. In the treated states, their active labor force lost 4.16 percentage points. These disparate changes over time reflect the points made by Beyer and Charles (2018) and Chandra (2003), that black men are more negatively affected by changes in the labor market.

Methodology

One of the biggest challenges that my data presents is that the minimum wage increases do not all occur at the same time. Therefore, I had to find a model that could account for the staggered implementation. I used a model similar to the one used by Anderson, Crost, and Rees (2014) in their analysis of the effect of Kansas wet laws on violent crime, in which their data also had implementations that varied across time and location.

To estimate the relationship between minimum wage implementation and wages I used the following difference-in-differences model:

$$\ln(\text{wage})_{ist} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Implemented}_{ist} + \beta_2 X_{ist} + \theta_s + \delta_t + \epsilon_{ist}$$

which was clustered at the state level.

The variable of interest, *Implemented*, indicates if a state implemented a minimum wage increase in a particular month and year. If the state raised their minimum wage more than once, only the first

increase was counted. For example, Connecticut increased their minimum wage four times during the period from 2001 to 2004; but for this study, I only used the first increase in January 2001 to indicate that an increase was implemented. All months before January 2001 have a value of 0, and the month of January and thereafter are 1.

The variable X is a set of controls for each individual. These controls include age, age squared, highest level of education attained, occupation, and whether the individual is a full- or part-time worker. I also incorporated state fixed effects, represented by θ ; and year fixed effects are represented by δ .

I employed this model separately for white and black men to estimate the impact a minimum wage increase had on each racial group. If the coefficient on my variable of interest, *Implemented*, was larger for black workers than for white workers, it could indicate that a minimum wage increase is associated with a more positive impact on black workers' wages than for white, and thus with a decrease in the racial wage gap.

For the earnings gap I used a similar methodology:

$$\ln(\text{earnings})_{ist} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Implemented}_{ist} + \beta_2 X_{ist} + \theta_s + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{ist}$$

The only difference in the earnings model was my dependent variable, the log of week earnings instead of the log of hourly wages.

Finally, I applied the same difference-in-differences formula to weekly work hours:

$$\text{Hours}_{ist} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Implemented}_{ist} + \beta_2 X_{ist} + \theta_s + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{ist}$$

Just as with the other two models, I controlled for age, age squared, education, and industry. I also incorporated state and year fixed effects, along with state-year trends.

Results

Impact on the Racial Wage Gap

Figure 2a shows the change in men's average hourly wages by race in relation to each state's implementation of the first minimum wage increase, plotted at 6-month averages. This figure does not offer a clear picture of what is happening with men's wages. There is a lot of noise happening in the data in the pre-implementation period. This noise is likely due to the staggered implementations by the states. For example, only one state, Illinois, increased its minimum wage during 2004. Therefore, the data at $time = -4$ is from a very limited dataset, because Illinois is the only state that has four years of data before implementation. The same is true at the other end, $t = +4$. Only two states, Rhode Island and Washington, increased their minimums during 2000. The bulk of the data is centered around $t = 0$. While the post-implementation trends are slightly smoother, it is still not entirely clear how the two racial groups' wages are trending in relation to each other. What can be inferred from Figure 2a, though, is that white men's average wages are consistently higher than black men's by about 20%. This interpretation of the data is supported both by the data already presented in this study and overwhelmingly by the research into racial wage gaps (see Beyer & Charles, 2018; Chandra, 2003; Wilson, 2016).

The regression results for the relationship between minimum wage and workers' wages, displayed in Table 4a suggest support for my hypothesis that a minimum wage increase would narrow the racial wage gap. The regressions without controls, columns 1 and 4, display results similar to the description statistics, that the minimum wage increase was associated with a larger impact on wages for white workers than for black workers, a 7.7% increase in wages compared to 7.1%. But once various factors (age, age², level of education, occupation, and full- or part-time status) are controlled for and state and year fixed effects are added, the suggested impact of a minimum wage increase switches. A state increasing their minimum wage is associated with a 2.99% increase in black workers' wages (column 5) and only a 1.62% increase in white workers' wages (column 2). Adding in state-year trends, the associated increase in wages is even greater (columns 3 and 4). Because the hourly wages for black

workers increased by a larger percentage than those of white workers, this suggests that the minimum wage increases may be associated with a narrowing of the racial wage gap.

Impact on the Racial Earnings Gap

The average observed weekly earnings follow trends similar to those for hourly wages (see Figure 2b). There is a lot of movement in the average 6-month earnings for both sets of men, especially before implementation. As with the figure for wages, there are not many conclusions that can be drawn from this data regarding the narrowing or widening of the earnings gap. The most prominent feature of Figure 2b, as with Figure 2a, is the general gap in earnings that exists between the two sets of men, reflecting the earnings disparities shown in the descriptive statistics and in the literature on racial inequality.

The regression results for weekly earnings, displayed in Table 4b, show that increased earnings are associated with the treatment: a state increasing its minimum wage. Without controls, a minimum wage increase is associated with a 5.25% increase in white men's wages (column 1). Black men's wages increased by slightly more, 5.34% (column 4). Without controlling for any observable characteristics, the regression results indicate that there is a slight narrowing of the earnings gaps occurring at treatment implementation, and these results are significant at the 1% level.

Once controls, along with state and year fixed effects, are included, the associated change to average earnings for both black and white working men are less pronounced. The increase to black men's earnings is 2.4% (column 5), whereas for white men it is 1.4% (column 2). In other words, once workers are compared according to age, age squared, education level, and occupation, the change in earnings for both sets of men is lower.

Finally, columns 3 and 6 show that the associated earnings increased more for white working men than for black working men when accounting for state-year time trends. This reversal in who potentially received more benefits when the minimum wage was increased suggests that black men's earnings were already trending upward before the minimum wage increases went into effect. In other words, black working men saw a 1 percentage point larger increase in their earnings than white working men; however, black working men's earnings were already trending toward white working men's earnings. Therefore, the additional boost in earnings that black working men saw upon an increase in minimum wage, outside of their current earnings trend, was less impactful than it first appears.

The descriptive statistics from Tables 3a and b showed a larger increase to white men's earnings in 2004 compared to 2000 for individuals living in treated states than what the regression results suggest. As with the hourly wages, it makes sense for the descriptive statistics to show a larger effect: the descriptive statistics were measuring the change across the full sample period, rather than right before and right after implementation occurred, as is the case with the regression results; also the descriptive statistics do not take into account the differences across age, education, or occupation. Therefore, the greater benefits of a minimum wage increase appear to go to white working men, in terms of overall weekly earnings.

Discussion

This study adds to the research addressing long-standing economic disparities between whites and African Americans. Zipperer (2018) and Wilson (2016) both advocate for raising the minimum wage to alleviate racial inequality. Literature shows that there is a disproportionate percentage of the black population earning less than \$15 per hour (Huzar & Gebreselassie, 2016). There is no doubt, then, that increasing the minimum wage would increase the wages of black workers and possibly offer them net benefits. However, there is a lack of literature studying whether increasing the minimum wage could be an effective way to help address the income gap, or whether it would just be another policy that benefits both races but with more of the benefits going to white workers.

The statistics from my study suggest that raising the minimum wage may not be the effective tool that Zipperer and Wilson hope it to be. The data presented in this study suggest that while increases to the minimum wage were associated with higher overall incomes for black workers, they were also associated

with even higher overall incomes for white workers. Yet when looking at the change at the point of a minimum wage increase and controlling for observable characteristics and state-year time trends, black workers' wages increased at a higher rate than the wages for white workers. Thus, when the minimum wage is increased, black workers have a larger increase to their average hourly earnings than do white workers. These results add support to Wilson's (2016) finding that the low minimum wage has a more detrimental economic effect on black workers than it does on white workers.

However, even though wages increased, the weekly earnings show a more complicated picture. Neumark, Schweitzer, and Wascher (2004) and Jardim et al. (2017) warn that minimum wage increases can also bring hours reductions, resulting in net earnings losses to low-wage workers. When accounting for inflation, black workers' weekly earnings in 2004 were 1.3% lower than they were in 2000 for treated states. In comparison, white workers in those same states had higher average earnings by the end of the sample period than they did at the beginning. At the point of treatment implementation, a temporary increase in weekly earnings for both races appears to be more in accordance with the findings of Dube, Lester, and Reich (2010) and Jardim et al. (2018). Yet, black working men's weekly earnings boost upon implementation gets largely swallowed up by their state-year trends. In all, the changes to weekly earnings by race suggest that black workers are more vulnerable to hours reductions enacted by employers to offset higher mandatory wages for their lowest paid workers, as suggested by Neumark, Schweitzer, and Wascher (2004) and reflected in Table 4c.

Conclusion

Previous research into racial economic equality has consistently shown vastly different economic situations for black and white Americans, with respect to both income and wealth gaps. These differences have persisted for decades. To put it more bluntly, African Americans as a group have never had equal economic footing with white Americans. To find a solution to the disproportionately high percentage of black Americans in poverty, Zipperer (2018) recommended raising the minimum wage. The question is: could increasing the minimum wage be a tool to help narrow the persistent wage and earnings gaps for black Americans? Other research on the minimum wage offers mixed signals to the question of whether increasing the minimum wage helps or hurts low-wage workers of all races, though the most current studies suggest a slight benefit or no effect. However, there is not much research on how increasing the minimum would impact black and white workers separately, especially in addressing the economic disparities between the two.

The results show that a minimum wage increase is associated with higher wages and earnings for both black and white workers, while accounting for inflation. Black workers experienced a higher increase to their hourly wages than did white workers, suggesting that the minimum wage increase may have a more positive impact on black workers and help reduce the racial wage gap. Yet, when accounting for earnings trends, white workers experienced a higher increase to their weekly earnings when the minimum wage was increased, which suggests that black workers also bear more of the cost to their work hours than white workers, as seen in Figure 2c and Table 4c. It also suggests that increasing the minimum wage may not help narrow their earnings gap with white workers. Rather, increasing the minimum wage, which saw disparately increasing earnings for black and white workers, results in more of an upward shift in racial earnings than a narrowing.

It is important to note that this study did not incorporate unemployment or labor force non-participation rates into the data for earnings or wages, which could be acting as omitted variable bias. If it did, the study would likely show an even greater disparity in benefits from minimum wage increases, given that there is a higher percentage of white men who are employed and able to reap those benefits. Therefore, the earnings and wages data here are to be interpreted only for men who are employed rather than as an indication of a broader measure of the economic state of the two groups.

The findings from this study suggest that for those concerned about racial inequality, advocating for a minimum wage increase may not offer the desired outcome. While that policy change will likely benefit black workers, it may not narrow the racial economic gap. The reason why the change is unlikely to get the desired results that social justice advocates seek is two-fold. First, the costs of higher wages are

borne disproportionately by greater reductions in black worker's hours. Second, simply increasing the minimum wage does not address the root of the racial disparity. It does not address racial disparities in labor force outcomes, especially the fact that black workers are among the most vulnerable to decisions made by employers to counteract wage increases.

The suggestion, then, for policymakers and advocates, is to use a more direct and targeted tool. What is needed is a policy that specifically addresses racial inequality, which is the bigger issue at play. Blanket policies, such as the minimum wage, which will ostensibly impact people equally regardless of race, will likely have a similar outcome of shifting the disparity up but not narrowing it. Admittedly, a policy that effectively targets the deeper issue of racial inequality, which is fraught with overt and unconscious biases alike, is more difficult to identify, test, and implement. But if one could be identified and implemented it may prove more effective than a "race neutral" policy, such as the minimum wage.

This study has several limitations. First, the time period used for the dataset is short, only a 5-year span, which makes it difficult to detect trends. The small time period does not easily lend itself to a nationwide study of this nature. There are too many factors that could be influencing the outcomes, as seen in how noisy the wage and earnings trends are in Figures 2a and b. Additionally, such a short period of time does not lend itself well to a study with varying dates for policy implementation. To alleviate this problem in future studies and aid in the data analysis, researchers should use a sample in which there is more alignment in the implementation dates or covers a longer time period.

Future research should expand on the work done here to get a more complete and accurate picture for how minimum wage interacts with racial economic inequality. My study only explored the impact to wages and earnings for working white and black men. Future research that incorporates people who are unemployed or out of the labor force will be able to give insight into the overall economic impact of such policy changes on different populations, as Beyer and Charles (2018) and Chandra (2003) argue in their studies of racial income and wealth gaps. Larger studies should also include more demographics than the ones I explored here — white and black men. For example, the Economic Policy Institute found that the largest racial demographic to earn near-minimum wages was Hispanic workers (Cooper, 2018). Additionally, single women with children are significantly more likely to be living in poverty than married couples with children or single men with children (NWLC, 2018).

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Appendix

Table 2: State Characteristics, by Treatment and Control

	<i>CONTROL</i>	<i>TREATMENT</i>
NUMBER OF STATES	38	12
MEDIAN POPULATION	5,514,026	3,569,463
MEDIAN GDP	\$203,138	\$198,662
MEDIAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.96	5.33

Source: FRED, 2019a, 2019b

Table 3a: Individual Averages in Control States over Time, 2000-2004

	<i>2000</i>		<i>2004</i>	
	<i>White Averages</i>	<i>Black Averages</i>	<i>White Averages</i>	<i>Black Averages</i>
AGE	39.6	38.9	40.4	39.7
EDUCATION	High School Graduate	12 th Grade, No Diploma	High School Graduate	12 th Grade, Diploma Unclear
USUAL HOURS WORKED AT PRIMARY JOB	42.4	40.6	41.8 ▼1.4%	40.0 ▼1.5%
HOURLY WAGES	\$16.99	\$13.98	\$17.19 ▲1.2%	\$14.14 ▲1.1%
WAGE GAP	17.7%		17.8% (+0.1%)	
WEEKLY EARNINGS	\$722.82	\$570.11	\$722.48 ▼0.05%	\$565.27 ▼0.8%
EARNINGS GAP	21.1%		21.8% (+0.7%)	
POPULATION NOT IN THE LABOR FORCE	11.35%	20.93%	13.23% (+1.88%)	23.11% (+2.18%)

Note: The wage and earnings amounts displayed here are adjusted to 2004 dollars. Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data.

Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

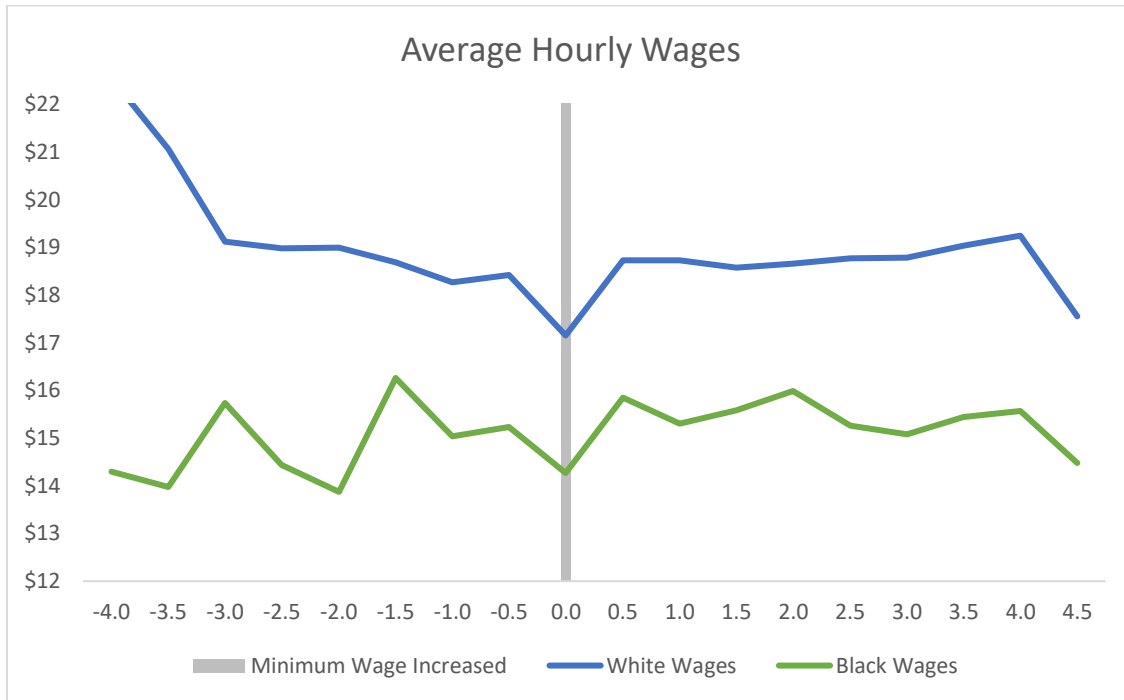
Table 3b: Individual Averages in Treatment States over Time, 2000-2004

	<i>2000</i>		<i>2004</i>	
	<i>White Averages</i>	<i>Black Averages</i>	<i>White Averages</i>	<i>Black Averages</i>
AGE	39.6	39.2	40.6	40.0
EDUCATION	High School Graduate	High School Graduate	High School Graduate	High School Graduate
USUAL HOURS WORKED AT PRIMARY JOB	41.7	40.1	41.3 ▼ 1.0%	39.5 ▼ 1.5%
HOURLY WAGES	\$18.45	\$15.38	\$18.91 ▲ 2.5%	\$15.65 ▲ 1.7%
WAGE GAP		16.6%		17.2% (+0.6%)
WEEKLY EARNINGS	\$778.22	\$621.41	\$787.14 ▲ 1.1%	\$613.08 ▼ 1.3%
EARNINGS GAP		20.2%		22.1% (+0.9%)
POPULATION NOT IN THE LABOR FORCE	11.83%	20.38%	14.43% (+2.57%)	24.54% (+4.16%)

Note: The wage and earnings amounts displayed here are adjusted to 2004 dollars. Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data.

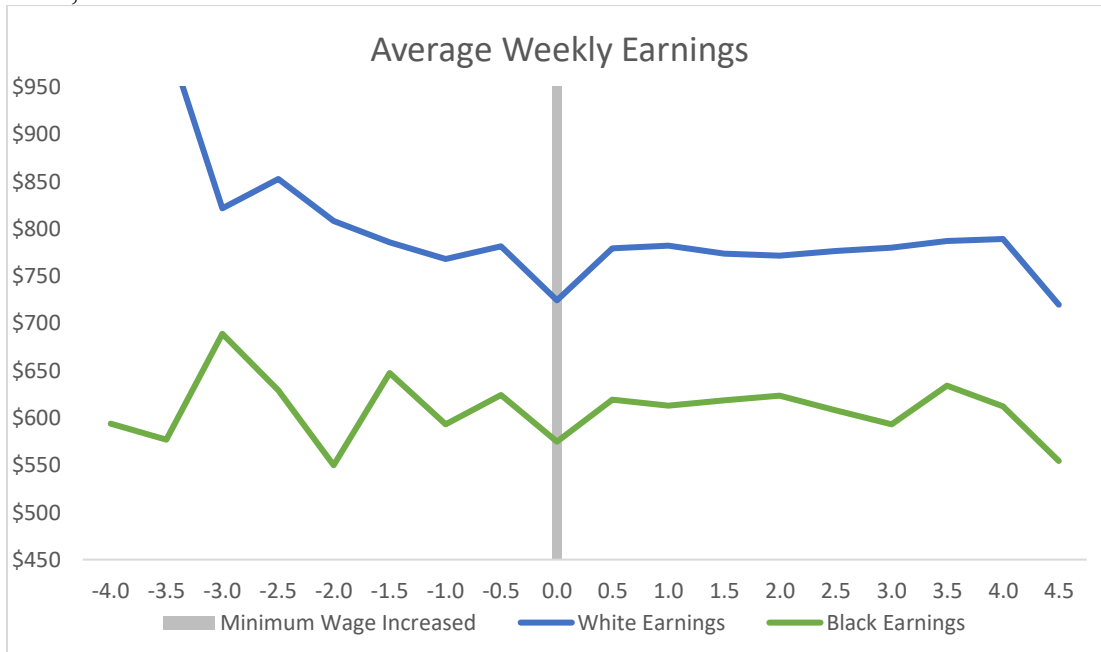
Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

Figure 2a: Average Hourly Wages in Relation to The First Minimum Wage Increase, by Race, 2000-2004



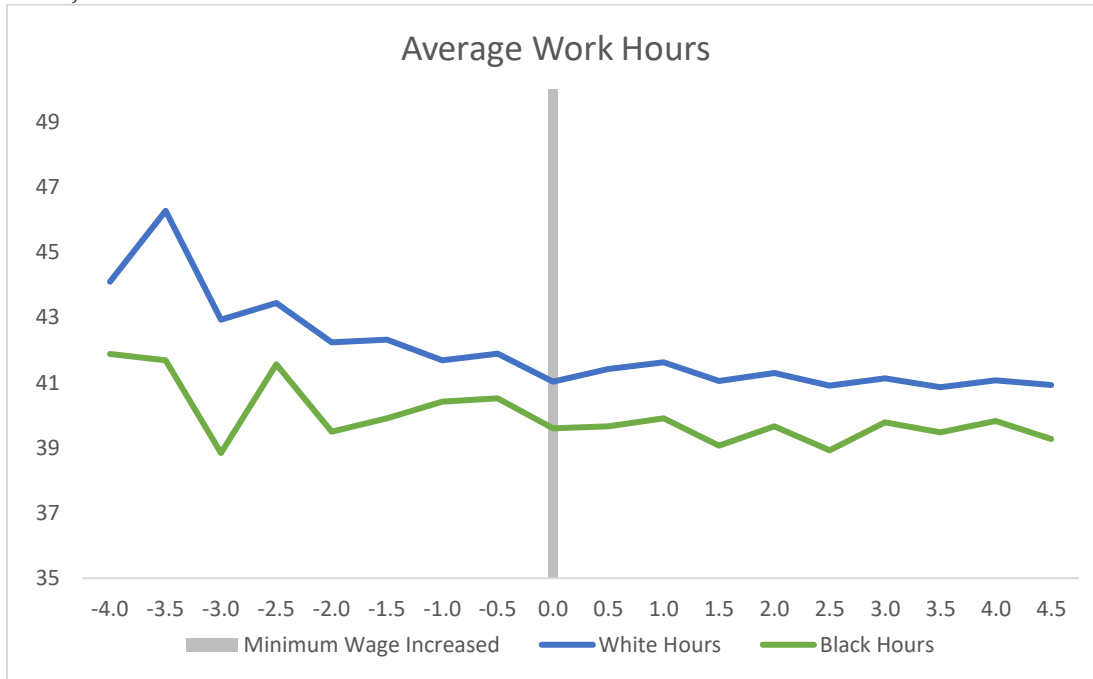
Note: The wage amounts displayed here are adjusted to 2004 dollars. Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data. Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

Figure 2b: Average Weekly Earnings in Relation to The First Minimum Wage Increase, by Race, 2000-2004



Note: The earnings amounts displayed here are adjusted to 2004 dollars. Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data. Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

Figure 2c: Average Weekly Work Hours in Relation to The First Minimum Wage Increase, by Race, 2000-2004



Note: Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data.

Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

Table 4a: Regression Results for Hourly Wages using Fixed Effects and State-Year Trends, by Race

	White Wages			Black Wages		
	(1) Ln(wage)	(2) Ln(wage)	(3) Ln(wage)	(4) Ln(wage)	(5) Ln(wage)	(6) Ln(wage)
Implementation	0.0770** (0.024)	0.0162 (0.010)	0.0189 (0.010)	0.0707** (0.026)	0.0299* (0.012)	0.0361 (0.024)
Age		0.0745*** (0.001)	0.0746*** (0.001)		0.0459*** (0.002)	0.0461*** (0.002)
Age ²		-0.000780*** (0.00002)	-0.000780*** (0.00002)		-0.000450*** (0.00003)	-0.000452*** (0.00003)
Education		0.00730*** (0.0003)	0.00730*** (0.0003)		0.00866*** (0.0005)	0.00865*** (0.0005)
Occupation		-0.0000210*** (0.00000)	-0.0000210*** (0.00000)		-0.00000374 (0.00000)	-0.00000371 (0.00000)
Full-/Part-Time		-0.00871*** (0.002)	-0.00867*** (0.002)		0.00711* (0.003)	0.00716* (0.003)
Constant	2.720*** (0.012)	0.767*** (0.061)	47.04*** (0.363)	2.535*** (0.015)	0.439*** (0.082)	151.2*** (5.939)
<i>Fixed Effects</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>State-Year Trends</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>N</i>	190369	190639	190639	24151	24151	24151

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note: The wage and earnings amounts displayed here are adjusted to 2004 dollars. Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data.

Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

Table 4b: Regression Results for Weekly Earnings using Fixed Effects and State-Year Trends, by Race

	White Earnings			Black Earnings		
	(1) Ln(earn)	(2) Ln(earn)	(3) Ln(earn)	(4) Ln(earn)	(5) Ln(earn)	(6) Ln(earn)
Implementation	0.0525* (0.023)	0.0135 (0.010)	0.0108 (0.012)	0.0534* (0.024)	0.0239 (0.015)	0.00780 (0.027)
Age		0.115*** (0.002)	0.115*** (0.002)		0.0728*** (0.003)	0.0730*** (0.003)
Age ²		-0.00125*** (0.00002)	-0.00125*** (0.00002)		-0.000760*** (0.00004)	-0.000762*** (0.00004)
Education		0.00770*** (0.0003)	0.00769*** (0.0003)		0.00953*** (0.0006)	0.00953*** (0.0006)
Occupation		-0.0000213*** (0.00000)	-0.0000213*** (0.00000)		0.00000174 (0.00000)	0.00000187 (0.00000)
Full-/Part-Time		-0.0201*** (0.002)	-0.0200*** (0.002)		0.00637** (0.004)	0.00639 (0.004)
Constant	6.416*** (0.012)	3.803*** (0.080)	71.59*** (0.403)	6.194*** (0.014)	3.473*** (0.105)	260.7*** (7.023)
<i>Fixed Effects</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>State-Year Trends</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>N</i>	205605	205605	205605	25981	25981	25981
<i>Standard errors in parentheses</i>						
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$						

Note: The wage and earnings amounts displayed here are adjusted to 2004 dollars. Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data.

Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

Table 4c: Regression Results for Weekly Work Hours using Fixed Effects and State-Year Trends, by Race

	White Work Hours		Black Work Hours	
	(1) Hours	(2) Hours	(3) Hours	(4) Hours
Implementation	-0.7978*** (0.137)	0.0496 (0.118)	-0.7073*** (0.174)	-0.622* (0.269)
Age		1.130*** (0.021)		0.717*** (0.038)
Age ²		-0.0131*** (0.0002)		-0.00816*** (0.0005)
Education		0.00761*** (0.003)		0.0349*** (0.006)
Occupation		-0.000105*** (0.00001)		0.0000796*** (0.00002)
Full-/Part-Time		-0.461*** (0.026)		-0.126*** (0.029)
Constant	41.9992*** (0.127)	1396.7*** (7.362)	40.231*** (0.136)	3135.7*** (43.493)
<i>Fixed Effects</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>State-Year Trends</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>N</i>	751872	751872	95145	95145
<p><i>Standard errors</i> in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$</p>				

Note: Calculated from 2000-2004 CPS data.

Source: CPS data from Flood et al., 2018.

Colonial Political Thought and Independence

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Abstract

The Colonial Charters of Virginia established the rights of settlers, and these rights became the basis of Colonial era political thought. They were repeated in Revolutionary texts to cite the grievances of colonists and to justify their declaring independence from the British. These rights of settlers cited in the Charters inherently implied they could develop economic and political activities, and Jefferson preserved this when he was tasked with writing the Declaration. This piece makes three claims. First, the political philosophy that the natural rights of men entitled them to democratically governed economic and political activity, stated implicitly in the Charters and similarly repeated in the Boston Pamphlet and Declaration of Independence, predates enlightenment thinkers and this political philosophy was learned from the British system. Secondly, this philosophy has a basis in economic rights and this basis, as well as liberty left for colonists' decision-making in the Charters, provided the foundation for expanded political rights and political development in the Colonial era. Thirdly, fundamental colonial political philosophy was largely unchanged from settlement through the time of the revolution, but the development of political rights meant increased British involvement, or interference, in colonial economic and political affairs was antithetical to the Colonial era. Therefore, by establishing these rights the British sowed the seeds of their own destruction in Colonial America, and these rights provided the basis for colonial political thought eventually leading to the classic liberal tradition of life, liberty, and property. The Colonial era inherited its fundamental understanding of economic and political rights from British-American colonist ancestors. These ancestors were provided significant autonomy in their economic and political rights, so they declared their independence for those reasons.

Introduction

The impetus for the Declaration of Independence largely centered on the terms of the colonists' economic and political rights because of a lack of control over the rights they felt entitled to as British-Americans. This lack of control was a result of British tax and trade policies, and the context of British mismanagement of the colonies made the situation worse as the British sought to pay off debt following the French and Indian War. The colonists declared their independence for the same economic and political rights as their English colonist ancestors, rights formally recognized in 1607 in the colonial Charters granted by King James Charles Stuart I. The Charters established colonial rights to economic and political activity and later actions by the Crown that limited colonists' control over these activities provided the justification to declare independence. The basis of opposition to British interference in colonial economic and political affairs is a colonial political philosophy, which is identified in the Charters and other documents from the first colonists through the American Revolution. This philosophy is the natural rights of colonists entitled them to democratically governed economic and political activity. The role of the Charters and this philosophy predated enlightenment thinkers, and the colonists learned this fundamental political philosophy, particularly the value of rights in economic terms, by the British who therefore sowed the seeds of their own destruction, as the colonists declared independence one hundred and sixty-nine years later. This paper will discuss the fundamental role this philosophy had in the context of colonial political thought and the Declaration of Independence, and eventually leading to the classic liberal tradition of life, liberty, and property.

The colonial Charters of 1607 established settlers' rights in the New World, entitling them to the same rights they held in Britain. James Otis Jr. noted, "The colonists are entitled to as ample rights, liberties, and privileges as the subjects of the mother country are, and in some respects to more (Howard,

1905).” The basis of settlers’ rights were first established by the king who, ‘by the grace of God,’ provided rights to pursue economic and political ends in America (Stuart I and VI, 1607). The words ‘by the grace of god’ are referenced by later colonists who claimed entitlement to these natural rights, or unalienable rights. This wording is a matter of nomenclature; therefore rights ‘by the grace of God’ and natural rights share the definition as rights provided by God, or natural law.

The point of the Charters was to cite these natural rights of English subjects in order to establish their entitlement to the economic and political ends they sought in the New World. Through these seminal documents, this became the fundamental political philosophy of the colonial era. The presence of this language in the First, Second, and Third Charters of Virginia, and repeated in the latter Boston Pamphlet and Declaration of Independence, illustrates how this political thought and the political philosophy within them was fundamentally unchanged at the American Revolution. However, political thought in the colonial era allowed for further development of political rights because of the basis of political rights in economic terms, and the liberty granted to settlers for decision-making in the Charters.¹

The American Revolution was about the rights colonists had experienced since the first settlement and the violation of those rights by the English government. These violations were primarily economic but were also sometimes more abstract. These economic rights continued to serve as the basis for political rights and provided the basis for what is the classic liberal tradition of life, liberty, and property. The king establishing these rights through natural law in the Charters provided the rights of ‘settlers to plant and habitate’ in America, and this later translated to ‘all men endowed by their creator with rights,’ as Jefferson asserted, because these men wanted to exercise those same rights for the same ends. The rights of settlers cited in the Charters inherently implied they could develop economic and political activities, and Jefferson preserved this when he was tasked with writing the Declaration. This piece makes three claims. First, the political philosophy that ‘the natural rights of men entitled them to democratically governed economic and political activity,’ stated implicitly in the Charters and similarly repeated in the Boston Pamphlet and Declaration of Independence, predates enlightenment thinkers and this political philosophy was learned from the British system. Secondly, this philosophy has a basis in economic rights and this basis, as well as liberty left for colonists’ decision-making in the Charters, provided the foundation for expanded political rights and political development in the colonial era. Thirdly, fundamental colonial political philosophy was largely unchanged from settlement through the time of the revolution, but the development of political rights meant increased British involvement, or interference, in colonial economic and political affairs was antithetical to the colonial era. The colonial era inherited its fundamental understanding of economic and political rights from British-American colonist ancestors. These ancestors were provided significant autonomy in their economic and political rights, so they declared their independence for those reasons.

The First, Second, and Third Charters of Virginia

The prominent position of settlers’ rights at the beginning of the Charters, expressed by the king’s granting rights by the grace of God, make the basis of settlers’ economic ends a matter of divine providence, or natural law. The perennial features of the colonial era, including individual liberty, local governance, and property rights, were a product of this philosophy in the Charters as it expressed rights in similar terms. This section will illustrate how this philosophy in the Charters was an antecedent to

¹ Hyneman and Lutz noted the Charters granted colonists liberties, privileges, enlargements, and immunities. When the Charters did not provide enumerated political rights there was room for the Colonists to decide themselves, thus the Colonists had the same rights of Englishmen with the added benefit the Charters left for decision-making. Additionally, America’s geographical location also afforded for this local political autonomy. The authors also note rights meant most of the early Charters allowed settlers to design their own political institutions and practice self-government. The colonists used this experience to develop early compacts and townships.

Jefferson's words in the Declaration. The First Charter's content centers on the rights of settlers to adventure and to exploit the natural resources of America for economic gain.

The First Charter permitted the investors in the joint-stock company "to make habitation, plantation, and to deduce a colony of sundry of our people into that part of America commonly called Virginia (Stuart I and VI, 1607)." The two groups of investors established here were authorized settlement by his grace to two separate areas of land. This provided settlers discretion to establish themselves, within the geographical parameters set by the charter, by making use of the lands and resources available to them. The document authorized the right of settlers to defend themselves from those who would violate their commercial interests, including anyone who would attempt to inhabit those colonies and plantations, or those who attempt "the hurt, Detriment, or Annoyance, of the said several colonies (Stuart I and VI, 1607)" Any violation of these colonial interests could be taken up with the treasurer of a colony and that treasurer could enforce financial penalty under his authority to levy fines (Stuart I and VI, 1607).

These points are central to future understanding of colonial era political thought because these established rights to land and resources meant settlers had a legally binding document to refer to as their political foundation for economic and political activity. The discretion authorized in the document also supported later increases in colonists' autonomy of rights as they engaged in economic activity: "And shall and may inhabit and remain there; and shall and may also build and fortify within any the same for their better safeguard, according to their best Discretion, and the Discretion of the Council of that Colony (Stuart I and VI, 1607)." The Charters established a community of colonies under the direction of Britain, but Britain left room for the judgement of the settlers to make decisions as subject to their own interests.

Within the Charters, the authority of the king, by the direction of natural law, granted investors their rights to plantation and habitation in America (Stuart I and VI, 1607). The political philosophy of the Charters, therefore, is one originating with the king and his government, but it is through natural law that the investors are provided these rights, so they are natural rights. These rights of settlers were established to pursue and secure economic ends, and the Charters provided the basis of justification for settlement as an economic one whereby investors exercised their natural rights to profit from American natural resources. The natural resources in America were advantageous to the British market and joint-stock company investors, and the investor rights pursuant to the economic interests thereof was the basis for any future justification of economic activity.

The economic basis also allowed investors to gain more democratic control over the Virginia Company in the second and third Charters. The Second and Third Charter of Virginia followed the same basic format of the First, but the Second expressly provided settlers the right to choose their representatives to a Council (Stuart I and VI, 1607). The company was initially governed by a Council for Virginia composed of thirteen investors who were appointed by, and swore to serve in the interests of, the king, and the council was delegated powers to govern and make decisions they felt were in the best interests of the Crown and Company (Wolf). The company council also appointed a seven-member council to ensure its directions were followed in Virginia, and these council members elected from their ranks a president (Wolf). This position was unsuccessful, but this subtle democratic quality became the basis for increased democratic governance of the company in the Second and Third Charters. The need for the second charter came out of the financial needs of colonists and the resistance they faced from natives, and this charter divested some power from the King and transferred it to the colonists themselves, so they could solve these issues (Wolf). The investors of the Virginia Company could now elect a treasurer to lead it, and they were also authorized to elect their own council members whereas the king had the sole authority of these appointments before. The choice of council members by the investors were subject to the king's veto and maintained their duty of loyalty to his interests, but this still marked an evolution in governance for the Virginia Company whereby natural rights and economic activity led to increased political rights.

The Boston Pamphlet

One hundred and sixty-five years after the First Charter of Virginia, and in the early stages of revolution, following what Parliament considered an inflammatory denouncement of the Townshend Acts by the Massachusetts Assembly, the Assembly defied an order to revoke its denouncement, and Parliament dissolved it. The Boston Pamphlet was the response, written primarily by Samuel Adams, to this action by Parliament. Its immediate grievances were based on the desire of the Assembly to reconvene, and what colonists claimed was an unjust vestige of Parliament to decide the pay of the Massachusetts governor and other officials (Adams, 1772). The document asserted that the restriction placed on the Assembly to reconvene, its weak position compared with Parliament, the imposition of economic restrictions, and a lack of recourse through petition threatened their life, liberty and property (Adams, 1772). The colonial era witnessed increased emphasis for the role of natural rights as it related to economic activity.² The experience of wealth in the colonies after 1745, and the following economic decline, also increased the sensitivities of the colonists', which bolstered their claims that increased British taxation was a violation of their natural rights. In effect, the Boston Pamphlet asserted violations like these were a violation of their ancestors' rights in settlement.

The British, by establishing economic rights for the colonists, sowed the seeds of their own destruction as these rights became increasingly political. The Boston Pamphlet cited the colonists' rights provided by the Charters, and it expressed the colonists' rights to direct economic affairs. For resistant colonists, the British Parliament's interference with provincial assemblies' control over economic and political affairs through restrictive commercial trade and tax policies were a contradiction of the Charters.³

The Boston Pamphlet asserted the colonists were entitled to their vested rights as men, which the law of God and nature, as well as the laws of nations, and well-grounded municipal law with foundation in the former, provide for and respect (Adams, 1772). Adams asserted the legitimacy of their grievances rested on their natural rights as men, as Christians, and as subjects, and he claimed the actions of their provincial assembly and the document itself are not subversive to the ends of government (Adams, 1772). This was reasonable because their grievances centered on the infringement of fundamental rights to economic and political activities granted to them by Charters. Citing the Charters, the document asserted colonial rights were violated because they wished to exercise the very rights granted to their ancestors (Adams, 1772). These ancestors "hired Servants for the defense of their Lives, Liberties and Property," and this is the reasoning the document used to claim the colonists themselves should be the assessors of the pay for their governor and other officials (Adams, 1772). The document asserted it was the rights of the colonists, as subjects of England, to assume control, as a body politic, for the mutual safety and prosperity they had as a union of men (Adams, 1772). "The absolute Rights of Englishmen and all Freemen in or out of civil society are principally personal Security, personal Liberty, and private Property

² Gautham Rao noted "By the time Revere set to work in 1770, the British imperial custom house had become a backdrop of the gathering revolution. Since 1756, British Treasury officials had been pressuring colonial customs agents to strictly enforce new taxes and commercial regulations. Colonial merchants, sailors, and others fiercely resisted these actions."

³ Prior to the 1760s Britain had largely ignored their American colonies. Following the Seven Years' War, the parliament worked to pay-off debt, but it was limited by the strengthened radical reform movements in Britain. The reform movements disrupted the British governing class and forced the British government to create increased revenue from colonies. British officials responsible for managing the colonies until this point were often more interested in English political patronage than organizing the affairs of the colonies. Further, the way the British haphazardly managed colonial affairs left colonists with less political and economic incentive to cooperate with Parliament. King George III's impetuous style did not help Britain regain the authority it required to work with the increasingly independent and economically motivated colonists. The lack of British support following colonial economic decline still made matters worse for the British. British imposition of new taxes and customs regulations while proving unsupportive of colonial economic issues naturally led to colonial indignation of the King and Parliament.

(Adams, 1772).” Therefore these colonists, by ‘the laws of God and Nature,’ as provided by the Charters and acts of British Parliament, declared themselves entitled to these economic and political activities (Adams, 1772).

The Declaration of Independence

The Declaration’s purpose was to provide an explanation of the Resolution of Independence, which Congress approved as the official separation between the colonies and Great Britain. However, the Declaration provided a deeper explanation as it reflected on the colonial era and illustrated the points of tension with Britain based on colonial era political thought. The Declaration asserted when it becomes necessary for a people to dissolve its political bands with another, that people assume “the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them,” so they must provide “the causes which impel them to separation (Jefferson, 1776).”

The document addresses the commercial restraints of the colonists which followed the raising of conditions, or increased standards, for the “new appropriation of lands,” which the document claimed cut off trade with “all Parts of the World,” and the imposition of new taxes without consent of the colonies (Jefferson, 1776). Referring to the severity posed by British despotism, Jefferson points out the Quebec Act of 1774, and cited the abolishment of the free system of English laws in that province. This is significant because he admits the established system of English laws is free, so there is continuity with the Boston Pamphlet as he asserted his grounds are consistent with the Charters (Jefferson, 1776). These violations, then, contradict colonial political thought and norms of political practice, and this point is emphasized when he cited how unalienable rights derive from the Charters (Jefferson, 1776). Here Jefferson wrote, “For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments (Jefferson, 1776).”

Jefferson claimed petitions were answered only by further injury. “We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations (Jefferson, 1776).” These appeals were not heard by the voice of justice and consanguinity, so here he provided context for shared ideas and values consistent with their ancestry as they related to British usurpations.⁴ This context was defined by Jefferson as a British government with shared traditions and political values, but one which no longer upheld the rights necessary to exercise that political philosophy (Jefferson, 1776). The document concluded that its declaration of independent united colonies is supported by its “firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, and the delegates’ mutually pledged lives, fortunes, and sacred honor (Jefferson, 1776).”

Conclusion

The ideas of the revolution were not new in the decades leading to revolution, but they were subsequent to the role early settlers had in formulating their Colonial tradition. The principles of natural rights, freedom of economic activity, taxation and representation, self-government, and individual liberty were all provided within the context the Charters established with the first settlers. The ideas of revolutionary texts repeated many of the same values of colonial political tradition and used them to justify their rights to have control over economic and political activities.

The continuity of the proceeding ideas, beginning with the Charters, and repeated in the Boston Pamphlet and Declaration was complemented by the philosophies of John Locke, Adam Smith, Francis Hutcheson, and others who influenced the colonists as they emphasized the relationship between natural

⁴ Gary Wills referred to Edmund Burke’s *reflections* to provide the colonial context for the meaning of revolution, and this is significant as it relates to the intention of colonial petitions for redress. The sanctity colonists observed for the practice came from the reforms of the Glorious Revolution of 1688: “He reminded them that ‘the Revolution was made to preserve our ancient indisputable laws and liberties.’ True revolution is a constitutional development—the extraordinary act that is needed to maintain the flow of ordinary ones: ‘This is the spirit of our constitution, not only in its settled course, but in all its revolutions.’”

law, the individual, and society. This is apparent as colonists cited Locke's principles in colonial documents, and the Boston Pamphlet asserted the language in the Charters supported Locke's principles of life, liberty, and property (Adams, 1772). Enlightenment thinkers had a significant role in contributing to later colonial political thought, but the antecedents of colonial political thought beginning with the Charters provide a temporal order leading to revolution, and this basis in the Charters allowed for the development of that political thought, or expanded political rights before these enlightenment thinkers began making their contributions. The philosophy found in these documents was inherently characteristic of what became the classic liberal tradition whereby life, liberty, and property remain its foundation. The Declaration reflects this philosophy and history, which Jefferson expanded on, and this made it a seminal document in American political thought. He captured the fundamental character of colonial political thought, and he repeated it to justify independence, but he illustrated some of the more inherent qualities of those rights with words like "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights (Jefferson, 1776)."

Political concepts largely remained the same, but they were inherently fluid as they were established through natural law and based in economic rights and provided freedom for decision-making and autonomy. The political conditions, as a result of British interference in colonial affairs, at the time of the American Revolution made the colonists' continued subjection to Parliament's commercial acts antithetical to these thoughts and beliefs, and antithetical to the relationship they had with Britain. These conditions provided for a more formal evolution in political rights with the American Revolution. Colonial political expressions of revolutionary colonists were consistent with the philosophy established in the Charters, and they developed these ideas as they grew more familiar with independence. These ideas grew both as they related to the conditions of their political affairs and as a matter of abstract political thought.

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**Great Streets Small Business Grant Program:
Criminological Effects in Washington, D.C.'s Emerging Corridors**

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Abstract

The Great Streets program in Washington, D.C. was initially designed in the mid-2000s to assist small business owners experiencing financial stress resulting from the city's transportation-related construction projects. The program has since evolved to support hundreds of small businesses in the city's emerging neighborhood corridors. While a causal connection between socioeconomic deprivation and criminal behavior has long been theorized, there are few studies analyzing the relationship between commercial revitalization and crime rates at the business level. Our research attempts to address the question: How does giving a small business a public retail revitalization grant affect crime rates in the immediate proximity of the store front? Using grantee and crime data from Open Data DC and demographic data from the United States Census Bureau, this study employs an innovative donut geospatial modeling technique to set treatment and control areas in concentric circles with equal square footage around each grantee. Because the two areas are equal, crime counts occurring in each could be directly compared. A difference-in-differences approach was used to analyze the impact of small business grants on crime in the immediate vicinity of grantees. Crime outcomes were evaluated for the District as a whole, then separated by corridor. Our results suggest that the effectiveness of the Great Streets program to reduce property crime is dependent on the demographic makeup and socioeconomic shifts of a neighborhood. This is consistent with contemporary criminological research which shows that as communities absorb higher-income residents, these residents are often more likely to report property crime. These results indicate promise for business development grants to curb certain types of crime in particular neighborhoods.

Executive Summary

Great Streets is a commercial revitalization initiative in Washington, D.C. administered by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). It is designed to "support existing small businesses, attract new businesses, increase the District's tax base, create new job opportunities for District residents, and transform emerging corridors into thriving and inviting neighborhood centers" ("About Great Streets," n.d.). Our study evaluated the impact of the Great Streets program on crime rates immediately adjacent to grantee businesses for the District and for four of the program corridors. The treatment and control groups were created using a geospatial donut method that defined them as areas of concentric circles around each grantee. Because the circles were set so that the two areas were equal, crime counts in each could be directly compared. Using ArcMap, crime occurrences were counted and demographics were assigned to the treatment and control areas. A difference-in-differences analysis was used to evaluate the impact of the program on crime in the immediate vicinity of the grantees.

Figure 1. Changes in Crime Incidences Due to Great Streets and Changes in Poverty Rates

The results indicated grants led to a small increase in crime outcomes in corridors where poverty rates decreased and a reduction in crime outcomes in corridors where the poverty rate increased during the time period of the study (*see figure 1*). District-wide and in the Georgia Ave NW and H Street NE

corridors, crime counts increased while the average poverty rate decreased. In the Martin Luther King Street NE corridor, crime counts decreased while the average poverty rate increased. Both crime counts and poverty rate remained relatively flat in the Rhode Island Ave NE corridor. These results are consistent with criminological research showing that as communities attract higher-income residents they are likely to experience an increase in reported property crimes. This suggests that neighborhood demographic shifts play an important role in predicting property crime reporting. The study also advances the use of donut geomasking in criminological research. While this method is new and mostly used in public health research, it has great potential for understanding crime trends using potentially sensitive data.

Background

As explained by Great Streets staff, the impetus for this commercial grant program was to respond to the frustration of small business owners who were experiencing financial interruptions as a result of the city's ongoing transportation-related construction projects (Kirk-Patrick, 2018). In response to the building of the DC Streetcar in the mid-2000s, the first Great Streets grants were directed at supporting small businesses along H Street NE. Since 2006, the grant program has grown to support hundreds of businesses in 13 corridors known as the Great Street Corridors (*see* figure 2).

DMPED accepts applications for its competitive Great Streets Small Business Retail Grants on an annual basis, and awards up to \$50,000 to eligible small business owners who wish to improve their storefront ("RFA FY2019 Great Streets Retail Small Business Grant," n.d.). Grant eligibility dictates that a small business owner must have or plan to have a new or existing business in one of Great Street Corridors.⁵ While program administrators prioritize funding small businesses in service deserts, as long as a small business owner demonstrates how they will impact the corridor and incentivize the community to patronize the business, then they are eligible for maximum funding (Cook & Kirk-Patrick, 2018).

Past grantees have used, and benefited from, their funds in diverse ways. A local journalist interviewed the owners of three Great Streets grantees of the Connecticut Avenue NW Corridor. They reported using their funds for equipment and an outdoor café (Bread Furst, 4434 Connecticut), interior and outdoor dining areas (Acacia Bistro, 4340 Connecticut), and improvements to interior dining areas and infrastructure repairs (Italian Pizza Kitchen, 4483 Connecticut) (Berlin, 2017). Over the years, grantees have reported improved foot traffic, better marketing products, upgraded equipment, and hiring additional staff. The awardees say all of these improvements contribute to increased revenue as each element allows them to attract more customers (Cook & Kirk-Patrick, 2018).

⁵ Ineligible businesses, as outlined in the 2019 Request for Application, include: Adult Entertainment, Auto Body Shop, Bank, Bar, Construction/General Contracting, E-commerce Business, Financial Services, Home-Based Businesses, Hotels, Liquor Stores, Nightclubs, Phone Stores, Real Estate Development/Property Management Realtor, and previously awarded businesses.

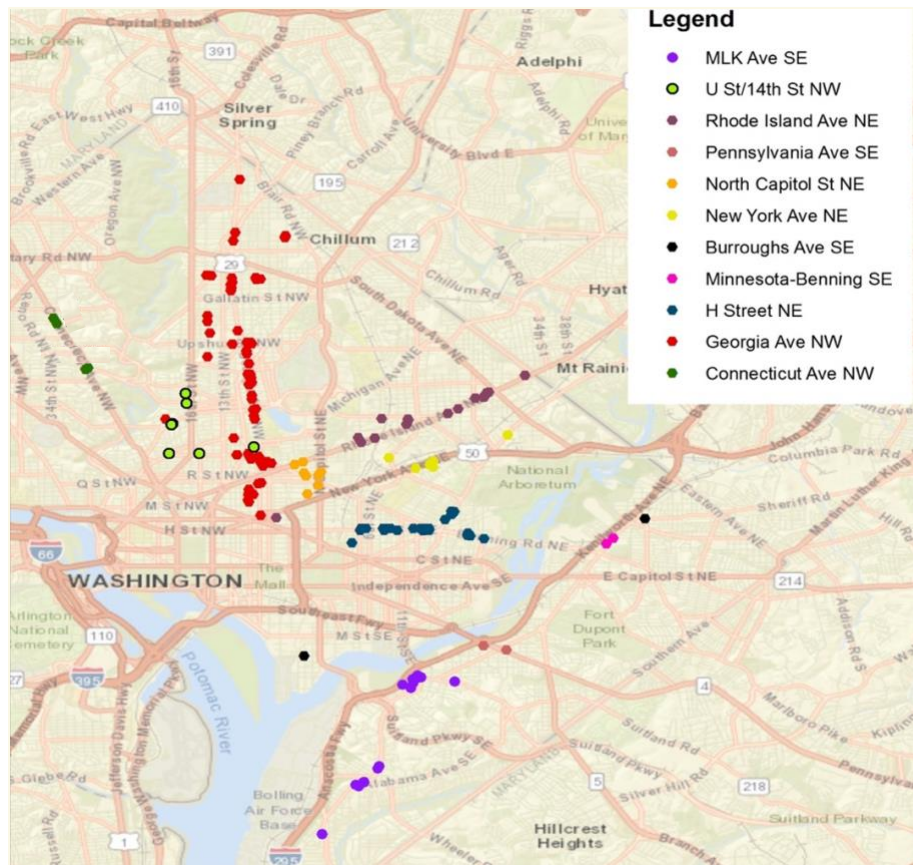


Figure 2. Map of the Great Streets Corridors generated in ArcGIS as of December 2018.

Accompanying the geographic expansion of the grant program is a richer development of the program's goals. The Great Streets Program Director, Sybongile Cook, explained that the contemporary goals of the program are to increase tax bases, create jobs, and spread capital improvement dollars. Director Cook's ultimate hope is to transform historically lower socioeconomic areas into "livable, walkable, and shoppable areas" (Cook & Kirk-Patrick, personal communication, December 7, 2018). With an eye towards creating equitable access, Director Cook emphasized neighborhood stability as one of the program's foundational goals. While crime reduction was not an explicit consideration of the program's original concept, it has become a part of recent conversations. DMPED staff have discussed the possibility of infusing money into high-crime areas in an attempt to hinder criminal activity; "if you give people jobs, there will be less crime" (Cook & Kirk-Patrick, personal communication, December 7, 2018).

Literature review

Criminologists have long theorized a relationship between socioeconomic deprivation and criminal behavior. However, few researchers have examined the relationship between commercial revitalization initiatives and crime rates. Perhaps the most relevant studies examine the impact of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) on crime rates (e.g. Brooks, 2008; Hoyt, 2004; Cook & MacDonald, 2011). These studies suggest that BIDs act as mediators of crime reduction by strengthening neighborhood collective efficacy as a means of reinforcing social control. As BIDs typically assess a voluntary tax on local businesses to fund auxiliary neighborhood services like security, sanitation, and urban planning, scholars have described them as the privatization of public safety in urban neighborhoods (MacDonald, Grunwald, Stokes & Bluthenthal, 2013). BIDs operate at the neighborhood-level, which means BIDs research is limited to neighborhood effects. Few studies have drilled down to the structural level (i.e. a business storefront), to investigate the individual effects of community revitalization initiatives on crime.

Literature that addresses the interplay of neighborhood economics and crime at the structural level primarily focuses on vacant lots (e.g. Branas, et al., 2011) and foreclosed homes (e.g. Cui & Walsh, 2014). Branas and colleagues (2011) found that the greening of vacant lots in Philadelphia was associated with a reduction of violent crimes citywide, but varied for other crimes by event type and geography. Operating in a social disorganization theory framework, Branas and colleagues posit that community interest in maintaining a newly greened lot may have increased police calls resulting in an increase in reported property crimes. Cui and Walsh (2014) studied the impact of home foreclosures on crime and found contrasting results. Rather, they found that violent crime rates rose once foreclosed homes became vacant while property crime rates were unchanged. Cui and Walsh defend their results by arguing that to the extent squatters or drug dealers are frequenting vacant properties, such individuals would be less likely to report property crime than violent crime. Despite their contrasting findings, Branas and colleagues (2011) and Cui and Walsh (2014) construct a thematically similar defense: demographic shifts of a neighborhood may impact the frequency with which property crime is reported.

Theoretical framework

The Great Streets grant program's encouragement of commercial improvement in historically socio-economically depressed neighborhoods effectively mirrors the theoretical framework for previous research on mixed-income developments and suggests similar mechanisms at play. Shaw & McKay's (1942/2016) social disorganization theory hypothesizes that community structural characteristics tied to social disorganization (i.e. mobility, poverty, and racial heterogeneity) lead to weak social ties that result in increased crime. Premised on the assumption that affluent communities have strong social ties because of shared values, social disorganization posits that non-affluent communities have weak social ties and thus promote crime-positive values. Modern criminologists have extended social disorganization theory by advancing the notion of collective efficacy, or the idea that social ties serve as a barometer of social cohesion and trust (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997/2016). Much like Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, most scholars interpret social control to implicate *informal* mechanisms of control. Meaning, the willingness of neighbors to intervene if they see wrongdoing (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003). Shaw and McKay concluded that when social ties are strong, a neighborhood is socially organized and less prone to crime.

As exhibited in the BIDs research, some scholars have supplemented social disorganization analysis with aspects of social control. Exploring social control and 'positive' gentrification, Chaskin and Joseph (2013) explain that mixed-income developments allow for the establishment of a diverse social network which bridges social capital and strengthens social ties. It is expected that higher-income residents will maintain order and safety in their neighborhood through normative notions of law enforcement to protect their investment, resulting in more residents feeling empowered to enforce *formal* mechanisms of control by calling the police to report property crimes.

Research question

Couched in citywide crime trends, our research attempts to address the question: How does giving a small business a public retail revitalization grant affect crime rates in the immediate proximity of the store front? According to social disorganization theory purists:

Hypothesis: Small businesses that benefit from a retail revitalization grant are likely to experience less crime in the immediate proximity of their store fronts as social ties and community social controls are strengthened through improved structural characteristics.

However, according to social control critiques of social disorganization, it is possible that the interaction of collective efficacy and bridging of social capital may mitigate or negate these effects, resulting in increased property crimes.

Methodology

Data

Open Data DC provided the Great Streets Grantees and crime datasets. The Great Streets dataset included the business name, census tract number, DC ward number, and the latitude and longitude coordinates of businesses that received the grants. Our study sample consisted of 175 businesses spread over eleven corridors that received grants from 2014 to 2016 (*see* figures 2 and 3). The publicly available crime dataset included total crime, burglary, robbery with a weapon, theft from automobiles, and other theft. These were downloaded for years 2013 to 2016.

Census tract level demographic data from 2013 to 2016 was obtained from the United States Census Bureau. Consistent with criminology research, the controlling demographic variables used in this study included median age, high school graduation rate, poverty rates, and percent of residents who are African American or Hispanic.

Study design

This paper employed geospatial techniques and difference-in-differences modeling to analyze the impact of a small business receiving a Great Streets grant on crime in the immediate vicinity of the grant awardee. Crime outcomes were evaluated for the District as a whole and then separated for each of the corridors.

The difference-in-differences method attempts to measure the effect of a treatment on an outcome variable by comparing a group of those receiving the treatment to a control group not receiving the treatment. Both groups are studied over the same time period which begins before the treatment starts and ends after the treatment is completed. The difference in the outcome variable between the change in the treatment group and the change in the control group is the difference-in-differences estimate and suggests a causal relationship attributable to the treatment. This method controls for extraneous effects that have an influence on the outcome variable not related to the treatment.

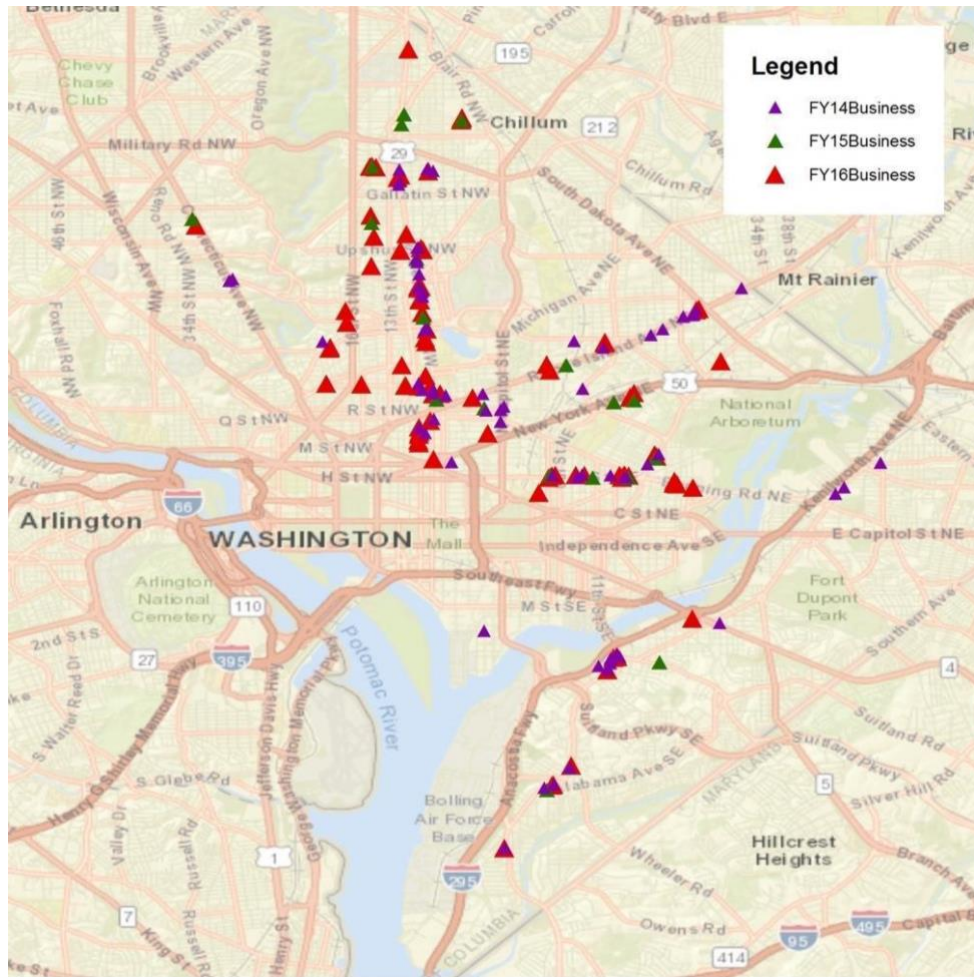


Figure 3. Map of the Great Streets FY 14, 15, 16 grant awardees generated in ArcGIS.

The treatment and control groups were created using a geospatial donut method based on its use in a paper by Branas, et al. (2011). The treatment and control groups were defined as the areas of concentric circles around each business grantee. The treatment area was a circle with a 250-foot radius around the treated business, and the control area was a ring around the treatment area with an inner radius of 250 feet and outer radius of 353 feet (*see* figure 4). These distances were selected to capture crime at the individual business level and to ensure both the treatment and control areas had the same square footage. Because the areas are the same size, counts of the crimes occurring in the treatment area and the control area can be directly compared. The crime data was joined to the treatment and control areas using ArcMap (*see* figure 5). ArcMap then counted the crime occurrences in each of the two areas by year.

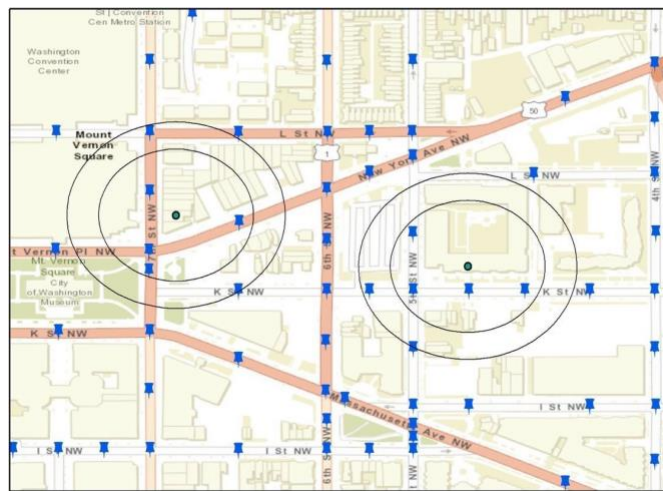


Figure 5: Crime Counts in Treatment and Control Areas

For the census information, the demographic data was joined to the treatment and control areas in ArcMap by census tract. The center point of the circles was used to assign demographic values to the treatment and control areas. The treatment and control area for a specific grantee share identical demographic values, however, those demographic values change within each area over time.

Each grantee was in the pre-period for the years before they received the grant, and in the post-period for the year they received the grant and after. In 2013, all of the grantees were in the pre-period. In 2014, 68 businesses received grants and were in the post-period. In 2015, 19 additional businesses received the grants and were in the post-period. In 2016, the remaining 88 businesses received the grant, and all 175 businesses were in the post-period. Table 1 shows how the businesses moved through the pre- and post-periods throughout the study. Tables 1 through 4 summarize the relevant statistics used in the study.

Table 1: Pre- and Post-Periods by Year

Year	Number of Grants Awarded	Number in Pre- and Post-Periods	
		<i>Pre-period</i>	<i>Post-period</i>
2013	-	175	0

2014	68	107	68
2015	19	88	87
2016	88	0	175

Table 2: Summary Statistics of Crime Variables

	Treatment Group					Control Group				
	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Total Crime – Counts per Treatment or Control Area										
Pre-Period	370	21.13	17.10	1	119	370	13.78	14.53	0	98
Post-Period	330	23.74	20.27	0	119	330	14.13	16.53	0	108
Burglary – Counts per Treatment or Control Area										
Pre-Period	370	1.20	1.70	0	13	370	0.82	1.31	0	6
Post-Period	330	0.93	1.03	0	5	330	0.62	1.04	0	5
Robbery with a Weapon – Counts per Treatment or Control Area										
Pre-Period	370	2.37	2.54	0	15	370	1.52	1.56	0	9
Post-Period	330	2.25	1.95	0	9	330	1.17	1.56	0	8
Theft from Auto – Counts per Treatment or Control Area										
Pre-Period	370	5.94	6.36	0	40	370	4.99	6.16	0	33
Post-Period	330	7.90	10.42	0	69	330	5.48	8.11	0	56
Theft Other – Counts per Treatment or Control Area										
Pre-Period	370	9.17	10.76	0	69	370	4.83	7.41	0	61
Post-Period	330	9.95	11.78	0	64	330	5.23	8.60	0	69

Table 3: Summary Statistics of District-Wide Demographic Variables

	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Median Age					
2013	175	35.15	5.76	22.0	48.4
2014	175	34.71	5.56	21.4	47.7
2015	175	34.74	5.24	22.3	45.2
2016	175	34.55	5.22	21.5	45.3
Percent of Residents African American					
2013	175	60.11	25.16	4.5	99.4
2014	175	59.12	24.40	4.4	97.9
2015	175	56.96	25.26	6.3	97.4
2016	175	55.06	25.42	6.2	96.9
Percent of Residents Hispanic					
2013	175	12.26	10.58	0.0	38.2
2014	175	12.17	10.52	0.4	41.5
2015	175	12.65	10.83	0.3	43.0
2016	175	12.25	9.81	0.6	38.0
Percent of Residents High School Graduate From					
2013	175	85.05	6.25	70.6	100.0
2014	175	85.39	6.04	70.6	99.5
2015	175	85.97	6.06	74.0	99.2

2016	175	87.11	6.13	74.6	99.1
Percent of Residents Living Below the Poverty Line					
2013	175	19.06	10.69	3.1	52.2
2014	175	19.16	11.50	2.5	53.2
2015	175	18.25	11.55	3.8	51.8
2016	175	17.63	10.93	3.6	52.0

Table 4: Summary Statistics of Demographic Variables by Corridor

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
	Georgia Ave NW (N = 76)				H Street NE (N = 31)			
Median Age	35.17	34.91	35.19	34.72	35.08	34.82	34.59	34.42
Percent of Residents African American	50.56	49.82	47.87	46.32	58.41	56.79	51.82	47.69
Percent of Residents Hispanic	19.56	20.26	20.78	19.56	6.50	4.43	4.99	5.75
Percent of Residents High School Graduate From	84.61	84.76	84.88	85.88	86.69	87.65	89.34	90.40
Percent of Residents Living Below the Poverty Line	15.71	14.99	13.30	13.15	17.56	18.07	16.74	15.26
	Martin Luther King Ave SE (N = 18)				Rhode Island Ave NE (N = 19)			
Median Age	32.73	31.73	31.54	32.44	38.68	37.71	38.04	38.59
Percent of Residents African American	96.45	95.21	94.20	93.16	77.52	75.83	75.47	73.72
Percent of Residents Hispanic	0.26	1.34	1.67	2.05	8.23	7.68	7.35	7.51
Percent of Residents High School Graduate From	82.04	83.3	84.31	85.40	84.84	83.98	84.41	85.55
Percent of Residents Living Below the Poverty Line	33.36	37.77	38.22	35.90	17.14	17.14	17.85	17.40

Using the difference-in-differences method allowed us to isolate the impact of the grants on crime outcomes in the District between 2013 and 2016. The theoretical regression specification for the difference-in-differences analysis was:

$$CrimeOutcome_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 TreatmentDummy_i + \beta_2 TimeDummy + \beta_3 TreatmentTime + \beta_4 MedianAge_i + \beta_5 PercentBlack_i + \beta_6 PercentHispanic_i + \beta_7 PercentHighSchool_i + \beta_8 PercentPoverty_i + \Sigma_i$$

Where: CrimeOutcome = Total Crime, Burglary, Robbery, Theft from Auto, or Theft Other

TreatmentDummy = 0 for the Control Group and 1 for the Treatment Group,

$\beta_3 =$ TimeDummy = 0 for the pre-period and 1 for the post-period, the difference-in-differences coefficient

TreatmentTime = the difference-in-differences interaction term TreatmentDummy * TimeDummy, and

$\Sigma =$ error term

Difference-in-Differences Results

The difference-in-differences equation was analyzed for total crime, burglary, robbery, theft from auto, and other theft for the District as a whole and for four of the eleven corridors in the Great Streets Program that had more than ten businesses receiving grants from 2014 to 2016. The results are presented in Tables 5 and 6. The remaining seven corridors were not included because the sample size was too small for conclusive results.

Table 5: Output for Crime Outcomes District-Wide

VARIABLES	Total Crime	Burglary	Robbery	Theft from Auto	Theft Other
<i>TreatmentDummy</i>	7.349*** (1.574)	0.386*** (0.117)	0.862*** (0.183)	0.959** (0.467)	4.373*** (0.987)
<i>TimeDummy</i>	0.783 (1.013)	-0.181* (0.0935)	-0.324*** (0.110)	0.877** (0.417)	0.455 (0.585)
<i>TreatmentTime</i>	2.263 (1.416)	-0.0774 (0.134)	0.214 (0.186)	1.462*** (0.512)	0.354 (0.983)
<i>MedianAge</i>	-0.604*** (0.173)	-0.0144 (0.00890)	-0.0243 (0.0177)	-0.441*** (0.0899)	-0.117 (0.106)
<i>Black</i>	-0.161*** (0.0501)	-0.00694*** (0.00240)	0.000117 (0.00555)	-0.0802*** (0.0250)	-0.0690** (0.0279)
<i>Hispanic</i>	-0.249** (0.122)	-0.0262*** (0.00520)	-0.00937 (0.0138)	-0.0582 (0.0497)	-0.108 (0.0667)
<i>HighSchoolGrad</i>	-0.478** (0.195)	-0.0380*** (0.0111)	-0.0250 (0.0238)	-0.283*** (0.0823)	-0.0829 (0.106)
<i>Poverty</i>	-0.350*** (0.114)	-0.0138** (0.00568)	-0.0162 (0.0127)	-0.201*** (0.0457)	-0.103 (0.0639)
<i>Constant</i>	94.48*** (20.95)	5.559*** (1.066)	4.908* (2.508)	53.53*** (8.423)	23.20* (12.13)
<i>N</i>	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400
<i>R-squared</i>	0.156	0.050	0.063	0.207	0.095

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The coefficient on the TreatmentTime variable, β_3 , is the difference-in-differences estimator, or the expected impact of the grants on the crime outcomes. For the district-wide evaluation, it shows the impact of the Great Streets program was an estimated increase of 2.26 counts of total crime within the treatment area relative to the control area, holding the demographic covariates constant. The increase was not statistically significant (p-value = 0.112), and it was a small effect of about 11 percent of a standard deviation. Burglary showed a small effect size decrease, while robbery and other theft showed small increases, but these were not statistically significant. Theft from automobiles was the only crime outcome that had a statistically significant change district-wide, and it was significant at the 99 percent level. The estimated increase of 1.46 counts within the treatment area was a small effect size of about 14 percent of a standard deviation.

Table 6: Difference-in-Differences Estimates of the Impact of the Great Streets Program on Crime Outcomes in Washington, DC

Outcome (Crime Counts)	District-Wide			Georgia Ave NW			H Street NE		
	β	SE	R ²	β	SE	R ²	β	SE	R ²
<i>Total Crime</i>	2.263	1.416	0.156	3.919	2.489	0.231	3.775	3.945	0.144
<i>Burglary</i>	-0.0774	0.134	0.050	0.0980	0.192	0.056	0.273	0.384	0.207
<i>Robbery</i>	0.214	0.186	0.063	0.0602	0.277	0.058	0.0941	0.539	0.117
<i>Theft From Auto</i>	1.462***	0.512	0.207	2.725**	1.402	0.287	0.116	0.794	0.223
<i>Theft Other</i>	0.354	0.983	0.095	0.907	1.746	0.107	1.719	2.982	0.174
	Martin Luther King Ave SE			Rhode Island Ave NE					
	β	SE	R ²	β	SE	R ²			
<i>Total Crime</i>	-6.75***	2.512	0.422	-0.211	3.832	0.218			
<i>Burglary</i>	-1.528***	0.453	0.208	0.311	0.299	0.164			
<i>Robbery</i>	-0.0278	0.625	0.335	-0.293	0.377	0.227			
<i>Theft From Auto</i>	-0.472	0.678	0.215	0.346	1.404	0.089			
<i>Theft Other</i>	-3.167*	1.725	0.345	-0.791	2.251	0.227			

SE = Robust standard errors
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

To understand neighborhood-level impacts, a similar regression analysis was used to explore the results by corridor. Each corridor displayed varying outcomes by crime type. The Georgia Avenue NW corridor was the most similar to the district-wide results, with only theft from automobiles having a statistically significant change in crime counts. The increase of 2.72 incidences in the treatment area relative to the control area was a small to moderate effect size of about 26 percent of a standard deviation at the 95 percent significance level. Total crime, burglary, robbery and other theft all showed small size increases that were not significant.

The Martin Luther King SE corridor saw decreases in all crime outcomes, with the decrease in Burglary significant at the 99 percent level, the decrease in total crime significant at the 95 percent level, and the decrease in other theft significant at the 90 percent level. The total crime decrease of 6.75 incidences in the treatment area was a small to moderate effect size of about 33 percent of a standard deviation. The decrease in burglary of 1.53 incidences was a large effect size of 148 percent of a standard deviation. Other theft showed a small to moderate decrease of 3.17 incidences or about 27 percent of a standard deviation. Robbery and theft from auto both showed small, statistically insignificant decreases. Both the Rhode Island NE and H Street NE corridors had statistically insignificant results. The Rhode Island NE corridor had small effect size changes for all crime output variables and the H Street NE corridor had small effect size increases for all crime outcomes.

For all of the above regressions, robust and clustered standard errors were used. Robust standard errors were used to correct for heteroskedasticity, and standard errors were clustered over the panel variable Business Name to correct for likely serial correlation.

Discussion

Our hypothesis was rejected and affirmed in part, dependent on geography and crime type. The grants are associated with a decrease in crime in the MLK corridor, with significance at the 90 percent level for total crime, burglary, and other theft. The analyses also indicated that business improvements were associated with a small increase in crime outcomes district-wide and in the Georgia Ave NW and H Street NE corridors. They suggested no impact in the Rhode Island Ave NE corridor and a significant reduction in total crime in the Martin Luther King Ave SE (MLK) corridor. In terms of crime type, theft from automobiles showed a small yet significant increase district-wide and in the Georgia Ave NW corridor but was unchanged in the remaining corridors. While these results are inconsistent, they indicate promise of business development to curb certain types of crime in particular neighborhoods.

Differences in results may be driven by differences in corridor demographics. The demographics of the MLK corridor showed significantly higher rates of poverty and racial minorities. MLK corridor's poverty rate is 33-36 percent, which is more than twice that of the District and the other corridors studied. The corridor's poverty rate also increased during the time period of the study. District-wide and in the H Street NE and Georgia Ave NW corridors, poverty rates decreased, and in the Rhode Island NE corridor they remained steady. The number of African American residents decreased by about four percentage points district-wide and all corridors except for H Street, where it decreased by about 11 percentage points.

Consistent with Chaskin and Joseph's (2013) mixed-income development research, communities that experience a shift from socioeconomic homogeneity to socioeconomic heterogeneity are likely to experience an increase in reported property crime. This is especially true when communities absorb higher-income persons, as these new residents often expect to maintain order and protect their investment in the new neighborhood through normative notions of law enforcement. The logic being, as more residents feel empowered to enforce *formal* mechanisms of control they are more likely to report crime. This was consistent with findings from H Street NE and George Ave NW corridors, both of which experienced a decrease in poverty rates but an increase in property theft crimes. However, the MLK corridor remained relatively unchanged demographically and alternatively showed significantly less property crime for the treatment group. Rather than concluding that the Great Streets grant program is ineffective at reducing crime, this suggests that the demographic makeup of a neighborhood plays an important role in the reporting of property crime.

Limitations

In this study, the treatment area captured activity along the main streets where the businesses were located. The control area of the ring around the treatment area captured activity partially on the smaller streets off of the main corridor. It is possible that the control areas picked up different levels of crime due to different levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the main corridors versus the smaller

side streets. This could have caused the control areas to not be equal in expectation to the treatment areas. It also appears that crimes were geocoded as occurring at the center of the street and block, rather than the exact location, for privacy reasons. This may have led to a potential overcount of crime incidences for businesses on a corner or in the middle of a block, and a potential undercount for other businesses.

A different control group technique may have improved the analysis by better capturing the crime incidences. Due to legal concerns, the Great Streets program was unable to share the list of businesses who were eligible and applied for the grant but were denied. This group of businesses would have made a more suitable control group. In lieu of this, a future study may want to consider creating a control group of businesses that would be eligible for the grants but did not apply. This control group could be matched one-to-one based on similar characteristics to the treatment group of businesses that received the grants. The control businesses would also be on the main corridors in the Great Streets program, and thus the radius around them would be more likely to be equal in expectation to the treatment group areas. However, in absence of this information and in consultation of the geospatial criminology literature, we employed the recognized donut method to create an artificial control group.

The crime data available to conduct this research was not ideal. We had to use felony crime data, as that is what the Metropolitan Police Department collects and publicly releases. Arguably, as is consistent in comparable literature (e.g. Branas et al), more appropriate crime data would be inclusive of nuisance crimes like public intoxication or disturbing the peace. Future research on this topic should attempt to seek data that is inclusive of misdemeanor crimes. Moreover, given the theoretical support for our findings, additional research should be performed to confirm that an increase in crime correlates with an increase in calls to law enforcement.

Conclusion

Our study expands on existing literature in two ways. First, literature investigating the effects of community revitalization initiatives on crime is limited, as contemporary studies concerning the relationship of neighborhood economics and crime at the structural level primarily focus on vacant lots and foreclosed homes. Our attempt to understand the impact of structural improvements to small businesses on the prevalence of crime is uncharted territory and thus adds to this severely understudied field.

Second, it adds to the general literature of geospatial criminology. While there are current limitations to the donut technique, this fairly new spatial method holds great promise for better understanding crime patterns and trends. The adaptive method of donut geomasking is already being praised for its improved privacy protection in mapping health data (Hampton et al., 2010). Given similar privacy concerns in mapping sensitive crime data, such as the location of sex offenses or offenses involving minors, advancing donut-style methods is vital to unlocking the potential of using geospatial technology to further criminological research.

As each corridor in the program has different demographics, the services desired by each corridors' residents reflect those differences. When asked about the future vision of the grant program, Great Streets Director Cook highlighted an aspiration to ensure the annual Request for Applications meets the diverse needs of the city (Cook & Kirk-Patrick, personal communication, December 7, 2018). Early conversations around crime reduction included fleshing out strategies to incentivize ways to encourage small business owners to locate to high-crime police service area boundaries. This literature would benefit from additional research exploring the data that results from this crime prevention-based expansion of the Great Streets program.

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Analyzing the Effectiveness of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program

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Introduction

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program was created by The Tax Reform Act of 1986 to provide incentives for private developers to build low-income housing units. The LIHTC program is now the largest subsidy program for low-income rental housing in the country. The program has financed the creation of more than 1.4 million new units per year.⁹ Under the LIHTC program, investors can reduce their federal income taxes by \$1 for every dollar of tax credit received. They are able to receive this credit for up to 10 years, and the property must remain occupied by low-income households for at least 15 years. This paper will explore the effectiveness of the program and whether the program lives up to its anticipated goals and objectives.

In order to do this, the paper will analyze the LIHTC process and explore variables related to the program's impact, including: the specific private/public mechanisms through which housing units are produced, whether the cost per unit is reduced, if the number of units produced matches demand, what income levels these units serve, and where the units are located. First, the paper will discuss how the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) works and then analyze the specific private/public mechanisms through which the units are produced.

How the LIHTC Program Works, and How Tax Credits are Produced

Within the LIHTC program, the IRS allocates the amount of LIHTC provided to state agencies based on their population and assigned 'need'.¹⁰ The LIHTC program requires that each state agency that distributes tax credits have a document called a Quality Allocation Plan (QAP) in place, which must provide preferences to certain projects and serve low-income residents.⁹ The QAPs also need to show that LIHTC plans are in qualified census tracts (QCTs), which have a poverty rate of around 25 percent, or where half of the households' income levels are 60 percent below the area median income (AMI). They also must be located in Difficult Development Areas (DDAs), locations where the costs of construction, land, and utility costs are high compared to the AMI. Along with this, QAPs require that a project include the use of existing housing as part of a community revitalization plan and project sponsorship characteristics. Many states adopt more rigorous criteria to target priority populations and locations as part of the QAP proposals, although they must be approved by the IRS.⁹

Then the State Housing Agency determines which developers will be awarded tax credits for their projects. Developers may only submit proposals for four percent or nine percent credits, to be granted by the State Housing Agency if they meet all QAP standards⁹, after which developers may sell these tax credits to investors or utilize a syndicator to sell these tax credits. With the additional equity gained from selling credits, developers are able to build affordable housing. Developers may also receive additional subsidies to reduce their construction and management costs. Once the development is built, developers must charge a lower rent for LIHTC units.⁹

Finally, for the property to continue to receive LIHTC funding, units must remain affordable for low-income tenants. The tax-credit recipient will receive credits annually for 10 years, but the property must remain affordable for an additional five years.⁹ If the IRS finds rents have risen above the maximum rent caps at any point of during the 15 years in operation, investors are subject to a financial penalty where some credits will be recaptured. Housing has to remain viable for residency and in good condition throughout these 10 years to continue to receive tax credits. Even though LIHTC units are not a guaranteed permanent residency for low-income households, low-income residents pay a lower level of rent than market rate based upon their AMI level⁹. After the full 15 years, the landlord can charge the market rate unless additional affordability restrictions are placed on these apartment buildings.⁹ Most of these housing units will continue to serve low-income households after 15 years, but assistance to pay for

essential renovations will be needed. After 15 years, units may also not convert to market-rate occupancy based on how many improvements need to be made.

The Tax Credit Process and How Developers Receive Credit

To apply for tax-credits, a developer must follow each step of the Qualified Allocation Process, which varies from state by state.¹⁰ The credit applicant will need to determine the total development cost of the LIHTC project.¹⁰ This can be computed by determining the overall cost of land and whether it needs to be purchased, along with construction material costs, environmental and regulatory costs, the furniture-fixture-equipment costs, and factoring any additional costs that will come from the construction requirements.¹⁰ These additional costs can be from elevators, ac/heater installation, electrical wiring costs etc. Once an estimation of the overall cost is determined, the financier will determine the financially acceptable cost and the lowest rate that they can afford to charge the renter.

Second, the credit applicant needs to determine the number of units or at least the percentage of units that will be occupied by low-income households. The percentage of the total square footage occupied by these households must be multiplied by the eligible basis to determine the qualified basis.¹⁰ Third, the developer must determine whether their project is located in either a difficult development area or a qualified census tract. If so, then the development can receive a basis boost of 30 percent, thus increasing the size of the qualified basis. The qualified basis is then multiplied by the credit rate to determine the size of the tax credit that can be taken annually for 10 years.¹⁰ For new construction and substantial rehabilitation, the 10-year stream of tax credits is based on 70 percent of the present value of the qualified basis (around nine percent annually, while developments that cost less than \$3,000 a unit to renovate can be considered for a smaller credit based on 30 percent of the present value of the qualified basis (around four percent annually).

After the housing developer receives their tax credit, they usually sell LIHTC credits. Developers can either directly sell their interest to private investors or more commonly, turn to syndicators for this purpose.¹⁰ These syndicators will sell these credits to private investors and banks that will then finance construction costs.¹⁰ Generally, developers will turn to syndicators to sell their interest on behalf of them to private investors. From this interest, private investors will receive some cash transfers to finance their construction operations along with this obtain tax credits to make building units with less rent, more feasible.¹⁰ They sell an interest in the development to private investors, who receive the tax credits, other tax benefits, and perhaps some cash flow from operations and a portion of the capital gains if the property is sold.

The Power of Designated State Agencies and Syndicators

As stated earlier, tax credit amounts depend on the cost and location of the development and its portion of units dedicated to housing low-income residents. Tax credit funding assigned to individual properties also depends on total development costs including land and other expenses.¹⁰ Properties located in difficult development areas or qualified census tracts tend to receive additional credits compared to LIHTC proposals that are in wealthier areas or in median income neighborhoods.¹⁰ Tax credits are provided to individual housing developers by designated state housing agencies based on state population and the overall housing needs. As of 2007, states could allocate \$1.95 per resident in tax credits and at least 10 percent of a state's tax credit allocation must go to housing developed by nonprofit organizations.¹⁰ Generally, state housing agencies award federal tax credits to particular developers, who sell them to investors either directly or through syndication.¹³ Once investors receive equity from the projects, they can use these tax credits to diversify the risks that investors will take. This provides individual housing developers with greater freedom regarding, which projects receive a boost.¹³

Generally, state housing agencies provide four and nine percent credits to offset approximately 30 and 70 percent of project costs.¹³ However, the LIHTC can be boosted in value by 30 percent for building in low-income areas. State housing agencies have discretion to choose the projects that receive a 30 percent boost, which comes from the federal budget, causing many state housing agencies to abuse the

system in providing this boost many of its projects.² Developers make little effort to reduce their costs after the state's generous grants are given to them.¹³ Many LIHTC projects operate at a loss, because investors can offset their taxes on other income if they receive additional funding.¹³

Major banks are the biggest financiers of LIHTC projects, because these projects allow them to fulfill certain requirements that make it easier for them to finance market-rate housing projects. Recently, it was found that close to 85 percent of total LIHTC equity investments were provided by banks and almost half of the equity investments have been provided by four banks.²

A 1997 study conducted by the Government Accountability Office discovered that the syndication process takes up anywhere from 10 to 27 percent of the equity on LIHTC projects. Due to state regulations regarding Qualified Allocation Plans, they have unique costs associated with financing, construction, and labor requirements compared to market rate housing. In many cases, these requirements have made the cost of affordable housing projects more expensive than market-rate housing projects.¹²

A lack of oversight over the LIHTC program has made it susceptible to tax fraud. An NPR investigation discovered that "little public accounting of the costs exists, even among government officials and regulators charged with monitoring the program."¹¹ The IRS hands out LIHTC benefits, but its oversight has been limited. Only 13 percent of the state housing agencies that hand out the tax credits have been audited by the IRS. The failure of the IRS to properly monitor how their allocations are used reduces the accountability of developers. This lack of oversight allows the state housing agencies to use their funds in any manner that they want.

Who's Eligible to Live in the LIHTC Homes

The cost of renting LIHTC units are usually factored into their overall cost of production by developers to ensure that low-income renters can afford them.⁹ The reduced cost of rent allows LIHTC developments to be occupied by low-income households. Depending on where the LIHTC unit is located, the developer will receive more tax credits and the cost of building the unit declines. The Area Median Income is the midpoint of a region's income distribution – half of families in a region earn more than the median and half earn less.⁹ These policies help identify which households are eligible to live in income-restricted housing units, and determine the cost of housing at three levels of affordability: at or below 30 percent AMI, between 31 and 50 percent AMI, and between 51 and 80 percent AMI.⁹

Within properties that dedicate more than 40 percent of their units to low-income renters, low income is defined as being up to 60 percent of the median family income, while in properties where only 20 to 39 percent are dedicated to low-income renters, low income is defined as being up to 50 percent of the median family income.⁹ In most cases, the cost per unit is uniform across LIHTC units within a particular location, and market rate plays a role in influencing average rental costs for low income households based around the AMI rules. With market rate being higher on average within metropolitan areas, many lower-income residents cannot afford the high cost of rent.⁹

The Locational Patterns of LIHTC Development

Sociologist Deidre Oakley's 2005 research study examined neighborhood characteristics and spatial patterns of LIHTC developments in four metropolitan areas. Utilizing HUD's LIHTC database and collected census data, Oakley used socio-spatial analysis to determine how clustered or dispersed LIHTC units are. She determined that the program attained high levels of success in locating units in less advantaged neighborhoods. However, the research showed the LIHTC program failed to build units in more affluent locations on aggregate.⁸ Originally, one of the stated goals of the program was integrated by income level. However, socio-spatial analysis showed that LIHTC developments were not being placed in upper-income neighborhoods where there are affordable housing shortages, despite there being a major demand for the affordable rent range in these neighborhoods (Oakley, 2005). Therefore, the program has a higher likelihood of rewarding developers that place LIHTC units in qualified census tracts where a heavy flow of other LIHTC projects already exist. From this assessment, it can be determined that the

program is only building units where a majority of the low-income housing units already exist (Oakley, 2005).

Does the LIHTC Increase the Overall Supply of Housing?

The LIHTC program aims to place units in neighborhoods with a home shortage, and state agencies allocate federal funds to resolve a specific area of need through their Qualified Allocation Plans. Economists John Malpezzi and Deborah Vandell found no significant relationship between the number of LIHTC units built and the overall supply of housing.⁵ This suggests a high rate of substitution and that LIHTC units only added to the existing affordable housing stock. From this assessment, we can determine that the program is building units where a majority of the low-income housing units already exist.⁵

This creates a high level of housing demand in cities without sufficient housing stock. With an inflow of new residents entering large cities for job opportunities, education, or business ventures, housing supply is limited. No one wants to be unsheltered, and cities have a priority to house all permanent residents and visitors, whenever they enter their city.¹ LIHTC credits are generally unaccounted for in large cities, because they tend to have the most regulations associated with home-building. Generally, the lack of available land and higher labor standards in metropolitan areas result in high costs for developers to build additional LIHTC units.

This leads many economists to argue against federal tax subsidies, and instead advocate for state and local policy changes.¹ Both building and zoning regulations decrease the supply of housing, potentially causing homelessness, as is evident in larger cities. With the LIHTC, the rising costs and regulations of buildings in large cities deters many developers from building in wealthier communities³. And generally, these larger metropolitan cities have an extremely high demand for multifamily housing for low-income tenants and renters that are unable to afford expensive rent and home-mortgage costs.

Has the LIHTC Improved Poverty De-Concentration?

Over the past decade, poverty de-concentration has become a major federal housing policy goal to help reduce the income gap.¹⁵ One major aim of the LIHTC program has been to deconcentrate poverty and promote mixed income living. By increasing the supply of housing in metropolitan areas is an example, but the policy needs to also create units across the median income neighborhoods to improve standards.

Williamson, Smith, and Strambi-Kramer's article analyzes whether the Housing Choice Voucher and the LIHTC have worked together to reduce poverty concentration. The authors found that LIHTC units are important sources of housing opportunity for voucher holders in some areas, but also found evidence that LIHTC location patterns in economically distressed areas known as Qualified Census Tracts may reinforce existing poverty concentrations.¹⁵

With income separation, area property values increase at a higher rate. Lower property value neighborhoods tend to have low levels of development and a large amount of poor residences.¹⁵ By bringing low income residents to wealthy neighborhoods and high income residents to poor neighborhoods through gentrification, the property values of both areas increase. Higher property values mean higher property taxes for cities, allowing them to increase their revenues, which can be used to improve the amount of support and opportunities provided to citizens from improved education, infrastructure, and recreation.¹⁵

The Market Price of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Housing

Imagine a housing project that costs \$10 million to build and receives the seven percent credit. Investors would get tax credits of \$700,000 a year for 10 years, totaling \$7 million. Those two credits would be worth about \$5 million on a present-value basis, or about 50 percent of all construction costs. This would allow the government to cover around 50 percent of the project, while allowing the investors to reduce income taxes they are paying by around \$5 million dollars. The amount of tax revenues that are lost in funding one development in the example above shows how much money can be spent on aggregate

if supervision is absent. Many economists argue that the LIHTC will become more expensive in financing a high level of housing support in comparison to tenant-based policies such as vouchers.

Additionally, there are many liquidity constraints faced by LIHTC developers in allocating subsidies and developers selling tax credits at low discounts below the actual value of the construction.² Currently the price has been estimated to be around \$0.73 per dollar of tax credit and has averaged to be around \$1.8 billion annually compared to allocating a cash transfer to developers.² Such policies overstate the overall cost of LIHTC units and allow developers to benefit.

Market price influences what unit rents are set at, however this whole assessment is subjective.⁹ Land assessors determine property values and from this assessment, the apartments will decide based upon the demand, how much market-rate rent prices should be set at. However, the actual cost of rent can be based not on what is affordable, but by how much others are willing to pay.⁹

A recent study by the Washington State Department of Commerce found that once a federal LIHTC allocation has been secured and the investor has made their money, they have few incentives to reduce development costs of affordable projects¹⁴. The over-regulation and the high costs of metropolitan areas reduce the incentives for developers to build in these regions. However, with the full appropriated federal LIHTC credits, they will not worry about saving money on material costs and labor costs, and this will make the overall project cost to be more expensive than projected.

By the government allocating money to developers to build these cheaper LIHTC properties, the goal of providing affordable housing should be the primary incentive. But instead, homes are being built and will continue to be built, regardless of the LIHTC credit. So, if private demand prices are determining the rates, then LIHTC units have not assisted with poverty de-concentration. All it has done is provided nicer apartments by tearing down old ones, in poor and low-income areas. And generally, only the supply of homes has increased in low-income areas, where there are already enough low-income units. In order for income integration to happen, the state housing agencies need to further incentivize low-income home creation in upper-income neighborhoods. The problem comes from the lack of willingness to accept less wealthy people in the more affluent communities. With the higher standard of living in these areas, the cost of goods and services are too high for a low-income individual to afford residency. Cities need to reduce their property tax rates and de-regulate certain market barriers, to allow low-income residents to have the ability to live in wealthier communities.

Are LIHTC Units Affordable?

LIHTC developments tend to set rents between 30 to 60 percent of the area median income, as discussed earlier.³ But rents are still too high, especially for poor families whose incomes are below 30 percent of the median. A majority of the people that live in poverty are far below the current AMI standards, and these families typically do not have the income to afford even the lowest-rent cost.³ In some states, some extremely poor residents receive vouchers for financial assistance to help them pay rent, but even then the cost is still high.

This is another reason why LIHTC units are not being developed in high-opportunity neighborhoods, because poor families cannot afford the rents even at 30 percent AMI in wealthy areas. In low-income neighborhoods, market rents are typically much lower than the 30 percent to 60 percent area median, so LIHTC owners have to set lower rents. In these cases, these owners would not be able to fill these newly built units if they are above market rate.³ That's not the case in high-opportunity areas, where most apartments will be filled due to the large housing demand. state Qualified Action Plans (QAPs) have the ability to set restrictions to make LIHTC units more affordable. In order to compensate the owners, certain programs like the HOME Investment Partnership, Community Development Block Grant, or National Housing Trust Fund are in place to cover anticipated revenue losses from the rent cost so that the owner is able to cover operating costs and payments on debt from development costs.³ Even then, by placing low-income families in more affluent areas, they still face a high risk of displacement.³

Certain city barriers need to be lifted to allow lower-income people to be incentivized to move to wealthier neighborhoods. Wealthier neighborhoods may have better schools and more job opportunities, but the high cost of living in these areas deters low-income households from moving to these areas.

Marketing and Tenant Selection Discrimination

Whenever poor families and minorities can afford LIHTC rent costs, they still may have lower credit scores than more affluent families.³ In many cases, there is a rigid credit screening process to ensure that the most qualified individuals obtain residency in LIHTC units located in upper-income areas. The lack of high credit scores is one of the major reasons that people tend to be poor in the first place, and this criterion further inflates the overall goals of building the LIHTC development. This prevents many impoverished people from having access to LIHTC housing in high-opportunity areas. Along with this, they have their own personal networks within lower-income neighborhoods, so they may not know people that can potentially vouch for them to enter the upper-income residence.

The goal of the LIHTC program is to help the poor and disenfranchised, but these barriers to entry directly discriminate against people the program intends to help.³ It is necessary for states to address these barriers through more targeted outreach to attract underrepresented groups to LIHTC developments. States usually have detailed marketing criteria in place, and people of color and underserved populations need to have greater access.³

Voucher Assistance Program

A majority of the poor households that reside in LIHTC developments need some federal rental assistance in order to afford housing.³ This assistance generally gives families the capability to pay 30 percent of their income towards rent. Housing Choice Vouchers, which are tenant-based and can be used in the private market, are the most common form of federal rent assistance.³ Housing vouchers allow low-income families to relocate to better apartments where units go unfilled and they are charged a lower rent than the market rate.

Both the programs working together will allow poor families to rent housing in high-opportunity areas where the rent is very high. However, with vouchers, states or sometimes cities decide whether apartments have to mandatorily accept vouchers. “Good credit is needed to apply for apartments, and voucher holders must compete with each other where vouchers are accepted.”⁹ Generally, the people with the least credit, usually the poorest individuals in society, will receive these vouchers. However, there are issues with state implementation of the program when states do not force apartments to accept vouchers from low-income residents. When allowed to choose apartments tend to deny voucher recipients residency or implement an even more rigid voucher selection process.

These voucher subsidies can and usually do work in tandem with LIHTC units, because these low-income homes are made to house the poorest residents. However even with LIHTC developments (depending on the state or locality), apartments can discriminate with voucher-holders by choosing the applicant with the highest levels of credit.⁹ Allowing these programs to work together will improve the overall success of LIHTC developments in housing the disadvantaged residents it aims to serve, but certain changes need to be made to the voucher program at the federal level to ensure that apartments are willing to accept voucher recipients.

LIHTC Tenant Protections, A Good-Cause to Evict?

All LIHTC unit residents must be allowed to pay lower rent costs for up to 15 years. Owners of LIHTC properties can evict tenants only if a good cause is provided.⁷ The good cause requirement has helped prevent many low-income residents from being evicted. In many cases, tenants may be delayed in making necessary rents and payments, putting their tenancy at risk. This has led certain tenants to be forcefully removed from their apartment without notice. A lack of tenant protections would allow apartments to remove tenants at will. Such problems have led to the creation of LIHTC tenant protections. Some states like California have required the good-cause requirement and require a letter to be delivered to low-income residents informing them of their rights⁷, while other states like Wisconsin and Massachusetts have made references to a good-cause requirement in their LIHTC regulatory agreements.

However, many state tax credit agencies have entirely failed to implement the good-cause requirement. This has become a major issue for LIHTC tenants and has led critics to advocate for change to the IRS.

For LIHTC residents in particular, the IRS created the “extended low-income housing commitment” (ELIHCs) in 2005, which has been enforced to a greater extent in some states than others. The good cause eviction requirement applies to all terminations of tenancy in the LIHTC program, whether during the term of the lease or at the end of the term. However, the ruling requires state agency tax credit allocators to review their LIHTC inventory to determine the extent of noncompliance and to simultaneously take action to protect tenants’ rights during this process (26 U.S.C. § 42 (h)(6)(J)). Many of these states have their own bilateral ELIHC agreements between the state housing agency and the owner, requiring the owner to comply with existing agreements.⁴

Maintenance and Upgrades

Another major problem LIHTC housing has historically faced is the issue of maintenance and upkeep.⁶ LIHTC credits are used primarily for construction, but every housing unit needs maintenance and capital upgrades.¹ With market-rate housing, owners generally raise rents to finance these upgrades. LIHTC properties have rent caps and income limits, constraining the ability and incentive of owners to make additional investments.⁶ The age of properties is another point of concern, as they require increased upkeep due to higher wear and tear. If the LIHTC properties operated in the regular market, these improvements would be made at a faster rate.¹

In many cases, the lack of upgrades can put the lives of tenants at risk. With units starting to face problems of asbestos and paint wearing out, the apartment owners should make immediate improvements.⁶ But as the LIHTC apartment unit is under contract for cheap rent up to 10 years, the development owner does not have the same incentive for improving their homes. In addition, low-income tenants will need to be temporarily displaced or shifted until proper renovations or repairs are made, which increases the marginal cost for both parties.⁶ However, the short-term impacts of not improving the property are heavily outweighed by the potential long-term problems of putting the health and safety of the tenant at risk.⁶ This can be solved by state housing agencies threatening to take away tax-credits unless renovations are made periodically.⁶

Conclusion

Overall, the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit has many drawbacks that reduce the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the program. Providing cheap units to low-income residents through a free-market approach has many challenges, which has not shown to adequately benefit many of the low-income residents it intends to help. The goal of the program is to provide more low-income homes in difficult development areas and upper-income neighborhoods. Doing so will reduce the income gap and improve the standard of living for impoverished Americans.

The program has failed to be effective for several reasons. The first is money mismanagement. The LIHTC policy has few mechanisms in place to prevent the misuse of funds or adequately monitor how funds are allocated by state housing agencies. Lack of oversight has allowed developers and investors to make financial gains from the program at an unprecedented rate.

The second problem comes from the cost of “affordable” rent. Under the current LIHTC provisions, units are intended to serve households that have incomes between 30 and 60 percent of the area median income, yet a majority of impoverished households make less than the 30 percent AMI. This means that regardless of all the tax-credits, incentives, and affordability provisions, these LIHTC units are still too expensive for low-income residents.

The third problem is location. The LIHTC program aims to create cheaper developments in two types of areas: difficult development areas and upper-income neighborhoods. However, when it comes to upper-income neighborhood LIHTC developments, there has been little supply of homes and rental costs for lower-income residents have exceeded their affordability range. The LIHTC program does not account for the high cost of building and regulations within metropolitan areas, which de-incentivizes developers

from building cheap units in wealthy neighborhoods as they will lose money for 15 years. With LIHTC units being built only where low-income families are clustered, the program fails to accomplish one of its goals of income integration.

The fourth problem with the LIHTC program comes from credit discrimination. The LIHTC program does not do enough to reduce credit discrimination and help the low-income population that it was implemented to serve.

The final problem is maintenance, as the program leads to a lack of incentive for the property owners to renovate and upgrade their properties.

In summation, the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit has not effectively lived up to the goals and standards set during its implementation. Unless these policies are reconsidered and until changes are made, the program cannot be called efficient or effective.

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Public Policy Process and “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”

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Abstract

The public policy process as defined by Kingdon (2011) poorly articulates the stages in which the American public are involved during the passage of legislation. In the agenda setting/identification stage of the public policy process, the public is the most involved. Within the first two stages, various groups attempt to facilitate and cultivate public opinion towards their argument about a policy.

This paper uses the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Repeal Act of 2010 to argue that the public is the most involved in the first stages of the public policy process. Through an in-depth analysis of the process to pass the bill, inclusive of the actors and legislative process, I conclude that the public is primarily involved in the first stage of Kingdon’s process. Using quantitative data provided by the Human Rights Campaign, I confirm that the public was most involved during this stage due to their invoked engagement.

Thus, this study builds on the public policy process model by expanding the theory behind Kingdon’s work. Specifically, it illuminates stages in which non-elite actors are involved in beyond Kingdon’s elite framing of the process. By using a social rights bill, this study helps to define how the public policy process model applies to a specific type of policy.

Main Paper

Americans are often involved in the first two steps of the policy process: problem identification/agenda setting and alternative specification (Kingdon, 2011, pp. 3-10). Unlike the latter steps of the process, these stages engage the public more directly. Within the first two stages, various groups attempt to facilitate and cultivate public opinion towards their argument about a policy. Using the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Repeal Act of 2010 this paper argues that the public is the most involved in the first stages of the public policy process.

In the first phase of the public policy process, a problem is identified by either the public, public officials, or members of the elite (Kingdon, 2011). The public is increasingly aware of an issue in this stage due to the media’s promotion of an issue, interest groups facilitating public relations campaigns, and political elites taking sides. For example, questions regarding the need for Directive 1304.26, Don’t Ask Don’t Tell (DADT), was originally brought to the public’s attention by the media. Several outlets probed several members of Congress about the murder of Barry Winchell in 1999. This suggested that his death was due to the policy’s institutionalized anti-gay violence (Benecke, 2011, Neff and Edgell, 2013). Further, the public responded positively to media coverage of the Log Cabin Republicans’ (LCR) 2000s lawsuit against the government to end DADT.

These examples demonstrate several aspects of the problem identification stage in the public policy process. The media directly provoked elite participation of DADT and brought the issue to the public’s attention by framing a personal narrative. The visibility of DADT in the media and general public was further increased by LCR’s lawsuit (Johnson and Ham, 2010, Nicholson, 2012, Connell, 2013). As interest groups, the media, and members of Congress continued to actively discuss the impact of the policy, the public grew more aware and responsive to the issue, making it more politically potent. For example, Fox News ran a poll in 2000, after the death of Winchell and the LCR lawsuit, showing that 57% of the public supported gays in the military (“LGBT,” 2008).

This level of support from the public demonstrates that the narrative surrounding DADT was enough to identify the problem as a public concern. The independent but interlinked actions of the media, interest groups, and Congress heightened awareness about the negative effects of the policy. Polling the public added pressure to Congress to address the issue, as it demonstrated a growing desire for discussions and a legislative solution. In this particular stage, the public is most impactful because the media is able to engage with groups the most. Without media engagement, the public is limited in their

collective ability to gain political attention and influence politicians. Because Congress is primarily concerned with being reelected, they are more influenced when there is a clear public opinion about policy initiatives.

As media attention on the topic grew, so did the involvement of interest groups. Specifically, after numerous Arabic linguists were removed from the military due to DADT between 2001-2002, interest groups like the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, SLDN, joined in the repeal effort (Cosgrove-Mather and Bootie, 2002; Bishop, 2010; Nicholson, 2012; Neff and Edgell, 2013). The involvement of lobbyists helped to solidify the urgency of the problem in the initial stage of the public policy process. Gallup Polls noted that public opinion towards gays in the military has gradually increased since the 1970s ("Gays and Lesbian Rights," 2019). Public opinion consequently spiked after the firing of the linguists and the involvement of SLDN, making the repeal of DADT a public and congressional concern ("2000 to 2008: Individual opinion polls on gays & lesbians serving openly in the military," 2008; "LGBT," 2008).

Interest groups capitalized on the media's coverage and polling data by lobbying Congress with public opinion numbers that identified the issue as relevant. The interactions amongst these groups made the repeal of DADT as a crucial concern to be addressed by Congress. For example, SLDN and the Human Rights Campaign, HRC, created media attention with publicity tours with gay service members, and the academic think tank, the Palm Center, conducted studies regarding those nations with gays openly serving in the military to lobby Congress (Nicholson 2012; Neff and Edgell 2013; N. Frank 2013). Examining the public's support for gays in the military over time provides evidence for the importance of these first two steps. A 2006 Pew Research survey showed support at 60 percent, while a little more than three years later, a USA Today poll demonstrated that support increased to 69 percent ("LGBT," 2008). These numbers indicate that the efforts of interest groups, the media, and political elite did increase the visibility of the issue to the public, increasing public support of the repeal and placing pressure on Congress to act.

After identification, the next step in the public policy process is agenda setting. Agenda setting consists of a variety of people and institutions interacting over time through which a law like DADT can be repealed (Kingdon, 2011, pp. 3, 22-27). Congressman Marty Meehan (D-MA) attempted to bring the repeal bill to the attention of his colleagues in 2005 and 2007; however, nothing concrete resulted from his various attempts (Meehan, 2005; 2007). Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) passed an exception to DADT in 2004 to allow for gay linguists avoid wartime discharges but did not have strong enough political momentum to repeal the law. (Neff and Edgell, 2013). As Kingdon notes, these setbacks are due to Congress having too many competing interests to practice real agenda setting power. This dynamic explains why Meehan's bills never garnered enough support to leave the House even though the public backed his bill (Kingdon, 2011, p. 36). Groups like SLDN and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) as well as representatives like Meehan, heavily lobbied Congress to address the issue. Their attempt to build a coalition in Congress shows how the public was less involved in placing the problem on the formal policy agenda (Nicholson, 2012; Frank, 2013; Neff and Edgell, 2013).

In comparison, Presidents and party leadership are incredibly resourceful at agenda setting. With the repeal of DADT, President Barack Obama played a critical role in placing the law on the Democratic agenda. As a candidate, Obama felt the pressure of the public and Democrat Party supporters to repeal DADT, demonstrating the power of public opinion to influence the agenda of policy actors. This pressure encouraged Obama to more directly approach the issue and take a public position, eventually broadening the issue to the entire Democrat Party. When the Democrats took control of Congress in 2008, Speaker Nancy Pelosi and party leadership made the repeal a priority for the party (Neff and Edgell, 2013; Pruitt, 2018; Kingdon, 2011). Kingdon was correct in his assessment that the media, interest groups, the general public, and Congress, as a collective unit, were not strong enough actors to place DADT legislation on the agenda; rather they elevated the issue to political elites as an issue that needed to be discussed by vocally identifying it (Kingdon, 2011, pp. 49 - 64).

Party leadership played a critical role in the advancement of the repeal. President Obama spoke about repealing DADT in his 2010 State of the Union Speech (SOTU), thus setting it officially as a policy

for the Democratic Party to pursue. The Senate Armed Services Committee held a hearing in response to this policy promotion, which subsequently led the Obama Administration to launch a study through the Department of Defense that examined how to remove the law and the impact of doing so (Lee, 2013; Johnson and Ham, 2010). In this example, the public was critical in promoting awareness of the issues and pressuring Congress to act, but they were not nearly as influential in placing the item on the congressional agenda as leadership. Fox News polls after the SOTU in 2010 showed that 61% of all Americans supported gays in the military, and by May, CNN showed that support was at 78% (“LGBT,” 2008). These numbers demonstrate that since the push by the President and party leadership to take on repealing DADT, most Americans began to support the public policy initiative. Increased public opinion in support during the problem identification stages and agenda setting phases further encouraged the President and Congress to address the issue.

However, the public alone was not enough to accomplish this goal. They were provoked by interest groups to encourage congressional action after the policy was placed on the agenda, thus demonstrating their direct involvement in the alternative specification stage. Zohlhofer, Hub, and Herweg (2016) note that political entrepreneurs, or people who have the time, access, resources, and networks who can advocate for policy and their outcomes, are active in both the agenda setting stages and decision-making stages (p.250). The public is the most active in this stage because they were given the tools to facilitate change by political entrepreneurs, unlike in the agenda setting stage.

For example, after a large majority of the public was in support of the repeal, interest groups like the HRC began to engage the public to pressure congressional action in the alternative specification stage (HRC, 2010 a). HRC measured that from the 19 million emails sent to their supporters, 625,000 emails and 50,000 letters were sent to Congress to repeal the law. 1,000 grassroots lobbying events happened in Congress or in local districts, and 20,000 veterans contacted a news forum to encourage congressional and public response to the issue (HRC, 2010 b). These numbers show that the public was heavily involved in the alternative specification stage after the item had been placed on the agenda.

Regarding DADT, it is unlikely that the public would be more involved in other stages. The public is unlikely to participate in the implementation stage of the repeal process, as their ability to access Congress during votes is limited. From the repeal’s passage to the enactment, public participation significantly declined because they believed they had accomplished their goal with the passage of the repeal, when it would not be implemented until September of 2011 (Williams, 2011). Further, because the President has a greater say over the implementation of a law due to Congress’ deferral norms of legislating, increasing public contact Congress would be moot.

Thus, public involvement in the public policy process is most effective in the first two stages. While the influence of the public on the process is limited in the agenda setting stage, it did help to narrow the narrative in the problem identification stage. With less organizational skills and knowledge of government, interest groups facilitated public action in the alternative specification stage, increasing their involvement.

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Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact: Coordinating Climate Change Response Through New Government Structures

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Abstract

The Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (SFRCCC) was founded in 2009 by the Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties as a means to share resources, reduce competition, and more effectively address evident climate change impacts. Despite a relatively informal structure, this regional network has been remarkably successful, in large part due to voluntary implementation of different recommendations and support by grants. However, the success of the SFRCCC, especially as time goes by and climate impacts worsen nationally, may not be able to be replicated in other regions and at different levels of government due to competition for grant dollars and to the inherent difficulty of scaling a regionally unique solution.

Introduction

President Barack Obama's words are displayed prominently on the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (SFRCCC)'s website: "Local leaders down here, Republicans and Democrats, formed the bipartisan Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact — an agreement to work together to fight climate change. And it's become a model not just for the country, but for the world."

Formed in 2009, the SFRCCC is composed of the Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties, as well as any municipalities within these counties that choose to participate. The SFRCCC is in many ways a sensible response to the state of Florida's reluctance to take statewide action regarding climate change, especially because these four counties are among those that will be the most impacted by climate change in the United States. These networks — "novel governance systems," as described by Woodruff (2018), are a part of a trend to make critical decisions about land use, infrastructure, hazard migration, and water resources at the local level. According to Woodruff, these collaborations can manifest as "learning and professional networks" as well as "horizontal or polycentric governance outside formal, hierarchical structures," acting as a kind of negotiation among equals (Woodruff, 2018).

The SFRCCC is unique in that it is not only responding to federal government inaction, but also to extreme reticence and even climate obstruction at the state level, memorably brought to light by Governor Rick Scott's policy to restrict government employees from using the phrases "climate change," "global warming," and "sustainability" in any correspondence (Korten, 2015). Though Governor DeSantis has made strides in the environmental arena (for example, appointing a Chief Science Officer that is also a well-respected ecologist), the state still woefully under-funds resilience projects. This may be because the state as a whole does not feel political pressure to fund these programs, as the problems are more visible on a daily basis in Southeast Florida as opposed to other regions like the Panhandle: "Southeast Florida is in a more precarious situation than the rest of the state with respect to climate change impacts with sunny day (King tide) flooding, the failure of flood control canals, rapid beach erosion, and saltwater intrusion into drinking water supplies" (Vella et al., 2016). Thus, the problem is isolated to one part of the state and easily ignored by a government sitting far to the north in Tallahassee.

The Florida Constitution bans income and inheritance taxes and limits the issuing of bonds, which may contribute to financial pressures and scarcity state funds. There are historic reasons for this: voters initially banned income taxes in 1924 through a constitutional amendment, and chambers of commerce and real estate agencies have pitched it ever since to wealthy people and retirees as an incentive to move to Florida. Politicians and others routinely talk about considering a personal income tax as "off the table" (Associated Press, 2007). This leads to increases in regressive taxes, like sales taxes, that disproportionately burden people with lower incomes. According to the Institute of Taxation and Economic Policy, though Florida has a reputation of being a low-tax state, it is the ninth-highest tax state

for low-income families – meaning that, “To pay for state and local government services, Florida derives over half (51 percent) of its tax revenue from sales and excise taxes — far above the national average of 35 percent” (Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, 2018). In general, states without personal income taxes have less fiscal stability, and, especially in Florida, the dependence on sales taxes means that the ability to provide services is at risk during a recession or when tourism is low (Walters, 2010). This can lead the state to cut key programs, like departments at state universities, which Florida did in 2008. With these pressures, it can be difficult to fund environmental and resilience programs at the state-level.

Before the SFRCCC, the four counties competed against each other for resources at the local, state, and federal levels. This is normal; competition commonly occurs amongst local governments in regard to jobs, resources, and autonomy – and persists even when it occurs alongside necessary collaboration on issues like shared infrastructure (Shi, 2019). A highly visible instance of this competition occurred in 2009 when each county sent staff to Washington, D.C. to lobby Congress for resilience funding. The staffs were embarrassed when they each presented different estimates for sea-level rise, resulting in legislators recommending that the counties work together on unified climate science in order to be taken more seriously (Shi, 2019). These conflicting projections “left Congressional staff unpersuaded” in terms of providing funding to mitigate sea-level rise – not ideal! (Menees and Grannis, 2017).

Governing Structure

Democrats and Republicans alike were shamed by 2009’s humiliating episode and acted promptly to create the SFRCCC that same year. There are over 15 adaptation networks in the United States, and most, in contrast to the bipartisan SFRCCC, tend to be liberal leaning (Woodruff, 2018). The SFRCCC’s goals can be summarized as “to work together to collect information, guide climate action and collectively lobby federal, state and regional planning agencies to support implementation of strategies to address climate mitigation and adaptation” (Vella et al., 2016). Interestingly, the SFRCCC is completely voluntary and it operates without legal mandate or force: “the Compact provides only guidance to local governments without robust inducements or support from other levels for implementation” (Vella et al., 2016). Authors from the Georgetown Climate Center describe the SFRCCC’s status as distinctive:

“The Compact is not a formally recognized legal entity—it is not a non-profit organization or municipal corporation—which means that it has no official legal status. This has two consequences for the Compact: First, the Compact has no legal authority and actions taken by the Compact Steering Committee have no legal effect, meaning that recommendations made by the Compact must be adopted and ratified at the individual county and municipal level. Second, the Compact historically had no dedicated source of funding and no means by which to take in grants or other sources of funding. To fund the Compact’s efforts, grants must be funneled through individual local government members of the Compact, or through their non-profit fiscal agent, the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC)” (Menees and Grannis, 2017)

Despite its voluntary nature, “the collective weight of activity generated by the Compact’s governance structure gives momentum to climate action in the region helping to engage stakeholders at higher levels” (Vella et. al, 2016). One government official interviewed anonymously in 2016 said, “we represent 30% of the population of the State of Florida. If you think that climate change isn’t important in Tallahassee, then all you need to do is poll citizens in South Florida, which represents a large voting bloc in the state. Our unified voice is much stronger at the state and federal level” (Vella et al., 2016). Though the state may still ignore the SFRCCC to an extent, they are making more progress together — rather than fighting each other for funding.

Funding

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) is the glue that holds the SFRCCC together, and its initial funding came from the Kresage Foundation, which allowed the ISC to begin “coordinating meetings; organizing workshops; developing a website and online database of regional best practices, policies, and guidance documents; and conducting surveys that help monitor and evaluate progress” (Shi, 2019). Interestingly, the Kresage Foundation’s second grant to the ISC asked it to “develop a self-sustaining governance mechanism in the future” (Shi, 2019). This road to more formal, sustained governance is also reflected by the counties, which agreed to appropriate \$100,000 each to support the SFRCCC (Menees and Grannis, 2017). This combination of grants and contribution by counties is what makes the SFRCCC work.

The idea of grants supplanting local funding is not a new one and is not limited just to environmental issues: “local tax bases have become too small to support higher level governments (formerly the sovereigns) and too small to even finance their own needs and the tasks imposed upon them by upper level governments. Local governments, therefore, heavily depend on grants and transfers from upper level governments” (Blankart and Borck, 2005). The responses to grants vary from region to region, and in the context of education, which can be informative to consider when thinking about other, including environmental, grants, “the limited evidence on the issue suggests that additional resources from reformed state financial systems or additional spending have generally not induced schools to alter the methods of education production” (Fisher and Papke, 2000). In other words, schools did what they were going to do regardless. In some ways, this is also true in the case of the SFRCCC: “the SFRCCC is not technically a policy-making organization. While they recommend policy, the actual implementation happens at a smaller municipal and county-wide level. In other words, the outcomes of the SFRCCC’s documentation are mediated by local implementation” (Cagle, 2016). Nonetheless, many of the SFRCCC’s recommendations are indeed taken up by smaller entities within it because of the true severity of the problems and the prevalence of science-based solutions, which may distinguish it from educational grant implementation. This may be a trait of environmental grants in general. In an article about flypaper effects between federal funds and state spending, Clark and Whitford (2011) specifically focused on environmental protection and wrote that “Federal spending and state spending are positively correlated after accounting for the contribution of the unique factors.” In other words, environmental grants are “sticky” and the programs they support seem to be successful. More study is needed to understand the exceptional characteristics of environmental grants.

In terms of the funding structure of the SFRCCC, in the initial founding document, all four counties signed on to collaborating on lobbying for “the allocation of federal climate change funding based on vulnerability to climate change impacts,” as well as agreed that “each county shall commit appropriate staff resources and expertise, within budget constraints, to participate in a Regional Climate Team with other counties party to this compact toward the development of a Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Action Plan” (Compact Founding Document, 2009). Funding is embedded in the core of the SFRCCC as the commitment of the counties to donate resources, like staff time, to make the SFRCCC work, and the eagerness of the counties to receive increased federal dollars. Specific federal grants to the SFRCCC include *Seven50: Southeast Florida Prosperity Plan* from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Special Merit Competition Grant, and a Department of Transportation Climate Resilience Pilot Grant (Menees and Grannis, 2017).

Discussion

The SFRCCC provides a fascinating window into local governance. Historically, the theory behind local governance has been that it is more responsive to local wants and provides better services than a more distant, centralized government: “This model yields a solution for the level of expenditures for local public goods which reflects the preferences of the population more adequately than they can be reflected at the national level. The assumptions of the model will then be relaxed to see what implications are involved. Finally, policy considerations will be discussed” (Tiebout, 1956). THE SFRCCC would

seem to confirm this assumption; it is providing a key service – resilience planning – that the state government is not. Tiebout assumes that individuals would pay to move to an area with better local government services, an idea confirmed in the context of multiple studies focusing on education: “they are willing to pay about 2.1 percent-or \$3948-more for houses associated with test scores that are 5 percent higher at the mean” (Black, 1999). However, though many individuals may be willing to pay to live in areas with better government services and living conditions, some individuals are unable to move: “In the real world, moving is of course not costless. In addition to the physical act of moving which is costly, individuals may also be attached to their community if they have friends and family who live there; environmental amenities also may create a barrier to mobility. Therefore, individuals may find themselves stuck in a community with a non-optimal supply of public services” (Blankart and Borck, 2005). This is particularly worrying in the context of Southeast Florida, an area with immense income inequality. Even within the SFRCCC, service delivery can vary.

As summarized by Shi (2019), climate change poses major questions of equity, especially for Southeast Florida:

“Already, residents in Miami fear that ‘resilience gentrification’ (Gould and Lewis, 2018) will displace low-income communities as wealthier residents retreat to higher ground (Bolstad, 2017). Other examples include wealthier homeowners elevating homes, developers elevating subdivisions above current flood elevations, property managers buying inflatable floodwalls for downtown complexes, and individual neighborhoods or cities fortifying their shorelines, all of which worsen flooding elsewhere. The construction of new ‘resilient islands’ or other major infrastructure investments can hog public and private investments and leave socially vulnerable areas behind (Anguelovski et al., 2016). Conversely, emerging developments in this vein may be harbingers of future ‘climate slums’ (Eubanks, 2016).”

The concerns summarized above could even extend to the SFRCCC. Not every municipality contained in the four counties participates in the SFRCCC, and based on existing literature about regional collaborations, wealthy areas could participate at the expense of worse-off entities in the same region. For example, the increased heights of local seawalls in wealthy Fort Lauderdale and Miami Beach as a result of new local ordinances will inevitably displace floodwaters, potentially negatively impacting under-resourced neighbors (Shi, 2019).

Already in Florida, beyond climate change, environmental inequity is an issue of serious concern. Researchers found that children in Florida exposed to pollution performed worse in school, and this cognitive impact may persist past middle childhood (Heissel et. al, 2019). Similar effects could be true for exposure to climate change hazards, and the negative lifelong impacts for children could decrease their economic output and hurt society over decades. Regional compacts can allow for small technical fixes – like new sea-walls – without addressing the deeper problems associated with climate change.

Interviews

With the hope of acquiring personal perspectives of the SFRCCC, I conducted informal phone interviews with Megan Houston (Palm Beach County, Director, Office of Resilience) and Jason Liechty (Broward County Environmental Planning and Community Resilience Division, Senior Environmental Project Coordinator – and an American University alumnus).

In my two interviews, what largely came through was the importance of informal structures and a top-notch professional network, including the annual summit. This confirms what Shi found as a hallmark of successful regional networks: “Informal networking, trainings, and presentations are central to [regional networks] [...] Some also organize formal annual events to reaffirm political commitment and re-energize momentum” (Shi, 2019). These in-person events solidify connections between people and create strong working relationships. It also affirms the old saying: “The last thing you want to do during a crisis is exchange business cards.” The Menees and Grannis report also emphasized the Summits as vital to the functioning of the SFRCCC: “The positive attention brought to the region by the summits has been

critical to ensuring continued bipartisan support for the Compact from elected officials in the region... the summits also help to inform local, state, and federal officials of the efforts underway in the region to prepare for future climate change” (Menees and Grannis, 2017).

Both Houston and Liechty stressed that they had come on board in the past two years (well after the SFRCCC’s creation) described the collegial network as an important asset of the SFRCCC. They both positively described being initiated into a culture of collaboration and emphasized that a strength of the SFRCCC is having access to expertise and advice across counties – something as simple as just picking up the phone and talking about a problem, expert-to-expert. Southeast Florida seems to have a special blend of a lot of work to do and competent people to do it.

Looking to the Future

Though the problems associated with climate change are most severe in Southeast Florida, the rest of Florida is not immune to climate hazards, and it is important to consider how to fund climate change resilience throughout the entire state. Climate change in particular highlights the meaninglessness of government borders: “The effectiveness of many climate change programs also hinges on the ability to coordinate across political jurisdictions due to the presence of trans-boundary risks—such as sea level rise and storm surges—that span ecosystems and infrastructure networks” (Hughes et al., 2018). Addressing climate change also requires a careful balance: local governments may be more responsive to climate-based problems that uniquely impact their area, but the existence of organizations like the SFRCCC is important to eliminate meaningless competition for resources (like federal dollars) and duplicate efforts in a region. Thus, the optimal scope of government for climate change response is unclear, and will likely involve a mix of bottom-up and top-down governance solutions. The example of the SFRCCC points to the wisdom of regional networks, but the pressing climate issues facing the rest of Florida and the United States underscore the need for at least some coordinated action at all levels of government. The optimal combination of local and regional governance with state and federal coordination for climate issues is a topic that requires further study, and ultimately may vary from region to region and state to state.

It may indeed be difficult for other areas across the country to follow the SFRCCC’s model. In many ways, Southeast Florida may be a unicorn of sorts in that it has a clearly defined problem, wealth, and congeniality necessary to form an effective collaboration. Woodruff (2018) has a similar critique of collaboration networks: “Many small cities may not have the capacity – financial resources, personnel, and time - to participate.” Even in the case of the SFRCCC, which is widely regarded as successful, “Implementation is limited by insufficient resources and power from uneven political commitment, a low tax culture, constantly changing rules, a one-size-fits-all comprehensive planning approach, and an overbureaucratization of plans” (Vella et al., 2016). Kalesnikaite (2018) came to a similar conclusion. And while she praises the SFRCCC, Shi (2019) also offers words of caution: “[...] local-centric regional adaptation efforts have had less success in addressing horizontal coordination challenges across municipalities, particularly as they relate to land use planning, fiscal constraints, spillovers effects, and social equity.” Nonetheless, key successes of the SFRCCC include the fact that it has “improved accountability and the transparency of local government land-use decision making and enabled professionals to share important information about progress and key lessons from the experience of what has and has not worked” (Vella et al., 2016). The SFRCCC’s main value proposition is in its ability to expand access to information and policy ideas, like saltwater intrusion and stormwater drainage systems, that can save Floridians large amounts of money. However, in many ways, the SFRCCC is what a municipality makes of it. As one planner anonymously complained, “The mayor signed the pledge, but does he remember it? Any reasonable person would sign on to something that says we should plan and study and we’ll bring you technical resources and assistance” (Shi, 2019). Though the SFRCCC is a good response to the current on-the-ground situation in the state, based on the fact that South Florida and Florida in general have so much to lose – in property values, lost earnings, and more – from climate impacts, it might behoove the state to raise taxes in favor of resilience planning. These taxes will not necessarily have a negative impact on economic growth (Gale et al., 2015) and at the regional level they have “little net reduction for the combined region” beyond the border area (Rohlin and Thompson, 2018).

As two tax attorneys stated simply in a Florida Bar journal, “[...] one thing is certain: addressing these [climate] issues will be expensive” (Hogan and Jacobs, 2017). These attorneys actually urge that “local governments along the coasts of Florida cannot be left to ‘go it alone’ in paying the costs of sea-level rise” and believe that, in light of the fact that coastal communities will likely lose their tax base due to the decay in property values and decreased tourism, that the state must step in, perhaps providing a “super fund” for the state. They also explain that state may need to relax its prohibition on income and inheritance taxes, as well as its bond limit. Hogan and Jacobs (2017) urge consideration of the fact that grants from the federal government and private foundation “sources may be depleted in the future as coastal communities around the U.S. seek funding for their adaptation costs. Local governments would be well advised to avail themselves of grant and subsidy opportunities in the short term, while understanding that such funding sources may not be as available in the coming years.” Thus, in light of this, the SFRCCC is not a forever solution.

In the immediate context, it is clear that the Compact has facilitated collaboration on the local level between climate scientists, state and federal legislators, grant administrators and grantees, and creators of a climate action plan (Menees and Grannis, 2017). The SFRCCC is a response to the lack of state support, and its members are reacting to the very clear problem of climate change. The SFRCCC seems to have succeeded so far without a formal structure – successfully applying for grants, sharing expertise, and issuing recommendations that its members implement – because of the overwhelming pressures of sea-level rise and the collegial, collaborative network that has risen up to deal with it. Though the SFRCCC may not last forever in Southeast Florida or be successfully replicated elsewhere, at least something good is happening now.

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Where the Sidewalk Ends: Built Environment Decline and Depression

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Abstract

This study utilizes panel data collected in 1986 and 1989 to analyze the relationship between the quality of neighborhood sidewalks and individuals' levels of depression. Based on the well-established association between social isolation and negative mental health outcomes, we hypothesized that residents living in areas with poor sidewalks would report higher levels of depression due to limited walkability in their neighborhoods. We found that poorly maintained sidewalks were indeed associated with higher levels of depression ($p < .001$). We identified additional relationships between sidewalk quality and social integration (positive; $p < .001$) and between social integration and depression (inverse; $p < .001$). These findings carry implications for urban planners and local government finance.

Introduction

Does the quality of structures in a community contribute to an individual's mental health, particularly their likelihood of experiencing depression? If a neighborhood is plagued by sidewalks that abruptly end or are obstructed by tree roots, might this reduce residents' interactions with peers? Our research attempts to quantify the relationship between quality of sidewalks and depression to better understand the role that the built environment plays in social connectedness.

There are few, if any, existing pieces of literature which specifically explore the relationship between sidewalk quality and depression. Therefore, our motivations and hypotheses are based on a chain of assumptions drawn from prior research that examine the influence of outdoor spaces on other areas of health. In their research on environments and health, Rogowski, Freedman, & Schoeni (2006) found that the condition of one's environment influences well-being through the ability to socially interact with others. Similarly, Clarke, Ailshire, & Lantz (2009) found that individuals who reported living in communities that were not ideal or poorly maintained (e.g. deteriorating sidewalks, heavy traffic, inaccessible public transportation) also reported poorer physical health and higher rates of disability compared to those living in well-maintained communities.

Because social isolation is understood to be associated with depression and negative health outcomes (Cacioppo, Hawkley, Norman, & Berntson, 2011), we expect to identify an association between quality of sidewalk structures and depression.

Hypotheses

Using panel data from the Americans' Changing Lives study collected in 1986 and 1989, this paper analyzes how the upkeep of sidewalks in an individual's neighborhood may impact levels of depression and social integration. The impact of sidewalk quality on social integration will also be examined. The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

1. Individuals who report sidewalks as being poorly maintained will report higher levels of depression.⁶

⁶ H₀: ↓ sidewalk quality ⇒ ↑ depression

H_A: ↓ sidewalk quality ⇒ ↑ depression

2. Individuals who report sidewalks as being poorly maintained will report lower formal and informal social integration.⁷
3. Individuals who report lower formal and informal social integration will report higher levels of depression.⁸

Literature Review

Prior research has largely focused on the relationships between the built environment, physical activity, and overall mental health. However, there are a limited number of studies providing quantitative evidence of the strengths of these relationships. This is encapsulated by Araya, Dunstan, Playle, Thomas, Palmer, & Lewis (2006) who stated “[...] there has been much speculation about a possible association between the social and built environment and health, but the empirical evidence is still elusive” (p. 3072). The results from this limited 2006 study, which focused on South Wales, were consistent with other research in the field and demonstrated that there is notable variation for social cohesion and mental health between neighborhoods.

Studies on mood and wellbeing have clearly illustrated the importance of social networks on overall mental health. In their study of communities and health, Rogowski et al. (2006) found that the condition of one’s environment influences well-being. This relationship is largely driven by social interaction with others and community participation. Mollenkopf, Marcellini, Ruoppila, Flaschentrager, Gagliardi, & Spazzafumo (1997) aptly stated, “mobility becomes a fundamental prerequisite for the participation in social relations and activities” (p. 295). It is therefore reasonable to hypothesize that the mental health of an individual may be negatively impacted by living in a poorly maintained space, which may result in a higher level of isolation from others and subsequently a higher incidence of depression.

It is also reasonable to theorize that seniors or persons with mobility-limiting disabilities may be more likely to experience the negative consequences of poorly maintained sidewalks. In their 2009 study, Clarke et al. found that individuals who had limited outdoor mobility due to poor infrastructure reported poor physical health outcomes and higher rates of disability. Further, Gilderbloom & Rosentraub (1990) explained that large urban areas in Houston acted as “invisible jails” for people with disabilities and seniors because infrastructure was not accessible or accommodating to these populations (p. 271).

Weich, Blanchard, Prince, Burton, Erens, & Sproston (2002) sought to explore the relationship between depression and individual ratings of the built environment. They explained that “at a neighborhood or small area level, the built environment is likely to affect traffic, pollution, crime, and residents’ perceptions about their own safety,” all of which are factors that may influence prevalence of depression in a community (p. 432). After controlling for socioeconomic status and quality of household structure, they found that prevalence of depression was associated with poor mobility and the presence of graffiti. Though the findings of this study were localized to London and are therefore not generalizable, they support our notion that a community’s walkability may strongly inform levels of social connectedness and incidence of depression in that area.

Foster, Giles-Corti, & Knuiiman (2010) proposed that a subpar built environment could be perceived by residents as unsafe and more susceptible to crime, discouraging individuals from engaging in physical or social activities. They found evidence that this decline in physical and social activities led to a deterioration in mental health, and concluded that “planning policies that engender a shift away from

⁷ H₀: ↓ sidewalk quality \nRightarrow ↓ social integration

H_A: ↓ sidewalk quality \Rightarrow ↓ social integration

⁸ H₀: ↓ social integration \nRightarrow ↑ depression

H_A: ↓ social integration \Rightarrow ↑ depression

low density suburbia towards more walkable environments could benefit psychological wellbeing and physical health” (p. 1164).

Data and Methodology

This study utilizes data from the Americans’ Changing Lives (ACL) study. Data was collected by the University of Michigan and is publicly available on the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Science Research (ICPSR) (2018). The survey series, which began in 1986 and is ongoing, seeks to explore social relationships, life events and stressors, physical and mental health, and socio-cultural variations in Americans. In addition to these variables, the study also collects information about utilization of healthcare services, neighborhood characteristics, well-being, employment, income, and living situations for the years 1986, 1989, 1994, 2002, and 2011.

The present study uses two out of five waves of collected data. Wave 1 (collected in 1986) surveyed 3,617 participants ages 25 and older. The researchers report oversampling Black Americans and individuals over the age of 60 at twice the rate of other demographic groups because these subsets of the population were of particular interest. Wave 2 (collected in 1989) attempted to survey all participants from Wave 1 who were still living ($n = 2,867$). The rate of attrition between Waves 1 and 2 was approximately 20.7 percent. Tables 1 and 2 (Appendix A) contain demographic information about the respondents.

In an attempt to ensure that the sample was as representative as possible, participants in the original study were selected using a four-stage sampling process. First, ‘probability proportionate to size’ (PPS) methods were used to ensure that metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas were sampled proportionately. The researchers then performed a secondary PPS sampling of geographic areas within the initial PPS regions. Household units within these areas were then enumerated, and final selection of participants was accomplished by randomly selecting individuals within a sample of household units.

The key variables of interest for the present study are sidewalk quality in individuals’ communities (independent variable) and depression (dependent variable). Sidewalk quality scores were calculated using participants’ responses to the following question: “How well kept and cared for are the yards and/or sidewalks in front of structures in the neighborhood?” with possible responses ranging from 1 (‘Very poorly’) to 4 (‘Very well’).

Depression scores were calculated by summing and averaging participants’ responses to eleven out of twenty questions from the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CESD-11) (Radloff, 1977). Items on this index included ‘I did not feel like eating,’ ‘I felt that everything I did was an effort,’ ‘I felt lonely,’ and ‘People were unfriendly,’ among others. Possible responses ranged from 1 (‘Hardly ever’) to 3 (‘Most of the time’). This scale in its entirety can be found in Appendix B.

Formal Social Integration Index (FSII) measured an individual’s level of social engagement in formally organized activities or events with others, such as clubs or organizations (Radloff, 1997). FSII was calculated by averaging participants’ responses to two survey questions (“How often do you attend meetings or programs of groups, clubs, or organizations that you belong to?” and “How often do you usually attend religious services?”), to which they responded on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 6 (> once per week).

Informal Social Integration Index (ISII) measured one’s social engagement with others via informal routes, such as visiting friends, relatives, or neighbors or talking to them on the telephone. ISII was calculated by averaging participants’ responses to two survey questions (“In a typical week, about how many times do you talk on the telephone with friends, neighbors, or relatives?” and “How often do you get together with friends, neighbors, or relatives and do things like go out together or visit each other’s homes?”), to which they responded on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 6 (> once per week).

Lower scores on Formal and Informal Social Integration Indexes indicate a lower level of social interaction with others. Participants’ depression index scores, sidewalk ratings, FSII scores, and ISII scores were standardized (to a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1) in order to make meaningful

comparisons between individuals and aid interpretation of results. Individuals' age, sex, and race were selected as control variables.

Identification Strategy

Our hypothesis follows the regression model

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 zSidewalk_{it} + \beta_2 ZFSII_{it} + \beta_3 ZISII_{it} + X_{it} + e,$$

where Y_{it} represents the dependent variable (individual i 's standardized depression index score) in time t , β_0 is the regression coefficient, and $zSidewalk_{it}$ is the independent variable (individual i 's standardized sidewalk rating) in time t . $ZFSII_{it}$ represents individual i 's standardized Formal Social Integration Index score in time t , and $ZISII_{it}$ represents individual i 's standardized Informal Social Integration Index score in time t . X_{it} includes the control variables sex, age, and race for individual i at time t , and e represents the error term. It is important to note that this model may be limited because the researchers omitted location information from the dataset to preserve participants' privacy. As a result, clustering could not be performed.

Results

Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was performed to identify any potential relationships between the variables of interest. Tables 3 through 5 (Appendix C) illustrate the relationships explored. The findings are explained below.

OLS analyses performed on individuals' ratings of sidewalks and their scores on the CESD-11 index indicate that individuals living in neighborhoods with poorer sidewalks were more likely to report higher levels of depression [$t(1,3284) = -12.49, p < .001$]. These findings remain significant when the control variables age, sex, and race are included in the regression model. This finding supports our first hypothesis.

OLS regression was performed to identify any potential relationship between individuals' sidewalk ratings, Formal Social Integration Index (FSII), and Informal Social Integration Index (ISII). The results indicate that individuals who rated sidewalks as lower quality were more likely to have lower levels of FSII [$t(1,3376) = 5.72, p < .001$]. Individuals who rated sidewalks as lower quality were also more likely to have lower levels of ISII [$t(1,3376) = 8.14, p < .001$]. These two findings remain significant when control variables are included in the regression model, and support our second hypothesis.

Finally, OLS regression was performed to analyze the relationship between depression, FSII, and ISII. The results indicate that individuals who have lower formal social integration with others are more likely to report higher levels of depression [$t(1,5480) = -10.36, p < .001$]. Individuals who have lower levels of informal social integration with others are also more likely to report higher levels of depression [$t(1,5484) = -8.82, p < .001$]. These findings remain significant when control variables are included in the regression model, and support our third hypothesis.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the quality of sidewalks in an individual's neighborhood is related to their level of depression. Using OLS regression, our findings suggest that an individual living in a neighborhood with poor sidewalks is more likely to report higher levels of depression as measured by the CESD-11. We also identified statistically significant relationships between sidewalk quality, formal and informal social integration, and depression. These findings remained significant with the inclusion of control variables (age, sex, and race) in the regression models.

The findings from this study are consistent with previous research on the relationship between the built environment and mental health. Like Weich et al. (2002), we found that a poor built environment is associated with an increased likelihood of experiencing depression. Similar to Mollenkopf et al. (1997), we also found evidence supporting the existence of a relationship between social connectedness and depression.

Limitations

These findings are limited by several factors, the first being omitted variable bias. A number of variables in addition social connectedness contribute to an individual's onset of depression, including biological differences such as genetics, brain chemistry, and hormones ("nature"). Environmental factors such as parenting style during upbringing, traumatic or stressful events, recreational use of drugs/alcohol, or the use of prescription medications ("nurture") may also play a role in the incidence or onset of depression (Mayo Clinic, 2019). For this reason, it is shortsighted to imply that an individual experiences depression solely due to lacking access to walkable sidewalks.

In addition to omitted variable bias, the sample of participants in this dataset is not representative and may have produced biased results. The original researchers stated that Black Americans and individuals over the age of 60 were oversampled due to a specific interest in these subsets. This limitation is significant because accessibility may be more or less of an issue for subsets of the total population. Additionally, geographic data was expunged from the dataset by the researchers in order to protect the privacy of survey participants, which gives rise to several problems. It is impossible to determine the geographic distribution of participants, further limiting generalizability of the findings. We were also unable to cluster using location as a fixed effect variable. Individuals living in group quarters or institutions, such as nursing homes or psychiatric facilities, as well as individuals from Hawaii and Alaska, were excluded from participating. These sampling concerns further limit generalizability of our results.

Measurement error may also limit the implications of this study, as information was self-reported by participants. Although depression is not as stigmatized as it once was, individuals from older generations may be unwilling to disclose feelings of intense sadness. Additionally, a handful of interviews in Wave 2 were completed by proxy respondents (family members, caretakers, etc.) rather than the original participants from Wave 1. Inaccurate reporting by a proxy may bias results. In addition to proxy respondents, attrition between survey Waves was approximately 20 percent. Had this proportion been primarily comprised of older respondents or those with health and mobility issues, our results would not be representative of these individuals' experiences.

Reverse causality is not a major defect of our study's primary hypothesis. Our findings suggest that poorly maintained sidewalks may contribute to depression via a social isolation pathway; however, it is reasonable and valid to state that depression does *not* cause poorly maintained sidewalks. For similar reasons, we do not believe reverse causality is present in our second hypothesis: social integration does *not* directly cause poorly maintained sidewalks. It is more likely that poorly maintained sidewalks are the result of inadequate leadership or economic conditions of a place, rather than individuals' characteristics. Admittedly, reverse causality may be present in our third hypothesis: a lack of social integration may contribute to one's level of depression, and depression may significantly reduce one's level of social integration.

Implications

Despite these limitations, the results of this study have several potential implications for the fields of policy and urban planning. Our findings broadly suggest that the physical environment of one's neighborhood may influence mental health. Due to the well-established relationship between mental and physical health, improving a population's ability to maintain their physical health may have spillover effects into mental health outcomes, and societal productivity by extension.

More narrowly, our findings may provide insight into where urban planners, state policy makers, and local council members can concentrate their efforts to produce an effective and efficient public good. The presence of well-maintained walkways in a neighborhood often positively contributes to the area's overall safety and significantly reduces vehicle collisions with pedestrians (PEDSAFE, 2019). However, the mere presence of sidewalks is not all that is important. The maintenance, accessibility, and walkability of sidewalks over time are equally as essential. A community largely benefits from having such public works features available, especially individual community members with mobility challenges. As Golden,

Conroy, Bruce, Denihan, Greene, Kirby, & Lawlor (2009) found, the relationship between loneliness, social networks, and well-being may hold a greater impact for older individuals as compared to the general population. A major barrier to social connectedness may be removed by simply ensuring that walkways are well-maintained and clear of obstacles. Local levels of government may consider these implications in their planning and maintenance of neighborhood structures.

Researchers studying this topic in the future should ensure that the sample examined is representative of the characteristics and geographic distribution of the general population. Including additional control variables, such as socioeconomic status, location, and level of mobility (disability status, type of disability, etc.), might give further insight into what factors interact heavily with neighborhood walkability. Future research might also include objective, rather than self-reported, ratings of the built environments, sidewalk quality, and other structures being analyzed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research identified statistically significant associations between poorly maintained sidewalks and levels of depression in individuals living in the United States. We also identified lower levels of social integration among those living in areas with poorly maintained sidewalks, and higher levels of depression in individuals with lower social integration. Further refinement of measurement techniques would be useful in establishing a causal relationship. In the absence of more sophisticated methodology, however, these findings suggest that increasing residents' ease of mobility through improvement of neighborhood structures should be prioritized by state and local policy actors.

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Appendix A

Table 1: Demographic data for Wave 1 participants

	e(count)	e(sum_w)	e(mean)	e(Var)	e(sd)	e(min)	e(max)	e(sum)
ID	3617	3617	1809	1090526	1044.282	1	3617	6543153
age	3588	3588	53.98969	310.1262	17.6104	25	99	193715
sex	3617	3617	.3754493	.234552	.4843056	0	1	1358
race	3617	3617	1.423002	.4626123	.6801561	1	5	5147
ZCESD	3486	3486	1.62e-07	1	1	-1.171548	4.008399	.0005653
zsidewalk	3557	3557	5.15e-07	1	1	-2.913454	1.019433	.0018302
ZFSII	3610	3610	2.21e-07	.9999997	.9999999	-1.417511	1.888184	.000796
ZISII	3610	3610	2.47e-08	1	1	-2.902367	1.32279	.0000892

Table 2: Demographic data for Wave 2 participants

	e(count)	e(sum_w)	e(mean)	e(Var)	e(sd)	e(min)	e(max)	e(sum)
ID	2827	2827	1794.314	1090603	1044.319	1	3617	5072527
age	2827	2827	56.44499	293.3992	17.1289	28	99	159570
sex	2827	2827	.3618677	.2310012	.4806258	0	1	1023
race	2827	2827	1.390874	.4172274	.6459314	1	5	3932
ZCESD	2750	2750	-.0001597	1.003975	1.001986	-1.130518	4.017685	-.4390975
zsidewalk	597	597	.0118108	.994416	.9972041	-2.745977	1.038849	7.051022
ZFSII	2822	2822	-.0000487	1.003792	1.001894	-1.442766	1.88187	-.1374495
ZISII	2825	2825	.001154	1.001856	1.000927	-3.071476	1.325555	3.260189

Appendix B

Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), NIMH

Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved. Please tell me how often you have felt this way during the past week.

Week	During the Past			
	Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)	Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)	Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)	Most or all of the time (5-7 days)
1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I felt I was just as good as other people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I felt depressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I felt that everything I did was an effort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I felt hopeful about the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I thought my life had been a failure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I felt fearful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. My sleep was restless.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I was happy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I talked less than usual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I felt lonely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. People were unfriendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I enjoyed life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I had crying spells.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I felt sad.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I felt that people dislike me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I could not get "going."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SCORING: zero for answers in the first column, 1 for answers in the second column, 2 for answers in the third column, 3 for answers in the fourth column. The scoring of positive items is reversed. Possible range of scores is zero to 60, with the higher scores indicating the presence of more symptomatology.

Appendix C*Table 3:* Individuals who report sidewalks as being poorly maintained will report higher levels of depression.H₀: ↓ sidewalk quality ⇏ ↑ depressionH_A: ↓ sidewalk quality ⇒ ↑ depression

	(1)	(2)
	ZCESD	ZCESD
zsidewalk	-0.216***	-0.180***
	(0.0173)	(0.0177)
age		-0.00267**
		(0.000990)
race		0.166***
		(0.0266)
sex		-0.217***
		(0.0351)
constant	-0.00193	-0.0160
	(0.0170)	(0.0707)
<i>N</i>	3286	3273
<i>R</i> ²	0.045	0.070

* significant at $p < .05$; ** significant at $p < .01$; *** significant at $p < .001$

Table 4: Individuals who report sidewalks as being poorly maintained will report lower formal and informal social integration.

H₀: ↓ sidewalk quality $\not\Rightarrow$ ↓ social integration

H_A: ↓ sidewalk quality \Rightarrow ↓ social integration

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	ZFSII	ZFSII	ZISII	ZISII
zsidewalk	0.0995*** (0.0174)	0.119*** (0.0179)	0.139*** (0.0171)	0.119*** (0.0176)
age		0.00618*** (0.000998)		-0.00327*** (0.000980)
sex		-0.155*** (0.0354)		-0.284*** (0.0348)
race		0.138*** (0.0270)		-0.164*** (0.0265)
constant	0.00233 (0.0171)	-0.457*** (0.0718)	0.0138 (0.0168)	0.519*** (0.0705)
<i>N</i>	3378	3365	3378	3365
<i>R</i> ²	0.010	0.034	0.019	0.049

* significant at $p < .05$; ** significant at $p < .01$; *** significant at $p < .001$

Table 5: Individuals who report lower formal and informal social integration will report higher levels of depression.

H₀: ↓ social integration ⇏ ↑ depression

H_A: ↓ social integration ⇒ ↑ depression

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	ZCESD	ZCESD	ZCESD	ZCESD
ZFSII	-0.137***	-0.152***		
	(0.0132)	(0.0131)		
age		-0.00120		-0.00213**
		(0.000768)		(0.000770)
sex		-0.228***		-0.236***
		(0.0272)		(0.0276)
race		0.249***		0.213***
		(0.0202)		(0.0205)
ZISII			-0.119***	-0.116***
			(0.0135)	(0.0135)
constant	-0.0185	-0.215***	-0.0174	-0.110
	(0.0132)	(0.0563)	(0.0133)	(0.0570)
<i>N</i>	5482	5469	5486	5473
<i>R</i> ²	0.019	0.059	0.014	0.049

* significant at $p < .05$; ** significant at $p < .01$; *** significant at $p < .001$

Political Participation Among Politically Active Women Post-2016

By: Jacqueline Pelella, M.A.

Abstract

Little research has looked into politically active women post the 2016 Presidential Election. Women are mobilizing at high rates and as we saw in 2018, they are running and winning offices across the Nation. Women hold strong political power and have been a key part of many political and social movements even before they got the right to vote. In the post 2016 era many things we thought we knew before about political participation have changed, but some themes still ring true today. I created a survey of 25 questions to uncover the attitudes and motivations of politically active self-identified women, as well as what messages work to motivate them. With the help of Virginia League of Women Voters and American University's Women and Politics Institute, I distributed my survey and received over 600 responses. Looking into this niche group, I uncovered that politically active women are highly involved, and the ones that are not, family responsibilities and time come in the way of political activities. Additionally, reproductive rights, health and justice is the key issue motivating women to get politically active today. When it comes to increasing their political activity, many women noted needed more tangible tasks from organizations and campaigns, even some at the local level. The themes and findings through this research are critically important as we head into the 2020 election cycle because women will be a force on the ground, at the ballot box, and getting elected into office. We need to learn from 2016 and politically active women in order to keep this momentum going.

Introduction

From the Temperance Movement to suffrage to fighting for equal pay and against sexual harassment in the workplace, women have influenced social movements and been a noticeable force in politics. In 1992, coined the "Year of the Woman," 24 women were elected to Congress - the largest number up to that point. Though women have always been politically active, women increased their participation in politics since 1992, especially following the 2016 election. On January 20, 2017, close to 4.1 million women nationally and 300,000 internationally took to the streets to protest not only the election of President Donald Trump, but other social issues deeply rooted in gender inequality. Women sent a message that this was just the beginning (Chenoweth, 2017). Followed by #MeToo and #TimesUp, more women spoke up about injustice and the need for greater female representation in government. On November 6, 2018, their message was actualized when 102 women were elected to Congress, 35 of them winning for the first time, marking the largest representation by women in U.S. history at 23.4 percent (DeSilver, 2018). Women did not just win in record numbers at the ballot box in 2018, they were also mobilizing in massive amounts on the ground to help elect more women to office. Voter turnout increased by 12 percent among women from 2016 to 2018 (Bureau, 2019). Mobilization was unlike any other year previously, with women of color leading mobilization efforts across the country, amounting to a 37 percent increase in the number of women of color voters compared to 2016 (Chiu, 2019). Mobilization of friends and family played a key role in the higher turnout among women of color voters with 84 percent of black women, 75 percent Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI), 72 percent Native American, 70 percent Latinas, compared to 66 percent of white women mobilizing their friends and family to vote (AAPI Civic Engagement, 2019).

Women's overall civic and political engagement has increased since 2016, surpassing that of men, and making them a crucial group to mobilize when it comes to issues and elections (Jones, 2018). Women have historically been underrepresented at every level of government. Yet, it has been shown that when more women are involved and represented in all levels of government, the policies enacted are more likely to benefit women in areas such as health care and education. Additionally, women are more likely to hold progressive views on policies involving social issues and intersectionality (Reinhold, 2008). Further, it has been shown that when young women see other women involved in politics, they see that

political participation is possible and become involved as well, a process described as the “role model effect” (Campbell and Wolbrecht, 2006).

2020 is a vital year to get women motivated on the ground, on campaign trails, and in political office. Young women, and adolescents specifically, have had the highest levels of activism and interest in political activities since the 2016 election (Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2019). Prior research has shown that when people are frustrated with their situation, they often disengage in the activity. For Democratic adolescents, the opposite happened in 2016 with more Democratic young women than ever wanting to throw their hat in the ring (Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2019). The first year after Donald Trump’s election was crucial to mobilizing women across the nation. 58 percent of women reported that since the election they pay increased attention to politics (Pew Research Center, 2017). While women have historically given less money to political campaigns and causes, the number of women donating to either a candidate or major issue increased by 284 percent in 2018, with women making the majority of top donors for large organizations (Zhou, 2018). While it is important to note that political activism and participation among young women increased in the post-Trump era, equally important is how they went about participating and merging old and new ways of political activism together. Women transformed their frustration over the outcome of the 2016 election into marches, town halls, protests, and campaigns to elect more women to elected office (Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2019).

Appealing to Women Voters

According to the Center for American Women and Politics, women have consistently voted at higher rates than men since 1980 (Connley, 2019). Women also tend to have different voter preferences than men (Holma, Schneider, Pondel, 2015). They also vote vastly different than men when it comes to issues and party lines. Women are more likely to care about issues such as health care, gender equality, reproductive health, gun violence, race relations, education, and inequality than men are (Deckman, 2018). A recent study showed that women vote 25 percent more Democratic than men in house elections and are more likely to identify as Democrat than men in general (Deckman, 2018). These differences in voting behavior between men and women make it reasonable to believe that men and women also differ in how and why they become politically motivated.

Understanding voting patterns and behavior of women allows campaigns and organizations to strategically message this group, though it is important to note that women are not a monolithic group by any means. For example, Latina women might list immigration as their top-priority issue while white women might emphasize health care (APPI Civic Engagement Fund, 2019). More recently, many young women have prioritized access to contraception and abortion as their top-order issues (Barbara Lee Family Foundation, 2012).

A University of Utah study, *Gender Targeting in Political Advertisements*, used a nationally represented sample of American voters to test identity-based appeals that are aimed at women to see if those types of advertisements worked to attract women voters. When viewing an identity-based message, such as a message about the Violence Against Women Act, women were more likely to vote for the candidate than if they were to see an issue-based control message from the candidate (Holman, Schneider, Pondel, 2015). This reinforces the idea that women respond to identity-based messages that they can relate to. They also found that although male and female candidates can use identity-based messaging and be successful to an extent, only female candidates can use these types of messaging to prime female voters (Holman, Schneider, Pondel, 2015). In other words, a message as such coming from a female candidate allows the female voters to relate and identify with the candidate more than a male candidate. An important finding from this study is that unintended audiences of these identity-based messaging, such as men, do not get turned away from a candidate that uses these messages to appeal to female voters (Holman, Schneider, Pondel, 2015).

Research Problem and Question

Few researchers have studied the impact of the 2016 election of Donald Trump on the participation of politically active women. In 2018, we observed a spike of women running in and winning

state-level elections, especially in Virginia. But as a whole, there has been little research on the motivations and attitudes of women post 2016. Additionally, few studies have focused specifically on politically active women, which may allow researchers to understand why and how women become politically engaged, why they remain engaged, and how to maintain their levels of engagement in 2020 and beyond.. Understanding politically active women will allow us to draw conclusions on how to attract apolitical women into politics at every level of government.

My core research questions, motivated by a desire to uncover the attitudes of politically active women, were:

- What is the new language or engagement tool to motivate and activate women?
- How do organizations capitalize on women’s anger, frustrations, and motivations?
- What ways are women getting politically active? Are they using traditional or new methods of political activism?
- Why are women getting politically motivated? What would make them increase their political activity?

Methods

Research Design

I created a 25-question survey to uncover the attitudes and motivations of politically active women and understand what messages work to motivate women to become politically active. I designed this survey to be both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Only individuals who responded as female, or identifying as female, were able to participate in this survey. This survey was intended for politically active women ranging on a Likert scale from 1 (least politically active) to 5 (most politically active). Women who responded below 3 were important to study because the barriers that keep them from participating in politics could be uncovered. Half of the survey questions collected information on the ways the respondents were politically active in 2016 and their motivations and attitudes towards the current political climate. The other half of the survey asked for their attitudes on certain issues (i.e. immigration). The last question of the survey asked “What would make you increase your political activity?” to gain a greater understanding of what would push women to become more active in politics.

Survey Method

The survey was created in Qualtrics and was launched midnight October 21, 2019 and closed at midnight on November 4, 2019, just before Election Day. The survey in full can be found in Appendix A.

The first part of the survey asked respondents demographic questions such as gender, age, race, education, marital status and political identification. The second part of the survey asked questions focused on political participation, wherein participants were asked to rank their activity level, as well as answer questions in response to how and at what levels of government they are politically active. In this question I defined political activity as:

- Volunteering
- Talking to friends and family about the current political climate
- Fundraising for a candidate or cause
- Donating money to a candidate or cause
- Attending a march or rally
- Voting
- Belonging to a political organization
- Signing petition
- Calling your representatives
- Canvassing/phone banking for a candidate or cause
- Urging friends to vote or run for office
- Running for office yourself
- Other: [Open ended]
- No

The next section of the survey asked participants about their attitudes toward the 2016 election and the current political climate. Following these questions, respondents were asked to identify their top three issues that motivate them to become politically active. Respondents were also asked which methods of communications from organizations and campaigns do they prefer, as well as what messages motivate them the most. The remainder of the survey asked respondents issue specific messaging questions such as, “Which issue within the environment do you think is most urgent to activate around?” The final question was an open-ended question that asked respondents what would make them increase their political activity.

In addition to this survey, I conducted six in-depth interviews with experts in the field of women and politics in order to gain a greater understanding of the political landscape today. Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, and each interviewee was asked the same questions, with some follow-up questions if necessary. The interviews were with experts from the Yale Women’s Campaign School, The League of Women Voters, Rutgers Center for American Women and Politics, Supermajority, Virginia’s List, and a political scientist from the University of Notre Dame. Each of these interviews supported my survey findings and gave me a more comprehensive understanding of how to motivate women to participate in politics in 2020.

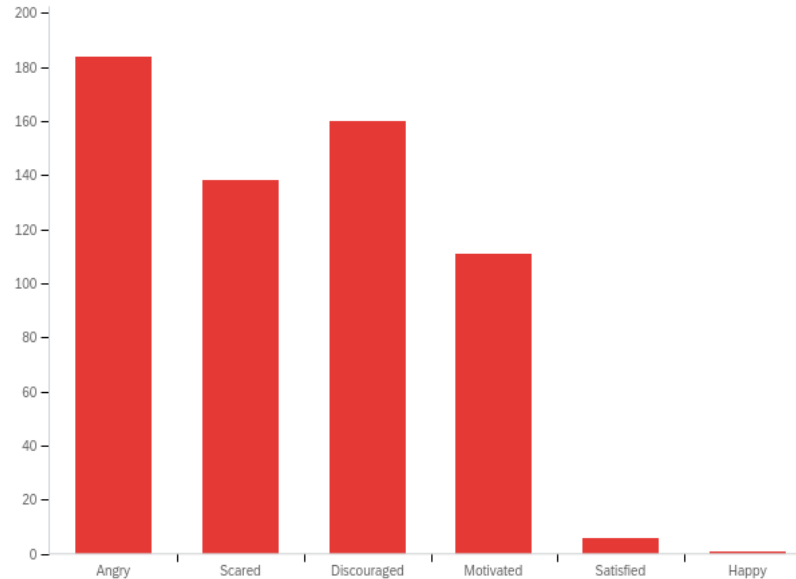
Distribution

During the early stages of this research, I contacted organizations including the League of Women Voters of Virginia and American University’s Women and Politics Institute to gauge their interest in distributing the survey to their members. Members of these organizations were presumably affiliated because of their above-average level of political participation. From October 21st to November 4th, each organization pushed out the survey’s anonymous link through their social media channels and email lists. Additionally, I and friends, family, and American University professors distributed the anonymous link through social media channels and email lists. Many of the individuals interviewed also shared the survey link with colleagues at their organization. More than 400 responses were recorded on the first day of the survey being live. A majority of these responses originated from the League of Women Voters of Virginia. The distribution from Qualtrics below illustrates how many people clicked and responded on the anonymous link from October 21st to November 4th. During this time period, many participants were working on the Virginia off-year election which was held on Tuesday, November 5th.

Results

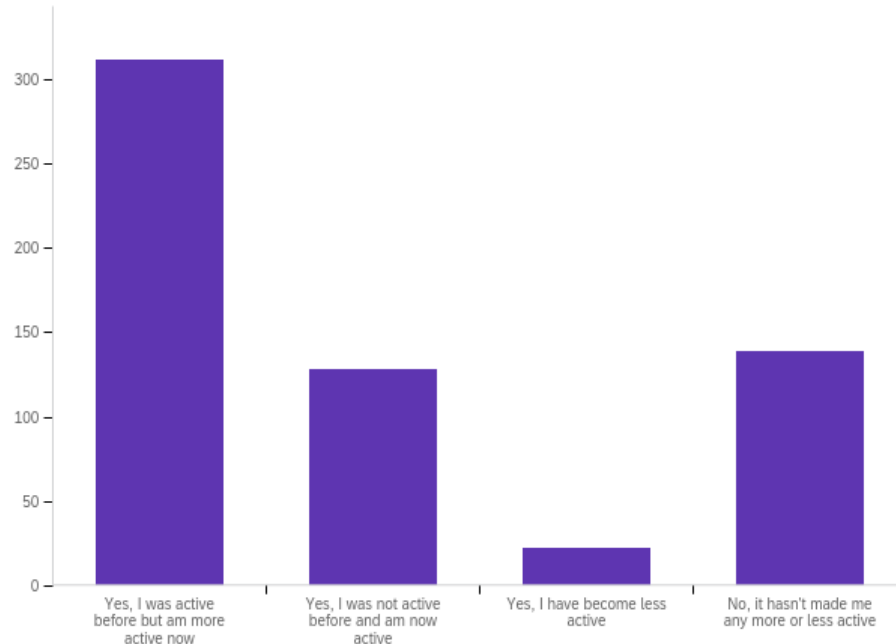
The survey was comprised of mostly Democratic (75 percent), white (85 percent), 61+ (41 percent), women (97%). When asked about their gender, 3 percent of respondents identified as “Prefer not to answer” or “Self-Describe” and were still able to complete the survey (Appendix B). 90 percent of respondents ranked their political activity as 3 or higher, with 1 being not at all active and 5 being very active. When asked how they felt about the current political climate, respondents most commonly indicated they felt angry, discouraged, and scared. Outside of these demographic findings, I will discuss several key findings below.

Figure 1: Respondents’ self-reported feelings toward the current political climate



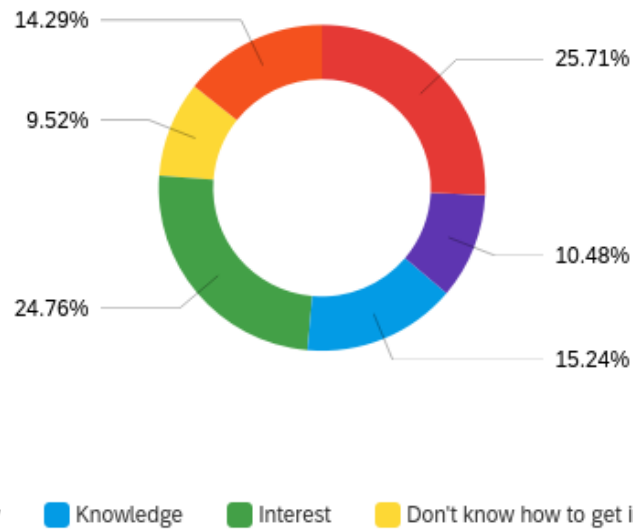
Women have always been politically active, even before they got the right to vote in 1919. Thus, high levels of political participation among women was not a new phenomenon in 2016. In my qualitative interview with Christina Wolbrech, a political scientist at the University of Notre Dame, she said, *“Women, for 200 years, have been central to political activism and social movements before even getting the right to vote.”* Similarly, Cara Bernard, Digital Communications Associate at Supermajority said, *“Women have been leading in a lot of ways prior to 2016. Women make up the majority of voters on campaigns, approaching the majority of donors, and also the majority of campaign staff. There’s been a lot of activism involved that women have already been involved in.”* These observations rang true in the survey with 51 percent of respondents saying that they were active before the 2016 election but are more politically active now - noting that the political environment has changed their level of political engagement. Further, women are not a monolithic group, and that was supported through my survey and interviews. Kelly Ditmar, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers, said, *“Women do not all care about the same things or come to politics for the same reasons. How might this resonate with different groups? What priorities do we need to appeal to different groups?”* In the survey, 56 percent of respondents said that they are more motivated to increase their political activity when something affects either them or their family.

Figure 2: Respondents’ self-reported level of political engagement post-2016



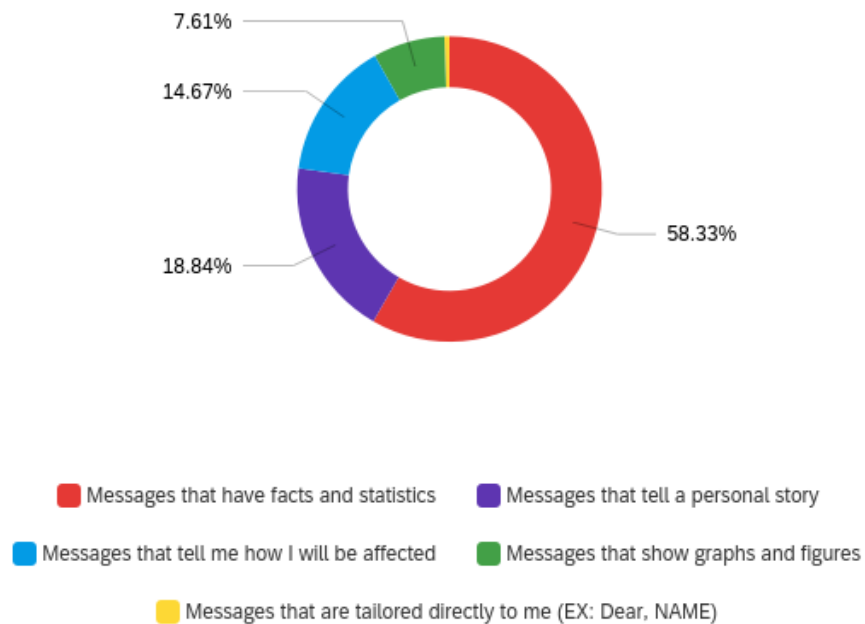
When asked to identify their top three motivating issues, reproductive health, rights, and justice, climate change, and gun reform were almost equally tied. Reproductive rights, health, and justice (43 percent) were the top motivators when the respondents were asked to rank their top three issues. Respondents were then asked to pick the most urgent issue to activate around within the reproductive health, rights and justice space, in which many said access to abortion. The top three political activities respondents took part in were 1) talking with friends and family about the current political climate (13.7 percent), 2) voting (14.7 percent), and donating money to a candidate or cause (10.5 percent). Some respondents also noted in “other” that they currently work for a campaign or they help register people to vote which were two important political activities that were not reflected in my definition of political activity above. Top barriers to political participation were time constraints either from work and/or family responsibilities and not being energized enough by the candidate or party. An additional barrier raised by respondents was that they were currently maxxed out with their political activities, which is likely due to the highly politically active sample I surveyed.

Figure 3: Respondents' self-reported barriers to political participation



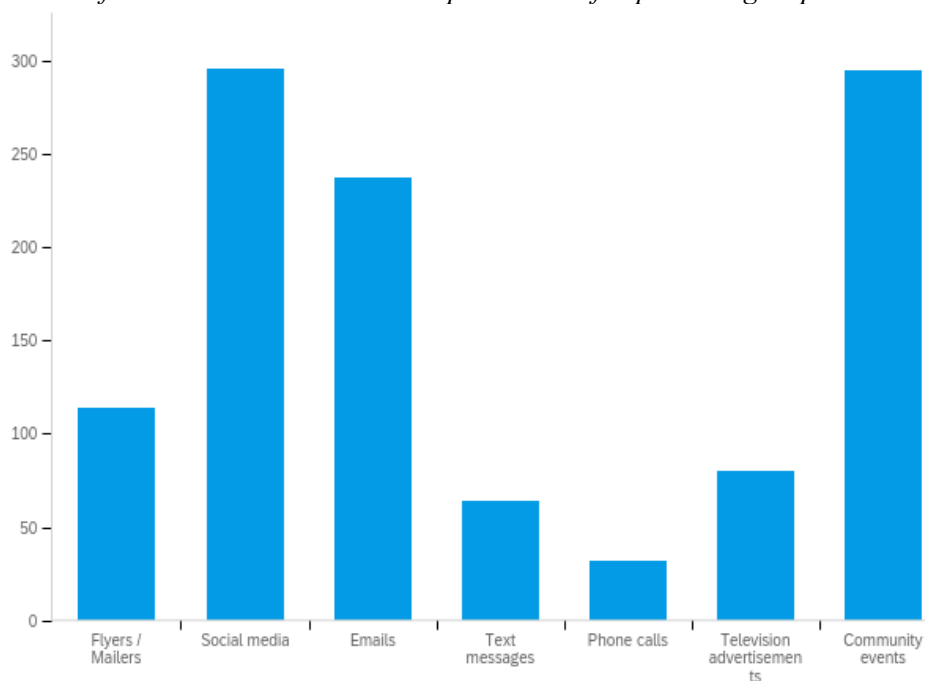
The ways in which women get involved in politics and which issues by which they are most motivated were key research questions. The study also sought to understand effective messaging tactics to motivate women to become politically active. Fifty-eight percent of respondents indicated that messages that contained facts and statistics were most likely to catch their attention. While storytelling is an effective communication tool, statistics and facts proved to drive women to become involved and increase their levels of confidence when speaking about politics. Like an earlier finding, messages with facts and statistics were more effective when they contained information about how it would affect the individual and their family personally.

Figure 4: Types of messages respondents self-report find attention-grabbing



Maggie Bush, Programs and Outreach Director at the League of Women Voters, said, *“Women get involved because they have a personal entry point and they realize that political activism and engagement is going to help their family and community - this still holds true today.”* Many respondents in the open-ended question described a lack of tangible tasks, steps, and communities they could be a part of and expressed wanting more organizations and campaigns to meet them where they are. Bush said, *“If we want to succeed in navigating this field, we have to recognize that and give them a place to do something with that energy - we do this by giving authentic volunteer experience in communities.”* The need for tangible tasks was also confirmed by Bernard from Supermajority who said, *“Being able to help connect and build that community is such a big part of Supermajority. It has tremendous potential to be pushed towards action by giving people specific actions to have them do something (I.E. Where to put their energy when it comes to the recent abortion bans).”* Community events (26 percent) and social media (26 percent) were the top two methods of communications from organizations or campaigns that respondents were most responsive to, followed by emails (21 percent) and mailers (10 percent).

Figure 5: Methods of communication to which respondents self-report being responsive



A theme that was apparent in both surveys and interviews, as well as prior research on the topic, was that many respondents felt like they did not know enough to get politically involved. Additionally, they did not feel confident enough in their own abilities to make a difference or to be involved in politics, whether that be running for office, volunteering for a campaign, or donating to a cause. Therefore, showing women that they can and will make a difference could increase their participation in politics at all levels of government. Scholars Campbell and Wolbrecht from the University of Notre Dame published a study in *The Journal of Politics* in 2006 that discussed women politicians as role models for adolescents. In this study, they discussed the role model effect, which states that the presence of visible female role models makes young women more likely to express an interest to engage in political activity as adults (Campbell and Wolbrecht, 2006).

Discussion

Researching only politically active women offered insight into what motivated and continues to motivate these individuals to be involved in politics. Prior research that examined this group could not be identified. Although the sample was small and not generalizable, the results from this research offer a glimpse into the world of politically active women and expose their attitudes towards politics. One of the

biggest takeaways of this research is that women are angry and mobilizing following the 2016 election. Many women expressed a desire to increase their level of political participation, but cannot do so because of family responsibilities and/or time constraints. This finding is supported by previous research, which found that family responsibilities acted as a barrier to their political participation. Another theme identified in prior research and the current study was women not having confidence in themselves to participate in politics. Fortunately, even though these same barriers are still hindering women from participating politically, we are seeing more women involved in politics than ever before.

The survey was successful in answering the core research questions. I found that messages containing facts, statistics, and information regarding how the recipient will be affected by the policy, action, or candidate are most effective in mobilizing women. Messages that focus on the top issues of the day, such as reproductive health, rights and justice, are important to disseminate. In order to capitalize on the energy and anger women feel in relation to the current political climate, women and communities must be presented with tangible tasks to increase their participation. While most women reported being politically active at the federal level, many also expressed a desire to get involved in local politics. Women are using traditional ways to become active, such as talking to friends and family, voting, and donating to campaigns, but they are also highly active on social media. With more people using social media as a form of political activism, tangible tasks that incorporate social media and tasks that can be completed over the phone might increase the political activity of women who have competing responsibilities. Of course, we can never overcome all the barriers women face when it comes to political participation, because every woman experiences different barriers. Though the barriers to political participation are as diverse as women themselves, organizations and campaigns can work to make participation easier by understanding those that are most common.

Shortly after I concluded this research and capstone, American University's Women and Politics Institute and the Barbara Lee Family Foundation's Gender on the Ballot initiative conducted research on what motivates women to become politically active and what their participation looked like heading into 2020. Their survey was a national random sample of 600 women and 200 men. Their key findings were 1) Talking to friends and family is the top activity for becoming active in politics, 2) Family and time serve as the biggest constraints on participation, 3) lack of confidence is also a barrier, and 4) many women reported they have become more politically active since 2016. These key findings further supported and validated my results.

Limitations

Overall, the survey's response rate exceeded expectations for typical voluntary surveys, with 635 responses recorded over the course of two weeks. Most of the findings were supported by previous literature on issues that motivate women to get politically active (i.e. health care, reproductive rights, climate, education, etc.). There are a few demographic characteristics that limit the survey's statistical significance and generalizability. First, the majority (41 percent) of respondents were 61 or older, possibly skewing the data and producing results that are more so aligned with that age group. Despite the majority of respondents being over the age of 61, the younger and older demographics recorded similar responses. One question that produced different responses between age groups was the source from which people get their news. 17 to 45-year olds mostly listed social media and the internet as their top two sources, while individuals 61 and older mostly reported newspapers. Additionally, the question on how often respondents use social media for activism was either daily or never, with the majority of individuals 61 or older primarily indicating they never used social media in this way.

Another limitation of this survey is that most of the respondents were located in the DMV area and not nationally representative. If the survey was nationally representative, it is likely that the responses and demographics would be more variant. In the final open-ended question, many respondents noted that they are currently maxed out due to the Virginia off-year election that was taking place on November 5th. Having this election take place so close to the election possible skewed the data for that question in a sense that many were very involved in the election through working on a campaign, raising money, canvassing, registering people to vote, etc.

Respondents were overwhelmingly (86 percent) white therefore skewing the data to reflect one race group. Additionally, an overwhelming majority (93 percent) were highly educated. I expected these results considering the demographic makeup of the groups I worked with were mostly older, educated, democratic white women. Due to the make-up of respondents being mostly white, educated women, it is not at all representative of women in America. A policy issue that was a top priority for an individual taking this survey is likely different than that of a minority woman who lives in the Midwest and has a lower income and educational status. I urge future researchers on this topic to ensure their samples are nationally representative of politically active women.

Conclusion

I set forth on this research to dig deeper into the motivations of politically active women. While the results may not be generalizable, some themes identified may be felt across demographics. These are the five key takeaways from this study that I hope others can reflect upon for future elections.

1. **Reproductive rights, health, and justice are the number one motivators for political participation:** With the Trump Administration's stances on Title X, abortion bans, and lack of access to affordable birth control, many women reported this issue as their primary motivating factor to get politically involved.
2. **Women want more tangible tasks, events, and groups to attend:** Women reported time and family responsibilities as the biggest barriers when it comes to increasing their political activity. Many reported they are more interested in and able to get involved at the local level. Creating actionable, tangible tasks that they can perform remotely or at their local town hall may increase political participation.
3. **Women are not a monolithic group:** Women reported getting more involved in politics when a candidate or organization focuses on issues that affected them personally. Women's participation and attitudes toward politics are different due to the socioeconomic factors that affect all women differently. Talking about issues with an intersectional lens is essential to celebrate and center marginalized voices.
4. **Show the proof:** While storytelling is an effective communication tool, the majority of women reported that they are motivated the most by statistics, facts, and figures. Women reported higher confidence when they are equipped with facts and statistics they can then share with family and friends.
5. **Inspire more women to get involved by demonstrating that they can make a difference:** Messages that focus on what will happen without women's representation inspire them to become more politically active. Paired with organizational support, such as training, money, and support groups, women are more likely to succeed and increase their confidence in political participation.

When it comes to mobilizing women, campaigns, universities, and organizations need to have a deep understanding of their base, how to keep their base engaged, and how to attract more women to their cause. Politically active women are the future, women are the future.

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APPENDIX A

Women and Politics Survey

Q1 This research project is being conducted by an American University Masters student for her capstone project. The purpose of this research project is to gain a greater understanding of attitudes and messages that resonate with women involved in politics.

You will be filling out an online survey of 25 questions that will take between 5 and 10 minutes. Your responses will be confidential and we do not collect identifying information such as your name, email address or IP address. This survey is completely voluntary and you can stop or disengage at any point. The result of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only and may be shared with American University representatives.

I agree to participate in this research study

I do not agree to participate in this research study

Q2 Which of these **best** describes how you identify?

Male

Female

Self Describe: _____

Prefer not to answer

Q3 How old are you?

17 or younger

18-29

30-45

46-60

61 or older

62 Prefer not to answer

Q4 Which racial or ethnic group do you **most** identify with?

White - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa

Black or African American - A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa

American Indian or Alaska Native - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South American (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment

Hispanic or Latino - A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, "Spanish origin," can be used in addition to "Hispanic or Latino"

Asian - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example Cambodia, China, India, Japan, **Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam**

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands

Self Describe: _____

Prefer not to answer

Q5 Which of the following best describes your highest level of education completed?

Some High School

High School

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Ph.D. or higher

Trade School

Prefer not to answer

Q6 What is your relationship status?

Married

Widowed

Divorced

Separated

Single

In a relationship

Living with a partner
Prefer not to answer

Q7 How would you **best** describe your political identification?

Democrat
Republican
Independent
Something else

Q8 On a scale of 1 to 5 how would you **best** describe your political activity since 2016?

1 Not at all active
2
3
4
5 Very active

Q9 What barriers prevent you from being more politically active? (Check all that apply)

Time
Money
Knowledge
Interest
Don't know how to get involved
Other: _____

Q10 Which political activities do you currently partake in? (Check all that apply)

Volunteering
Talking to friends and family about the current political climate
Fundraising for a candidate or cause
Donating money to a candidate or cause
Attending a march, protest, or rally
Voting
Belonging to a political organization (I.E. Sister District, Swing Left, etc.)
Signing petitions
Calling your representatives
Canvassing/phone banking for a candidate or cause
Urging friends to vote or run for office
Running for office yourself
Other: _____
None of the above

Q11 Which level of government are you the **most** active and/or interested in?

Local
State
Federal
None

Q12 Which emotion **best** describes how you feel about the current political climate?

Angry
Scared
Discouraged
Motivated
Satisfied
Happy

Q13 Has the 2016 election and the current Administration changed your level of political engagement?

Yes, I was active before but am more active now
Yes, I was not active before and am now active
Yes, I have become less active
No, it hasn't made me any more or less active

Q 14 Please choose below your top **three** issues that motivate you the most to become politically active.

Reproductive health, rights and justice

When I see wrong-doing throughout the country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When something on the world stage catches my attention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17 Which messages are you **most** likely to pay attention to?

- Messages that have facts and statistics
- Messages that tell a personal story
- Messages that tell me how I will be affected
- Messages that show graphs and figures
- Messages that are tailored directly to me (EX: Dear, NAME)
- None of the above

Q 18 Which **two** methods of communication from organizations and/or campaigns are you **most** responsive to?

- Flyers / Mailers
- Social media
- Emails
- Text messages
- Phone calls
- Television advertisements
- Community events

Q19 Which issue dealing with the environment do you think is **most** urgent to activate around?

- Climate change
- Clean air and water
- Fossil Fuels
- Renewable energy
- Greenhouse gasses
- Emissions
- Sea-level rising
- Carbon dioxide (CO2) levels
- Other _____

Q20 Which issue dealing with guns do you believe is the **most** urgent to activate around?

- Banning all guns
- Banning assault style weapons, high capacity magazines, and bump stocks
- Arming teachers and officials in schools
- Background checks
- Gun control
- Gun violence
- Second Amendment right
- Gun safety
- Common sense gun reform
- Other _____

Q21 Which issue dealing with voting rights do you find **most** urgent to activate around?

- Gerrymandering
- Voter Restoration
- The Voting Rights Act
- Fighting Voter Suppression
- Promoting Access to the Ballot
- Other _____

Q22 Which issue dealing with immigration do you find **most** urgent to activate around?

- Families being separated at the border
- Illegal immigration
- Comprehensive immigration reform
- ICE raids
- Building a wall at the U.S. Mexico border
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA)
- Other _____

Q23 Which issue dealing with women's rights do you find **most** urgent to activate around?

- Equal pay
- Paid family leave
- Sexual harassment and assault
- Access to abortion
- Access to contraception
- Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
- Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)
- Other _____

Q24 Which type of media **best** describes where you get **most** of your information about recent or important events?

- Social media
- Internet
- Radio
- Television
- Newspapers
- Email
- Other _____

Q25 Which **best** describes how frequently you use your social media accounts as a form of political activism?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Yearly
- Never

Q26 What would make you increase your political activity? For example, if you are currently a volunteer what would make you run for office? If you are active on social media, what would make you canvass for a candidate?

APPENDIX B

Figure 6: Respondents' self-reported age

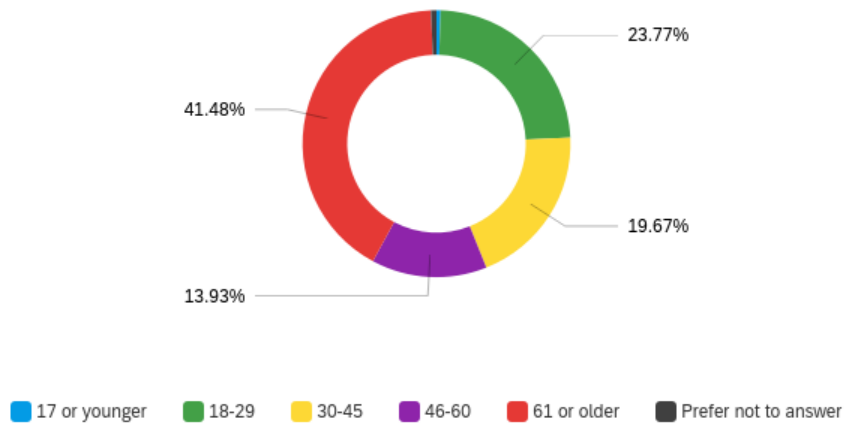


Figure 7: Respondents' self-reported ethnicity

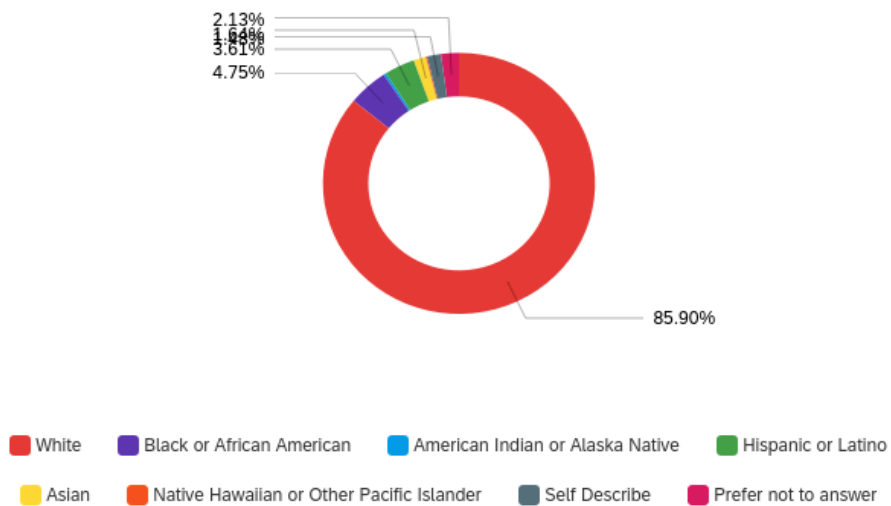


Figure 8: Respondents' self-reported education level

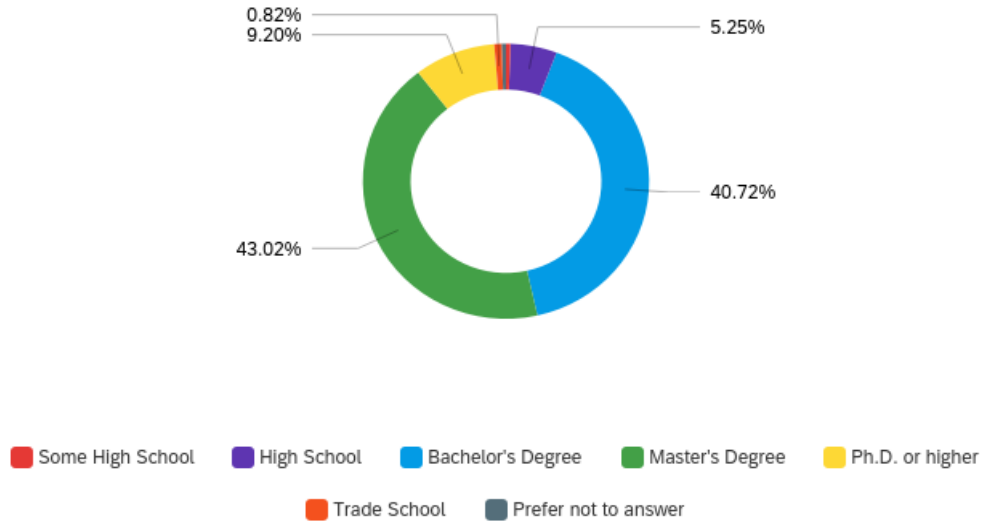
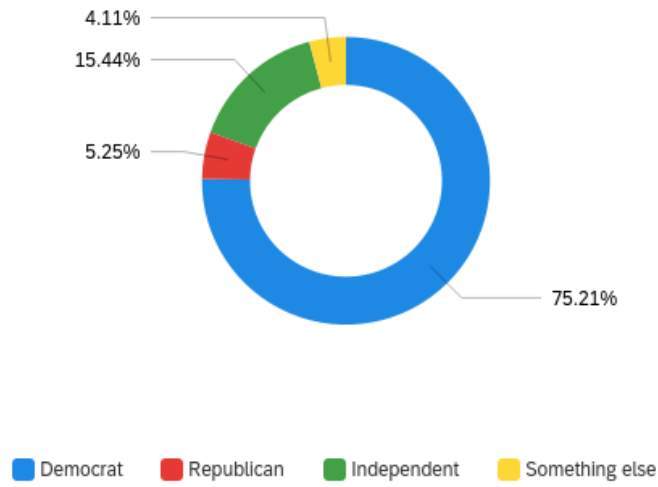


Figure 9: Respondents' self-reported political identity



Putting Stock in Students: Exploring Effective Retention Efforts on College Campuses

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College attendance rates have been on the rise since the early 2000s (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Retention came to the forefront of higher education shortly after the financial crisis, when students were fleeing the market in pursuit of opportunity that did not cost upwards of \$100,000 (Matthews, 2009). Institutions were forced to re-strategize, so they shifted their focus from initial enrollment to retention. Since 2009, the overall retention rate has continued to rise with an increase of about 2.6 percentage points since 2009, (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2018). This paper will examine both the statistical and practical impact each of financial or post-admission retention designs have on students. Many of these studies examine the impact of these efforts on underserved students, and although these efforts are both vital and necessary for these students, this essay will be focusing on the causal nature of retention efforts as a means to retain any student, rather than specific communities on campus that may particularly be susceptible to high drop-out rates.

States and institutions have become creative in their efforts to maintain high student attendance within institutions of higher education. Research has suggested that various retention efforts vary in their effectiveness for groups across campus. Dependent upon the intended treatment group, the type of effort needed to retain students from semester to semester varies. All retention efforts examined in this paper falls into two categories: financial aid and post-admission support. Within these subgroups include federal financial aid, state financial aid, campus scholarships or financial offerings, advising, mentorship and coaching opportunities, and academic guidance.

Financial Aid

When referencing financial aid, this does not necessarily refer to the money received through the filling of a FAFSA form. Although some of these efforts are received through state or federal government programs, the forms of assistance explored in this paper may be different than those received in the form of a low-interest loan from the federal government. The studies included in this paper are sourced from state and federal government programs, including both grants and scholarships. Non-governmental organizations also provide student scholarships and grants in various states, and the effectiveness of these programs will also be explored below. Campuses also provide their own form of assistance, although merit scholarships are lacking from the literature--this will be discussed later as a limitation of the literature on retention efforts.

State-Level Interventions

The first type of financial aid to be examined is a state-level intervention. Many states utilize grants or scholarship programs for a variety of reasons. For most state-provided grants or scholarships, these are limited to use within the state at public institutions. This reduces the number of students that flock to neighboring states for an education. In a study discussed later in this brief, this reduced the number of "leavers" to out-of-state institutions from eight percent to just four, (Angrist, Autor, Hudson, & Pallais, 2016). The focus of these programs is retention, however, this can clash with the institutional goals of in-state public institutions because the state government is not as concerned that the students stay on the same campus all four years, just that the campus they do enroll at is in-state. It is important to understand the focus of these programs so one may comprehend their unintended consequences--including how they play out both on campus and in a student's decision making process prior to enrollment.

Florida is one state that maintains several incentives for students to remain in-state at public institutions. A need-based grant called the Florida Student Access Grant (FSAG) aims to incentivize students to matriculate to college immediately after high school to obtain a degree. Examining graduating

seniors of the class of 2001, Castleman and Long connected data from the Florida Department of Education K-20 Data Warehouse with in-state, public post-secondary data to understand the role the FSAG plays in student enrollment decisions. With a sample size of over one hundred thousand students, the authors utilized a regression discontinuity design to estimate the causal effect of FSAG eligibility on matriculation and persistence. With grant eligibility as the cutoff to view the margins, the authors found that FSAG eligibility increased the probability of enrollment, although this finding was not statistically significant. Furthermore, FSAG increased continuous enrollment rates by about three percent, increased the number of credits students earned by 2.2 credits, and thus increased on-time graduation rates for eligible students by about 2.5 to 3.5 percent, (Castleman & Long, 2013).

Similar to Florida, Nebraska has a scholarship program that aims to incentivize immediate enrollment in college after high school. This scholarship is provided through the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation for eligible students that attend an in-state public institution. Eligibility is based on high school grades and GPA, however, it is important to note that eligibility is not as strenuous as other scholarship programs, (Susan Buffett Scholarship Foundation, 2019). About \$36 million dollars is awarded each year to Nebraskan students (Angrist, Autor, Hudson, & Pallais, 2016). The authors examine college-going cohorts between the years of 2012 and 2016, when more than 3,700 scholarships were awarded by random assignment. Please note that this is not perfect random assignment, with basic eligibility guidelines set for students to obtain. Students that were considered in the “middle of the pack” were the ones that received the scholarship by random assignment. This was intentional--high achieving students were likely to receive other incentives to attend, and low-achieving students were facing additional barriers that the scholarship would likely not be able to help them overcome. With this “noise” removed, the scholarship is isolated as a causal variable for students to attend college after high school graduation. Some of these students were also afforded the opportunity to participate in a learning community under the “College Opportunity Scholarships.” Although this is labeled as a “scholarship” this award is a post-admission support program. This program will be examined later under post-admission retention efforts.

The scholarship program proved to be causal for increased overall enrollment at public institutions in Nebraska. Community college enrollment boosted by about five percentage points, while other institutions experienced a modest enrollment boost. The main effect of the scholarship was a decrease in drop-out rate. Although the average graduation rate for scholarship recipients was five years instead of four, the treatment group was nearly two times as likely to extend beyond the third year, where the dropout rate is usually highest, with more than half of scholarship recipients persisting from year three to four. This is likely due to the nature of the award, with the money available for five years. Sophomore retention increased by about seven percentage points, whereas about 28 percent of the control group students left by year three, (Angrist, Autor, Hudson, & Pallais, 2016).

Wisconsin provides a need-based grant titled the Wisconsin Scholars Grant, and although the evidence is not causal, the authors found that this lottery system increased on-time graduation rates, (Goldrick-Rab, Kelchen, Harris, & Benson, 2016). Over twenty percent of the grant recipients graduated and received a degree, whereas only sixteen percent of the control group finished, (Goldrick-Rab, Kelchen, Harris, & Benson, 2016).

Federal programs have also participated in retention efforts. The intent of these programs varies, but few are for the sole purpose of campus retention. Rather, these programs focus on overall economic and educational investment for eligible populations. The Pell grant is one of the more notable programs the federal government offers for low-income students.

Another federal assistance program available in prior to 1982 was the Social Security Student Benefit Program. This program aimed to assist the children of deceased social security recipients. When the program was discontinued in the early 1980s, author Dynarski used the discontinuation of the program as the cutoff for a difference in differences design to understand the role the program played in enrollment and retention choices for eligible students. Although this study only examined the children of deceased men, Dynarski did find that the discontinuation of the program caused a decrease in enrollment for eligible students, (Dynarski, 1999).

Ohio students showed the prevalence and importance of the Pell grant in enrollment decisions in a study by Bettinger in 2004 by linking detailed financial data and postsecondary attainment data from the Ohio Board of Regents. Using the available information, a multi-state investment model was created for the freshman class of 1999-2000 school year. Regressions included fixed effects that controlled for the school the student attended, capturing quality and independent campus barriers to success. Although the strategy used is conditional on initial enrollment, the authors found a causal relationship between the Pell grant and drop-out rates, with those that receive the Pell grant less likely to drop out than those that do not receive it, (Bettinger, 2004).

The literature on state-level financial aid is twofold--first, the goals of the state vary from the goals of campuses. The money provided in Florida, Nebraska, or Wisconsin may incentivize students to remain in state, but this may increase the likelihood that students are to transfer between institutions from semester to semester. These studies also are state-focused, even when federal grant dollars are at play. The literature has yet to capture how these programs impact inter-state educational enrollment and decision making, or how these funds have shifted campus demographics or retention within institutions.

Campus Provided Financial Aid

Few campuses provide data on any merit scholarships provided to students. This is the case for several reasons. First, at particularly endowed campuses, this money is provided to incentivize athletes and legacies--a sensitive topic in admissions. Providing this information opens institutions up to criticism and potentially lawsuits. Because these scholarships are provided based on "merit" rather than eligibility criteria, this seemingly ambiguous and arbitrary deliverance of financial assistance leaves little room for defense in a court of law. This is not to say that students that receive merit scholarships are not deserving, this is just to point out that ambiguity leaves room for criticism within higher education and that little data exists on the topic.

Merit scholarships have, however, been studied in other countries, particularly Canada. In a study by Angrist, Lang, & Oreopoulos, students at a large public Canadian institution were randomly assigned various treatment arms including merit aid, post-admission support, and a combined treatment of both merit aid and post-admission support. Students who received merit aid earned fall grades nearly two percentage points higher than the control group, and those that received a combined treatment saw the greatest impact, with grades nearly three percentage points higher than the control, (Angrist, Lang, & Oreopoulos, *Incentives and Services for College Achievement: Evidence from a Randomized Trial*, 2009).

Post-Admission Support

The literature on post-admission support varies by both the strategic mission of the institution and available resources to pursue these campus goals. Post-admission support can include anything from advising, summer bridge programs, to small mentorship programs that are unique to a program or campus. Some of these are targeted for low-income, first generation, or other high-risk students. Other programs serve as a last-ditch effort to save certain students from dropping or failing out of college and acquiring debt without a degree. Overall, these programs tend to have a positive impact on students, whether this impact earns statistical significance on a Stata output. Due to the nuanced nature of student circumstances and the inability to randomize some of these treatments, few causal inference papers exist on this topic. This paper will explore the effectiveness of the various post-admission support programs campuses use to strengthen retention efforts for various student populations.

Advising is noted as one of the crucial keys to student success, particularly for at-risk students, (Christensen, 2016). In the study mentioned under merit aid by Angrist, Lang, & Oreopoulos, one of the three treatment groups were for post-admission support only. This treatment was relatively intensive. Students had access to peer advisors that received over a hundred hours of training, and voluntary academic support groups were available for major introductory courses. Although the findings were not statistically significant, the greatest impact was on women. This is likely because of the gender the peer

advisors available to them, with most of the peer advisors being women, (Angrist, Lang, & Oreopoulos, *Incentives and Services for College Achievement: Evidence from a Randomized Trial*, 2009).

Although post-admission lacks as many causal inference papers as financial aid, a large chunk of the papers includes valuable qualitative data on student experiences and preferences. For instance, a convenience sample of over thirty pre-nursing and thirty nursing students were asked about the important pieces of academic advising. The qualities listed by these students included knowledge, a tendency to foster and nurture students, as well as morality and virtue--all while maintaining an approachable stature, and strong organizational and communication skills, (Harrison, 2009).

Humanity is one key piece of the practice for underrepresented students at a predominantly white institution, (Museus & Ravello, 2010). About 45 individuals were interviewed, including 14 academic advisors and 31 racial/ethnic minority students. Of these students, 22 identified as low-income. The key takeaway from the interviews was that academic advisors had a responsibility to humanize the practice. All included in the sample stated the importance of shared responsibility the academic advisor has for minority students, ensuring that these students have access to the support they need, regardless of the nature of their problems. Academic advisors must be proactive, assuming a shared responsibility for student success. A systematized, proactive approach across campus offices is crucial for students from underrepresented backgrounds to succeed and thrive at predominantly white institutions, (Museus & Ravello, 2010).

Other forms of post-admission support can include course-specific incentives for student success. Clark, Gill, Prowse & Rush randomly assign students to two treatment groups, asking the treatment group to set goals for themselves within the course. This study occurred over multiple semesters of the same course, with students asked to set various types of goals. Some were asked to set overall course grade goals, some set goals on the number of practice tests they would complete that semester, some set goals on major assignments only. The study found that task-based goals are best for mitigating issues of self-control and have the potential to serve as a low-cost solution to improve college outcomes for all students, (Clark, Gill, Prowse, & Rush, 2017).

A multi-campus project of CUNY campuses in New York examined the causal impact of post-admission supports for their students. Students were randomly assigned eligibility for a post-admission support program called ASAP. Nearly 900 students were selected for eligibility. Overall, the study was a huge success, finding that the ASAP program caused an overall increase in graduation rates for the students of all campuses, (Weiss, Ratledge, Sommo, & Gupta, 2019).

Although the Susan Buffett Foundation mentioned in the financial aid section of this paper provided scholarships for students in Nebraska, they also assigned students to "learning communities." There were no statistically significant findings that enrollment increased for students that participated in the learning communities, (Angrist, Autor, Hudson, & Pallais, 2016).

Moving Forward: Retention Efforts and Limitations of the Literature

There are multiple limitations of the literature on retention efforts. First, it is difficult to provide a fully randomized trial to isolate each decision factor for students in the college-going process. Combined with limited campus resources, policymakers must make decisions based on the information available to them--lacking both causal evidence and direction.

Retention efforts are often only discussed in times of crisis. Particularly stringent and intentional retention strategies are reserved for the most at-risk students. Nearly all the post-admission support studies included in this paper were targeted for students that were already systematically less likely to succeed than their traditional counterparts. Therefore, it is unclear what retention efforts work for students that fit the traditional college-going checklist. Social researchers may be hesitant to examine this group because they are already the most likely to succeed, however, it may be the case that a rising tide lifts all boats, and the best method is to support already privileged students to de-stigmatize help for the underserved communities on college campuses.

It would be an understatement to say that college is a complex choice and process in which students face multiple exit points and disincentives to persist. Therefore, it is difficult to isolate any

treatment from the inevitable external and internal pressures students face when pursuing a degree. Retention is a continuum. The complexity of retention and student circumstance clouds the literature with little room for clarity. For instance, it is unclear in the literature if retention includes initial enrollment. It certainly relies on initial enrollment to retain from the first to second year and graduate after that. Does retention include graduating on time? Certainly, this is a benefit, but academia and campus leadership have not defined the scope of their efforts, making it unclear if a program assists in retention, enrollment, or persistence. Persistence and retention are often used synonymously both in campus mission statements and academia examining the topic. Persistence is supposed to mean that students persist year after year, whether they start at institution A and graduate from institution A, or transfer and graduate from institution B. Retention means that students remain at the same institution semester after semester, with the aim that they eventually graduate from the school they started at. However, academics often cite findings that students persisted from year one to year two, creating confusion around whether experiments successfully increase retention or persistence amongst targeted students.

Policymakers must first, before implementing programs that use valuable time and resources, decide the intent of the program itself. State policymakers are likely better off using financial incentives that keep students within their state, enrolling at public institutions. Programs like this cost less than it would to lose these students to private or out-of-state institutions. Keeping students in-state boosts economies, both state-wide and local to the communities surrounding institutions.

Institutions have many choices when it comes to effective retention strategies for their campuses. First, campus leaders must evaluate the demographics of their institution, as well as the students most likely to experience barriers to retention. As indicated throughout this paper, the literature on retention largely revolves around targeted retention efforts. Institutions will likely have little to no difficulty finding literature on effective efforts for the students at risk on their campus, if they choose targeted retention efforts.

In instances where resources are available, campuses should consider policies that incentivize overall retention with the goal that “rising tides lift all boats.” Where possible, institutions should internally track the student’s outcomes and the effectiveness of these implemented programs. Qualitative studies should also be captured when possible to understand how these policies and programs impact students beyond the quantitative outcomes measured. Research-based institutions should consider implementing new literature on the topic that will benefit their students, and other students on other campuses as well.

Although the effort is small, it is crucial for academia to strengthen their definitions and understanding of enrollment, retention, and persistence. Without clear definitions of each of these three things, the literature will continue to muddy the waters on retention efforts. Social scientists have a responsibility to value the subjects they study, whether these subjects are included in a dataset or participants in an in-depth interview. Each student that does not enroll, retain, or persist is a student that will likely be afforded fewer opportunities on the basis of their educational attainment, or lack thereof. Retention is a serious issue for campuses, not just because of the financial investment lost, but because of the lifelong outcomes afforded to graduates are stripped from students that do not finish. Education is not necessary for excellence, but it is our responsibility as leaders in the field to eliminate as many barriers to education as possible. Sometimes students fail the system--and sometimes the system fails students. We must do our part to fix the leaks in the graduation pipeline so that students have the greatest opportunities afforded to them by the institution they choose.

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The Federal Job Guarantee: A Hopeful Plan That's Too Expensive to Deliver

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Introduction

Senator Cory Booker (NJ) and Rep. Bonnie Coleman (NJ) introduced S.2746 and H.R.6467 to establish a federal jobs guarantee program in at-least 15 high-unemployment communities and regions across the United States. These pilot 15 unemployed communities must follow the following criteria to be accepted, “has an unemployment rate that is not less than 150 percent of the national unemployment rate, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (except in the case of tribal entities which may submit their own employment data where no such Federal data is available for such entities) based on the most recent data available at the time the Secretary solicits applications for grants under this section (S.2746, 2017).” The pilot program will be available to anyone over the age of 18 residing in the unemployed community, and the program should be eliminated no later than three years since the program began.

Depending on the success of this legislation, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) introduced a joint resolution that would make this bill a federal program throughout the country. This policy would aim to solve unemployment and raise income levels of 13 million unemployed Americans. The plan will assess and evaluate the implementation of the programs and their impact on: employment; private sector employment, including wages and benefits; poverty rate; safety net and other Federal spending in the area served by the program; child health and educational outcomes; health and well-being of those with mental, emotional, and behavioral health needs; incarceration rates; and other economic development and individual outcome indicators, as determined by the Secretary” (S.2746, 2018).

There are many benefits that come a massive job-creation program. First, this policy will lead for there to be more income in the hands of the people so they will potentially purchase more items and add to our overall GDP (Tobin, 2016). Similar to the Universal Basic Income policy proposal, the Federal Job Guarantee plan will help provide higher levels of income to people that make less than \$15/hour or are failing to work. This policy will increase their overall income levels and improve their overall standard of living (Tobin, 2016).

Along with this, the Job Guarantee Program will help put people at work for public-sector jobs that are currently going unfilled. Economically, the more money that gets given to the people, the more they will invest in other goods, services, or purchases. This increases but tax revenues and income for the private sector, from higher levels of purchases and investments in the private market by these individuals that will have more money.

This criteria signals that many modes and impacts will be evaluated to signal the success of the program, and with the political standstill in the country, many of these criteria has various different definitions on what classifies as a success. The idea of generating more income for the public will have boost our overall economy and reduce the wealth inequality that encompasses the country. However, the policy may not be able to completely solve unemployment, and it is also true that we cannot continually borrow more and more funds to fund another long-term investment. Ultimately, the intrinsic and extrinsic costs of implementing this policy outweigh the potential benefits the Federal Job Guarantee plan has to offer.

Grant Process Described By the Pilot Program Bill

Within these 15 eligible states or entities per the Booker bill, the Secretary overseeing the project will award specific grants. “The Secretary shall ensure that not less than 4 such entities serve predominantly rural areas under the grant; 6 such entities serve predominantly urban areas under the grant; 1 such entity serve in each of the 6 regions served by the Regional Offices of the Employment and Training Administration; and 1 such entity shall be a Tribal entity.”

The amount of the grant will be established by the Job Guarantee Program Trust Fund consisting of amounts. “The Secretary shall determine the annual amount of a grant under this section based on a formula to be developed by the Secretary and should not make subsequent payments to a grantee after the initial payment until the grantee certifies to the Secretary that the grantee has expended, transferred, or obligated not less than 80 percent of the most recent payment made under this subsection (S.2746, 2017).”

Financial Costs Associated with Proposal

If this temporary federal job guarantee program were deemed to be successful by Congress in these potentially 15 or more sample of unemployed communities, than Senator Sanders resolution would institute this program throughout the nation. However, the bill itself does not have any explicit information on what kind of jobs will be created, what the unemployed individuals will need to do, and the cost of the basic groundwork necessary to implement the project.

Under the resolution, Senator Sanders plan will guarantee a job or training paying \$15 an hour with health-care benefits to every American worker that is currently unemployed (Stein, 2017). Based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates, the current unemployment rate is around 4.1. The total labor costs per each individual worker will cost roughly \$37,440 per year, with this program. This means there are around 13 million unemployed Americans, making the initial labor costs around \$486.72 billion per year (Stein, 2017). But we need to factor in workers that make less than \$15/hour and disgruntled or uninterested workers not in the labor force.

The labor force participation rate measures the active labor force in the United States. This number is computed by dividing the number of people participating in the labor force by the total number of people eligible to participate in the labor force. The last census shows that 63% of our current population is in the workforce or 163,351 million Americans are in our current labor force. Among the 37% of the people not within the current Labor Force calculations, such as: stay-at-home parents, recent immigrants, illegal immigrants based upon state-laws, or retired people may wish to re-enter the workforce. Many of these individuals have not been calculated within the financial estimates, however these individuals will potentially participate in the program for \$15/hour with health benefits. The financial costs also fail to measure the current labor force that makes less than \$15/hour that the Federal Job Guarantee Plan promises.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, as of May 2018, around 54 million people earn \$15/hour or less; around 39% of the current workforce. This workforce will now have an incentive to quit their current job if possible and join a federal program that promises at-least a \$15/hour wage. Obviously, the location and movement will play a factor, but these failed cost measurements, does undervalue the overall cost of the Federal Job Guarantee program.

Income and Social Inequality Demands Income Redistribution

According to Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez, *Income Inequality in the United States 1913–1998*’s article published in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* in 2003, our country’s share of income and wages have represented a U-shaped pattern (Piketty, T., & Saez, E., 2003). This U-shaped pattern represents the current wealth gap, where members of the top 1% are not paying their fair share in the current income distribution. In order to solve some of the income inequity issues, the authors suggest that a more progressive income tax and a corrective estate tax is needed to reduce the overall inequality among the top and the bottom (Piketty, T., & Saez, E., 2003). The progressive income tax will ensure that Americans that hold the highest amount of wealth will provide higher levels of tax revenue, which will then be shifted onto funding welfare policies that will address social inequality. This tax should be coupled with a corrective estate tax because the top wage shares have been dropping since the 1960s. Due to this, a majority of the rentiers in the country, do not represent the majority of the country, only members at the top of the income distribution (Piketty, T., & Saez, E., 2003).

In order to meet the demands proposed by social and income inequalities, we need to possess a safety net that will directly assist the lowest income individuals and the unemployed elderly to make ends

meet (Adamy, 2019). Many of these plans cost trillions of dollars, but if these programs help improve family incomes and improve child achievement, they pay for themselves by creating a more egalitarian society. In the current US system, we have many cash-transfer income support programs, which try to reduce this divide among the wealthy top 1% with everybody else.

Current Income-Support Welfare Policies that may be Altered

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a tax-refund for the working poor based on their income levels and number of children. In the policy, your family must make a certain amount of earned income to qualify. According to Nada Eissa and Jeffrey Liebman's *Labor Supply Response to the Earned Income Tax Credit* (1996), they discuss the benefits and drawbacks of the EITC on the labor force. The policy provides you a refund if you make a certain amount of money and claim qualified children. With this the EITC affects labor force participation rate and the number of hours worked by people both positively and negatively (Eissa and Liebman, 1996).

With the Labor Force Participation Rate, the EITC rewards additional workers, and obtaining a job will potentially add to the tax refund. This policy encouraged low-income and single mothers to join the labor force from 1990 to 1996. However, with the increase in the Labor Force Participation Rate, the number of hours worked by low-income families were negatively impacted (Eissa and Liebman, 1996). According to the EITC, you must make between a certain bracket to continually qualify for the tax refund. If the Head of Household generates more income, which is the anticipated goal of EITC, it disqualifies them from EITC income bracket. This may lead them to pay more in taxes and receive a slimmer EITC refund. This perception has kept many families to remain in similar income brackets, because losing their EITC refund may be much more costly than the benefits of generating higher levels of income.

According to Gordon Dahl and Lance Lochner's *The Impact of Family Income on Child Achievement: Evidence from the Earned Income Tax Credit*, their research found that there are short-term impacts on childhood test scores and maternal labor market participation. However, there is little evidence that the effect of income lasts very long (Dahl and Lochner, 2012). The EITC negatively impacts second earners in married homes and has produced a negative work effect, where if the spouse starts to work, the level of EITC benefits may decline based on household income (Dahl and Lochner, 2012). This policy has created a higher level of reliance on the government, because people care more about their EITC benefit than actually making enough income to not qualify for EITC (Edward and De Rugy, 2015). With the current EITC policy, taxpayers on average lose \$90 billion dollars to pay for the \$60 billion in EITC refunds. These additional taxes can negatively impact middle-class Americans and create deadweight losses that may alter their decision-making. EITC recipients are now reliant on the refunds that the government is providing them Edward and De Rugy, 2015). In many cases, this will deter them from working additional hours because this may cost them more.

Social Security

Under Social Security, everyone after the age of 65, receives a cash payment generally funded by FICA Taxes and administered by the SSA (Social Security Primer, 2018). Under this payroll tax system, the tax rate for both employers and employees are around 7.65%, from which 6.2% goes to Social Security. There is also a 15.3% tax for self-employed Americans and a tax applied on earned income up to \$132,9000 (Social Security Primer, 2018). In 20 years, the Social Security Fund is projected to be depleted (Dickstein, 2015). Two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the Elderly get half of their income from Social Security and private pensions only account for 18%. Birthrates have fallen to such a degree since the 1950s that the number of workers supporting each retiree has gone down from 30 in the 1950s to below 5 in 1990 (Social Security Primer, 2018). By 2030, the number of workers supporting each retiree will be below 3 (Social Security Primer, 2018). Higher levels of immigration can combat these dwindling birth rates by bringing more people into the system to help outlast these projections and help provide more tax-revenue to further finance the program (Social Security Primer, 2018).

Unemployment Insurance Policies

According to Daron Acemoglu and Robert Shimer's "Efficient Unemployment Insurance," in the *Journal of Political Economy* in October 1999, they discuss how the unemployment insurance has helped provide insured workers, high-wage jobs with high unemployment risk (Acemoglu and Shimer, 1999). According to their research, an economy with risk-averse workers have the ability to maximize their overall output and increase risk-sharing. These unemployment insurance plans help with risk aversion and helps economies find levels closer to equilibrium (Acemoglu and Shimer, 1999).

Unemployment Insurance provides compensation for all workers that are unemployed that are not employed for a specific period of time until they find a new job (USA Gov, 2019). Each state usually has a state unemployment insurance program that provides certain benefits based upon eligibility for unemployment insurance. Generally, these state unemployment compensation details are available on your local state unemployment office website. These compensation amounts depend on the amount you earned while working and how many weeks you worked (USA Gov, 2019). These unemployment benefits are paid for up to 26 weeks, but this maximum amount will differ from state to state (USA Gov, 2019).

As of 2019, there are no federal unemployment benefit programs, and all of these programs are offered in a state by state basis (USA Gov, 2019). However, whenever someone is laid off, the first thing newly unemployed people should do is file for unemployment and generally it might take up to three weeks before you receive a check (USA Gov, 2019). The following circumstances will disqualify you, depending on state law, from you receiving unemployment benefits. These include being fired for misconduct, quitting without good cause, attending school, self-employment, quitting to get married, resigning because of illness (disability laws will vary), or being involved in a labor suit (USA Gov, 2019).

However, in order to receive unemployment benefits, the filer must register with a state job service and actively seek work. The job service may require active job applying, submitting resumes, and being willing to work. The state will help you receive suitable employment, but the standards for suitable employment will vary on the state (USA Gov, 2019).

Under the Job Guarantee Plan, if everyone has a job, then it can be assumed that these unemployment insurance plans would be gradually dismantled. Such policies can help finance the implementation of the Federal Job Guarantee legislation and utilize similar resources to assist with future job growth (USA Gov, 2019).

Labor Dynamics Impact On Private Sector Market from Job Guarantee Plan

According to Vincenzo Caponi's "*The Effects of Public Sector Employment on the Economy*," he examines the impact on public sector employment on the economy as a whole. Whenever the public sector creates jobs by hiring citizens to provide goods and services, it has both positive and negative effects on the labor market (Caponi, 2017). His research showed that the unemployment rate decreased in the short-term, creating more stabilizing effect in economy. Along with this, certain demands in inequity were met in places that had higher levels of poverty in comparison to others. Plus, with the higher levels of public sector jobs, many employers were encouraged to employ disadvantaged and marginalized Americans (Caponi, 2017). At the same time, the reduction of short-term unemployment by expanding public sector jobs were not efficient, because wages in the public sector are flexible and not fixed. This expansion of public sector jobs created a crowding-out effect of private sector, where many people left their low-paying private sector jobs to work for the public sector that provided higher levels of stability. To add to this, wages are unresponsive to productivity differences, so if workers are less or more productive in the public sector, they do not see salary increases or decreases (Caponi, 2017). With the crowding-out effect leading to labor shortage and lack of overall productivity in public-sector jobs, Caponi's research suggests that there is a reduction in the overall productivity of the economy, coupled with the negative effects of the resource reallocation from the private to the public sector.

When it comes to the Federal Job Guarantee plan, Caponi's discussed impacts show how a massive public sector work project can have many drawbacks to the private sector. In Greg Ip's Wall

Street Journal article titled *The Problem with a Federal Jobs Guarantee (Hint: It's Not the Price Tag)*, Ip discusses the challenges that the private sector will face with wages, inflation, and technology after the implementation of the Federal Job Guarantee plan. First in order to keep many of the workers that make less than \$15/hour, the private sector will see massive salary increases. Employers will be forced to raise the salaries of their workers, because they do not want to lose their labor, similar to a \$15 minimum wage effect (Ip, 2018). This will lead the companies to potentially raise the private sector causing rise in customer costs to offset their short-term losses in revenue. This raised cost on customers will negatively impact certain businesses more than others (Ip, 2018). Policies such as this will positively impact labor in big firms like Wal-Mart that can afford offering health benefits or wage increases (Ip, 2018). But these policies will hurt smaller firms to a mega scale, that cannot offer the same benefits as the public sector would with Job Guarantee. Overall this may intensify the oligopoly market that we have in the country, because many small businesses or start-ups, will be unable to meet labor or revenue demands to stay afloat (Edwards, 2016). This would make many argue that the Job Guarantee plan will not be very positive for the private sector as a whole. It may force labor or employment changes against the market need, that may help some, but forced changes have mixed effects from unequal benefits.

Whenever we add money to the market or change wage floors, we see various inflationary pressures that will reduce the value of the dollar in the short-term. The rise in salaries will see a short-term rise in the cost of goods (Edwards, 2016). This will trickle to make the overall cost of goods and services increase to offset the additional increase in wages. In order to combat these issues, the government will need to alter the current tax rates and federal interest-rate to offset the inflated cost of the dollar (Edwards, 2016). Plus, private-Sector low-income jobs may be replaced by technology, as certain jobs would be much more efficient with machinery over people (Edwards, 2016). With wage changes and cost increases, companies will need to shift more towards technology making the product cheaper and more affordable. Therefore, in order to maximize efficiency while minimizing costs, many more low-income private-sector jobs will be lost. This includes jobs like hamburger flippers, baristas, or waiters, that there is a demand for, but can easily be replaced by technologies. There can also be a potential public-sector spillover with the use of technology, because when citizens are paying for each additional job, their tax dollars value efficiency (Caponi, 2017).

Job Guarantee Plan in India

The only country that has a similar population to the United States to test out a federal plan like the Federal Job Guarantee proposal was India. B Sasi Kumar and Kalarani Rengasamy from Alagappa University in Tamil Nadu analyzed the successes and drawbacks of the Job Guarantee plan in India, within their article, "*Participation of Rural Workers in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India.*" The Government of India provides funds to the Indian states to meet the full cost of wages and up to 75% of the material cost of work including wages to skilled and semiskilled workers (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012). Within the program, District Officers need to meet with Delhi (Capital of India) to give updates on how funds are being used (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012). The government meets full cost of employment wages and in addition funds equal to 50% of wages are given towards all other costs (including material components, staff etc.). This simple pattern of funding would dispense the need for getting from states details of expenditure on material, staff etc. or having to calculate the wage-material ratio (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012). The Government of India will then be concerned with maintaining only state-wise accounts and not nearly 600 accounts for the districts (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012).

The positives of this program are that they say increased earnings for low-income households by 13.3 percent (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012). Ninety percent of that increase is due to higher wages and increased work in the private sector, not the job guarantee program itself. Just as job guarantee advocates would predict, the program bid up wages everywhere. On the flipside, there were many negative effects to this program as well (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012). Many unskilled jobs such as digging potholes or moving rocks sparked high demand by lower income people. According to S. Baskar Reddy, head of agriculture at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) said, "It is deskilling

our people at a time when we should be training them for new skills (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012).” The policy also caused there to be an extreme demand by workers outpacing skilled jobs demand. Generally similar pay for lower-income jobs. “The jobs program was meant to be a measure of last resort for the poorest. Instead, it has become the preferred work because it is easy money and a little bit of digging here and there (Kumar and Rengasamy, 2012).”

In my personal opinion, it is extremely difficult to compare an Indian Job Guarantee program with an American Federal Job Guarantee. India is a completely different market, with a current minimum wage of 160 rupees or \$2.25 per day. They have actual overlying issues with properly paying labor, which has led various companies to outsource their jobs there. India is a third-world economy with 1.2 billion people without a safety net, so initiating a program like this deters from investment in skilled jobs. They have little to no safety nets and have 2.59 trillion dollars in their GDP to finance the growth of 1.2 billion Indians. The United States may have an income gap, but we produce much 17 trillion dollars more in GDP regardless of our income inequalities in the United States. Plus, poverty in India and poverty in America cannot be compared, because our safety nets may not solve all of the underlying issues of racism, homelessness, poverty, educational inequality, healthcare, or the income gap. But in many cases, in comparing to India, the United States does make substantial effort irrespective of whatever party is in power. We have policies that allow everyone in the country to get a K-12 Education, have policies that deter racism, and push to reduce poverty whether through welfare reforms like EITC or even with Affordable Housing policies. So, for India, the Federal Job Guarantee program has at least created something to allow people to escape poverty without pure capitalistic virtues. However, the cost of them having one-billion-dollar welfare program does not necessarily equate to the United States expenditures.

Job Guarantee Proposal Analysis with Economic and Political Forecasts

In terms of the Federal Job Guarantee program, the idea itself has many merits from a capitalistic standpoint. Economists have stated that by improving the overall levels of income that people have, they will have more opportunity to take risks. Risk-taking will allow them to potentially increase their revenue flow and potentially improve the life-quality of their family members. Such policies have many benefits, but the asymmetric information and the lack of details, makes this policy too big of a risk. Certain information still needs to be learned such as: what kind of jobs will the people be doing, how much does the job-creation itself cost, how many hours will they be working, how long will the program lasts, and what about the non-unemployed people that may wish to join the program.

Currently our federal GDP is at \$19.37 Trillion, and we spend \$27 trillion on entitlements, and the Federal Job Guarantee plan will only add to it. According to the Budget and Economic Outlook: 2019 to 2029. “In 2018, the current 3.9 percent of G.D.P., compared with an average deficit of 2.1 percent of G.D.P. over the previous 70 years (Budget and Economic Outlook, 2019).” This budget deficit will increase to 4.6 percent of G.D.P. in 2023, and no more than that based on continued economic growth and no major military conflict (Budget and Economic Outlook, 2019).”

The Federal Job Guarantee proposal is a \$486.72 billion-dollar investment only factoring in the 4.1% unemployment rate. But there will still be some unemployed people who will opt out of the program, making the policy look financially optimal. However, you will also have potential private-sector low-income or part-time employees that will join the program, along with some people not factored in the labor force. In order for Job Guarantee to work, we may need to curtail our investments in current running entitlement programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit, reduce Social Security payments, and Eliminate Unemployment Insurance.

Conclusion

The policy will have a direct impact on the private market, will increase our national debt, and contribute to the rising costs of our entitlement spending, which will further rise over time. Much of these things, make taking on another extremely expensive program not really feasible. Personally, the idea of a Federal Job Guarantee is great from both a capitalistic and an inequity standpoint. Because this policy, will not only increase the revenues for many low-income Americans but will also allow them to

contribute more to the GDP. However, the potential inflationary pressures coupled with the lack of information on the number of Americans that will take part in the program, makes this policy too risky. We have never created a full-on job creation policy within the public sector and are unaware of the exact impact that it will have on the private sector in particular. Plus, with our historical problems in solving social issues by increasing our financial pressures, makes me argue that we need to first solve some of our pending spending priorities, before moving to another potential trillion-dollar policy.

We need more information on how the Job Guarantee Program will work and until these semantics are determined, the policy remains a question mark. The more money that people have, the higher our overall GDP rises, and this policy can eventually create a permanent 100% full employment. If these details were provided, the procedures were spelled out, and if we had more examples of this policy in implementation, than the Federal Job Guarantee proposal could be an excellent idea. However, with the amount of information that we have to work with, and the unanticipated explicit costs of implementing this program makes the policy too risky. So, it would be wise to recommend the plan at the moment, because of the lack of information and its anticipated effects on the market.

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A Case Study on the Drug Enforcement Administration Marijuana Growers Program

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Executive Summary

This case study was constructed in Fall of 2019 to bring attention to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA): Marijuana Growers Program. In 2016, the Drug Enforcement Administration announced the use of federal resources to construct the marijuana growers program which aims to increase the quantity of licensed marijuana growers to research and examine the effects of marijuana. Since the announcement of this program, cannabis growers across the country sprang into action to submit applications. However, in its initial stages the statutory landscape complicated the approval process due to the U.S. obligations under the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 (Single Convention). It is recommended that the DEA routinely analyze regulatory guidelines to improve regulatory policy. Additionally, I recommend compliance centers to be instituted in this program to equip the DEA with the components needed to advance the regulatory objectives of the program and increase accountability. Lastly, I recommend the preparation of an administrative team to provide a clear pathway for trust and confidence as this program develops.

Background

Cannabis is the botanical word for a hemp plant derivative that's been called by many names. That word's origins are linked with a Mexican word used for the plant in the early 1900s that was spelled and pronounced "mariguana." This term evolved to marihuana and eventually to the modern spelling of marijuana (Mcdivitt 2018). For almost a century in the U.S, the public and policymakers debated the legality of Cannabis, widely known as marijuana. By the early 20th century the federal government has placed punitive restrictions on use, sale, and manufacture of marijuana. The mid 20th century saw calls for national legalization and decriminalization of marijuana. In recent years, growing support for cannabis legalization presents an opportunity to reclassify the substance in federal law.

Growing public support provoked state-level initiatives to grow out of the dissenting conclusion regarding marijuana reclassification. Supporters and opponents have different views on the appropriate classification of marijuana. Nonetheless, in November of 2011, Governors Lincoln D. Chafee of Rhode Island and Christine O. Gregoire of Washington submitted a petition to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) requesting that proceeding be initiated to repeal the rules and regulations that place marijuana in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) on November 30, 2011 (DEA: Proposed Rule, 2016). The DEA denied the petitions of two top state level officials to reclassify marijuana. To support their decision, the DEA stated, "marijuana has a high potential for abuse, has no accepted medical use in the United States, and lacks an acceptable level of safety for use even under medical supervision and further issued recommendation that marijuana remains in Schedule I and the DEA Administrator likewise so concluded" (DEA: Proposed Rule, 2011).

The petition aimed to make its case for marijuana reclassification, stating "cannabis has an accepted medical use in the United States, is safe for use under medical supervision, and has a relatively low abuse potential compared to other Schedule II drugs." Additionally, the petition requested that marijuana and "related items" be rescheduled in Schedule II of the CSA (DEA: Proposed Rule, 2011).

In accordance with rescheduling provisions under the Controlled Substance Act (1971), The United States Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) concluded that marijuana has a high potential for abuse, has no accepted medical use in the United States, and lacks an acceptable level of safety for use even under medical supervision. Therefore, the HHS recommended that marijuana remain in Schedule I and in agreement the DEA Administrator likewise so concluded (DEA: Proposed Rule, 2011).

In spite of this, public support for national marijuana reclassification continued to grow despite the DEA's decision. California established the Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research (CMCR) in 2000 "in response to scientific evidence for therapeutic possibilities of cannabis and local legislative initiatives in favor of compassionate use." State-level public referendums and laws in support of the use of medical marijuana cultivated massive interest in the medical community. Additionally, the desire for high quality clinical investigation as well as comprehensive safety and effectiveness data (DEA: Proposed Rule, 2011).

Statutory Landscape

The DEA announced a policy change aimed at expanding the number of DEA registered marijuana manufacturers to provide researchers with a more varied and robust supply of marijuana. At present, there is only one entity authorized to produce marijuana to supply researchers in the United States: the University of Mississippi, operating under a contract with National Institute on Drug Abuse consistent with the Controlled Substance Act and U.S. treaty obligations, DEA's new policy will allow others to apply to become registered with DEA so that they may grow and distribute marijuana for FDA-authorized research purposes (DEA, 2016 [Press Release]).

A. Communication of requirements

According to the federal register filing, Under section 823(a), for DEA to grant a registration, two conditions must be satisfied: (1) The registration must be consistent with the public interest (based on the enumerated criteria listed in section 823(a)) and (2) the registration must be consistent with U.S. obligations under the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 (Single Convention). Parties to the Single Convention are obligated to maintain various control provisions related to the drugs that are covered by the treaty. Among these is a scheduling provision, 21 U.S.C. 811(d)(1). Section 811(d)(1) provides that, where a drug is subject to control under the Single Convention, the DEA Administrator (by delegation from the Attorney General) must "issue an order controlling such drug under the schedule he deems most appropriate to carry out such [treaty] obligations, without regard to the findings required by [21 U.S.C. 811(a) or 812(b)] and without regard to the procedures prescribed by [21 U.S.C. 811(a) and (b)]." (DEA: Proposed Rule, 2016)

In 2016, the DEA administrator wrote that the total number of individuals registered with the DEA to research marijuana, marijuana extracts, marijuana derivatives, and THC has doubled from 161 in 2014 to 354. However, program inaction promulgated on 25 applicants for the program since 2016 (DEA, memo, 2016). Currently, applications are being approved for the program on the basis of alignment with the requirements, but the concern is that many applications are still pending for unknown and unclear reasons.

While the number of applicants indicates popular support for the marijuana growers program, Attorney General Jeff Sessions soon halted its expansion. Mr. Sessions was concerned about political blowback from Single Convention treaty guidelines, costs and lack of supervisory ability in the program. The unique nature of this program could produce conclusive research evidence that alters the regulatory trends of marijuana. The DEA anticipates that registering additional qualified marijuana growers will increase the variety of marijuana available for these purposes. Since August of 2019 further announcements have not been made and pending applicants are at a standstill.

Life-Cycle of DEA Marijuana Growers Program

The publication of the 2016 policy statement from the Department of Justice engaged a review process to ensure that the marijuana growers program is consistent with applicable laws and treaties. In consultation with other federal agencies, this process remains ongoing; however, it has progressed to the point where DEA is able to issue Notices of Application (DEA: Notice of Applications, 2019).

Due to the political blowback and instability of the DEA marijuana growers program, the method for dispute resolution & monitoring of activity/behavior and compliance is unclear. Nevertheless, the

denial of Lyle E. Craker's (2013) application provides a potential framework for the DEA's method of resolving disputes and checking compliance.

A. Compliance

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) program administrator ultimately concluded that any one of three negative findings could provide a "compelling" basis to deny the application: conflict with the Single Convention; existing adequate supply and competition; and Mr. Doblin's, who was a colleague of Dr. Craker, conduct and involvement. Availing himself of the opportunity, Dr. Craker filed a motion for reconsideration in January 2009 and on February 13, 2009, Dr. Craker filed a petition for review of Craker II in this court. (Howard 2013).

The inability to comply with the guidelines orchestrated by the DEA constituted grounds for denial for a license to grow marijuana. Further, if an entity is denied entry into the program and they sue the Drug Enforcement Administration it is likely any judge will turn to these proceedings to adjudicate if the denial was reasonable. With that in mind, compliance with the outlines announced by the program is essential. Lyle E. Craker's twelve year ongoing litigation reveals the procedures that the DEA is likely to follow for monitoring of activity/behavior, compliance.

B. Enforcement

In the event an applicant submits paperwork for entry into the DEA marijuana growers program and they are approved and responsibilities are disregarded legal penalties will be faced. The same goes for applicants that apply to the program and they are denied. According to the U.S Code of Federal Regulations § 822(a), the manufacture of a schedule I substance is a criminal offense unless the manufacturer has registered with the Attorney General. Id. § 822(a)(1). The Controlled Substance Act (CSA) provides that the Attorney General "shall register an applicant to manufacture substances in schedule I or II if he determines that such registration is consistent with the public interest and with United States obligations under international treaties, conventions or protocols in effect on May 1, 1971." Applicants will face legal repercussions if they neglect to follow the law or abandon their legally binding responsibilities stated in U.S Federal Code.

Alternatives not considered

Upon enacting the marijuana growers program policy, the program administrators found themselves overwhelmed with the level of public interest. In August of 2019, Scottsdale Research Institute sued the DEA in the D.C. Circuit U.S Court of Appeals for inaction on their pending application submitted to the marijuana growers program in 2016. The court dismissed the case since the Scottsdale Research Institute application was in the process of being reviewed as stated in the DEA 2019 press release.

Continuous ongoing litigation over different aspects of the program highlights a barrier of administrative compliance for applicants. Former Attorney General Jeff Sessions pointed out several reasons for the gradual action taken within the program on applications. As pointed out, one of the reasons, "lack of supervisory ability" demonstrates a viable opportunity for the DEA to advance its regulatory schism and institute compliance centers for assistance with the program.

Compliance centers will equip the DEA with the components needed to advance the regulatory objectives of the program and increase accountability. Dr. Craker felt there was institutional bias due to the barriers that prevented his application from being granted. Similarly, Scottsdale Research Institute wanted the DEA to take action on their application that was pending since 2016. Regulations that stipulate a clear and timely standard for compliance such that all improper behavior can be specified or reasonably inferred in advance will be more effective than those that do not (Wilson 1980). If compliance centers are set up at the early stages of the regulatory process, then it would provide clarity for denied and pending applicants. Further, it would resolve the issue of "lack of supervisory" ability by providing applicants with the regulatory knowledge and requirements for the DEA marijuana growers program.

The conclusions of *Lyle v DEA* could help applicants understand that the purpose of the program is to provide researchers with a more varied and robust supply of marijuana from applicants. “Finding the right fit can make a big difference in reducing confusion over regulatory requirements and incentives for regulated entities to shirk their responsibilities” (May 2007). With this new approach, the DEA will increase the fluidity of the program and thoroughly guide applicants through the treaty guidelines.

Management Tasks & Skills

Preparing an administrative team to take on this task will increase transparency and provide a clear pathway for trust and confidence as this program develops. The DEA marijuana growers program has a meticulous process for approval. The tasks are assigned to the administrative team through stages. **(1)** Consistent with subsection 823(a)(1), DEA will evaluate each application it receives to determine whether adding such applicant to the list of registered growers is necessary to provide an adequate and uninterrupted supply of marijuana (including extracts and other derivatives thereof) to researchers in the United States. **(2)** As with any application submitted pursuant to section 823(a), in determining whether the proposed registration would be consistent with the public interest, among the factors to be considered are whether the applicant has previous experience handling controlled substances in a lawful manner and whether the applicant has engaged in illegal activity involving controlled substances. **(3)** given the in-depth nature of the analysis that the CSA requires DEA to conduct in evaluating these applications, applicants should anticipate that, in addition to the information requested in the application itself, they will be asked to submit other information germane to the application in accordance with 21 CFR 1301.15.

In order to accomplish the outlined tasks, the DEA administrative team needs high level management skills and trained legal specialists to contend with potential lawsuits and disputes from denied applicants.

The ongoing litigation suggests the marijuana growers program has faults in its foundation. Applicants desire to gain access into the program range from commercial to public motivations, however the meticulous process doesn't provide access to everyone. As the program develops, the DEA should institute a legal team or a legal specialist who will tightly examine the legal ramifications of every decision made regarding the marijuana growers program.

However, public participation alone in a program of this caliber does not adequately measure the success of the program. “The evaluation community needs to ask not whether participants are satisfied, but whether the public’s collective interests would likely be more satisfied with the results of a given” (Coglianese 2002). With this, I recommend that more well grounded measures of success be implemented when assessing objectives, effectiveness, and equity. This program should be focused on providing researchers with a varied supply of marijuana as opposed to the satisfaction of making it through the applicant process. Further, I recommend comparing the ease and effectiveness of procedures for all applicants. The DEA should compare the applicants that were approved against the applicants that were not approved for the marijuana growers program and see if this comparison is accomplishing what they set out to achieve.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Presently there is legislation before both houses in Congress to modify the status of marijuana in the U.S. For example, the Marijuana Freedom and Opportunity Act aims to remove cannabis from the Controlled Substances Act and to establish a marijuana opportunity trust fund. Opponents of legalization and reclassification argue that it would be unreasonable to legalize marijuana through Congress because the research does not support acceptable safety levels. Whether the DEA marijuana growers program has had an impact on the national conversation surrounding legalization of the drug is unknown. Despite the controversy, the program has increased the number of federally licensed marijuana researchers.

Moving forward, it is recommended that the DEA routinely analyze regulatory guidelines to improve regulatory policy. According to authors Hahn and Hird, the DEA can do this in three steps: (1) Evaluate the cost and benefits of proposed regulatory changes. (2) Design the program to promote more effective regulation. (3) Reflect on the actual design of specific policies.

The public perception of the regulatory program is crucial, because it is essential that applicants participate in this program for the government to appropriately conclude their efforts in marijuana legalization are legitimate. As disclosed in *Craker v. Drug Enforcement Admin*, claims of institutional bias can hinder the growth of the program due to public dissatisfaction. When the program sets out to implement new regulatory objectives, its past performance can surmount its efforts and suggest resources are better used elsewhere. With approximately 350 researchers enrolled in the program, for now the goals of the program are being accomplished. As the program develops, the Agency should focus on providing clear and transparent information to applicants, and should make more effort to be responsive to questions and criticisms.

Many of the issues that arose with respect to the DEA marijuana growers program can be traced back to the lack of attentive detail with information. According to “An Agenda to Improve Administrative Rulemaking, Information Management”, the success of any administration in using information to advance a policy agenda and produce quality rules depends in large part on their ability to manage another central element of rulemaking. Therefore, this study proves that it is incumbent upon the Drug Enforcement Administration to improve its information management to communicate about the program in a more smooth manner.

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