

MINORITY DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION IN THE U.S. HOUSE:
A STUDY OF MINORITY CANDIDATE EMERGENCE IN 2010

by

ANGELA MICHELLE MORGAN

(Under the direction of Audrey Haynes)

ABSTRACT

Much of the scholarly research on minority representation in Congress has been limited in several ways. The focus on minority success in general elections provides a narrow understanding of the influence of race on minority representation. Few scholars have examined minority candidate emergence, despite the insight it provides into when and where minority candidates decide to run for office. Studies of minority candidate emergence and success have largely ignored the influence of party in congressional elections. To address this shortcoming in the literature, this thesis seeks to extend the research on minority representation in Congress by examining candidate emergence, with specific emphasis on party, during the 2010 U.S. House elections. The results reaffirm the previous research which indicates that district-level racial composition is associated with Black and Latino candidate emergence; however, party appears to have a differential impact on the likelihood of emergence among Black and Latino candidates.

INDEX WORDS: Majority-minority districts, African American politics, Latino politics, Voting Rights Act, candidate emergence, congressional elections

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ANGELA MICHELLE MORGAN

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ANGELA MICHELLE MORGAN

Approved:

Major Professor: Audrey Haynes

Committee: Charles Bullock III
James Monogan

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2012

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Chapter 1

Introduction

On November 4, 2008, this country elected Barack Obama as its first African American president. His electoral success was made possible, not by minority voters alone, but by a white voting population willing to see beyond the racial divisiveness that has plagued the United States for more than 200 years. Following this historic election, many suggested that the United States may be entering a period of post-racial politics, one in which race would no longer act as a significant barrier to minority office holding.¹ This conversation was extended in 2010, a year in which an unprecedented number of Black and Latino Republican candidates emerged for local, state, and national office. Of these Black Republican candidates, 35 emerged in U.S. House primary contests, with 14 victors moving forward to compete in general election contests. All but two of those 14 who competed in the general election garnered more white voter support than the white Republican candidate in their district in 2008 (Rogowski and Fairdosi 2012). Even more striking, however, was the general election success of Allen West, a congressional candidate from Florida's 22nd congressional district, and Tim Scott of South Carolina's first congressional district. Their general election victories marked the first time that two southern, Black, Republicans won election to the U.S. House of

¹Parker, Jennifer. 2008. Move Toward a Post-Racial America. *Los Angeles Times*, 5 Nov.; Taranto, James. 2009. "Obama's Postracial America: Why stupid squabbles over race are a sign of progress." *Washington Post*, 15 Sept.

Representatives since Reconstruction.

Latino candidates also reached several milestones in the 2010 midterm elections.² Latino Republican candidates won an unprecedented 8 seats between House and Senate races, which is the most seats won by Latino Republicans to date. For many of these races, Latino candidates were victorious without the support of Latino voters, who tend to prioritize issues over ethnicity. The widespread appeal of the aforementioned Black and Latino politicians makes the issue of racial redistricting, a central tenant of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its progeny, increasingly controversial, as justification for racial redistricting is based upon the notion that white voters seldom cast their vote for minority candidates.

Minority electoral success in majority-white districts and coalition districts is not a new occurrence. Scholars can point to several examples over the past three decades in which Black and Latino candidates have prevailed in such districts. Former Representative Gary Franks, a Black Republican from Connecticut's 5th congressional district, was able to achieve electoral success in a district in which the black voting-age percentage (BVAP) was only 4% (Swain 1993). Former Rep. J.C. Watts of Oklahoma's 4th congressional district also found electoral success by forging a multi-racial coalition of voters in a majority-white district. Most recently, Rep. Tim Scott of South Carolina's 1st congressional district and Rep. Allen West of Florida's 22nd congressional district achieved electoral success in majority-white districts in the South. However, of all House elections held in majority-white districts between 1966 and 1996, Black candidates were successful in 35 of 6667 elections, which is only 0.52% of the time (Canon 1999). Similarly, several Latino candidates have found success with the support of majority-white constituencies. Among these, Robert Martinez of Florida and Bill Richardson of New Mexico, both ran successful gubernatorial campaigns in their respective states (Casellas 2009). The electoral victories of the above mentioned minority candidates are generally seen as anecdotal evidence of declining racially polarized voting. They have, therefore, been deemed aberrations, and as such, unnecessary of systematic analysis.

²Lacey, Marc and Julia Preston. 2010. Latinos Reach Milestones in Midterm Races. *The New York Times*, 5 Nov.

Minority representation in Congress has interested scholars since the 1992 redistricting cycle, which led to dramatic increases in the number of minority candidates in Congress. The literature has primarily focused on the district characteristics, such as the racial composition of the district, which influences the general elections success of minority candidates (Lublin 1997; Canon 1999; Grofman, Handley and Lublin 2001; Casellas 2009; Lublin 1999). However, most of these scholars have largely ignored the two-stage process of most electoral contests in districts across the country. Few scholars have addressed the importance of race in primary elections. Studies examining the influence of race in primary elections provide increased understanding of when and where minority candidates decide to run for office (Branton 2009; Fraga 2011). However, many of these studies fail to account for the combined effect of district characteristics and a candidate's party on the probability of minority candidate emergence, which limits our ability to explain the emergence and success of minority candidates from the Republican Party during the 2010 U.S. House primary elections. Are Black or Latino Democrats and Black or Latino Republicans likely to emerge in districts with similar characteristics?

This analysis builds on the present body of literature in several ways. Specifically, this thesis examines minority candidate emergence during the 2010 congressional primary to assess the continued relevance of race, given the proclamation by many that the United States has entered an era of post-racial politics. Studies of minority candidate emergence and success have, for the most part, disregarded the influence of party in the two-stage electoral process. For this reason, I focus on minority candidate emergence in both Democratic and Republican primaries to determine if minorities of different parties are equally likely to emerge from heavily minority districts.

This study utilizes an original data set of all U.S. House primary contests held in 2010, which includes race information on all primary election candidates - winners and losers. To address the question of the continued relevance of race, given recent anecdotal evidence of decreased racially polarized voting in 2008 and 2010, I employ logistic regression analysis to test the effect of the racial composition of a district on the emergence of minority candidates in 2010 congressional

primary elections. Results indicate that as the district-level percentage of African Americans increases, the likelihood of an African American candidate emerging in that district increases. This also held true for the impact of district-level percentage of Latinos on the likelihood of Latino candidate emergence. However, while race remains the predominant indicator of minority candidate emergence, it appears that the effect of race wanes when we distinguish between partisan primaries. My findings indicate that in 2010, Black Republicans were less likely than Black Democrats to emerge in districts with higher percentages of African Americans. Latino Republicans, on the other hand, were more likely to emerge in districts in which Latinos comprised approximately 60% or less of the population, and were as likely to emerge as Latino Democrats in districts that were 60% Latino. However, Latino Democrats were more likely to emerge in those districts in which Latinos comprised 60% or more of the population.

The goal of this analysis is to contribute to the longstanding debate regarding the importance of majority-minority districts to the election of minority candidates. Do minority candidates perceive their chances of electoral success to be limited outside of majority-minority districts? Do minority candidates make decisions to run for office based on district characteristics? Do these district characteristics weigh equally in the decision-making of minorities from opposing parties? To begin to answer these questions, I will analyze the district-level factors that influenced minority candidate emergence during 2010 U.S. House primary elections. Following a review of the legal context of racial redistricting and literature on minority representation, I will lay out the theoretical basis of my posed hypotheses. I will then detail the collection of the original data set used to assess the impact of district characteristics on minority candidate emergence. To test these expectations, I will use logistic regression analysis to model emergence among Black and Latino candidates from the Democratic and Republican parties. This analysis will conclude with a discussion of key findings, limitations of the present study, and suggestions for the direction of future research on minority candidate emergence in congressional primary elections.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Legal Context of Racial Redistricting

Passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 not only led to the expansion of the franchise to many African Americans, particularly in the South, but further amendments and court decisions also led to the creation of majority-minority districts intended to give minority groups the ability to elect representatives of their choice. The majority-minority districts created during the 1990 redistricting period dramatically increased minority representation in Congress. This increase led to 50% growth in Congressional Black Caucus membership after the 1992 election cycle alone (Canon 1999). Similarly, the number of Latino representatives from Latino majority-minority districts more than doubled in 1993, as nineteen Latinos successfully won seats in the U.S. House (Lublin 1997). Despite these historic gains in minority representation, opposition to racially motivated redistricting has led to several legal battles that called into question the constitutionality of these newly created majority-minority districts.

In the aftermath of the 1992 congressional elections, the Supreme Court made several controversial decisions that eliminated newly created majority-minority districts and halted further creation of such districts. In *Shaw v. Reno* (1993), the Supreme Court struck down several majority-

minority districts based on their ruling that heavy reliance on race in drawing congressional districts must also serve some other state interest. This decision was followed two years later by *Miller v. Johnson* (1995), which held that race could no longer be the “predominant factor” in the creation of majority-minority districts. The Supreme Court ruled that majority-minority districts created solely on the basis of race were a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, and according to Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, “bear uncomfortable resemblance to political apartheid.” This decision resulted in the redrawing of Georgia’s 2nd and 11th congressional districts. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, legal battles regarding the legitimacy of racial redistricting led to the alteration of congressional district plans in ten states, which in most cases decreased the district minority population (Bullock and Dunn 1999). Despite the invalidation of several majority-minority districts, black incumbents were surprisingly successful in districts transformed into majority-white districts (Grose 2011; Bullock and Dunn 1999). The success of these minority candidates in majority-white districts fueled further debate and generated increased scholarly interest in the utility of racial redistricting.

2.2 Minority Representation in Congress

Political scientists have become increasingly interested in the issue of minority representation given the historic gains made by minorities during the 1992 congressional elections. This literature has focused primarily on the factors influencing minority candidate success in local, state, and national general elections. Just as racial redistricting has ignited legal debate, scholars have also debated the utility of racial redistricting given the success of several minority candidates in majority-white districts. Debate has also centered on the distinction between descriptive and substantive minority representation in Congress. Descriptive representation is representation based upon the election of legislators who mirror the physical appearance of the majority of constituents within in a district, while substantive representation is based upon the policy implications and ben-

efits and services garnered by a legislator in favor of the majority of constituents within a district. Though scholars have consistently found that minority candidates are more likely to be elected from majority-minority districts (Swain 1993; Lublin 1997; Thernstrom and Thernstrom 1999; Grofman, Handley and Lublin 2001; Lublin et al. 2009), opponents of racial redistricting believe that majority-minority districts are no longer necessary for minorities achieve electoral success (Thernstrom 1987; Swain 1993; Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran 1996; Thernstrom and Thernstrom 1999).

Studies exploring the implications of minority representation based on racial redistricting have concluded that racial redistricting can work to dilute minority representation by concentrating minority populations in majority-minority districts (Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran 1996; Canon 1999). According to these scholars, there is a trade-off between minority descriptive representation and substantive representation (Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran 1996). As minority descriptive representation increases in Congress, policy toward minorities is less favorable (Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran 1996; Canon 1999). Others have suggested that majority-minority districts have been instrumental in the weakening of white, southern support for the Democratic Party (Lublin 1995; Bullock 1995).

African American Representation

Though there is some debate among political scholars and members of the legal community about the necessity of majority-minority districts, the literature on African American representation in Congress has consistently found that as the African American population within a district increases, the likelihood of African American candidate success also increases (Lublin 1999; Grofman, Handley and Lublin 2001; Lublin et al. 2009). Though Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran (1996) suggest that there is a trade-off between descriptive and substantive representation, majority-minority districts have also made it easier for African Americans and other minorities to win Democratic primaries (Grofman, Handley and Lublin 2001). Republican dominance in the South has also

greatly influenced African American candidates running within the Democratic Party. As white, Southern, Democrats have switched to the Republican Party, minority candidates have achieved more electoral success within the Democratic Party. Though there is a lack of consensus regarding the utility of majority-minority districts, Canon (1999) analyzed legislative behavior beyond roll call voting and found that race plays a significant role in the type of legislation a representative proposes and leads to an increase in the number of references made to racial issues. Using a survey of African Americans, Tate (2001) also found that descriptive representation provides symbolic benefits for African American constituents. Her findings reveal that African Americans are more likely to express support for their representative if that representative is also African American (Tate 2001). According to Whitby (1997), it is the shared black experience and shared “consciousness” of African Americans that leads African Americans legislators to promote public policy that favors their African American constituents.

Latino Representation

Studies of Latino representation are of particular importance as Latinos now constitute the single largest minority group in the United States but continue to be underrepresented at all levels of government. Few scholars have examined the factors influencing Latino representation in Congress, despite the rapid growth of this segment of the population. Just as district racial composition is a key indicator of African American electoral success, so, too, do Latino candidates find it electorally beneficial to run in districts that are heavily Latino. As the district-level percentage of Latinos increases in a district, the probability of Latino candidate success also increases (Lublin 1997; Casellas 2009, 2004). The racial composition of a district also influences the supply of candidates. As the Latino population increases, more Latino candidates will vie for elective office (Casellas 2009).

Latino candidate success is not only influenced by key district-level characteristics, such as district racial composition, but electoral success among Latino candidates is also heavily influenced

by institutional determinants. In an analysis of Latino representation in state legislatures, Casellas (2009) examines the impact of Latino population, legislative professionalism, and state legislative term limits on the probability of Latino electoral success. His findings suggest that Latino candidates are more likely to be successful in states with higher percentages of Latino voters, as well as in states with citizen legislatures (Casellas 2009). These findings present evidence that factors other than district racial composition play a significant role in influencing Latino emergence and success.

2.3 Minority Candidate Emergence

Most contests for elective office in the United States consist of an intra-party contest in which partisans compete for their party's nomination and an inter-party contest in which opposing parties compete for office (Adams and Merrill 2008). The minority representation literature has focused primarily on the second electoral stage, or general election contests, while largely ignoring the effects of race on primary contests. Though there are a litany of studies that examine the effect of incumbency, gender, and candidate behavior on primary elections, many congressional scholars have failed to address the importance of race on minority candidate emergence in primary elections. According to Bullock and Dunn (1999), assessment of congressional primaries in majority-minority districts is of particular importance as the choice of a candidate is generally confined to the Democratic Party. Minority populations generally constitute a greater share of the vote in Democratic primaries than in general elections (Bullock and Dunn 1999). This suggests that general election outcomes are of less importance to minority candidates as the prospects for electing a minority are determined in the primary. Therefore, the concentration on general election outcomes provides a narrow understanding of how race acts as a barrier to minority representation in Congress. In order to be a successful minority candidate, one must first emerge. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the individual and district-level characteristics that may influence a minority candidate's decision

to run for office.

Few scholars have examined the impact of race in congressional primary elections (Branton 2009; Fraga 2011). At the foundation of studies on minority candidate emergence is the strategic-politician theory. This theory argues that potential candidates tend to run for office when they have a chance of winning and tend to avoid running for office when there is a strong likelihood of failure (Jacobson 2001; Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Black 1972). In her analysis of U.S. primary contests between 1994 and 2004, Branton (2009) finds that district-level race and ethnicity are associated with minority candidate emergence. This finding suggests that minority candidates are more likely to emerge in districts with a sizeable minority population. Though limited in number, studies on minority candidate emergence provide insight into when and where potential minority candidates decide to run for office and how the presence of minority candidates influences primary competitiveness (Branton 2009).

The literature on minority representation in Congress indicates that above all else, race is the most importance indicator of minority candidate emergence and success. However, this emphasis on race ignores the decades of findings that indicate that party identification is the key factor in how voters process political information, evaluate candidates, and make voting decisions (Campbell et al. 1960; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2004). Black allegiance to the Democratic Party is assumed to be one of the most stable features of American politics (Dawson 1994; Tate 1994; Walton 1985). The stability of the Black vote was reaffirmed in a recent study of the 2010 midterm elections. In this study, Rogowski and Fairdosi (2012) find that increased levels of support for Black Republicans in 2010 was driven by white voter support, and not by Black conversion to the Republican Party. According to the strategic-politician theory, Black Republicans may be less likely to emerge in districts with a sizeable Black population, as they will avoid districts in which they have a low probability of winning.

While the literature has consistently found that the likelihood of minority candidate emergence and success increases as the district-level minority population increases, it fails to account for dif-

ferences in emergence and success among Black and Latino Democrats and Republicans. Fraga (2011) examines the impact of partisan influence and race during the 2008 and 2010 congressional primaries. Using data on all Democratic and Republican primary candidates, as well as a measure of party influence based on party registration statistics for available states, he finds that differences in the composition of party coalitions produces variation in rates of emergence among Whites, Blacks, and Latinos (Fraga 2011). Though this study makes a significant contribution to our understanding of minority candidate emergence, it is limited based on the study's reliance on party registration data, which is only available in 29 states. By assessing minority candidate emergence in party registration states only, 57 minority candidates across 21 states are excluded from analysis (Fraga 2011). While the literature has consistently found that the likelihood of minority candidate emergence and success increases as the district-level minority population increases, much of the literature fails to account for differences in emergence and success between Black Democrats and Black Republicans. Therefore, it is necessary to consider, separately, the emergence of minorities from the Democratic and Republican parties from all 435 U.S. congressional districts.

Chapter 3

Theory and Model Specification

This section outlines the theoretical basis for the formulation of models of African American and Latino candidate emergence during the 2010 U.S. House primary elections. The majority of the literature on minority representation in Congress assesses the impact of district characteristics on the probability of minority success in local, state, and national elections. I use several district-level variables to gauge the continued strength of race in influencing emergence among minority candidates in primary elections. Below I outline the key independent variables used to model minority candidate emergence.

Percent Black: According to the phenomenon of “racially polarized voting, blacks have generally preferred to vote for black candidates, while whites have preferred to vote for white candidates (Harvard Law Review, 2003). Gay (2001) also suggests that minorities are more likely to trust members of their own group. Based on the previous literature, I expect that as the district percentage of African Americans increases, the probability that a black candidate will emerge also increases. Given the stability of Black support for the Democratic Party, I hypothesize that Black Democrats are more likely to emerge in districts that are heavily African American (Dawson 1994; Tate 1994; Walton 1985). However, I also expect the district percentage of African Americans may have less influence on Black Republican emergence, as increased levels of support for black

Republican candidates in 2010 were driven by white voters, and not because the recruitment of Black Republican candidates increased the party's appeal to black voters (Rogowski and Fairdosi 2012). Black candidates have consistently been successful in mixed majority minority districts, which suggests that Latino voters aid in the election of black candidates (Lublin 1997).

Hypothesis 1: As the district-level African American population increases, the probability of an African American candidate emerging in a primary election increases.

Hypothesis 2: As the district-level African American population increases, the probability of an African American Democratic candidate emerging in a primary election increases.

Hypothesis 3: As the district-level African American population increases, the probability of an African American Republican candidate emerging in a primary election decreases.

Percent Latino: Just as African American voters are more likely to trust members of their own ethnic group, Latinos also tend to be more supportive of members of their own ethnic group, especially when voters share a common language (Gay 2001). Therefore, I expect that as the percentage of Latinos in a district increases, the probability that a Latino candidate will emerge also increases. At times, African Americans and Latinos have joined together to elect their most preferred candidates, therefore, I expect that as the African American population in a district increases, Latino Democratic candidates are more likely to emerge (Kaufmann 2004) .

Hypothesis 4: As the district-level Latino population increases, the probability of a Latino candidate emerging in a primary election increases.

Hypothesis 5: As the district-level Latino population increases, the probability of a Latino Democratic candidate emerging in a primary election increases.

Hypothesis 6: As the district-level African American population increases, the probability of a Latino Republican candidate emerging in a primary election decreases.

Republican Vote Share: I collected data on the vote share received by the Republican presidential candidate during the previous election cycle. This measure of district-level partisanship will be useful in examining if minority candidates are more likely to emerge in liberal versus conservative districts. I expect that as the Republican share of the two party vote in 2008 increases, the likelihood of Black and Latino Democratic emergence will decrease. However, I also hypothesize that as the Republican share of the two-party presidential vote in 2008 increases, so too does the probability of Black and Latino Republican candidates emerging in a district.

Open Seat: This variable is intended to measure the impact of incumbency on black candidate emergence. It is a dichotomous variable coded 1 for open seats and 0 otherwise. African Americans, as with most challengers, may find it easier to compete when they do not have to overcome name recognition and the resources at the disposal of most incumbents (Lublin 1997, 1999). According to Jacobson (2001), one of the biggest predictors of whether a candidate chooses to pursue a House seat is whether the incumbent is seeking reelection. The expectation is that strategic politicians will be more likely to emerge if the incumbent is not seeking reelection.

Median Income: This variable is a measure of the median income level of households in a particular district. It is an important control variable as the literature suggests that as the median income in a district rises, the probability of electing a minority candidate within that district decreases (Lublin 1997). Historically, minority candidates generally hail from low-income districts. Their constituents tend to be from lower income housing districts which exclude affluent whites. I expect that as the median income level rises within a district, the likelihood of a minority candidate emergence decreases.

Percent Foreign Born: According to a study by Hirsch (1998) recent immigrants to the United States are less likely to vote for minority candidates outside of their racial group due to strong group identity ties. Therefore, my expectation is that as the percentage of foreign born within a district increases, the likelihood of Black and Latino candidate emergence decreases.

Median Age: This control variable is a measure of the median age within a district. According to the Pew Research Center, youth voters have cast the majority of their votes in favor of Democratic candidates.¹ Given recent voting trends among youth voters, I expect that as the median age within a district increases, the likelihood of minority emergence among Black and Latino candidates decreases.

Government Worker: The percentage of government workers in a district should have a positive effect on the emergence of black candidates. This is because minority districts have a disproportionate number of government workers. Residents in these districts are more dependent on the government for employment than other districts and will therefore be more likely to support liberal policies that minority candidates tend to support (Lublin 1997, 1999).

Education: According to Lublin (1997), the prevalence of racial prejudice in a district declines with the increase in the level of education. Therefore, I measure the percentage of high school graduates in a district so that we can determine if the level of education impacts the emergence of minorities candidates.

South: I use Lublin's (1997) conception of the South, but with slight modification. We define southern states as those states that seceded from the Union before and after the fall of Fort Sumter, which marked the beginning of the Civil War. However, I exclude Florida, based on the impact immigration has had on its political cultural.² I expect that Black candidates will be more likely to emerge in Southern states as these states have large Black populations and majority-black districts are more pervasive. However, I expect that Latinos are less likely to emerge in Southern states, as these states do not tend to have large Latino populations.

Rural: This variable measures the percentage of a district that is rural. Rural areas are less likely to attract diverse populations which include African American and Latino candidates and

¹Keeter, Scott, Juliana Horowitz, and Alex Tyson. 2008. "Young Voters in the 2008 Election." *Pew Research Center for the People & the Press*.

²Southern states include: South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee.

are less tolerant than urban areas (Lublin 1997, 1999). Therefore, I expect that as a district becomes more rural, it is less likely that a black candidate will emerge.

Chapter 4

Models of Minority Candidate Emergence

Studies of minority candidate emergence are limited in number, due in large part, to the difficulties associated with collecting race information on all primary candidates. To determine where minority candidates emerged, a listing of all Democratic and Republican primary candidates who ran in the 2010 U.S. House primary elections was generated. To assure that all primary candidates were accounted for, data were compiled from several sources, which included Federal Elections Commission donation data, listings of candidates from Secretaries of State, and data sets compiled by other researchers.¹ With assistance from several scholars, I coded the race/ethnicity of each primary candidate as either White, Black, Latino, Asian, or other.² Data on the race of each primary candidate who ran in the 2010 U.S. House primary elections were collected through candidate statements, candidate membership in an ethnic caucus or organization, advocacy foundations, news articles, and candidate websites (Fraga 2012).³ Table 4.1 provides descriptive statistics on the individual level data used in this analysis. In total, 1,758 Democratic and Republican primary candidates emerged. Of these candidates, 644 were Democrats, 1114 were Republicans.

¹I would like to extend a special thanks to Allison Trochesset, Stephen Pettigrew, Bernard Fraga, and James Snyder for sharing in the data collection process.

²All other races/ethnicities were excluded from this analysis.

³Though attempts were made by multiple coders, the race/ethnicity of several primary candidates could not be ascertained. These primary candidates were assumed to be White.

The candidate level data were used in the development of an original data set, which contains electoral and demographic data for all 435 U.S. congressional districts. Several district-level dummy variables were created using the candidate level data. These variables were needed to examine Black and Latino candidate emergence. Additional information used in the formation of the district-level data set were primarily drawn from the Almanac of American politics. This reference book includes district profiles for all 435 congressional districts during 2010. Table 4.2 provides summary statistics for all variables included in models of minority candidate emergence.

After the success of Barack Obama in 2008, many thought it was possible that the United States was entering into a period of “post-racial” politics. This conversation was extended in 2010, as Black and Latino candidates ran for office and found electoral success in unprecedented numbers. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show where Black and Latino candidates emerged based on district type. Figure 4.1 suggests that Black Republicans frequently emerge outside of majority-black districts. Figure 4.2 also reveals that in 2010, Latino Republicans frequently emerged in majority-white districts. Given the number of minority Republicans who emerged in 2010, it is important to assess when and where minority candidates from different parties emerge.

To determine what factors influence minority candidate emergence in primary elections, I employ logistic regression, as the dependent variables utilized in this study are dichotomous. I construct dummy dependent variables for each district, as well as each party within a district to assess minority candidate emergence, generally, and across partisan primaries. These variables are coded 1 if a Black (Democrat or Republican) or Latino (Democrat or Republican) candidate emerges in district and 0 if no such candidate emerges. First, I will model emergence among all Black and Latino candidate who ran in a primary contest in 2010. I will then model emergence among Black and Latino candidates from both the Democratic and Republican parties in an attempt to ascertain differences in emergence based on party.

4.1 Black Candidate Emergence

In 2010, Black candidates emerged in 21% of U.S. congressional districts. Given recent examples of Black candidates emerging and finding success in majority-white districts, I revisit the debate about the utility of majority-minority districts, in a political era that many deem as “post-racial”. In order to test the above mentioned hypotheses, I utilize logistic regression . The variables in the model are detailed in previous section. The following is the formula used to model Black candidate emergence, generally, and with consideration to partisan primaries:

$$\text{logit}(\text{Pr}(\text{emergeBlk}_i=1)) = \beta_0 + \text{pctblk } \beta_1 + \text{pctlat } \beta_2 X_{2i} + \text{open } \beta_3 X_{3i} + \text{medinc } \beta_4 X_{4i} + \\ \text{educ } \beta_5 X_{5i} + \text{foreign } \beta_6 X_{6i} + \text{govwork } \beta_7 X_{7i} + \text{repshare } \beta_8 X_{8i} + \text{ruralXsouth } \beta_9 X_{9i}$$

In accord with the previous literature, I hypothesized that as the percentage of African Americans within a district increases, so too, would the probability of Black candidate emergence. Table 4.3, column (a) presents the results of emergence among all Black candidates in 2010. The logit model results reaffirm the findings of the previous literature. District-level percentage African American has a strong and statistically significant impact on the probability of Black candidate emergence. For every 1 unit change in the percentage of African Americans in a district, the odds that an African American candidate will emerge increases by a factor of 1.13. The results also indicate that Black candidates are more likely to emerge in districts where no incumbent is up for reelection. The sizeable coefficient suggests that incumbency is the key determinant, regardless of race, on candidate emergence. The odds that an African American candidate will emerge increases by a factor of 9.43 when there is an open seat. The Republican share of the two-party presidential vote in 2008 also reached levels of statistical significance. A higher Republican share of the two-party presidential vote decreases the probability of Black candidate emergence, without accounting for party. As the Republican share of the two-party vote increases, the odds of Black candidate emergence decreases by a factor of 0.95.

The results for the models of Democratic and Republican emergence, versus, the general model reveal subtle differences in how district-level characteristics influence Black candidate emergence. The probability of emergence among Black Democrats and Black Republicans increases when no incumbent is up for reelection. Contrary to my posed hypothesis, Black Republicans are more likely to emerge in districts as the percentage of African Americans increases. However, Figure 4.3, which plots the probability of Black candidate emergence for each model as a function of district-level percentage African American, reveals that when party is taken into account, the district-level percentage of African Americans has less of an impact on Black Republican emergence. Interestingly, the interaction of rural and South has a positive and statistically significant effect on black Republican candidates.

4.2 Latino Candidate Emergence

Latino candidates from the Republican emerged in found success in unprecedented numbers during the 2010 midterm elections. Previous literature suggests that the key determinant of minority candidate emergence is the district racial composition. However, to assess the impact of race and party, I again utilize logistic regression. The variables in the model are detailed in previous section. The following is the formula used to model Latino candidate emergence, generally, and with consideration to partisan primaries:

$$\text{logit}(\text{Pr}(\text{emergeLat}_i=1)) = \beta_0 + \text{pctlat } \beta_1 + \text{pctblk } \beta_2 X_{2i} + \text{open } \beta_3 X_{3i} + \text{medinc } \beta_4 X_{4i} + \\ \text{educ} \beta_5 X_{5i} + \text{foreign} \beta_6 X_{6i} + \text{govwork} \beta_7 X_{7i} + \text{repshare} \beta_8 X_{8i} + \text{south} \beta_9 X_{9i}$$

Table 4.4 presents the logit model results of Latino candidate emergence, generally, and across the Democratic and Republican primaries. The results of model (a), which includes all Latino candidates, reveals that the percentage of Latinos within a district, has a positive and statistically significant impact on Latino candidate emergence. As the percentage of Latinos in a district increases, the odds of a Latino candidate emerging increase by a factor of 1.1. The percentage of

government workers within a district, also reached levels of statistical significance. As the percentage of government workers within a district increases, the odds of Latino candidate emergence decrease by a factor of 0.91. Surprisingly, incumbency does not play a significant role in influencing Latino candidate emergence during the 2010 congressional primary elections.

Several factors reach levels of statistical significance for the models of Latino Democratic and Republican emergence. Just as the district racial composition influences overall Latino candidate emergence, it too influences emergence from both the Democratic and Republican party primaries. Oddly, median age has a positive and statistically significant impact on Latino Democratic emergence. As the median age in a district increases, the odds of Latino Democratic candidate emergence increase by a factor of 1.05. This is counter to my expectation that the younger the district population, the more likely Latino candidates would emerge. As in the general model of Latino candidate emergence, the percentage of government workers within a district has a negative and statistically significant impact on Democratic candidate emergence. As the percentage of government workers within a district increases, the odds of Latino Democratic candidate emergence decreases by a factor of 0.84. Interestingly, the percentage of African Americans within a district has a negative and statistically significant impact on the probability of Latino Democratic emergence. In comparison to models of Latino Republican emergence, this finding suggests that African Americans are less likely to support Latino Democratic candidates as their population increases within a district.

Figure 4.4 plots the probability of Latino candidate emergence across all models presented in Table 4.4. This plot reveals that Latino Republicans were more likely to emerge in districts in which Latinos comprised approximately 60% or less of the population, and were as likely to emerge as Latino Democrats in districts that were 60% Latino. However, Latino Democrats were more likely to emerge in those districts in with Latinos comprised 60% or more of the population. This plot may suggest that Latino populations are less monolithic in terms of partisanship than African American populations.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The models that I have presented reaffirm previous studies, which have found district racial composition to be a key factor in the emergence of minority candidates from both the Republican and Democratic parties. They also reveal that minority candidates, in general, are more likely to emerge when there is an open seat, versus when an incumbent is running for reelection. Though several minority candidates have emerged and found success outside of majority-minority districts, minority candidates are more likely to emerge in districts with higher percentages of African American or Latino constituents. Contrary to my posed hypothesis, African American population also has a positive effect on Black Republican emergence. However, Black Republicans are less likely than Black Democrats to emerge in districts that are heavily populated by African Americans. This suggests that Black Republicans perceive their electoral chances to be limited in majority-black districts, as African American allegiance to the Democratic Party remains one of the most stable features of American politics. Models of Latino candidate emergence had far more variation in the impact of district-level variables. However, as the previous research suggests, the percentage of Latinos within a district has a strong, positive impact on the probability of Latino candidate emergence. Interestingly, incumbency seems to be less of a deterrent for Latino candidates than for most challengers in primary elections.

The 2010 congressional primary elections saw the emergence of an unprecedented number of African American and Latino Republican candidates. The goal of this thesis was to contribute to the longstanding debate regarding the utility of majority-minority districts to the emergence and success of minority candidates. Despite the emergence and success of a few minority candidates outside of majority-minority districts, district racial composition continues to play a significant role in determining where minority candidates emerge in U.S. House contests. However, those who argue that race, above all else, is the most important factor in determining minority candidate success may be overlooking the importance of partisanship. The probability plots suggest that examining minority candidate emergence without distinguishing between party leads to significantly different interpretations about the impact of race on emergence during the 2010 U.S. House primary elections. This examination reveals that Black and Latino Democrats and Republicans are not equally likely to emerge in similar districts. Future research should continue to distinguish between partisan primaries as there are disparities in result.

Though this study reaffirms many of the findings of the previous literature, and therefore provides reinforcement for arguments that suggest that majority-minority districts remain a necessity for the emergence and eventual success of minority candidates, the present study has several limitations. Most significant is the lack of generalizability of this study's findings. Analysis of minority candidate emergence was conducted on the 2010 U.S. House primary elections, which limits the applicability of these findings to past and previous primary elections. Despite this fact, this analysis provides a good starting point for analyzing shifting racial attitudes in the post-Obama era.

In this analysis, district racial composition is operationalized as the percentage of all African Americans or Latinos within a district. Though overall population percentages are generally an accurate reflection of the distribution of voters within a district, it is not the best representation of the eligible voting population. This analysis would have had increased precision if district racial composition were measured using the percentage of the Citizen Voting-Age Population (CVAP). Using the district percentage BVAP (Black-voting-age population) and HVAP (Hispanic-voting-age pop-

ulation) would more accurately reflect the influence of district racial composition on a candidate's decision calculus.

While the intent of this study is to assess the impact of district-level characteristics on the likelihood of minority candidate emergence, district-level analyses are only indirect assessments of the motivations and decision calculus of potential candidates for office. To truly understand the factors influencing candidate emergence, it is necessary to study emergence at the individual level of analysis. Previous studies of minority candidate emergence have primarily been quantitative assessments. However, future studies using qualitative methods, such as elite interviewing would enhance theories of minority candidate emergence.

Another prospect for future research on minority candidate emergence would be an analysis of the impact of party recruitment on the emergence of minority candidates from both the Democratic and Republican parties. What led to the surge in the number of minority Republican candidates vying for election office in 2010? Did party elites view Obama's electoral success in 2008 as an opportunity to support more minority candidates in 2010 midterm elections? Studies that seek to answer the aforementioned questions would contribute greatly to our understanding of the determinants of minority candidate emergence in congressional primary elections.

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Appendix

Table 4.1: 2010 US House Primary: Race by Party

	Democrat	Republican	Third Party	Total
White	489	1016	20	1525
Black	107	35	1	143
Latino	32	44	1	77
Asian	14	16	1	31
Other	2	3	65	70
Total	644	1114	88	1846
Note: N = 1846				

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of Included Variables from District Level Data

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Min	Max
Black Candidate Emergence	0.17	0.38	0.00	0.00	1.00
Blk Democratic Emergence	0.14	0.35	0.00	0.00	1.00
Blk Republican Emergence	0.08	0.27	0.00	0.00	1.00
Percent Black	12.45	14.57	6.60	0.40	68.80
Percent Latino	16.06	21.37	9.10	0.80	82.50
Republican Share	44.87	14.76	47.00	5.00	77.00
Open	0.10	0.30	0.00	0.00	1.00
Education	84.73	6.75	86.50	54.30	96.30
Foreign	12.93	11.28	8.70	0.60	58.10
Median Income	53077.00	14016.00	50156.00	23829.00	104033.00
Median Age	38.65	27.16	37.00	25.60	45.40
Percent Gov't Worker	15.14	4.42	14.10	7.20	31.60
Rural	21.32	20.67	15.70	0.00	143.00
South	0.18	0.39	0.00	0.00	1.00

Note: N = 435 ; Source: Alamanc of American Politics 2012

Table 4.3: Logistic Regression: Black Candidate Emergence in 2010

	All Black Candidates	Democrats	Republicans
	(a)	(b)	(c)
(Intercept)	-9.61 * (5.81)	-3.95 (6.96)	-5.46 (6.18)
Percent Black	0.12 ** (0.02)	0.12 *** (0.03)	0.05 * (0.02)
Percent Latino	0.02 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Open Seat	2.36 *** (0.47)	2.48 *** (0.52)	1.30 ** (0.56)
Median Income	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Median Age	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.08 (0.10)	-0.02 (0.10)
Educational Attainment	0.10 (0.07)	0.07 (0.08)	0.04 (0.07)
Percent Foreign-born	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.03)
Percent Gov't Worker	-0.03 (0.05)	-0.06 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.05)
Percent Rural	-0.02 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.04)
South	-1.49 (0.96)	-1.50 (1.05)	0.28 (0.80)
Republican Share	-0.04 ** (0.02)	-0.05 ** (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)
Rural:South	0.05 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	0.06 ** (0.04)
<i>N</i>	435	435	435
log <i>L</i>	-74.04	-51.89	-53.81
AIC	252.08	207.77	211.62
BIC	464.00	419.69	423.54
Area Under Curve	0.899	0.918	0.861
Percentage Correctly Predicted	89.89%	92.64%	91.26%

Standard errors in parentheses

*** indicates significance at $p < 0.01$; ** indicates significance at $p < 0.05$; * indicates significance at $p < 0.1$

Table 4.4: Logistic Regression: Latino Candidate Emergence in 2010

	All Latino Candidates	Democrats	Republicans
	(a)	(b)	(c)
(Intercept)	-6.64 * (3.99)	-1.61 (5.08)	-11.18 ** (4.50)
Percent Latino	0.09 *** (0.02)	0.08 *** (0.03)	0.09 *** (0.02)
Percent Black	0.01 (0.02)	-0.09 * (0.05)	0.04 ** (0.02)
Open Seat	-0.19 (0.71)	-1.29 (1.57)	0.30 (0.69)
Median Income	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Median Age	0.00 (0.00)	0.01 * (0.00)	-0.04 (0.08)
Educational Attainment	0.05 (0.05)	0.05 (0.06)	0.10* (0.05)
Percent Foreign-born	-0.02 (0.03)	0.01 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.03)
Percent Gov't Worker	-0.10 ** (0.05)	-0.17 * (0.09)	-0.07 (0.05)
Republican Share	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.02)
South	0.24 (0.74)	-14.30 (1811.60)	-0.12 (0.74)
<i>N</i>	435	435	435
log <i>L</i>	-86.22	-15.27	-73.01
AIC	260.44	118.54	234.01
BIC	439.76	297.85	413.33
Area Under Curve	0.845	0.945	0.807
Percentage Correctly Predicted	90.34%	94.38%	91.26%
Standard errors in parentheses			
*** indicates significance at $p < 0.01$; ** indicates significance at $p < 0.05$; * indicates significance at $p < 0.1$			

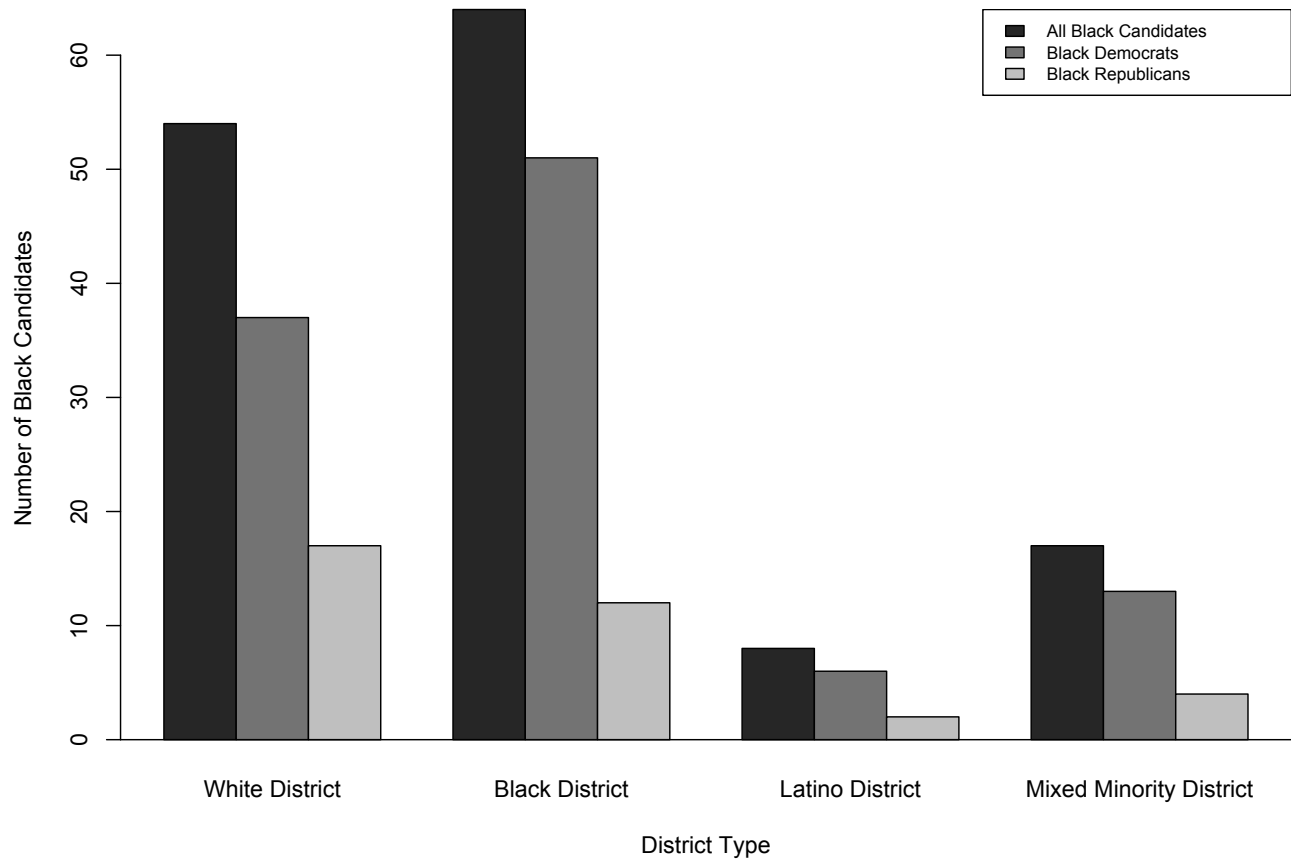


Figure 4.1: Black Candidate Emergence by District Type

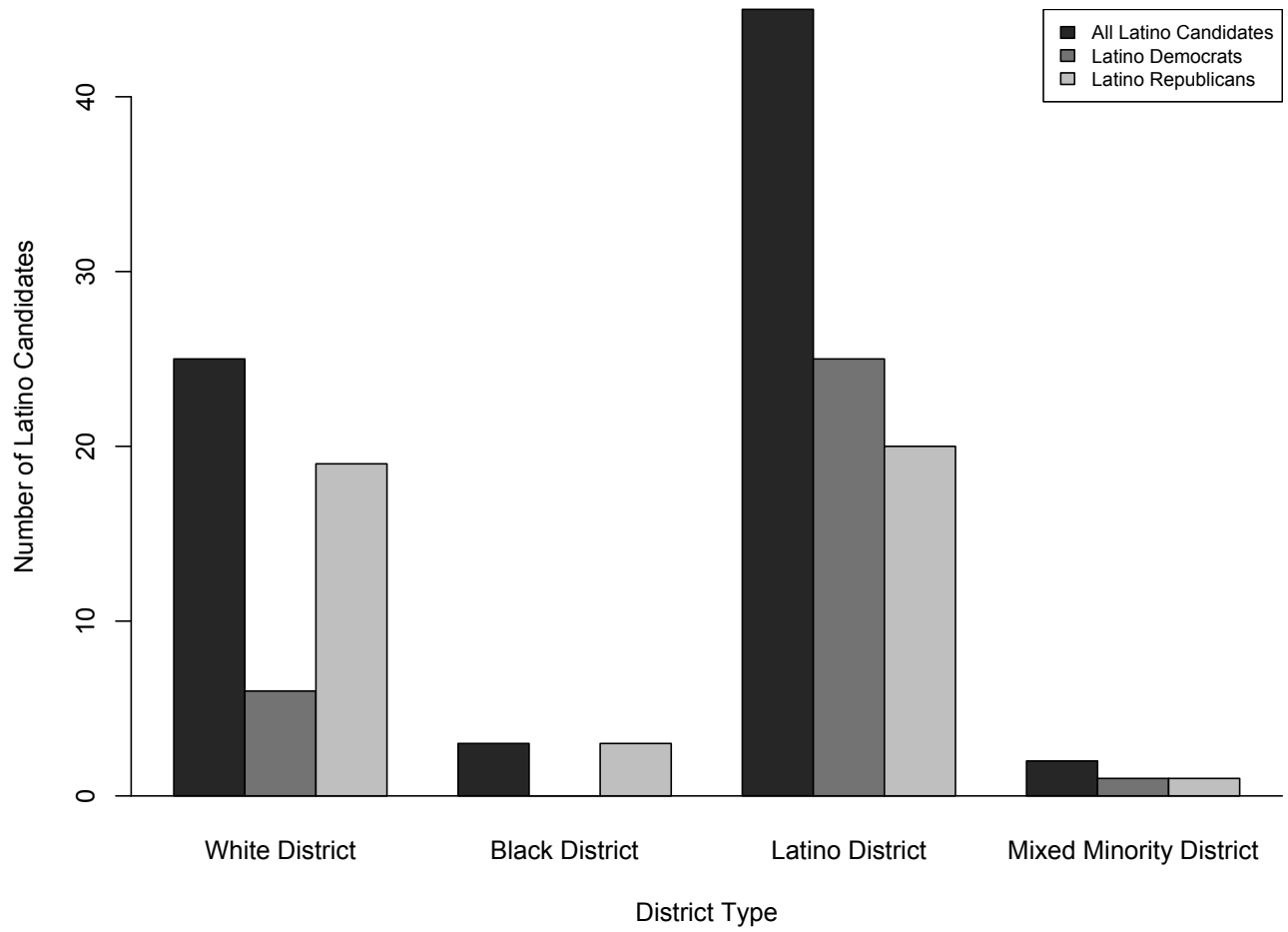


Figure 4.2: Latino Candidate Emergence by District Type

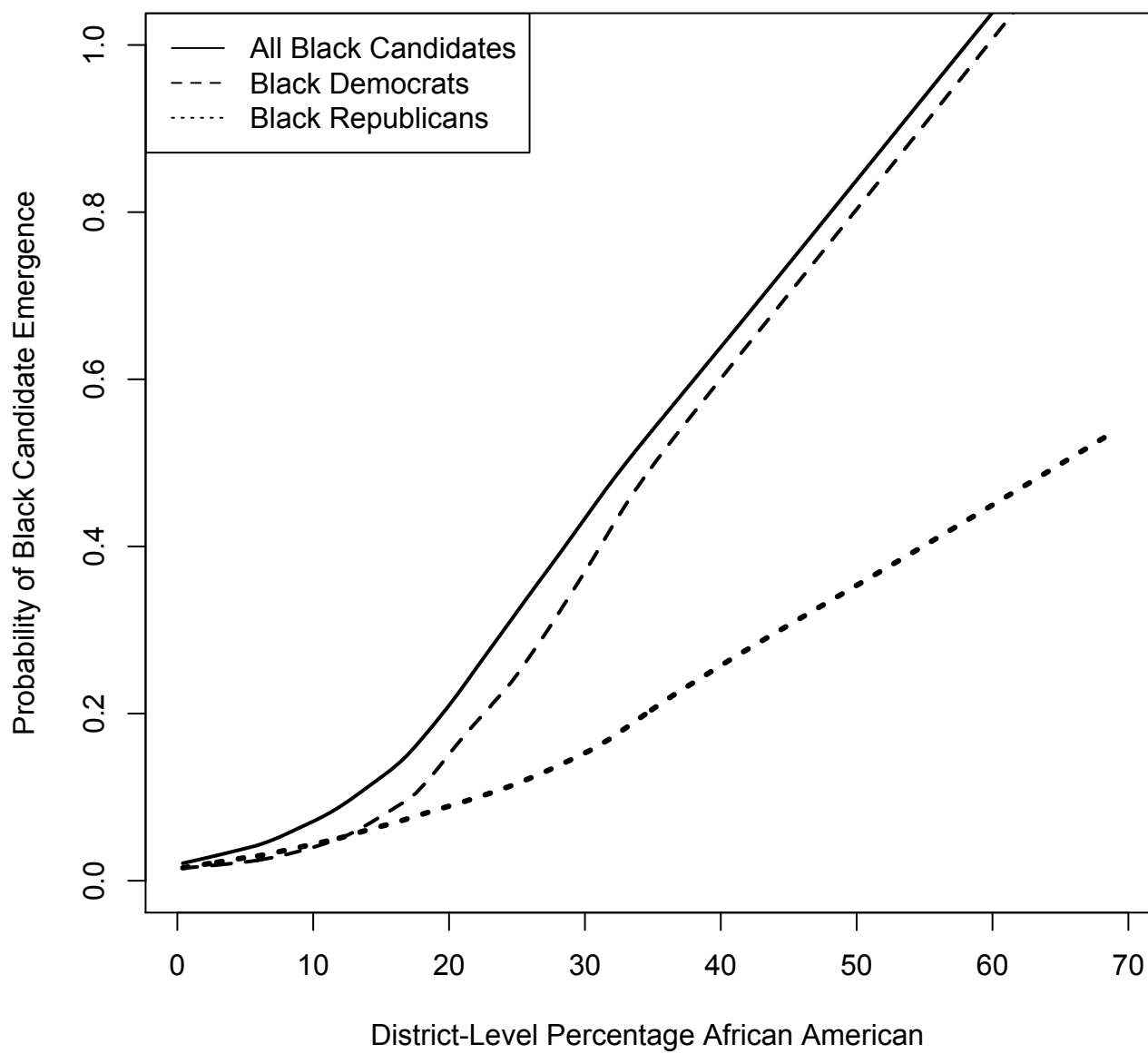


Figure 4.3: Probability of Black Candidate Emergence

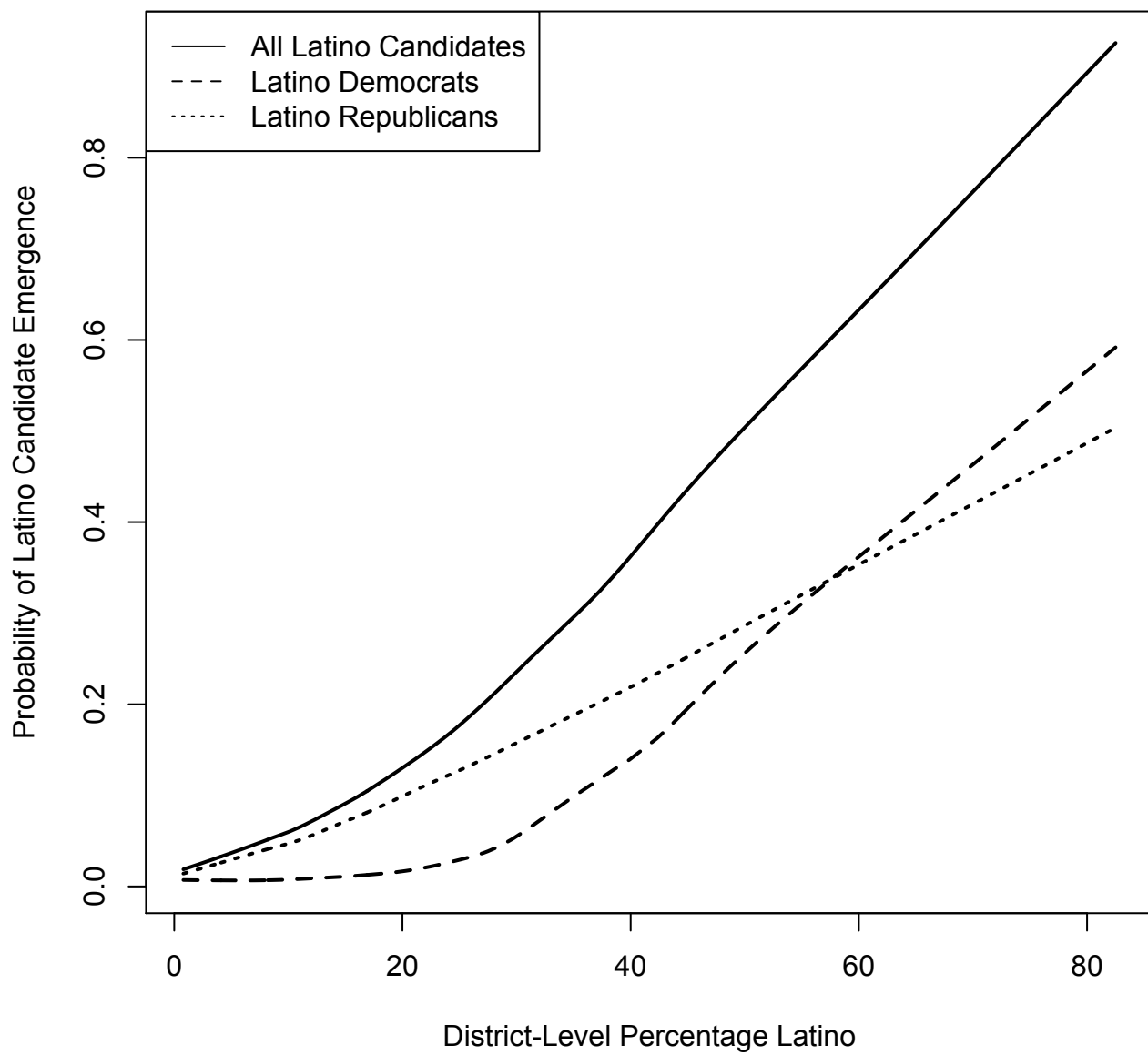


Figure 4.4: Probability of Latino Candidate Emergence