SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENTIALS IN SUPPORT FOR LEGAL AND EXTRA-LEGAL PUNITIVE PRACTICES IN SANTIAGO, CHILE.


The purpose of this study is to explore the sociodemographic differentials on punitive attitudes, using a sample of 367 people from the city of Santiago, Chile. Using an ordinary least squares estimation, I explore, separately, the attitudes of social groups on both punitive formal punishment and informal punishment. I focus on differences in support by residential district, education, income, age, and political orientation. I further consider whether any sociodemographic differentials in support can be explained by a set of mediators: prior crime victimization, fear of crime, perceived legitimacy of the police, and perception of effectiveness of the criminal justice system. For the most part, support for formal punishment and informal punishment share the same sociodemographic predictors, with age and political orientation both being statistically significant predictors. Perceived legitimacy of the police is the only mediator that might partially explain socio-demographic differentials, for support for both formal and informal punitive practices.

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