

**Colorism and Classism Confounded:
Perceptions of Discrimination in Latin America**

Abstract

Historically, national narratives in many Latin American countries have acknowledged the presence of class disadvantage, but minimized the role of racial and skin color discrimination. Since the 1990s, however, social science research and social movements have increasingly highlighted the racial and skin color-based inequality within Latin America. Yet, much less is known about the degree to which people themselves distinguish between types of discrimination or attribute disadvantage to both class and color. This study draws on the social psychological concept of attributional ambiguity, which suggests that marginalized groups may have difficulty attributing the motivation behind the treatment they receive. I expand this concept by considering whether individuals experience dual discrimination, which is defined in this study as perceiving both color and class discrimination. Using the 2010 AmericasBarometer LAPOP survey data for eight Latin American countries, I find that color-based explanations have not replaced class-based explanations. Instead, both class and color appear to be part of schemas drawn upon by individuals to understand the unfavorable treatment they perceive—in line with scholarship showing both class disadvantage and color conjointly influence the stratification systems of Latin America.