

THE INFLUENCE OF COUNTRY OF ORIGIN ON
NATURALIZED CITIZEN VOTING BEHAVIOR

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Abstract: How does the regime type of their country of origin influence the likelihood of naturalized citizens' participating in voting? Voting behavior of different demographics is a long studied topic within Political Science research. But few studies have been conducted regarding the voting behavior of naturalized citizens. Using the Voting and Registration Supplement from the November 2012 Current Population Survey, I attempt to identify the influence that the country of origin for these citizens has on their attitude towards voting. Findings suggest that individuals who immigrated from democratic countries are more likely to vote than those from non-democratic countries.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	3
Native vs Naturalized: Does it matter?	3
Voting Behavior.....	5
The Importance of Country of Origin.....	5
Literature Critique.....	7
III. THEORY	10
Socialization.....	10
Regime Type Influence.....	11

Chapter	Page
IV. METHEDOLOGY	15
V. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION.....	20
Results.....	20
Discussion and Conclusion.....	25
REFERENCES	28

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Table 1: Logistic Regression; Dichotomous Polity	22
2. Table 2: Logistic Regression; Continuous Polity	23
3. Table 3: Logistic Regression; Time/Age Interaction.....	24

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Naturalization Application Figures	4
2. Yearbook of Immigration Statistics	6

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Voting in the United States is a duty, one that people are excited to participate in. Citizens in America are supposed to get the sense that they have a say in the policies that affect them and in selecting the people who represent them. It is no secret that the United States prides itself in the freedom of its citizens to participate in the political process. For someone who has grown up in a country in which voting is considered a cultural norm and is openly and regularly discussed, it may be easy to assume that the desire to vote is innate. But this desire to vote may not even cross the mind of someone who has never been socialized to view political participation as a regular part of citizenship. Take Ahmed¹ for example, an international student from Saudi Arabia, a government that functions as a Monarchy. When asked if he would vote if he ever got the opportunity, he replied with a seemingly disinterested “no”. He explained that “In Saudi Arabia, there has always been the crown and there will always be the crown and that is just how it is”. There are probably many factors that might have influenced Ahmed’s response, but it is clear in the above statement that the regime that he was socialized under had a major impact on his views on voting.

¹ This is my own personal anecdote. The name has been changed to protect the identity of this student.

From voting behavior to voting laws to voter mobilization, there are few voting based topics that have not been touched on in political science research (Hill, 1999; Lijphart, 1997; McDonald, 2016). One of those few neglected topics is the voting behavior of naturalized citizens. Naturalized citizens are individuals who have immigrated from a country outside of the United States who elect to complete the process of becoming a citizen of America. Many times, this demographic is not viewed as their own group because it is easy to categorize these individuals into whatever other identity group they might fall into (i.e. a Kenyan individual likely being categorized as Black/African American).. Just as scholars do with any other demographic, it is important to determine the factors that has the most impactful influence on voting behavior of naturalized citizens.

For naturalized citizens, how does the regime type of their country of origin influence the likelihood of voting? In addressing this question, I hope to add to the already established literature, while also sparking more interest in specifically researching this demographic. Motivated by determining the effects of the distinguishing characteristic between this group and native born citizens, I seek to focus on the main difference between the two, their country of origin/birth. Specifically looking at individual countries rather than region will allow for a more in depth study especially because not all countries in the same region have the same regime type.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Native vs Naturalized: Does it matter?

It is estimated that foreign born citizens make up about 13% of the United States population according to the United States Census Bureau (Grieco, 2012). At first glance, this may seem like an insignificant percentage to dedicate research efforts towards, especially when we isolate the number of age eligible voters within that population and find that naturalized citizens only make up about 9% of the voting population (Nuno, 2016). But when it comes to voting, small numbers matter, especially in close elections.

For example, in the 2016 election, Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by a margin of just over 2% and in such close elections, researchers find that these small margins are typically determined by minority population and in the case of the 2016 election, it is predicted that naturalized citizens especially had a major affect (Nam, 2017; Porter 2016). According to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services², they saw the highest number of naturalization applications ever in 2008 and since then, though there have been some periods of decline, there have been between 700,000 and 750,000 approved applications yearly.

² Source: Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Yearbook of Immigration Statistics (Washington, DC: DHS Office of Immigration Statistics, various years), available online.

This means that the percentage of voting eligible foreign born citizens will only continue to increase which might illuminate a proportional gap between native born participation and naturalized participants.



So it is safe to assume that

studying this group would likely provide substantial insight to voting literature and it would seem that distinguishing between naturalized citizens and natural born citizens in voting literature should be a priority, especially considering that immigrants will continue to pursue naturalization at such high rates. But there is little research on the effects that being naturalized might have on voting or what factors contribute to how this group tends to vote. And in the research that has been published, there are recurrent issues that need to be addressed in order to further legitimize some of the theories brought forth.

Bass and Casper (2001) find evidence that there exists a difference in the political behavior of native born and naturalized. Though DeSipio (1997) concluded that when analyzing the aforementioned factors such as age or education, naturalized citizen voting behavior tends to align with the general research on voting, other scholars only agree to a point. Some political scientists believe that current voting research has identified a baseline of factors that influence political behavior but have failed to address unique factors that are likely to impact naturalized citizens in a different way (Bass and Casper, 2001; Cho, 1999). If there is even a slight difference within this population that might impact their voting behavior, it is worth studying.

This would mean focusing on what factors have a significant enough socialization impact on these individuals to carry over into their behavior in the United States.

Voting Behavior

Voting is a heavily studied topic in the field of political science. The literature covers everything from voter identification laws to turnout statistics. Even further, many political scientists have heavily studied the behavior that influences how and why individuals vote. Researchers have determined that a number of socio-economic factors can help to predict the likelihood of participation (Hill, 1999; Lijphart, 1997; McDonald, 2016). In general, the evidence indicates that level of education, occupation, income, gender, age, and overall societal status can influence the propensity to vote (Ansolabehere and Hersh, 2011). There is also a focus on socialization, that is, the process in which a multitude of people, factors, and surroundings work together to define an individual's perception and behavior towards the world. Researchers have largely determined that socialization plays a major role in an individual's propensity to vote. It has been established that those who are consistently exposed to electoral behavior in childhood are likely to engage in the same type of behavior in adulthood (Brady, Schlozman, and Verba 2014). So from childhood, an individual's electoral identity is being formed. This illuminates even more the need to study any and all agents of socialization that might play a factor in this process, including country of origin.

The Importance of Country of Origin

The major factor that separates naturalized citizens from natural born citizens is the most obvious, one group contains citizens from different countries. When addressing this specific population, the assumption that someone who is naturalized is not from the United States is a given. But much of the literature about naturalized citizen voting fails to make the further distinction between the different individual countries represented within this group. There are

many studies that indicate that where you live can influence the way you vote or your likelihood of participating in voting (Gelman et. al, 2010). For one, people who live in countries in which the majority holds different ideological values than an individual, voting might be a turn off because they believe their vote may not affect the outcome. Or, in states that have particularly strict registration or identification laws we see that turnout is particularly low (Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson, 2017). If such major implications are found from state to state within the same country, one can only imagine what can be found from country to country.

I find that most of the literature tends to only speak on regions rather than individual countries and even

then, much of the

literature focuses on

Central America and

Asia (Bass and

Casper 2001;

Schmidley and

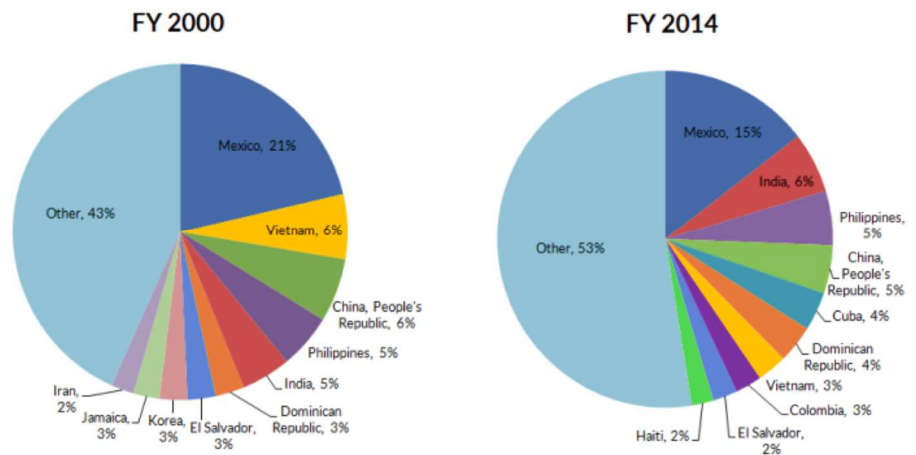
Gibson, 1999).

According to the

United States Census Bureau³, over 50 countries are represented in the United States. This

indicates that current naturalized citizen studies are neglecting to account for a major portion of this group by only studying certain regions.

Regions are generalized, they capture the essence of the area but fail to properly acknowledge the culture, tradition, and individuality of each country. There are many reasons that making clear distinctions between individual countries might be a better method of collecting



³ Source: DHS, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 2002 and 2016, available online.

accurate findings than simply studying the region. For one, research has shown that the process of assimilation occurs at different rates within different racial and ethnic groups (Alba and Nee, 2003). Also, some factors that might be specific to the country but not to the region would increase the need for this distinction. One of these factors might be language. Take Brazil for example. Brazil is surrounded by countries that are Spanish speaking, yet Brazilians speak Portuguese. Even though the languages are very similar, they are distinctly different.

Those differences can have major foundational impacts on citizens engagement and mobilization. All over the world, countries that border one another have glaring differences that create a completely different atmosphere for their citizens. North and South Korea, for example, are bordering nations that, because of different governing bodies, dramatically influence every day activities and well-being of citizens. These are just a few examples of how the country a person is from can impact the way they are socialized to think about certain topics that influence parts of an individual's life such as political participation.

Literature Critique

It has already been theorized that naturalized citizens are likely to adopt differing political behavior compared to their native born counterparts (Bass and Casper, 2001). But because of the lack of research into this specific population, it is yet to be determined the significance of some of these differences. The lack of research is made even more evident when compared to the droves of research that has been done on other voting populations.

Bass and Casper (2001) made great strides in adding to the research in naturalized citizen voting participation and behavior. Their study tests a variety of different factors which include region of origin and country of origin. When theorizing about these two factors, Bass and Casper (2001) suggest that considering both would be important because of a few key reasons. First, looking at region and country of origin distinguishes the immigrant and minority populations

from the Caucasian majority. They do not elaborate much on why this would be an important reason to look at origins which removes some of the importance from these variables. This reasoning also ostracizes immigrants who are white and cannot be included in the minority demographic in America on the basis of race. Second, they suggest that immigrants from certain regions tend to attain naturalization at higher rates than those from other regions. This seems like an obvious assertion as most of the research done on voting in immigrant populations is focused on Latin and Asian American communities. With the amount of naturalized citizens in the United States, it is necessary to look at any country that is represented within this demographic because of the possibility of misrepresentation that could occur by assuming that all naturalized citizens would adopt the same views as those from the regions and countries frequently studied. Another glaring issue with the origin variables that Bass and Casper (2001) present is that both region and country are viewed as identical variables even after acknowledging that looking at country of origin could garner more specific findings that would differ from looking at only region. They posit that some countries provide different economic opportunities as well as social opportunities like education. Not to mention the slight differences in culture and norms that distinguishes each country from its neighbor. And again, we see a focus on Latin American and Asian American countries like in much of the other literature about naturalized citizen voting. Yet still, Bass and Casper (2001) suggest in their findings that studying country of origin is not important as long as region is being tested for.

Within the voting literature that specifically focuses on immigrant populations, there not only seems to be a lack of consensus on whether or not the country of origin is a significant variable but when the variable is studied, there is contention on why the variable is important (Lien, 1994; DeSipio, 1996; Bass and Casper, 2001). I believe that the discrepancy within the literature is derived from a lack of theory. It is not simply that being from one country versus

another makes an individual more inclined to vote. Rather, there is something about certain countries that might be driving electoral participation.

CHAPTER III

THEORY

Socialization

An individual's surroundings and agents of socialization impacts their decision making process daily (Quintelier, 2013). Though there are many examples of the effects of socialization, political participation is one of the best illustrations of a process that is shaped throughout a lifetime by these agents of socialization (Aldrich, Montgomery, and Wood, 2011; Valentino, Gregorowicz, and Groenendyk, 2009).

Even though citizens are not allowed the opportunity to vote until eighteen years of age, socialization plays a part in their future political identity starting at a young age through factors such as family, media, and religion (Amna, 2012). The influence that these agents of socialization can have on an individual can also impact the electoral system in very subtle but major ways. In a democracy, citizens have the power to vote for more than just the President. Each individual has a different mixture of agents of socialization that can influence their political participation but generally research has pinpointed the main components that a majority of individuals adhere to. With naturalized citizens, there is an extra factor of being from a different country that affects their socialization.

Naturalized citizens are likely to find themselves with two identities, one that is socialized by their past home and one that is socialized by their current home. These two identities might be at odds as factors that are traditionally found to influence voting participation are impacted by which identity the individual chooses to prioritize. Perhaps, for example, if fear is associated with voting or political participation and that fear is created by the actions of the country of origin's government leaders, the likelihood of participation would decrease. On the other hand, someone who desires to leave their past behind and assimilate into American culture might increase their likelihood to vote as political participation is encouraged.

Regime Type Influence

It is important to address the differences between the United States and any other country because of the potential impact that government can have on an individual's socialization. Though many would say that the major differences between countries vary, I would argue that regimes are what really set countries apart from one another. While some may say that the people or the culture distinguishes countries from one another. I would say that the government and the way it treats its citizens plays a major part in defining cultural impacts and citizen well-being. A government can choose to provide social programs for their poor citizens or choose to repress the media. Decisions like this, that are made at the top, can have profound impact on the makeup of a country. And in turn, this impact can shape the daily lives of citizens. Due to their ability to elect officials, citizens of a democratic regime seem to be in a better position than citizens in authoritarian regimes.

Different regimes have varying types of socio-economic resources available to citizens and this could influence the propensity to vote in a few ways. For example, democracies are believed to offer more educational opportunities to a broader group of citizens while autocratic governments tend to reserve higher quality educational opportunities for elites (Glaeser, Ponzetto,

and Shleifer, 2007). Research shows that those with a higher degree of education have an increased likelihood of voting (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). With a higher likelihood of receiving some level of education, citizens who lived in democracies potentially increase their understanding of government and electoral systems, therefore increasing an individual's likelihood to vote. Many other factors likely go into the process of deciding whether or not to vote but this illustration is just one example of the part that regime can play in that process.

On the other hand, autocratic governments tend to be passive about the needs of their citizens and sometimes actively repress certain rights that are seen as fundamental by many (Davenport and Armstrong, 2004). Often, these repressive regimes must use violence to 'legitimize' their rule (Gerschewski, 2011). This can lead to a major disconnect between citizens and government, as people grow to distrust leaders. Perhaps when there is a culture of fear, antagonism, or apathy towards the government, this could carry over after immigration.

Then comes the issue of assimilation. A logical assumption could be that perhaps naturalized citizens who have not had the opportunity to voice their political opinions through voting would be eager to finally be heard by their government and with the weight that the United States puts on the importance of elections and participation, this might excite them even more to exercise this right. Though this assumption is compelling, there are many factors that could endanger the validity. For one, authoritarian governments are known to use threats or violence against people who speak in opposition of the ruling party or leader (Svolik, 2012). An individual who has migrated from a country with such a system might associate voting with fear. Another factor is the access and ease of voting. When interviewing Moira⁴she indicated that she strongly disagreed with a statement that indicated that the process of voting was easy. The voting process begins many months prior to the actual voting day in an election and it involves registration,

⁴ This name of the respondent has been changed in order to protect their identity.

primaries, obtaining proper identification, finding your polling station. This could possibly deter those who are not familiar with the entire process from participating because they may not have the desire or time to learn. And possibly when assessing the costs and benefits of learning the process and becoming involved, they may find that it may be more beneficial to free ride off of the outcome of the election and eliminate the need to go through the process and take on the costs that participating in voting might garner. Another factor to consider if an individual has been required to know a language by their government for their entire life and English is a secondary language, it would be difficult to understand the political rhetoric used in the media and on campaigns, making it hard to follow an election and likely causing disinterest in participating. This could be a factor that also affects those from democratic countries but if an individual is already not interested or invested in voting and have the added barrier, it becomes less likely for them to assimilate into the electoral system.

On the other hand, maybe those who have already had the opportunity to participate in democracy prior to coming to the United States view voting is a necessary part of their pre-established routine. We know that voter turnout in the United States is already low due to factors such as time constraints, work and school obligations, difficulty finding polling stations or obtaining proper registration/identification, and a feeling of disconnection from the political process due to institutions like the electoral college (Powell, 1986). But, we also know that the United States has one of the lowest turnout rates⁵ amongst democracies in the world. Which leads me to assume that many of these individuals from democratic countries are probably already highly likely to turnout to vote.

It seems likely that those who have participated in any type of democratic voting process will continue participating after their naturalization while those who have had little to no opportunity to participate will be less likely to initiate themselves into the voting process. It

⁵ This is according to a 2018 Pew Research Center report.

makes sense to assume that an individual is more likely to stick to a routine that has been indoctrinated in them. This individual might have a propensity to follow the routine and continue voting, especially for those who have immigrated from countries with practices such as compulsory voting which requires all eligible citizens in a certain country to register and vote or face a penalty (Birch, 2016). Citizens from an autocratic country, on the other hand, would gain no incentives from initiating themselves into a process that is difficult to understand and has seemingly little impact on their lives if they choose not to participate. And just like in the case of those from democratic countries, it makes little sense to deviate from what you have always been done.

Hypothesis 1: naturalized citizens of the United States who immigrated from a country with an autocratic government are less likely to participate in voting than naturalized citizens who immigrated from a country with a democratic government.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

In order to test my hypothesis, I take a quantitative approach by estimating a logistic regression model on survey data. This approach of measurement is the most beneficial method for testing my hypothesis because quantitative methods allow researchers to make generalizable assumptions about larger populations with tests of statistical significance. Testing a large number of cases allows for increased reliability by increasing consistency as more people are surveyed, unlike if I examined just a few cases where the probability of random outcomes is as high as the probability of consistent outcomes.

There are also drawbacks to using quantitative methods. While a quantitative method can indicate statistical significance, it can be difficult to pinpoint the cause of significance. Utilizing survey data allows me to gain insight into explaining the reason a variable might be significant rather than simply indicating that it is. Also, as I have stated previously, there is not a lot of research available on this specific topic. Due to a lack of availability of research on this specific topic, I have decided to use more general survey data that contains some questions that can be applied to this analysis. Though it is not a survey that is tailored to this specific topic, I believe that the survey used will still provide reliable data.

This analysis will use data from the Current Population Survey (CPS). This survey is distributed by the United States Census Bureau. The survey addresses questions on voting, citizenship, nativity, and time spent in the United States for foreign born respondents. Within the CPS there is a Voter and Registration Supplement which is administered in November of an election year. This supplement contains information on voting and registration behavior for all voting eligible members of every home surveyed.

The dependent variable for this study is the likelihood to vote. The CPS Voter and Registration Supplement is a good dataset to utilize because it not only identifies whether or not a person has voted in the most recent election corresponding to the year of the survey, but it also contains variables that address the citizenship and nativity of the respondent that can be used as part of the analysis for the independent variable as well.

For the purpose of this research, I use Polity IV to measure my independent variable, the regime type of state of origin. This dataset provides a very clear definition of regime types and measures these regimes at varying degrees. This is beneficial for measuring the independent variable because not all regimes can be treated the same. Polity IV counters this by evaluating how open and competitive an election is, how freely individuals are allowed to participate in elections, and checks/balances on executive authority. This database also measures polity over time, which would help to determine the type of regime during the time in which the respondent indicates they resided in that country.

The Polity IV Project is a database created to test levels of democracy by “coding authority characteristics of states in the world system for purposes of comparative, quantitative analysis”. Polity IV provides information for states with a population of over 500,000 and covers the timespan between 1800 and 2017. For each year that a state meets the population criteria, a

polity score is assigned. The scores range from -10 to 10, indicating most autocratic state to most democratic state respectively.

Polity IV has the stipulations that the country must have a population of at least 500,000 people and that the country must be independent. These stipulations create an issue as sometimes there are missing values in the variable that indicates a country's polity score. There were many possible reasons for missing polity scores such as change in population, conflict arising (whether internal like a coup or external like a war), party or regime changes. In order to make the dataset as complete as possible I had to go through each missing value and match the country's history with an appropriate polity score. In many cases I attempted to assign the score that was least democratic in order for my method of testing to be as rigorous as possible.

I merged the Polity IV dataset with the CPS dataset, sorting and merging based on country code and year variables. Once merged, I needed to delete certain observations that did not match the criteria of my analysis. The original, unedited dataset has 151,598 observations. The survey has a variable that indicates each respondent's citizenship status. I then remove all observations that are not classified as "foreign born, U.S. citizen by naturalization". This ensures that all observations fit the criteria of being foreign born for my analysis, leaving me with 6,670 observations. I delete all observations where respondents indicated that they were below the legal voting age of 18 years old.. This left 5,400 observations in the dataset.

It is important to control for certain factors that might also account for significant effects.. Including these controls in my analysis allow for more rigorous results, eliminating as many alternative explanations as I can think of. I select control variables that in political science research, have previously been identified as having significant influence on voter participation.

My first control variable is age⁶. This variable isolate the significance of regime type because those who immigrated later in life will likely have experienced a more significant impact in socialization from country of origin than those who came to the United States at a younger age. We also know from previous literature that those in the 65+ age demographic are more likely to vote than any other age group. I create a dichotomous variable called “age” that categorizes a 1 as someone who is 65 years old or older and a 0 as someone who is between the ages of 18 and 64.

I also control for gender⁷ because according to the Center for American Women and Politics, in general, women are more likely to turnout and vote than men are. And according to the United States Census Bureau, women seek naturalization at higher rates than men. This could likely mean that if women are becoming citizens at a higher rate than men are, then they are likely voting at higher rates as well (Ogburn and Goltra, 1919; Salvo and Ortiz, 1992).

I include a control variable for race. Because the CPS is a supplement from the Census, the standard classifications for ethnicity and race used in the Census are used in this survey. It is commonly found that white individuals have maintained higher turnout and participation rates than any other racial and ethnic group (Fraga, 2015). To make the measure simpler, I create a dichotomous variable based on the original CPS variable. The new variable indicates that a 1 represents a white individual and a 0 represents all non-white individuals.

I create a variable that indicates how many years the respondent has spent consecutively in the United States since entering the country. The theory behind this is twofold. One, those who might have immigrated to the United States at a later age have had more time to be socialized in

⁶ I also run another model with the age variable as a continuous variable.

⁷ I do not make any changes to this variable and it is important to note that the variable only includes male and female as gender classifications, though respondents were permitted to also leave this question blank.

their home country (Arvizu and Garcia, 1996). While those who have spent more time in the United States have had more time to assimilate to the culture (Cho, 1999; Uhlaner et al., 1989). The original variable in the dataset gave a range of the years that the respondent could have entered the United States. I created a new variable that contains a single year. I chose the latest year within the range to run a more strict analysis. Then from there I the final variable to be used in the regression by subtracting the single year variable from 2012, the year the survey was collected.

I also control for household income using the original variable from the dataset. There are many scholars that find that individuals who live in households with higher incomes are more likely to vote (Filer, Kenny, and Morton, 1993). The original variable in the data set is coded in ranges starting from “Less than \$5000) going up to “\$150,000 or More”. This variable is straightforward so I do not make any changes to it.

Previous voting literature indicates that the higher an individual’s level of education, the more likely they are to vote (DeSipio, 1996). So I control for education by creating a new variable based on the original variable from the dataset which indicates how many years of college a respondent has completed. If the respondent has completed any amount of college credit they are classified as a 1 in this dichotomous variable. While those who have no college credit completed at all are classified as a 0.

Finally I control for region of the state that the respondent resides.. The census employs four regions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. I run the logistic regression with fixed effects on regions.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Results

Table 1 shows the results from the logistic regression model testing the relationship between likelihood to vote and the regime type of a naturalized citizen's country of origin. Table 1 also includes the coefficients for the control variables known to influence the likelihood of voting mentioned earlier. The results in Table 1 indicate that the coefficient for the main independent variable, whether the country of origin is democratic or not, is statistically significant at the .01 level. This finding supports my hypothesis, which means that respondents that are from democratic countries are more likely to vote than those who are from non-democratic countries. Another statistic shown in Table 1 is percent delta which shows the change in likelihood of voting for an increase of one standard deviation away from the mean for each variable. The percent delta statistic is only reported for the variables that are found to be statistically significant. In regards to the main independent variable, the results indicate that individuals from democratic countries are 5.58% more likely to vote than those who are from non-democratic countries.

Table 1 shows that the coefficient for the control variables of age, education, and household income are all positive and statistically significant. This means that as education, income, or age increases so does an individual's likelihood to vote. As explained before, this fits with what scholars have previously found about the impact these factors have on voting.

In regards to the percent delta results for the control variables, individuals who are more educated are 5.19% more likely to vote. Older individuals are 3.55% more likely to vote. And individuals with higher incomes are 1.47% more likely to vote. Another control that is found to be significant is the number of years that a respondent has spent in the United States since their entry. Respondents who have spent more time in the United States are .56% more likely to vote. This indicates that individuals who have spent more time in the United States are slightly more likely to vote, probably due to a higher likelihood for assimilation or more time to learn and understand the voting process in the United States. Gender and race were two controls that were not found to be significant. In regards to race, finding that this variable was not significant does not align with previous findings but makes sense due to the volume of people in this demographic that are considered to be “non-white minorities”.

Table 2 shows the results of a logistic regression but instead of using a dichotomous polity score, I run the regression using the original continuous polity score. This was done as a robustness check. Table 2 still indicates that the main independent variable of country polity is significant at the .05 level. This means that as a country becomes more democratic (by moving closer to the score of 10), the individual becomes more likely to vote. This, again, supports my initial hypothesis. In regards to the control variables, Table 2 shows that Household income, education, and years spent in the United States are all still significant. The gender and race variables are also still not significant. The main difference in regards to the control variables is that the variable for age in Table 2 is not significant.

Table 3 is the same logistic regression from Table 1 but I interact time spent in the United States with the continuous age variable. The interactions turns out to be significant which indicates that the more time an individual has spent in the United States, relative to their age, the more likely they are to vote. All of the control variables had the same outcome.

Table 1: Logistic Regression; Dichotomous Polity

VARIABLES	Model 1	%Δ
Country of Origin Polity	.240*** (.062)	5.58%
Age	.153* (.018)	3.55%
Education	.223*** (.071)	5.19%
Race	-.016 (.060)	---
Years Spent In U.S.	.024*** (.002)	.56%
Household Income	.063*** (.008)	1.47%
Gender	.053 (.058)	---
Constant	-1.04*** (.149)	
Number of GERE	4	
Wald Chisq	209.2	
Log Likelihood	-3460	

Table 2: Logistic Regression; Continuous Polity

VARIABLES	Model 2
Country of Origin Polity	.015** (.004)
Age	.158 (.081)
Education	.225** (.071)
Race	-.030 (.060)
Years Spent In U.S.	.024** (.003)
Household Income	.064** (.058)
Gender	.053 (.058)
Constant	-.955** (6.50)
Observations	5,400
Number of GERE	4
Wald Chisq	209.2
Log Likelihood	-3460

Standard errors in parentheses

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

Table 3: Logistic Regression; Time/Age Interaction

VARIABLES	Model 3
Country of Origin Polity	.278*** (.063)
Age	.029*** (.004)
Education	.294*** (.072)
Race	.018 (.060)
Years Spent In U.S.	.047*** (.009)
Household Income	.067*** (8.46)
Gender	.063 (.052)
Interaction Yrs. Spent in U.S./Age	-.0005*** (.0001)
Constant	-2.39** (.248)
Observations	5,400
Number of GREG	4
Wald Chisq	268.0
Log Likelihood	-3428

Standard errors in parentheses

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

Discussion & Conclusion

It seems that those who are well established in society (i.e. wealthy and more educated) are more likely to vote. Their socioeconomic status may indicate that they have overcome social and structural barriers and feel more comfortable participating in the electoral system. Finding that the main independent variable is statistically significant at the highest degree, even when measured up against all of the control variables, indicates that this was part of the missing theory in previous attempts at analyzing country of origin.

It is important to remember that previously, there was little to no consensus on the significance of country of origin within the literature. The significance of this variable will bring some clarity to the confusion but there are still some questions that remain. Even though it is clear that the electoral behavior exhibited by naturalized voters cannot be assumed to follow the same patterns as their native-born counterparts, what exactly is the reason for this? One thing to consider is how sticky socialization can be. Theoretically both the country of origin and the United States would play some part in the naturalized individual's socialization. The question then becomes how much each influences the individual.

Perhaps there exists a stronger connection between time spent in the United States or age of immigration into the country that could better explain the interaction between participation and country of origin. It would be easy to assume that those who immigrated at a younger age might be more likely to participate, but my findings show

that the interactions are complex and need a deeper analysis. It might also be beneficial to inquire whether the age of naturalization has any influence as well. Maybe if an individual becomes naturalized at a younger age, they might find themselves caring about voting because they know that is a right now and forever afforded to them and they have more time to understand the process of voting. But maybe it is the opposite, an individual who becomes naturalized at a younger age might adopt the apathy towards voting of many Americans. It is worth analyzing further.

Another thing to think about is how American democracy differs from foreign democracies and how that might impact an individual's perception of democracy over time. Polity IV analyzes six key component that measure executive recruitment, constraints on executive authority, and political competition. It might be beneficial to take a deeper look at the measures of polity and determine if there exists a difference in levels of participation when looking at a lack of or an abundance of one or more of these specific components.

There could also be significant implications during election years that these findings might begin to address. In a report from Rock the (Naturalized) Vote II, it was presented that naturalized citizen voter turnout had seen an increase between 2012 and 2016 presidential elections. This report also predicted an additional exponential increase for the 2020 election. This, combined with the fact that the number of naturalization applications have increased steadily over the past two decades, could indicate to political figures that tailoring their campaigns towards this specific demographic could help win elections. It is clear that there is still a lot of work to do to help us understand this population better.

As seen with the significance of some of the control variables, there are some similarities in prediction of participation between native born voters and naturalized voters. But there are also still questions about whether or not there are differences in registration and overall propensity to vote between the two groups. It would be interesting to determine if the same theories that are applied generally to United States key demographics would still apply within the group of naturalized citizens. My findings could open doors to more comprehensive analysis on the part that naturalized citizens play in campaign and election strategies.

In my attempt to draw a connection between country of origin and electoral participation, I conclude that naturalized citizens from democratic countries have a higher likelihood of voting than those from non-democratic countries. Contrary to previous literature, my findings bring some clarity in studying this demographic. But on the other hand, these findings garner even more questions about this group. It is clear that studying the electoral participation of naturalized citizens is much more complex than previously thought and should entice researchers to pursue a more in depth analysis on this group.

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