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## UCR Honors Capstones 2020-2021

### Title

Examining The Sociopolitical Factors That Encourage/Discourage Political Participation Among Young Ethnic Minorities.

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/00w054wp>

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### Publication Date

2021-08-13

### Data Availability

The data associated with this publication are within the manuscript.

EXAMINING THE SOCIOPOLITICAL FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGE/DISCOURAGE  
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AMONG YOUNG ETHNIC MINORITIES

By

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A capstone project submitted for Graduation with University Honors

May 05, 2021

University Honors

University of California, Riverside

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## **Abstract**

*The United States is the most ethnically diverse democracy in the world. The 2016 U.S Presidential election, however, demonstrated a lack of political participation among young ethnic minorities, according to data from the American National Election Studies (ANES, 2016). With the growing population of racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S., there is a growing demand to represent ethnic minorities in the American political sphere. Political participation among young ethnic minorities has been examined by scholars in the late twentieth century (Fridkin et al 2006; Uhlaner et al 1989; Chong et al 2005; Miller et al 1981; Brady H.E. et al 1995; Grillo et al 2010) and is considered a new and developing area of research. I hypothesize that three factors: (1) Socialization, (2) Issue salience, and (3) The current state of affairs will encourage young ethnic minorities to participate politically. These factors are examined through a political opinion survey of 159 undergraduate students administered online at the University of California, Riverside. The findings reveal that issue salience and the current state of affairs work toward mobilizing young ethnic minorities into participating politically. In addition, it is found that familial socialization discourages political participation, yet socialization through friends/peers encourages participation. This research project will explicate the sociopolitical factors that are conventionally linked with political participation among young ethnic minorities, which will contribute to work towards increasing participation of minority groups in the future.*

## **Acknowledgements.**

First, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to my faculty advisor, Dr. Jennifer Merolla. Having the opportunity to work with Dr. Merolla was incredibly motivating and humbling. To one day be a mentor to others, the same way she was a mentor to me, would fulfill me in academia. Thank you Dr. Merolla!

My sincerest thank you to the UCR Honors Program for allowing me to explore my own interests in academia. As a young woman of color, I am grateful to find a space in academia that motivates me to pursue new and challenging opportunities. The encouragement I received within the program has fostered new interests and new goals.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for the endless support and unconditional love they have given me throughout this process. Without your support, none of this would be possible.

Finally, I would like to dedicate my research to my loved ones who passed away in the year 2020 -Grandma Sally Carrillo, Grandpa John Carrillo, Aunt Tish, and my Nino Lupe Lopez. I miss you all deeply and will wait to meet you again soon.

## **Introduction**

The 2016 U.S presidential election demonstrated a lack of political participation among young ethnic minorities. Historically, (Census Bureau 2021) young people have relatively low-voter turnout rates than older generations. In addition, ethnic minorities are also reported to have low voter turnout rates as compared to White Anglo-Americans (Census Bureau 2021). Numerous studies have sought to understand the mobilizing factors that contribute to increased participation rates among ethnic minorities. Existing research focuses largely on group consciousness (Miller et al, 1981), racial solidarity (Chong D. et al, 2005), and the presence of co-ethnic candidates (Michelson, 2005). The highly contentious debate of political issues between candidates and political parties provided scholars sufficient reason to predict an increase in voter turnout and political participation of American citizens. Issues such as immigration reform, gun control, education, and health care become primary points of concern for voters.

The four years preceding the 2020 presidential election proved to illuminate a political climate that fostered divisiveness and party polarization. Events occurring in the year 2020 have brought attention to structural and social issues -issues that became more salient to younger generations. For example, the brutal death of a 46-year-old Black man named George Floyd ignited nationwide protests against police brutality and institutionalized racism in the nation's justice system. Other current events such as increased "Black Lives Matter" protests, the Covid-19 pandemic, the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump, heightened international relations with Iran, and the "Me Too Movement" became increasingly salient as election season approached. As a result of these events, voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election rose about 10 percentage points as compared to the 2016 presidential election (pewresearch.org). More

specifically, voter turnout among young people increased in the 2020 U.S presidential election. This is the largest recording of youth voter turnout in American history -But why did it happen?

This research seeks to investigate the factors that contributed to the mass mobilization of young ethnic minorities in the 2020 U.S Presidential election. Factors that are expected to be positively linked to participation among young ethnic minorities are (1) socialization -the process of learning behaviors or beliefs through social interactions, (2) issue salience, and (3) the current state of affairs. For clarification purposes, issue salience is the process by which an individual becomes more engaged with political and/or social issues due to relevancy. For example, political issues/policies concerning student debt is especially salient to university students and/or to those paying student loans. When referencing the current state of affairs, I am referring to the current political climate and circumstances that exist at the present moment. For example, the state of affairs during the 1929 Great Depression demonstrated how economic instability influenced the voting behavior and preferences of Americans. These variables are examined through a public opinion survey of undergraduate students at the University of California, Riverside. In this study, I find that socialization, issue salience, and the current state of affairs mobilizes young ethnic minorities to participate in politics through voting.

### **Political Participation**

First, we must define the broad concept of political participation. Scholars have been unable to reach a single definition for the concept, due to its complexity. Conge (1988) sought to define the meaning of political participation and argued there are six major issues that make it difficult to give political participation a meaning. The six major issues hindering scholars from reaching a definition are as follows: (1) Whether the definition should narrow down on passive

or active forms of participation. Passive participation would include political awareness and internal political feelings, whereas active participation includes activities such as protesting, voting, etc. (2) Whether a definition of political participation should include either aggressive or nonaggressive political behavior. (3) Determining whether the definition should include efforts to change the government or efforts to create change within the current government. (4) Whether the definition should only include behavior toward governmental authorities or should it include nongovernmental authorities. (5) Whether the definition should include voluntary participation or participation sponsored by the government. (6) Whether the definition should include intentional participation or unintentional participation efforts. Considering these issues, Conge (2009) offers the definition, “Political participation is any action (or inaction) of an individual or a collectivity of individuals which intentionally or unintentionally opposes or supports, changes or maintains some feature(s) of a government or community” (Conge 2009, 246).

Alternative attempts to define political participation is evident in Jan W Van Deth (2014) where she presented four variants of political participation: (1) political participation is depicted as an activity (2) political participation is understood as something done by people in their role as citizens (3) political participation should be voluntary; and, (4) political participation deals with government, politics, or the state. Within these four variants include activities such as voting, campaigning, consumption of political news, protesting, etc. Jan W Van Deth (2014) developed a conceptual map of political participation -a map allowing for recognizable activities pertaining to the broad concept of political participation.

Considering the definitions and concerns presented in Conge (2009) and Jan W Van Deth (2004), this research works toward understanding political participation -specifically intentional actions of individuals. Due to time-constraints, a focus in this study will be voter turnout in the

2020 U.S Presidential election. Thus, this study will evaluate political participation in a conventional activity (voting in an election).

### **Background/Literature Review**

Scholars have worked toward distinguishing the factors that influence the political participation of racial and ethnic minorities. Barreto, M. A. (2007), argues that ethnicity is a mobilizing agent for the Latino community. In his observation, the rising presence of Latino officeholders coincides with rising Latino voter turnout. He suggests that ethnicity is an issue salient to Latinos, thus it encourages increased participation among the Latino community. Similarly, scholars have investigated group consciousness, and its effect on mobilizing ethnic minorities into participating. Miller et al (1981) found that ethnic/racial group members who were “discontented” and/or dissatisfied with their group’s social status are less motivated to participate in politics. Group consciousness allows members to recognize and become aware of the group’s position in society. This awareness encourages members to participate in collective action movements to increase the group’s social status, increase their access to resources, and enact change of issues salient to the group. These studies lead me to understand ethnic identification is a mobilizing factor for political participation.

Next, we must examine the scholarly work concerning the factors that influence the political participation of young people. Fridkin, K. L. et al, (2006) addressed how early political experiences affect/determine whether a young person will participate politically. The researchers conducted a survey that sampled eighth grade students of different racial/ethnic identities to determine at what age ethnic minorities decided whether they will participate in politics. The findings showed that ethnic minority students presented “lower levels of political efficacy,



political trust, civic duty, and partisan attachment” as compared to White Anglo-Americans. Determinants of these results included home socialization, political experiences, and access to political resources. Other studies evaluated the political participation of college aged-people (Jarvis S.E et al 2005; Johnson et al 2002; Y Kim et al 2014) and found that working at a young age, exposure to diversity, and civic voluntarism positively influenced the political participation of young people. These studies offer some insight into what motivates young people to engage in politics and participate.

Now we must address existing literature that examines the determinants of political participation among young racial/ethnic minorities. Bedolla, L. (2000) analyzed political participation attitudes among Latino high school students. The findings showed that ethnic identification is a strong mobilizing factor in encouraging participation, yet it is not enough to encourage young people to want to participate in formal political activities (voting, etc.). These findings rely on theories of group consciousness (Miller et al 1981, Chong et al 2005) discussed above. Brady, H. E. et al (1995), demonstrated the significance of access to resources in student’s political efficacy and determinants of political participation. Young ethnic minorities can be mobilized by their ethnic identity, however, socioeconomic barriers such as resources and low political efficacy discourage young ethnic minorities from participating.

There are several gaps existing within scholarly literature concerning political participation among young ethnic minorities. First, there is limited literature concerning young people and political participation. Previous explanations (Jarvis S.E et al 2005; Johnson et al 2002; Y Kim et al 2014; Fridkin et al 2006) have demonstrated a positive correlation between adolescent political experience and political participation. Research, however, does not account for the ever-increasing salience of issues concerning youth. In addition, research concerning

young ethnic minorities is insubstantial. Plenty of research concerning young Latinx mobilization has been performed, yet an evaluation of other racial/ethnic identities relating to political participation is limited.

### **Hypotheses**

In this research study, I am focusing on three separate factors that are expected to increase political participation among young ethnic minorities:

First, I will analyze the effect of socialization on participation. Socialization is the process of learning behavior and ideologies through interaction. I am expecting socialization through family and peers to increase political participation among young ethnic minorities. Research has been conducted on socialization and how early political experiences are able to affect/determine whether a person will participate politically (Fridkin et al 2006; Uhlaner, C. et al 1989; Brady, H. E. et al 1995). Family socialization is expected to foster higher participation due to the adolescent stage of learned behaviors. Due to shared culture and shared experiences, young ethnic minorities are expected to rely on family for political determination of participation.

Second, I will analyze the effect of issue salience on young ethnic minorities' participation. Studies concerning young ethnic minorities do not consider the mobilizing factor of issues and policies. As mentioned before, issue salience is the process by which an individual becomes more engaged with political and/or social issues due to their relevancy. Due to the increasing use of social media, a 24-hour feed of news makes it easier for people to find issues important and relevant to them as individuals and to their ethnic groups. According to the *American National Election Studies* (ANES 2016), groups such as Hispanic or Latinos and/or

Asian or Pacific Islanders find issues such as U.S immigration policies salient to them. People recognize where their ethnic or social group stand in society and try to improve their group's status through mobilizing on issues salient to the group (Miller et al 1981). I am expecting issues such as immigration and civil rights to play a large role in mobilizing young ethnic minorities.

Third, I will analyze the effect of the current state of affairs on young ethnic minorities participation. The current state of affairs refers to the current political climate within the U.S. The polarization of political parties, the state of the economy, public health crises, and major political/social movements are all aspects that affect the participation of the American people. As mentioned before, the major events plaguing the 2020 year are impossible to ignore when assessing the mobilizing factors of political participation. Events in 2020 such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter Movement, and more have flooded media discourse for all of 2020. Due to this increase in media coverage, it is expected that young ethnic minorities may be more influence and or apt to participate in politics.

After discussing relevant theories surrounding ethnic participation, I argue that (1) socialization, (2) issue salience, and (3) the current state of affairs will be positively linked to an increase in participation among young ethnic minorities. The following three hypotheses will be tested:

1. Socialization through familial relationships will positively impact the likelihood of an individual to participate in politics.
2. Issue salience is expected to have a positive impact on an individual's likelihood of participating politics.
3. When the current state of affairs presents increased political and/or social instability though movements, there will be an increase in political participation.

## Methodology

### Subjects

Study participants were recruited from the University of California, Riverside (UCR). The study sample consisted of 159 respondents (58 males, 98 females, and 3 gender non-conforming individuals) with a median age of 26, recruited from two lower-division political science classes and one upper-division political science class. UCR possesses an ethnically diverse student body -thus, allowing for data to be recorded from several ethnic/racial groups. The survey demonstrated the following demographics: White (10.1%), Black or African American (4.0%), Native American (0.0%), Asian or Asian American (36.5%), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (1.3%), Hispanic or Latino (43.4%), Middle Eastern (3.1%), and other (1.3%). In comparison to UCR demographic data in Fall 2020, the sample is relatively representative of students at UCR (Figure A).

TermName Ethnicity	Fall 2016		Fall 2017		Fall 2018		Fall 2019		Fall 2020	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Chicano/Latino	40.8%	8,069	41.3%	8,291	41.5%	8,550	41.7%	9,201	41.8%	9,494
Asian	34.2%	6,772	33.8%	6,776	33.8%	6,950	33.6%	7,402	34.0%	7,713
White	12.0%	2,368	11.5%	2,305	11.0%	2,258	11.1%	2,452	10.8%	2,458
Two or More Races	5.7%	1,124	5.7%	1,135	5.6%	1,154	5.5%	1,219	5.6%	1,264
Black/African American	3.6%	718	3.5%	702	3.3%	689	3.2%	697	3.1%	698
International	2.5%	493	2.9%	580	3.4%	697	3.6%	793	3.4%	761
Domestic Unknown	1.0%	201	1.1%	226	1.1%	231	1.1%	247	1.1%	250
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2%	34	0.2%	34	0.2%	33	0.1%	30	0.1%	33
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.1%	20	0.1%	20	0.1%	19	0.1%	14	0.1%	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19,799</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>20,069</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>20,581</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>22,055</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>22,687</b>

Figure A: <https://ir.ucr.edu/stats/enroll/demograp 1>

### ***Procedure***

All subjects were asked to complete a 15-minute survey questionnaire conducted online. The survey included standard public opinion questions that ask of one's political participation. Within the survey, questions regarding issue salience, socialization, and current political events were asked. Questions were designed to understand factors that encourage young ethnic minorities to participate in American politics.

### ***Comparison of Ethnic Minorities to Anglo-Americans***

The primary focus of the research is understanding the mobilizing factors that encourage young ethnic minorities to engage and participate in politics. To properly understand the factors that are unique to ethnic groups, it is useful to collect data of White or Anglo-Americans. The collection of this data will allow us to fully test out the hypotheses by comparing data collected by ethnic minorities to White or Anglo-Americans. Mobilization factors that are expected to be significant determinants of participation in ethnic minorities are familial socialization and issue salience. As discussed before, ethnic minorities may experience a different sort of politicization due to culture-based familial socialization. In addition, issue salience according to ethnicity may encourage individuals to engage with political issues that are salient to them.

### ***Variables and Survey Design***

The survey consisted of political opinion and voting behavior questions typically used in the *American National Election Study (2016)*. The questionnaire is designed to assess the effect of the independent variables on young ethnic minorities willingness to participate in politics. The first few questions acted as screener questions -to establish the age, gender, and racial/ethnic

identity of the respondent. The remaining questions were separated into three blocks according to each variable: (1) socialization, (2) issue salience, and (3) the current state of affairs.

The four questions within the (1) socialization block asked of the respondent's primary socialization groups, where they consume much of their political news, whether they share political beliefs with parents, and whether they share political beliefs with their peers. The (2) issue salience block consisted of four questions that asked respondents what social issues they are most interested in, their feelings of government intervention, how well they understand the current issues facing the country, and whether the issues presented in the 2020 Presidential election personally impacted them. Finally, the (3) current state of affairs block consisted of four questions that asked respondents whether they follow what is currently going on in the political sphere, has the political climate increased their engagement, do they believe American politics have become increasingly divisive, and what events within 2020 encouraged them the most to engage in politics.

The dependent variable will be political participation. Participation will be measured through voter turnout; specifically turning out to vote in the 2020 U.S Presidential election. Respondents indicated "yes" or "no" when asked "Did you vote in the last election? (2020 U.S Presidential election)". Indicating "Yes" will label the respondent as actively participating. Indicating "No" will label the respondent as inactively participating.

## **Results and Analysis**

### ***Results – Socialization effect on participation***

I begin by examining the effect of socialization on political participation. A filter of racial/ethnic identity is applied to the data to determine the effect of socialization on young

ethnic minorities as compared to White respondents. I present the cross tabulation for each block of questions with whether or not respondents voted in the 2020 U.S Presidential election. Figure 1.1.1 and Figure 1.1.2 evaluated which groups had the most influence on their party identification. Figure 1.1.1 demonstrated White respondents who voted in the last election reported that “Media” played a larger role in their party identification with 38.5%, and white respondents who did not vote chose “Peers” at 66.7%. Figure 1.1.2 demonstrated that Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election, reported that “Family” played the largest role in their party identification with 37.3%, whereas Nonwhite respondents who did not vote indicated “Family” with 50.0%.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q6: Which of the following groups most influence your party identification?	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Family	5.0	4.0	1.0
		31.3%	30.8%	33.3%
	Peers	4.0	2.0	2.0
		25.0%	15.4%	66.7%
	School	2.0	2.0	0.0
		12.5%	15.4%	0.0%
Media	5.0	5.0	0.0	
	31.3%	38.5%	0.0%	

Figure 1.1.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q6: Which of the following groups most influence your party identification?	Total Count (Answering)	142.0	96.0	46.0
	Family	53.0	30.0	23.0
		37.3%	31.3%	50.0%
	Peers	30.0	23.0	7.0
		21.1%	24.0%	15.2%
	School	21.0	16.0	5.0
		14.8%	16.7%	10.9%
Media	38.0	27.0	11.0	
	26.8%	28.1%	23.9%	

Figure 1.1.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

Figure 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 evaluated where respondents consumed their news. Figure 1.2.1 showed that White respondents who voted in the last election also reported social media as the main source of news consumption with 30.8%, and White respondents who did not vote reported social media as their main source of consumption with 66.7%. Figure 1.2.2 shows Nonwhite respondents who voted last election, reported that social media is their main source of news consumption with 51.6%, and Nonwhite respondents indicated social media with 47.8%. The data also reveals that for both White respondents and Nonwhite respondents, those who voted are much more likely to read news subscriptions than those who do not vote.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q7: Where do you consume the majority of your news?	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Media Channels (CNN News, Fox News, etc)	3.0	3.0	0.0
		18.8%	23.1%	0.0%
	News subscriptions (NYTimes, TheGuardian, etc)	3.0	3.0	0.0
		18.8%	23.1%	0.0%
	Social Media Feed (Twitter, Facebook, etc)	6.0	4.0	2.0
		37.5%	30.8%	66.7%
Other	4.0	3.0	1.0	
	25.0%	23.1%	33.3%	

Figure 1.2.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q7: Where do you consume the majority of your news?	Total Count (Answering)	141.0	95.0	46.0
	Media Channels (CNN News, Fox News, etc)	34.0	23.0	11.0
		24.1%	24.2%	23.9%
	News subscriptions (NYTimes, TheGuardian, etc)	18.0	17.0	1.0
		12.8%	17.9%	2.2%
	Social Media Feed (Twitter, Facebook, etc)	71.0	49.0	22.0
		50.4%	51.6%	47.8%
Other	18.0	6.0	12.0	
	12.8%	6.3%	26.1%	

Figure 1.2.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied



Figure 1.3.1 and Figure 1.3.2 examined whether respondents share the same political beliefs as their parents. Figure 1.3.1 demonstrated that 53.8% of white respondents who voted in the last election indicated “probably yes” for sharing the same political beliefs as their parents, whereas White respondents who did not vote indicated “probably not”. Figure 1.3.2 demonstrated that Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election indicated “probably yes” with 38.9%, and Nonwhite respondents who did not vote indicated “probably yes” with 59.0%. The data also reveals that for both White respondents and Nonwhite respondents who indicated that they do not share the same political beliefs as their parents, are more likely to vote.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q8: Do you share the same political beliefs as your parents?	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Definitely Yes	2.0	2.0	0.0
		12.5%	15.4%	0.0%
	Probably Yes	8.0	7.0	1.0
		50.0%	53.8%	33.3%
	Probably Not	3.0	1.0	2.0
		18.8%	7.7%	66.7%
Definitely Not	3.0	3.0	0.0	
	18.8%	23.1%	0.0%	

Figure 1.3.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q8: Do you share the same political beliefs as your parents?	Total Count (Answering)	134.0	95.0	39.0
	Definitely Yes	30.0	22.0	8.0
		22.4%	23.2%	20.5%
	Probably Yes	60.0	37.0	23.0
		44.8%	38.9%	59.0%
	Probably Not	27.0	21.0	6.0
		20.1%	22.1%	15.4%
Definitely Not	17.0	15.0	2.0	
	12.7%	15.8%	5.1%	

Figure 1.3.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

Finally, figure 1.4.1 and figure 1.4.2 analyzed the extent to which respondents shared the same political beliefs with their peers/friends. Figure 1.4.1 demonstrated White respondents who

voted in the last election, indicated “much” of their friends/peers share the same political beliefs as them with 38.5%. whereas White respondents who did not vote indicated “somewhat” to describe whether they share the same beliefs as peers. Figure 1.4.2 presented that Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election indicated “much” with 43.8%, whereas Nonwhite respondents who did not vote indicated “somewhat” at 37.8%.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q27: To what extent do you share the same political beliefs with your friends/peers?	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Not At All	0.0	0.0	0.0
		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	A Little	4.0	3.0	1.0
		25.0%	23.1%	33.3%
	Somewhat	5.0	3.0	2.0
		31.3%	23.1%	66.7%
	Much	5.0	5.0	0.0
	31.3%	38.5%	0.0%	
A Great Deal	2.0	2.0	0.0	
	12.5%	15.4%	0.0%	

Figure 1.4.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q27: To what extent do you share the same political beliefs with your friends/peers?	Total Count (Answering)	141.0	96.0	45.0
	Not At All	4.0	1.0	3.0
		2.8%	1.0%	6.7%
	A Little	15.0	11.0	4.0
		10.6%	11.5%	8.9%
	Somewhat	37.0	20.0	17.0
		26.2%	20.8%	37.8%
	Much	55.0	42.0	13.0
	39.0%	43.8%	28.9%	
A Great Deal	30.0	22.0	8.0	
	21.3%	22.9%	17.8%	

Figure 1.4.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

In summary, these results do not align with my expectations, as I found that those who vote are less likely to be influenced by familial relationships. In fact, both White respondents and

Nonwhite respondents that voted, are less likely to share political beliefs with their parents. To further disprove this expectation, both White respondents and Nonwhite respondents who voted are more likely to share political beliefs with friends/peers. This suggests that familial socialization is not as impactful as socialization through peers. In addition, this section revealed that those who vote, are more likely to consume news through subscription media.

**Results -Issue salience effect on voter turnout**

With the filter of racial/ethnic identity applied, I am able to examine the effect of issue salience on respondent’s willingness to participate in politics. Figure 2.1.1 and figure 2.1.2 asks respondents which social issues interest them the most. Figure 2.1.1 demonstrated that White respondents who voted in the last election, indicated “Civil Rights Movements” with 38.5%, whereas White respondents who did not vote in the last election indicated “State of the economy” at 66.7%. Figure 2.2.2 investigates the social issues most interesting to Nonwhite respondents. Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election, indicated “Civil Rights Movements” as the issue of most interest with 29.2%, whereas Nonwhite respondents who did not vote indicated “U.S immigration policies” at 34.8%.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?			
		Total	Yes	No	
Q9: Which social issues are you most interested in?		Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
		U.S Immigration policies	0.0	0.0	0.0
			0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Government Health Insurance	2.0	2.0	0.0
			12.5%	15.4%	0.0%
		Civil Rights Movements	5.0	5.0	0.0
			31.3%	38.5%	0.0%
		Poverty	4.0	3.0	1.0
			25.0%	23.1%	33.3%
		State of the economy	3.0	1.0	2.0
			18.8%	7.7%	66.7%
		Other	2.0	2.0	0.0
			12.5%	15.4%	0.0%

Figure 2.1.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q9: Which social issues are you most interested in?	Total Count (Answering)	142.0	96.0	46.0
	U.S Immigration policies	43.0	27.0	16.0
		30.3%	28.1%	34.8%
	Government Health Insurance	7.0	7.0	0.0
		4.9%	7.3%	0.0%
	Civil Rights Movements	37.0	28.0	9.0
		26.1%	29.2%	19.6%
	Poverty	26.0	20.0	6.0
		18.3%	20.8%	13.0%
	State of the economy	25.0	12.0	13.0
	17.6%	12.5%	28.3%	
Other	4.0	2.0	2.0	
	2.8%	2.1%	4.3%	

Figure 2.1.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

Figure 2.3.1 and figure 2.3.2 analyzed whether the issues presented in the 2020 U.S election effected respondents personally. Figure 2.3.1 demonstrated that. White respondents who voted in the last election, indicated “Yes, these issues impacted me personally” at 69.2%, whereas White respondents who did not vote in the last election split results with 33.3% for each category. Figure 2.3.2 showed that Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election, indicated “Yes, these issues impacted me personally” at 66.7%, whereas Nonwhite respondents who did not vote indicated “Yes, these issues impacted me personally” at 41.3%.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q12: In following the U.S 2020 Presidential election and campaign, did you believe the issues debated impacted you personally?	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Yes, these issues impacted me personally.	10.0	9.0	1.0
		62.5%	69.2%	33.3%
	No, these issues did not impact me personally.	4.0	3.0	1.0
		25.0%	23.1%	33.3%
Maybe	2.0	1.0	1.0	
	12.5%	7.7%	33.3%	

Figure 2.2.1 White Filter Applied

	Q30: Did you vote in the last election?			
	Total	Yes	No	
Q12: In following the U.S 2020 Presidential election and campaign, did you believe the issues debated impacted you personally?	Total Count (Answering)	142.0	96.0	46.0
	Yes, these issues impacted me personally.	83.0	64.0	19.0
		58.5%	66.7%	41.3%
	No, these issues did not impact me personally.	33.0	20.0	13.0
		23.2%	20.8%	28.3%
Maybe	26.0	12.0	14.0	
	18.3%	12.5%	30.4%	

Figure 2.2.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

In summary, these results align with my expectation that issue salience will encourage young ethnic minorities from participating in politics. Issue salience, however, has shown to have a similar effect on both White respondents who voted and Nonwhite respondents voted. Due to this, both White and Nonrespondents respondents that indicated “Yes, these issues did not impact me personally” were more likely to vote, and those who indicated “No, these issues did not impact me personally” were less likely to vote.

***Results -Current state of affairs effect on voter turnout***

Finally, with the filter of racial/ethnic identity applied, I examine how the current state of affairs or current political events affects respondent’s willingness to participate in politics. Figure 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 evaluated respondent’s engagement with U.S politics. Figure 3.1.1 demonstrated that 61.5% of White respondents who voted in the last election indicated that they followed government and public affairs “Most of the time”, as compared to White respondents who did not vote, who chose “Some of the time” at 33.3%, “Only Now and Then” at 33.3%, and “Hardly at all” at 33.3%. Figure 3.1.2 evaluated Nonwhite respondents’ engagement and Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election, indicated “Some of the time” at 46.9%, as compared to Nonwhite respondents who did not vote with 33.3%.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q13: Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Most of the time	8.0	8.0	0.0
		50.0%	61.5%	0.0%
	Some of the time	5.0	4.0	1.0
		31.3%	30.8%	33.3%
	Only Now and Then	2.0	1.0	1.0
		12.5%	7.7%	33.3%
Hardly at all	1.0	0.0	1.0	
	6.3%	0.0%	33.3%	

Figure 3.1.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q13: Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?	Total Count (Answering)	142.0	96.0	46.0
	Most of the time	37.0	30.0	7.0
		26.1%	31.3%	15.2%
	Some of the time	65.0	45.0	20.0
		45.8%	46.9%	43.5%
	Only Now and Then	32.0	20.0	12.0
		22.5%	20.8%	26.1%
Hardly at all	8.0	1.0	7.0	
	5.6%	1.0%	15.2%	

Figure 3.1.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

Figures 3.2.1 and figure 3.2.2 asked respondents whether they believe politics have become more divisive within the past 4 years. Figure 3.2.1 demonstrate that 84.6% of White respondents who voted in the last election indicated “Yes, U.S politics have become more divisive”, whereas White respondents who did not vote chose “Yes, U.S politics have become more divisive” at 33.3%, “No, U.S politics are not as divisive” at 33.3%, and “I don’t keep up with the divisiveness of U.S politics” at 33.3%. Figure 3.2.2 demonstrated that 84.4% of non-White respondents who voted in the last election indicated “Yes, U.S politics have become more

divisive”, whereas Nonwhite respondents who did not vote indicated “Yes, U.S politics have become more divisive” at 60.9%.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q15: Do you believe U.S politics have become more divisive within the past 4 years?	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Yes, U.S politics have become more divisive.	12.0	11.0	1.0
		75.0%	84.6%	33.3%
	No, U.S politics are not as divisive.	1.0	0.0	1.0
		6.3%	0.0%	33.3%
	I don't keep up with the divisiveness of U.S politics.	3.0	2.0	1.0
		18.8%	15.4%	33.3%

Figure 3.2.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q15: Do you believe U.S politics have become more divisive within the past 4 years?	Total Count (Answering)	142.0	96.0	46.0
	Yes, U.S politics have become more divisive.	109.0	81.0	28.0
		76.8%	84.4%	60.9%
	No, U.S politics are not as divisive.	10.0	7.0	3.0
		7.0%	7.3%	6.5%
	I don't keep up with the divisiveness of U.S politics.	23.0	8.0	15.0
		16.2%	8.3%	32.6%

Figure 3.2.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

Lastly, Figure 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 asks respondents which political/social events in 2020 encouraged them the most to participate politically. Figure 3.3.1 showed that 46.2% of White respondents who voted in the last election indicated “Black Lives Matter Protests” as being the event that encouraged them the most to participate politically, whereas White respondents who did not vote indicated the “Covid-19 Pandemic” at 66.7%. Figure 3.3.2 demonstrated that Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election with 50.0%, whereas Nonwhite respondents who did not vote indicated “Covid-19 Pandemic” with 43.5%.

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q16: Which events of 2020 have prompted or encouraged you the MOST to engage and participate with political discourse ? - Selected Choice	Total Count (Answering)	16.0	13.0	3.0
	Covid-19 Pandemic	5.0	3.0	2.0
		31.3%	23.1%	66.7%
	Black Lives Matter Protests	6.0	6.0	0.0
		37.5%	46.2%	0.0%
	Supreme Court Nomination Hearings	1.0	1.0	0.0
		6.3%	7.7%	0.0%
	2020 Presidential Debates	1.0	1.0	0.0
	6.3%	7.7%	0.0%	
Other	3.0	2.0	1.0	
	18.8%	15.4%	33.3%	

Figure 3.3.1 White Filter Applied

		Q30: Did you vote in the last election?		
		Total	Yes	No
Q16: Which events of 2020 have prompted or encouraged you the MOST to engage and participate with political discourse ? - Selected Choice	Total Count (Answering)	142.0	96.0	46.0
	Covid-19 Pandemic	41.0	21.0	20.0
		28.9%	21.9%	43.5%
	Black Lives Matter Protests	64.0	48.0	16.0
		45.1%	50.0%	34.8%
	Supreme Court Nomination Hearings	3.0	2.0	1.0
		2.1%	2.1%	2.2%
	2020 Presidential Debates	29.0	23.0	6.0
	20.4%	24.0%	13.0%	
Other	5.0	2.0	3.0	
	3.5%	2.1%	6.5%	

Figure 3.3.2 Nonwhite Filter Applied

In summary, these results align with my expectation that the current political climate and current events positively impact the participation among young ethnic minorities. Both White respondents and Nonwhite respondents who indicated that they follow public affairs, are more likely to vote. In addition, Nonwhite and White respondents who indicated “Black Lives Matter” as events that increased political engagement are more likely to vote. This suggests that those who did not vote are more concerned with events that impact them (Covid-19 Pandemic),



whereas current events that have increased awareness and activism are of more interest to young ethnic minorities who do vote.

## **Discussion**

The findings in this research suggest that socialization encourages young ethnic minorities to participate in American politics. Familial socialization is the main source of political identification for ethnic minorities. As compared to White respondents, Nonwhite respondents were more strongly influenced by familial socialization to vote (figure 1.1.1 and figure 1.1.2). In addition, as compared to White respondents, more Nonwhite respondents who voted indicated that they shared the same political beliefs as their friends/peers (figure 1.4.1 and figure 1.4.2). Both White and Nonwhite respondents held similar response patterns as those who had print media subscriptions are more likely to vote (figure 1.2.1 and figure 1.2.2). The data also reveals that for both White respondents and Nonwhite respondents who indicated that they do not share the same political beliefs as their parents, are more likely to vote (figure 1.3.1 and figure 1.3.2). Overall, familial socialization patterns were weak in correlation with voter turnout. This suggests that young ethnic minorities that have higher influences of familial socialization are less willing to participate in politics (based on a measure of voter turnout), yet those who indicated that they shared political beliefs with friends/peers had increased participation.

The survey data also demonstrates that issue salience contributes to the mobilization of young ethnic minorities. Issues pertaining to Civil rights and Immigration policies were salient to ethnic minorities. The data also reveals that both White respondents who voted and Nonwhites who voted demonstrated “civil rights movements” as the issue that most interests them (figure 2.1.1 and figure 2.1.2). Next, I compared White respondents’ feelings of issues personally affecting them with Nonwhite respondents. Both White and Nonwhite respondents believed

“Yes, these issues impacted me personally” (figure 2.2.1 and figure 2.2.2). Interestingly, Nonwhite and White respondents had similar survey response patterns found when assessing issue salience. Both of these results were in consideration of the dependent variable (political participation), as ethnic minorities who voted felt more strongly that these issues affect them personally than nonvoters and indicated “Civil Rights Movements” as issues of most interest to them than nonvoters. Overall, these results suggest that young ethnic minorities who feel that issues will have an immediate impact on their personal lives are more willing to participate in politics.

The current state of affairs or political climate is a mobilizing factor for young ethnic minorities to participate in politics. As compared to White respondents, Nonwhite respondents demonstrated less political awareness of current events (figure 3.1.1 and figure 3.1.2) and indicated that “Black Lives Matter Protests” was the event that prompted them to participate the most (figure 3.3.1 and figure 3.3.2). Similar to White respondents, however, Nonwhite respondents shared the same beliefs of political divisiveness (figure 3.2.1 and figure 3.2.2). These results were in consideration of the dependent variable (political participation), as ethnic minorities who voted held similar political awareness of current events to nonvoters, had stronger feelings of political divisiveness than nonvoters, and chose “Black Lives Matter protests as events that encouraged participation. These results implicate that events of increased media attention and awareness affect increased participation of young ethnic minorities.

In comparing the data between White respondents who voted in the last election and Nonwhite respondents who voted in the last election, I found that both populations had similar answer patterns. This leads me to believe that age may have a stronger effect on young ethnic minorities than expected. Age solidarity within generation z seems to be a mobilizing factor that

I did not recognize. Studies concerning young people and the effect of social media may be more revealing in the mobilizing factors that encourage participation. In the U.S, however, it may be useful to better understand age as a mobilizing factor, just as ethnic identity is studied as such.

It is also important to note that the measure of participation within this study is based on whether or not a respondent has voted within the past 2020 Presidential election. As discussed earlier in this paper, political participation includes different types of active or passive forms of participation (Conge 1988, Deth 2014), yet I chose to narrow my scope of participation to voter turnout. Due to this, I have excluded forms of participation such as campaigning, political awareness, protests, and more. In addition, I am unintentionally excluding participants who were ineligible to vote in the 2020 Presidential election -excluding non-citizens, those under the age of 18 at the time of election, and other groups. I understand and encourage that more research concerning the political participation and engagement of undocumented and international young ethnic minorities be carried out.

Research concerning the political behavior and participation of young people and ethnic minorities are often researched separately and not intersectionally. Understanding what encourages ethnic minorities to participate in politics could be beneficial for public policy, advancing ethnic agendas, and mobilizing racial minorities. This study, however, tries to add to existing research of participation of American citizens and contribute to the field.

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