HOW DISCRIMINATION IMPACTS SOCIOPOLITICAL BEHAVIOR


The conventional wisdom regarding the impact of discrimination on political behavior is that the perception of prejudiced treatment motivates individuals to take political action. This study challenges this common conception by demonstrating that the source of discrimination can play a significant role in whether perceived or experienced injustice leads to activism or withdrawal from political life. Drawing from political science and social psychology literature, this study provides a new perspective on the potential effects of discrimination on a relatively new marginalized group in the United States. Specifically, an important distinction is drawn between political (systematic) and societal (interpersonal) discrimination in analyzing the sociopolitical behavior of American-Muslims in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The results will hopefully encourage scholars to take a deeper look at the nexus between discrimination and democratic engagement, which is an important, complex, and understudied topic.

Key words: Political Discrimination; Societal Discrimination; Sociopolitical Behavior; Muslim-Americans

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