

Connected Citizenship: Social Networks and Interracial Differences in Immigrants' Political Participation

Stephanie Chan

PhD Candidate, Princeton University

WPSA 2022

Abstract

Race significantly shapes American political behavior, including immigrants' political incorporation. I show the unique role of race in shaping political incorporation and I argue that a key reason behind the unique role of race is an individuals' social network. Using the United States Current Population Survey Supplements (CPS) as well as the Cooperative Election Study (CES), I show that immigrants of color are less likely to participate in politics over the generations and that traditional theories of immigrant incorporation and political participation cannot account for this racial participation gap. I then use an original survey experiment to show how the impact of an individuals' social network varies by race. In a nation of immigrants, it is critical to recognize that immigrants' political incorporation experiences vary by race and mobilization efforts will need to account for these differences.¹

For the full paper, please email me. I can be reached at sc47@princeton.edu.

¹ I would like to thank Professor Tali Mendelberg, Professor Dara Strolovitch, Professor Ismail White, Professor LaFleur Stephens-Dougan, and Professor Markus Prior for detailed feedback on this paper. Professor Amel Ahmed, Fatih Cetin, and Professor Ray La Raja also provided helpful comments. For very helpful feedback, I also thank participants of the panel at the “Immigration and Politics” panel at APSA 2019, commenters on my APSA 2020 session, participants of the Princeton American Politics Research Seminar, Behavior Group, and Princeton Research in Experimental Social Science.