

Example PS300 Paper 1**Dr. Chris Stout****PS 300****22 March 2018****The Relationship Between Party Affiliation and Support for the #MeToo Movement****Abstract**

In the past year, a number of women have come forward to share their stories of sexual abuse, assault, and harassment, sparking the #MeToo Movement. While on the surface it may seem that sexual assault is a bipartisan issue, some components of the #MeToo movement have been met with hostility. The main aim of this study is to analyze if political party affiliation affects one's support for the #MeToo Movement. To collect data, a survey will be conducted through the crowdsourcing platform *Mturk*. The survey will look at a number of demographic factors (party, race, gender, age etc.) in addition to questions specifically related to the #MeToo Movement. Due to the current nature of partisan politics and polarization, I expect to see differing levels of support for the movement between Democrats and Republicans. Since the #MeToo Movement began as a response to accusations against movie producer Harvey Weinstein, and is often associated with Hollywood film stars who are considered by many to be "liberal elites," I expect Democrats to be more supportive of the movement in comparison to their Republican counterparts. To test my hypothesis, I conducted chi-square tests, in addition to a multivariate regression. The results of my tests demonstrated that my hypothesis is correct: Democrats are more supportive of the #MeToo Movement.

Introduction

Recently, a number of women have come forward to share their stories of sexual misconduct, assault, and harassment, particularly in the workplace. The #MeToo Movement empowers and provides sexual assault and harassment survivors who were once silenced with a platform to voice their stories. While on the surface the topics encompassed by the #MeToo Movement may appear to be bipartisan issues supported both by Democrats and Republicans, the movement to a degree has been met with hostility by critics. This hostility can potentially undermine the survivors by discrediting their stories.

The main aim of this study is to analyze if party affiliation affects one's support for the #MeToo Movement. To determine whether Democrats or Republicans are more supportive of the movement, I will create a survey that will be conducted using the crowd sourcing platform *Mturk*. The survey will first ask a number of demographic questions to determine details about the respondents. Among these demographic details will be gender, race, age, and party affiliation. Next, respondents will answer specific questions regarding sexual assault, specifically, "how strongly do you support women sharing their experiences of sexual assault/speaking out against sexual assault?" Following that, respondents will answer questions specific to the #MeToo Movement, including "how familiar are you with the #MeToo Movement?" and "how much do you support the #MeToo Movement?" When the data is collected, a determination will be made as to whether or not party affiliation impacts one's support of the movement.

Given the current nature of partisan politics and polarization, I expect to see differing support between Democrats and Republicans. Additionally, it can be argued that many

Republicans have taken a passive approach to addressing sexual assault, primarily because of their support for Roy Moore in the 2017 Alabama Senate Race, in addition to their support of President Donald Trump, despite his sexual assault allegations. Another example of this is the Democratic leadership's response to sexual harassment accusations against Democratic Senator Al Franken. Franken was ultimately ousted by his own party after being pressured to resign from his position. Yet, this cannot be said for Republican political leaders accused of the same, or worse, allegations. It can therefore be inferred that Republicans will be less supportive of the #MeToo Movement in comparison to their Democratic counterparts.

After conducting chi-square tests and a multivariate regression, I found that the data supported my hypothesis. Democrats are indeed more supportive of the #MeToo Movement. However, party affiliation does not affect one's overall support for women sharing their stories of sexual assault; nor does it affect one's familiarity with the #MeToo Movement.

Literature Review

Previous research suggests that party affiliation influences attitudes about women and gender issues. For example, in a study entitled *Sex and the Grand Old Party: An Experimental Investigation of the Effect of a Candidate Sex on Support for a Republican Candidate*, David C. King and Richard E. Matland survey 820 Republican adults to analyze whether or not a candidate's sex impacts a Republican voter's attitudes of a candidate. Each respondent was given the same description of a hypothetical candidate, but half of the sample was told the candidate was male, and the other half was told the candidate was female. The survey concluded that being a woman "hurt" the female Republican candidate, providing her no advantage within her own

party. In fact, she was seen as “less conservative” and more liberal than the male Republican candidate with the same description.

In contrast, political independents and Democratic voters were more likely to vote for the female Republican candidate. This is likely because female Republican politicians are generally considered to be “more liberal” than their male counterparts due to their gender. This study demonstrates the point I previously made about the #MeToo Movement. Since #MeToo is oftentimes viewed as a women’s movement, created by liberal feminists, it is likely to receive less support from the Republican party in the same way that a female Republican candidate received less support than a male in the same role.

In addition, there are differing levels of support and varying attitudes in regards to gender equality from both parties. According to Juliana Horowitz of the *Pew Research Center*, 69% of Democrats do not believe the U.S. has gone far enough to address women’s rights, while only 26% of Republicans believe the same statement. In fact, about half of Republicans -- 54% -- believe that the current state of gender equality in the U.S. “has been about right.”

These statistics also support my hypothesis in regards to the differing support of the #MeToo Movement between the two parties. To many Republicans, gender issues are not relevant, nor a pressing matter in the present day. Therefore many may believe the #MeToo Movement is unnecessary and pointless. In contrast, Democrats believe more work must be done to address gender equality, which suggests that they will be far more supportive of the movement.

Moreover, in a different study by *Quinnipiac University*, a survey was conducted to determine whether or not respondents would still consider voting for candidates who have been

accused of sexual harassment by multiple people. The study found that 48% of Republicans would still consider voting for such a candidate, while only 10% of Democrats stated the same. Additionally, 84% of Democrats said they would “definitely not vote” for a candidate with such allegations, while only 34% of Republicans agreed. These results clearly demonstrate that there are differing attitudes surrounding sexual assault between the two parties; Democrats seem to be much more concerned with issues of sexual abuse compared to Republicans. Therefore, it can be inferred that Democrats will be more supportive of the #MeToo Movement as a whole.

Data and Methods

To answer the question “does party affiliation affect one’s support for the #MeToo Movement?”, I utilized the crowd sourcing platform *Mturk* to conduct a survey. I submitted three varying questions all relating to women and the #MeToo Movement. The purpose of the first two questions were to grasp a sense of how familiar the respondents were with the topic, and whether or not the label of the movement ultimately impacted the ways in which the respondents viewed sexual assault and harassment. The first question asked “how strongly do you support women sharing their experiences of sexual assault/speaking out against sexual assault?” and gave the respondents a sliding scale in which to respond, ranging from 1 (strongly support) to 5 (strongly oppose). The second question asked the respondents, “how familiar are you with the #MeToo Movement?” ranging from 1 (extremely familiar) to 5 (not familiar at all). The third question, and one that pertains directly to my research question and hypothesis is, “how much do you support the #MeToo Movement?” Respondents rated their support on a negative scale by selecting 1 (a great deal), 2 (a lot), 3 (a moderate amount), 4 (a little), and 5 (not at all).

The *Mturk* survey also asked a number of demographic questions regarding gender, race and age, in addition to my independent variable of interest, party affiliation. For the purposes of this study, I will be focusing only on Democrats and Republicans; Independents will not be taken into account during my chi-square tests. However, Independents will be used as my omitted comparison category during my multivariate regression.

Ultimately, my null hypothesis is that there is no relationship between party affiliation (my independent variable) and support for the #MeToo Movement (my dependent variable). In contrast, my alternate hypothesis is that Democrats will be more supportive of the #MeToo Movement.

Since party affiliation is a nominal variable -- meaning the variables are categorical and not arranged in a particular order -- I will be conducting a chi-square test to determine whether or not to reject or accept my null hypothesis. Additionally, I will be conducting a multivariate regression to account for three control variables which may influence the relationship between party and support for the #MeToo Movement: gender, race, and age. Since the #MeToo Movement is generally considered to be a female-focused and feminist movement, women may be more supportive of the movement in comparison to men. Additionally, if my alternate hypothesis is correct, and party affiliation does impact one's support for the movement, race may potentially play a role, since minorities tend to be more liberal. And lastly, since the #MeToo Movement has had a significant presence on social media, age may impact one's support for the movement. Younger people may be more exposed to #MeToo, and therefore may be more supportive of it. Party affiliation will also be included in the regression.

Before I conducted my chi-square tests, I had to recode “party,” since “independent” and “other” were also included in the survey. Therefore, I recoded in Stata so both “democrat” and “republican” were equal to 1, and “independent” and “other” were equal to 0.

Results

From the first chi-square test (*Figure 1*), I was able to determine that there is a significant relationship between party affiliation and support for the #MeToo Movement. The P-Value is equal to 0.032, which is less than .05. Because of this, we reject the null and assume there is a significant relationship between party affiliation and one’s support for the movement. It can be determined from this chi-square test that more Democrats (represented by “1” in *Figure 1*) supported the movement “a great deal” or “a lot” in comparison to their Republican counterparts (represented by “0” in *Figure 1*).

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. tab metoosupport party, col chi2
```

Key			
frequency			
column percentage			
metoosupport	party		Total
	0	1	
1	11 28.95	37 35.24	48 33.57
2	5 13.16	25 23.81	30 20.98
3	6 15.79	23 21.90	29 20.28
4	6 15.79	12 11.43	18 12.59
5	10 26.32	8 7.62	18 12.59
Total	38 100.00	105 100.00	143 100.00

Pearson chi2(4) = 10.5228 Pr = 0.032

```
. tab womenspeakout party, col chi2
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Key			
frequency			
column percentage			
womenspeakout	party		Total
	0	1	
1	20 52.63	70 66.67	90 62.94
2	8 21.05	19 18.10	27 18.88
3	7 18.42	10 9.52	17 11.89
4	2 5.26	4 3.81	6 4.20
5	1 2.63	2 1.90	3 2.10
Total	38 100.00	105 100.00	143 100.00

Pearson chi2(4) = 3.0713 Pr = 0.546

Figure 1: Chi-Square Test
(Support for the #MeToo Movement)

Figure 2: Chi-Square Test
(Support for Women Speaking Out)

Furthermore, I conducted a chi-square test for the variable “womenspeakout” to determine whether Democrats are more supportive of women speaking out about sexual assault and harassment issues in general. For this test, the null hypothesis is that there is no relationship between party affiliation and support for women speaking out, and the alternate hypothesis is that Democrats will be more supportive of women speaking out. According to this chi-square test (*Figure 2*), it can be determined that there is not a significant relationship between party affiliation and support for women speaking out ($0.546 > .05$); therefore, we accept the null hypothesis. This is likely due to the fact that this question was not specifically associated with the #MeToo Movement. It suggests that while Republicans may support women speaking out, they may not support the actual movement.

Lastly, I conducted a chi-square test for the variable “metoofamiliar” to see if there is any variance in familiarity of the movement between both parties. For this test, the null hypothesis is that there is no relationship between party and the degree to which one is familiar with the #MeToo Movement, and the alternate hypothesis is that Democrats will be more familiar with the movement. According to this chi-square test (*Figure 3*), it is clear that there is no relationship between party and familiarity of the movement. The P-value is more than .05, so we reject the alternate hypothesis and accept the null.

metoofamil iar	party		Total
	0	1	
1	12 31.58	32 30.48	44 30.77
2	10 26.32	31 29.52	41 28.67
3	8 21.05	28 26.67	36 25.17
4	5 13.16	10 9.52	15 10.49
5	3 7.89	4 3.81	7 4.90
Total	38 100.00	105 100.00	143 100.00

Pearson chi2(4) = 1.7631 Pr = 0.779

Figure 3: Chi-Square Test
(Familiarity of the #MeToo Movement)

Furthermore, the multivariate regression I conducted (*Figure 4*) reveals that after controlling for gender, race, and age, there is still a significant relationship (at .05) between the Democratic party and support for the #MeToo Movement. Therefore, there is still support for my alternate hypothesis. Additionally, the adjusted R-squared value is equal to 0.1724, which means there is a 17% variation in the dependent variable “metoosupport” as explained by my independent variables. Although gender was marginally significant (0.065), aside from “democrat,” none of my independent variables were statistically significant predictors of my dependent variable. Moreover, in this regression, political independents serve as the omitted comparison. Therefore, the “democrat” coefficient (-1.0292) suggests that on a 5-point scale, Democrats are on average 1.02 points more supportive of the #MeToo Movement in comparison political independents.

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. regress metoosupport democrat republican female age race
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Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	140
Model	54.7913449	5	10.958269	F(5, 134)	=	6.79
Residual	216.201512	134	1.61344412	Prob > F	=	0.0000
				R-squared	=	0.2022
				Adj R-squared	=	0.1724
Total	270.992857	139	1.9495889	Root MSE	=	1.2702

metoosupport	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
democrat	-1.0292	.2627786	-3.92	0.000	-1.548931 - .5094702
republican	.2694013	.309193	0.87	0.385	-.3421287 .8809312
female	-.4063763	.2187214	-1.86	0.065	-.8389692 .0262166
age	.000527	.0098542	0.05	0.957	-.0189629 .0200169
race	-.0052393	.0644575	-0.08	0.935	-.132725 .1222465
_cons	3.137612	.4518222	6.94	0.000	2.243986 4.031237

Figure 4: Multivariate Regression

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that party affiliation has a significant impact on one's level of support for the #MeToo Movement, and the chi-square tests I have conducted and the data I have collected confirms this hypothesis. Democrats tend to be more supportive of the #MeToo Movement. However, party affiliation does not impact one's familiarity of the movement or support for women speaking out against sexual assault in general, which suggests that it is simply the label of "#MeToo" that may deter many Republicans from supporting the movement. Additionally, there may be some social desirability bias at play; when respondents are asked whether or not they support women, the socially desirable answer is yes. However, when masked by the label of the movement, I saw different results in which those who supported the notion of women speaking out were ironically less supportive of the movement that encourages women to do so.

I believe this is largely due to a number of factors, many of which I discussed in the introduction. #MeToo is oftentimes viewed as a "liberal" movement, and the majority of

Republicans have taken a passive approach to addressing sexual assault. Arguably, these results have a number of implications. When the #MeToo Movement becomes labeled as a liberal campaign, it undermines the survivors of sexual assault and ultimately discredits their stories. Furthermore, a partisan divide hinders the nation's ability to truly tackle the issue of sexual assault and harassment in an effective way.

While this study did support my hypothesis, there are a number of ways in which this project could be more accurately conducted in the future. For example, there are several downsides of administering the survey through *Mturk*. It is a select population rather than a truly random sample. Consequently, the respondents are not representative of the population as a whole. Therefore, to improve this study and better support my hypothesis, a nationwide survey could be administered. Doing so would ensure that the data and results I have collected are truly applicable to the nation as a whole.

Works Cited

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