

Sociodemographic Differentials in Support for Legal and Extra-Legal Punitive Practices in
Santiago, Chile.

Francisca Javiera Gomez Baeza

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment for the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

University of Washington
2019

Committee:
Stewart Tolnay
Angelina Godoy

Program Authorize to Offer Degree:
Sociology

©Copyright 2019
Francisca Javiera Gomez Baeza

University of Washington

Abstract

Sociodemographic Differentials in Support for Legal and Extra-Legal Punitive Practices in Santiago, Chile.

Francisca Gomez Baeza

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Stewart Tolnay

Department of Sociology

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.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Background and Literature Review
 - 2.1. Context: Latin America and Chile
 - 2.2. Punitive Attitudes
 - 2.2.1. Support for Informal Punishment (Mob Violence) as Extra-legal Punishment
 - 2.2.2. Support for Formal Punishment as Legal Punishment
 - 2.3. Sociodemographic Differentials in Support for Punitive Attitudes
 - 2.4. Mediators
3. Data, Variables, and Methods
 - 3.1. Data
 - 3.2. Measures
 - 3.2.1. Dependent Variables
 - 3.2.2. Sociodemographic predictors
 - 3.2.3. Mediators
 - 3.3. Methods
4. Results
 - 4.1. Bivariate correlation
 - 4.2. Ordinary Least Squares Multivariate Regression
5. Discussion and Conclusion
6. Bibliography

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisors, Stewart Tolnay and Angelina Godoy, for their support during the process of conducting this study. I really appreciate their constant support of my research ideas, their incredible mentorship, curiosity, motivation, and critical thinking. Above all, I thank them for their infinite kindness and humanity. It has been life-changing to work with them. Also, I would like to thank other members of the Department of Sociology at the University of Washington. Many thanks to Liz Collier, Ulrika O'Brien, Fatema Mookhtiar, Aimee Dechter, and Steve Pfaff, for being so welcoming and helpful as I adapted to life as a graduate student. In addition, I would like to express all my gratitude to the members of the UW Center for Human Rights. I'm grateful for their deep commitment to social justice and for helping me feel at home. In addition, I would like to thank to my fellow graduate students and friends. Hannah, Tyler, Maria, Thiago, Michelle, Ursula, Andre, Sebastian, Justis, Roxana, Caro and Rebecca. I would not have made it without their friendship and support. Very importantly, I would like to express my gratitude for all my friends and family in Chile. They are my giants, my pillars, my inspiration and my strength. I would not be here without them. Many thanks to their constant support and love. And last but not least, all my love and appreciation to Felipe, *mi compañero*. I can't summarize what it has mean to me to have his presence, help, love, and support every single day since the beginning of this adventure. Thank you for the gift of spending my life with you.

I gratefully acknowledge the Becas Chile scholarship from CONICYT, that helped fund my graduate studies. In specific, this work was partially funded by the CONICYT PFCHA/DOCTORADO BECAS CHILE/2017 – 72180385. Finally, I would like to thank to my colleagues from COES with whom I worked to construct the dataset used in this study. That work was funded by the Center for Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies (COES, CONICYT/FONDAP/15130009).

1. Introduction

At least since the early 1990's, mob violence as a form of extralegal punishment has been a frequent practice in Latin America (Godoy, 2006). Until the beginning of the present decade, Chile seemed to be an exception. Considered one of the most stable, safest, least corrupt countries in Latin America¹, and with the highest perceived legitimacy of the police (LAPOP, 2017), the topic of mob violence in Chile has not received much scholarly attention. However, coverage by the popular media suggests that this form of violence has enjoyed strong support from the general population, raising alarms about the legitimacy of institutions and the willingness of the population to support "popular justice". While no reliable data exist on the frequency of these events, some incidents of mob punishment have been filmed and circulated on social media, generating a great deal of commentary about the appropriateness of such actions. In fact, during the last four years, the Chilean media have increasingly reported situations of people engaging in mob violence as a form of social control. Moreover, the latest public survey (DPP, 2016) indicates that more than one-half of the population supports these practices.

Given that there is no previous quantitative research on this topic in Chile, I started by exploring some of the most traditional assumptions around these attitudes, especially around who supports these practices and why. Traditionally, it is assumed that there is a substitution relationship between private citizens and the state in the use of physical force for social control. In other words, if people take "justice into their own hands" it is because the state does not provide effective measures to reduce criminality. From this perspective, past experiences of victimization and a poor evaluation of the effectiveness of the criminal justice system would play a key role in explaining support for mob violence as extra-legal punishment. If that is the case, we should be able to see a positive relationship between victimization and support for punitive practices. Other theories emphasize more the subjective experience around crime and the criminal justice system. From these perspectives, the subjective experience of fear of crime and legitimacy of police would play an important role. If these two factors play a role, previous research suggests that social groups that experience higher levels of fear of crime or lower levels of perceived legitimacy of the police

¹ It is very likely that this has rapidly changed during 2018 due to a large number of corruption scandals that were made public during this year.

should report higher levels of support for mob violence. Regarding support for formal punitive policies, previous research suggests that it would most likely correlate positively with fear of crime and legitimacy of the police.

Finally, other theories have emphasized that the sources of fear of crime can be multidimensional, therefore their levels are not in a direct correlation with levels of criminal activity of an area. Here, the media and political rhetoric also play a role. If that is the case for this sample, political identification with the right wing would have a positively significant relationship with punitive attitudes, and a weaker relationship with actual experiences around the criminal justice system.

For this study, a survey about attitudes toward punishment was administered in Santiago, Chile during January and February of 2016. Using data from this survey, I analyzed two models that share the same covariates but have different dependent variables: 1. Support for Formal Punishment, 2. Support for Informal Punishment. The possible socio-demographic differentials that I explore in this study are: age, sex, residential district, education, income and political orientation. To have a better understanding of how the sociodemographic characteristics might be shaping punitive attitudes, I included four potential mediators in the model: previous experiences of victimization, fear of crime, perceived legitimacy of the police, and perception of effectiveness of the criminal justice system. For the analysis, I used ordinary least squares regression to estimate support for mob violence, and then repeated the same process using Support for Formal Punishment as my dependent variable.

This thesis is organized as follows: In the second section, I present the literature review, followed by section three that includes the description of the data, variables and methods. I present the results in section four and provide the discussion and conclusion in section five.

2. Background and Literature Review

2.1.Context: Latin America and Chile

There is a consensus among researchers and policy makers that Latin America is a region characterized by high levels of violence, from both the state and private individuals. High levels of insecurity and instability for decades have been accompanied by high levels of support for ‘mano dura’ (iron fist) policies and support for extra-legal practices like mob violence.

Some scholars have stated that ‘crime and violence are an epidemic in the Americas (Cohen, Lupu and Zechmeister, 2017: p. 69). Although only 9% of the world’s population lives in Latin America and the Caribbean, 33% of the homicides that took place worldwide in 2015 were committed in the region (Jaitman, 2017). In addition, other types of crimes such as robberies, assaults, and kidnappings have become common in many countries (UNDP, 2013). According to the Americas Barometer Survey², reported crime victimization in the hemisphere was greater in 2016/17 than it was in previous years. Averaging across the 29 countries of the Americas included in the 2016/17 round of the survey, roughly 20% of individuals reported being a recent crime victim. In no country in the region did the number of crime victims significantly decline. The results of the same survey indicate that, in Chile, victimization is slightly above the mean: 22.4% (place 14 out of 29). The U.S victimization rate in the same survey is 14.4% (place 20 out of 29) (Cohen *et al.*, 2017).

Similarly, the results of the Americas Barometer Survey indicate that reported feelings of insecurity were higher in 2016/17 than in previous years. The results also indicate sociodemographic differentials in feelings of insecurity. Although feelings of insecurity have increased across all income quintiles, the share of the poorest quintile that feels very unsafe increased by nearly 9 percentage points between 2014 and 2016/17, while the share of individuals in the two wealthiest quintiles who felt very insecure only increased by 3

² The AmericasBarometer is a wide-ranging, nationally representative survey of adults that has been developed and conducted in every country in both North and South America since 2004. Samples are taken from the country's voting-age population, are nationally representative, and are drawn using a multistage cluster design based on the size of regions in the country (LAPOP, 2017). Only one individual is interviewed per household using quotas for both age and gender to avoid sampling bias.

percentage points over the same period. While all wealth groups have faced increased feelings of insecurity, the wealthy are much less likely to report feeling very unsafe in their homes in the context of deterioration in overall safety. On average, in the Americas 13.9% of the respondents indicate feeling very unsafe in their neighborhood. For this indicator, Chile is below the mean (12.7% of Chileans report feeling very unsafe in their neighborhood), and place 17th out of 29 countries. In the same survey, the U.S results indicate that 3.3% report feeling very unsafe in their neighborhood (position 24 out of 29).

As mentioned, some previous research has suggested that perceptions of effectiveness and legitimacy of the criminal justice system are related with attitudes towards punishment, both formal and informal. The last Americas Barometer Survey indicated that there is a general lack of satisfaction regarding the effectiveness of the justice system in the continent. On average for the region, less than 20% of respondents are very confident that the justice system in their country would work as designed, and more than half of individuals have little or no confidence that the justice system would ultimately end up punishing a hypothetical criminal. Moreover, poor individuals and those who live in high-crime areas are even less confident that police would respond quickly to a call for help. The wealthiest and most educated respondents were more confident that the police would respond quickly if called, but express little confidence that the perpetrator would be punished. Confidence that the judicial system will punish the guilty is also lower among those living in urban areas and among individuals who do not feel secure in their neighborhood or who live in areas where the number of crime victims is high. The data also suggest that, as crime increases and police corruption goes unchecked, citizens' trust that the rule of law will be applied properly declines.

According to the same survey, in several countries the proportion of individuals with little or no confidence that the judiciary would punish their attacker increased significantly compared to their historical average. Chile is one of those countries. Currently, Brazil has the lowest confidence in the justice system's response to crime, with 89.9% of respondents reporting little or no confidence in the justice system. It is followed by Chile, with 79.9% reporting little or no confidence. The average for the Americas is 63%. In the United States, 35.5% of the respondents indicate little or no confidence in the justice system.

In this scenario of high crime rates, dissatisfaction and distrust of law enforcement institutions, it is not infrequent to observe groups taking undemocratic, and potentially extralegal, measures to boost their personal security. In the cases of El Salvador and Guatemala, Pérez (2003) finds that higher perceptions of insecurity and crime victimization amplify support for military coups, as citizens' faith in the democratic regime's crime-fighting credentials erode. In the context of an increasingly violent conflict between the Mexican government and drug cartels, Malone (2013) finds that victimization and fear of crime negatively impact respect for the rule of law and confidence in specific law enforcement institutions.

Over the last several years, reports of mob violence or the attempted lynching of suspected criminals, from petty thieves to alleged rapists, have appeared with some frequency in the news across the Latin American region (Zechmeister, 2014). The Americas Barometer Survey includes a question that gauges popular support for these kinds of actions by asking: *'Of people taking the law into their own hands when the government does not punish criminals. How much do you approve or disapprove?'* On average, support for extralegal collective criminal justice in Latin America and the Caribbean was fairly low in 2014, scoring between 28.63 and 31.55 on a 100 points scale. There is no clear trend in public opinion on this item over time, but the score in 2014 is significantly higher than in any other round between 2004 and 2014. Nevertheless, the 2014 score still shows that the average respondent in the region disagrees with people taking the law into their own hands. In that survey, Chile is below the mean, with a support of 25 points out of a possible 100.

Finally, punitive formal policies tend to have very strong support in the region. In 2012 and 2014, the Americas Barometer Survey asked respondents in Latin America and the Caribbean which policy approach would they favor: crime prevention or harsher punishment of criminals. Crime prevention policy includes actions taken to incentivize prosocial behaviors for at-risk individuals, integrate prior offenders, and reduce the likelihood of individuals engaging in criminal activity by addressing underlying risk factors like poverty, substance abuse, dysfunctional family life, low academic achievement, and gang membership (Currie 1998; Shader 2004). The alternative is to attempt to dissuade individuals from committing crime either by implementing harsher and less flexible sentencing policies or by lowering living standards at correctional facilities (Roberts et al. 2003). The punitive

approach is based on the assumption that harsher punishments have a deterrent effect on rational would-be criminals. In the 2014 survey, 55.3% of respondents in the region prefer a punitive approach whereas 29.1% of respondents prefer a preventive approach, and 15.7% of respondents answer “both”. In 2012, 46.9% of respondents preferred a punitive approach, whereas 37.4% preferred preventive measures and 15.7% spontaneously answered “both.” Thus, between 2012 and 2014 there was a statistically significant, 8.4 percentage point shift of opinion towards approval of more punitive crime prevention measures ($p < 0.001$). Across both years, there is a clear modal preference for a punitive approach as a solution to crime in the region. The 2014 results also indicate that, in Chile, 59% of respondents support punitive measures, while 17% of respondents preferred preventive measures (Zechmeister, 2014). The report does not indicate the percentage of Chileans that reported support for both measures.

2.2. Punitive Attitudes

Adriaenssen and Aertsen (2015) define punitive attitudes as: ‘an attitude towards the goals of punishment, specified forms of penal sanctions, the intensity of penal sanctions and specific sentencing policies’ (p. 95). Similarly, King and Maruna (2009) define punitivism as the desire to see a greater number of people punished, for greater durations, and with increased severity. According to Beckett and Godoy (2008), punitive practices and policies are those that seek to intensify the pain associated with punishment by intensifying its severity and/or duration, and by increasing its application (p.143). Based on these previous definitions, individuals with stronger punitive attitudes should express greater support for these types of policies and practices. Under this broad definition, the concept of punitive attitudes is not limited by the legal status of the punishment. It could be legal or extra-legal.

In general, research around punitiveness has been conducted on three levels: a macro level, a meso level, and a micro level (Adriaenssen and Aertsen, 2015). The macro level of punitiveness refers to the social debate, the media messages and/or the political discourse on punishment, and at the meso level we find judicial punitiveness, which contains the concrete actions of judicial actors, and thus represents the sentencing mentality of the judicial system. The micro level of research on punitiveness focused on individual person’s beliefs and

expectations about punishment (Adriaenssen and Aertsen, 2015). This is what we call ‘punitive attitudes’ and is the focus of this thesis.

The purpose of this study is to understand variation in the level of support for these punitive practices, both legal and extralegal. Most research tends to focus on understanding punitive attitudes towards one of the two, i.e., legal or extra-legal, with some exceptions that explore both. Therefore, the evidence provided by previous research is presented in two sections: previous evidence on support for informal punishment and support for formal punitive policies.

2.2.1. Support for Informal Punishment (Mob Violence) as Extra-legal Punishment

Senechal de la Roche (1996) posits that vigilantism and lynching are two forms of nongovernmental collective violence directed towards “deviant” individuals. These forms of popular justice circumvent formal judicial policies and institutions and they provide few, if any, formal mechanisms of accountability for actions taken; as such they present a challenge to the rule of law and the state’s monopoly on the use of force (Zechmeister, 2014).

Vigilante justice is a subject that has been investigated over decades of scholarship (e.g., Black 1976; Tolnay and Beck 1995; Senechal de la Roche 2001, Godoy, 2006), with some research suggesting a connection between citizens’ perception of law enforcement and support for vigilante justice (Goldstein 2012; Silke 2001; Zizumbo-Colunga 2010).

Using data from Ghana, Tankebe (2009) reported that perceptions of police trustworthiness were the main driver of support for vigilantism. Both perceptions of police anti-corruption reforms and the quality of citizen treatment by the police were associated with disapproval of vigilantism. However, neither the perceived effectiveness nor the perceived quality of police decision-making predicted vigilantism.

Jackson and his colleagues reported similar findings in their analysis of survey data from 1,017 Londoners (Jackson et al., 2013). They found that procedural justice and police effectiveness did not explain people’s willingness to use violence to settle disputes. Instead, what mattered was people’s sense of obligation to obey the police.

Haas, de Keijser, and Bruinsma (2014) combined a series of items measuring various dimensions of police legitimacy to form what they termed “diffuse confidence in police,”

and to test its effects on support for vigilantism. Their findings showed a negative statistically significant association between the two.

More recently, Nivette (2016) analyzed survey data from 18 Latin American countries in a study that examined two scenarios of vigilantism: one scenario involved an individual who killed a suspected rapist, and the other scenario involved an individual suspected of terrorizing the community. The results showed that perceived police criminality and institutional ineffectiveness predicted approval of vigilantism in both scenarios.

2.2.2. Support for Formal Punishment as Legal Punishment

Punitive criminal justice policies are those that punish, incapacitate, or increase the transaction costs of crime (Ramirez, 2013). Policies that increase the authority and resources of law enforcement agencies or the penal system at the expense of policies that target the social causes of crime also can be classified as punitive. Punitive policies range from capital punishment to mandatory sentencing to increasing the authority of law enforcement officials (Ramirez, 2013). From this perspective, individuals opting for longer prison sentences with harsh conditions, higher fines, etc. are considered more punitive than people who prefer shorter prison sentences with less harsh conditions or lower fines (Adriaenssen and Aertsen, 2015).

According to Gelb (2008), one of the conclusions that can be drawn from the research on public opinion on crime and justice, is that, in general, the public considers sentences to be too lenient. People desire harsher responses to crime. This finding has been consistent over time and across different countries (Adriaenssen and Aertsen, 2015).

Beyond the general consistency, research also indicates variation in the level of punitiveness by type of offenses. According to Roberts and Stalans (2000), when respondents are asked about their specific sentencing preferences, a bifurcation emerges. On the one hand, offenders who committed crimes that involve violence, or a threat of violence, provoke a punitive response, whereas a non-punitive public emerges for offenders who are convicted of economic or property crimes (Roberts and Stalans, 2000). Similarly, Roberts and Hough (2005) observed that public support for alternative sanctions is considerable for less serious offences, whereas public opposition to such alternatives is strong for the most serious offences.

2.3. Sociodemographic Differentials in Support for Punitive Attitudes

The main purpose of this study is to explore the sociodemographic differentials in punitive attitudes in Santiago, Chile. Specifically, I explore the attitudes of social groups on both punitive formal punishment, and informal punishment, separately. I focus on differences in support by residential district, education, income, sex, age, and political orientation. Exploring whether there are differences between groups in support for punitive punishment can be a first step toward understanding how social inequalities are involved in the dynamics of conflict, and how these are linked to support for collective violence.

Previous research across different countries also found different levels of punitiveness across socio-demographic groups, but the relationships were usually not strong and were often inconsistent (Payne, Gainey, Triplett and Danner, 2004).

In what follows, I present evidence from previous research addressing the relationship between punitiveness and various sociodemographic characteristics. The evidence is from different countries across the globe, which means that there are gaps and assumptions in this section that need to be acknowledged. For example, we should expect that social constructions like gender or urbanity have a different impact depending on the setting, and this is an important limitation for such a summary discussion because I am relying on evidence from very diverse places. Considering this, it would be inaccurate to assume that we should find a similar relationship between sociodemographic characteristic and punitiveness across different settings. However, the diversity of results around this topic could be a useful general panoramic for a heretofore unexplored topic in Chile³.

³ I present evidence from different countries, despite of the several limitations of this approach, partially because I was unable to find quantitative evidence on this topic for Chile. I could decide to use only previous evidence from Latin America, but it is still scarce. I was not able to find a similar study in other country in Latin America either. Given that the existent findings on this topic indicate that these issues are particularly salient in Latin America, hopefully this study would be a first contribution on quantitative research on specific countries for a more detail understanding of the phenomenon.

When exploring **age** differentials on punitive attitudes in the U.S. using survey data of 1,700 respondents, Rossi and Beck (1997, in Payne et al., 2004) found that age was positively associated with more punitive attitudes, though they also suggest that the relationship might be curvilinear, with the youngest and oldest groups holding the least punitive attitudes. In his research about support for vigilantism in Ghana using survey data of 374 residents of Accra, Tankebe (2009) found that older people were more likely than younger people to express support for lynching. Payne et al., (2004) found different age gradients depending on the offenses in the state of Virginia. In specific, in their sample of 734 respondents their findings indicate that age has a significant positive effect on punitive attitudes across items dealing with illegal drugs and guns. In contrast, there is no relationship between age and punitive attitudes towards occupational crimes, but there is a negative effect of age on punitiveness regarding drunkenness.

With respect to differentials by **sex**, the evidence is also not consistent across studies. Unfortunately, all quantitative research that I found use the variable sex as a binary variable and does not acknowledge the variation of its meaning across different cultures and settings. The data that I use for the current study has the same restriction. This essentialism is an important limitation of this study. Nevertheless, in light of this limitation, some research has indicated that men tend to be more punitive than women (Applegate, Cullen, & Fisher, 2002), but the differences were sometimes small. That is the case for Applegate et al (2002) whose research was based on a random sample of 1000 Ohio residents. Other research suggested more punitive attitudes among women, but only for certain types of crimes. Payne et al., (2004) found statistically significantly greater punitiveness among females for gun related offenses, but not for drug related offenses. In their study about attitudes towards victimless crimes in the U.S, Meier and Geis (1997) observed that females seem to be more punitive than males in cases where there are more directly apparent negative consequences to victims or potential victims than in seemingly victimless crimes. Based on his research in Ghana, Tankebe (2009) concluded that gender was not a statistically significant predictor of support for mob violence.

Regarding **income**, as noted earlier, the 2017 Americas Barometer Survey indicated that poor individuals and those who live in high-crime areas are less confident that police would respond quickly to a call for help. The full dataset for this round of the survey included over

43,000 interviews. In the same survey, the wealthiest and most educated respondents were more confident that the police would respond quickly if called (Cohen *et al.*, 2017). Similarly, Goldstein's (2008) qualitative analysis from Bolivia suggested that, for the upper class, police and judicial services are at least nominally available to investigate crimes, respond to grievances, and resolve conflicts. But for the majority of crime victims, who are typically poor and marginalized, honest and reliable police protection or recourse to the law are simply nonexistent. Instead, the poor themselves are often criminalized in public discourse and in police practice, and experience heightened police violence, as states adopt more repressive and violent measures in the name of crime control (Fruhling, 2003). Given that previous research in other countries of Latin America indicate some variation by income in the perception of the justice system, I included income in the models.

Several previous researchers have highlighted the role of **education** in shaping punitive attitudes (Dowler, 2003). The usual assumption here is that education leads to more tolerance, and that more informed citizens are less punitive in their criminal justice policy preferences (Tankebe & Asif, 2016). Indeed, the literature suggests that it is often a *lack* of knowledge about crime and the processes involved in the criminal justice system that best predicts punitive attitudes rather than the *salience* of crime as measured by fear, victimization, or local crime rates (Stinchcombe *et al.* 1980). People often fail to consider the alternatives to incarceration and the limitations on the sentencing process to affect crime rates" (Roberts *et al.* 2003), which leads to stronger support for punitive policies and action. In his research in Ghana, Tankebe (2009) found that educational attainment was a significant and negative predictor of support for mob violence.

Prior research has also suggested variations in punitive attitudes related to characteristics of the **neighborhood in which individuals reside**. The Americas Barometer Survey for 2017 indicates that, in Latin America, confidence that the judicial system will punish the guilty is lower among those living in urban areas and among individuals who do not feel secure in their neighborhood or who live in areas where the number of crime victims is high (Cohen *et al.*, 2017). In addition, the 2014 Americas Barometer Survey shows that, in the region, those who feel more insecure in their neighborhoods, and those who report more gang activity in their neighborhoods, are more likely to approve of vigilante justice (Zechmeister, 2014).

Regarding differentials by **political identification**, scholars have argued that punitive attitudes respond to the politicization of crime by national political actors—particularly the framing of crime as a problem of a lenient criminal justice system (Ramirez, 2013; Beckett and Godoy, 2008). Empirically, little evidence exists that punitive sentiment responds to actual crime conditions or even public concern over crime (Beckett, 1997). The more political actors frame the issue of crime as a problem of a permissive justice system, the more we tend to observe increases in punitive sentiment. Support for punitive policies is a product of (typically) conservative political rhetoric framing crime as the result of liberal, welfare-oriented policies (Beckett and Sasson, 2004). In Latin America, rising insecurity has led some right-wing politicians to call for *mano dura*, or "iron fist," crime control tactics, which can include police brutality, militarized police operations, and extended prison sentences (Holland, 2013). Like conservative rhetoric in the United States, which problematized "permissive" criminal justice policies, right-wing politicians in several countries of the region have blamed the democratic reforms of the 1990s for rising crime rates (Holland, 2013).

2.4. Mediators

Previous evidence suggests that some societal differences in punitive attitudes (formal and informal) might be associated with perceptions or experiences related to crime and the criminal justice system. For this study, I explored the mediating role of previous experiences of victimization, fear of crime, perceived legitimacy of the police, and perception of effectiveness of the criminal justice system⁴.

Instrumental theories suggest that support for more punitive measures is a result of direct experiences of **victimization**. However, a sizable and consistent body of research fails to support these instrumental hypotheses (Cullen et al., 1985; Hough and Moxon, 1985; Baron and Hartnagel, 1996; Unnever et al., 2007). Unnever and colleagues (2007) tested the hypothesis that criminal victimization leads to punitiveness using national-level US data from the General Social Survey. They found no relationship between being a victim of crime

⁴ As in the previous section, I relied on evidence from different countries across the globe because I was not able to find any research on this topic in Chile. I could decide to use only previous evidence from Latin America, but it is still scarce. I was not able to find a similar study in other country in Latin America either.

and support for the death penalty or for harsher local courts. Similarly, research studies conducted in different places and moments in the U.S indicate that personal victimization experiences and perceptions of crime salience in one's residential area do not relate consistently to punitive attitudes (Flanagan et al., 1985; Langworthy and Whitehead, 1986; Tufts and Roberts, 2002). Likewise, only 9 percent of the self-reported victims of violent crimes in the 1998 British Crime Survey favored the incarceration of their own offender (Roberts, 2002). This research counters intuitive beliefs that victims are most likely to seek punitive or harsh consequences for offenders. Walker, Hough, and Lewis (1988), suggest that one reason for this is that individuals who lack personal experience of victimization may exaggerate the negative consequences of crime while victims are more pragmatic.

Previous evidence on the relationship between support for extralegal punishment and **fear of crime** is mixed. Using a quota sample of 2,696 New York City subway riders, Ziegenhagan and Brosnan (1991) found that fear of victimization was associated with support for vigilante groups. Similarly, Gray, Jackson and Farrall's (2011) study using representative survey data of seven London neighborhoods, found a negative correlation between frequent and dysfunctional worry about crime and confidence in police, suggesting that people who tend to frequently worry about crime have diminished confidence in, and hence are less likely to rely on, the police (Gray et al., 2011). According to Jackson et al., 2013, in theory, people with heightened fear of crime may also find it more acceptable to use violence for protection. Moreover, fear of crime may even have an effect upon attitudes to private violence unmediated by attitudes toward the police or the state. That is, people who fear more for their own safety may feel more motivated to see violence as acceptable, out of an instrumental goal to protect oneself regardless of how police are viewed. Either mechanism would suggest that fear of crime will be positively related to attitudes about private violence (Jackson et al., 2013). However, a sizable body of research fails to support these hypotheses (Cullen et al., 1985; Hough and Moxon, 1985; Baron and Hartnagel, 1996; Unnever et al., 2007). In their survey research on a random sample of 166 adults living in East Bay area of Northern California, Tyler and Boeckmann (1997: 252) conclude that 'crime-related concerns are the least important factor' in predicting punitive attitudes and suggest that 'the image of the citizen as supporting punitive public policies because of fear of crime is inaccurate'. When we explore the relationship between fear of crime and punitive attitudes, it is difficult to

disentangle the pervasive effect of the ‘tough-on-crime’ rhetoric on an individual’s perception of security. As Goldstein (2008) states, even in the absence of direct experience of crime, the fear of criminal and state violence, perpetuated by ‘talk of crime’, ratchets up the level of insecurity people confront and the extremes to which they are willing to go to attain security (Caldeira, 2000; Dammert and Malone, 2003). Especially in urban areas, a general feeling of fear and insecurity may seem all-encompassing and inescapable, part of the habitus of daily life (Garland, 2001).

The perceived **effectiveness of the criminal justice system** is a measure regularly considered in the study of punitive attitudes. Under a substitution perspective, it is reasonable to think that there should be a negative relationship between perceived effectiveness of the criminal justice system and punitive attitudes, especially toward informal punishment. If the punitive attitudes are not driven by the assessment of the criminal justice system, this relationship would not be significant. The Americas Barometer Survey results for 2014 indicate that Canada (55.8) is among the countries with the most confidence in the judicial system, while Brazil (27) displays the lowest average confidence. Citizens in Suriname (67.7), Panama (60.5), Barbados (57.7) and the United States (56.1) are also among those with the highest average confidence in the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty. Chile (28.7) and Venezuela (32) on the other hand, join Brazil at the bottom of this confidence scale. In fact, in separate cross-temporal analyses, the authors found that Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile, along with El Salvador, Guyana, and Belize, are the countries that experienced the greatest declines in confidence in their judicial systems between 2012 and 2014 (Zechmeister, 2014).

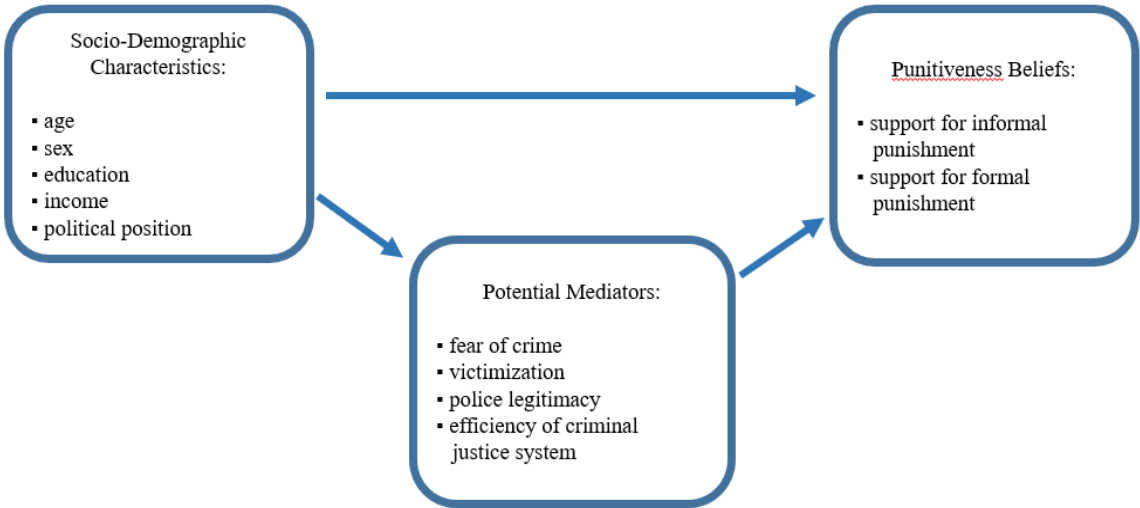
Finally, regarding legitimacy, my study focuses on **police legitimacy**, not on the legitimacy of the state as a whole. Police legitimacy warrants special study, not only because of the police's unique association with coercion (Brodeur, 2010; Loader Mulcahy, 2003) but also because of the frequency and density of police- citizen interactions (Jackson et al., 2013). Based on the results from their research in London, Jackson et al (2013) argued that perceiving the police as a legitimate authority should lead people to grant the police the monopoly of the use of force and to reject the use of force by private individuals or groups. The study's primary finding was that judgments about police legitimacy were negatively correlated with individual support for private violence for social control (Jackson et al.,

2013). Similarly, Nivette (2016) explored this relationship in Latin America using cross-national data from the year 2012. However, she did not explore support for mob violence within specific countries. Her results indicate that one of the most robust predictors of support for violent vigilantism is the perception of institutional illegitimacy (Nivette, 2016).

In the following statistical analysis, I expect to answer the following questions: a) Are there sociodemographic differentials (i.e., by age, sex, education, income, neighborhood, and political position) in support for both informal and formal punishment? and b) Are any observed sociodemographic differentials due to the influence of the potential mediators mentioned above (i.e., fear of crime, victimization, police legitimacy, and perception of the effectiveness of the criminal justice system)?

Figure 1 provides a heuristic conceptual model that indicates how the exogenous socio-demographic characteristics, mediators and dependent variables are hypothesized to be related to one another.

Figure 1. Heuristic Conceptual Model for Analysis of Socio-Demographic Differentials in Support for Informal and Formal Punishment



As portrayed in Figure 1, it is hypothesized that sociodemographic characteristics are related to beliefs about both formal and informal punishment. Furthermore, it is proposed that some or all of the potential relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and punitive beliefs is due to the influence of mediating, or intervening, variables. The statistical

analyses to follow fall short of providing definitive evidence of causality, however the associational evidence can be considered suggestive of the causal processes proposed in Figure 1.

3. Data, Variables and Methods

3.1. Data

The survey on which this study is based was conducted in two districts of the city of Santiago, Chile: Renca and Providencia. The study was originated at a time when the popular media showed strong support among the general population for mob violence as ‘extralegal punishment,’ raising alarms about the legitimacy of institutions and the willingness of the population to support these practices. In fact, during the last four years, the Chilean media have increasingly reported situations of people engaging in mob violence as a form of social control. Moreover, the latest public survey (Bravo and Ordenes, 2016) indicates that more than one-half of the population supports these practices.

During January and February of 2016, a sample from both districts was surveyed about their attitudes towards punishment. The sample included 200 respondents from each district. Renca is a low-income district while Providencia is a high-income district. Only one respondent per household was selected and she/he must have resided in the district for at least three years to be eligible for inclusion. In addition, age and gender quotas were established and met within each district.

An important caveat is that the sample is relatively small, and the sampling was not random, therefore, the data are not representative of the larger populations of the districts, the city of Santiago, or the country of Chile. These limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings.

With listwise deletion of missing data for the variables used in the statistical analyses, the final sample size was 367. Table 1 shows the original quotas for the full sample and Table 2 reports the corresponding number of usable cases after the listwise deletion of missing data.

Table 1. Quotas for the whole sample

		18-24 years old	25 a 34 years old	35 a 54 years old	55 and more	Total
High SES	Male	25	25	25	25	100
District	Female	25	25	25	25	100
Low SES	Male	25	25	25	25	100
District	Female	25	25	25	25	100
Total		100	100	100	100	400

Table 2. Quotas after listwise deletion

		18-24 years old	25 a 34 years old	35 a 54 years old	55 and more	Total
High SES	Male	24	24	21	22	91
District	Female	23	25	23	21	92
Low SES	Male	24	21	24	21	90
District	Female	25	22	25	22	94
Total		96	92	93	86	367

3.2. Measures

Two groups of questions were used to develop measures of the respondents' attitudes toward punishment or sentencing severity: (1) Support for Formal Punishment (2) Support for Informal Punishment.

Table 3 provides descriptive statistics for all variables used in the empirical analyses that follow.

Table 3: Punitive Attitudes. Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	Mean	St. Dev.	Pctl(25)	Median	Pctl(75)	Min	Max
Support for informal punishment	3.09	1.03	2.3	3.3	4	1	5
Support for formal punishment	3.58	0.96	3.00	3.67	4.33	1.00	5.00
Fear of Crime	3.01	1.17	2.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	5.00
Police Legitimacy	2.61	0.94	2.00	2.67	3.33	1.00	5.00
CJS Effectiveness	2.08	0.77	1.50	2.00	2.50	1.00	5.00
Age	39.05	17.26	24	34	54	17	85
Female	0.51	0.50	0	1	1	0	1
High Income Wage	0.61	0.49	0	1	1	0	1
College Degree	0.35	0.48	0	0	1	0	1
Left Wing Ideology	0.26	0.44	0	0	1	0	1
High Income District	0.50	0.50	0	0	1	0	1
Victimization	0.36	0.48	0	0	1	0	1

3.2.1. Dependent Variables

- Support for informal punishment

The first dependent variable is the respondent's average support for extra-legal punishment based on 3 items of a 5-level Likert scale of possible functions of support for mob violence as a response to alleged crimes. Each item is an ordinal variable that takes the following values: Highly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neither agree nor disagree = 3, Agree = 4, Highly Agree = 5. In specific, the dependent variable is the average response for each participant across the following three questions:

'In recent months, there have been situations in which citizens catch and beat people who have just committed crimes. How much do you agree or disagree that these actions...

A. help the offender think twice before committing another offense.

B. will make fewer people try to commit crimes in the future.

C. contribute to generate more security for all.'

I conducted reliability analyses for all the variables on which the average response is based. A rule of thumb is that Cronbach Alpha values of 0.7 indicate acceptable reliability

and 0.8 or higher indicates good reliability, with .9 or higher being extremely good. For this variable, the alpha is 0.79, suggesting good reliability. As Table 3 indicates, the variable Support for Informal Punishment has a mean of 3.1 and a median of 3.3, which suggests overall ambivalence towards these practices.

- Support for formal policies

The second dependent variable is a continuous variable that represents the individual's average support for Support for Formal Punishment from 3 items of a 5-level Likert scale. Each item is an ordinal variable that takes the following values: Highly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neither agree nor disagree = 3, Agree = 4, Highly Agree = 5. The specific items are as follows:

'A. All persons who commit burglaries should go to jail, without exception.

B. Judges should give much longer sentences to those who have committed burglaries.

C. People imprisoned for burglary should not be entitled to reduce their sentences for good conduct.'

Cronbach's Alpha is 0.79 for this variable too. As Table 3 indicates, the variable Support for Formal Punishment has a mean of 3.6 and a median of 3.7, which suggest a slight tendency toward overall support for formal punishment.

One limitation of this variable is that punitive beliefs were measured only for the offense of burglary. However, based on my examination of media attention to the issue, it seems that most cases (if not all) of mob violence that have drawn public attention are towards people who allegedly committed burglary⁵.

⁵ <http://www.t13.cl/videos/nacional/video-limites-detenciones-ciudadanas>

3.2.2. Sociodemographic predictors

The sociodemographic variables (social groups) along which Support for Formal Punishment and Support for Informal Punishment are hypothesized to vary are the following.

Age: Age is represented with a continuous measure. Table 3 indicates that the average age in the sample is 39 years, with a median of 34 and a range that goes from 17 years old to 85 years.

Sex: Sex is measured with a binary variable that takes the value “1” if the person is identified by the interviewer as female, and “0” if the person is identified by the interviewer as male. Table 3 reports an average of 0.507, meaning that 51% of the respondents are female, generally consistent with the original sampling strategy.

Education: Education is measured with a binary variable that takes value “1” if the person has a college degree and “0” otherwise. The main purpose of this measurement strategy is to assess if there was a significant difference associated with having a college degree. According to Table 3, the average is 0.349, which means that 35% of the sample has a college degree.

Income: Income is represented by a binary variable that takes the value “1” if the household earns more than 500.000 Chilean pesos a month and “0” otherwise. I decided to use this threshold because, although the official minimum wage in Chile is 276.000 Chilean pesos⁶, the poverty line is 422.767 Chilean pesos⁷ (Duran and Kremerman, 2018). Table 3 shows an average of 0.61, which indicates that 61% of respondents’ households have income higher than 500.000 Chilean pesos⁸.

District: A binary variable is used to distinguish respondents who live in the low-income district of Renca (coded “1”) from those who live in the high-income district of Providencia

⁶ Approximately 407 dollars.

⁷ Approximately 693 dollars.

⁸ Approximately 740 dollars.

(coded “0”). The mean of this variable is 0.499, indicating a 50% of respondents reside in each district, consistent with the original sampling strategy.

Political Position: Political position is measured with a binary variable that takes a value of “1” if the person identifies with the left wing, and “0” otherwise. Table 3 shows a mean of 0.262 for this variable. This indicates that 26% of the sample reported political identification with the left wing.

3.2.3. Mediators

To have a better understanding of the nature of any sociodemographic differentials in punitive attitudes, I included four potential mediators in the model. As mentioned earlier, previous evidence suggests that some societal differences in punitive attitudes (formal and informal) might be associated with perceptions or experiences related to crime and the criminal justice system. For this study, I explored the mediating role of previous experiences of victimization, fear of crime, perceived legitimacy of the police, and perception of effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

- Crime victimization

Crime victimization is measured as a binary variable that takes a value of “1” if the person or a household member has been a victim of a crime during the past twelve months and a value of “0” if no victimization had been experienced. Table 3 reports a mean of 0.357, meaning that 36% of participants reported having been victim of a crime during that time period.

- Fear of Crime

Fear of Crime is represented by a latent variable created from 3 items of a 5-level Likert scale of level of fear of being a victim of a crime in different situations. Each item is an

ordinal variable that takes the following values: Not Scared = 1, Slightly Scared = 2, Pretty Scared= 3, Very Scared = 4, Extremely Scared = 5. The specific items were as follows:

'How much fear or worry do the following possibilities cause you...

A. Being a victim of an armed robbery in the street;

B. Having someone come in to steal at home when you are not present;

C. That a stranger will hit you on the street or in a public place.'

According to Table 3, the mean of the variable Fear of Crime (3 from a 1 to 5 scale) suggests a tendency to report some level of fear of being victim of a crime ("Pretty Scared"). The Cronbach's Alpha for the items used to construct this variable is 0.83, suggesting good reliability.

- Perception of effectiveness of the formal criminal justice system

Average level of perception of Effectiveness of the formal Criminal Justice System is based on the average response to two items measured with a Likert scale. Each item is an ordinal variable that takes the following values: Highly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neither agree nor disagree = 3, Agree = 4, Highly Agree = 5.

'A. The police are in control of the problem of crime in Chile.

B. In Chile, judges condemn those who must be condemned, and leave those who must be set free.'

The mean of perception of effectiveness of the criminal justice system (2.1 from a 1 to 5 scale) suggesting a low perception of effectiveness. A limitation is that the Cronbach's Alpha for these items is quite low (0.38), and I have only two items for this variable.

- Perceived Legitimacy of the Police

Perception of Legitimacy of the Police is measured as the average from 3 items of a 5-level Likert scale. Each item is an ordinal variable that takes the following values: Highly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neither agree nor disagree = 3, Agree = 4, Highly Agree = 5.

A. We must respect the decisions made by the police, even if we do not agree with them.

B. We must obey the instructions of the police without asking questions.

C. We must always support the decisions of the police, even if they make a mistake.'

For this variable, the reliability test shows a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.79. Table 3 indicates that the variable police legitimacy has a mean of 2.6. This suggests that the tendency is somewhere between disagree (2) and ambivalence (3).

3.3. Methods

For the analysis, I used ordinary least squares regression to estimate parallel sets of models for the two dependent variables -Support for Informal Punishment and Support for Formal Punishment. In both cases, I used the same covariates and present them in the same order of appearance in the model. The standard socio-demographic variables were entered first into the equation. Fear of crime and victimization were then added to the model to see whether those variables mediated the effects of the socio-demographic measures. Finally, the third model introduced perception of legitimacy of the police and perception of the criminal justice system to assess their possible mediating influences.

4. Results

4.1. Bivariate Correlations

Table 4: Zero-Order Correlations Among All Variables Used in the Analyses

	Informal Punish	Formal Policies	Fear Crime	Legitimacy	Effectiveness	Age	Female	Income	College	Left Wing	District
Informal Punish											
Formal Policies	0.46***										
Fear Crime	0.19***	0.22***									
Legitimacy	0.20***	0.33***	0.12*								
Effectiveness	0.00	-0.05	-0.13*	0.13*							
Age	0.14**	0.18***	0.16**	0.29***	0.02						
Female	0.10	0.04	0.39***	-0.04	-0.05	0.02					
Income	-0.13*	-0.18***	-0.15**	-0.13*	0.00	-0.09	-0.03				
College	-0.18***	-0.18***	-0.14**	-0.10	0.08	0.07	-0.02	0.39***			
Left Wing	-0.27***	-0.34***	-0.25***	-0.24***	0.04	-0.04	-0.09	0.23***	0.20***		
District	-0.18***	-0.20***	-0.13*	-0.09	0.03	-0.05	-0.01	0.51***	0.51***	0.22***	
Victimization	0.00	0.03	0.05	-0.07	-0.12*	-0.02	-0.05	0.07	0.08	0.00	0.01

Note: * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

An initial impression of the relationships between the socio-demographic characteristics and Support for Informal Punishment and Support for Formal Punishment can be gleaned from the bivariate correlations reported in Table 4.

Regarding socio-demographic characteristics, there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between age and both dependent variables. Also, there is a negative relationship between the dependent variables and income, education, left wing political orientation, and residence in the low-income district. This first glance at the evidence suggests that younger respondents with higher salaries, who live in the upper-class district, have a college degree, and have a left-wing political identification are less supportive of punitive behaviors (both formal and informal). Sex is the only socio-demographic variable that is unrelated to the two dependent variables in the bivariate case.

Regarding the mediators, neither perceptions of effectiveness of the criminal justice system nor crime victimization during the last year is significantly correlated with support for mob violence or support for punitive policies. Fear of crime and perceived legitimacy of

the police have a positive relationship with support for punitive measures. The fact that legitimacy of the police is positively correlated with support for informal punishment is surprising from a substitution perspective. However, in the broader neoliberal context of privatization of security this is not unexpected. I will return to this point in the discussion.

Finally, the results in Table 4 show a strong and statistically significant relationship between support for mob violence and support for punitive policies. From a substitution perspective, we might expect a negative relationship. But these results seem to suggest that the implementation of punitive policies does not necessarily reduce support for extra-legal practices.

4.2. Ordinary Least Squares Multivariate Regression

For a more definitive assessment of the socio-demographic differentials in support for formal and informal punishment we must turn to the results of the multivariable analyses.

Table 5: Ordinary Least Squares Regression Results for Analysis of Support for Mob Violence

	Model		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Age	0.008*** (0.003)	0.007** (0.003)	0.005* (0.003)
Female	0.144 (0.102)	0.079 (0.111)	0.101 (0.111)
High Income Wage	0.039 (0.125)	0.047 (0.126)	0.056 (0.125)
College Degree	-0.245* (0.127)	-0.230* (0.128)	-0.217* (0.128)
High Income district	-0.164 (0.129)	-0.161 (0.129)	-0.167 (0.129)
Political Position (Left Wing)	-0.509*** (0.121)	-0.473*** (0.123)	-0.419*** (0.125)
Victimization		0.013 (0.107)	0.034 (0.108)
Fear of Crime		0.076 (0.050)	0.072 (0.050)
Effectiveness of CJS			0.025 (0.068)
Legitimacy Police			0.123** (0.060)
Constant	2.990*** (0.159)	2.797*** (0.202)	2.470*** (0.276)
Observations	367	367	367
R ²	0.116	0.122	0.133
Adjusted R ²	0.101	0.102	0.109

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5 shows the results for the regression analysis of Support for Informal Punishment. The first model includes only the socio-demographic characteristics. The results for Model 1, which indicates the partial relationship between each predictor variable and the dependent variable while controlling for all other covariates, indicate that age, college degree, and political position are significant predictors of Support for Informal Punishment. Younger respondents, those with a college degree and from the political left express weaker support for mob violence. Household income, district SES, and sex do not evince significant partial relationships with support for mob violence.

The second model introduces information about victimization and fear of crime. In this model, neither victimization nor fear of crime is significantly related to support for mob violence. In addition, controlling for these possible mediators has little consequence for the relationships between Support for Informal Punishment and the socio-demographic

characteristics reported in Model 1. This suggests that age, education, and political orientation are not related to support for mob violence because of greater fear of crime among older, less educated, and more conservative respondents.

The third model adds perceptions of the justice system to the right-hand side of the prediction equation. The perception of effectiveness of the criminal justice system does not have a statistically significant relationship with support for mob violence, but perceived legitimacy of the police does. Regarding the latter, and quite surprisingly from a substitution perspective, perceived legitimacy of the police is positively related with support for mob violence. The coefficients for the statistically significant socio-demographic characteristics from Model 2 (i.e., Age, College Degree, and Political Position) are reduced slightly after the inclusion of the perceived legitimacy of police variable in Model 3, suggesting, again, that the latter variables do not function as mediators for those sociodemographic predictors.

In summary, the findings from the regression analysis indicate that support for mob violence is greater among respondents who are older, less educated, and hold more conservative political views. There is no evidence to suggest that the differentials in support by age, education, or political orientation are due to previous experiences of victimization, greater fear of crime, perceived legitimacy of the police, or perceived effectiveness of the formal criminal justice system. Regarding goodness of model fit, the predictors in Model 1 explain a modest amount of the variance in Support for Informal Punishment ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = .101$). The subsequent models show minor improvement for the fit of the model (An $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .102$ in Model 2, and $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .109$ in Model 3).

Table 6: Ordinary Least Squares Regression Results for Analysis of Support for Punitive Policies

	Model		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Age	0.009*** (0.003)	0.009*** (0.003)	0.005* (0.003)
Female	0.013 (0.092)	-0.068 (0.100)	-0.027 (0.098)
High Income Wage	-0.044 (0.113)	-0.038 (0.113)	-0.027 (0.110)
College Degree	-0.176 (0.115)	-0.161 (0.115)	-0.120 (0.113)
High Income district	-0.138 (0.117)	-0.131 (0.116)	-0.143 (0.113)
Political Position (Left Wing)	-0.635*** (0.109)	-0.588*** (0.111)	-0.484*** (0.110)
Victimization		0.068 (0.097)	0.086 (0.095)
Fear of Crime		0.097** (0.045)	0.081* (0.044)
Effectiveness of CJS			-0.064 (0.060)
Legitimacy Police			0.233*** (0.052)
Constant	3.524*** (0.143)	3.260*** (0.182)	2.900*** (0.244)
Observations	367	367	367
R ²	0.165	0.178	0.221
Adjusted R ²	0.151	0.159	0.199

Note:

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Table 6 shows the multivariate results obtained from the regression analysis of Support for Formal Punishment. The results of Model 1 indicate that age and political position, again, emerge as statistically significant socio-demographic predictors. More specifically, support for punitive policies increases with age and is weaker among those who identify with the political left. As in the analysis of support for informal punishment, the remaining socio-demographic characteristics are not significantly related to Support for Formal Punishment. Except for the variable ‘college degree’, these results are very similar to those observed in Table 3 of Model 1 in the analysis of support for mob violence. It is worth noting that, although the effect of education reported in Model 1 does not reach statistical significance by conventional standards (i.e. $p < .1$ or $p < .05$), the ratio of its coefficient to its standard error is -1.53, compared to a t-ratio of -1.93 for education from Model 1 in Table 5.

Therefore, the difference between the relationships between education and the two dependent variables is relatively modest.

The second model introduces information about victimization and fear of crime. Having been a victim of a crime is not statistically significantly related with Support for Formal Punishment, consistent with the findings for Model 2 in Table 5. In contrast to the findings for Support for Informal Punishment, however, generalized fear of crime is positively and significantly related to Support for Formal Punishment. Age and political position keep their sign and their statistical significance in Model 2 of Table 6. The stability of those coefficients after controlling for fear of crime suggests that age and political position are not related to support for punitive policies because of greater fear of crime among older, and more conservative respondents.

Finally, Model 3 in Table 6 includes perceptions of the justice system. Consistent with the evidence reported in Model 3 of Table 5, legitimacy of the police is positively related with Support for Formal Punishment and perception of effectiveness of the criminal justice system is not statistically significant. The effect of the other statistically significant covariates from Model 2 in Table 6 (i.e., Age, Fear of Crime, and Political Position) are reduced modestly after the inclusion of the legitimacy of the police variable.

In summary the findings from the regression analysis indicate that support for punitive policies is greater among respondents who are older and hold more conservative political views. There is no evidence to suggest that the differentials in support by age or political orientation are due to previous experiences of victimization, greater fear of crime, or perceived effectiveness of the formal criminal justice system. However, it is possible that those two sociodemographic differentials are partially explained by a higher perceived legitimacy of the police.

Regarding goodness of model fit reported in Table 6, the predictors in Model 1 explain a modest amount of the variance in Support for Formal Punishment ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = .151$). The next subsequent models show minor improvements in explained variance ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = .159$ in Model 2, and $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .199$ in Model 3).

In both cases (Support for Informal Punishment and Support for Formal Punishment), respondents that are older, politically conservative and report higher legitimacy of the police,

manifest higher support for those practices. The main differences between the two sets of findings are: 1) having a college degree has a negative relationship with support for mob violence but does not have a significant relationship with support for punitive policies. Again, however, the negative influence of having a college education on the two dependent variables is quite modest, falling just short of statistical significance in Table 6. And 2) reporting higher fear of crime has a positive relationship with support for punitive policies but does not have a significant relationship with support for mob violence.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the sociodemographic differentials in punitive attitudes, using a sample from the city of Santiago, Chile. Using an ordinary least squares estimation, I explore variation in the attitudes of social groups on both punitive formal punishment, and informal punishment.

The results of the regression analysis of Support for Informal Punishment indicate that support for these practices is greater among respondents who are older, less educated, and hold more conservative political views. There is no evidence to suggest that the differentials in support by age, education, or political orientation are due to previous experiences of victimization, greater fear of crime, perceived legitimacy of the police, or perceived effectiveness of the formal criminal justice system.

The results of the regression analysis of Support for Formal Punishment indicate that support for punitive policies is greater among respondents who are older and hold more conservative political views. There is no evidence to suggest that the differentials in support by age or political orientation are due to previous experiences of victimization, greater fear of crime, or perceived effectiveness of the formal criminal justice system. However, it is possible that those sociodemographic differentials in support are partially explained by a higher perceived legitimacy of the police among older respondents and those on the political right.

By comparing both sets of results, we can see that respondents who are older, more conservative and report higher legitimacy of the police, manifest higher support for both of those practices. The main differences between the two analyses are: 1) having a college degree has a negative relationship with support for mob violence but does not have a significant relationship with support for punitive policies. And 2) reporting higher fear of crime has a positive relationship with support for punitive policies but does not have a significant relationship with support for mob violence. And, for the sample used for this study, the experiences of victimization and fear of crime do not explain the levels of punitive attitudes among the respondents.

Political position emerges as the socio-demographic variable with the most robust relationship with both dependent variables. Respondents identified with the left wing consistently report lower support for punitive practices, both formal and informal. In both cases and across the six models, the coefficient for political position is statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level. And, this strong relationship is net of all other predictor variables in the models. This finding is consistent with previous international evidence that also reports stronger punitive attitudes among conservatives. However, given that this is not a representative sample, this information needs to be examined further in future research.

The other variable that systematically showed a relationship with punitive attitudes was age. Although we cannot jump to any conclusions, these results open questions about possible cohort effects. In other words, it would be interesting to explore if younger generations are pushing towards a less punitive society. That wouldn't be surprising in Chile, given that people younger than 30 years of age are the only age group that didn't live under the dictatorial regime. It is possible that younger generations have less tolerance for physical punishments. Alternatively, the results for the age variable could reflect a traditional "age effect" in which younger people start out with less support for formal and informal punishment but grow more supportive as they grow older. Adjudicating between these two interpretations for the effect of age on punitive attitudes will require additional research, with longitudinal data.

It seems that the main surprise of the study is the result for perceived legitimacy of the police. A full interpretation of this positive relationship between legitimacy of the police and support for mob violence is beyond the scope of this study, but this result raises interesting questions for future research. For example, a relevant question is: In the Neoliberal state, does the government no longer enjoy a monopoly on the use of physical force for social control? One of the key ideas of the modern state is the monopoly of the use of the force. From that perspective, one expects a negative relationship between support for extra-legal punishment and legitimacy of the police that previous evidence has shown. However, since the 1980s, Chile has experienced an extreme neoliberalization of its political/economical system, which includes the privatization of the mechanisms designed to provide security. At least since the early 1990s, the Chilean government has increasingly included private sectors in spheres that were traditionally public. This has happened mostly by creating new markets

and by social policies and political rhetoric. If, for almost three decades, the government has openly called on the community to join in the fight against delinquency, it would not be surprising that people who legitimize the police, also support informal practices. In the Chilean neoliberal state, formal and informal methods of exercising social control might be viewed as complementary rather than contradictory.

This study has at least four limitations worth noting. First, as mentioned above, the sample is not representative, therefore we cannot draw any conclusions about a larger population. Second, the data are cross-sectional, meaning that we are not able to make predictions of changes over time, and makes interpretation of the age effect difficult. Third, the variable effectiveness of the criminal justice system had a low Cronbach's Alpha, and consisted of only two items. Finally, given that I used ordinary least-square methods, I'm not making strong causal claims. Instead, I am documenting relationships and associations that are useful for guiding future research.

Despite these limitations, the results of this study provide an initial indication of the sociodemographic gradients in support for both formal and informal punishment in Chile. In addition, the multivariate analyses suggest that the significant differentials observed (i.e., by age, political orientation, and education) must be explained by mechanisms other than those represented by the mediator variables included in the analytic models. These findings help to provide a roadmap for the future study of support for formal and informal punishment in Chile, and beyond.

6. Bibliography

- Adriaenssen, A., & Aertsen, I. (2015). Punitive attitudes: Towards an operationalization to measure individual punitivity in a multidimensional way. *European Journal of Criminology*, 12(1), 92–112. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370814535376>
- Alvarado-Mendoza, C. A. 2007. Ausencia del estado y violencia colectiva en tierras mayas: una aproximación cuantitativa al fenómeno de los linchamientos en Guatemala (1996-2002). FLACSO Guatemala.
- Applegate BK, Cullen FT and Fisher BS (2002) Public views toward crime and correctional policies: Is there a gender gap? *Journal of Criminal Justice* 30: 89–100.
- Baron, S.W. and T.F. Hartnagel (1996) “Lock ‘em up”: Attitudes toward punishing juvenile offenders’, *Canadian Journal of Criminology* 38(2): 191–212.
- Beckett, K., & Godoy, A. (2008). Power, politics, and penalty: Punitiveness as backlash in American democracies. In *Studies in Law, Politics and Society* (pp. 139-173). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Beckett, Katherine, and Theodore Sasson. 2004. *The Politics of Injustice: Crime and Punishment in America*, 2nd ed. London, U.K.: Sage.
- Beckett, Katherine. 1997. *Making Crime Pay*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Black, D. (1976). *The Behavior of Law*. London, U.K.: Academic Press.
- Bravo, D. & Ordenes, C. (2016). Percepción del Servicio de la Defensoría Penal Pública. Centro UC Encuestas y Estudios Longitudinales. Extracted in March, 2017 from: <http://www.encuestas.uc.cl/Documentos/Publicos/Archivos/InformeDPP.pdf>
- Brodeur, J. (2010). *The policing web*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199740598.001.0001
- Caldeira, Teresa Pires do Rio. 2000. *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*. University of California Press.

- Cohen, M. J., Lupu, N., & Zechmeister, E. J. (Eds.). (2017). *The Political Culture of Democracy in the Americas, 2016/17: A Comparative Study of Democracy and Governance*. LAPOP, Vanderbilt University.
- Cullen, F. T., Clark, G., & Wozniak, J. (1985). Explaining the get-tough movement: Can the public be blamed? *Federal Probation*, 49, 16–24.
- Currie, E. 1998. *Crime and Punishment in America*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Dammert, L. & Malone, M. 2003. “Fear of Crime or Fear of Life? Public Insecurities in Chile.” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 22 (1): 79–101.
- Dowler, K. (2003). Media consumption and public attitudes toward crime and justice: The relationship between fear of crime, punitive attitudes, and perceived police effectiveness. *Journal of criminal justice and popular culture*, 10(2), 109-126.
- Flanagan, Timothy J., Edmund F. McGarrell and Edward J. Brown (1985) ‘Public perceptions and criminal courts: The role of demographic and related attitudinal data’, *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 22(1): 66–82.
- Frühling, H. Hugo, Joseph S. Tulchin, and Heather Golding, eds. 2003. *Crime and Violence in Latin America: Citizen Security, Democracy, and the State*. Woodrow Wilson Center Press.
- Garland, David. 2001. *The Culture of Control*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Godoy, A. S. (2006). *Popular injustice: violence, community, and law in Latin America*. Stanford University Press
- Goldstein, D. M. 2012. *Outlawed: between security and rights in a Bolivian city*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Goldstein, Daniel M. 2008. Flexible justice: Neoliberal violence and “self-help” security in Bolivia. In *Global Vigilantes*, eds. David Pratten and Atreyee Sen. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Gray, E., Jackson, J., & Farrall, S. (2011). Feelings and functions in the fear of crime: Applying a new approach to victimization insecurity. *British Journal of Criminology*, 51(1), 75–94. doi:10.1093/bjc/azq066

- Haas, N. E., de Keijser, J. W., & Bruinsma, G. J. (2014). Public support for vigilantism, confidence in police and police responsiveness. *Policing and society*, 24(2), 224-241.
- Holland, Alisha C. 2013. Right on crime? Conservative party politics and *mano dura* policies in El Salvador. *Latin American Research Review* 48:44–67.
- Hough, Michael and David Moxon (1985) ‘Dealing with offenders: Popular opinion and the views of victims, from the British Crime Survey’, *Howard Journal* 24(3): 160–75.
- Jackson, Jonathan, Aziz Z. Huq, Ben Bradford, and Tom R. Tyler. 2013. Monopolizing force? Police legitimacy and public attitudes toward the acceptability of violence. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law* 19:479–97.
- Jaitman, Laura. 2017. *The Costs of Crime and Violence: New Evidence and Insights in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Development Bank. <https://publications.iadb.org/bitstream/handle/11319/8133/The-Costs-of-Crime-and-Violence-New-Evidence-and-Insights-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y>.
- King A and Maruna S (2009) Is a conservative just a liberal who has been mugged? Exploring the origins of punitive views. *Punishment & Society* 11: 147–169.
- Langworthy RH and Whitehead JT (1986) Liberalism and fear as explanations of punitiveness. *Criminology* 24(3): 575–591.
- Loader, I., & Mulcahy, A. (2003). *Policing and the condition of England: Memory, politics, and culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198299066.001.0001
- Malone, M. 2013. “Does Crime Undermine Public Support for Democracy? Findings from the Case of Mexico.” *The Latin Americanist* 57 (2): 17–44.
- Meier, R. F., & Geis, G. (1997). *Victimless crime? Prostitution, drugs, homosexuality, and abortion*. Los Angeles: Roxbury.
- Nivette, A. E. (2016). Institutional ineffectiveness, illegitimacy, and public support for vigilantism in Latin America. *Criminology*, 54(1), 142-175.

- Payne BK, Gainey RR, Triplett RA and Danner MJE (2004) What drives punitive beliefs? Demographic characteristics and justifications for sentencing. *Journal of Criminal Justice* 32: 195–206.
- Pérez, Orlando. 2003. “Democratic Legitimacy and Public Insecurity: Crime and Democracy in El Salvador and Guatemala” *Political Science Quarterly* 118 (4): 627–644.
- Ramirez MD (2013) Punitive sentiment. *Criminology* 51(2): 329–364.
- Roberts JV and Hough M (2005) *Understanding Public Attitudes to Criminal Justice*. Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Roberts JV, Stalans LJ, Indemauro D and Hough M (2003) *Penal Populism and Public Opinion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Roberts, Julian (2002) ‘Public opinion and the nature of community penalties: International findings’, in J. Roberts and M. Hough (eds) *Changing attitudes to punishment: Public opinion, crime and justice*, pp. 33–62. Cullompton: Willan.
- Roberts JV and Stalans LJ (2000) *Public Opinion, Crime, and Criminal Justice*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Rossi, P., & Berk, R. (1997). *Just punishments: Federal guidelines and public views compared*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Senechal de la Roche, R. (2001). “Why is Collective Violence Collective?” *Sociological Theory* 19 (2): 126–144.
- Senechal de la Roche, R. (1996). Collective violence as social control. *Sociological Forum* 11:97–128.
- Shader, Michael. 2004. “Risk Factors for Delinquency: An Overview.” Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. US Dept of Justice. United States of America. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/frd030127.pdf>
- Silke, A. 2001. “Dealing with Vigilantism: Issues and Lessons for the Police.” *Police Journal* 74: 120.

- Stinchcombe, Arthur, Rebecca Adams, Carol Heimer, Kim Lane, Tom Smith, and D. Garth Taylor. 1980. *Crime and Punishment: Changing American Attitudes*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Tankebe, J., & Asif, M. (2016). Police legitimacy and support for vigilante violence in Pakistan. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 40(4), 343-362.
- Tankebe, Justice. 2009. Self-help, policing, and procedural justice: Ghanaian vigilantism and the rule of law. *Law & Society Review* 43:245–70.
- Tolnay, Stewart E., and E. M. Beck. 1995. *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882–1930*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Tufts, J. and J.V. Roberts (2002) ‘Sentencing juvenile offenders: Comparing public preferences and judicial practice’, *Criminal Justice Policy Review* 13(1): 46–64.
- Tyler TR and Boeckmann RJ (1997) Three strikes and you are out, but why? The psychology of public support for punishing rule breakers. *Law & Society Review* 31(2): 237–265.
- UNDP. 2013. *Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and Proposals for Latin America*. New York: UNDP.
- Unnever, James D., and Francis T. Cullen. 2007. The racial divide in support for the death penalty: Does white racism matter? *Social Forces* 85:1281–301.
- Walker, N., Hough, M. & Lewis, H. (1988). ‘Tolerance of leniency and severity in England and Wales’, in N. Walker and M. Hough (eds) *Public attitudes to sentencing: Surveys from five countries*, pp. 178–202. Brookfield: Avebury Publishing Co.
- Zechmeister, E. J. (Ed.). (2014). *The political culture of democracy in the Americas, 2014: democratic governance across 10 years of the AmericasBarometer*. LAPOP/Vanderbilt University.
- Ziegenhagan, E. A., & Brosnan, D. (1991). Citizen orientations toward state and non-state policing. *Law & Policy*, 13, 245–257. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9930.1991.tb00069.x

Zizumbo-Colunga, Daniel. 2010. "Explaining Support for Vigilante Justice in Mexico." AmericasBarometer Insight Series No. 39. Vanderbilt University: Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/I0839en.pdf>