

**Reformulating and Reassessing Solidarity's Downstream Effects:
New Panel Evidence on People of Color During the 2024 Presidential Campaign**

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Mounting evidence shows that shared identity between people of color (PoC) heightens inter-minority solidarity, which then yields downstream support for pro-PoC policies. Previous experiments detect this mediation pattern in cross-sectional samples, complicating inferences about solidarity's effects, especially in real-life politics. We reformulate solidarity as a developmental process and reassess its influence longitudinally. Leveraging a unique three-wave panel of Asian, Black, Latino, and Multiracial adults during the 2024 U.S. presidential campaign ($N = 3,402$), we find that across groups, shared PoC identity (Wave 1) significantly increased inter-minority solidarity (Wave 2), which then boosted support for pro-Black and pro-Latino policies – but not pro-Asian policy (Wave 3). This pathway is robust to major confounding threats. We also unearth new evidence of bi-directional effects, where solidarity (Wave 2) mediates the influence of prior support for pro-PoC policies (Wave 1) on future levels of PoC identity (Wave 3), thus further clarifying solidarity's dynamic nature.

At this very moment, the proportion of people of color (PoC) in the U.S. population is nearing 40% (Pérez, 2021). As our nation racially diversifies, new research explains *when* and *why* Asian, Black, Latino, Multiracial and other PoC express unified political views (e.g., Chan & Jasso, 2023; Chin et al., 2022; Craig et al., 2022; Sirin et al. 2021; Merseth, 2018). This is a pressing topic because more than thirty years of political science research shows that the modal outcome in inter-minority politics is one of conflict rather than cooperation (McClain & Karnig, 1990; McClain et al., 2011; Wilkinson, 2015; Benjamin, 2017). Against this backdrop, psychological scientists are converging on a framework where common identification as people of color (i.e., PoC ID) catalyzes solidarity between them, which then produces favorable attitudes toward other racially stigmatized groups (e.g., Zou & Ngum, 2025; Cortland et al., 2017; Craig & Richeson 2012,; see Pérez et al., 2024b for meta-analysis).

While the evidence for this pattern is extensive, the inference that PoC solidarity is a causal mechanism remains open to vigorous debate. This challenge arises from two quarters. First, in most published experiments, PoC solidarity is measured, not manipulated (e.g., Pérez et al., 2023; Pérez et al., 2024a), which opens the door to confounding in the downstream path linking solidarity to politics (Imai & Yamamoto, 2013). While a limited set of studies use design-based interventions where solidarity or its downstream impacts are manipulated (Rogbeer et al., 2025; Craig et al., 2022), these studies still occur under tightly controlled settings, leaving open the question of whether solidarity's effects arise in real-life politics (Stanley & Campbell, 1963).

Second, prior solidarity experiments are cross-sectional, appraising this mechanism's effects synchronously. Some of these studies bolster support for solidarity's impacts via sensitivity analyses (Pérez et al., 2024b) but cannot rule out bi-directional relations from policy support to solidarity. Moreover, if taken at face value, the cross-sectional findings from these studies imply that solidarity's political impacts occur instantaneously, which overlooks the possibility that, under some circumstances (e.g., electoral campaigns), this mechanism unfolds gradually and incrementally over time across individuals (Cole & Maxwell, 2003).

We break through these impasses by extending prior solidarity work in new theoretical and methodological ways. First, we reformulate solidarity as a developmental process (Little, 2024) that is responsive to dynamic features in mass politics, such as electoral campaigns (Hewitt et al., 2024; Blumenau & Lauderdale, 2024; Sides et al., 2022; Jacobson, 2015; Vavreck, 2009). We see this prospect as complementing, not supplanting, the current view of solidarity as instantaneously affecting PoC politics, since it implies that this mechanism may require, under some conditions, longer stretches of time to fully mature and manifest politically at scale.

Second, although published experiments on solidarity's effects display high internal validity, they also possess lower external validity (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). We believe this research can benefit from well-designed, non-experimental studies that improve prior work's *mundane realism* (i.e., reflects real-world situations) and *psychological realism* (i.e., prompts natural, spontaneous reactions) (Aronson et al., 1998), but without fully compromising causal inferences. Prior experiments yield their

evidence by exercising full control over stimuli among captive audiences, yet political psychologists teach us that most U.S. adults are generally disinterested, unaware, and disengaged from mass politics *despite* campaign efforts to flood them with information (Converse, 1964; Zaller, 1992; Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996). Thus, detecting solidarity's effects in electoral settings can strengthen current evidence by showing that its effects are also reliably catalyzed in the rough-and-tumble world of mass politics.

We address these blind spots with the American Multiracial Panel Study (AMPS), which contains extensive measures of PoC identity and solidarity (3 items per concept), indicators of three pro-PoC policies (affirmative action, undocumented immigration, and high-skill immigration), a structure overlapping the 2024 presidential campaign (3 waves), coverage of multiple populations of color (Black, Asian, Latino, and Multiracial adults), and a large sample size (N=3,402). We use structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate solidarity's mediating effects, test for bi-directional relations, and rule out major threats to confounding (e.g., time-invariant heterogeneity).

We yield three new results for this literature. First, consistent with prior work, we find that higher PoC identity levels (Wave 1) predicted elevated solidarity levels (Wave 2), which then increased support for pro-PoC policies (Wave 3) in the realms of affirmative action and unauthorized immigration, but not high-skill immigration. Second, we establish this pattern's robustness to time-invariant confounders (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, partisanship) and prior levels of each variable in this temporal chain. Together, these patterns illustrate solidarity's political effects in a high-stakes electoral context. Finally, we uncover meaningful evidence of bi-directional relations from prior

support for pro-PoC policies (Wave 1), to PoC solidarity (Wave 2), to downstream PoC identity levels (Wave 3). This new insight enhances our conceptual understanding of solidarity as a dynamic political variable. We end by discussing our results' implications for theory and methods in studies of U.S. people of color and their politics.

Solidarity's Effects as Instantaneous and Causal

Current research appraises solidarity's downstream effects via cross-sectional experiments. Their results imply that the link between PoC identity and pro-PoC policies *through* solidarity emerges instantly. We reason that solidarity's immediate effects are plausible, but not exclusive of other pathways with different temporal rhythms. Since all three variables in this mediation chain are tested simultaneously, solidarity's rapid effects might be a function of measuring everything at once, making it unclear whether these emerge in settings where people are not captive to political information. Indeed, as Converse (1964) and others (Zaller, 1992) teach us, most Americans are highly inattentive to politics on average, as reflected in their thin knowledge about public affairs (Luskin & Bullock, 2011) and anemic voter turnout (Hill, 2006; Franklin, 2004). In fact, our contemporary media ecology is flush with consumer options, leading most people to simply tune out explicit political content (Prior, 2007; Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013; Velez & Newman, 2019). Thus, participants' high degree of engagement in solidarity experiments might reflect an uncommon political scenario.

Another challenge in cross-sectional studies of solidarity involves the causal inferences drawn from them. The typical study manipulates PoC identity via shared discrimination (Pérez et al., 2023), but measures solidarity and its downstream impact

on pro-PoC policies. This design makes it difficult to infer solidarity's causal nature due to possible unobserved confounding in the downstream path linking solidarity to policy support. Here, an unmeasured "third variable" could wreck the relation between solidarity and political outcomes observed in prior work. Some studies cast doubt on confounding by adjusting mediation estimates for key covariates (Pérez et al., 2024b), while others use design-based interventions to mitigate it (Cortland et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2025). Still, these cross-sectional studies cannot rule out whether baseline differences in these variables upend causal inferences about solidarity (Georgeson et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the mediation chain from PoC identity to policy support *through* solidarity might, in fact, also run in reverse from policy support to PoC identity via solidarity. Although some PoC are densely concentrated in major U.S. cities, many of these populations are also regionally rooted and segregated from each other (e.g., ethnic enclaves) (e.g., de la Garza & DeSipio, 1992; Dawson, 1994; Wong et al., 2008; Abrajano & Alvarez, 2010). This spatial isolation works against the development of a superordinate identity as *people of color* (Pérez, 2021), with non-Whites incentivized to compare themselves to each other (Zou & Cheryan, 2017), triggering inter-minority competitions for status and resources instead of articulating shared grievances (Craig & Richeson, 2018; McClain & Karnig, 1990). Thus, it is plausible that PoC identity is not only an initial "mover" in solidarity-based mobilization, but also an outcome of it (e.g., Doosje et al., 2002). Here, the process starts with support for pro-PoC policies, as political elites thread these issues into bundles requiring coordination via inter-minority coalitions (Krochmal & Moye, 2021; Benjamin, 2017), which heighten solidarity. These

elevated solidarity levels then promote the development of stronger PoC identity levels. Current studies cannot speak to this additional pathway.

It's About Time: Toward a Developmental View of PoC Solidarity in Politics

Our discussion reveals several tensions regarding the interpretation of solidarity's established downstream effects. We alleviate these concerns by formulating a developmental view of solidarity's effects, where solidarity's operation evolves across time in real-life politics. We hoist this framework onto three insights that have been overlooked or under-emphasized in the literature on inter-minority politics.

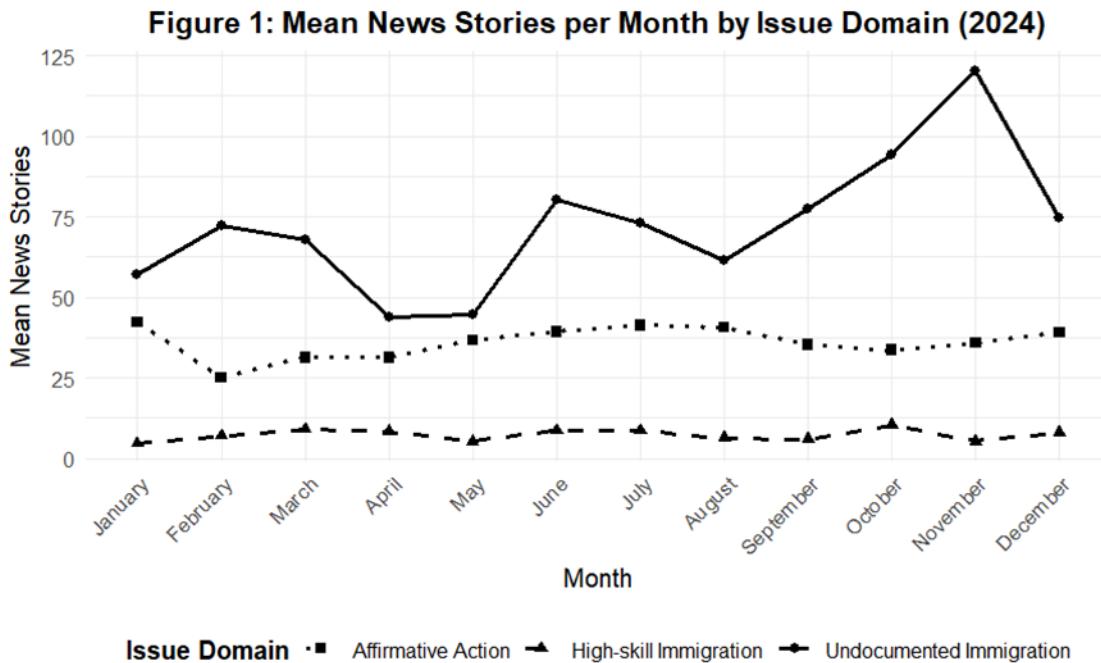
First, published research indicates that each of these variables is relatively stable and slow to change (Engelhardt et al., 2025). With test-retest correlations between .60 (PoC solidarity) and .73 (PoC identity), these constructs are deep wellsprings of intragroup coordination that PoC have gradually accumulated through inter-minority coalitions and other political activities (Krochmal & Moye, 2021). Thus, energizing these concepts requires priming them (since they are well-rooted in PoC's minds), rather than "teaching" them to PoC from scratch (Tesler, 2015). The former process means that stretching out assessments of identity-solidarity relations can provide a clearer view of how the link(s) between these constructs unfold dynamically over time in real-life politics. Thus, our first hypothesis is that over time, elevated PoC identity will boost expressions of PoC solidarity (H1a). Furthermore, we test whether solidarity's effects also loop back to PoC identity levels (H1b), a bi-directional effect suggesting that ingroup solidarity further crystallizes ingroup identity (cf. Doosje et al., 2002; Branscombe et al., 1999).

Second, research shows that PoC solidarity is responsive to politics in municipal (Benjamin, 2017), state (Krochmal & Moye, 2021; Wilkinson, 2015), and national settings (Rogbeer & Pérez, 2025). For instance, recent work (Engelhardt et al., 2025b) establishes that Democratic coalition-building in presidential elections galvanizes most (but not all) people of color into this party's fold. Accordingly, past solidarity levels reliably predict future levels of Democratic identity among Asian, Black, Latino, and Multiracial adults – a remarkable pattern given partisanship's high stability (Green et al., 2002). These insights suggest PoC solidarity might also have downstream impacts on other political outcomes, like issue preferences in domains implicating specific PoC, such as affirmative action (i.e., African Americans), high-skill immigration (i.e., Asian Americans), and undocumented immigration (i.e., Latinos) (Pérez, 2021). Therefore, we hypothesize that elevated solidarity levels will reliably increase downstream support for policies associated with specific PoC populations (H2a).

Moreover, research on solidarity's effects on political outcomes finds that once Democratic self-identification grows among PoC, this effect is then partly incorporated into stronger solidarity levels among Asian, Black, Latino, and Multiracial adults. Hence, we also hypothesize that greater support for pro-PoC policies might loop back to shape PoC solidarity (H2b). Here, issue preferences in pro-PoC domains are the initial “glue” and catalyst behind solidarity, which then (further) develops into a stronger sense of PoC identity – a plausible but untested prospect (Pérez, 2021).

Finally, prior research documents extensive variability in issue salience across mass publics (e.g., Lenz, 2012; Baumgartner & Jones, 2009; Vavreck, 2009), which arises

endogenously from elite debates over what issues to compete over, often through campaign news coverage and other discourse (Egan, 2013; Chong & Druckman, 2010; Sniderman & Theriault, 2004). Issues that news media regularly cover become a higher priority in the mass public (i.e., *agenda-setting*). Such organic variation in agenda-setting means that some political issues will be more “top-of-mind” for people than other issues (Krosnick & Kinder, 1990; Zaller, 1992), leading them to integrate what they know about them into their judgments of relevant policy proposals. Among PoC, the increased salience of some policy domains over others should convey the importance of those issues, serving as a focal point for PoC to coordinate politically (Pérez, 2021).



Consider figure 1, which tracks the average number of news stories on three issue domains theorized to be associated with PoC, i.e., affirmative action (African Americans), high-skill immigration (Asian Americans), and Latinos (undocumented

immigration) (Pérez, 2021). These data are from the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*, spanning January through December 2024. The figure reveals that undocumented immigration and affirmative action received far more voluminous coverage than high-skill immigration during this electoral cycle. Our last hypothesis, then, is that solidarity's effects will emerge most coherently on issues with sharper temporal salience (H3). For convenience, table 1 summarizes all our predictions.

| TABLE 1. Hypotheses About PoC Solidarity's Dynamics | |
|---|--|
| (H1a) | Across time, elevated PoC identity will boost expressions of PoC solidarity (<i>unidirectional relationship</i>). |
| (H1b) | Across time, solidarity's effects feed forward to increase PoC identity levels (<i>bi-directional relationship</i>). |
| (H2a) | Over time, elevated solidarity levels will increase downstream support for pro-PoC policies (<i>unidirectional relationship</i>) |
| (H2b) | Over time, greater support for pro-PoC policies feeds forward to increase PoC solidarity (<i>bi-directional relationship</i>) |
| (H3) | Solidarity's effects will emerge most coherently on more salient issues |

Data

We test our hypotheses with three waves of survey data (N = 3,402) from the 2023-2024 American Multiracial Panel Study (AMPS), comprised of Black, Asian, Latino, and Multiracial adults. We gathered these data in June 2023 (Wave 1), December 2023 (Wave 2), and August 2024 (Wave 3). This was accomplished jointly with YouGov, a leading survey firm that uses propensity score matching to build nationally representative samples of target populations from its extensive U.S. respondent panel.

These samples closely resemble target population(s) on key census metrics, making them higher quality than most opt-in online surveys (Ansolabehere & Schaffner, 2017).

YouGov fielded Wave 1 of the AMPS between June 10 – 21, 2023, generating large sub-samples of Black ($n = 985$), Asian ($n = 678$), Latino ($n = 975$), and Multiracial adults ($n = 764$), for a total sample of $N = 3,402$. Each sub-sample is generally powered at 80% to detect a small effect (Cohen's $f^2 = .02$) in a model with three predictors and lags of those variables. For theoretical reasons we explain below, we analyze the total pooled sample, which helps preserve statistical power in light of some attrition. For Wave 2, YouGov reached 52-70% of wave 1 completes, yielding smaller but still informative Wave 2 sub-samples, which were collected between November 17 and December 12, 2023 (African Americans $n = 514$, Asian Americans $n = 474$, Latinos $n = 562$, Multiracials $n = 476$). YouGov then gathered Wave 3 data between July and August 2024, generating slightly smaller, but still statistically useful sub-sample sizes (African Americans $n = 302$, Asian Americans $n = 345$, Latinos $n = 368$, Multiracials $n = 364$). Across all three waves, respondents had a mean age of 51 years old, 56% were female, and 39% possessed at least a bachelor's degree or more. Also, 16% and 36% of the sample consisted of second generation and third-generation immigrants, respectively. Our gathering of these data complied with APA ethical standards for human subjects.

Prior work finds that the subgroups in the mega-category, *people of color*, generally operate in a coherent and uniform way in terms of psychological processes and political outputs (Engelhardt et al. 2025; Pérez et al. 2024b). Previous work also establishes the measurement equivalence of the items we use to operationalize our main

constructs, PoC identity and solidarity (Pérez et al., 2025). Based on these insights, we estimate our models in a pooled sample (N=3,402), which has the added virtue of optimizing statistical power to uncover even small effects as described above.

There are three primary variables in our modelling framework: PoC identity, PoC solidarity, and support for pro-PoC policies in the realms of affirmative action, unauthorized immigration, and high-skill immigration. We operationalize PoC identity with three previously validated statements completed on a scale from 1-strongly agree to 5-strongly disagree to complete items like (Pérez et al., 2024). A sample item from this brief battery includes “Being a person of color is an important part of how I see myself.” We recode these items and combine them into an averaged scale where higher values reflect stronger PoC identity ($\alpha_{w1} = .892$, $M_{w1} = 3.400$, $SD_{w1} = 1.235$).

Using the same response options, respondents also completed three previously validated items capturing solidarity (Pérez et al., 2024). This short battery contains items such as “The problems of Black, Latino, Asian, and other people of color are similar enough for them to be allies.” We combine all three solidarity items into an averaged index ($\alpha_{w1} = .807$) from 1 – 5, with higher values indicating more solidarity ($M_{w1} = 3.423$, $SD_{w1} = 1.025$).

In turn, we operationalize support for affirmative action with one item answered on the same response scale, which read: “Allowing admissions officers to consider an applicant’s race or ethnicity, alongside factors such as an applicant’s high school grades, standardized test scores, and letters of recommendation, when evaluating students for

admission into a college or university?" We code replies so that higher values reflect stronger support for this policy measure ($M_{w1} = 2.919$, $SD_{w1} = 1.433$).

We tap policy opinions toward unauthorized immigration with a single item answered on the same scale: "Renewing temporary relief from deportation for undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as children?" We recode replies to a 1-5 range so that higher values mean greater support for this policy toward undocumented immigrants ($M_{w1} = 3.497$, $SD_{w1} = 1.355$). In turn, we measure support for high-skill immigration with two items on the same 5-point scale. The first one is a generic statement about legal immigration, which prior work finds taps into support for high-skill immigration from Asian countries (Pérez, 2021): "Expanding the number of visas available to legal immigrants who wish to enter the United States?" The second item specifically asks about "Increasing the number of H1-B visas to allow U.S. companies to hire people to work in highly skilled occupations, such as engineering, computer programming, and high-technology?" (Malhotra et al., 2012). We average these items ($r = .571$) to build another index where higher values reflect greater support for this policy domain ($M_{w1} = 3.566$, $SD_{w1} = 1.089$).

Research Design

With three waves of data, on four populations, and three issues with varying salience, we build a longitudinal structural equation model (SEM) that allows us to directly test the dynamics between PoC identity, PoC solidarity, and support for pro-PoC policy (Cole & Maxwell, 2003; Little, 2024). We use all available responses to our measures (i.e., no data exclusions) in a full information maximum likelihood

framework, which preserves cases and minimizes missingness (cf. Osborne & Sibley, 2020). Specifically, we estimate a three-wave model where single lags of each variable, at each measurement occasion, are included to account for the possible confounding effects of baseline levels of each construct (Georgeson et al., 2023; Rohrer & Murayama, 2023), which place causal inferences about a mediator on sturdier ground. These lags also reflect our theoretical view of this solidarity process as dynamic, where each variable (e.g., Policy support_t) is a function of its previous levels (e.g., Policy support_{t-1}) plus new information (i.e., PoC solidarity_t) (Keele & Kelly, 2005).

In addition, the panel structure of our model (i.e., following the same individuals over time) lessens concerns about the confounding effects of time-invariant covariates, that is, quantities that are very unlikely to change over time. This includes key demographics, namely, age, gender, education, nativity, and race/ethnicity of respondents. For example, if one is a foreign-born respondent at Wave 1, one will remain foreign-born in subsequent waves. We consider partisanship a time-invariant confounder as well, since prior work establishes this variable as having a high and enviable degree of stability (Green et al., 2002), including among people of color (Hopkins et al., 2023). Although we exclude these time-invariant covariates based on methodological principles, we still report more complex models with these covariates included. These less parsimonious models leave our main inferences unchanged, but their fit noticeably deteriorates, as one might expect.

The primary quantities in our panel analysis are the regression coefficients capturing the paths from PoC identity (Wave 1) to PoC solidarity (Wave 2) to support

for pro-PoC policy (Wave 3). Insofar as we find precisely estimated coefficients for each of these paths – independent of baseline levels and lags of these variables, plus time-invariant covariates – we will have evidence aligning with the view of PoC solidarity as a mediator of PoC ID’s influence on support for pro-PoC policies. We will then evaluate whether bi-directional mediation exists, from pro-PoC policy to PoC identity.

Results

We start with our analysis of a longitudinal model depicting support for affirmative action, a Black-coded policy domain (Pérez, 2021). Table 2 provides the fit statistics for this model, which indicate a strong fit to our data, with our CFI/TLI well above the .90 cutoff, an RMSEA in a desirable range (.05-.08), and an SRMR that falls under the .05 threshold. This degree of fit lets us interpret the relevant coefficients for this model with confidence.

We expect solidarity’s mediating effect to manifest via a reliable path from PoC identity (Wave 1) to PoC solidarity (Wave 2) to support for affirmative action (Wave 3), with positive coefficients capturing the two links between these patterns. The relevant quantities are displayed under the column labeled affirmative action, with shaded entries highlighting the results for our parsimonious model without covariates. These coefficients capture relationships that are independent of lags for each focal variable per wave, plus structural relationships between these variables and each other that do not involve our anticipated mediation path. Accordingly, we find that a 1-point increase in PoC identity (Wave 1) significantly boosts solidarity by .162 points (SE = .018, $p < .001$). In turn, we observe that solidarity (Wave 2) significantly increases downstream support

for affirmative action (Wave 3) by .143 points (SE = .020, $p < .001$). The joint effect of these two coefficients yields a reliable indirect effect from identity to policy support *through* solidarity (.026, SE = .004, $p < .001$), which supports our mediation hypotheses (H1a, H2a) in this policy domain.

Turning to the model depicting people of color's support for renewal of DACA, a flexible policy toward unauthorized (Latino) immigrants, we find another model with strong fit. This is evidenced by global fit indices well above .90 (CFI/TLI), a parsimony-based index in a highly desirable range (RMSEA $\leq .050$), and a relative absence of large model residuals (SRMR $\leq .050$). When we interpret this model's coefficients, we detect more evidence of solidarity's mediating effects. As expected, we find that a 1-point increase in PoC identity (Wave 1) elevates PoC solidarity levels (Wave 2) by .174 points (SE = .018, $p < .001$). In turn, we find that a 1-point increase in PoC solidarity (Wave 2) boosts downstream support for DACA by nearly one-tenth of a point (.070, SE = .019, $p < .001$). The indirect effect here is again positive and reliable (.014, SE = .004, $p < .001$).

These findings are consistent with expectations and align with the descriptive data on the salience of these two issues in mainstream news coverage (see figure 1). What happens when we examine the least salient issue of this policy trio, support for high-skill immigration, which implicates Asian Americans (Pérez, 2021)? Like our previous two models, we find one here with excellent fit, as our CFI/TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR all meet accepted thresholds for them. This pattern of fit increases confidence in the inferences we can draw about solidarity's impact on support for high-skill immigration. Accordingly, we find that an increase in PoC identity (Wave 1) produces a

reliable increase (.181, SE = .018, $p < .001$) in PoC solidarity (Wave 2), which aligns with (H2a). However, in contrast to the other two policy issues, heightened PoC solidarity (Wave 2) has a trivially small and unreliable downstream impact (-.006, SE = .019, $p < .763$) on support for high-skill immigration. This negative coefficient indicates that, if anything, higher PoC solidarity levels (Wave 2) produce a hair's breadth decrease in support for this policy domain. As methodologists note, even if only one of the coefficients in a mediation pathway is reliably different from zero, their joint effect can still be statistically significant (Hayes, 2022). In this case, though, the indirect effect is tiny, negative, and indistinguishable from zero (-.001, SE = .003, $p < .763$), suggesting that solidarity's downstream effects had no discernible influence on support for high-skill immigration, which is consistent with (H3).

Table 2. Solidarity Mediates the Effect of PoC Identity on Support for Pro-PoC Policies

| | Outcome | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Support affirmative action _{W3} | Support undocumented immigration _{W3} | Support high-skill immigration _{W3} | | | |
| PoC solidarity _{W2} → Outcome _{W3} | .143* (.020) | .168* (.030) | .070* (.019) | .053* (.021) | -.006 (.021) | -.017 (.020) |
| PoC identity _{W1} → PoC solidarity _{W2} | .162* (.018) | .144* (.016) | .174* (.018) | .192* (.018) | .181* (.018) | .191* (.018) |
| Indirect effect [90% CI] | .026 [.014, .039] | .024 [.011, .037] | .014 [.003, .024] | .012 [.006, .018] | -.001 [-.007, .005] | -.003 [-.010, .003] |
| CFI/TLI | .979/.947 | .906/.881 | .987/.967 | .867/.862 | .979/.951 | .862/.859 |
| RMSEA [90% CI] | .062 [.054, .070] | .061 [.057, .064] | .050 [.042, .058] | .064 [.061, .067] | .062 [.054, .069] | .065 [.062, .068] |
| SRMR | .045 | .065 | .033 | .069 | .038 | .067 |
| Demographic/political covariates | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |

Note: For all models, N = 3,402. Estimator = Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML). Standardized coefficients.

W₁ = Wave 1, W₂ = Wave 2, W₃ = Wave 3.

CFI = Comparative Fit Index. TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index. RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error. SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.

Covariates: age, college education, gender, race/ethnicity, immigrant generation, and partisanship.

*Significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed).

Robustness Test: Inclusion of Covariates for Respondent Heterogeneity

The previously discussed models are parsimonious insofar as they assume, based on published work, that 1) our measures of key variables mean the same thing to the same degree across respondents who are Black, Latino, Asian, or Multiracial (i.e., measurement equivalence); and 2) general uniformity in the underlying solidarity-based process under investigation (i.e., homogenous dynamics) (Engelhardt et al., 2025; Pérez et al., 2025). Still, some readers may wish to know how sensitive our inferences are to the inclusion of time-invariant covariates – i.e., demographic and political variables that are unlikely to change over time, but that are still likely correlated with each variable in our mediation chain. Table 2's non-shaded entries report the estimates from refreshed models that include the following covariates in each path in our mediation chain: age, gender, college education, generation-since-immigration, race/ethnicity, and partisanship.

Two patterns are worth highlighting. First, notice that across models, inclusion of these covariates generally deteriorates model fit, especially in terms of reduced CFI/TLIs below accepted levels and increases in model residuals (SRMRs) beyond conventional cutoffs ($>.05$). This is understandable since these quantities are time-invariant, which means that their inclusion adds little to the estimation of the proposed longitudinal process, except perhaps noise.

The second thing to note is that, even if we accept these more saturated models with mediocre fit and proceed to interpret the main coefficients in our mediation framework, we arrive at the same substantive inference. On more salient issues during

the 2024 presidential campaign (i.e., affirmative action, undocumented immigration), heightened PoC identity levels boost future PoC solidarity levels, which then increases future downstream support for these two policies. Again, we find null solidarity-based effects on the least salient issue of the three, i.e., support for high-skill immigration.

Evaluating Bi-Directional Relations Between Key Variables

So far, we have yielded evidence suggesting that on the more salient issues of affirmative action and unauthorized immigration, previous levels of PoC identity increase later support for each policy domain *through* PoC solidarity levels. But what about the reverse pattern – is there any evidence of PoC solidarity mediating an effect from policy support (Wave 1) to PoC identity (Wave 3)? Table 3 below suggests the answer is ‘yes.’ There we see the indirect effects for each possible reverse relationship from policy support (Wave 1) to PoC identity (Wave 3) via solidarity (Wave 2). These indirect effects are noticeably smaller than those reported in table 2, which reflect the more extensively studied pattern from PoC identity to support for pro-PoC policy *via* solidarity. Specifically, the indirect effect of affirmative action (Wave1) on PoC-identity (Wave 3) through solidarity (Wave 2) is .008 (see table 3), which is about two-thirds smaller than the indirect effect of PoC identity (Wave 1) on support for affirmative action (Wave 3) via solidarity (i.e., .026; see table 2). Similarly, while the indirect effect of support for DACA (Wave1) on PoC-identity (Wave 3) through solidarity (Wave 2) is .009 (see table 3), this estimate is roughly one-third smaller than the indirect effect of PoC identity (Wave 1) on support for DACA (Wave 3) via solidarity (i.e., .014; see table 2). Critically, the 90% confidence interval (CI) around each of these alternate indirect

effects excludes zero (see table 3), suggesting these patterns are viable. This means that on both salient issues where we found solidarity's anticipated mediated effect from PoC identity to policy support, there is some evidence that prior support for pro-PoC policies can also affect future PoC identity levels through solidarity, which raises interesting new theoretical questions, which we discuss below.

Table 3. Evaluating Bi-Directional Relations from Support for Pro-PoC Policy to PoC Identity Through PoC Solidarity (Indirect Effects)

| | Affirmative → PoC ID _{w3} Action _{w1} | Undocumented → PoC ID _{w3} Immigration _{w1} |
|--|--|--|
| Indirect Effect [90% CI] via Solidarity _{w2} | .008 [.005, .012] | .009 [.006, .014] |

Note: These indirect effects are independent of those reported in table 2.

Summary and Implications

What do our results teach us about the relations between PoC identity, PoC solidarity, and support for policies involving people of color? We see our findings as affirming and extending current knowledge in this research area. First, although prior evidence consistently finds that a heightened sense of solidarity is associated with support for pro-PoC policies, this evidence is derived primarily from controlled, online experiments. Our longitudinal results here suggest that solidarity's downstream effects also emerge in real-world political settings, across a longer time frame, and are robust to time-invariant confounders. In this way, we learn that solidarity, as a mechanism, has a developmental nature – one that unfolds and evolves over time, which adds a new perspective about this key variable's rhythm. One way to build on and extend these

findings is to 1) begin theorizing relevant time-*varying* forces that might affect this longitudinal process; and 2) start to consider alternate designs, using the same data, that can speak more directly to these time-varying factors. We see no easy answers here, but we think that the totality of the literature on PoC solidarity now teems with some prospects, including the specific pace of growth over time that these variables might take (Little, 2024).

Another lesson implied by our results concerns the role of issue salience in conditioning the positive indirect effects that PoC identity has on policy support *through* solidarity. We examined three policy domains that prior work establishes as being publicly associated with African Americans (affirmative action), Latinos (undocumented immigration), and Asian Americans (high-skill immigration). Our efforts found that, insofar as the year 2024 was concerned, the two former issues had outsized prominence in public discourse during that year's presidential campaign. This pattern aligns with our longitudinal results, where PoC solidarity played a mediating role in the realms of affirmative action and undocumented immigration, but not high-skill immigration. This discrepancy, we think, highlights how difficult it is to achieve political unity and action among people of color, since our anticipated effects emerged most coherently on the two issues that received voluminous and repeated attention in news coverage. This insight can be used to develop new experimental designs to evaluate how easily (or not) some policy issues become "PoC issues" for people of color, and what dosage of "priming" must occur and on what grounds for new "PoC issues" to galvanize members of this mega-group.

Finally, we note that while our paper evaluated the longitudinal dynamics behind PoC solidarity, we have not cornered the market of ideas on the relationship between time and this mechanism behind inter-minority politics. For example, although we found some evidence that solidarity can also channel the influence of previous policy support onto future levels of PoC identity, this evidence is novel and worthy of additional investigation because it is the first time it is reported. One direction here is to simply try to replicate this new pattern with other longitudinal designs. But beyond this methodological exercise, our evidence on this point also highlights a new theoretical possibility that merits additional investigation, we think. This particular result implies that the crystallization of a person of color identity can be influenced by the solidarity that is generated through one's mere support of policies that target various communities of color. This gives political candidates and their advisers the ability to harness solidarity by championing issues, *without* directly and explicitly calling on non-White individuals to political action based on their PoC identity. As the proportion of voters of color grows (Pérez, 2021), and many in the White majority continue engaging in reactionary and racist politics (Jardina, 2019; Knowles, Tropp, & Mogami, 2022), clearer answers to these unknowns assume a high degree of urgency.

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