

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: **FOUR ESSAYS ON HOW PRESIDENTIAL
POLICY REPRESENTATION ON THE
ISSUE OF IMMIGRATION AFFECTS
LATINO POLITICAL BEHAVIOR**

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Philosophy, 2018

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I bridge the presidency literature and priming literature to develop a new model for understanding how the executive office can prime the public's attitudes. The Executing Priming Theory (EPT) hypothesizes that the president can subtly alter the public's views toward him by responding to the public's policy demands through the use of his executive powers. These actions will often draw news coverage from the media, taking the president's policy actions directly to the public and raising the salience of these issues. In turn, this affects the criteria that will be used to evaluate the president's performance and influence political behavior. In four essays, based on data from the Pew Research Center, I find an association between Latino approval of President Obama's policies on immigration and their political behavior. These findings present a new way of thinking about the president's policy responsiveness. Previous presidents have been found to respond to policy demands with symbolic

actions (Cohen 1997) rather than substantive policies or motivated primarily by partisan factors (Wood 2009). I demonstrate here that President Obama utilized unilateral actions to provide Latinos with substantive policy representation to improve his standing within this community. Overall, I find that substantive presidential policy representation influences not only Latino but also non-Latino political behavior. The findings presented in these four essays demonstrate that substantive policy representation by the president matters.

FOUR ESSAYS ON HOW PRESIDENTIAL POLICY REPRESENTATION ON
THE ISSUE OF IMMIGRATION AFFECTS LATINO POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2018

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Preface

This dissertation presents an analysis of data from the Pew Research Center. As a 2012 summer intern at the Pew Hispanic Center, the center tasked me with developing a new survey instrument that captured Latinos' sense of influence during the 2012 presidential election for the National Survey of Latinos (NSL)—I analyze this item in chapter 5. I also put together initial drafts of the overall questionnaire and listened-in on data quality interviews for the 2012 NSL. I make heavy use of this data along with other data from the Pew Research Center, and I am grateful for the opportunity that they provided me. The Pew Research Center bears no responsibility for the interpretations offered or conclusions made based on my analysis of their data. The data provided by the Pew Research Center allowed me to fully evaluate my hypothesis that the Obama administration, due to its policies on immigration, changed Latino political behavior in many different ways.

Dedication

To my father, Antonio Rodriguez, Sr., who at a young age came to this country in search of opportunity and a better life. Though he could not see me achieve the highest level of education, I know he is proud. To my mother, Carolina Rodriguez, whose relentless commitment to ensuring that I received the best education possible motivated me to complete my doctoral studies. For my loving wife, Maria G. Guerrero whose support and guidance has led me here and without her, I could not have made it to the end. And, for all of those in search of the American dream, may your dream become a reality.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to my mentors and graduate colleagues who inspired me to continue on this journey. Karen M. Kaufmann took me under her wing and taught me the value of excellent mentorship. From there, Stella M. Rouse continued this exemplification of mentorship and support and taught me how to sharpen my theoretical perspective. Michael J. Hanmer encouraged me to take advantage of my interest in survey methods. Antoine J. Banks and James G Gimpel fueled my interest in both political psychology and sociology. Irwin M. Morris helped spark my interest in the presidency, which motivates my research here.

I cannot express how grateful I am to have shared an office with Daniel Biggers and Anne Cizmar. These two great colleagues and friends of mine unselfishly shared all of their wisdom and knowledge with me. They continued to serve as my mentors long after leaving the halls of Tydings.

At my previous institution, I am thankful to my McNair Scholars' mentor, Celeste Montoya, whom first nurtured my interest in political science while I was an undergraduate student. From there Randolph Burnside continued to provide the needed mentorship to pursue my doctoral studies. Scott McClurg made American political behavior easier to understand, and Laura Hatcher taught me how to keep an open mind to other theoretical and methodological perspectives.

At the Pew Research Center, I am grateful to Mark Hugo Lopez and Ana Gonzalez-Barrera who exposed me to the non-academic research world and encouraged me to think about the public policy implications of my research. I am grateful to all of these people for guiding me through this fulfilling journey.

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Chapter 1: Overview of the theory and presentation of the four essays

A growing body of research has sought to explain Latino vote choice (Barreto 2007, 2010; McConaughy et al. 2010), presidential approval (Sanchez et al. 2012) and favorability (Sanchez et al. 2015), and efficacy (Pantoja and Segura 2003).

Latinos' collective responses to policy actions on immigration seem to have had a consistent impact on their political attitudes during the past ten years (Suro 2005). I attempt to provide a comprehensive framework that explains why President Obama chose to become active on the issue of immigration toward the latter half of his presidency, and why these actions exerted a powerful effect on Latino political behavior. The following research will demonstrate that Latinos are indeed responsive to presidential action on an issue that disproportionately impacts their community. Further, they can choose to either punish or reward the president based on his actions (MacKuen et al. 1992). I also demonstrate how and why a president would circumvent Congress to create policies that critical constituents care about to improve his standing within that community.

It is well-known that the U.S. media has a vital agenda-setting role that can shape American public opinion. The media's traditional role as the primary source of political information is what allows them to influence what issues the public considers when evaluating its political leaders (Iyengar and Kinder 1987). The media can affect what criteria will be used to evaluate the president's performance and influence political behavior. This social phenomenon is known as a priming effect. However, it is possible for the causal arrow to flow in the opposite direction with the

president shaping what the news media will cover, thus influencing public opinion (Edwards and Wood 1999). The president can achieve this through unilateral actions aimed at providing his constituents with policy representation and setting the policymaking agenda.

I develop a new model for understanding how the executive office can prime the public's attitudes by becoming active on an issue that in-turn shapes the news coverage of his presidency and ultimately alters the criteria the public will use to evaluate his performance. The Executing Priming Theory (EPT) hypothesizes that the president can actively respond to the public's policy demands by acting unilaterally. These actions will often draw news coverage from the media, taking the president's policy actions directly to the public and raising the salience of these issues.

For the EPT to be a generalizable framework, I must find that the president's actions correlate with changes in more than one type of political attitude. I evaluate how attitudes toward President Obama's policies, including unilateral actions led to significant shifts in Latino and at times non-Latino, political behavior. Across four essays, I demonstrate that Latino vote choice, presidential approval and favorability, and belief in their community's political power were all associated with approval of President Obama's policies on immigration. These findings present a new way of thinking about president's policy responsiveness. Previous presidents have been found to respond to policy demands with symbolic actions (Cohen 1997) rather than substantive policies or policies motivated primarily by partisan factors (Wood 2009). I demonstrate here that President Obama utilized unilateral actions to provide Latinos

with substantive policy representation to improve his standing within this community and increase both his own and his party's chances of winning an election.

As the only nationally elected office, the president is blamed or credited for the country's policy wins and, or, failures. This expectation applies pressure to the executive branch of government to appease the public. As Cohen (1999) writes,

“Whether by design or accident, taking advantage of technological changes or being swept along by them, public pressure has intensified. This creates incentives for presidents to attend to public opinion, with the concern that the public might withhold its support if the president is viewed as being out of touch with the public (p.14).”

Congressional cooperation, however, is needed for the president to enact federal laws. When there is divided government, it becomes less likely that Congress and the president will pass major legislation (Mayhew 1991, Grant and Kelly 2008). This is especially true with increased political polarization, which has made it more difficult to pass legislation during periods of divided government. The president, therefore, turns to his broadly defined executive powers to “go it alone” to provide policy representation that has implications. In the following four papers, I highlight the importance of the president's policy representation on immigration through unilateral actions and leadership for understanding mass political attitudes.

The president is often thought to be at the mercy of the news media (Patterson 1993). Until recently, presidential scholars echoed this sentiment that the president had, at best, informal powers that allowed him to influence policies (Neustadt 1960). Of late, the president's unilateral actions and ability to set the national policy agenda

are now acknowledged by some scholars as a real source of power (Bailey and Rottinghaus 20014; Howell 2003, 2005; Krause 1997; Krause and Cohen 2000; Moe 1993; Moe and Howell 1999; Young 2014). On the other hand, frequent use of executive powers can lead to outcries and accusations, usually from opponents, that the president is undemocratic. Presidential decision-making through unitary executive action is in many ways a direct form of representation. The president's executive actions can provide an immediate remedy to a problem or concern that his constituents have, especially if Congress is unwilling, or unable to act on that issue. The ability to affect the implementation of a law without the involvement of Congress can send a strong signal to the public, especially in an election year.

The idea that a president can prime the public's attitudes through his unilateral policy actions is not a new concept. The shift to the modern presidency, starting with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to utilize the executive branch as an institution of representation rather than one that focuses on neutral policy implementation presents a significant change in American politics. This change only continues to be magnified with each technological advance that increases the president's ability to communicate directly with his constituency.

Unilateral action is defined here as any executive decisions made by the president—such as executive orders, memorandums or directives—to provide guidelines or leadership on the enactment or implementation of federal laws. These actions shift the national legislative agenda by bringing the issue that the president has acted on to the forefront of American politics. Throughout American history, U.S. presidents have used their executive powers to influence both domestic and foreign

policy with mixed results (Howell and Moe 1999; Mayer 1999; Mayer and Price 2002). Formal executive actions such as executive orders, memorandums, proclamations and signing statements, as well as, simple acts like the State of the Union Address and White House front lawn speeches all exemplify executive powers. Both formal and informal actions are carried out to apply pressure on Congress to take legislative action on an issue that the president has highlighted, or to point to their inaction to justify unilateral policymaking. More importantly, unilateral action offers the president an opportunity to show voters that he is responding to their policy concerns by elevating the importance of an issue, which they care about, onto the national legislative agenda.

The public also does not seem to view unilateral actions as a threat to our nation's check and balance system, giving the president more leeway to act on his own (Christenson and Kriner 2017). Instead, partisan predispositions and ethnic identity are a stronger determinant of support for unilateral action (Christenson and Kriner 2017). Also, the public seems supportive of unilateral action so long as they approve of the president's performance and find his policies consistent with their preferences (Reeves and Rogowski 2015; Reeves and Rogowski 2016, Reeves et al. 2017). To understand how the president can influence public attitudes, I focus on a specific issue and a particular group: how presidential politics on immigration affected Latino political behavior, -compared with non-Latinos.

The issue of immigration continues to have a powerful influence on the nation's current political environment. For example, the 2014 Pew Research Center's People and the Press' July Political Survey found that 62 percent of the public thought

it was either very or extremely important that Congress and the President pass major immigration legislation. About 77 percent of Latinos compared to 60 percent of non-Latinos¹ believed it was important to pass major legislation on immigration. Yet, Congress has not passed any significant reforms to the U.S. immigration system since 1996. Whereas Latino leaders were able to build broad coalitions to get support for the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), it is unlikely that Congress will pass a similar law anytime soon due to the current polarized political environment (Skulley et al. 2017). As a result, other legislative institutions within our federal system of government have started to enact their own policies to address different aspects of the issue of immigration.

In response to congressional inaction, several states have addressed the issue of immigration by passing their own legislation to either increase enforcement or provide undocumented immigrants with protection from deportations. The 2010 Arizona Immigration Law, SB-1070, which aimed to increase local police's role in enforcing immigration laws was seen as an anti-immigrant initiative. On the other hand, California's SB-54 was seen as a pro-immigrant law that provided undocumented immigrants with additional protections from deportations. At the executive level, President Obama enacted several new policies beginning with the 2012 Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the 2014 Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) to alleviate concerns within immigrant communities worried about deportations that had risen under his administration. President Donald J. Trump ran his 2016 campaign on a

¹ Based on weighted data provided by the Pew Research Center.

promise to build a wall between the United States and Mexico which also elevated the relevance of immigration in American politics. President Trump allowed the DACA policy to expire in March 2018 forcing Congress to come up with a solution on how to handle the issue of children brought to the country illegally at a young age. This debate only became possible because President Obama chose to alter how immigration agencies enforced these types of cases. These recent events raise important questions regarding the influence the executive branch can exert on public attitudes regarding this contentious issue. Though I focus on the issue of immigration, the theoretical process that I discuss in the following four essays should apply to many other issues that offer the president the opportunity to improve his, or his party's, standing within a specific community.

Overall, I argue that the president can use his executive power to affect policy implementation and in turn influence voters. The following is a summary of each of the four essays that rely on data from the Pew Research Center. Each essay presents a test of the executive priming hypothesis by evaluating the impact of presidential policy representation, measured by using a question that specifically asks respondents for their assessment of the Obama administration's policies on different aspects of political behavior: vote choice, approval, favorability, and Latino group-based political efficacy.

The first essay evaluates how presidential policy representation affects Latino vote choice. I find that before the 2012 presidential election President Barack Obama was facing a reelection bid with an increasingly disenchanted Latino community. Although Latinos overwhelmingly preferred President Obama over Republican

Presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, there was a significant share of Latinos who remained undecided about their vote choice. I find that after President Obama announced the DACA policy, his support increased among Latinos, compared to non-Latinos, and among those Latinos who approved of this policy.

In the next essay, I examined how President Obama's approval among Latinos changed depending on the community's perceptions about his handling of specific immigration issues and toward his use of unilateral action to enact DAPA. I find that, early on, Latinos' dissatisfaction with the Obama administration's policies had a significant impact on their approval of his performance. I also see that DACA did not have an immediate effect on Latino attitudes, but a month later, there was a significant effect. At the same time, DAPA had a substantial impact on both Latino and non-Latino approval of Obama.

Building on the previous essay that evaluated presidential approval, I next examine how Latino approval of DACA and DAPA, along with perceptions about President Obama's handling of the unaccompanied Central-American children crisis, affected his favorability ratings. I evaluate whether approval of President Obama's immigration policies explains when presidential favorability ratings do not match presidential approval ratings. This analysis replicates previous research conducted by Cohen (2000), which found that systematic partisan factors explained when approval and favorability did not match. I find that views toward Obama's immigration policies and handling of an immigration-related crisis strongly affected changes in his favorability ratings. I also find that Latino identity and immigration-related factors along with other socioeconomic characteristics predicted systematic instances when

presidential favorability and approval diverge. However, I did not see that attitudes toward President Obama's immigration policies predicted consistency between approval and favorability. I did discover that some Latinos were more likely to have less consistent presidential favorability and approval than non-Latinos.

After previously finding that President Obama's actions influenced Latino vote choice, Latino and non-Latino approval of his performance and favorability toward him, I examined the impact of these policies on Latinos' sense of group-based political efficacy. I find that approval of DACA and believing that Obama's policies have helped Latinos were associated with a heightened sense of political power among Latinos. These results demonstrate another way in which unilateral action and the president's policies on immigration can have an impact on Latino political empowerment.

Based on all four studies, I conclude that substantive presidential policy representation on the issue of immigration influences not only Latino but also non-Latino political behavior. These findings suggest that substantive policy representation by the president matters. Future research should explore the limitations of this power by examining the president's actions on other issues. At the same time, scholars should evaluate how President Trump's use of unilateral actions to restrict immigration will affect the Latino community's political behavior moving forward.

Chapter 2: Targeted Executive Action: Examining the effect of presidential policy representation on Latino vote choice

“These are young people who study in our schools, they play in our neighborhoods, they’re friends with our kids, they pledge allegiance to our flag. They are Americans in their heart, in their minds, in every single way but one: on paper.” - President, Barack Obama

The prestige and growing importance of the U.S. presidential office afford the president a unique opportunity to respond to his constituents’ policy concerns. I argue that an incumbent president has the power to raise the salience of an issue that he has acted on by providing key constituents with policy representation on their most important issue. To this end, in this essay I evaluate how Latinos respond to the president's policy representation and what motivates them to choose one candidate over another in a presidential election. Additionally, I argue that the utilization of the executive office as a branch of representation rather than implementation empowered Latinos ahead of the 2012 presidential elections.

On June 15, 2012, President Obama announced a memorandum that outlined changes to deportation procedures involving undocumented youth. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy provided temporary protection from deportation for undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children and had not committed a serious crime. The DACA policy was not a formal “executive order” as it does not appear in the federal register². President Obama wielded his executive authority to alter how the nation's immigration laws are applied. With just five months before the presidential election, the DACA policy was

². An executive order is a change to administrative law that is found in the Federal Register while an executive memorandum provides a directive to bureaucrats on how to enforce or implement existing federal laws

criticized by some as an electoral strategy meant to mobilize the Latino community. The DACA policy was widely supported by Latinos. According to the 2012 National Survey of Latinos (NSL), about 89 percent of Latinos supported the DACA policy, and 31 percent knew someone who had applied to the DACA program (Lopez and Gonzalez-Barrera 2012) including 24 percent of native-born Latinos (Lopez and Gonzalez-Barrera 2012).

Before the DACA announcement several polls showed that President Obama had a sizable lead over the Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney in the 2012 presidential election (Wallace 2012); however, Latino voters were less enthusiastic about the 2012 election when compared to the 2008 election (Collingwood et al. 2014). Like the rest of the country, many Latinos were worried about the sluggish economy that was still trying to recover from the Great Recession (Barreto 2012; Wallace 2012; Collingwood et al. 2014; Sanchez et al. 2015). Perhaps more troubling for Latino voters was President Obama's record on immigration (Barreto 2012; Wallace 2012; Collingwood et al. 2014; Sanchez et al. 2015). Under the Democratic Obama administration deportations rose to record numbers and controversial programs initiated by the Bush administration—Secure Communities, 287(g), and e-verify—were expanded (Wallace 2012). Many community leaders expressed their frustration with the continuation of these programs along with the President and Congress' inaction on the issue of immigration, especially given that early on in the President's term, the Democratic Party had control over both legislative bodies. The lack of action on immigration caused many Latinos to have negative attitudes toward the President (Barreto, 2012; Collingwood et al. 2014,

Wallace 2012). This response to the President's immigration policy highlights not only the importance of immigration for Latinos, but also why President Obama felt compelled to act unilaterally. His actions toward protecting some undocumented immigrants served the purpose of combatting the "deporter-in-chief" narrative.

I propose that President Obama utilized his executive powers to make a change to how the United States enforces its immigration laws with the introduction of the DACA policy to win back Latino leaders. At the time of the announcement, it was estimated that potentially 1.4 million young undocumented immigrants would benefit from the DACA policy³ (Pew Hispanic Center, June 2012). Thousands of undocumented immigrants applied for deportation relief under this program with 86 percent of those applicants granted a temporary stay of deportation (Pew Hispanic Center, August 2014). This policy received extensive news coverage and likely sent a strong message to the Latino community just months before the presidential election. The DACA policy is an excellent case study to test the executive priming theory.

To test the present hypothesis regarding the impact of President Obama's unilateral actions on vote choice, I use data from the Pew Research Center.⁴ I evaluate vote choice using the Pew People and the Press Center's 2012 June Political Survey (JPS). The JPS was in the field before and after the announcement of the DACA policy on June 15, 2012, creating a natural experimental design. I also utilize the 2012 National Survey of Latinos (NSL). After performing a series of analytical tests,

³. After the details of the program became public the revised estimate went up to 1.7 million (Pew Hispanic Center, August 2012).

⁴ The Pew Research Center bears no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations of the data presented here.

my findings suggest that the DACA policy did alter the public's level of support for President Obama's reelection.

Executive Priming Theory and Latino Vote Choice

Several factors shape Latino candidate preferences. Latinos' generational status (DeSipio and Uhlaner 2007), shared ethnicity (Barreto 2007, 2010; McConnaughy et al. 2010) and racial identity (Stokes 2004) all affect vote choice. Also, partisanship (Cain and Kiewiet 1984; Graves and Lee 1996; Michelson 2005), and a candidate's qualities (Manzano and Sanchez 2010) have also been found to influence Latino vote choice. Some segments of the Latino community already have been found to be influenced by political content via mass communication. For example, McCann and Chavez (2016) using a panel study found that exposure to campaign information affected both Mexican immigrant's propensity to identify as Democrat and their vote choice. Moreover, the effect was observed to have a lasting impact on their partisan identity as they still identified as Democrats in the second wave two years after the first panel (McCann and Chavez 2016). All of these characteristics help explain Latino candidate preferences, but only a few studies have examined how Latinos utilize policy cues to evaluate candidates (Abrajano 2005; Nicholson et al. 2002). Furthermore, it is unclear if substantive policy representation at the executive level can yield any positive electoral benefits, though, it has been found to influence vote choice at the local and congressional levels (Abrajano 2005; Nicholson et al. 2002).

One of the reasons why the executive could have such a pronounced impact on Latino vote choice is because partisanship is still an evolving feature of Latino

political behavior. Although a significant share of Latinos identify as Democrat, many do not, or only lean Democratic. As a result, partisanship for Latinos at times does not predict their political behavior (Rouse et al. 2010). This an important finding since partisanship has consistently been found to be the most reliable predictor of vote choice. Further, presidential actions themselves may disrupt Latino partisanship attainment. Younger Latinos who were told that Obama's administration had deported more illegal immigrants than his predecessor were found to be less likely to identify as Democrats (Street et al. 2015). Though the president can unilaterally influence public policy, there is scholarly debate as to why he would choose to do so.

Previous research suggests that U.S. presidents are focused on securing their place in history by demonstrating leadership on key political issues, thus making it necessary for them to be proactive in policy making (Moe and Howell 1999; Wildavsky 1966). Given a president's interest in his legacy, he might be motivated to use all available resources to maintain power (i.e. win reelection). The president's unique access to the media, due to him being a national political figure, can further magnify the influence of his executive decisions. Though, most scholars agree that executive orders are real examples of unilateral action, there are times when the president will turn to other types of policy actions. Reeves (2011) found that areas hit with natural disasters in electorally competitive states were more likely to be declared disaster areas by the president, thus making them eligible for federal assistance. This, in turn, benefited presidents with an average of one more percentage point in the following election based on aggregate vote returns (Reeves 2011). Policies that

directly bring about some policy change seem to be more likely to influence voters, especially if they are substantively impactful.

To understand how president's actions affect elections, I argue that scholars have to accept the idea that the president's role in the office is not isolated from his position as a candidate. Historically, presidents who do not meet voters' expectations are more likely to have low approval rating and less likely to be reelected (Waterman et al. 1999). If voters have high hopes of presidential performance, they expect an incumbent president to deliver (Waterman et al. 1999). Moreover, the change from party-centered to candidate-centered elections has increased the expectation of voters that the president represents their interests in office (Wattenberg 1991). There is evidence to suggest that the president is more likely to issue an executive order when public support declines in order to send the message that he is responding to the public's policy demands (Krause and Cohen 1997; Mayer 1999; Deering and Maltzman 1999). Mayer (1999) found a link between issuing a presidential order and the presence of a looming election. He writes, "this fits well with the notion that executive orders allow presidents to shape the public agenda and maintain ties with important constituencies during campaigns (459)." I build on this research by providing a framework that demonstrates how the president can affect voter attitudes by using the executive office to enact national policies supported by his constituents.

A model that suggests that the president is responsive to the policy demands of some of his constituents contradicts some previous portrayals of the presidency. Cohen (1997) argued that a president is more likely to take symbolic approaches such as acknowledging the seriousness of an issue rather than substantive policy acts to

demonstrate policy-responsiveness to his constituents. This relationship could be changing, however, due, in part, to polarization between the two major political parties. Growing differences in political preferences between Democratic and Republican partisans might encourage the president to enact policies that are more substantive rather than simple displays of acknowledgment.

Recently, scholars have explored presidential candidates' ability to capture the minority vote. This area of study recognizes the increasing importance of minority voters in determining the outcome of presidential elections. Collingwood et al. (2014) proposed a cross-racial-mobilization (CRM) model for understanding why candidates from a different racial or ethnic minority might try to capture another minority community's vote. The CRM model postulates that candidates use different strategies to appeal to voters from different racial and ethnic backgrounds to help them win an election. The actions taken by candidates to win over these communities include promoting salient policies.

One reason why Latinos are receiving the attention of campaigns is that their population is growing in key battleground states (Barreto, Collingwood and Manzano 2010; Collingwood and Barreto 2014; Collingwood et al. 2014), which now motivates more candidates to appeal to them. Using a sample of registered Latino voters, Collingwood et al. (2014) found that those who approved of the DACA policy were more likely to voice support for President Obama before the 2012 presidential election. The authors attribute their findings to the presidential campaign's strategies and the president's policies "...Obama and his campaign would spend considerable effort mobilizing the Latino vote as well as taking policy positions favorable to the

majority of Latino voters” (Collingwood et al. 2014, p.4). The CRM model provides some evidence that minority candidates from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, including the president, are motivated to attract minority voters.

As both parties grow farther apart ideologically, it has become more critical to evaluate how candidates attempt to garner support from the increasingly influential minority voter. I argue it is not necessary for elected officials to share their constituents' racial or ethnic identity to promote these communities' preferred policies, especially if doing so will help them win reelection. This focus on minority communities is evident among presidential candidates who have to appeal to a broader constituency.

Often, the promises that a presidential candidate makes to maintain an edge on an issue can have consequences once in office (Claibourn and Martin 2008). The fact that voters do not forget the president's campaign message is one possible explanation for why many Latinos have not been satisfied with President Obama's performance on immigration. During the 2008 presidential campaign, then U.S. Senator and Democratic presidential candidate, Barack Obama spoke to the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO) and promised to tackle the issue of immigration during his first term. Four years later in 2012, comprehensive immigration reform still had not passed, and a record number of deportations and raids continued under President Obama's administration leading to criticism that the President had not kept his promise (Wallace 2012). Even after four years, Latino leaders remembered the immigration reform narrative President Obama espoused as a candidate.

Thus far, I have discussed the presidential studies literature, as well as the CRM literature, which together explains why a president is motivated to influence legislative agenda before an election. Next, I focus on describing the concept of priming and how it fits within the theoretical framework of executive priming theory (EPT). Priming is the social-psychological phenomenon where a person's evaluations are altered by shifting their focus toward a specific consideration over all others. Evidence of priming is well established in the political science literature. Priming research in political science has traditionally centered on how the news media's agenda-setting role affects the criteria that the public uses to evaluate political candidates (Behr and Iyengar 1984; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Krosnick and Kinder, 1990). The media through its agenda-setting role can prime the public's attention by repeatedly focusing on a specific controversial issue (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Krosnick and Kinder 1990; Krosnick and Brannon 1993). The fact that the media primes voters is a concern because of the private media's willingness to focus on sensationalized rather than informative news (Zaller 1999). By not providing fact-based reporting, the news media may be depriving voters of crucial political information and increasing cynicism by focusing on scandals (Zaller 1999).

There is still some debate over the mechanics of priming. One group of scholars argue that voters are merely learning during a campaign and projecting what they have learned, instead of assimilating priorities based on information that they are receiving (Lenz 2009, 2012; Hart and Middleton 2014). Nevertheless, most scholars agree that the news media can prime voters and affect the criteria that the public uses to evaluate candidates (Behr and Iyengar 1984; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Krosnick

and Kinder 1990; Krosnick and Brannon 1993; Hart and Middleton 2014; but see Lenz 2009, 2012).

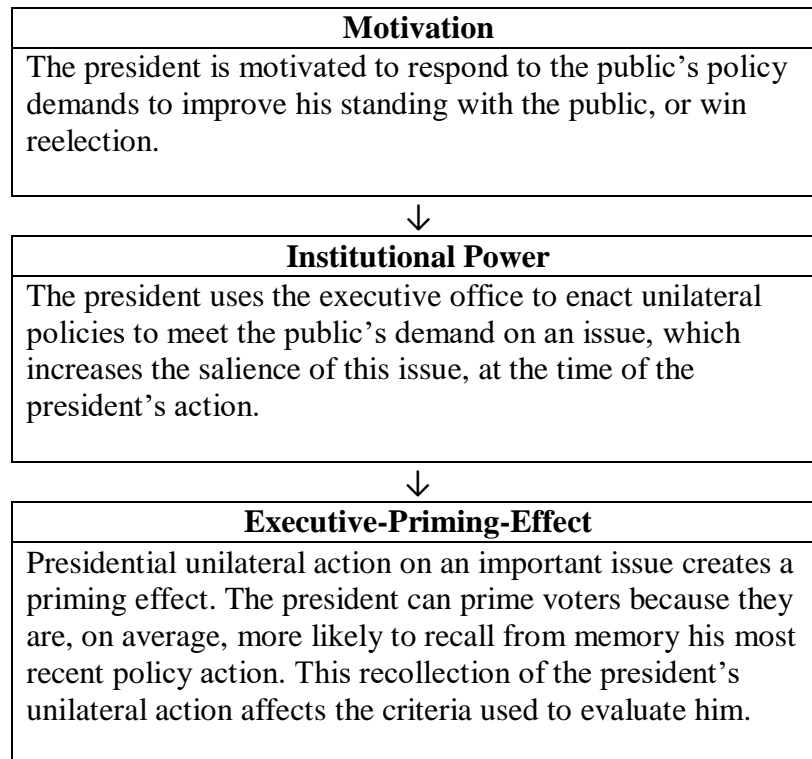
The priming phenomenon is not a new phenomenon to presidential campaign staffs. Some studies have found that past presidential candidates were well aware of what scholars now call a priming effect (Jacobs and Shapiro 1994, Druckman et al. 2004). Evidence of priming during a campaign dates back to the presidential campaigns of both President Kennedy in 1960 (Jacobs and Shapiro 1994) and President Nixon in 1972 (Druckman et al. 2004). The staff of both candidates frequently monitored polls to gauge the public's perception of their respective candidates so that they could respond accordingly. In sum, priming is a remarkable psychological phenomenon that explains how mass communication affects the public's attitudes.

While most prominently utilized in reference to the media, a priming effect can also refer to the actions of presidential candidates—those who have the exposure to motivate such an effect. Here, I highlight the direct role of elected officials in priming political attitudes. Under my framework, politicians are able to prime the public's attitudes through their policy actions by affecting the issues that voters will prioritize when evaluating them. Therefore, this theoretical framework assumes that the news media role in priming the public's attitudes is an intervening variable rather than causal. It is a politician's policy actions that initiate the priming effect of altering what criteria the public will use to evaluate elected officials.

Previous research has demonstrated that the president can prime the public (Krosnick and Kinder 1990; Druckman and Holmes. 2004). There is a lack of a

comprehensive framework to explain how political attitudes change at the individual level as a result of presidential action. I fill this void by proposing the executive priming theory (ETP) to better understand how the president shapes public opinion. I focus on the actual mechanics of how a president can exert a strong influence on people's views through his use of executive power. The EPT combines the priming, presidency, and the CRM literature to illustrate how the presidential office is used to influence political attitudes.

Table 1 - Executive priming theory framework



In table1, I summarize the three processes predicted by EPT, which explain why presidential policy representation through unilateral actions is a potent source of psychological-priming. First, the president is motivated to act on an issue he believes will result in winning over a vital minority voting bloc and ultimately help him win

reelection. Second, I argue that the president uses his executive powers to elevate an issue's importance to satisfy minority constituents. Often Latinos are less likely to be represented by congressmen on the issues they care about—unless they are a majority in their district. Latinos' population size within a district, lower levels of voter participation and income all contribute to them not being represented when compared to Whites (Griffin and Newman 2007). In addition, descriptive representation is an important factor for Latinos to obtain policy representation, yet, many of them are not descriptively represented in Congress (Rouse 2013). This magnifies the importance of executive actions for Latinos as the president can own the issue he has acted on over Congress by taking the lead, circumventing the legislative process, and making it his cause. Third, the president can capture the public's attention by providing them with new relevant policy information with his actions on an issue. This new policy information increases the likelihood that an individual will recall this issue when forming a judgment about the president as it will be more readily accessible from memory. This is the real source of the impact of priming because of the "recency" effect (Baddeley and Hitch 1993; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Krosnick and Kinder 1990).

The recency effect is a psychological phenomenon in which people are more likely to recall the most recent information received (Segal and Cofer 1960; Baddeley and Hitch 1993; Nelson and Goodmon 2002). For example, if a person were asked to recall a list of items after hearing them out loud, they, on average, would be most successful at remembering the items that were said last on the list (Segal and Cofer 1960; Baddeley and Hitch 1993; Nelson and Goodmon 2002). I argue that the recency

effect helps explain why a president choosing to act on an important issue during an election year cannot only increase the salience of a public policy issue, but also ensure that voters will recall this display of representation when making a judgment about him as a candidate. The priming effect depends to some extent on recent information that can activate hidden associations in memory (Segal and Cofer 1960; Baddeley and Hitch 1993; Nelson and Goodmon 2002). Therefore, by acting on the issue of immigration the president is able to make his actions more accessible in Latinos' memory, given that this is an issue about which many already have an existing attitude (Highton, 2012; Tesler 2015). In sum, the president can alter how the public evaluates his performance. Even though in this study, I focus on an incumbent president, the framework laid out in EPT can also help us understand non-incumbent presidential candidates seeking the presidential office as they also enjoy widespread media attention. I present my testable hypotheses from this present study below.

Hypotheses

Study 1 -

H-1: After the DACA announcement, Latinos are more likely than non-Latinos to think that immigration is an important issue when deciding between presidential candidates in the 2012 presidential election.

H-2: After the DACA announcement, Latinos are more likely than non-Latinos to support President Obama in the 2012 presidential election.

Study 2-

H-3: Latinos that approved of the DACA policy are more likely to say they will vote for President Obama in the 2012 presidential election than Latinos who opposed the DACA policy.

Data, Methodology and Findings

I conduct three studies based on three national surveys from the Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends and the Pew People and the Press Projects to examine the hypothesis that the president's agenda-setting role affects Latino vote choice through priming. Each survey includes a battery of essential questions about President Obama. Also, each survey contains items that measure factors that explain Latinos' propensity to prefer one candidate over all others. The following details the research strategy, methodology and results of all three studies.

Study – 1: 2012 Pew People and the Press June Political Survey

I use the 2012 Pew People and the Press' June Political Survey referred to here as the (2012 JPS), a nationally representative survey of 2,013 respondents including 167 Hispanic respondents. This survey is unique because it was in the field before and after President Obama announced the DACA policy. Of the 167 Latino respondents, 115 of them interviewed before the DACA announcement and 52 interviewed beginning on June 15th, after DACA. Due to the small sample size, I expanded my analysis of the 2012 JPS to include both Hispanic voters and non-

voters.⁵ This small sample limits external validity and generalizability outside of this sample. However, the 2012 JPS allows me to examine whether there is some evidence of a causal relationship between presidential action and Latino vote choice. I can capture changes in Latino attitudes over time and compare it with non-Latinos when evaluating the DACA's effect on attitudes, thus strengthening the argument for a causal relationship. Therefore, I can determine if this relationship is unique to Latinos or something that affects non-Latinos as well. Of course, it would be problematic to only rely on the 2012 JPS to support my central claim that DACA changed Latino vote choice. To bolster support for my claim, I use data from the Pew Hispanic Center's 2012 NSL in the second study, using a large nationally representative Latino sample.

The 2012 JPS includes a series of questions that are used to capture important factors that predict Latino vote choice. First, I describe the dependent variables of interest. Then, I will discuss the primary independent variables of interest. Finally, I explain other factors included when estimating the probability of preferring President Obama to win reelection in the 2012 presidential election.

The following question is used to measure Latino vote choice before the 2012 presidential election, "Now, suppose the 2012 presidential election were being held TODAY. If you had to choose between who would you vote for? [Barack Obama, the Democrat] [Mitt Romney, the Republican]" Based on the responses to this question I created a dichotomous variable (1 = support for President Obama and 0 = support all

⁵ I conducted the same study presented here with the only 79 available Latino respondents who were eligible to vote. My results did not change in any significant manner, and these results are available upon request.

other candidates and non-response) to determine whether Latinos became more or less likely to support President Obama's reelection. The primary independent variable of interest captures people who interviewed before or after the DACA announcement to capture the effect of this new policy on attitudes. President Obama announced the DACA policy on June 15th, 2012. All respondents interviewed on or before June 15, 2012 were assigned a value of 0 while those polled after June 15, 2012 were given a value of 1.

The 2012 JPS also allows me to control for other important factors that affect levels of support for President Obama.⁶ These include the standard socioeconomic variables income, education, gender, and age. Previous research has found that vote choice is strongly associated with individual socioeconomic characteristics (Campbell et al. 1960). Since the focus of my analysis is on how President Obama's actions affected Latino candidate preferences, I created a dichotomous variable to capture Latino /non-Latino respondents in the 2012 JPS data. Another important factor is the language of interview (Spanish). It has been well established that Spanish speaking Latino attitudes differ from their English speaking brethren due to how they interpret some of the cultural nuances found in survey questions that are not always translated accurately (Lee and Perez 2014; Perez 2016). I measure language based on a question that ask interviewers in what language was the interview conducted in—Latino respondents interviewed in English are assigned a value of 0 while those interviewed in Spanish are assigned a value of 1.

⁶A full list of all variables along with the distribution between the control and treatment groups is available in Appendix 1.

No other factor is more prevalent in the political behavior literature than partisanship, which is consistently found to be the most reliable predictor of vote choice (Campbell et al. 1960). I control for whether respondents identify as Democrat or Republican by collapsing the 5 category partisan scale to these variables with all values serving as the reference category.⁷ I choose to collapse the partisan variable because Latino partisanship is not equally distributed. A sizable portion of the Latino community identifies as Independent. Therefore, I categorize Latino partisanship to capture how Latino Democrats and Republicans differ in their vote choice from non-Latino partisans.

In addition, I control for the following survey-based factors. The presence of a Latino interviewer and the gender of an interviewer are included in the model to capture their impact on vote choice. The DACA policy may have created a social desirability bias with people being less likely to express their actual attitudes toward immigrants to a Latino interviewer; previous research has already found evidence of bias in a pre-election poll based on the racial background of an interviewer (Finkel et al. 1991). Also, respondents from the opposite sex may offer different responses depending on the gender of their interviewer (Kane and Macaulay 1993). Therefore, I include in the model two dichotomous variables that capture the presence of a Latino interviewer and a female interviewer.

Natural Experiment and Robustness Checks

⁷In earlier versions of this paper, I control for existing policy preferences including immigration and attitudes on financial outlooks. I drop these variables, however, for parsimony. Omitting these variables does not change my results in any meaningful way. These results are available upon request.

In an ideal world, I would simply ask the president to randomly act on an important policy issue that key voters care about to examine how this affects them. I would then observe the attitudes of two-panel groups of voters—those who received this information versus those who did not—before and after the announcement. This scenario is not realistic. Alternatively, I could turn to a controlled randomized experiment in a lab setting or online survey, which is attainable. With this approach, I would lose some realism as people would likely be skeptical of the idea that the president made a significant announcement that they did not already know. Fortunately, I can approximate the ideal research design through a natural experiment.

The 2012 JPS was in the field for eight days before the announcement and three days after. There was some speculation before the DACA announcement that President Obama would make a decision related to U.S. immigration policy, but an exact date or plan was not known to the public until his speech. Consequently, I argue that the president's announcement introduced a random exogenous shock that created a natural experiment with the date of June 15, 2015, being the natural cutoff point. This unique feature in the data provides us with some leverage to establish causality with the causal arrow moving from the DACA announcement toward changes in voter attitudes. This same approach was undertaken by Krosnick and Kinder (1990) to investigate the presence of priming effects following the Iran Contra disclosure. In their study, however, the electoral context was not relevant as the event had taken place after the midterm election and well before the next presidential election.

Researchers have to be cautious with natural experiments. Merely observing the impact of what is perceived by a scholar to be a random phenomenon's impact on the public does not guarantee that this is a random experiment. Even if the assignment mechanism in a natural experiment is presumed to be random, the data is still observational (Sekhon and Titiunik 2012). We cannot control when a political scandal will occur but we can observe its impact on a population before and after it has occurred. This observational data because it is not a true experiment can be susceptible to systematic bias that we must account for.

This study uses an exogenous shock with a random assigning mechanism in that the treatment (President Obama's DACA policy) was introduced to the real world abruptly; the actual survey data may not have produced equal groups. As Sekhon and Titiunik (2012, 36) note when referring to concerns with the comparability of groups in natural experiments, "...treatment and control groups constructed post hoc may not be comparable, even if one assumes that the natural intervention was randomly assigned." In natural experiments, scholars have to ensure that they are observing groups that are comparable. Scholars have to also examine whether randomization was successful across covariates in both the control and treatment group. I take several steps to ensure that I am making comparisons between similar groups.

One potential concern with the use of natural experiments in surveys is that people's willingness to participate in an interview may be affected by the same exogenous intervention that created the natural experiment. In this case, it is possible that the DACA announcement changed people's willingness to participate in a survey about politics, especially among Latinos. If this influx of survey respondents who

would not have participated in the survey had it not been for the DACA announcement differ in their attitudes from those who would have participated regardless, this could cast doubt on the impact of the treatment. This potential difference in opinions is why scholars must evaluate people's propensity to participate in a survey. These concerns have already been acknowledged and discussed in the Latino political behavior literature.

Recent research has utilized a well-known natural experiment to study various types of Latino political behavior. Carey et al. (2014) and Silber-Mohamed (2013) all sought to exploit the 2006 spring immigrant marches empirically. The 2006 Latino National Survey, the largest Latino political survey conducted, was in the field before and after the 2006 spring marches, and thus, created a natural experiment. These scholars treat the demonstrations as a random exogenous events, but the willingness to participate in the 2006 LNS may have been driven by individual characteristics as noted by both Carey et al. (2014) and Silber-Mohamed (2013). Carey et al. (2014) state, "The assignment of the respondents to the treatment and control groups was almost random, yet the respondents' decision to participate in the survey might be influenced by their personal characteristics and exposure to the rallies." Both Carey et al. (2014) and Silber-Mohamed (2013) recognized that the treatment and control groups in the 2006 LNS varied across demographics but, utilized several robustness checks to address these concerns. Carey et al. (2014) noted that they used Coarsen-Exact-Matching as a robustness check and found that their results did not change after adjusting for imbalances between the treatment and control group. This approach certainly helped account for some potential selection bias. Similarly, Silber-Mohamed

(2013) acknowledged and discussed concerns with comparability between the pre and post-treatment groups. She relied on multiple regression to account for differences between the treatment and control group and restricted her models by analyzing nine Latino sub-groups separately. Though both scholars addressed the non-randomness of survey participation in different ways, they could only account for factors based on questions asked in the 2006 LNS. Neither study had variables that could approximate an individual's propensity to participate in a survey. Both studies relied on adjusting for differences between the control and treatment group across observed covariates through regression analysis alone.

Fortunately, the 2012 JPS Dataset includes two objective variables—call attempts and refusal conversions—that help me account for non-random assignment in either the control (pre-DACA) or treatment group (post-DACA) based on willingness to participate in the survey. Utilizing these factors, I build on the initial concerns described by Carey et al. (2014) and Silber-Mohamed (2013) when using natural experiments with survey data. Indeed, I do find differences in the full sample—among both Latinos and non-Latinos—between the control and treatment group in their propensity to participate in a survey. First, I observed that it took on average one more call attempt ($p < .000$) to finish an interview with a respondent after the DACA announcement, compared to those interviewed before the announcement. Also, I observed a 10 percent ($p < .000$) increase in the number of people who initially refused, but then later converted into an interview after the DACA announcement. Overall, it appears that the post-DACA announcement treatment group was harder to reach for an interview, when compared to the pre-DACA group. I find differences in

people's willingness to participate in the survey before and after the exogenous intervention. I can account and adjust for this imbalance. Accounting for these factors increases the confidence that any observed changes in attitudes after the DACA announcement can be attributed to this policy and not differences in survey participation rates between the treatment and control group. Accounting for nonrandom assignment in a person's willingness to participate in a survey distinguishes this paper from Carey et al.'s (2014) and Silber-Mohamed's (2013) methods for dealing with a nonrandom assignment within survey-based natural experiments.

Looking at Appendix A, I also observed imbalances among several covariates. On average, Latinos made up a larger share of the sample, as did the number of respondents interviewed by Latinos, and the number of Spanish interviewees after the DACA announcement. These three variables are likely interrelated. There is a balance among the following covariates: gender of the respondent (female), income (both over \$30,000 and non-response to the income question), the gender of the interviewer, education, and age. To account for the observed imbalances, I include as a robustness check additional calculated predicted probabilities based on reweighted data generated by using the Coarsen-Exact-Matching (CEM) algorithm in STATA (Iacus et al. 2012) when presenting my results, which is the same approach used by Carey et al. (2014).

Matching as a robustness check is now a common tool in the literature that helps scholars bolster their evidence of a causal relationship using observational data. The goal of this technique is to make the treatment and control groups in

observational data more comparable. By doing so, scholars hope to mimic the features of a controlled randomized experiment. Using a natural experiment with a random exogenous shock, combined with other quasi-experimental techniques such as matching, are especially useful in helping scholars make causal inferences by ensuring balance among the covariates (Sekhon and Titiunik 2012). I used CEM to produce weights that bring balance across the treatment and control groups using “Monotonic Imbalance Bounding” (Iacus et al. 2012). CEM is attractive because it does not require scholars to continually check balance, rematch, and check again until the balance is achieved, as opposed to the alternatives such as propensity score matching (Iacus et al. 2012). Also, the weights produced by CEM can be used when calculating predicted probabilities based on nonlinear models. To demonstrate the impact of matching, I present results with both matching and non-matching weights.

I offer several manipulation checks to test for the presence of the suspected causal mechanism—priming. The 2012 JPS allows me to conduct a manipulation check to see if the DACA announcement did indeed prime voters to prioritize the issue of immigration more when evaluating candidates. The survey asked respondents to select the first and next issue that was most important to them when deciding between the presidential candidates. The issue of immigration was one of the options. I assigned respondents a value of 1 based on who selected immigration as the most important issue. I gave all other responses a value of 0. I modeled salience of immigration as a function of whether a person was interviewed before or after the DACA announcement.

Finally, in Appendix B, I provide results from my analysis of a Pew News Interest Survey that was in the field after the DACA announcement. I find that Latinos were, on average, 19 percentage points more likely to receive the treatment (news about the DACA policy) than non-Latinos. This high exposure to press about DACA would indicate that Latinos were more likely to be primed by the announcement after President Obama's speech.

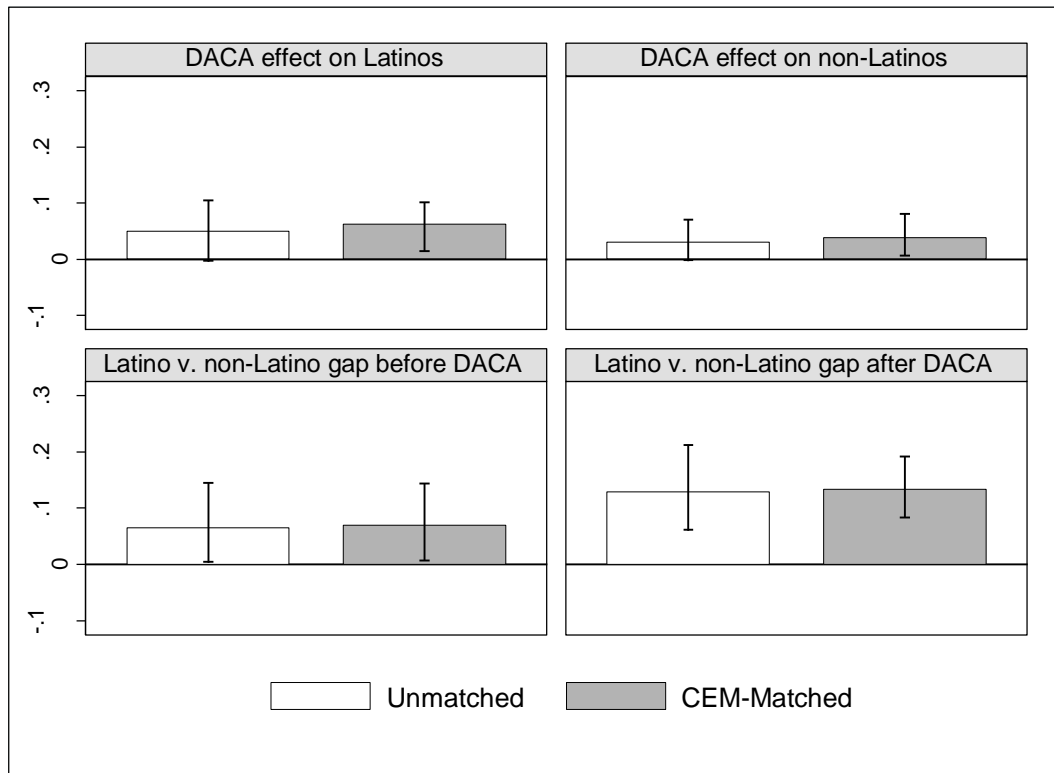
I conducted a multivariate probit regression analysis to estimate the effect of the DACA announcement on candidate preferences, while holding all other previously mentioned covariates constant. I clustered the standard errors by each interview date (N=11) to appropriately model the multi-level nature of the data since the independent variable of interest is at the level of the date of interview (Arceneaux and Nickerson 2009). The use of this methodological technique also distinguishes my study from previous research using a natural experiment design with surveys (Carey et al. 2014; Silber-Mohamed 2013). Also, I include an interaction term by multiplying whether a respondent is Latino with the DACA treatment variable to capture this interactive effect. The substantive meaning of coefficients produced by probit regression analysis is difficult to interpret on their own, especially when there is an interaction term in the model (Ai and Norton 2003). I focus the presentation of results on the predicted probabilities generated using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013) based on my model estimates.⁸

Results

⁸ Full model estimates generated from probit analysis are available in Appendix C and D.

In figure 1, I demonstrate that the DACA announcement did lead to a substantively large increase in the salience of immigration, but only for Latinos. Since interactions involve joint manipulations of two variables, I present all four possible changes to evaluate the substantive and statistical significance of each relationship. I look at how the DACA policy affected both Latinos and non-Latinos prioritization of immigration when deciding between candidates. Then, I examined the difference in Latino and non-Latino prioritization of immigration before and after the DACA announcement.

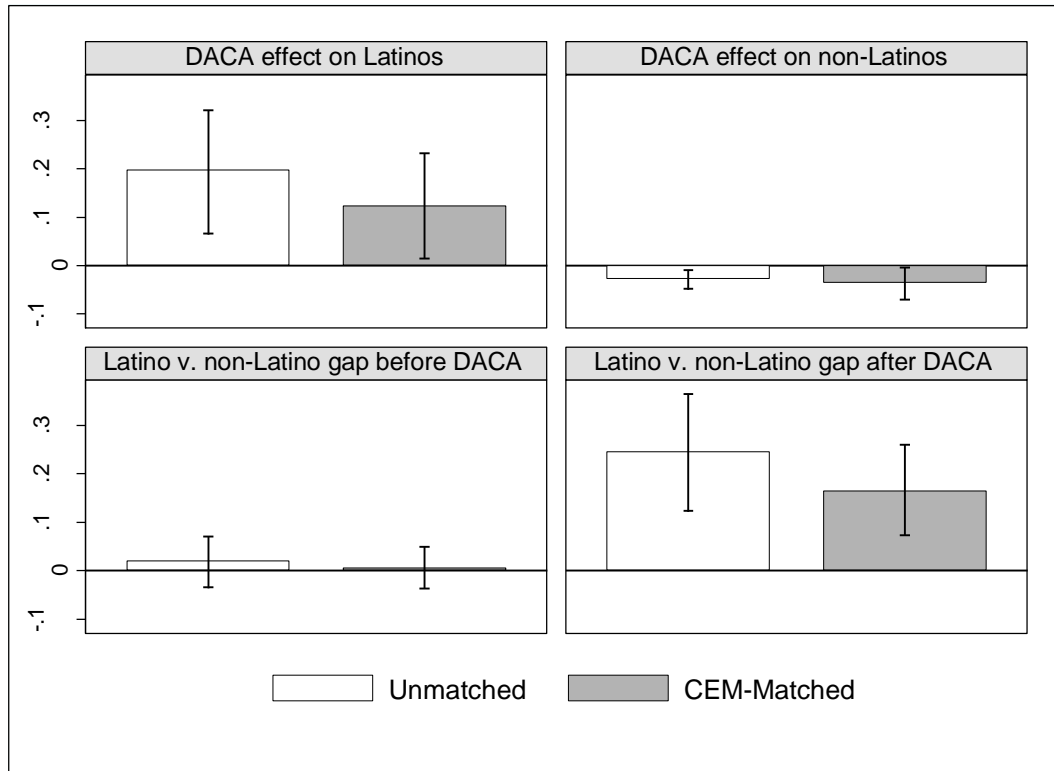
Figure 1 - 2012 JPS Predicting salience of the issue of immigration



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Immigration most important issue=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); CEM-matched predicted probability estimates were generated in the same manner as unmatched estimates except sample weights were replaced by Coarsened-Exact-Matching generated weights to account for imbalances among covariates before and after the DACA announcement (Iacus et al. 2012). Based on data from the 2012 Pew People and the Press' June Political Survey. Complete pre and post matching model estimates found in Appendix C and D.

First, there was a 5 percentage point increase in the predicted probability that Latinos interviewed after the DACA announcement thought that immigration was the most important issue when making a choice in the November presidential election, holding all other variables at their observed values. This effect size is not statistically significant at the conventional .05 level. Nevertheless, I observed a substantial movement in the salience of immigration, especially for Latinos for whom the issue is already highly salient compared to non-Latinos. Additionally, the DACA effect on salience for Latinos was statistically significant at the conventional .05 level for the CEM results. This indicates that the observed statistically insignificant findings might be due to differences between covariates in the treatment and control group. There was a 3 percentage point decrease among non-Latinos in the importance of immigration after the DACA announcement, but this was not a statistically significant change at conventional levels.

Figure 2 - 2012 JPS Predicted probability of voting for President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model, dependent variable (President Obama=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); CEM-matched predicted probability estimates were generated in the same manner as unmatched estimates but I used CEM generated weights to account for imbalances among covariates before and after the DACA announcement (Iacus et al. 2012). Based on data from the 2012 Pew People and the Press' June Political Survey. Complete pre and post matching model estimates found in Appendix C and D.

Next, there was a significant difference in the salience of immigration between Latinos and non-Latinos before and after the DACA announcement. Before the DACA announcement, Latinos were, on average, 7 percentage points more likely than non-Latinos to think that immigration was an important issue for deciding between candidates. After the DACA policy announcement, this effect size nearly doubled to 13 percentage, and both changes in predicted probability were statistically significant at the conventional .05 level. Both relationships also held after adjusting for covariate imbalance using CEM. President Obama's DACA policy did elevate the salience of this issue for Latinos.

I now examine whether this increase in the salience of immigration translated into more support for President Obama among Latinos. Figure 2 demonstrates that the predicted probability of supporting President Obama increased by 20 percentage points after the DACA announcement for Latinos and decreased by three percentage points for non-Latinos. Both of these changes in predicted probabilities were statistically significant at the .05 level. Furthermore, before President Obama announced the new policy Latinos were two percentage points less likely to support him when compared to non-Latinos, though this effect size was not statistically significant at conventional levels. After the DACA announcement, Latinos were 25 percentage points more likely to support the president compared to non-Latinos. This change is statistically meaningful at the conventional .05 level. The DACA policy did lead to a substantial increase in support for President Obama, confirming my central hypothesis. Even after controlling for important predictors of vote choice and adjusting for covariate imbalance, I still find a substantial change in Latino candidate preferences. It is important to note that effect sizes decreased after using the CEM weights, but remained substantively and statistically meaningful. Although support increased among Latinos, the president's level of support declined among non-Latinos by three percentage points following the announcement of the DACA. When contrasted by the significant gains made among Latinos this seems like a smaller loss.

These results demonstrate that President Obama's action led to changes in Latino's propensity to support his reelection. It seems likely that the DACA policy altered Latino perceptions about his immigration policies leading them to be more inclined to support President Obama over all other presidential candidates. The

impact of DACA on Latino vote choice underscores the importance of examining how unilateral executive actions can shape the public's attitudes.

Study – 2: 2012 Pew Hispanic Center National Survey of Latinos

The 2012 NSL is a nationally representative Latino sample of 1,765 Latino respondents that was conducted from September 7 to October 4, 2012. The sample was reduced to 1,241 for this analysis as only eligible voters were asked about their candidate preferences in the presidential election. The dependent variable of interest is based on the following question, “If the presidential election were being held TODAY would you vote [for the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden], [for the Republican ticket of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan]?” The response options for president were randomized.

The 2012 NSL includes the following survey item, "President Obama recently announced a policy that will allow illegal immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children to remain in the U.S. and apply for work permits. Do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of this new policy?" I use the response to this question to analyze the relationship between supporting the DACA and President Obama's reelection bid. I argue that this strategy still captures the impact of the DACA policy on vote choice. Since President Obama enacted the DACA policy, I can capture the lasting impact of the priming effect because the survey was conducted almost four months after this policy announcement.

With the 2012 NSL, I control for several other factors that are known to affect Latino vote choice. The strongest and most consistent predictor of vote choice in the United States is partisan affiliation. Since most Latinos identify as Democrats, and it

is President Obama's Party, I control for Latinos who identify as Democrats. Another important political factor is interest in the campaign, which could have potentially benefited President Obama as the incumbent candidate. I account for Mexican identity, which is the community with the most significant share of undocumented immigrants in the United States. Latinos of Mexican heritage might be more inclined to support President Obama's reelection because of a large number of undocumented immigrants in their community. I also account for Latinos' beliefs that Democrats care more about them. Collingwood et al. (2014) found that this was a strong predictor of support for President Obama. Also, I control for knowing someone who has applied for the DACA temporary stay of deportation and knowing someone who has been deported. Both factors account for how a Latino might be directly affected by the DACA policy. I also account for the salience of immigration, though, the salience of immigration may have already been elevated by the DACA policy. People's rating of their current finances, as well as, outlook over the next year may have also affected support for President Obama. Both of these factors capture any independent effect on vote choice for President Obama that is a function of their assessment of the economy. Voters' views toward economic conditions have long been suspected of having a profound impact on their candidate choices (Fiorina 1978).

Finally, I account for a series of socioeconomic characteristics. This includes Spanish-language interviewees.⁹ The language of an interview has been found to be a

⁹ I use Spanish language interviews in this analysis instead of foreign-born for simplicity because the two correlate highly (correlation=0.65). I also found that 89% of native-born Latinos were administered the English questionnaire while 76% of foreign-born Latinos interviewed in Spanish. This makes it very difficult to distinguish the effect of nativity and language of interview. The language of an interview is

powerful predictor of Latino political behavior (Lee and Perez 2014). Spanish dominant Latinos almost always tend to be first-generation immigrants. I expect them to be more likely to support President Obama because of the DACA policy. As previously mentioned in study one, younger voters have consistently been seen as key supporters of President Obama. I expect younger Latino voters to be more likely to support him. More highly educated Latinos may also be more supportive of President Obama because of his liberal policies. On the other hand, due to his policies that emphasize higher taxation for high-income earners, President Obama may have been less popular with wealthier Latinos. Finally, a gender divide may exist among Latinos in their support for President Obama. Previous research has found some evidence that women are less supportive of immigrant rights (Espenshade and Calhoun 1993, Burns and Gimpel 2000, Rouse et al. 2010), while other research has found no evidence of an effect (Hood and Morris 1997; Hood et al. 1997). The role of gender in shaping immigration preferences remains unclear. Other research, however, has found women, including Latinas to be more likely to identify as Democrats (Lien 1998). Therefore, I expect women to be more likely to support President Obama, due to their propensity to more likely identify as Democrat.

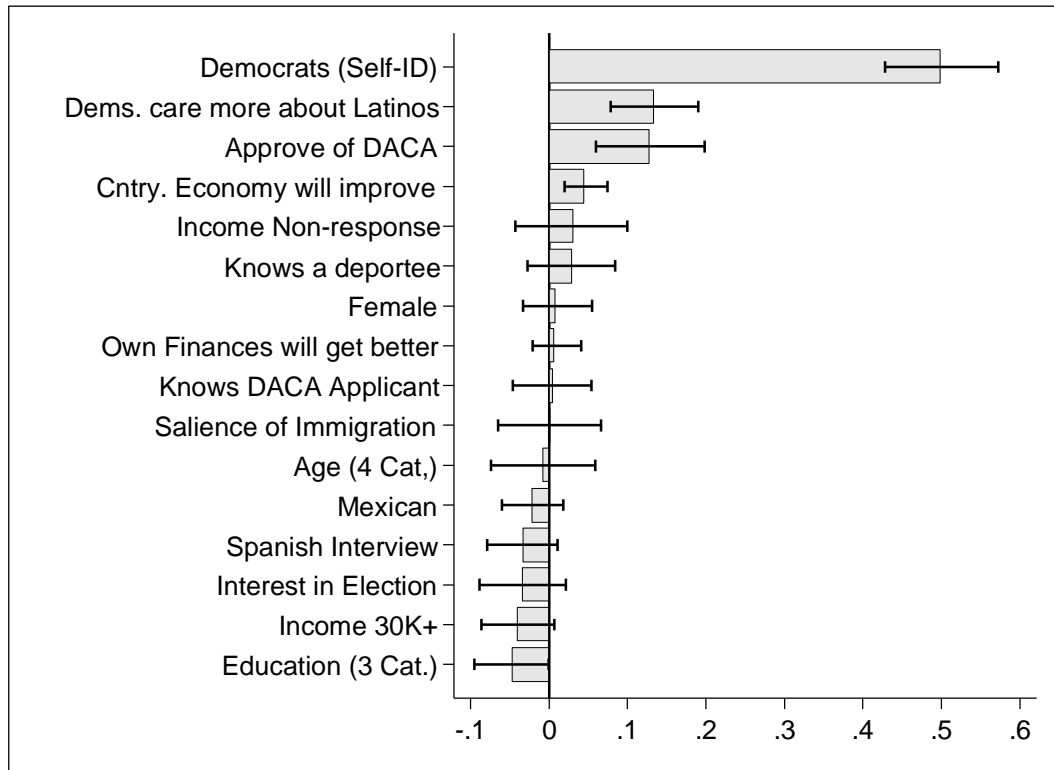
Results

As mentioned in the introduction, an overwhelming majority of Latinos (89%) approved of DACA, demonstrating the popularity of this new policy within the community. Did this support for DACA, however, translate into more durable support

also theoretically an important factor for understanding Latino attitudes (Lee and Perez 2014). Omitting one of these variables or including them both does not alter the main findings of my paper in any meaningful way. These results are available upon request.

for President Obama's reelection? Looking at figure 3, I find that Latinos who approved of the DACA policy were, on average, 13 percentage points more likely to want to see President Obama win the presidential election. I find that support for the DACA policy exerted a strong influence on Latino preferences for President Obama and was statistically meaningful at the conventional .05 level. The impact of DACA on Latino vote choice held even after controlling for partisanship, the most influential predictor of vote choice, and Latinos' belief that the Democratic Party cares more about their community—another strong predictor of Latino vote choice. Latino Democrats were about 50 percentage points more likely to support President Obama's reelection reinforcing the consistent findings that partisanship is the strongest predictor of vote choice. At the same time, Latinos who thought Democrats cared more about their community were 13 percentage points more likely to say that they would vote for President Obama. These findings, combined with the 25 percentage point increase found in the JPS study after the DACA announcement, demonstrate that the DACA policy increased Latino support for President Obama's reelection. I argue that these findings underscore the powerful impact that executive actions have on public opinion as the president's unilateral policies can influence people's attitudes.

Figure 3 - 2012 NSL Predicted probability of voting for President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (President Obama=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities were generated through simulation using the observed value approach seed was set at 99 (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on the 2012 Pew Hispanic Center National Survey of Latinos. Complete model estimates found in Appendix E.

Aside from approval of the DACA policy, Latinos who were optimistic about the country's future economic outlook were, on average, four percentage points more likely to support President Obama. The only negative effect observed was educational attainment. Latinos who held a college degree or higher were 5 percentage points less likely to support President Obama than those who graduated high school. These findings seem counterintuitive. However, this same finding has been seen in the past. For example, de la Garza and Cortina (2007) show that Latinos with more than a high school degree were more likely to support President Bush, but they also found that income had no statistically meaningful effect on support for President Bush. The

association between Latino preference for the Democratic candidate and education seems to be mixed and requires further research. A more highly educated Latino may also have been less likely to be convinced by the president's DACA policy given the "deporter-in-chief" narrative as they tend to be more politically knowledgeable.

Several other factors were not statistically significant in predicting support for President Obama. I find that income has no statistically meaningful impact on Latino support for President Obama based on analysis of the 2012 NSL. The language of interview, the salience of immigration, knowing someone who has been deported and knowing someone who was planning on applying for the DACA temporary stay of deportation also have no discernible effect on support for President Obama. I interpret this as meaning that among all immigration-related factors, President Obama's DACA policy was the only predictor of Latino support for his reelection. This reinforces my hypothesis that by relying on his executive powers, President Obama's actions on the DACA policy helped increase his level of support among Latino voters.

Discussion and Conclusion

In two separate studies, I find that President Obama positively affected Latino vote choice through his unilateral actions on the issue of immigration. President Obama's DACA announcement led Latinos to place a greater emphasis on the issue of immigration when evaluating him. By elevating the relevance of immigration for Latinos and demonstrating that he is willing to act alone to bring substantive change, President Obama greatly improved his level of support from this community ahead of the 2012 presidential general election. Both studies demonstrate how effective his unilateral actions were in shaping Latino vote choice.

One alternative explanation to the EPT is that opinion change due to learning rather than priming (Lenz, 2009; 2011) is what explains differences in vote choice. Lenz (2009; 2011) challenges the notion that the media and political campaigns dominance of how information is presented can lead to a priming effect that changes people's opinions. Instead, Lenz (2009; 2011) relies on panel data to demonstrate that people change their beliefs to conform to the positions of their political leaders, which they become aware of during a political campaign due to the spike in available political information. I address this concern by demonstrating with temporal data that before the DACA announcement Latino support compared to non-Latino support of President Obama was tepid. I also use a statistical matching-technique to create comparable groups before and after the announcement to capture the effect of the DACA announcement on Latino candidate preference. Without panel data, however, I cannot completely rule out that Latinos did not change their opinions on vote choice due to a learning mechanism. I do find that Latinos were more likely to follow news about the DACA policy and more likely to prioritize the issue after the DACA policy was announced, which seems consistent with a priming effect. Moreover, it seems that intuitively it is unlikely that most Latinos have become more supportive of less restrictive immigration policies due to President Obama's policy initiatives. Instead, it seems more likely that his actions changed their opinions about his performance on the issue and vote choice. More research is needed to settle the learning versus priming effect debate, which is beyond the scope of this present study.

Overall, my findings raise an important question regarding whether the presidential office should be used to provide direct policy representation to

constituents, even if it means bypassing Congress. On the other hand, my findings in this study may suggest that the president is responsive to swing voters. When the president chooses to highlight an issue that is most important to a minority community he might be fulfilling his duty to provide representation to all. The fact that the president can affect the public's attitudes also demonstrates the power of his unilateral executive actions in modern politics.

Based on these results scholars should further investigate how the growing influence of the presidency is shaping political behavior, particularly for groups that lack proportional representation such as Latinos. As the power of the executive branch in both implementing and creating laws continues to rise, it is imperative that scholars investigate the impact of the executive priming theory on other political phenomena outside of vote choice, such as presidential approval and favorability, and political efficacy. Given a president's interest in his legacy, it is likely that he will use unilateral executive actions to improve his standing within a community whose support for him has weakened, or to maintain his support among a core base. Adding to these findings, I next explore how President Obama's efforts on immigration influenced both Latino and non-Latino evaluations of his performance as president.

Chapter 3: To approve, or not? The role of presidential policy representation in shaping presidential approval

“Policy responsibility leads presidents to become policy-making leaders, and the public expectation of the presidential leadership increases the weight of policy responsibility that the president feels p. 18, (Cohen 1997)”

The slow-moving federal legislative making process, especially in the presence of divided government, can make voters impatient about policy solutions, and thus, leading to discontent. As a result, Americans seem to have become increasingly comfortable with the use of unilateral executive actions to address national issues, especially if the policies are consistent with their political predispositions (Christenson and Kriner 2017). The increasing reliance on institutions other than Congress to address the public's concerns raises the critical question, can policy actions taken by the president affect his approval? As Gronke and Newman (2003) note, “...if presidents have too much control over approval, they could boost it without meeting appropriate expectations, manipulating their way to power (p. 508)” This underscores the importance of exploring how the president's actions are in influencing his approval among the general public.

Presently, there is a breadth of literature seeking to understand what factors influence people's evaluation of the president. An ongoing scholarly debate has centered on how much control the president has over the American public's judgment of his performance. Three possible explanations of the president's ability to shape his evaluations are prominent in the public opinion literature. First, the president can influence his approval ratings, especially on domestic issues, by shifting the media's attention toward specific matters (Krosnick and Kinder 1990, Edwards and Wood

1999). Second, the president is powerless to control the factors that shape people's views toward him (Mueller 1973, Hibbs 1982, Erikson et al. 2002). The final argument suggest that presidential approval is affected by real events that the president cannot control (Kernell 1978). Additionally, presidential approval is also affected by the public's response to his policies, which is a slow moving process (Kernell 1978).

I proposed the executive priming theory (EPT) to explain how presidential actions can lead to changes in Latino, and non-Latino, approval of the president. Building on previous research that finds that priming can affect presidential approval (Krosnick and Kinder 1990), I argue that the president can raise the salience of an issue by acting on it. He is not powerless to change how the public will evaluate his performance. The president is able to influence the public by using executive unilateral powers, which the public does not currently view as a threat to our system of check and balances (Christenson and Kriner 2017). Therefore, the president's policy actions increase the likelihood that voters will retrieve this information from memory when evaluating his performance.

Latinos have, on average, less access to political information. The moderate level of political knowledge makes Latinos potentially more susceptible to the effects of psychological priming—the altering of attitudes by highlighting some criteria over all other possibilities when a person is making a judgment (Zaller 1992; Krosnick and Kinder 1990). I focus primarily on how Latino and non-Latino perceptions about the impact of the Obama administration's policies toward their community affected his approval. Also, I update previous research that suggests partisanship is the most

reliable predictor of presidential approval by using more recent data to test this hypothesis (Goren 2002, Goren 2005).

I rely on six national surveys from the Pew Research Center to test my hypothesis that perceptions about the president's policies can affect Latino presidential approval. The findings based on several multivariate probit analyses reveal new insights into how perceptions of a president's policies can change people's opinions about his performance. Additionally, I confirm previous research that demonstrates the importance of partisanship in explaining presidential approval (Goren 2002, Goren 2005). These results reinforce the need to continue to assess how various forms of presidential power can affect public opinion.

Understanding How the President can Influence his Approval Ratings

Beginning in 2012, President Obama undertook a series of executive actions that changed U.S. policies on how to handle deportations of undocumented immigrants who were brought to the country illegally at a young age. The DACA and DAPA policies were in response to a growing narrative that the Obama administration was hurting the Latino community by an increasing number of deportations. Research seems to support this perspective, as deportations were found to have a negative impact on Latinos. Younger Latinos who were told that the Obama administration had deported more illegal immigrants than his predecessor became less likely to identify as Democrats (Street et al. 2015). Nevertheless, it is unknown if Latinos would punish or reward a president based on his immigration policies by approving or disapproving of his performance in office.

Relying on the executive priming theory (EPT), I argue that a president can alter the public's political attitudes through priming based on their use of unilateral actions to promote specific policies that respond to a group of voters' policy demands. Of course, the media has traditionally been the medium that presidents have used to disseminate information about their actions to the public. Although that may be changing as the current president at the time of this writing, President Donald J. Trump heavily relies on the social media platform, Twitter, to share his immediate reactions to policies and events. By using social media, President Trump can take his message directly to voters without the need for the news media to serve as a filter for his statements through selective sound bites or quotes to share with voters.

Nevertheless, any president, through his actions, is the newsmaker, even when using traditional media. Both the news media and the public have an innate desire to gravitate toward news that is controversial (Zaller, 1999). News stories that focus less on just presenting the facts and more on storytelling and controversial events are more likely to capture the public's attention, and thus generate revenue (Zaller 1999; Iyengar and Kinder 1987). In fact, almost all classical evidence of priming effects in the literature have focused on highly salient controversial events involving the president (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Krosnick and Kinder 1990). Therefore, a contentious issue like immigration might make it easier for the president to prime voters.

Extant research has already found evidence that the president does indeed affect the public in various manners; this includes the ability to prime people's attitudes. Presidents, as head of state, can shift the public's attention by focusing on a

particular issue through public events such as the State of the Union address (Cohen 1995). Druckman and Holmes (2004) found that by focusing on the War on Terror during his State of the Union address, President Bush was able to shift voters focus to terrorism when evaluating his performance. By raising the salience of the issue of terrorism, President Bush was able to increase his approval ratings among those who watched the speech (Druckman and Holmes 2004). Under this example, the president used his position to alter the criteria that the public used to evaluate him, though, this may be changing as other research suggest the State of the Union Address' effect on public opinion has diminished due to the increase of cable television (Young and Perkins 2005). Regardless, there is some evidence that suggests that a president's policy rhetoric can influence how voters evaluate his performance.

Not all of the public, however, may be susceptible to priming. Voters who are more attune to a political issue (Edwards et al. 1995), or comprehend the issue (Kelleher and Wolak 2006), are more likely to be primed by news coverage when evaluating the president's performance. Additionally, recent research has found that crystalized attitudes based on politically relevant predispositions such as identities (religion, ethnicity or partisanship) are most likely to be primed by the president. Tesler (2015) found that President Obama's approval ratings increased immediately after announcing his support for same-sex marriage, but this effect eventually dissipated (Tesler 2015). These recent studies suggest that priming effects are most potent when the audience receiving the message is very interested in the issue and already predisposed to accept the policy. Therefore, the president can influence how

people evaluate him by creating new public policy that people are already predisposed to approve.

At the aggregate level, Cavari (2013) finds that presidential speeches can move the public's policy positions in the short-term. He writes, "focusing on the short-term effect of presidential communications, I demonstrate that following an address of the president, public opinion moves in favor of the president's advocated policy, an effect that is strongest among the attentive audience (p. 347)." This finding is significant and motivates my hypothesis for this paper. I agree that the president has the power to affect the attitudes of those who are already attentive to the issue that relates to his new policy.

Partisan identification is the most reliable and most consistent predictor of presidential approval (Bartels 2002, Goren 2002, Goren 2005). However, policy attitudes have been found to have a conditioning effect on mass attitudes toward the president. Highton (2012) observes that existing policy positions condition the impact of partisanship on presidential approval. He also offers three conditions that must be met for citizens to update their assessment of the president: the public must have a position on an issue, the president must take a stance on that issue, and people must be made aware of the president's position on the issue (Highton 2012). This criteria suggests that it is possible, under right conditions, for policy attitudes to dominate all other considerations, including partisanship, when evaluating the president's performance.

I argue here that the president's handling of an issue, through the use of executive action, can shift respondents focus to this new policy when evaluating his

performance. The new political information offered by the president through his policy actions can affect how he is evaluated. Most Latinos do not agree on who is their most important political leader (Taylor and Lopez 2010, Rouse 2017). The lack of a consensus political leader in the community seems to create a void in elite political communication that the president can fill by acting unilaterally to enact policies with widespread implications.

Often when things are not going well, the president's approval numbers will reflect this dissatisfaction with a downward trend (Brody 1991, Erikson et al. 2002, MacKuen et al. 1992, Waterman et al. 1999). However, there has been much debate as to whether the president can do anything to affect his approval ratings. One possible action is the president's decision to act unilaterally to make policy changes. Growing research has found that most Americans do not view a unilateral action as a threat to our system's checks and balances, as people tend to see these actions in the same manner that they look at all politics through their partisan and social lenses (Christenson and Kriner 2017). In other words, people's predispositions affect how they interpret unilateral presidential decisions. Christenson and Kriner (2017) find that political inclinations and those respondents who would benefit most from the executive action in question are more likely to support it. In sum, the public appears to be open to the president acting unilaterally so long as they are confident that the policies he is pushing are consistent with their political predispositions.

Partisanship and views about the economy are two of the most consistent and most debated predictors of presidential approval. For example, Malhotra and Krosnick (2007) find that attitudes about the economy strongly predicted support of

President Bush while Edwards et al. (1995) found that media coverage of the economy directly affects the magnitude of its impact on presidential approval. On the other hand, Lebo and Cassino (2007) utilize aggregated data to show that partisans tend to reward or punish the president, but only if they belong to the opposite party.

Partisanship seems to have a strong effect on presidential approval. However, Latinos are, on average, less likely to identify with one of the two major political parties. Thus, Latinos' low levels of partisan attachment deprives them of a vital heuristic used to evaluate the president (Abrajano and Alvarez 2010). Immigrant communities also rely on American institutions to acquire crucial political information, such as partisan identification (Wong 2000). This reliance on American institutions for political information further demonstrates how the president can influence the public's attitudes by dominating the news media's coverage of an issue.

Sometimes the promises that a presidential candidate makes to maintain an edge on an issue can have consequences once in office. Claibourn and Martin (2008) found that political campaigns were able to affect people's evaluation of candidates, not by merely airing an ad, but instead by repeatedly attacking a candidate on a particular issue with these ads. Claibourn and Martin (2008) suggest that this repetition is the first stepping stone to a candidate later being held accountable by the public on that particular issue. They write:

“If candidates are heavily and reliably evaluated on the basis of issues priorities promoted during the campaign, and these issues continue to serve as a criterion of presidential evaluation after the election, then presidents attuned

to their public standing may feel constrained to act in accordance with their campaign rhetoric.” (Clabourn and Martin, p.1158, 2008)

This finding is one possible explanation for why many Latinos were not satisfied with President Obama's performance on immigration. As mentioned earlier, President Obama's policies on the issue of immigration were viewed by many Latinos as a broken promise based on his campaign rhetoric during the 2008 presidential election. Four years later, in 2012, comprehensive immigration reform still had not passed; a large number of deportations and raids continued under President Obama's administration, which led to criticism that the president had broken his promise to the Latino community (Sanchez et al. 2012). Even after four years from the time when President Obama was first elected, Latino leaders still remembered this narrative about tackling immigration during his first term. President Obama's promise, during the 2008 campaign to get immigration done, and his party's more favorable stance on the issue, may have had unintended consequences of elevating the importance of this issue for Latinos.

The heighten salience of immigration for Latinos may have forced the president's hand to act to satisfy the growing discontent that many Latinos and community leaders were increasingly expressing. Sanchez et al. (2012), using a survey of registered Latino voters, shows that the salience of healthcare and immigration reform strongly predicted support for President Obama. This is one of the most extensive looks at Latino approval and confirms that political favors explain Latino presidential approval. However, two questions remain,-can the president's

specific policy actions influence Latino approval of his performance and how does this compare with non-Latinos?

Other factors also predict presidential approval. Cohen (2012) finds that interest in group membership is strongly associated with presidential approval ratings at the individual level, but only on specific issues. Nicholson et al. (2002) find that periods of divided government is related to an increase in presidential approval. They attribute this finding to the president's party not being in full control of the government, which complicates citizens' ability to determine who is responsible for policy failures. This association was strongest among respondents who were more knowledgeable of government control (Nicholson et al. 2002). The results of this study suggest that the president may have more leeway to act unilaterally in periods of divided government. Waterman et al. (1999) find that voters' expectations of a president to have sound judgment, perform well on foreign-affairs, uphold ethical behavior, and work with Congress strongly predict their approval of his performance as president.

Hypotheses

Thus far, I have argued that the president uses his executive powers to influence how the public views his performance. Additionally, Americans seem comfortable with the use of unilateral actions to enact policies. Executive actions can prime voters by forcing them to mostly rely on the president actions over other considerations when evaluating his performance. Therefore, I propose the following hypotheses regarding the effects of the president's policies on his approval, which motivate my research strategy in the next section.

Table 2 - Summary of hypotheses

Study	Hypothesis
1. 2010 Pew National Survey of Latinos	<p><i>H-1:</i> Latinos who believe President Obama’s policies have helped their community will be more likely to approve of his performance than those who see no effect, all else equal.</p> <p><i>H-2:</i> Latinos who believe President Obama’s policies have hurt their community will be less likely to approve of his performance than those who see no effect.</p>
2. 2011 Pew National Survey of Latinos	<p><i>H-3:</i> Latinos who disapprove of President Obama’s handling of the issue of deportations will be less likely to approve of his performance than those who see no effect.</p>
3. 2012 Pew June Political Survey	<p><i>H-4:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos interviewed after the DACA announcement will be more likely to approve of President Obama’s performance compared to those interviewed before the announcement, all else equal.</p>
4. 2012 Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey	<p><i>H-5:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DACA will be more likely to approve of President Obama’s overall performance, all else equal.</p> <p><i>H-6:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of the Dream Act will be more likely to approve of President Obama’s overall performance.</p>
5. 2014 Pew-July. Political Survey	<p><i>H-7:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of the way Barack Obama is handling the situation involving a large number of children from Central America who have entered the country illegally will be more likely to approve of his performance.</p>
6. 2014 Pew-Dec. Political Survey	<p><i>H-8:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DAPA will be more likely to approve of his performance.</p> <p><i>H-9:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DAPA will be more likely to approve of his performance on the issue of immigration.</p>

Data and Research Strategy

The following is a detailed explanation of the data used to test my hypotheses that presidential unilateral policy actions affect Latino's approval of an incumbent president. Though prior research has treated the president's unilateral actions as a

dependent variable and presidential approval as an independent variable (Reeves and Rogowski 2015; Reeves and Rogowski 2016). I argue that unilateral action alters presidential approval because people respond to the president’s policies. I analyze data from six nationally representative telephone landline and cell phone surveys from the Pew Research Center. Each study contains a battery of survey items that measure the dependent and independent variables of interest as seen in table 3.

Table 3 - Questions used across surveys

Survey	Period	Dependent variable	Independent variable
Pew National Survey of Latinos (Study 1)	2010	Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?	Overall, do you think that the Obama administration’s policies have been helpful to Latinos, harmful to Latinos, or have they had no particular effect on Latinos?
Pew National Survey of Latinos (Study 2)	2011	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?	In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way the Obama administration is handling the issue of deportations?
Pew June Political Survey (Study 3)	2012	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?	Natural experiment examining responses before and after the DACA policy announcement
Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey (Study 4)	2012	In general, do you approve or disapprove of the job that Barack Obama is doing as president?	President Obama recently announced a policy that will allow many illegal immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children to remain in the U.S. and apply for work permits. Do you approve or disapprove of this new policy?
Pew-July. Political Survey (Study 5)	2014	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling The situation involving the large number of children from Central America who have entered the country illegally?

Pew-Dec. Political Survey (Study 6)	2014	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?	As you may know, Barack Obama recently issued an executive action that expands the number of undocumented immigrants who are allowed to stay and work in the country. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of this new policy?
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First, using the 2010 Pew National Survey of Latinos (2010 NSL), I examine how Latinos' assessment of President Obama's policies toward their community influences their overall approval of his performance as president. Next, I analyze the 2011 Pew National Survey of Latinos (2011 NSL) to examine how Latinos' approval of the Obama administration's deportation policies predicts overall approval of his performance. I use the June 2012 Pew Political Survey (2012 JPS) and the 2012 Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey (2012 FRPLS) to analyze how the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy affected Latino and non-Latino approval of President Obama. The next analysis uses the 2014 July Pew Political Survey to examine how President Obama's handling of the 2014 crisis of Central American children entering the United States' illegally shaped Latino and non-Latino approval of him. Finally, I use the December 2014 Pew Political Survey to analyze how approval of President Obama's Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) affected Latino and non-Latino approval of President Obama's overall performance.

An advantage of using survey data from one organization is that I can account for socioeconomic factors across all six studies using the same survey instruments (see table 3). These include language, income, education and gender and age. Language has been found to be a consistent explanatory variable of Latino public

opinion (Lee and Perez 2014) including approval of the president (Sanchez et al. 2012). Also, income and education may produce different attitudes toward President Obama as these segments of the Latino community will be more attuned to how his policies affect their wealth and social policy preferences. Finally, I account for both gender and age. Based on previous research that found Latinas to be more likely to identify as Democrats (Lien 1998), I expect them to be more likely to approve of President Obama, as partisanship is a strong predictor of presidential approval. I expect older Latinos to be less likely to approve of President Obama as he has enjoyed support among younger voters.

There are some significant differences between Pew National Survey of Latinos and the Pew Political survey. The Pew National Survey of Latinos but not the Pew Political Surveys asked respondent about their specific Hispanic heritage or country of origin. With the 2012 Pew Political Surveys, I also account for the presence of a Latino interviewer, a female interviewer, refusal conversions and the numbers of calls it took to obtain an interview. Finally, all of the surveys allowed me to account for partisan identification, which has been shown to be the most reliable predictor of presidential approval.

Other factors that can explain Latinos' propensity to support the president include immigration, economic and partisan based-factors, which I discuss in more detail in the following section when describing each study.

Table 4 - Covariates across all Pew Research Center surveys

	National Survey of Latinos (NSL)		Pew Political Survey			
	2010	2011	2012-06	2012-07	2014-07	2014-12
<i>Socioeconomic factors</i>						
Income +30K	X	X	X	X	X	X
Income Non-response	X	X	X	X	X	X
Spanish	X	X	X	X	X	X
Education	X	X	X	X	X	X
Female	X	X	X	X	X	X
Age	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mexican	X	X				
<i>Interview-based factors</i>						
Female interviewer			X	X		
Latino interviewer			X	X		
Refusal			X	X		
Call attempts			X	X		

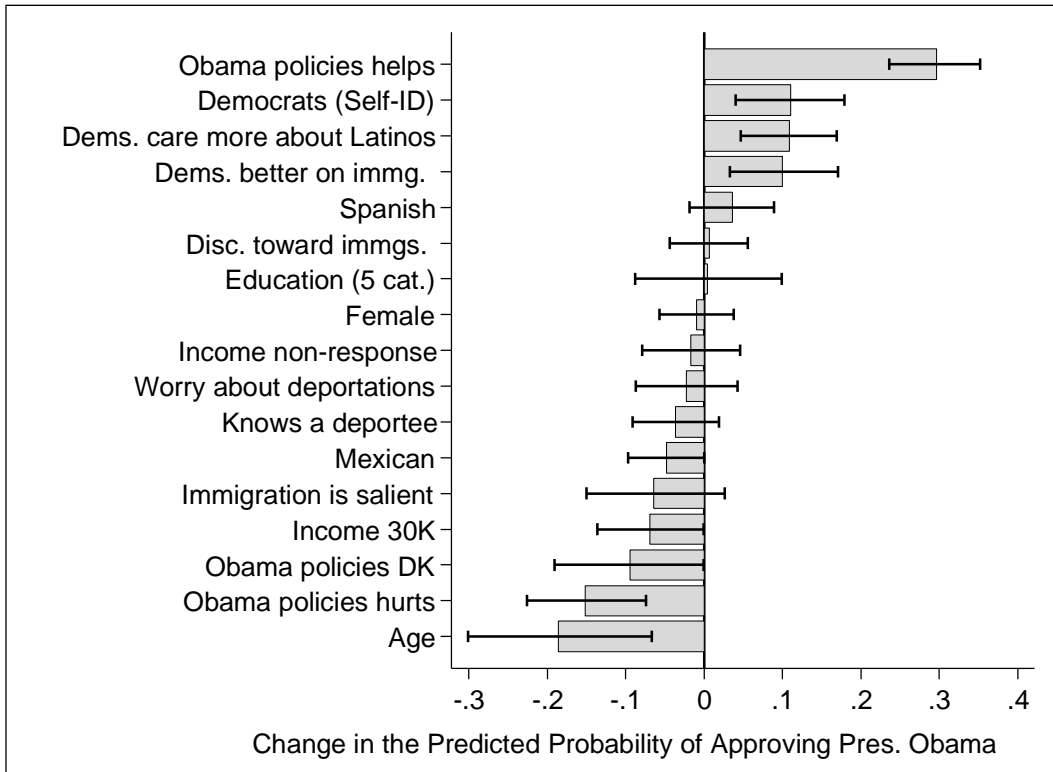
Study Details and Results

Study – 1: 2010 National Survey of Latinos

The 2010 National Survey of Latinos is a nationally representative sample of 1,375 Latinos obtained by calling cellphone and landline telephones. I used this data to test my hypothesis that Latinos who believe that the Obama administration’s policies were harmful to their community were less likely to approve of the president, while those who thought they were helpful should be more likely to approve of his performance (*HI*). I estimate this association by creating a dichotomous variable of presidential approval to capture the dependent variable based on the question in table 1. Using the survey items in table 4, I created three dummy variables that identify

whether Latino respondents believed that President Obama's policies were helpful or harmful to their community and if they refused to answer the question. The excluded category is "President Obama's policies had no effect on the Latino community."

Figure 4 - 2010 NSL Predicted probability of approving of President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); based on data from the 2010 National Survey of Latinos. Complete model estimates found in Appendix F.

In addition to language, education, gender, country of origin, age and income, I controlled for important partisan and immigration-related factors. Aside from partisan identification, I accounted for Latinos that believe Democrats had the better position on immigration and that Democrats care more about their community than the Republican Party. I expect to find a positive association between attitudes toward the Democratic Party and approval of President Obama.

Additionally, I captured several other immigration-related factors. The salience of immigration was measured by asking Latinos how important they thought the issue of immigration is for them. I expect salience of immigration to positively associate with approval of President Obama. I control for those Latinos who worry that a friend or family member could be deported. I also control for whether Latinos know someone who has been deported. Both factors should have a negative impact on approval based on related research that explains favorability (Sanchez et al. 2015). Finally, I can control for whether Latinos thought there was discrimination toward immigrants. I expect to find that those who believe there is discrimination to be less likely to approve of President Obama.

Results

I estimated the association between Latinos' attitudes toward President Obama's policies and overall approval of his performance as president by using a multivariate probit regression model. Since coefficients generated by probit models are difficult to interpret on their own (Ai and Norton 2003), I present predicted probabilities estimated while holding all other covariates at their observed value (Hanmer and Kalkan 2012). I find that Latinos who thought President Obama policies had helped their community, on average, were 30 percentage point more likely to approve of his job performance, compared to those who thought the policies did not affect their community, as seen on figure 4. This effect had the largest impact on Latino approval of Obama and was statistically significant at the conventional p-value of .05 level. This finding supports my hypothesis (*H1*) that Latinos who believe President Obama's policies has helped their community are more likely to approve of

his performance as President. Approval of President Obama's policies toward Latinos was more substantively and statistically meaningful than Democratic partisan identification. I find that Latino Democrats were 11 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama.

On the other hand, approval of President Obama decreased by 15 percentage points among those Latinos who thought the Obama administration's policies hurt their community. This effect is statistically significant effect at conventional levels and supports my hypothesis that Latinos who viewed President Obama's policies as hurtful are less likely to approve of his performance (*H2*). In addition, Latinos who refused to answer the question regarding the impact of the Obama Administration's policies on Latinos were 9.5 percentage points less likely to approve of President Obama. This result is statistically significant at conventional levels. These findings confirm my hypothesis that before the 2012 DACA policy, there was a divide among Latinos in their approval of President Obama based on how they perceived his administration's policies were affecting their community. I suspect that the Obama administration's deportation policies led to these differences in opinions.

Other factors that were found to have a meaningful impact on Latino approval of Obama include the following. Latinos who thought that Democrats cared more about their community were 11 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. At the same time, those who believed Democrats were better on immigration were 10 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. Age and income had a negative effect on Latino approval of President Obama. The gap between an 18-year-old and 92-year-old Latino was 19 percentage points with the

elder Latino being less likely to approve of President Obama¹⁰. Both effects were statistically significant at p-value .05. Latinos making more than 30 thousand dollars were also found to be 7 percentage points less likely to approve of President Obama.

Finally, I found no evidence of a statistically meaningful association between approval of President Obama and the following factors: language, education, gender, non-response to income question, worry about friends and family being deported, knowing a deportee, Mexican country of origin and salience of immigration. These findings suggest that Latinos' perceptions about how Obama's policies were impacting their community had the most substantial impact on their approval of his performance.

Study – 2: 2011 National Survey of Latinos

Next, I examine whether Latinos who disapproved of the Obama administration's deportation policies were less likely to approve of his overall performance as President. As mentioned earlier, the Arizona immigration law (SB 1070) and the expansion of the Secure Communities program, which partnered local law enforcement agencies with the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE), caused many Latino leaders to criticize President Obama on the issue of immigration. For example, Congressman, Luis Gutierrez, in an

¹⁰ I used the maximum range for all covariates to compare their full effect on approval to have some consistency. However, it is important to note that comparing a 92 year old, 2 of which are in sample, to 18 year old Latinos might not provide a realistic comparison. I calculated the predicted probabilities comparing Latinos who were one standard deviation above (59 years old) and one standard deviation below (27 years old) the mean of 43 years old. I find that older Latinos were still 8 percentage points less likely to approve of President Obama (sig. at p-value level of .05). Though the effect size is 11 percentage points less than the results presented here, the main conclusion that older Latinos in this survey were less approving of President Obama did not change when using a more realistic comparison.

opinion editorial wrote the following in response to the announcement of the continuation of the Secure Communities program:

“The president argues that he is sworn to enforce the current law and it is up to Congress to change the law...While true, this ignores the fact that the president has extraordinary powers under current law to temporarily spare families and individuals with deep roots in the US from deportation, while targeting resources at deporting criminals, security threats and other menaces.” Congressman, Luis Gutierrez (Aug 1, 2011)

I analyze whether this growing negative perception of President Obama on immigration had an impact on his overall approval rating among Latinos.

The 2011 National Survey of Latinos is a nationally representative sample of 1,220 Latinos obtained by calling cellphone and landline telephones. I created a dichotomous variable to measure presidential approval based on the question in table 4. To measure the primary independent variables of interest, I created a dummy variable that identifies Latinos who disapprove of President Obama's handling of the issue of deportations, compared to those who approve. According to the 2011 National Survey of Latinos, 59 percent of all Latinos disapproved of President Obama's handling of the issue of immigration, while 27 percent approved, 12 percent did not know, and 1 percent refused to answer the question.

Results

I estimated the association between Latinos' attitudes toward President Obama's policies and overall approval of his performance as president by using a probit regression model. Once again, I present predicted probabilities for ease of

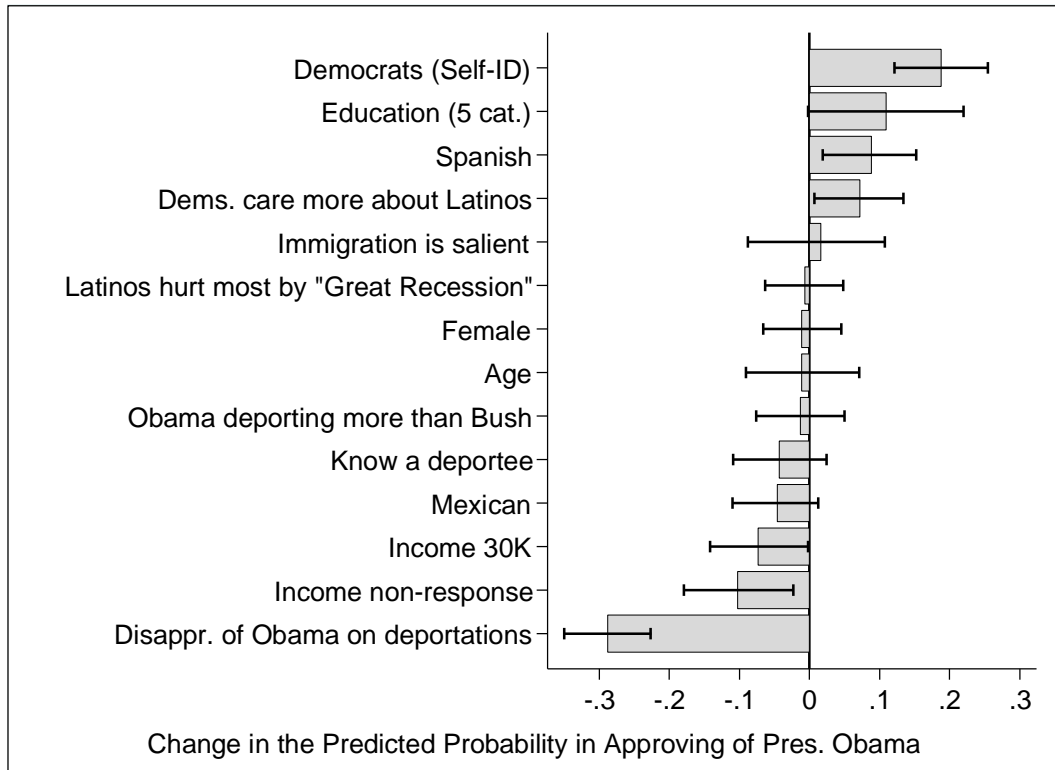
interpretation. Predicted values are estimated while holding all other covariates at their observed value. Turning to figure 5, I find that Latinos who disapprove of Obama's handling of deportations were 29 percentage points less likely to approve of his performance as president, compared to those who approve of his deportation policy. This effect was both substantively and statistically meaningful at conventional p-value levels of .05 and the strongest predictor of Latino approval of President Obama in this study. This finding provides evidence to support my hypothesis that Latinos who disapprove of President Obama's handling of the issue of deportations will be less likely to approve of his performance as president (*H3*). This factor had a stronger effect than Democratic identification, which is traditionally the strongest predictor of presidential approval. Latino Democratic partisans were 19 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama than non-Democratic identifiers. Another partisan factor that also strongly predicted Latino support of President Obama is thinking the Democratic Party cared more about their community. Latinos who held this opinion were 7 percentage points more likely to approve of him. Both partisan-based associations were statistically meaningful at conventional levels of significance.

Surprisingly Spanish speaking Latinos, in spite of President Obama's performance on immigration, were more likely to approve of his performance by 9 percentage points. This effect had a sizable and statistically meaningful impact on Latino approval of President Obama. Finally, Latinos with household incomes above 30 thousand dollars were 7 percentage points less likely to approve of Obama, as were those Latinos who refused to answer the income question (by a margin of 10

percentage points). These were the only factors that had a statistically significant impact on approval of Obama.

The following factors were not found to have a statistically meaningful impact on Latino approval of President Obama. Latinos of Mexican origin approval of President Obama were not statistically distinguishable from other Latinos. Latino's approval of the president does not appear to have been divided by ethnic origin. Latinos who believed that they were hurt more by the "Great Recession" did not have a meaningful impact on presidential approval. I also found no difference in support based on critical socioeconomic indicators age, education, and gender.

Figure 5 - 2011 NSL Predicted probability of approving of President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); based on data from the 2011 National Survey of Latinos. Complete model estimates found in Appendix G.

Finally, Latinos who know someone who has been deported, or believe that the Obama administration has deported more undocumented immigrants than President Bush, were all found not to have a statistically meaningful difference with other Latinos in explaining their overall approval of Obama. Also, the salience of immigration did not seem to predict approval of President Obama. These immigration-related null findings are likely due to Latinos' strong disapproval of President Obama's handling of the issue of deportations, making this the most meaningful explanation of his overall approval. Next, I examine whether President Obama's unilateral actions were able to lift his approval ratings within the Latino community.

Study – 3: June 2012 Pew Political Survey

Using the June 2012 Pew Political survey, I examined the effect of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) announcement on Latino and non-Latino approval of President Obama. A unique feature of this survey is that it was in the field both before and after President Obama announced the DACA policy. The June 2012 Pew People and the Press Political Survey referred to here as the (JPS), a nationally representative survey of 2,013 respondents including 167 Hispanic respondents. The small Latino sample of 167 respondents is an important limitation with the JPS. Of 167 respondents, 115 interviewed before the DACA announcement and 52 interviewed beginning on June 15th. Despite its small sample size, this study can still shed some light on how Latinos' approval of President Obama changed before and after his announcement of the DACA policy. To account for imbalances among covariates between those interviewed before and after the DACA

announcement, I utilized Coarsened-Exact-Matching (CEM) technique but I present both matching and non-matching results (Iacus et al. 2012).

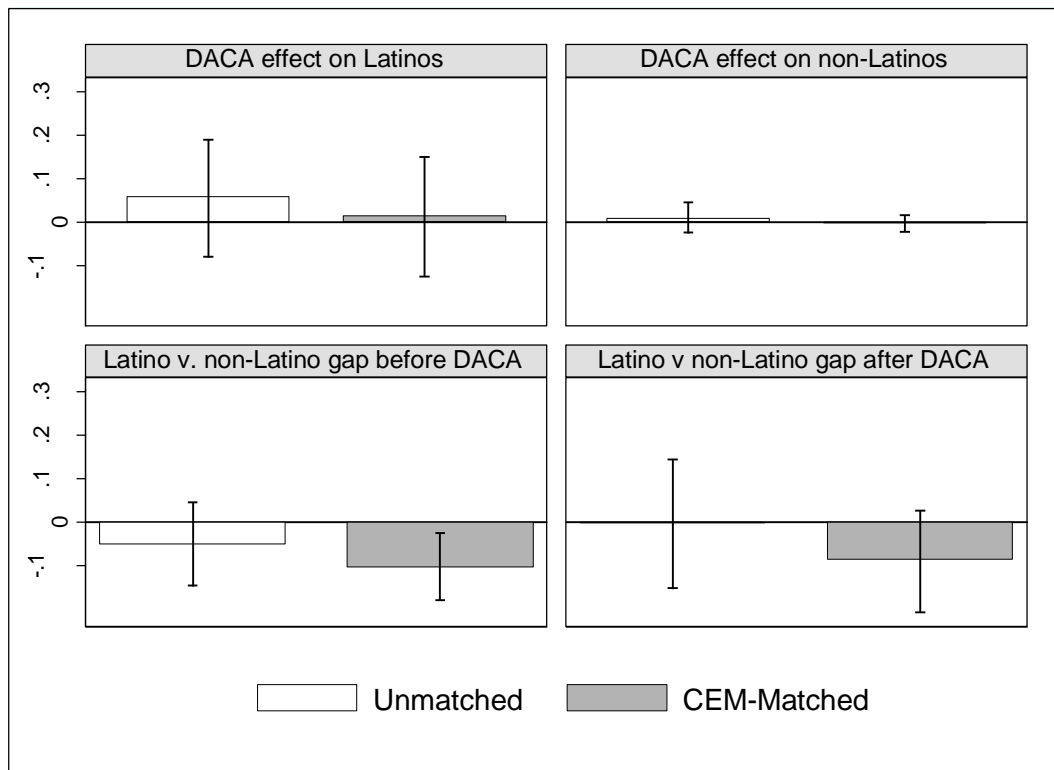
Results

Turning to figure 6, after controlling for the previously mentioned covariates, I find that the DACA announcement did not have a statistically meaningful effect on presidential approval for either Latinos or non-Latinos. Though Latinos were 6 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama after the DACA announcement, this effect was not statistically significant at the .05 conventional level. I did see that after accounting for covariate imbalance, Latinos before the DACA announcement were less likely to approve of President Obama, compared to non-Latinos by 10 percentage points at a statistically meaningful .05 p-value level but only for the CEM results. It seems that other covariates absorb most of the variance in presidential approval before and after DACA. Additionally, looking at approval after the DACA announcement Latinos when compared to non-Latinos were still less likely to approve of President Obama, by a margin of 9 percentage points. This effect, however, was not statistically significant at conventional levels. Therefore, I do not find support for my hypothesis (*H4*) that Latinos and non-Latinos interviewed after the DACA announcement would be more likely to approve of President Obama.

These results seem to counter previous literature that finds a relationship between presidential rhetoric and change in presidential approval (Druckman and Holmes 2005; Bailey et al. 2003). It is also possible that it takes longer for attitudes toward new presidential actions to become assimilated into people's overall assessment of the president. These results suggest that DACA did not have an

immediate impact on Latino approval of President Obama. As previous research shows, voters have to integrate their evaluation of the president's policy actions into their overall assessment of him to see an effect (Highton 2012). To determine if more additional time would indeed lead to an eventual effect of the DACA policy on Latino presidential approval, I examine this relationship with a different national sample, conducted a month after the policy was enacted.

Figure 6 - 2012 JPS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); CEM-matched predicted probability estimates were generated in the same manner as unmatched estimates except sample weights were replaced by Coarsened-Exact-Matching generated weights to account for imbalances among covariates before and after the DACA announcement (Iacus et al. 2012). Based on data from the 2012 Pew People and the Press' June Political Survey. Complete pre and post matching model estimates found in Appendix H.

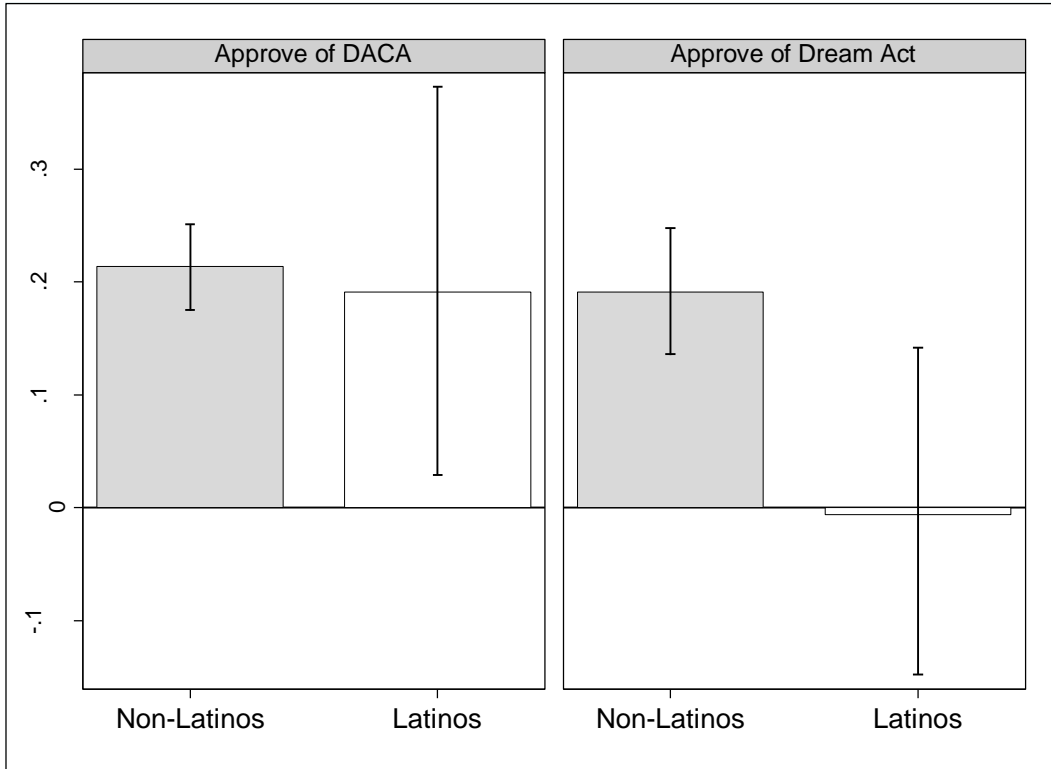
Study – 4: 2012 Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey

I use data from the 2012 Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey (FRPLS). This study is a nationally representative sample of 2,973 respondents obtained by contacting respondents via landline and cellphones. This sample included 359 Latinos. As seen in table 4, the survey asked respondents about their approval of President Obama. The study has a unique feature to measure the independent variable of interest. Half of the sample received a question on whether they approve of President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy and the other half were asked if they support the "Dream Act." This split resulted in 169 Latinos and 1,551 non-Latinos that were asked about the generic “Dream Act” question. Meanwhile, 190 Latino respondents and 1,503 non-Latinos were asked whether they support the DACA policy. I use this data to measure the impact of the DACA policy on Latinos' propensity to approve of the president. These questions were asked after the presidential approval question, therefore, the presidential approval survey item did not prime these policy questions. Instead, any associations observed likely reflect how these different questions are interpreted by those who approve or disapprove of President Obama.

I use a multivariate probit model to estimate the association between approval of DACA or the Dream Act with the approval of President Obama overall. Aside from the previously mentioned primary socioeconomic indicators—Latino origin, gender, age, education, and income—I account for partisan identification,

respondents that thought either Democrats or Republicans had the better position on immigration and interest in the 2012 presidential election.

Figure 7 - 2012 FRPLS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2012 Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix I.

Results

I present the results of the effect of the interaction between approval of DACA or Dream Act, and Latino origin. Looking at figure 7, I find that there is a statistically significant difference in approval of President Obama between those who approve and those that disapprove of the DACA policy. This effect was found to be statistically meaningful for both Latinos and non-Latinos at conventional .05 level.

Latinos who approve of DACA were 19 percentage points, on average, more likely to

approve of President Obama, while non-Latinos were 21 percentage points more likely to approve. These results support my hypothesis (*H5*) that Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DACA will be more likely to approve of President Obama.

On the other hand, I find a difference in approval among those who approve of the Dream Act, but only a statistically meaningful effect among non-Latinos. Non-Latinos who approve of the generic form of the "Dream Act" were 19 percentage points more likely to support President Obama. I observed almost the same gap among those non-Latinos who approve of DACA policy. At the same time, the effect among Latinos was virtually zero. Approval of the generic Dream Act question did not produce differences among Latinos, when compared to non-Latinos, similar to the DACA policy. These results present mixed support for my hypothesis (*H6*) that Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of the Dream Act will be more likely to approve of President Obama. Though I find support for non-Latinos, I did not observe a difference in President Obama's approval between Latinos who approved and disapproved of the Dream Act. This finding seems to suggest that attitudes toward an actual unilateral policy action rather than a generic policy one led to a gap in Latino, but not non-Latino, presidential approval.

Study – 5: July 2014 Pew Political Survey

The July 2014 Pew Political survey was used to examine how President Obama's handling of another immigration issue affects his approval. The July 2014 Pew People and the Press' Political Survey referred to here as the (2014 JPS), is a nationally representative survey of 1,805 respondents including 223 Hispanic respondents. Despite the small Latino sample size, I can still use this data to provide

some evidence on how a national sample of Latinos respond to the President's handling of the issue of Central-American unaccompanied minors entering the United States illegally. Further, I can compare how Latino attitudes toward President Obama's handling of this issue compares to non-Latinos in explaining their propensity to approve of his performance as President.

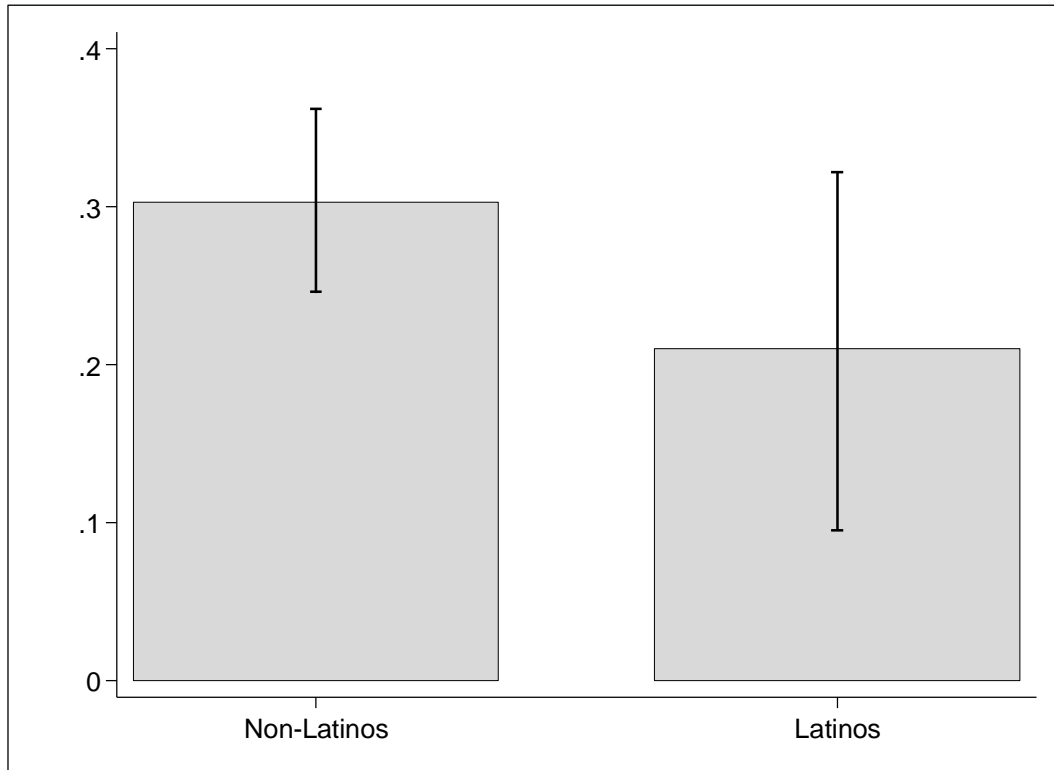
Results

First, I examine if President Obama's handling of the issue of Central-American children at the border affected his approval for all respondents as seen in figure 8. Indeed, I find that overall those who approve of Obama's handling of the issue of unaccompanied minors from Central-America entering the country illegally were 28 percentage points more likely to approve of him. Surprisingly, this effect was more substantial among non-Latinos; those who approve of Obama's handling of the children of Central-American entering the country were 30 percentage points, on average, more likely to approve of his job performance. This effect is statistically significant at the conventional .05 level. At the same time, Latinos who approve of this issue were 21 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama, an effect that also was statistically meaningful. I find that perceptions about President Obama's handling of the issue of unaccompanied minors from Central-America strongly predicted approval of President Obama. This result supports my hypothesis (*H7*) that Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of President Obama's handling of the unaccompanied minor issue are more likely to approve of his performance as president.

As expected, I find that Democratic partisan identification is the most influential predictor of approval of President Obama. Turning to figure 9, I find that Democrats were 29 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. Also, those who self-identified as very liberal were 11 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama than those who identified as very conservative. Finally, I find that approving of Congress was associated with an increase in President Obama's approval by a margin of 8 percentage points. All of these effects were statistically significant at the conventional .05 level.

The public's assessment of the country's current economic situation also predicted presidential approval. Those who rated the country's economic condition as excellent versus poor were 22 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. Also, people who believed that their economic condition would improve in the future were 8 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. Both of these effects were statistically meaningful at the conventional .05 p-value level.

Figure 8 - 2014 JPS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama by Latinos and Non-Latinos

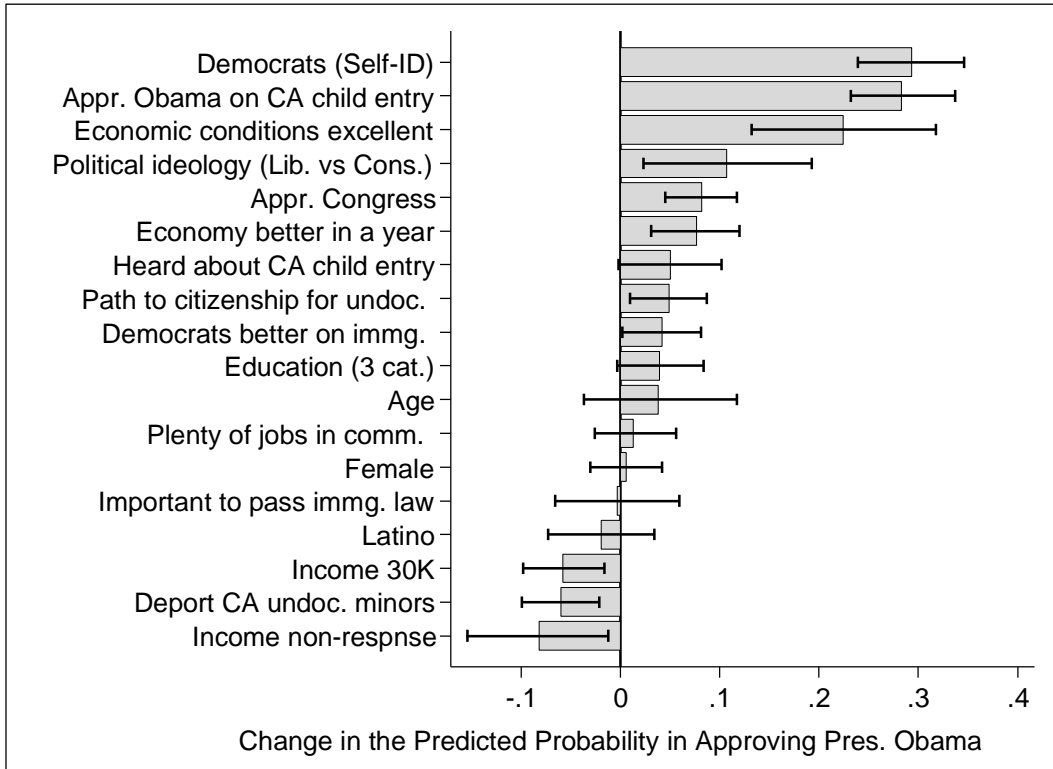


Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew July Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix J.

Several other factors were found to be strongly associated, at a statistically significant level, with the approval of President Obama. Those who believe that immigrants who are in the country illegally should be able to apply for U.S. citizenship were 5 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. Those who thought Democrats were better on immigration were 4 percentage points, on average, more likely to approve of President Obama. Those who believe the childhood Central-American immigrants who crossed the border illegally should be deported were 6 percentage points less likely to approve of President Obama. Higher income respondents, those making more than 30 thousand dollars, were 6 percentage

points less likely to approve of President Obama compared to those making less than 30 thousand dollars. Those who refused to answer the income question were 8 percentage points less likely to approve of Obama.

Figure 9 - 2014 JPS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew July Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix J.

Finally, some factors did not affect approval of President Obama. People who said they had heard of the issue of unaccompanied Central-American minor, respondents who thought there were plenty of jobs in their community, gender, age, higher education, and respondents who thought it was important for Congress to pass a new U.S. immigration law, all had no observed statistical effect on approval of President Obama.

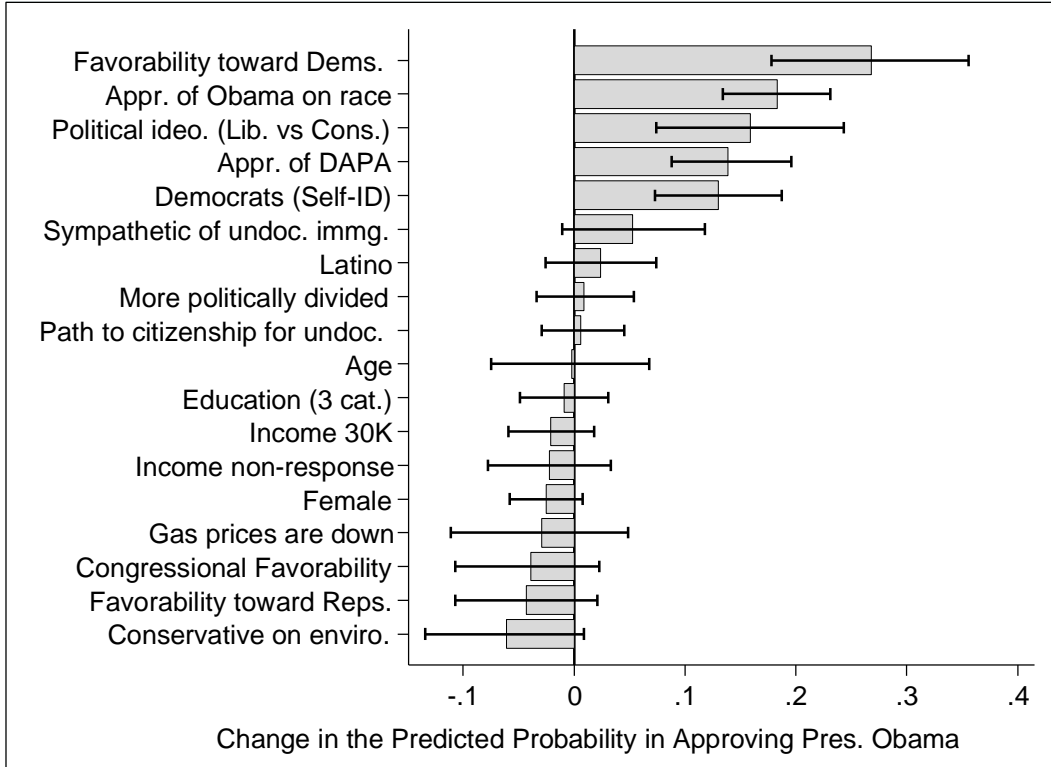
Study – 6: December 2014 Pew Political Survey

The December 2014 Pew Political survey was used to examine how President Obama's issuance of another immigration-related executive order affected his overall presidential approval, and his approval on the issue of immigration. The December 2014 Pew People and the Press' Political Survey referred to here as the (DPS), is a nationally representative survey of 1,478 respondents including 172 Hispanic respondents. Despite the small Latino sample size, I can still observe how Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) predicts their approval of President Obama.

Results

First looking at the full model in figure 10, I find that approval of DAPA had a sizable effect on President Obama's approval. Those who approve of DAPA were 14 percentage points more likely to approve of him, a statistically significant relationship at conventional levels. Next, looking at figure 11, I find that this effect was most notable for Latinos, as those who approved of DAPA were 26 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. Conversely, non-Latinos who approve of DAPA were 12 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. Both effects were statistically significant at conventional levels. These findings support the expectations (*H8*) that Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DAPA will be more likely to approve of President Obama's performance. This finding further demonstrates that President Obama's executive actions have a strong impact on approval of his performance as president, particularly among Latinos.

Figure 10 - 2014 DPS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama

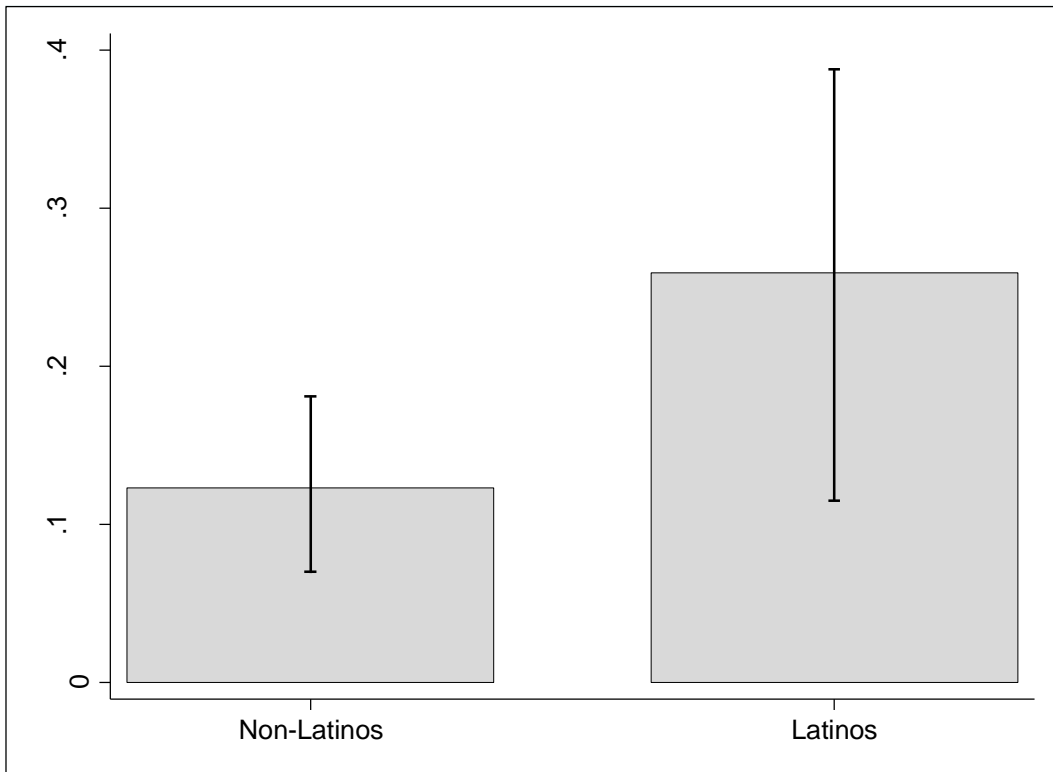


Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew December Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix K.

People who viewed Democrats favorably had an increased probability of 27 percentage points of approving of President Obama. This effect was statistically significant at the conventional level of .05. The second most influential predictor was approval of President Obama's handling of the issue of race relations. Those who approved of President Obama's handling of race relations were 18 percentage points more likely to approve of his performance—a statistically significant finding. Also, as expected, political ideology strongly influenced presidential approval. Those who considered themselves very liberal were 16 percentage points more likely to approve

of President Obama than those who considered themselves very conservative. Democratic identification was a strong predictor of presidential approval. Self-identified Democrats were 13 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama. This effect was statistically significant.

Figure 11 - 2014 DPS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama by Latinos and non-Latinos

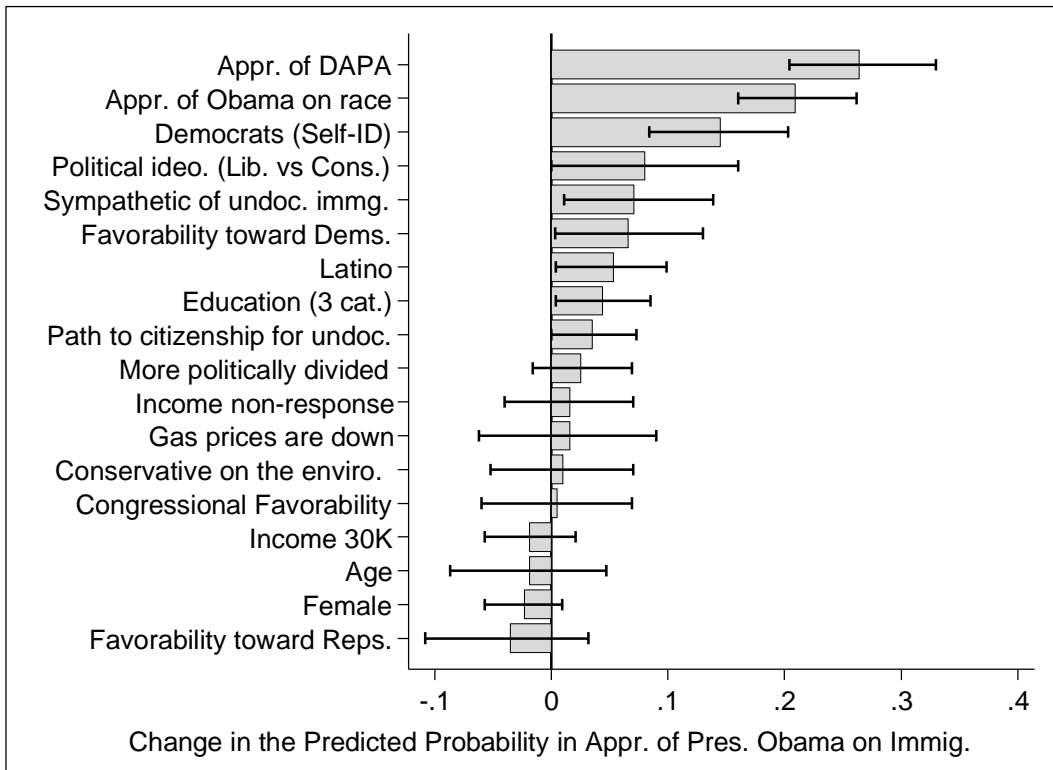


Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew December Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix K.

I found several factors that did not predict presidential approval at a statistically significant level. Critical socioeconomic factors education, gender, age, and income all did not have a meaningful impact on Latino presidential approval. Also, those who are sympathetic toward immigrants, believe undocumented immigrants should be granted citizenship, think gas prices were rising, perceived a

more significant political divide, had more liberal policy preferences on the environment, viewed Republicans more favorably, viewed Congress more favorably and identified as Latino, did not have a meaningful impact on Latino presidential approval.

Figure 12 - 2014 DPS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama on Immigration

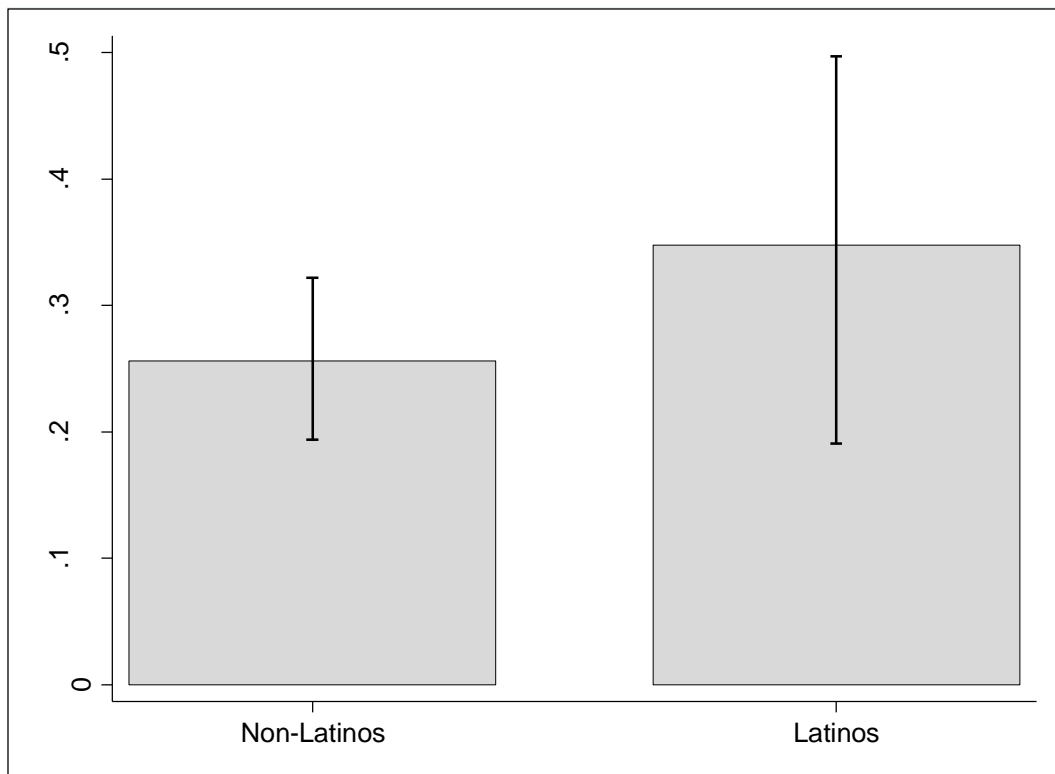


Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew December Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix L.

Now looking at figure 12, I present the results of a probit model predicting approval of President Obama's handling of the issue of immigration. I observe that the approval of President Obama's handling of the issue of immigration was strongly associated with approval of DAPA. All respondents who approved of DAPA were 26 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama's handling of

immigration. As we see in figure 13, however, this effect was strongest for Latinos as those who approve of DAPA were 35 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama’s handling of the issue of immigration. At the same time, non-Latinos that approved of DAPA were 26 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama's handling of immigration. Both effects were statistically significant at conventional levels. These results support my hypothesis (*H9*) that Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DAPA will be more likely to approve of President Obama’s performance on the issue of immigration.

Figure 13 - 2014 DPS Predicted probability of approving of President Obama on immigration by Latinos and non-Latinos



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew December Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix L.

Finally, those who supported President Obama's handling of race relations were 21 percentage points more likely to approve of his handling of the issue of immigration. This effect was statistically significant at the conventional .05 p-value level. I also find that a series of partisan factors explain approval of President Obama's handling of immigration. Self-identified Democrats were 14 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama on immigration, an effect that was statistically significant. Those who viewed Democrats favorably were 7 percentage points more likely to approve of Obama's handling of immigration, a statistically significant effect at conventional levels. I find that those who identify as very liberal were 8 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama on immigration, a substantively meaningful impact. However, this effect was not statistically significant. Even after controlling for important partisan based factors, people's attitudes regarding President Obama's DAPA policy strongly predicted their approval of his performance on immigration.

Table 5 - Summary of results

	NSL			PPS		
Hypothesis: Attitudes toward President Obama's policies affected his approval ratings	2010	2011	2012 -06	2012 -07	2014 -07	2014 -12
Study #	1	2	3	4	5	6
Results for Latinos	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Results for Non-Latinos	NA	NA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: National Survey of Latinos (NSL); Pew Political Surveys (PPS); Yes = Effect size was statistically significant at a p-value level of .05.

Also, I observed that respondents' sympathies toward undocumented immigrants strongly predicted approval of President Obama on the issue of

immigration. Those who are very sympathetic were 7 percentage points more likely to approve of President Obama's handling of immigration. Looking at the full model, those who identified as Latino were 5 percentage points more likely than non-Latinos to approve of President Obama's handling of immigration; a statistically meaningful impact. This finding differs from the results on President Obama's overall approval. In that analysis, no differences were observed between Latinos and non-Latinos. This result appears to indicate sharp difference in how Latinos evaluated President Obama overall versus just on the issue of immigration¹¹.

Conclusion

The growing salience of immigration and the executive branch's role in shaping these policies, given Congressional inaction, has led to a more significant interest in uncovering how this issue is affecting Latino political attitudes toward the president. This essay makes a scholarly contribution with six separate studies, which find evidence that Latino and non-Latino views toward President Obama's policies on immigration strongly predicted their approval of his overall job performance. This association was found throughout most of Obama's presidency as seen in table 5. Though a majority of priming studies evaluating presidential influence have focused on presidential campaign effects, I find here that a sitting U.S. president can use this

¹¹ I found several factors that did not predict presidential approval of Obama on the issue of immigration at a statistically significant level. The following socioeconomic factors all did not have a meaningful impact on Latino presidential approval: education, gender, age, and income. Also, those who believe undocumented immigrants should be granted citizenship, believe gas prices were rising, perceived a greater political divide, had more liberal policy preferences on the environment, viewed Republicans favorably, and viewed Congress favorably all did not have a statistically significant effect on President Obama's approval on immigration.

alternative form of persuasion, through his politics, to influence the public's approval of his job performance.

Early on in Obama's presidency, Latinos who were dissatisfied with his administration's immigration policies became much less likely to approve of his performance as president. Also, those who believed his policies were harmful toward Latinos disapproved of him, while those who thought his policies helped the community were more likely to approve. It seems that President Obama was well aware of the discontent within the Latino community with his immigration policies and responded with unilateral immigration policies, DACA and DAPA, while voicing his concern over the issue of Central-American children entering the country illegally. Although the President's action's on DACA did not have an immediate impact on his approval ratings for either Latino or non-Latinos (compared to their attitudes toward the Dream Act), I did find a robust effect a month after he announced his DACA policy. Also, I see that perceptions about President Obama's handling of the issue of unaccompanied Central-American children entering the country illegally had a substantial impact on his approval rating. I find the most substantial effect among non-Latinos, but I still see a considerable impact on Latino approval of President Obama. Finally, support of the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) policy strongly predicted overall approval of President Obama, with an effect almost twice as large among Latinos. I also find that DAPA strongly predicted President Obama's approval on the issue of immigration.

Along with Latinos' perceptions about the Obama administration's policies on immigration, and toward their community, I find that partisan factors strongly

predicted approval of President Obama. In most studies, attitude toward the parties, partisan identification and political ideology continued to exert the most substantial influence on Latino presidential approval. Even though presidential unilateral actions matter, partisanship continues to more strongly explain, in most cases, Latino and non-Latino presidential approval, as suggested by existing literature. Nevertheless, people's attitudes toward presidential actions also seem to have a powerful influence on presidential approval.

The results presented here are significant when considering that the American public seems to be increasingly placing pressure on the commander-in-chief to address their specific policy concerns. At the same time, these findings suggest that the president can shape how particular segments of the American public evaluate his performance by responding with substantive policy actions. This effect could potentially create the incentive for presidents to act on their own rather than seek compromise and cooperation with Congress. This process seems to undercut the role of Congress in the American policymaking process. However, it is important to reiterate that the President can only offer temporary policy gains. Long-term solutions still require new public laws that have to be approved by both Congress and the president and upheld by the Supreme Court. With that said, temporary policy wins may be all that an incumbent president needs to advance larger political goals such as winning reelection or garnering favor for policies supported by his party.

The next essay focuses on understanding the impact of President Obama's immigration policies on his favorability ratings. Though closely related to presidential approval rating, presidential favorability ratings offers another opportunity to

examine how a president can influence the public views toward him. In addition, existing research has found that there are times when presidential approval and favorability do not match (Cohen 1999, Cohen 2000). Therefore, I also examine whether attitudes toward the president's policies and unilateral actions can explain when a person might view him favorably but still disapprove of his performance, or vice versa.

Chapter 4: Understanding the president's influence on Latino and non-Latino favorability ratings, and when it diverges from presidential approval

Existing research evaluating public attitudes toward the president has focused primarily on his approval rating. However, his favorability ratings may capture another critical component of attitudes toward him. Presidential favorability is used to gauge a respondent's opinion of the president to assess if it is favorable or unfavorable, rather than the traditional approval question, which ask if respondents approve of the president's performance. Using the favorability question, research has already found that presidential favorability can predict higher support for an incumbent president's reelection (Kenski 2010). Though, few studies have examined whether a president can affect his favorability ratings among the public by using the powers of the office to change their opinions of him.

Even though the current literature suggests that presidential approval and favorability tap into similar sentiments, scholars have found instances when the two diverge at the individual (Cohen 2000) and aggregate-level (Cohen 1999). Partisanship and other traditional factors were found to explain when presidential favorability and approval did not match (Cohen 1999, Cohen 2000). This initial finding leaves open the question of whether the president can influence when the public will view him favorably but not approve of his performance as president, or vice versa.

To address this gap in the literature, I propose a new theory, executive priming theory (EPT), which suggests presidential action can alter the president's favorability ratings and create inconsistency between approval and favorability

ratings. I argue that unilateral executive action can introduce new information about an important policy issue that brings this policy to the forefront of any favorability judgment made about the president. Specifically, I argue that President Obama's policies on immigration significantly shaped both Latino's and non-Latino's favorability toward the president. These policies might have also created inconsistency between approval and favorability ratings as some voters may have viewed the president favorably but disapproved of his overall performance due to his policies on immigration.

I rely on three national surveys to test my hypothesis that President Obama's policy representation on immigration, through his executive actions, affected his favorability ratings. I also examine whether there is consistency between approval and favorability ratings. All of the data come from three surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center. The June 2012 Pew Political Survey (2012 JPS) is a nationally representative survey of 2,013 respondents including 167 Hispanic respondents. A unique feature of this survey is that it was in the field before and after the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), announcement thus, creating a natural experiment¹². With this survey, I can detect any changes in favorability before and after the DACA announcement.

Also, I test whether President Obama's handling of the issue of childhood arrivals from Central-America entering the country illegally affected his favorability rating among respondents using the July 2014 Pew Political Survey (2014 JPS).

¹² A more detailed methodological discussion of the natural experiment embedded in this survey is available in Chapter 1.

Using data from the December 2014 Pew Political Survey (DPS), I examine how approval of the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) affected President Obama's favorability rating. Finally, the 2014 JPS and 2014 DPS allow me to measure the impact of the president's policy representation on consistency between presidential favorability and approval ratings.

After performing a series of analytical tests using multivariate probit regression analysis, and the Coarsened-Exact-Matching technique using the 2012 JPS, I confirm my expectations regarding the association between executive action and favorability toward President Obama (Iacus et al. 2012). President Obama's immigration policies seemed to affect both Latino and non-Latinos similarly. Additionally, I did not find the expected association between Obama's immigration policies and consistent favorability and approval ratings. The results still provide new insight as I observe several factors that explain when people's approval and favorability of the president do not align. This study is the first to find that factors other than partisanship help explain differences in consistency in presidential favorability and approval. Overall, I demonstrate that presidential policy representation matters for understanding Latino and non-Latino attitudes toward President Obama.

How Executive Priming Affects Presidential Favorability

Recent research has converged on understanding how the continuous debate surrounding the issue of immigration has transformed Latino political behavior. For example, the impact of acculturation on policy positions was found to be moderated by Latinos perceptions about discrimination toward their community (Pedraza 2014).

Xenophobic rhetoric by political leaders can lead high identifying Latinos to become more politically active to positively increase the image of their community (Perez 2015). These are just a few studies that highlight the increasing role that immigration policy is having in shaping Latino attitudes. What is not clear is if the president can alter Latino attitudes toward him by injecting himself into the immigration debate with the use of unilateral policy actions.

I build on the executive priming theory (EPT), which theorizes that presidential policy responsiveness is a potent source of priming. The president's policies can leave a strong impression on how voters will evaluate him. Relying on a memory-based model of public opinion (Zaller 1991, Krosnick and Kinder 1990, Tesler 2015), I argue that voters will more readily access information regarding the president's most recent policy actions when rating his favorability. Here, I examine how perceptions about President Obama's policies on immigration, and toward Latinos in general, can shape his favorability ratings within the community. Attitudes toward President Obama's policies should have a positive and significant impact on Latino and non-Latino favorability ratings due to the growing salience of the issue of immigration.

Few studies have focused on uncovering the factors that explain when people will view the president favorably. The president, through his actions, has been shown to move existing policy positions for some members of the public, as well as change his favorability rating. Bailey et al. (2003) found that President Clinton's "Don't Ask Don't Tell Policy" led to changes in the public's support for this policy, while President Clinton's favorability decreased by 8 percentage points among those who

opposed the policy. This finding suggests that, although the president forced some of his supporters to revise their opinions, he also lost even more support among opponents (Bailey et al. 2003).

Previous research on Latino favorability toward the president has found that President Obama's deportation policies on immigration can affect his ratings. Sanchez et al. (2015) observed, based on a national poll of registered Latinos in 2013, that those who knew someone who was undocumented were less likely to view President Obama favorably. This research suggests that President Obama's policies can shape Latino favorability ratings. There are some limitations to this work, as Sanchez et al. (2015) did not evaluate how Latino favorability ratings compared to non-Latinos, nor how their attitudes toward the president's unilateral actions affected his favorability ratings.

Presidential favorability is likely understudied due to its high correlation with presidential approval, although there are instances when the two differ. In one of the most in-depth looks at factors that explain presidential favorability, Cohen (2000) found that favorability and presidential approval ratings tend to be almost identical. However, Cohen (2000) found inconsistency at the individual-level between approval and favorability ratings based on levels of educational attainment and political ideology. This research builds on Cohen's previous study, which also found periods when approval and favorability ratings were inconsistent based on aggregated polling data (Cohen 1999). At the same time, Cohen (2000) found that respondents who favored President Clinton primarily attributed strong leadership qualities to him such as the ability to "get things done" and being "tough enough." Another interesting

quality was empathy, as many people found that he "cares about the needs of people like them" Cohen (2000).

Overall, exploring why people choose to view the president favorably seems worthy of scholarly inquiry as it can provide additional information about presidential power. Though favorability and approval ratings are highly correlated, there seem to be some differences explained by systematic social factors. The previous variables explored by Cohen (2000) were traditional socioeconomic cleavages that often create differences in opinions and partisanship. I add to this research by determining if immigration policy-oriented factors that measure attitudes toward the president's unilateral action or handling of a crisis on immigration can explain discrepancies between his approval and favorability ratings. I hypothesize that Latinos will have different approval and favorability ratings due to the Obama administration's immigration policies. On the one hand, Latinos may personally view President Obama favorably, but at the same time disapprove of his job performance because of his administration's immigration policies. Those who approve of President Obama's unilateral actions, however, should be more likely to hold consistent attitudes. Building on existing literature, I offer the hypotheses seen in table 6.

Hypotheses

Table 6 - Summary of hypotheses

Study	Hypothesis
1. 2012 Pew June Political Survey	<p><i>H-1:</i> Latinos interviewed after the DACA announcement will be more likely to view President Obama favorably compared to those interviewed before the announcement, all else equal.</p> <p><i>H-2:</i> Non-Latinos interviewed after the DACA announcement will be more likely to view President Obama favorably compared to those interviewed before the announcement.</p>
2. 2014 Pew-July. Political Survey	<p><i>H-3:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of the way President Obama is handling the situation involving a large number of children from Central America who have entered the country illegally will be more likely to view him favorably.</p>
3. 2014 Pew-Dec. Political Survey	<p><i>H-4:</i> Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DAPA will be more likely to view him favorably.</p>
4. 2014 Pew-July. Political Survey /2014 Pew-Dec. Political Survey	<p><i>H-5:</i> Those who approve of the way President Obama is handling the situation involving a large number of children from Central America who have entered the country illegally will be more likely to have consistent presidential favorability and approval ratings.</p> <p><i>H-6:</i> Those who approve of DAPA will be more likely to have consistent presidential favorability and approval ratings.</p>

Data and Methods

The following is a detailed explanation of the data used to test my hypothesis that the president's policies can affect Latino's favorability of an incumbent president.

I also provide a brief description of the variables used as seen in table-7. I use the June 2012 Pew Political Survey to analyze how the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy affected Latino and non-Latino favorability of President Obama. The next analysis uses the July 2014 Pew Political Survey to examine how

President Obama's handling of the 2014 crisis of Central American children entering the United States' illegally shaped his favorability ratings and its impact on the consistency between approval and favorability ratings. Finally, I use the December 2014 Pew Political Survey to analyze how approval of President Obama's Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) affected Latino and non-Latino approval of President Obama's overall performance.

Table 7 - Questions used to measure variable of interest

Survey	Period	Dependent variables	Independent variables
Pew-June Political Survey	2012	Is your overall opinion of Barack Obama very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?	Natural experiment before and after DACA
Pew-July Political Survey	2014	Is your overall opinion of Barack Obama very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling The situation involving a large number of children from Central America who have entered the country illegally?
Pew-Dec. Political Survey	2014	Is your overall opinion of Barack Obama very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?	As you may know, Barack Obama recently issued an executive action that expands the number of undocumented immigrants who are allowed to stay and work in the country. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of this new policy?

Study – 1: 2012 June Political Survey

Using the June 2012 Pew Political survey, I examined the effect of the DACA announcement on Latino and non-Latino favorability of President Obama. The 2012

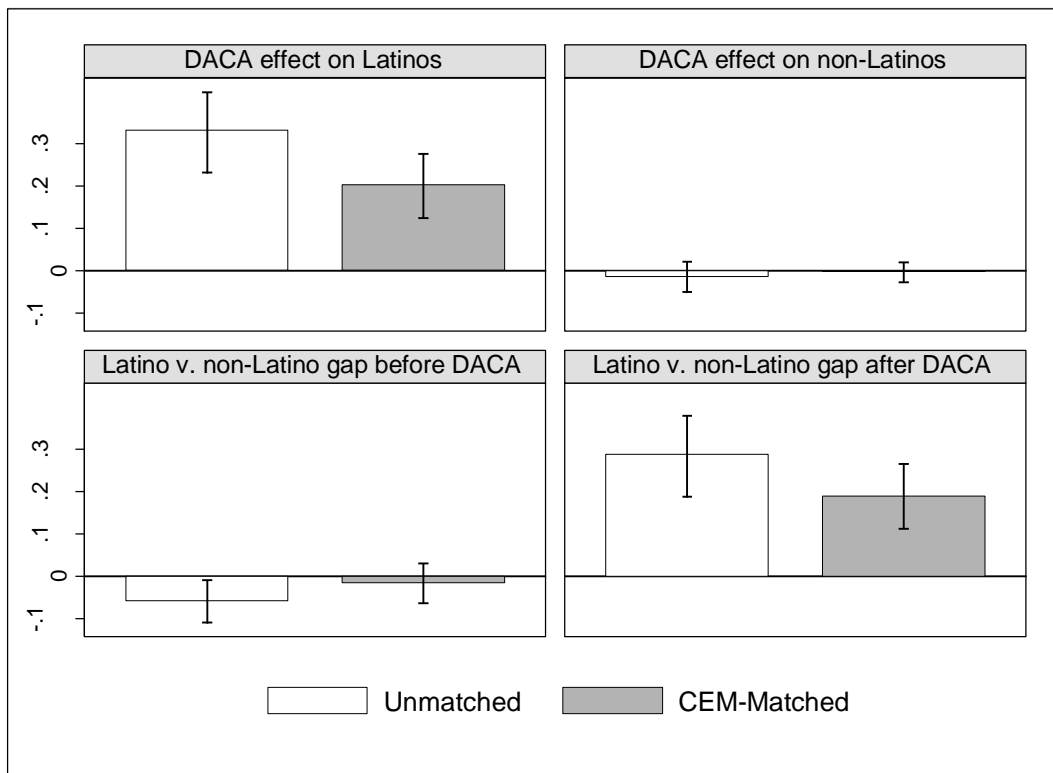
Pew People and the Press' June Political Survey referred to here as the (2012 JPS), is a nationally representative survey of 2,013 respondents, including 167 Hispanic respondents. A unique feature of this survey is that it was in the field both before and after President Obama announced the DACA policy. The small Latino sample of 167 respondents is an important limitation of this survey. Of 167 respondents, 115 of were interviewed before the DACA announcement and 52 interviewed beginning on June 15, 2012. Despite the small sample size, this study can still demonstrate how Latinos' approval of President Obama changed before and after his announcement of the DACA policy. I employ the Coarsened-Exact-Matching (CEM) technique to account for covariate imbalance between the control (before DACA) and treatment (after DACA) when evaluating President Obama's DACA policy's impact on voters (Iacus et al. 2012).

Results

First, I evaluated the DACA announcement's impact on Latinos' affect for President Obama by examining favorability ratings. The results in figure 14 show that the DACA increased President Obama's favorability significantly among Latinos, even after controlling for many factors. There was a 33 percentage point change in the predicted probability that Latinos viewed President Obama favorably after the DACA announcement, a statistically significant effect at the .05 p-value level. This finding supports my hypothesis (*H1*) that Latinos interviewed after the DACA announcement will be more likely to have a favorable view of President Obama. A modest negative change of 1.3 percentage points was observed among non-Latinos, but was statistically insignificant. This finding does not support the proposition (*H2*)

that non-Latinos interviewed after DACA will be more likely to view President Obama favorably. Before President Obama announced the new policy, Latinos were 6 percentage points less likely than non-Latinos to view him favorably—a statistically meaningful difference. After the DACA policy, however, Latinos were 29 percentage points more likely than non-Latinos to have a more favorable rating for President Obama. This effect was meaningful at the .05 p-value level. This relationship shows a significant change in the president's favorability occurring after the DACA announcement; this suggests that Latinos did indeed update their evaluation of him based on this information. These relationships hold even after using the CEM weights, albeit with smaller effect sizes.

Figure 14 - 2012 JPS Predicted probability in having a favorable view of President Obama by Latinos and non-Latinos



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Favorable view President Obama=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for

unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); CEM-matched predicted probability estimates were generated in the same manner as unmatched estimates except sample weights were replaced by Coarsened-Exact-Matching generated weights to account for imbalances among covariates before and after the DACA announcement (Iacus et al. 2012). Based on data from the 2012 Pew People and the Press' June Political Survey. Complete pre and post matching model estimates found in Appendix M.

Study – 2: July 2014 Political Survey

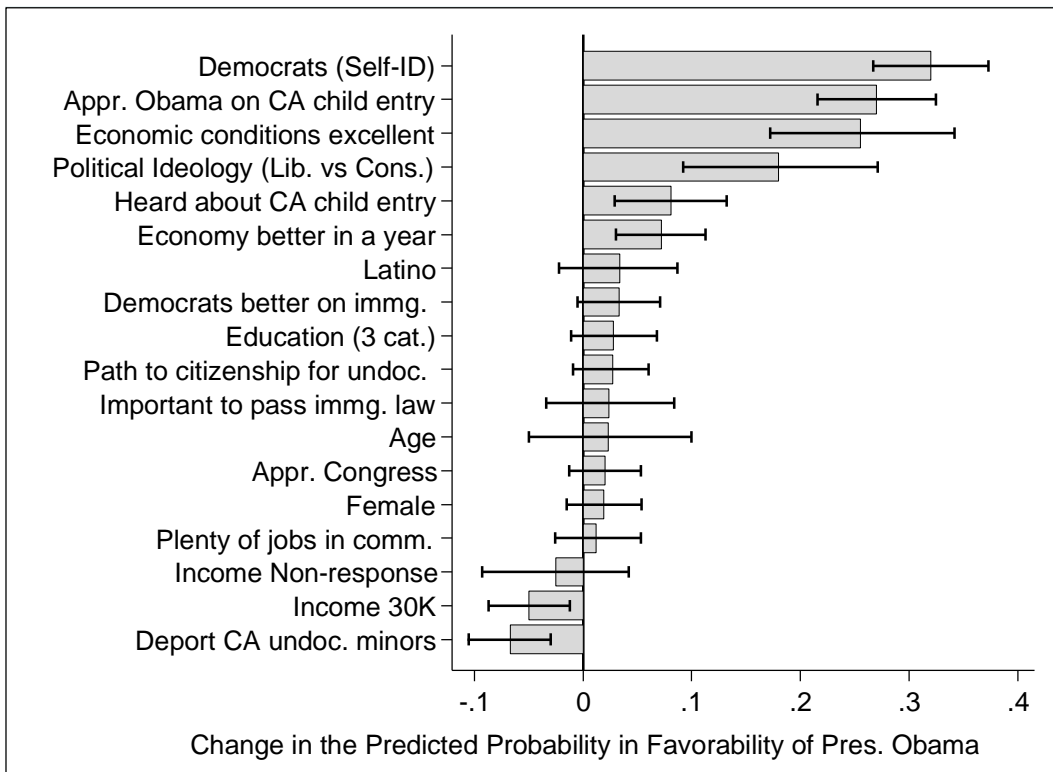
I utilize the July 2014 Pew Political survey to examine how President Obama's handling of the issue of Central-American unaccompanied minors entering the U.S. illegally affected his approval. The 2014 Pew People and the Press' July Political Survey referred to here as the (2014 JPS), is a nationally representative survey of 1,805 respondents including 223 Hispanic respondents. Despite the relatively small Latino sample size, I can demonstrate how Latinos' attitudes toward the President's handling of this issue compares to non-Latino's in predicting their approval of President Obama, while accounting for various important covariates.

Results

I utilize a probit regression model to estimate the effect of the variable of interest, approving of President Obama's handling of the Central-American unaccompanied minor crisis, on viewing President Obama favorably. I control for traditional socioeconomic indicators (age, gender, education and income) as well as Latino identity, and other partisan and immigration based factors as see in figure 16. Looking at the full model in figure 16, people who approve of the Obama administration's handling of the issue of unaccompanied minors from Central-America were 27 percentage points more likely to view President Obama favorably. However, this effect varied when looking at the interaction with Latinos and non-Latinos. I find that approval of Obama's handling of the issue of immigration had a

stronger effect for non-Latinos. There was a 30 percentage point increase in viewing President Obama favorably among non-Latinos, while I observed a 16 percentage point difference among Latinos, both at statistically significant levels. These findings support my expectation (*H3*) that Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of President Obama’s handling of the Central-American unaccompanied minor crisis would be more likely to view him favorably.

Figure 15 - 2014 JPS Predicted probability in having a favorable view of President Obama



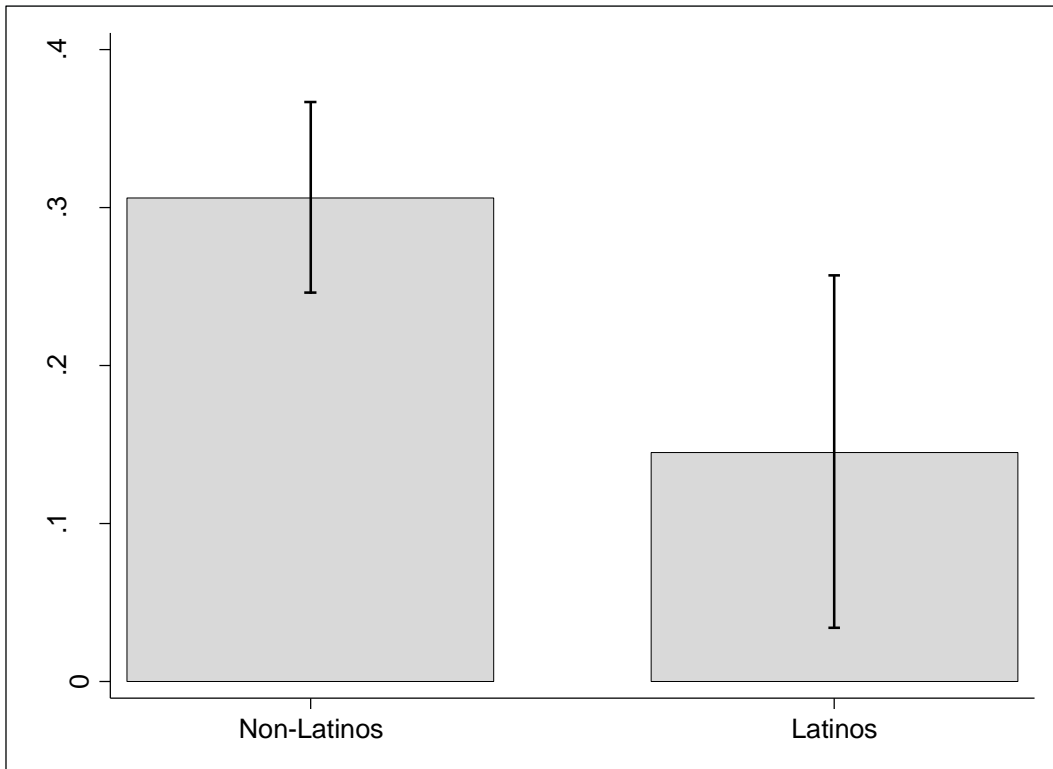
Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew July Political Survey. Complete model estimates are found in Appendix-N

Statistically significant findings were also observed for those who have heard of the Central-American children minor issue. These respondents were 10 percentage points more likely to view President Obama favorably. On the other hand, those who

believe that unaccompanied Central-American minors should be deported were 5 percentage points less likely to indicate favorability toward President Obama.

As expected, I find that self-identifying Democrats were 31 percentage points more likely to view President Obama favorably. This effect size was statistically significant and the largest among all covariates. Those who considered themselves to be very liberal were 19 percentage points more likely to favor President Obama than those who consider themselves as being very conservative. This effect was statistically meaningful at conventional level of a p-value of .05.

Figure 16 - 2014 JPS Predicted probability in having a favorable view of President Obama by Latinos and non-Latinos



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew July Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix N.

Also, people's perceptions of the current economic situation and their own future personal finances predicted statistically meaningful favorability toward President Obama. Assessment of the country's current economic status was associated with a 26 percentage point increase in viewing President Obama favorably. People who think their economic situation will be better in a year were 8 percentage points more likely to indicate favorability toward President Obama. Those with incomes higher than 30 thousand dollars were on average 5 percentage points less likely to show favorability toward President Obama.

The following factors were not predictive of favorability toward President Obama. Unexpectedly, Latinos were not more likely than non-Latinos to view President Obama favorably as seen in figure 15. People who think Democrats are better on immigration, believe it is important for a new immigration law to be passed, believe undocumented immigrants should have a path to U.S. citizenship, and think there are plenty of jobs in their community all were found not to be associated with favorability toward President Obama. Congressional approval was also found to be uncorrelated with presidential favorability. Also, the socioeconomic factors—education, income non-response, age, and gender—did not have a statistically meaningful impact on favorability.

Study – 3: December 2014 Political Survey

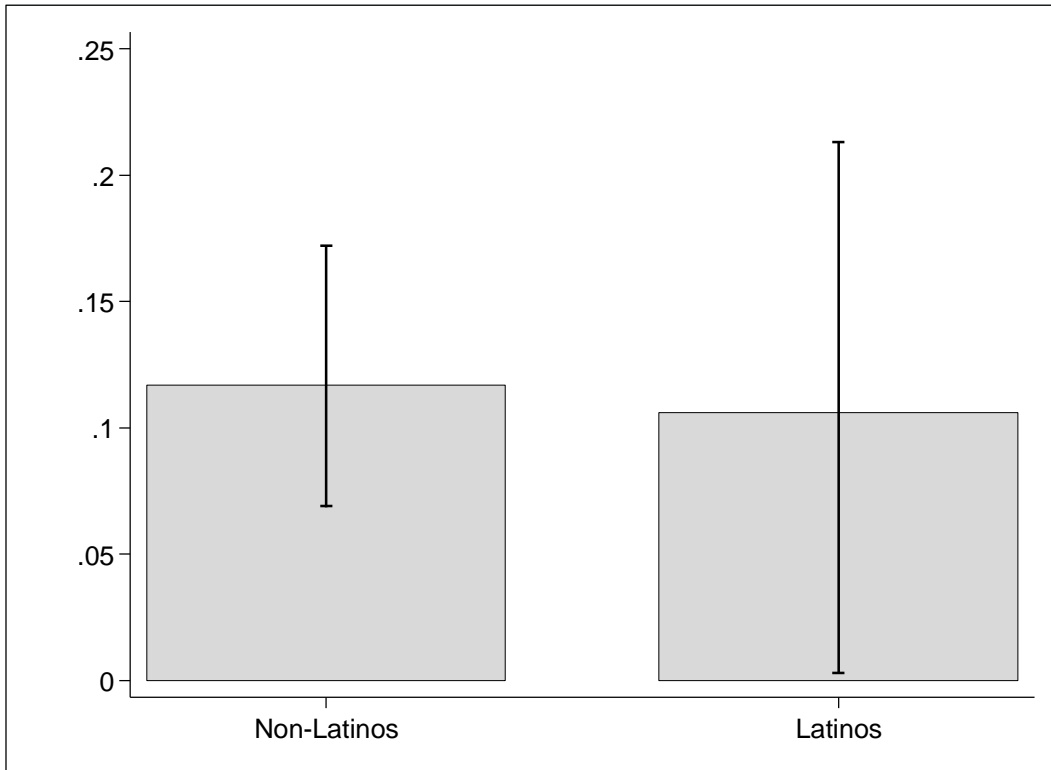
The December 2014 Pew Political survey was used to examine how President Obama's handling of another unilateral action affected his favorability. The 2014 Pew People and the Press' December Political Survey referred to here as the (2014 DPS), is a nationally representative survey of 1,478 respondents including 172 Hispanic

respondents. Although it includes a small Latino sample size, I can still observe how Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) predicts their approval of President Obama.

Results

I utilize a probit regression model to estimate the effect of the variable of interest, approving of DAPA, on viewing President Obama favorably. I control for traditional socioeconomic indicators (age, gender, education and income) as well as Latino identity, and other partisan and immigration based factors as seen in figure 18. First, I find that approval of DAPA was associated with an increase in presidential favorability. Overall, looking at the full sample, those who approved of DAPA were 12 percentage points more likely to indicate favorability toward President Obama, as seen on figure 18. This effect was statistically significant at the .05 level. I did not find a substantial difference between Latinos and non-Latinos in how approval of DAPA affected their favorability rating of President Obama as seen on figure 17. Latinos who approved of DAPA were 11 percentage points more likely to favor the President while non-Latinos were 12 percentage points more likely to favor him (both statistically significant levels). These findings support hypothesis (*H-4*) that Latinos and non-Latinos who approve of DAPA will be more likely to view President Obama favorably. This result suggests that approval of DAPA as an executive action influenced all respondents. Also, though DAPA did have a substantively significant impact on presidential favorability, it was not the most meaningful predictor of this sentiment.

Figure 17 - 2014 DPS Predicted probability in having a favorable view of President Obama by Latinos and non-Latinos

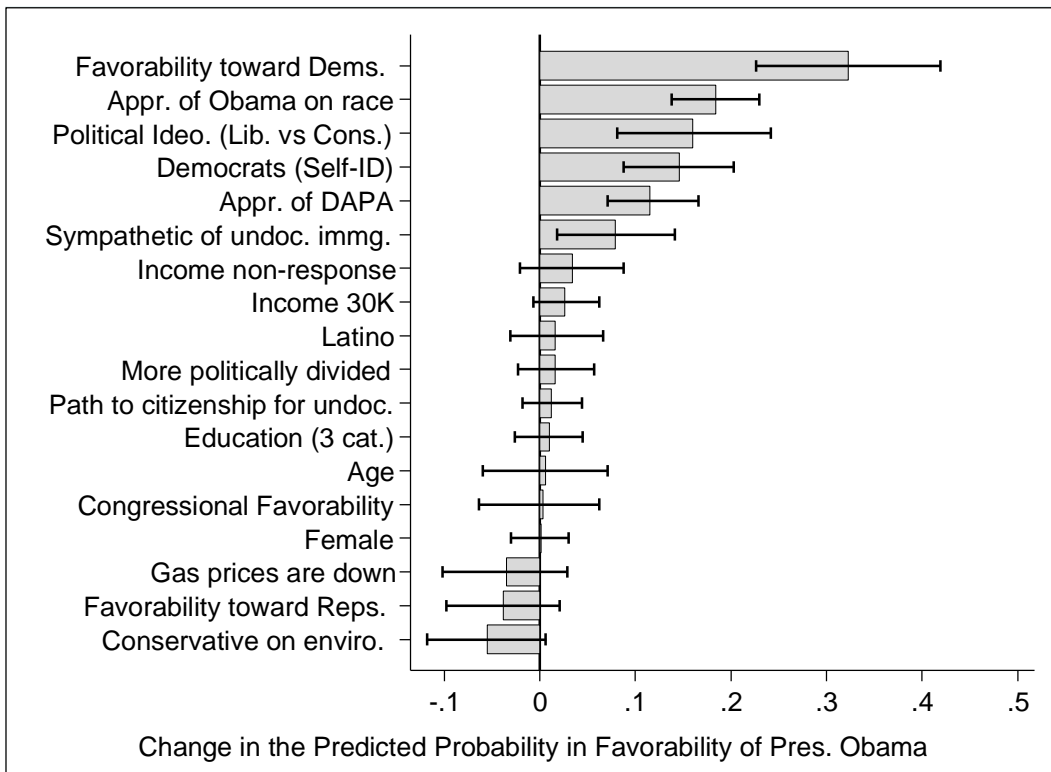


Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew December Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix O.

People who viewed the Democratic Party more favorably were also more likely to consider President Obama favorably. The effect of partisan favorability on presidential favorability was 32 percentage points and statistically meaningful at the conventional p-value level of .05. Respondents' views toward President Obama's handling of race relations was also found to be a significant predictor of his favorability. Those who approve of President Obama's handling of race relations were 18 percentage points more likely to view him favorably. Both political ideology and Democratic partisanship also strongly predicted favorability toward President Obama. Democrats were 15 percentage points more likely to view President Obama

favorably, while those who considered themselves to be very liberal were 16 percentage points more likely to express favorability. These effects were not only substantively meaningful but also statistically significant. Finally, respondents who were sympathetic toward undocumented immigrants were 8 percentage points more likely to view President Obama favorably, even after controlling for various partisan factors. This effect was substantively and statistically significant.

Figure 18 - 2014 DPS Predicted probability in having a favorable view of President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Approve=1 and all other options=0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew December Political Survey. Complete model estimates found in Appendix O.

I found that some critical socioeconomic indicators did not have a discernible impact on respondents' views of favorability toward the president; these include education, income, gender, age, and Latino identity. Further, Republican and

Congressional favorability also did not predict views toward President Obama. Also, those who believed that there is a higher political divide, that gas prices were rising, and who held consistently liberal policy preferences on the environment did not predict views toward President Obama in a statistically meaningful manner. Finally, those who thought there should be a path to U.S. citizenship for undocumented immigrants were more likely to view President Obama favorably but this finding was not statistically meaningful.

Study – 4: Predicting Consistency in Presidential Favorability and Approval Ratings

In the final analysis, I rely on the July and December 2014 Pew Political Surveys that were used in study 2 and 3 to analyze factors that predict when approval and favorability ratings are not consistent. To create the measure of consistency, I subtract the dichotomous presidential approval variable by the dichotomous presidential favorability variable. This creates a new variable with a -1 and +1 value. I then recode the 0 value to a 1 and the negative and positive 1 values to 0. The resulting variable has a value of 1 to indicate no difference in approval and favorability ratings while the 0 value captures instances when approval, or favorability, is higher than the other.

Table 8 - Share of respondents with consistent presidential approval and favorability attitudes

Survey	Latinos	Non-Latinos	Total
2014 July Pew Political Survey	78	91	89
2014 December Pew Political Survey	80	90	88

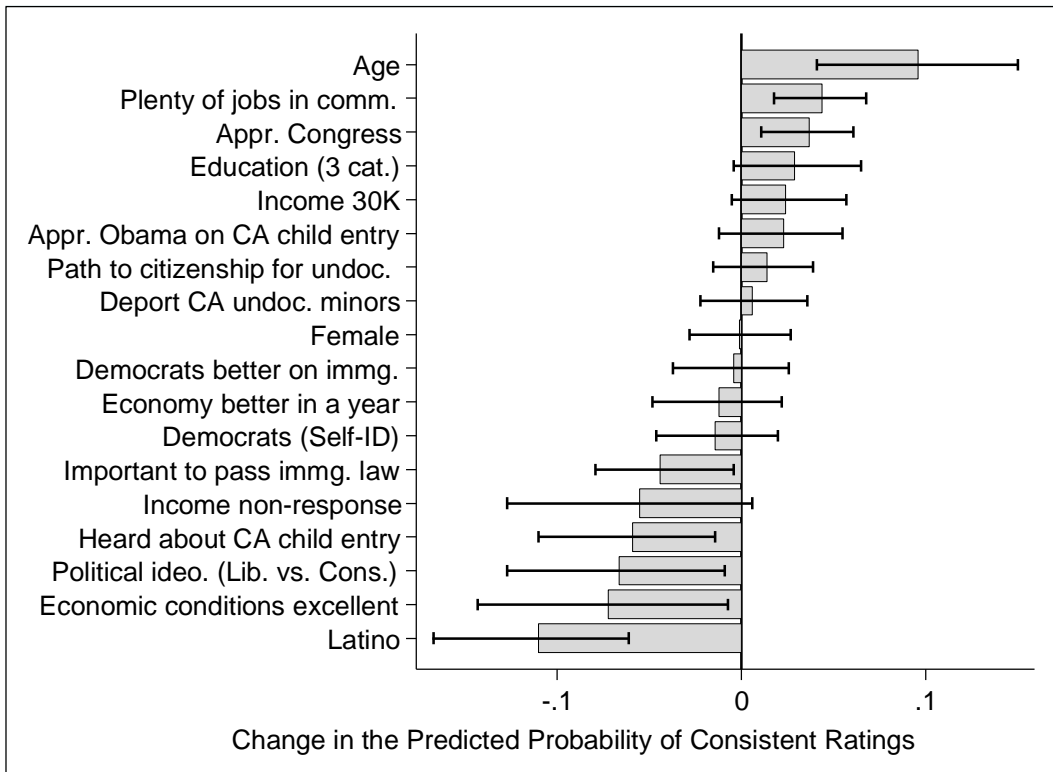
Notes: I measured consistency in presidential approval and favorability in the following manner: 1 = (Approve of president and view him favorably, or disapprove of president and view him unfavorably); 0 = (Approve of president but view him unfavorably, or disapprove of the president but view him favorably).

First, looking at table 8, I find that 89 percent of Americans held consistent favorability and approval ratings toward President Obama based on the 2014 July Pew Political Survey. This means that a majority of Americans both approved of President Obama's performance and viewed him favorably, or they disapproved of his performance and viewed him unfavorably. On the other hand, the remaining 11 percent of Americans either approved of President Obama's performance but viewed him unfavorably, or disapproved of his performance but had a favorable view of him. Sharp differences were also found between Latinos and non-Latinos. Only 78 percent of Latinos had consistent favorability and approval ratings of President Obama compared with 91 percent of non-Latinos a difference of 13 percentage points (p -value = .000; two-tailed test).

I find a similar pattern when analyzing the 2014 December Pew Political Survey as seen in table 8. Overall, 88 percent of Americans held consistent presidential favorability and approval ratings toward President Obama, a 1 percent drop 5 months after the 2014 July Pew Political Survey. There was a 2 percentage point increase in having consistent presidential approval and favorability attitudes among Latinos compared to the 2014 July Pew Political Survey as 80 percent now held consistent ratings. The share of non-Latinos that had consistent approval and favorability attitudes decreased by 1 percentage point to 90 percent. There was now a 10 percentage point difference (p -value = .000; two-tailed test) Latinos and non-Latinos down from 13 percentage points observed for the 2014 July Pew Political Survey. Although these simple cross-tabulations provide some support to my hypothesis that Latinos were less likely to have consistent presidential approval and

favorability ratings, they do not account for other factors that might explain this phenomenon. I now turn to my multivariate probit analysis to test my expectation that President Obama's policy actions on immigration explain consistency in his approval and favorability ratings as seen on figure 19.

Figure 19 - Predicted probability in having a consistent view towards President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (1 = (approve/favorable) or (disapprove/not favorable); 0 = (approve/not favorable) or (disapprove/favorable)). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew July Political Survey. Full model estimates found in Appendix P.

First looking at the data from July 2014, I find that there are systematic factors that explain consistency in approval and favorability ratings. Latinos were 11 percentage points less likely to have the same approval and favorability ratings toward President Obama, a statistically significant effect, even after controlling for partisanship and other important socioeconomic factors. Additionally, 94 year old

respondents were found to be 10 percentage points more likely to have consistent ratings than an 18-year old¹³. This effect was statistically meaningful at conventional levels. Those who believed that the country's economic situation was poor versus excellent were also 7 percentage points less likely to have a consistent rating, a statistically meaningful difference. Respondents who thought of themselves to be very liberal were 7 percentage points less likely to have consistent attitudes on approval and favorability. Also, those who heard about the Central-American unaccompanied minor crisis were 6 percentage points less likely to have consistent attitudes. People who thought it was very important versus not important at all for the president and Congress to pass significant legislation on immigration were 4 percentage points less likely to have consistent approval and favorability ratings. Respondents who thought their community had plenty of jobs were 4 percentage points more likely to have consistent ratings. Finally, those who approved of Congress were 4 percentage points less likely to have stable attitudes. All of these effect sizes were statistically meaningful at the p-value level of .05.

I did not find support for my hypothesis (*H5*) that the president's unilateral actions would affect consistency between approval and favorability. Approval of President Obama's handling of the central-American unaccompanied minor issue was associated with a 2 percentage point increase in holding consistent attitudes as

¹³ I used the maximum range for all covariates to compare their full effect on approval to have some consistency. However, it is important to note that comparing a 94 year old to an 18 year old Latinos might not provide a realistic comparison. I calculated the predicted probabilities comparing Latinos who were one standard deviation above (70 years old) and one standard deviation below (34 years old) the mean of 52 years old. I find that older Latinos were still 5 percentage points more likely to have consistent presidential and favorability attitudes (sig. at p-value level of .05). Though the effect size is 5 percentage points less than the results presented here, the main conclusion that older Latinos have more consistent attitudes did not change when using a more realistic comparison.

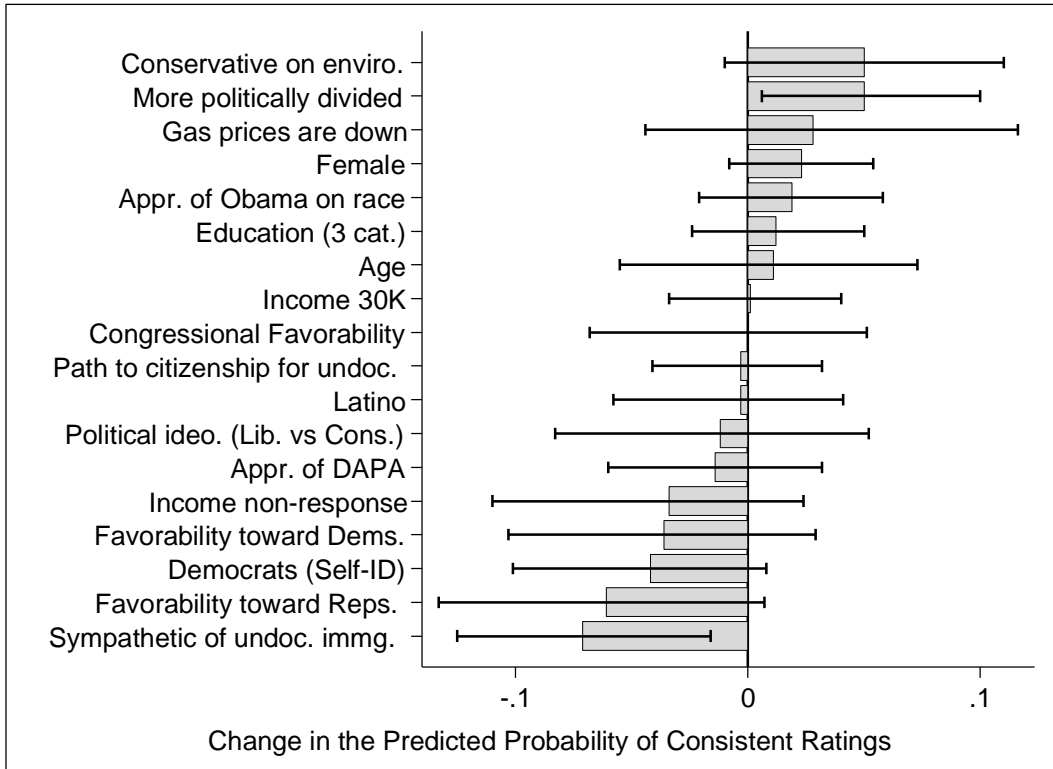
predicted. However, this effect was statistically meaningful at the conventional .05 level. This suggest that attitudes toward the president's actions does not influence whether positive or negative, approval and favorability ratings, will match.

Also, I found several factors that were not associated with consistency in approval and favorability ratings toward President Obama, including socioeconomic factors (e.g., education, income, and gender), and immigration-related factors. Additionally, support for a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, belief that Democrats were better on immigration and preference to deport unaccompanied Central-American minors all were not found to be statistically significant determinants of consistent presidential approval and favorability ratings. I did not find any differences between those who thought the economy would be better in a year, or among those who identified as Democrats. These findings suggest that ethnic-based factors had a stronger effect on stable attitudes than partisanship-based factors, which contradicts previous research (Cohen 2000).

Unlike the July 2014 Political Survey, I found only a few factors that were statistically significant in explaining differences in consistency in approval and favorability ratings for the December 2014 Political Survey. Perceptions about political divisiveness in our country and sympathy toward undocumented immigrants were associated with having consistent presidential favorability and approval ratings. Those who believed the country was more politically divided were, on average, 5 percentage points more likely to have the same approval and favorability attitude. On the other hand, those who said they are sympathetic towards undocumented

immigrants were 7 percentage points less likely to have conflicting favorability and approval ratings.

Figure 20 - Predicted probability in having a consistent view towards President Obama



Notes: Based on probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (1 = (approve/favorable) or (disapprove/not favorable); 0 = (approve/not favorable) or (disapprove/favorable)). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities for unmatched estimates were generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013); Based on data from the 2014 Pew December Political Survey. Full model estimates found in Appendix Q.

I did not find support for my hypothesis (*H6*) that unilateral action would affect consistency between approval and favorability; approval of DAPA did not have a statistically meaningful impact on consistency. Additionally, DAPA’s association with having consistent approval and favorability attitudes was not in the expected positive direction. People’s approval of DAPA was associated with a 1 percentage point decline in having the same positive or negative approval and favorability rating but this effect was not statistically significant at conventional levels. This again

suggest that people's attitudes toward the president are not associated with having the same positive or negative, presidential approval and favorability rating.

Other factors were also found to not have a statistically meaningful impact on Latino consistency in favorability and approval attitudes. The following socioeconomic factors did not have a statistically significant effect: Latino identity, gender, age, education and income. Additionally, partisanship based factors—partisan identification, political ideology, viewing Democrats favorably, viewing Republicans favorably and approving of President Obama's handling of race—also did not explain having consistent attitudes in presidential approval and favorability. Finally, viewing Congress favorably, people holding conservative preferences on the environment, belief that gas prices are down, and support a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants all did not have a statistically significant effect.

Conclusion

In three separate analyses of people's views toward President Obama, I find that approval of his policy actions on immigration was strongly associated with favorability toward him. The strength of the effect of unilateral action on President Obama's favorability ratings varied significantly between Latinos and non-Latinos in each study. I find that Latinos interviewed after the DACA announcement were substantially more likely to view President Obama favorably than Latinos interviewed before the announcement, while no effect was observed among non-Latinos. On the other hand, I find that approval of DAPA was statistically and substantively meaningful for both Latinos and non-Latinos. In both cases, approval of DAPA was associated with a double-digit percentage point increase in viewing President Obama

favorably. Finally, I find that approval of President Obama's handling of the unaccompanied minors from Central-America issue strongly predicted viewing him favorably. This effect was almost twice as large for non-Latinos, when compared to Latinos. All three studies confirmed my expectations that President Obama's actions on immigration strongly affect Latino's views toward him. As expected, partisan-based factors were also found to be the most reliable predictors of presidential favorability. However, their impact on consistency between approval and favorability ratings were, ironically, not consistent.

These results suggest that how Latinos and non-Latinos viewed President Obama's policies on immigration had a significant impact on whether they saw him favorably. Though President Obama's policies on immigration did not explain when approval and favorability diverged, other immigration-related factors did. This research contributes to the literature by revisiting why people choose to view the president favorably, but still disapprove of his performance, or vice versa. I find that Latino identity, along with immigration-related attitudes, strongly predicted consistency in favorability and approval ratings. The substantive and statistically significant impact of Latino identity and immigration-related factors differed between the 2014 July and 2014 December Pew Political Surveys. The differences in results between these two surveys suggest that consistency in favorability and approval ratings might also be influenced by the political context at the time that the survey was conducted. This seems consistent with a priming phenomenon as voters draw on political information that is readily available to evaluate the president.

Thus far, I have demonstrated that presidential actions aimed at responding to Latino policy demands on immigration affect Latinos' propensity to vote for, approve of, and view President Obama favorably. The president's unilateral action and policy representation may affect other aspects of Latino political behavior. In the final essay, I examine if policy representation heightens the Latino community's sense of political efficacy or belief in their community's ability to affect the political system in the United States.

Chapter 5: Substantive representation that matters: How President Obama's policies increased Latino political efficacy

In previous essays, I have proposed the executive priming theory (EPT) for understanding presidential behavior and the impact of a unilateral action on public attitudes. I have demonstrated that the commander-in-chief can alter Latino vote choice, presidential approval and favorability ratings at the individual level. The EPT model, however, may also help us understand other aspects of Latino political behavior. Executive powers can in some ways provide a more direct form of representation. This direct representation comes from the president's ability, through the use of executive action, to provide a quick remedy to a problem or concern, favored by a particular group, especially if Congress is unwilling, or unable to act on that issue.

I focus on the impact of President Obama's immigration policies on Latino political efficacy or belief in their community's ability to alter government. I examine political efficacy that is based on Latinos' belief in their community's ability to mobilize for a political cause to remedy a grievance. I call this concept *Latino group-based political efficacy*. This concept is similar to group-empowerment. Group empowerment is defined as "the extent to which a group has achieved significant representation and influence in political decision making" (Bobo and Gilliam 1990, p. 378). The concept I analyze here differs from group empowerment, however, in that I examine attitudes of empowerment held by people at the individual level. They are beliefs not about their political competence but that of their community. This concept also differs from linked-fate. Linked-fate argues that minority's political fortunes are

intertwined with other group members and use their identity as a heuristic to inform their political judgments (Dawson 1995; Sanchez 2006a; 2006b). Again, what distinguishes my examination of efficacy is that I am exploring whether individual Latinos believe their community can mobilize for a political cause. To my knowledge, no study has examined the impact of presidential policy representation, either substantive or descriptive, on political efficacy for Latinos.

The president's standing as the most recognized political figure in the United States makes his representation on policy a potent source of psychological priming. No other federal office is more visible than that of the president. This visibility provides the commander-in-chief with an unparalleled ability to influence and shape public opinion. The rise of candidate-centered versus party-centered presidential campaigns has also placed more pressure on the president to deliver on his campaign promises. The president's policymaking role is well known. Voters will often select a presidential candidate that will prioritize issues important to them. Congressional cooperation, however, is needed for the president to enact laws. Divided government and a fragmented party coalition can make it challenging for Congress and the president to pass federal laws.

The president can attempt to influence legislation by appealing to the public to pressure Congress, or by setting the agenda in his State of the Union address. If both of these strategies fail, the president can use his executive powers, both formal and informal, to "go it alone" (Moe and Howell 1999). Therefore, the president is in a position to shape public opinion and policy with his executive powers. The use of executive powers to enact policies can provide the public with a more direct form of

representation. The president's use of executive action can provide a remedy to a problem or concern, not solvable through regular law-making channels.

The growing electoral importance of minority communities has encouraged political candidates to reach out to them by mobilizing and appealing to their policy preferences (Leighley 2001; Collingwood et al. 2014). With respect to Latino political efficacy, existing research has found that Latinos respond positively to descriptive representation, as it makes them less likely to feel alienated (Pantoja and Segura 2003). At the federal level of government, however, Latinos are more likely to be represented by a non-Latino. This lack of descriptive representation at the national level highlights the importance of understanding how non-Latino elected officials affect the political attitudes of Latinos (Rouse 2013). I argue that descriptive representation—Latinos being represented by one of their own group members—is not the only path toward them feeling more politically efficacious.

I hypothesize that as long as Latinos have a representative that supports their policy preferences, they should not feel distant from the political process. I argue that substantive policy representation through unilateral policy actions taken on by the Obama administration positively influenced Latino political efficacy. I measure Latino group political efficacy in two ways: first by gauging Latinos belief that their native and foreign-born community is working together for a common political cause and next, I measure the extent to which Latinos believed that their community would determine the outcome of the 2012 presidential election. I expect to find that President Obama's policy representation will have a beneficial impact on both measures of Latino political group efficacy.

To test these hypotheses, I utilize data from the 2010 and 2012 National Survey of Latinos to examine the relationship between attitudes toward President Obama's policies and Latino group political efficacy. The 2012 Pew Hispanic Center National Survey of Latinos (NSL) features two questions that ask Latinos if they thought their vote would have a significant impact, minor impact, or no impact in determining the outcome of the 2012 presidential election and if they approve of President Obama's DACA policy. Next, I use data from the 2010 NSL that asked Latinos if they thought both foreign and native Latinos were working together to achieve a common political cause. Additionally, the 2010 NSL asks Latinos if they believed that President Obama's policies were either helpful, harmful or had no effect on their community. The findings from both studies generated by a multivariate probit regression analysis suggest that President Obama's perceived policy responsiveness had a significant impact on Latino political efficacy.

Unilateral presidential policymaking and Latino political efficacy

While much discussion surrounding Latinos presupposes that they are a homogenous group, in fact, Latinos are actually quite heterogeneous. Latino identity is a complicated concept. Most Latinos would agree that their community is unique. Country of origin can dictate the ease or difficulty in a family's ability to be incorporated into the United States political system. The shared immigrant story, or being children of immigrants from Latin-America, and the common shared language can at times bring the larger Latino group together. To non-Latinos, the gorditas, pupusas, and arepas, may all look the same, but each of these corn-based culinary examples of Latin cuisine exemplifies the diversity of this community. If this

community sees themselves as more different than similar, what then is there to unite them? I argue that immigration is such an important issue that it affects all Latinos in some way and serves as the basis for a political coalition (Zepeda 2017). Therefore, I examine whether the president's policy representation on the issue of immigration and toward the Latino community can bring them closer together by elevating the salience of an issue they care so much about.

Latinos have been found to hold relatively low levels of political knowledge, but at the same time are very trusting of the United States government (Abrajano and Alvarez 2010). However, there is some concern that the continuous focus on the immigration debate negatively affects Latinos' political orientations toward the United States government. In particular, many in this community are consistently disappointed by the lack of progress in resolving the issue of immigration (Pedraza 2014; Sanchez et al. 2015; Vargas et al. 2017). The ongoing immigration debate leads to an important question: Is Latino political efficacy influenced by policy representation? To answer this question, I must explore the current literature on political orientations and representation.

Several terms have been used to describe people's perceived influence over government. The term political efficacy has been described as an "amorphous concept" meant to conceptualize a sense of disconnection between citizens and their representatives (Pantoja and Segura 2003). There are two suggested components of political efficacy. The first component, known as internal efficacy, refers to a person's perception of their ability to participate in politics (Niemi et al. 1991). The second component relates to citizens' belief-in the responsiveness of elected officials to their

concerns, which is known as external political efficacy (Niemi et al. 1991). Neither of these two concepts fit my conceptualization of efficacy, thus, raising the need for a new theoretical framework. I instead utilize the political empowerment literature to study how the president's responsiveness influences Latinos' belief in their ability to shape the political process (Bobo and Gilliam 1990). Next, I explore how political representation can affect Latino political efficacy.

There are two types of prevalent representation models. The first is descriptive representation, which occurs when racial and ethnic minorities are represented by elected official from their community (Bobo and Gilliam 1990). On the other hand, substantive representation occurs when an elected official's is representing his or her constituent's policy preferences. Descriptive and substantive representation are not mutually exclusive. A Latino voter can be represented by an elected official who shares their racial or ethnic identity but this official may not vote in a manner that is consistent with this voters policy preferences. This may be the case when non-Republican self-identifying Latinos are represented by a Republican Latino elected official, or vice versa.

Descriptive representation is one of the most influential predictors of a more efficacious minority community (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Merolla et al. 2013; West 2017). Bobo and Gilliam (1990) find that the Black community felt more empowered as the number of Black representatives increased at the local level. Previous studies have found that Latinos and Blacks place greater importance on descriptive representation. This relationship varies by partisanship as Republican Latinos are less likely to emphasize descriptive representation (Casellas and Wallace 2015).

Latino have also been found to respond positively to co-ethnic representation. Pantoja and Segura (2003) find that when represented by a co-ethnic elected official Latinos become less likely to feel politically alienated (Pantoja and Segura 2003). As Pantoja and Segura (2003) state, “the cues sent by the election of ethnic representatives to fellow ethnics are that their interests will not be compromised by more powerful interests.” Subsequent research has found that this relationship is more complicated based on the heterogeneous nature of the Latino community. Sanchez and Morin (2011) observed that when Latino respondents share the same country of origin identity as their mayor, it positively affects their perceptions of linked-fate and alienation (efficacy). However, just sharing a pan-ethnic label of “Latino” (Hispanic) had no discernible impact on Latino linked-fate and alienation (Sanchez and Morin 2011).

Recent research has found some limitation to descriptive representation in terms of policy representation. For example, Latinos may be less likely to perceive policy responsiveness when represented by a Latino member of Congress (Bowen and Clark 2014). Using the 2008 Congressional Cooperative Election Study (CCES) Bowen and Clark (2014) find that though Latinos represented by a co-ethnic member of Congress were more likely to correctly recall that members’ race and party, they were less likely to believe that the co-ethnic member was representing their policy interests than a non-Latino member of Congress. This finding is in contrast to the finding observed among Whites who saw more policy congruency from a co-racial member of Congress while no statistically meaningful relationship was observed among Blacks (Bowen and Clark 2014). Additionally, Schildkraut (2014) found that

Latinos represented by a member of Congress who shared their party were more likely to emphasize the delegate role of representation while those represented by a Latino co-ethnic were more likely to emphasize the allocation model of representation. Latinos also do not automatically perceive themselves as having more substantive representation from Hispanic Congressmen (Jones 2016). Using a hypothetical scenario Jones (2016) did not find a difference among Latinos in perceived policy congruence with Hispanic or White Congressmen. This relationship seems to indicate that Latinos do not automatically dismiss non-Latinos representatives as not sharing the same policy preferences. This recent research provides some evidence for the argument that Latinos do not necessarily expect, or always receive, substantive policy representation from their co-ethnic representatives. Yet, policy representation seems to be expected of non-Latino representatives.

Nonetheless, Latino co-ethnic representation in government seems to have a positive impact on Latino group members' political efficacy. At the federal level of government, however, Latinos are more likely to be represented by a non-Latino elected official (e.g. congressman or president). Though previous research has found that descriptive representation can affect different components of Latino political efficacy (Pantoja and Segura 2003, Sanchez and Morin 2011) it is still not clear if substantive representation can have this same effect on political efficacy, especially when represented by a non-Latino candidate. The lack of co-ethnic representation at the national level makes it imperative to explore how non-Latino elected officials representing this community can affect their sense of political efficacy. Do Latinos respond as positively to substantive representation as they do to descriptive

representation? To my knowledge, there is void in the literature as scholars have not directly tested the impact of substantive representation on Latino political efficacy. Vargas et al. (2017) researching a similar concept, found that as the number of punitive immigration laws passed in a state increased, so did Latino perceived linked-fate. They also show that the same is true of beneficial immigration laws, especially among foreign-born Latinos (Vargas et al. 2017). These findings suggest that less substantive representation leads to a higher sense of empowerment aimed at changing Latinos' standing at the state level.

Even if Latinos were found to respond positively to substantive representation, why would a candidate choose to represent this community's policy preferences, especially if they do not make up a majority of his or her constituents? To answer this question, I draw on recent literature that examines the motivations for candidates reaching out to voters who do not share their racial or ethnic background by emphasizing shared minority-group identity. Collingwood et al. (2014) propose a cross-racial-mobilization (CRM) model as an extension of the traditional vote choice model that accounts for a candidate's policy and outreach strategies to explain Latino vote choice during the 2012 presidential election. According to the CRM model, candidates attempt to sway voters by taking on policy positions that are popular with them and actively work to mobilize this community through get-out-the-vote drives (GOTV) and strategic advertising (Collingwood and Barreto 2014; Collingwood et al. 2014). Voters who constitute a large voting bloc community are primarily of interest to candidates as they can influence the outcome of an election. The scholars speculate that voters who are being courted by candidates from different racial and ethnic

backgrounds should have a higher sense of political efficacy, but do not directly test this hypothesis. As Collingwood et al. (2014) suggest, “In turn, the candidate that most successfully taps into shared minority-group identity will be the candidate who Latinos are likely to view most favorably. This process, we argue, may enhance voters’ political efficacy..., p. 3.” This relationship comes from receiving strong messages from a political actor that their policy preferences matter. This responsiveness should, therefore, increase voters’ feelings that the political system is working for them and that they have the ability to influence the system.

At the federal level, Congress, as the national legislative body, is the most prominent policymaker in our government. However, Latinos’ policy preferences, when compared to Whites, are underrepresented by Congress (Griffin and Newman 2007). Griffin and Newman (2007) find that this disparity decreases in areas where Latinos are more engaged in electoral politics and when represented by a co-ethnic Latino or a Democrat. The lack of Latino substantive representation in Congress might make a president’s unilateral actions more meaningful.

Throughout American history, presidents have used their executive powers to influence both domestic and foreign policy with mixed results (Howell and Moe 1999; Mayer 1999; Mayer and Price 2002; Marshall and Pacelle 2005). These powers include both formal executive actions such as executive orders, memorandums, proclamations and signing statements. There are also some other informal ways in which the president can affect the policymaking process including making public appeals to pressure Congress, giving State of the Union Address, utilizing directives, and promoting policy ideas through speeches.

Executive action can offer presidents an opportunity to show voters that they are doing something to respond to their concerns and elevate the importance of these issues for voters. Most scholars have focused on a president's propensity to issue an executive order to measure unilateral action or executive power. Mayer (1999) found a link between issuing a presidential order and the presence of a looming election. Mayer (1999) writes that "this fits well with the notion that executive orders allow presidents to shape the public agenda and maintain ties with important constituencies during campaigns." The president is often said to exert more influence on foreign policy (Wildavsky 1966; Canes-Wrone et al. 2008); however, the president can have more success sometimes on domestic issues by focusing the media's and Congress's attention on his initiatives (Edwards and Wood 1998).

Ultimately, modern American presidents have been more focused on securing their place in history by demonstrating leadership on key political issues, thus making it necessary for them to be more active in policymaking (Moe and Howell 1999; Wildavsky 1966). Therefore, the goal of the president is to continue adding to his legacy, suggesting that there is a willingness to use all available resources to maintain power—win reelection—including executive authority to make policy changes. The president in search of winning an election, becomes motivated to provide marginalized communities like Latinos with policy representation to help ensure that they will get out and vote (Collingwood et al. 2014). By doing so, the president whether intentional or not, also lifts this community's sense of political influence as their policy demands are being responded to, even if they are based on temporary executive unilateral policy actions.

Taken together, existing research strongly suggests that the president can use his office to prime the public's attitudes and change their perceived level of political efficacy. I argue that President Obama's policies including the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), provides an excellent case study that allows us to examine if a president's executive decision affects voters' sense of efficacy. Additionally, it is important to see if general perceptions about how President Obama's policies affect Latino political behavior.

Hypotheses

By acting unilaterally on the issue of immigration through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, President Obama was able to change the narrative about him on the issue immigration—that he reneged on the Latino community on the issue of immigration—ahead of the 2012 presidential election. This signal of policy responsiveness should have led to higher efficacious attitudes within the Latino community. Before the 2012 presidential election, the Obama administration's deportation policies raised concern among many Latinos. Therefore, this may have created differences in political efficacy between Latinos who believed that President Obama's policies had helped their community versus those who thought they had been harmful.

I argue that when Latinos' political preferences are considered, they become more likely to hold efficacious attitudes. For this to happen, Latinos must be aware that policymakers are acting, or are not acting on their behalf. Measuring awareness can be challenging, as Latinos have been found to hold lower levels of political knowledge (Nicholson et al. 2006). This lack of political information places the

president in a unique position to influence Latino political efficacy. It is difficult for the public to discern who is responsible for passing a law or stopping a bill from becoming law in Congress. Unlike Congress, the president's public policy responsibility is the most visible at the national level. People give the president credit or blame depending on whether things are going well or not. This attribution of responsibility is because no other office is as publicly visible as that of the president with almost daily news media coverage. However, not all presidential policy actions are newsworthy; only those that are deemed necessary by a journalist will be reported. Since the news media is a business, it often focuses its news coverage on controversial topics as it is assumed that people are more interested in learning about these types of events.

The issue of immigration is a significant issue that can draw Latinos together (Rouse 2013; Barreto and Segura 2014, Zepeda 2017). Therefore, it is likely that Latinos will respond positively to elected officials working to find solutions to the nation's immigration crisis. Additionally, immigration news media coverage seems to focus its attention on the Latino community (Valentino et al. 2013). As a result, news coverage involving this "Latino issue" will be accessible to many Latinos in memory. When the president acts on an issue that a community cares about, his actions will be more meaningful due to the high level of visibility of the office. From a psychological perspective, it is harder for people to make lasting linkages between public policy and an elected official without having a direct "target" to base it on. In other words, it is easy for people to recall the actions of President Obama, Reagan or Clinton on immigration than that of the 112th, 104th or 99th Congress. Even the least politically

savvy person can have a sense of a president's position on a controversial issue. With this theoretical framework in mind, I propose the following hypotheses.

For this study, I hypothesize that the DACA policy led to a higher perception of group-based political efficacy among Latinos. By acting unilaterally on the issue of immigration through the DACA policy, President Obama was able to change the narrative about him on the issue immigration—that he failed to live up to his promises on this issue. This signal of policy responsiveness should have led to a greater sense of empowerment within the Latino community or efficacious attitudes. Also, I argue that Latinos' general views toward President Obama's policies impact on their community should strongly predict levels of political efficacy. If Latinos feel that the president's policies are benefiting their community, then this should increase efficacious attitudes. At the same time, if Latinos do not think that the current political system is serving their needs, then this should reduce levels of political efficacy.

Research Strategy and Results

To test these hypotheses, I utilize data from two large nationally representative telephone landline and cell phone samples of adult Latinos. The 2010 and 2012 National Survey of Latinos are used to examine the relationship between attitudes toward President Obama's policies on immigration and Latino political efficacy. Each study contains a battery of survey items to measure the variables of interest seen in table 9. The following is a detailed explanation of the research strategy and methods employed to test the proposed hypotheses for each study.

Table 9 - Survey items for dependent and independent variables of interest

	2010 National Survey of Latinos	2012 National Survey of Latinos
Dependent variable of interest	<p>Which comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly correct? (HISPANIC/LATINO) immigrants and native-born (HISPANICS/LATINOS)?</p> <p>Response categories: 1. Today are working together to achieve common political goals, or 2. Are not working together politically</p>	<p>Now in thinking about the 2012 Presidential election, in your opinion, will the (HISPANIC/LATINO) vote have a major impact, a minor impact or will it have no impact at all in determining who wins the 2012 Presidential election?</p> <p>Response categories: 1. Major impact 2. Minor impact 3. No impact at all</p>
Independent variable of interest	<p>Overall, do you think that the Obama administration's policies have been helpful to (LATINOS), harmful to (LATINOS), or have they had no particular effect on (LATINOS)?</p> <p>Response categories: 1. Helpful 2. Harmful 3. No effect</p>	<p>President Obama recently announced a policy that will allow illegal immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children to remain in the U.S. and apply for work permits. Do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of this new policy?</p> <p>Response categories: 1. Strongly approve 2. approve 3. disapprove 4. Strongly disapprove</p>

Study – 1: 2012 Pew Hispanic Center National Survey of Latinos

The 2012 Pew Hispanic Center National Survey of Latinos (NSL) is a nationally representative sample of 1,765 Latino respondents. The survey was conducted from September 7 to October 4, 2012. The 2012 NSL features a new question seen on table 9, which I helped create as a summer intern at the Pew

Hispanic Center. The goal of this measure was to capture Latinos' belief in the idea that their community would have a decisive impact on the 2012 presidential election. It asks Latinos if they thought the “Latino vote” would have a major, minor or no impact in determining the outcome of the 2012 presidential election. I use this measure to gauge perceived group-based efficacy. I argue that this survey item captures the extent to which Latinos think they wield significant electoral influence. I recorded responses to this question as 1 representing Latinos who believed that their community would have a substantial impact in determining who would win the general election; I assigned a value of 0 to all other responses. Next, to measure the impact of President Obama’s policy representation, I used the question in table 9 that asked respondents whether they approve of DACA. I assigned those who approved of DACA a value of 1 and all other responses were coded as 0.

With the 2012 NSL, I control for several important factors. I account for differences between Mexican and non-Mexican Latinos. As the largest sub-origin group within the Latino community, Mexicans may have a distinct outlook toward their political efficacy compared to other Latinos. Latinos’ beliefs that Democrats care more about them captures the view that one of the two major political parties is responding to their policy demands and should increase their empowerment. Also, I expect knowing someone who has applied for DACA to be associated with higher Latino efficacious attitudes. Those who know someone who has been deported should also have higher levels of efficacy as these individuals may be more likely to want political action. I also account for the salience of immigration and Spanish-language

interviewees¹⁴. Those for whom immigration is salient should be more likely to say that Latinos will determine the outcome of the election due to the politicization of immigration. Spanish-speakers are also more likely to receive news about the immigration debate (Abrajano and Singh 2009).

Additionally, I account for other political factors including interest in the campaign and Democratic partisanship. Those more interested in the campaign may be more politically inclined and to believe that Latinos will dictate the outcome of the election. At the same time, Democrats should also have higher efficacy due to the policy messages their same-party president has sent with his actions. I also account for Latinos' perceived level of responsiveness from the Democratic Party based on those who believe Democrats care more about Latinos. Latinos who feel that the party is responding to their policy needs should also have a higher sense of political empowerment.

Finally, I account for traditional socioeconomic indicators: age, education, income, and gender. I expect to find older Latinos to have a higher sense of political efficacy, since they are traditionally more active in politics. The more highly educated and wealthy segments of the Latino population will also have higher levels of efficacy due to access to political information and economic and political interest in how the country is governed. There is mixed evidence about female support for

¹⁴ I use Spanish language interviews in this analysis instead of foreign-born for simplicity because the two correlate highly (correlation=0.65). I also found that 89% of native-born Latinos were administered the English questionnaire while 76% of foreign-born Latinos were given the Spanish survey. This strong association makes it very difficult to distinguish the effect of nativity and language of interview. The language of an interview is also theoretically a critical factor for understanding Latino attitudes (Perez 2009; Lee and Perez 2014). Omitting one of these variables or including them both does not alter the main findings of our paper in any meaningful way. These results are available upon request.

immigrant rights. Due to previous mixed findings I do not have an expectation for the impact of gender on Latino efficacy. All of these factors should help explain levels of Latino political.

To test the hypothesis that President Obama's policies are associated with elevated attitudes of group efficacy, I estimate the effect of supporting the DACA policy on Latino sense of influence during the 2012 general election by utilizing a multivariate probit regression model. Also, I control for the previously mentioned covariates. Since coefficients generated from non-linear regression models, such as probit, are difficult to interpret on their own I focus my analysis on the predicted probabilities generated through simulation using the observed value approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2003).

Results

The results of the analysis confirm the proposed association between Latinos' perceptions about a president's responsiveness to their concerns on immigration and belief in their group's political efficacy. I find that perceived substantive representation on the issue of immigration by President Obama led to a heightened sense of Latino empowerment. Among Latinos who supported the DACA policy, there was, on average, a 22 percentage point change in the predicted probability that their community would have a decisive impact in determining the winner of the 2012 presidential election as seen on figure 21. This effect size was substantively large and statistically meaningful at the conventional p-value of .05. The results from the 2012 NSL analysis demonstrate that President Obama's DACA policy was the strongest

predictor of Latinos' belief that their community would determine the outcome of the 2012 presidential election.

Other factors that predict elevated levels of Latino group efficacy are Democrat partisan identity and belief that Democrats care more about Latinos. Latinos who identify as Democrats were 7 percentages more likely to think that their community would determine who wins the 2012 general election than Latino non-Democratic identifiers. At the same time, Latinos who believed that Democrats care more about Latinos were 14 percentage points more likely to have higher levels of group efficacy. Aside from partisanship, attentiveness to the election and salience of the immigration issues were also strong predictors of Latino political efficacy.

Latinos who had given quite a lot of thought to the upcoming election were 20 percentage points more likely to believe that their community would matter in determining the winner of the election than those who had not given any thought to the upcoming election. Those Latinos who say that the issue of immigration was an important issue were also 20 percentages points more likely to feel empowered. Finally, there was a divide between Spanish and English interviewees, with Spanish interviewees being 10 percentage points, on average, more likely to believe that Latinos would determine who would win the presidential election. All other factors had both small and statistically insignificant associations with the dependent variable of interest.

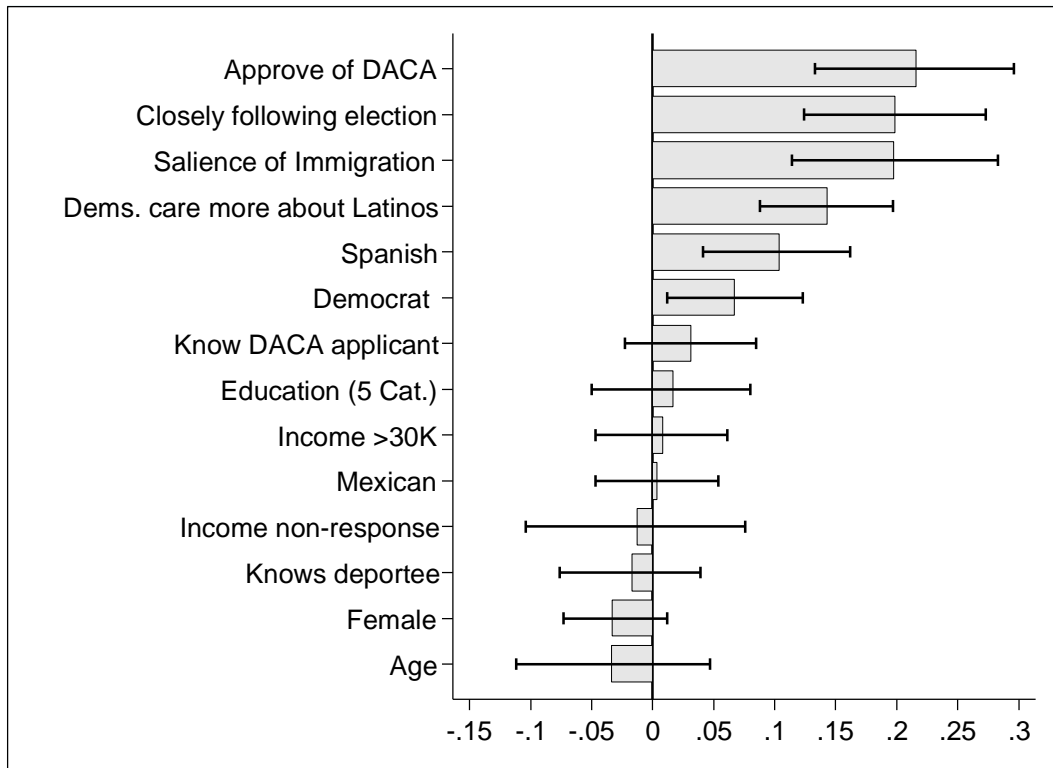
Study – 2: 2010 Pew Hispanic Center National Survey of Latinos

As mentioned earlier, substantive policy representation from President Obama might affect levels of Latino political efficacy. The 2010 Pew National Survey of

Latinos contains survey items that allow me to test the proposed hypothesis. The survey is a nationally representative telephone and cell-phone sample of 1,375

Latinos and was conducted from August 17 through September 19, 2010.

Figure 21 - Predicted probability in believing that Latinos will determine outcome of 2012 presidential election



Notes: Shown predicted probabilities are based on probit-regression analysis and generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 with all factors set at their observed value. Based on data from the 2012 Pew Research Center's National Survey of Latinos. Complete model estimates found in Appendix R.

The dependent variable of interest in this survey stems from a question that asked respondents if they believe that native and foreign-born Latinos are working together to achieve a common political cause. For this analysis, I coded those who thought that native and foreign-born Latinos were working together as 1, while all other responses were assigned a value of 0. If Latinos believe that their community is receiving adequate representation, it should increase their belief in their ability to

organize as a political coalition. The focus then is to capture Latinos' perceptions about the impact of President Obama's policies on their community. The independent variable of interest comes from a survey item that asked Latinos if they thought President Obama's policies were helpful or harmful toward Latinos. This question was asked after the 2010 Arizona immigration laws, and at a time when Latinos were increasingly upset about the Obama administration's immigration policies, specifically the steady increase in the number of deportations. I coded Latinos who thought President Obama's policies were helpful as 1, while all other responses were coded as 0.

Along with these measures, I also control for gender, age, levels of education and income, as well as other factors that capture attitudes on immigration. I also capture if Latinos are worried that someone they know might be deported or if they believe that people are now less accepting of immigrants. Latino political efficacy (the belief that Latinos' are working together) was estimated using a probit analysis. The presentation, again, is focused on predicted probabilities generated through simulation using the observed value approach.

Results

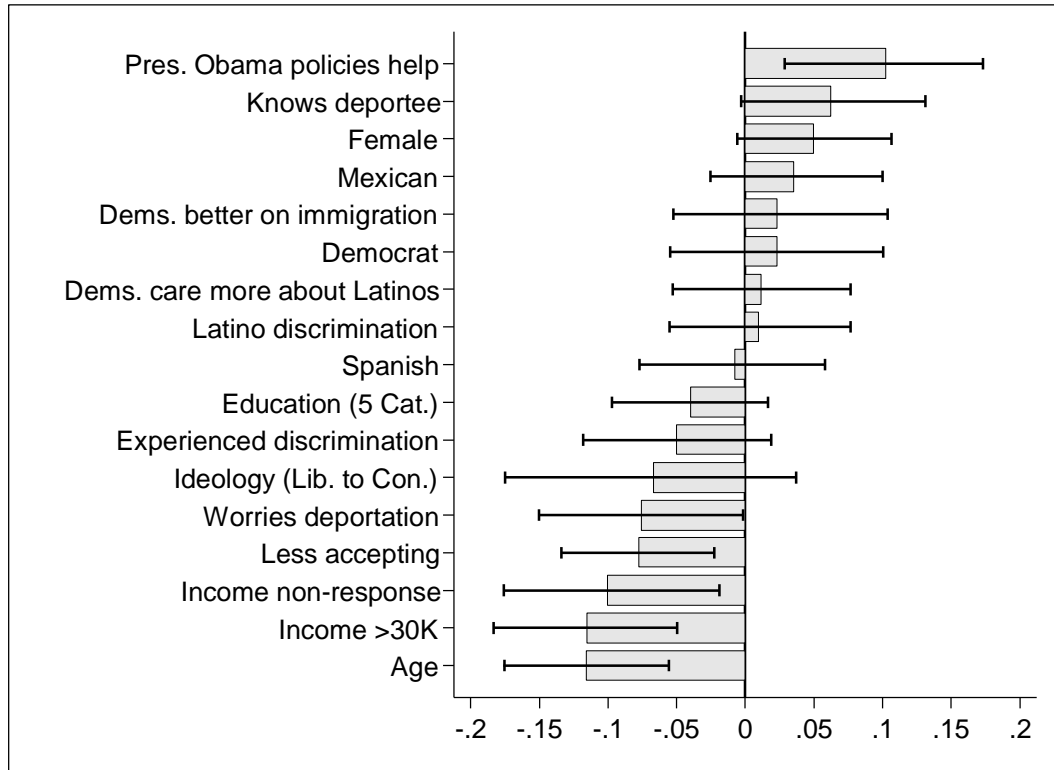
Based on the 2010 NSL, I confirm the hypothesis that Latino's political efficacy increases as a result of perceived substantive representation from the president. Looking at figure 22, I find that Latinos who believed that President Obama's policies were helpful to their community were 10 percentage points more likely to say that both native and foreign-born Latinos are working together to achieve a common political goal. Again, this effect size is statistically meaningful at

conventional levels and the most reliable predictor of heightening perceptions of political efficacy.

Aside from policy responsiveness at the presidential level, I find that some other factors are negatively associated with Latino political efficacy. Two immigration-based attitudes were found to be negatively correlated with Latino political efficacy. Latinos who worried the most that someone they know would be deported were 8 percentage points less likely to think that Latinos were working together; this effect was statistically meaningful at conventional levels. Meanwhile, Latinos who believed that people were less accepting of immigrants were 8 percentage points less likely to think that Latinos were working together, also a statistically significant effect. These findings suggest that factors capturing how the issue of immigration affects Latinos have a profound impact on their beliefs about the extent to which their community can influence the political process.

Latinos earning more than \$30,000 and those who refused to answer the income question were 10 percentage points less likely to say that Latinos are working together for a common political cause (significant at the .05 p-value). At the same time, those earning less than \$30,000 were less likely to think that Latinos were working together by a change of 12 percentage points in predicted probability. Age was the last statistically meaningful association found. Elderly Latinos were less likely to hold efficacious attitudes, as well, by a margin 12 percentage points.

Figure 22 - Predicted probability in saying that foreign-born and native-born Latinos are working together



Notes: Shown predicted probabilities are based on probit-regression analysis and generated through simulation with the seed set at 99 with all factors set at their observed value. Based on data from the 2010 Pew Research Center's National Survey of Latinos. Complete model estimates found in Appendix S.

All remaining factors, education, gender, Mexican identity, belief that Democrats are better on immigration and that Democrats care more about Latinos, Democratic partisan identity, political ideology along with perceived and experienced discrimination toward Latinos did not have a statistically meaningful impact on their political efficacy.

Though not statistically significant, some factors did have a substantively meaningful change in Latino's perceptions that both native and foreign-born Latinos are working together. Latinos who knew someone who had been deported were associated with being more efficacious. This effect size was substantively meaningful

with a 6 percentage point change but not statistically significant at the conventional level of .05. Additionally, Latinas were found to be 5 percentage points less likely to say that Latinos are working together. Very conservative Latinos versus those who are very liberal were 7 percentage points less likely to say that Latinos are working together, but again, not a statistically significant finding. Latinos who worried that a close acquaintance would be deported were 8 percentage points less inclined to believe that the community's native and foreign-born are working together. Finally, those who thought people are less accepting of immigrants were 8 percentage points less likely to feel the community is working together.

Discussion

Even after controlling for several critical factors, I find that President Obama's perceived responsiveness to the Latino community was associated with a higher belief in Latino political efficacy. These findings suggest that substantive representation at the presidential level has a meaningful influence on Latinos' perceived level of political power, both electoral and collective power. The positive association between the policies of a president's administration and political efficacy demonstrates how effective executive actions are at influencing political behavior. These findings support the executive priming theory (EPT) while revealing a vital source of presidential power, indirectly influence on attitudes vis-à-vis presidential priming.

With these results, I expand on the EPT by demonstrating how a candidate's policy appeals can indeed elevate the targeted minority community's sense of political efficacy. To my knowledge, this is the first paper to find evidence that substantive

representation at the presidential level increases Latinos' perceived influence over the American political process. Additionally, consistent with recent research, I show how much of an influence the issue of immigration has on Latino attitudes. In both models, attitudes about immigration had a profound impact on Latino's perceived level of group political efficacy.

Using the 2010 National Survey of Latinos, I find strong evidence that many Latinos directly affected by the issue of immigration held the belief that their community was less politically efficacious. Whether it was because they were worried that someone within their social network could be deported or believed that people in the U.S. were less accepting of immigrants, Latinos were feeling less empowered. On the other hand, those who believed President Obama's policies benefited their community were more likely to believe that Latinos were working together politically. In 2012, unlike 2010, those who thought that Democrats cared more about Latinos were more likely to have efficacious attitudes.

In future research it is critical that scholars continue to monitor and document the impact of presidential executive actions on the American public. Although I find an association between unilateral presidential action and political attitudes, I was unable to discern direct causal evidence. Moving forward researchers can improve on this work by testing the executive priming theory (EPT) using experimental evidence that can establish a causal relationship, such as with panel data.

Conclusion

In four essays, I have argued that President Obama affected various political attitudes through his policy actions, especially those on immigration. All of these unilateral policy actions were meant to galvanize a Latino community whose support for President Obama had weakened. Latinos who approved of President Obama's unilateral actions on immigration were more likely to say that they would vote for him over his Republican challenger, Mitt Romney, in the 2012 presidential election. Latinos who approved of President Obama's executive actions on immigration were also more likely to say that they approve of his performance and view him more favorably. Though President Obama's policy action did not explain when his approval and favorability ratings did not match, Latino identity and immigration-related attitudes, along with age, were found to explain differences in favorability and approval. Finally, I find that presidential policy representation can also shape Latinos' sense of political power. All of these essays find that Latino, and in many instances non-Latino, perceptions about the president's policies on immigration shaped political behavior during the Obama presidency.

It is likely that other communities receiving attention from the president can be affected by the president's policy posturing and use of unilateral executive actions to make significant policy shifts. Indeed, at the time of this writing Congress and President Obama's successor, President Trump, are engaged in a debate on how to handle the DACA policy that they inherited. President Trump himself ran on a campaign promise to crack down on illegal immigration and has already used his executive powers to push for funding of a border wall with Mexico and to let the

DACA policy expire, thus forcing Congress to come up with a solution. Further, early in his Presidency, Trump used executive powers to ban certain immigrants, initially from Muslim countries, from legally entering the country. He has continued to use the office to redefine immigration enforcement and border security by providing them with more leeway to apprehend and return undocumented immigrants to their country of origin, or a partnering nation such as Mexico, as in the case of Central-Americans.

This radical shift in the handling of immigration policies raises another important question, will these presidential policies by the Trump administration also shape Latino and non-Latino political behavior? Could a president who is not responsive to Latinos cause them to hold harmful political attitudes such as distrust in government? This question is especially crucial for Latino scholars to explore as some research has already found negative consequences of anti-immigrant rhetoric on Latino political behavior (Pedraza 2014). In the future, if immigrant and other marginalized communities, are ignored at the federal-level this could potentially affect their ability to acculturate into the American political process.

Appendices

Appendix - A

2012 Pew June Political Survey: Presentation of Covariate Differences by Treatment (After DACA) and Control Groups (Before DACA)

Variables	Unmatched				Post Coarsen Exact Matching		
	Before	After	Diff.	p-value	Before	After	Diff.
Call Attempts	2	3	1	0.000	3	3	0
Refusal	0.116	0.216	0.100	0.000	0.198	0.198	0
Conversion							
Latino	0.064	0.136	0.072	0.000	0.103	0.103	0
Interviewer							
Republican	0.439	0.370	-0.069	0.011	0.390	0.390	0
Democrat	0.479	0.540	0.061	0.024	0.530	0.530	0
Latino	0.074	0.121	0.047	0.002	0.106	0.106	0
Spanish	0.011	0.057	0.046	0.000	0.043	0.043	0
Female	0.504	0.526	0.022	0.403	0.517	0.530	0.013
Income > 30K	0.625	0.618	-0.007	0.806	0.645	0.628	-0.017
Female	0.731	0.720	-0.011	0.625	0.705	0.723	0.018
Interviewer							
Income Non-response	0.109	0.094	-0.015	0.376	0.085	0.098	0.013
Education (3 Cat.)	2.222	2.159	-0.063	0.178	2.237	2.165	0.072
Age (years)	49	48	-1	0.483	49	48	1
Sample Size (N)	1,561	452	-	-	1,516	400	-

Two-tailed test. Numbers reflect weighted averages.

Appendix - B

2012 Pew Research Center Omnibus Survey: Probability of Following News about President Obama's DACA Policy Very or Fairly Closely

	Coef.	p-value	% Δ (CI: LB, UB)
Latino	0.564	0.004	0.19 (0.09, 0.27)
Female	-0.093	0.369	
Age	0.174	0.000	
Education	0.246	0.000	
Income	0.035	0.156	
Democrat	0.228	0.030	
Constant	-1.439	0.000	
N	856		

Notes: Results are based on a probit model with a dichotomous dependent variable (Very or fairly closely=1 and not too or not at all =0). Confidence intervals (.95) for predicted probabilities were generated through simulation using the observed value approach seed was set at 99 (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013). Only respondents interviewed from June 15th to 17th are included as the question was not asked on June 14th.

Appendix - C

2012 June Political Survey: Pre-Matching, Model Estimates of the DACA's Impact on Immigration's Salience and Support for President Obama's reelection

Variables	Salience of Immigration		Support	
	Coef.	p-value	Coef.	p-value
After DACA	-0.176	0.054	-0.142	0.015
Latino	0.450	0.080	0.113	0.497
After DACA * Latino	0.420	0.029	1.149	0.005
Education (3 Cat.)	-0.084	0.148	0.035	0.402
Income Non-response	0.075	0.710	-0.235	0.203
Income 30K+	0.056	0.698	-0.311	0.033
Interest in 2012 Election	0.003	0.981	-0.016	0.859
Democrat ID	-0.219	0.183	1.517	0.000
Republican ID	0.077	0.687	-1.005	0.000
Age	-0.003	0.165	-0.007	0.001
Female	0.045	0.567	0.077	0.360
Spanish Interview	0.658	0.050	-0.171	0.747
Latino Interviewer	0.264	0.176	0.100	0.314
Female Interviewer	-0.085	0.509	0.040	0.785
Refusal Conversion	-0.023	0.902	-0.052	0.764
Call Attempts	-0.040	0.184	-0.034	0.152
Constant	-1.273	0.000	0.221	0.183
N	1,962		1,962	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are from a probit model using national sample weights.

Appendix - D

2012 June Political Survey: Post-Matching, Model Estimates of the DACA's Impact on Immigration's Salience and Support for President Obama's reelection

Variables	Post-Matching Estimates			
	Salience of Immigration		Support	
	Coef.	p-value	Coef.	p-value
After DACA	0.009	0.901	-0.152	0.064
Latino	0.598	0.029	-0.081	0.621
After DACA * Latino	0.351	0.014	0.761	0.012
Education (3 Cat.)	-0.139	0.030	0.033	0.574
Income Non-response	0.030	0.900	0.030	0.849
Income 30K+	0.074	0.687	0.003	0.979
Interest in 2012 Election	0.187	0.253	0.006	0.944
Democrat ID	-0.470	0.021	1.513	0.000
Republican ID	-0.164	0.371	-1.061	0.000
Age	0.000	0.912	-0.008	0.000
Female	0.007	0.935	0.143	0.168
Spanish Interview	0.356	0.357	0.841	0.029
Latino Interviewer	0.294	0.238	-0.017	0.934
Female Interviewer	0.022	0.790	-0.161	0.214
Refusal Conversion	0.259	0.330	-0.175	0.152
Call Attempts	-0.058	0.093	-0.068	0.003
Constant	-1.277	0.000	0.304	0.154
N	1,883		1,883	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are from a probit model using Coarsen-Exact-Matching weights (Iacus et al. 2012).

Appendix - E

2012 National Survey of Latinos: Model Estimates of Approval for DACA's Impact on Obama Support

Variables	Coef.	p-values
Approve of DACA	0.606	0.000
Mexican	-0.128	0.328
Democrat (Self-ID)	1.760	0.000
Dems. care more about Latinos	0.639	0.000
Female	0.038	0.788
Spanish Interview	-0.201	0.236
Age (4 Cat.)	-0.018	0.816
Interest in Election	-0.066	0.300
Income 30K+	-0.232	0.146
Income Non-response	0.189	0.441
Education (3 Cat.)	-0.130	0.111
Saliency of Immigration	0.005	0.947
Knows DACA Applicant	0.030	0.862
Knows a deportee	0.169	0.375
Own Finances will get better	0.031	0.768
Country's Economy will improve	0.194	0.001
Constant	-1.248	0.010
N	1,118	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - F

2010 National Survey of Latinos: Predicting President Obama approval

Variables	Coef.	P-values
Obama policies help	0.995	0.000
Obama policies hurt	-0.474	0.001
Obama policies DK	-0.294	0.123
Dems. care more about Latinos	0.341	0.003
Dems. better on immigration	0.310	0.014
Democrats (Self-ID)	0.337	0.009
Immigration is salient	-0.071	0.239
Discrimination toward immigrants	0.024	0.806
Knows a deportee	-0.117	0.270
Worry about deportations	-0.024	0.569
Spanish	0.115	0.295
Female	-0.028	0.769
Income 30K	-0.222	0.088
Income non-response	-0.054	0.655
Age	-0.008	0.007
Mexican	-0.150	0.116
Education (5 cat.)	0.005	0.914
Constant	0.349	0.329
N	1,305	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - G

2011 National Survey of Latinos: Predicting President Obama approval

Variables	Coef.	P-values
Disapprove of Obama on deportations	-0.804	0.000
Obama deporting more than Bush	-0.039	0.725
Latinos hurt most by “Great Recession”	-0.016	0.875
Democrats care more about Latinos	0.207	0.066
Democrats (Self-ID)	0.534	0.000
Immigration is salient	0.016	0.788
Know a deportee	-0.131	0.286
Spanish	0.265	0.035
Female	-0.032	0.749
Income 30K	-0.213	0.083
Income non-response	-0.301	0.038
Age	-0.010	0.845
Mexican	-0.137	0.185
Education (5 Cat.)	0.080	0.116
Constant	-0.232	0.496
N	1,167	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - H

2012 June Political Survey: Predicting President Obama approval

Variables	Pre-matching		Post-matching	
	Coef.	p-value	Coef.	p-value
After DACA	0.032	0.700	-0.017	0.732
Latino	-0.188	0.399	-0.436	0.040
After DACA * Latino	0.192	0.617	0.088	0.811
Education (3 Cat.)	0.060	0.009	0.076	0.072
Income Non-response	-0.100	0.412	0.036	0.744
Income 30K+	0.031	0.759	0.078	0.369
Interest in 2012 Election	0.019	0.794	-0.110	0.117
Democrat ID	1.122	0.000	1.276	0.000
Republican ID	-0.767	0.000	-0.802	0.000
Age	-0.007	0.002	-0.006	0.021
Female	0.052	0.538	0.060	0.527
Spanish Interview	0.384	0.315	1.190	0.001
Latino Interviewer	-0.223	0.140	-0.276	0.150
Female Interviewer	-0.154	0.049	-0.288	0.001
Refusal Conversion	-0.194	0.004	-0.316	0.000
Call Attempts	-0.009	0.625	-0.037	0.022
Constant	-0.038	0.857	0.054	0.825
N	1,962		1,883	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - I

2012 Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey Approval of Obama: Predicting President Obama approval

Variables	Approve of DACA		Approve of Dream Act	
	Coef.	p-value	Coef.	p-value
Approve of DACA	0.782	0.000		
Approve of Dream Act			0.737	0.000
Latino	0.056	0.875	0.910	0.004
Latino * Approve of DACA	-0.095	0.814		
Latino * Approve of Dream Act			-0.757	0.033
Education 3 (Cat.)	-0.023	0.676	0.050	0.403
Income non-response	-0.031	0.132	-0.003	0.836
Income > 30K	0.016	0.914	-0.111	0.196
Interest in 2012 Presidential Election	0.064	0.223	0.018	0.697
Democrat	1.090	0.000	1.317	0.000
Republican	-0.658	0.000	-0.614	0.001
Age	-0.008	0.003	-0.005	0.066
Female	0.028	0.802	-0.214	0.077
Spanish	-0.247	0.372	0.150	0.758
Latino Interviewer	0.453	0.001	0.107	0.174
Female Interviewer	-0.174	0.147	0.012	0.822
Refusal Conversion	-0.251	0.017	0.093	0.407
Call Attempts	0.038	0.039	-0.028	0.238
Constant	-0.078	0.854	-0.778	0.190
N	1,358		1,369	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - J

2014 Pew July Political Survey: Predicting President Obama approval

Variables	Coef.	P-value	Coef.	P-value
Approve Obama on CA child entry crisis	1.069	0.000	1.150	0.000
Deport CA undocumented minors	-0.273	0.008	-0.273	0.008
Heard about CA child entry	0.118	0.122	0.122	0.112
Democrats better on immigration	0.186	0.076	0.179	0.091
Important to pass immigration law	-0.002	0.962	-0.003	0.937
Path to citizenship for undocumented imm.	0.224	0.030	0.220	0.033
Economic conditions excellent	0.319	0.000	0.318	0.000
Economy better in a year	0.341	0.003	0.358	0.002
Plenty of jobs in community	0.058	0.613	0.050	0.668
Education (3 Cat.)	0.092	0.123	0.086	0.150
Income non-response	-0.390	0.067	-0.388	0.068
Income 30K	-0.267	0.025	-0.265	0.025
Democrats (Self-ID)	1.068	0.000	1.059	0.000
Age	0.002	0.405	0.002	0.395
Female	0.026	0.791	0.034	0.728
Latino	-0.083	0.593	0.020	0.910
Approve of Congress	0.379	0.000	0.384	0.000
Political Ideology (Liberal vs. Conservative)	0.121	0.034	0.117	0.040
Appr. Obama on CA child entry crisis*Latino			-0.360	0.236
Constant	-2.497	0.000	-2.494	0.000
N	1,544			

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - K

2014 Pew December Political Survey: Predicting President Obama approval

Variables	Coef.	P-values	Coef.	P-values
Approve of Obama on race relations	0.851	0.000	0.871	0.000
Approve of DAPA	0.665	0.000	0.590	0.000
Education (3 Cat.)	-0.023	0.749	-0.021	0.772
Income non-response	-0.123	0.537	-0.108	0.578
Income 30K	-0.119	0.377	-0.125	0.355
Democrats (Self-ID)	0.622	0.000	0.604	0.000
Age	0.000	0.956	0.000	0.969
Female	-0.146	0.210	-0.142	0.224
Political Ideology (Liberals vs Conservative)	0.208	0.001	0.224	0.000
Sympathetic of undocumented immigrants	0.096	0.156	0.094	0.163
Path to citizenship for undocumented	0.033	0.798	0.046	0.720
Gas prices are down	-0.039	0.567	-0.031	0.650
More politically divided	0.050	0.741	0.060	0.692
Conservative on the environment	-0.237	0.269	-0.253	0.237
Favorability toward Republicans	-0.085	0.127	-0.083	0.137
Favorability toward Democrats	0.311	0.000	0.313	0.000
Congressional favorability	-0.055	0.326	-0.051	0.361
Latino	0.138	0.436	-0.383	0.338
Approve of DAPA *Latino			0.680	0.129
Constant	-2.299	0.000	-2.378	0.000
N	1,303			

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - L

2014 Pew December Political Survey: Predicting President Obama approval on immigration

Variables	Coef.	P-value	Coef.	P-value
Approve of Obama on race relations	0.991	0.000	1.001	0.000
Approve of DAPA	1.157	0.000	1.116	0.000
Education (3 Cat.)	0.136	0.074	0.138	0.072
Income non-response	0.100	0.630	0.103	0.618
Income 30K	-0.114	0.441	-0.118	0.425
Democrats (Self-ID)	0.723	0.000	0.709	0.000
Age	-0.002	0.635	-0.001	0.684
Female	-0.140	0.244	-0.138	0.249
Political Ideology (Liberals vs Conservative)	0.113	0.096	0.121	0.076
Sympathetic of undocumented immigrants	0.139	0.055	0.138	0.055
Path to citizenship for undocumented	0.204	0.104	0.210	0.093
Gas prices are down	0.027	0.701	0.030	0.663
More politically divided	0.149	0.337	0.156	0.312
Conservative on the environment	0.069	0.755	0.061	0.782
Favorability toward Republicans	-0.052	0.381	-0.050	0.398
Favorability toward Democrats	0.096	0.079	0.097	0.075
Congressional favorability	0.009	0.878	0.010	0.857
Latino	0.315	0.077	0.015	0.969
Approve of DAPA *Latino			0.380	0.386
Constant	-3.194	0.000	-3.233	0.000
N	1,303			

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - M

2012 June Political Survey: Post-Matching, Model Estimates of the DACA's Impact on viewing President Obama favorably

Variables	Pre-matching		Post-matching	
	Coef.	p-value	Coef.	p-value
After DACA	-0.053	0.549	-0.021	0.725
Latino	-0.230	0.051	-0.212	0.192
After DACA * Latino	1.465	0.000	0.942	0.000
Education (3 Cat.)	0.059	0.112	0.112	0.083
Income Non-response	-0.170	0.254	0.058	0.737
Income 30K+	-0.140	0.195	0.003	0.983
Interest in 2012 Election	-0.093	0.184	-0.058	0.545
Democrat ID	1.290	0.000	1.388	0.000
Republican ID	-0.697	0.000	-0.757	0.000
Age	-0.008	0.000	-0.009	0.000
Female	0.031	0.721	0.164	0.160
Spanish Interview	-0.377	0.216	0.550	0.009
Latino Interviewer	-0.039	0.808	-0.284	0.087
Female Interviewer	-0.202	0.069	-0.292	0.005
Refusal Conversion	-0.209	0.000	-0.305	0.000
Call Attempts	0.003	0.864	-0.056	0.047
Constant	0.315	0.088	0.269	0.218
N	1,883		1,883	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are from a probit model using Coarsen-Exact-Matching weights (Iacus et al. 2012).

Appendix - N

2014 Pew July Political Survey: Predicting President Obama favorability

Variables	Coef.	P-values	Coef.	P-values
Approve Obama on CA child entry crisis	1.112	0.000	1.258	0.000
Deport CA undocumented minors	-0.326	0.002	-0.338	0.001
Heard about CA child entry	0.201	0.012	0.205	0.011
Democrats better on immigration	0.159	0.150	0.143	0.198
Important to pass immigration law	0.032	0.479	0.029	0.514
Path to citizenship for undocumented imm.	0.136	0.189	0.131	0.205
Economic conditions excellent	0.388	0.000	0.390	0.000
Economy better in a year	0.342	0.003	0.375	0.001
Plenty of jobs in community	0.060	0.609	0.042	0.721
Education (3 Cat.)	0.073	0.220	0.061	0.308
Income non-response	-0.124	0.559	-0.130	0.531
Income 30K	-0.244	0.037	-0.238	0.043
Democrats (Self-ID)	1.193	0.000	1.183	0.000
Age	0.002	0.593	0.002	0.519
Female	0.089	0.373	0.100	0.321
Latino	0.174	0.284	0.331	0.064
Approve of Congress	0.104	0.292	0.116	0.242
Political Ideology (Liberal vs. Conservative)	0.212	0.000	0.204	0.000
Appr. Obama on CA child entry crisis*Latino			-0.668	0.033
Constant	-2.813	0.000	-2.806	0.000
N	1,544			

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - O

2014 Pew December Political Survey: Predicting President Obama favorability

Variables	Coef.	P-values	Coef.	P-values
Approve of Obama on race relations	0.972	0.000	0.970	0.000
Approve of DAPA	0.651	0.000	0.659	0.000
Education (3 Cat.)	0.035	0.638	0.035	0.641
Income non-response	0.231	0.304	0.230	0.306
Income 30K	0.184	0.214	0.184	0.213
Democrats (Self-ID)	0.781	0.000	0.783	0.000
Age	0.000	0.889	0.000	0.899
Female	0.006	0.961	0.005	0.969
Political Ideology (Liberals vs Conservative)	0.243	0.000	0.242	0.000
Sympathetic of undocumented immigrants	0.168	0.026	0.169	0.025
Path to citizenship for undocumented	0.080	0.531	0.079	0.540
Gas prices are down	-0.056	0.393	-0.057	0.390
More politically divided	0.104	0.523	0.103	0.528
Conservative on the environment	-0.358	0.140	-0.356	0.142
Favorability toward Republicans	-0.063	0.280	-0.063	0.280
Favorability toward Democrats	0.405	0.000	0.405	0.000
Congressional favorability	0.007	0.915	0.006	0.920
Latino	0.113	0.564	0.159	0.607
Approve of DAPA *Latino			-0.064	0.869
Constant	-3.197	0.000	-3.191	0.000
N	1,303			

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - P

2014 Pew July Political Survey: Predicting consistent presidential approval and favorability

Variables	Coef.	p-values
Approve Obama on CA child entry crisis	0.161	0.267
Deport CA undocumented minors	0.036	0.758
Heard about CA child entry	-0.169	0.037
Democrats better on immigration	-0.024	0.850
Important to pass immigration law	-0.078	0.077
Path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants	0.094	0.401
Economic conditions excellent	-0.144	0.062
Economy better in a year	-0.070	0.597
Plenty of jobs in community	0.318	0.007
Education (3 Cat.)	0.096	0.141
Income non-response	-0.294	0.176
Income 30K	0.159	0.189
Democrats (Self-ID)	-0.094	0.490
Age	0.009	0.006
Female	-0.012	0.907
Latino	-0.564	0.000
Approve of Congress	0.253	0.019
Political Ideology (Liberal vs. Conservative)	-0.105	0.056
Constant	1.659	0.000
N	1,544	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - Q

2014 Pew December Political Survey: Predicting consistent presidential approval and favorability

Variables	Coef.	p-values
Approve of Obama on race relations	0.112	0.422
Approve of DAPA	-0.086	0.595
Education (3 Cat.)	0.038	0.567
Income non-response	-0.165	0.421
Income 30K	0.003	0.982
Democrats (Self-ID)	-0.244	0.197
Age	0.001	0.795
Female	0.139	0.232
Political Ideology (Liberals vs Conservative)	-0.017	0.776
Sympathetic of undocumented immigrants	-0.144	0.032
Path to citizenship for undocumented	-0.018	0.889
Gas prices are down	0.035	0.583
More politically divided	0.252	0.066
Conservative on the environment	0.302	0.167
Favorability toward Republicans	-0.084	0.131
Favorability toward Democrats	-0.049	0.383
Congressional favorability	0.004	0.939
Latino	-0.002	0.991
Constant	1.538	0.003
N	1,303	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - R

2012 National Survey of Latinos: DACA impact on Latino's that they will determine the outcome of 2012 presidential election

Variables	Coef.	p-values
Approve of DACA	0.627	0.000
Mexican	0.010	0.915
Democrat	0.213	0.046
Democrats care mo/re about Latinos	0.441	0.000
Female	-0.114	0.219
Spanish	0.306	0.004
Age	-0.038	0.470
Closely following election	0.204	0.000
Income > 30K	0.026	0.806
Income non-response	-0.034	0.837
Education (3 Cat.)	0.028	0.657
Salience of Immigration	0.205	0.000
Know DACA applicant	0.100	0.347
Knows deportee	-0.052	0.639
Constant	-1.910	0.000
N	1,765	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

Appendix - S

2010 National Survey of Latinos: Impact of President Obama's policies impact on Latino sense of political cooperation

Variables	Coef.	p-values
President Obama's policies helps	0.270	0.019
Democrat	0.061	0.627
Dems. Care more about Latinos	0.036	0.742
Spanish	-0.020	0.860
Female	0.138	0.138
Income >30K	-0.309	0.006
Income non-response	-0.281	0.036
Ideology (Con. to Lib.)	-0.045	0.310
Age	-0.010	0.001
Mexican	0.097	0.319
Education (5 Cat.)	-0.053	0.252
Worries about deportations	-0.067	0.116
Knows a deportee	0.165	0.124
Latino discrimination	0.027	0.797
Experienced discrimination	-0.139	0.190
Less welcoming	-0.204	0.026
Democrats better on immigration	0.063	0.618
Constant	0.607	0.085
N	1,206	

Notes: Two-tailed test. Coefficients estimates are based on a probit model.

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