The Rise of China in the West:

Chinese Influence in Latin America

Daniel A. Barquero

University of California, San Diego – Political Science Department

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Abstract

In December of 2001, China formally joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). This move was seen as expansionary and signaled China's intent to enter the global financial market in an unprecedented manner. Two decades on, and Chinese goods and products have made their way into American malls, supermarkets, and households. This trend is not just observed in the United States. Globally, countries have become more involved with China, both politically and financially, because of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Officially formed in 2013, the BRI has sought to link China with Europe, Asia, Africa, and the rest of the world through economic investment, infrastructure projects, and political bonds.[1] I seek to understand how the BRI has been received in Latin America through public opinion. I postulate the following research question: "how does an individual's perception of their personal economic situation impact their reception and trust in China and the BRI?" I find that over time, there has been a negative shift in sentiment across Latin American countries. Many countries begin with a high degree of trust in China, but over time, lose their faith. Not all states fit this pattern. Additionally, I find that the statistical methods employed by this study require further analysis and testing to solidify robustness and reject the null hypothesis.

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[1] McBride, James, Noah Berman, and Andrew Chatzky. "China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative." Council on Foreign Relations, February 2, 2023. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative.

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Introduction

Background:

Latin America has historically been a region of the world that has reacted to external political forces rather than proactively set a political agenda. Centuries of colonization and neocolonialism have turned Latin America into a region sought after for natural resources, agriculture, and mineral resources by global superpowers. Additionally, economic investment in the region by more powerful nations has long since existed. The United States, in a bid to encourage democratic transition following the Cold War in the 1980s, created the Washington Consensus as a doctrine to improve Latin American economic development.[2] The Washington Consensus, a set of ten policy recommendations aimed to use democratic transition as a means for economic growth, represented a modern example of economic hand-holding and oversight of Latin America into the end of the 20th century.[3] While the Washington Consensus exists now primarily in the recollections of political scholars and historians, the 21st century has not left Latin America without a hegemon looking to take over the role of economic overseer.

Moving into the 21st century, the People's Republic of China (PRC), a country once sealed off to international trade and investment, has revolutionized its foreign policy through a tactically astute plan called the Belt and Road Initiative. Introduced in 2013 by PRC president Xi Jinping, the Belt and Road Initiative's original purpose was to link China with Europe through physical infrastructure projects. These projects have ranged from highways and roads to dams

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[2] Archibong, Belinda, Brahima Sangafowa Coulibaly, and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. "How Have the Washington Consensus Reforms Affected Economic Performance in Sub-Saharan Africa?" Brookings, March 9, 2022. http://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-have-the-washington-consensus-reforms-affected-economic-performance-in-sub-saharan-africa/.

[3] Archibong, Belinda, Brahima Sangafowa Coulibaly, and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. "How Have the Washington Consensus Reforms Affected Economic Performance in Sub-Saharan Africa?" Brookings, March 9, 2022. http://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-have-the-washington-consensus-reforms-affected-economic-performance-in-sub-saharan-africa/.

and tunnels, thus leading to the coinage of the term "New-Age Silk Road". Moreover, while infrastructure projects remain a staple of the plan, Chinese firms have increasingly expanded their partnerships and investment into these regions newly under Chinese influence.[4] Upon the completion of the European-Asia link, the project has since spread to Africa, Oceania, and Latin America.

Latin America can best be described as an extension of the natural plan of the Belt and Road Initiative. This is because China's original outline for the plan did not include the Western Hemisphere. As Pepe Zhang of the Atlantic Council explains, the penetration of China's BRI into the Latin American sphere began with Panama's severance of political and economic ties with Taiwan in 2017. By 2019, eighteen of thirty-three countries in Latin America and the Caribbean officially signed on to the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative.[5] Even countries like Argentina and Brazil, two economic juggernauts of the region, have closely followed the ideals of the Belt and Road Initiative despite formally signing an agreement with the PRC.

The involvement of China in the Latin American political and economic theater comes from both inter-governmental relations and the private sector. From a purely political standpoint, much of the motivation behind the Chinese intervention has come to eradicate ties between China and Taiwan. For example, as an act of political ambivalence, the PRC spent over $100 million USD in 2011 to build a state-of-the-art soccer stadium for Costa Rica.[6] This came only after President Oscar Arias severed ties with Taiwan and signed an exclusive trade agreement

[4] McBride, James, Noah Berman, and Andrew Chatzky. "China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative." Council on Foreign Relations, February 2, 2023. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative.

[5] Zhang, Pepe. "Belt and Road in Latin America: A Regional Game Changer?" Atlantic Council, October 17, 2019. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/belt-and-road-in-latin-america-a-regional-game-changer/.

[6] Freedman, Seth. "Costa Rican Football Fans Celebrate Opening of Stadium Built by China." The Guardian, March 30, 2011. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/30/costa-rica-football-stadium-china.

with China to open political and economic channels between the two countries. This example highlights the "soft power" nature of the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative. Rather than focusing on military power, which it has magnitudes of, the PRC has elected to use diplomatic gifts, financial investments, and infrastructure projects to win over the support of Latin American governments and policymakers.

Equally as important to the success of the Belt and Road Initiative has been the role of the private sector. As of 2019, more than 850 private firms from 80 countries had signed on to the Belt and Road Initiative to make up the private sector component.[7] Much of the role of these firms is to provide the financial backing to the infrastructure projects undertaken by the Belt and Road Initiative. Sole government-government interactions alone would not produce the financial formidability necessary to ensure the success of the Belt and Road Initiative. It is also through these cooperating firms that the BRI trade system occurs. Latin American firms help produce the raw good exports to the Chinese market, while Chinese firms invest capital and technology to help develop the Latin American markets.[8] The link between the governmental and private sector parts of the BRI is what provides the strength for the program to function.

The political analysis of the Belt and Road Initiative has focused largely on the national-level, and transnational, implications. Much of the dialogue has focused on what policies the United States and Western Europe should take in response to China's investment. While this research is robust, it ignores the role that the individual plays in the efficacy of the BRI. In a place like Latin America, where slow-moving bureaucracies can stalwart investment strategies, winning over the hearts and minds of the citizenry is key to ensuring the survival of a program.

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[7] Zhang, Pepe. "Belt and Road in Latin America: A Regional Game Changer?" Atlantic Council, October 17, 2019. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/belt-and-road-in-latin-america-a-regional-game-changer/.
[8] Zhang, Pepe. "Belt and Road in Latin America: A Regional Game Changer?" Atlantic Council, October 17, 2019. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/belt-and-road-in-latin-america-a-regional-game-changer/.

The role of the individual, and the individual's role in shaping public opinion, requires further study. While there is existing literature on the effects of BRI investment, it is heavily divided. Certain camps have argued that this investment has improved the public's opinion of China, while others have argued that the predatory nature of the investment has only alienated the public from accepting China as a hegemon. This rich literature is what lies at the center of this research. However, before examining the literature surrounding China's investment in Latin America, an examination of the history of the United States' involvement in Latin America must be conducted.

This history must be understood because the United States served as the precursor to China in Latin America. Many of the concerns surrounding Chinese investment in Latin America are based on the actions and decisions taken by the United States over the course of the past centuries.

The History of the United States in Latin America

To properly understand the complexity of the relationship between China and Latin America, the relationship between the United States and Latin America merits scrutinization. As distinguished author David A. Lake explains in his book *Indirect Rule: The Making of US International Hierarchy,* the relationship between the United States and Latin America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries could best be described as imperialist.[9] U.S. involvement in Latin America, with its track record of political and economic repression, has served as an ominous precedent for what Chinese involvement in Latin America could bring in the future.

In official party announcements, president of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi Jinping, has insisted that China's Belt and Road Initiative is being strategized with the interests of all nations being weighed *equally.* Specifically, at the opening ceremony for The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in 2017, President Xi emphasized "peace and cooperation", "openness and inclusiveness", and "mutual learning and benefit" as the pillars upon which the Belt and Road Initiative rests.[10] Does this signal of intent deserve credence, or does the history of the United States' role in Latin America point to a troublesome relationship between China and Latin America? This chapter will focus on breaking down the United States' role in Latin America through political, economic, and militaristic lenses, and what that could mean as another global superpower encroaches on Latin America in the 21st century.

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[9] Lake, David A. *Indirect Rule: The Making of US International Hierarchy*. Cornell University Press, 2024. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/jj.1451374.

[10] "President Xi's Speech at Opening of Belt and Road Forum, May 14, 2017." USC US-China Institute, May 14, 2017. https://china.usc.edu/president-xis-speech-opening-belt-and-road-forum-may-14-2017.

The political history of the United States in Latin America can best be described as forceful, coerced, and only unilaterally serving the interests of the United States. Specifically, as David A. Lake discusses, by the end of the 19th century, and into the 20th century, the United States sought to gain a political grip on Latin America by supporting the small elitist class (~10% of the population) of wealthy landowners against the remaining slave class and poor classes. Of course, this bred anti-American sentiment early in the Americas, but it also demonstrated that the United States would rule by force and support autocratic rule to preserve its policy preferences.[11]

Under no circumstances was Latin America to be left with the autonomy to politically express itself however it saw fit. Early evidence for this could be seen in the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. Following forceful intervention by European powers such as Britain, Germany, and Italy into Latin American countries such as, but not limited to, the Dominican Republic and Cuba, the United States demonstrated its rigid stance on Latin American foreign policy by declaring itself a military power in the region. Specifically, the Monroe Doctrine (1823), and the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1904), stipulated that any European intervention into Latin America would be seen as an act of aggression toward the United States resulting in swift military action. Additionally, the United States reserved the right of being a "watchdog" protector over Latin America.[12] Less than a decade after the implementation of the Roosevelt Corollary, Professor Alfred Pillet wrote in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* that the irony of the Monroe

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[11] Lake, David A. *Indirect Rule: The Making of US International Hierarchy*. Cornell University Press, 2024. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/jj.1451374.

[12] "Theodore Roosevelt's Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1905)." National Archives and Records Administration, February 8, 2022. https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/roosevelt-corollary#:~:text=The%20corollary%20stated%20that%20not,and%20property%20in%20those%20countries.

Doctrine lied in its enforcement. To ward off European intervention, the United States would be required to promote its own intervention into the affairs of Latin American states.[13] Continuing on this thought, Adam Burns wrote in *American Imperialism: The Territorial Expansion of the United States 1783 to 2013* that the Monroe Doctrine led to the United States preemptively occupying territories in the Caribbean and seizing entire governments to avoid European intervention.[14] The pivotal takeaway from this point is that the United States was not shy to meddle in the affairs of Latin American nations. Despite the fact that Latin American nations were told their liberty would remain intact so long as their values synced with those of the United States, the United States did not hesitate to preemptively negate that autonomy at will.[15]

Examining the latter half of the 20th century, the United States was heavily involved in regime change in Latin America. This included installing conservative leaders to promote pro-Western, anti-communist ideals, fixing elections to promote said leaders, and supporting insurrection to change government types. The Harvard Review of Latin America estimates that at least 41 of these types of interventions occurred between 1898 and 1994.[16]

An example of this coerced regime change can be seen in the United States' handling of Nicaragua throughout the Cold War. Early in Ronald Reagan's presidential administration, this theme of denouncing and removing communist sympathizing governments from power in Latin

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[13] Pillet, A. "The Monroe Doctrine." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 54 (1914): 131–33. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1012581.

[14] BURNS, ADAM. "Occupation over Annexation (1912–73)." In *American Imperialism: The Territorial Expansion of the United States, 1783-2013*, 136–58. Edinburgh University Press, 2017. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0514c.12.

[15] "Theodore Roosevelt's Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1905)." National Archives and Records Administration, February 8, 2022. https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/roosevelt-corollary#:~:text=The%20corollary%20stated%20that%20not,and%20property%20in%20those%20countries.

[16] Coatsworth, John. "United States Interventions." ReVista, May 15, 2005. https://revista.drclas.harvard.edu/united-states-interventions/.

America was applied to the case of Nicaragua. Rather than stand by as the communist sympathizing Sandinista government tread ominously on policy lines unfavorable to the United States, the United States chose to exercise its "international policeman" role by supporting the insurgent Contras to overthrow the government.[17] The purpose of this anecdote is not to be a historical lesson on the facts and order of events of the United States' intervention. The bottom line is that this serves as a semi-recent example of the United States' willingness to undermine the autonomy of countries when politics are at play.

Another case where this political manipulation is visible is in El Salvador throughout the late 1970s. The 1970s in El Salvador was a time of deep, internal political struggle. The United States, through fixed elections had brought General Carlos Humberto Romero to power. Romero's illegitimate leadership brought about severe human rights violations and political oppression.[18] As author Stewart W. Fisher explains, the unpopular support for the far-right government in El Salvador by the United States ended up alienating the population and formulating the rise of leftist factions.[19] In turn, these factions promoted uprising against the government, a symbol of the anti-Americanism embedded in U.S. – Latin American relations since the 19th century. What the case of El Salvador shows is the United States' willingness to defy popular opinion, in favor of its own political interests.

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[17] Roberts, Kenneth. "Bullying and Bargaining: The United States, Nicaragua, and Conflict Resolution in Central America." *International Security* 15, no. 2 (1990): 67–102. https://doi.org/10.2307/2538866.

[18] Fisher, Stewart W. "Human Rights in El Salvador and U. S. Foreign Policy." *Human Rights Quarterly* 4, no. 1 (1982): 1–38. https://doi.org/10.2307/761988.

[19] Fisher, Stewart W. "Human Rights in El Salvador and U. S. Foreign Policy." *Human Rights Quarterly* 4, no. 1 (1982): 1–38. https://doi.org/10.2307/761988.

Combined, the cases of Nicaragua and El Salvador serve as two case studies where the United States, despite being a champion of political and human rights, chose to carve its own path in Latin America, irrespective of the desires of those countries. When tied to the broader scope of this study, these cases show that the interference of a global superpower in the political affairs of weaker regions of the world is rarely done purely in the honest interest of both parties.

What does this mean for Latin America in the 21st century? As will be examined in the next chapter, these actions by the United States have fueled concerns that China is just a new-age juggernaut attempting to exploit Latin America, both politically and economically, as the United States once did. These lessons have inspired authors to write pieces expressing their opinions on the present-day Chinese intervention through the BRI. The literature produced by these authors will be examined in the following chapter.

Literature Review

Introduction:

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) development strategy, which the Chinese government

has implemented across the last two decades, has been on the tips of the tongues of political

scholars since its inception. Though less than twenty years old, the program has witnessed

exorbitant amounts of financial aid being invested through various projects to countries in Asia,

Africa, Europe, and even the Western Hemisphere.[20] This has led to a rich scholastic debate of

competing theories regarding the underlying motives of this investment, its impact across the

globe, and its reception. While many scholars have elected to focus on the transnational and

sociopolitical implications of this program, the effects on public opinion have gone under the

radar. The literature upholding this research dives into this very topic by focusing on competing

theories for how the investment of the BRI impacts public opinion, and why certain

demographics may possess contrasting opinions.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI):

Officially launched in 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Chinese Belt and Road

Initiative (BRI) can best be described as a reincarnation of the notorious Silk Road. Through

physical infrastructure projects, the BRI's initial goal was first to link Asian trade to European

and African markets, though it has since expanded far beyond that into Oceania and the Western

Hemisphere.[21] Comprising both a land and maritime component, the long-run goal of the project

is to link railways, highways, and borders to allow for an easy flow of Chinese currency, culture,

and influence. This would allow for China to easily conduct political, philanthropic, and

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[20] McBride, James, Noah Berman, and Andrew Chatzky. "China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative." Council on Foreign Relations, February 2, 2023. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative.

[21] McBride, James, Noah Berman, and Andrew Chatzky. "China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative." Council on Foreign Relations, February 2, 2023. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative.

economic relations with foreign countries while increasing its financial, political, and cultural importance in the global sphere.

The use of soft-power techniques in this project, that is diplomacy over militarism, cannot be underscored. Rather than extract resources from nations through coercion, the Chinese government has implemented shrewd negotiating tactics to establish loan systems with countries in exchange for access to natural resources.[22] While scholars debate the nature of these loans and investments, with some arguing the loans are intentionally predatory, the intricate knitting and shaping of these deals cannot be refuted. The far-reaching ramification of this model is that countries are permanently increasing their interactions with China across political, economic, and cultural scenes.

The creative implementation of the BRI as a development strategy has led policymakers, government institutions, and political think-tanks to produce extensive research on how this investment strategy impacts the United States and Western Europe, and what policies should be adopted to curtail the negative ramifications. While this research is robust, it ignores the role that the individual plays in the efficacy of the BRI. In a place like Latin America, where slow-moving bureaucracies can stalwart investment strategies, winning over the hearts and minds of the citizenry is key to ensuring the survival of a program.

While there is existing literature on the effects of BRI investment, it is heavily divided. Certain camps have argued that this investment has improved the public's opinion of China, while others have argued that the predatory nature of the investment has only alienated the public from accepting China as a hegemon. This is where my research lies, and where an argument is to be made over why certain demographics are more in favor of Chinese investment and others not.

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[22] McBride, James, Noah Berman, and Andrew Chatzky. "China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative." Council on Foreign Relations, February 2, 2023. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative.

Existing Literature Advocating for Increased Public Opinion:

The existing literature arguing for an increased public opinion toward China and Chinese investment has made the point that U.S. foreign policy has largely ignored Latin America in the 21st century. Benjamin Creutzfeldt shines light on this by highlighting that the United States has remained distant with many countries in Latin America, while playing favorites with countries like Cuba and Colombia.[23] This favoritism has led to a sense of abandonment amongst countries like Venezuela who have been handed debilitating sanctions by the United States in the same period. Creutzfeldt does make the point that the economic benefits of Chinese investment have remained in the hands of the Latin American elite class, thus giving the U.S. the upper hand, but suggests that if the elites are able to pass down these benefits to the middle and lower classes, then public support for China will increase exponentially, thus toppling the United States.[24]

Vera Eichenauer's argument regarding the correlation between Chinese investment and public opinion in Latin America echoes a similar message to that of Creutzfeldt. Eichenauer's research finds that there is no direct correlation between an increase in investment and a diminishing public opinion but warns that this is not the entire picture.[25] Eichenauer argues that while China's current investment is not helping or hurting its quest for new political allies, U.S. policymakers should remain uncomfortable because China possesses a track record of overcoming obstacles to winning over hearts and minds. Specifically, Eichenauer believes that

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[23] Benjamin C., "China and the U.S. in Latin America." Revista Científica General José María Córdova 14, no. 17 (2016):23 -40. Redalyc, https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=476255357003

[24] Benjamin C., "China and the U.S. in Latin America." Revista Científica General José María Córdova 14, no. 17 (2016):23 -40. Redalyc, https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=476255357003

[25] Eichenauer, Vera, Andreas Fuchs, and Lutz Bruckner. "The Effects of Trade, Aid, and Investment on China's Image in Latin America." Journal of Comparative Economics, October 4, 2020. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147596720300627?via%3Dihub.

the issue could lie in the current penetration of Latin American markets.[26] This argument

suggests that it's too early to expect a change in public opinion, and that once Chinese firms

thoroughly penetrate Latin American markets, the benefits will holistically impact society to the

extent that citizens may switch to a highly positive mindset of China. Eichenauer expects that

any troubles in winning over the sentiment of the Latin American citizenry could be temporary,

with rapid changes in investment strategy from Beijing being the key to unlocking Latin America.

Eichenauer also places responsibility on the shoulders of governments in Latin American

countries by suggesting that popular unrest over poverty and corruption could be curtailed by

finding a way to allow the economic benefits of the BRI to flow across the population.[27]

Cooperation between China and the governments in Latin America is mutually beneficial when

there is a guarantee that an improved economy will improve domestic political popularity.

Making the BRI work, under this theory, is a must to ensure the popularity of both government

sides.

A commonality seen within the two previous arguments is the need for cooperation

between China and the governments of Latin American countries. Gustavo Oliveira further

extrapolates this point by suggesting that cooperation between Latin American governments and

the Chinese government will produce economic outcomes so positive that they will outweigh the

social and environmental cons associated with the BRI.[28] Oliveira's argument agrees with

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[26] Eichenauer, Vera, Andreas Fuchs, and Lutz Bruckner. "The Effects of Trade, Aid, and Investment on China's Image in Latin America." Journal of Comparative Economics, October 4, 2020. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147596720300627?via%3Dihub.

[27] Eichenauer, Vera, Andreas Fuchs, and Lutz Bruckner. "The Effects of Trade, Aid, and Investment on China's Image in Latin America." Journal of Comparative Economics, October 4, 2020. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147596720300627?via%3Dihub.

[28] L.T. Oliveira, Gustavo de. "The Tenuous Co-Production of China's Belt and Road Initiative in Brazil and Latin America." Taylor & Francis Online: Peer-reviewed journals, October 4, 2020. https://www.tandfonline.com/.

Creutzfeldt and Eichenauer on the point that the BRI has not been as penetrative in Latin America as previously hoped, but tweaks in the implementation of it could produce powerful, positive effects.[29] While flawed, the potential of the BRI to positively influence the lives of citizens in Latin America still remains ever present.

The common foundation which these three authors build their arguments upon is the role of economics. All three see economics as the tool which could take the BRI from being perceived as a shrouded program with dubious efficacy and turn it into a potent tool which clearly impacts the lives of citizens in a positive way. This direct impact, as Eichenauer states, has the potential to dramatically shift public opinion in a way which draws Latin American citizens closer to China. These authors utilize the "money talks" mentality by advocating for the position that economic change can outweigh social critiques. It is this very foundation which detractors of this argumentation look to exploit as a weakness.

Existing Literature Advocating for Negative Public Opinion

Detractors of the idea that the BRI can win over the populations of Latin America point to the social and environmental problems which have arisen in Latin America since the program's inception. Ariel Armony and Nicolás G. Velásquez highlight this point by arguing that public opinion of China has exhibited trends of social and environmental anxiety.[30] Armony and Velásquez first show, by scraping social media and web content, that many individuals have raised concerns about Latin America's ability to develop on its own due to the increasing amount of Chinese citizens immigrating, and the amount of nationals emigrating.[31] The belief is that

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[29] L.T. Oliveira, Gustavo de. "The Tenuous Co-Production of China's Belt and Road Initiative in Brazil and Latin America." Taylor & Francis Online: Peer-reviewed journals, October 4, 2020. https://www.tandfonline.com/.

[30] Armony, A.C., Velásquez, N. Anti-Chinese Sentiment in Latin America: An Analysis of Online Discourse. *J OF CHIN POLIT SCI* **20**, 319–346 (2015). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-015-9365-z

[31] Armony, A.C., Velásquez, N. Anti-Chinese Sentiment in Latin America: An Analysis of Online Discourse. *J OF CHIN POLIT SCI* **20**, 319–346 (2015). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-015-9365-z

Latin America is turning into a resource zone for China, but there are no plans in place to ensure Latin America develops as well. This goes against Creutzfeldt's point that the Chinese have a non-competitive agenda for Latin America and are eagerly developing a plan to ensure prosperous development for both parties. Additionally, Armony and Velásquez's research shows that many citizens are concerned their nations are being selected solely for the extraction of natural resources.[32] Armony and Velásquez believe that these factors outweigh the economic impacts of the BRI and produce a very negative public sentiment toward China and its investment.

In another piece done by Armony and Velásquez, they perform a case study on the relationship between China and Brazil. The takeaway from this case study is that the "honeymoon" between Brazil and China did not have a dramatic effect on increasing positive public opinion toward China, and that Brazilians should anticipate that the favorable terms of the original agreement are always susceptible to negative change.[33] This bolsters the argument used by these scholars which believes the economic impacts of the BRI, no matter how positive, are not stronger than the social and environmental consequences.

Miguel Carreras' research expands on these conclusions by putting forth the proposition that countries with governments that oppose U.S. values in Latin America, and look more favorably on the economic work of China in the region, have higher public opinion ratings

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[32] Armony, A.C., Velásquez, N. Anti-Chinese Sentiment in Latin America: An Analysis of Online Discourse. *J OF CHIN POLIT SCI* **20**, 319–346 (2015). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-015-9365-z

[33] Armony, Ariel, and Nicolas Velasquez. "A HONEYMOON WITH CHINA? PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND BRAZIL." *Revista Tempo do Mundo* 2, no. 2 (July 2016): 17–34.

toward China.[34] Carreras' examination of Argentina, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Venezuela validate this claim. Further research by Carreras suggests that countries where Chinese economic investment is not viewed favorably do not hold as high of a public opinion. Carreras' examination shows that individuals in this second region were far less in favor of Chinese investment, culture, and political influence on Latin America.[35] Carreras uses these mixed results to show that economics is not the sole determinant of public opinion. In accordance with Armony, Carreras believes that China's BRI must find a way to mitigate the social and economic concerns if it hopes to win over the popular support.

Sergio López and Salvador Suárez Zaizar also give credence to the claims of Armony, Carreras, and Velásquez by calling out the negative environmental practices which rampantly plague many BRI projects.[36] López and Suárez Zaizar believe that these issues make these programs unattractive both domestically and internationally. If these programs are to take root domestically in Latin America, cleaning up the environmental and social setbacks, on top of spurring economic development, are key.

The commonality amongst this group of scholars is the emphasis placed on the inherent social and environmental flaws built into the BRI. For these scholars, the key to negative public opinion toward China lies in the presence of barriers on top of the economic concerns.

Analysis of Methods

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[34] Carreras, Miguel. "Public Attitudes toward an Emerging China in Latin America." *Issues & Studies* 53, no. 1 (2017). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1142/s1013251117400045.

[35] Carreras, Miguel. "Public Attitudes toward an Emerging China in Latin America." *Issues & Studies* 53, no. 1 (2017). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1142/s1013251117400045.

[36] López, Sergio Ley, and Salvador Suárez Zaizar. "Chinese Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean." *DEALMAKING WITH CHINA AMID GLOBAL ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY: Opportunities, Risks, and Recommendations for Latin America and the Caribbean*. Atlantic Council, 2020. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep29467.5.

Examining the methods utilized by these authors, a commonality seen is the reliance on survey data to draw conclusions. What must be remembered when working with survey data is being careful when drawing conclusions over the years. Specifically, when the individuals interviewed change across years, it does not automatically represent a new conclusion. This kind of analysis would be a shift in the aggregate but would not automatically represent a shift in public opinion at the individual level. The authors in this study, especially Carreras, were careful to automatically generalize their claims for these reasons.

Summary

The literature surrounding this topic has been split into two categories: literature suggesting that positive public opinion toward China in Latin America is feasible with the BRI and literature which falls on the contrary. Those who argue that positive public opinion is feasible and seen argue that economic development plays an important role in establishing positive public opinion. Detractors of this argue that social and environmental concerns are more important to determining public opinion.

These authors provide excellent alternative explanations for why certain groups may favor Chinese investment while others choose to reject this investment. This research will build on this existing literature by examining personal economic perception and how that variable impacts an individual's perception of China.

Research Design

Research Question and Hypothesis:

The research question postulated in this study asks how an individual's perception of their personal economic situation, and its change over the past year, impacts their perception of China. I hypothesize that individuals with a perception of an improving economic situation would have a higher degree of trust and confidence in China. Additionally, I hypothesize that individuals reporting a worsening economic situation would rate China less favorably in terms of trust. The null hypothesis for this study is that there is no relationship between an individual's perception of their personal economic situation and their trust in China.

Data:

All data used for this study comes from the Latin American Public Opinion (LAPOP) project from Vanderbilt University. Any graphs, cross-tabulations, and regression tables used in this study are based on the figures in the LAPOP data. All credit for the data goes to the LAPOP team.

Research Design:

At the heart of this research is the goal to measure the relationship between the independent variable, an individual's perception of their economic situation, and the multiple dependent variables selected to measure an individual's perception of Chinese investment. This investment is measured in both political and economic terms. To accomplish this task, I employed data from two years of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative: 2012 and 2021. But why these two years specifically? The first reason lies in the chronology of the BRI program. In 2012, the BRI program was just getting started globally, and little impact had been made in the Latin

American theater. By 2021, the program was well underway in Latin America, and individuals had a more information available to formulate a robust opinion regarding affairs between their country and China. The second reason for selecting these two years lies in the availability of data. The data used for this project was taken from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) which surveys individuals across Latin American countries. While data was available for the years between 2012 and 2021, I elected only to analyze these two years because of the nature of the surveys. Specifically, since the surveys do not interview the same individuals across each year, it would be erroneous to make claims that an individual's perception is changing when that cannot be proven across time. Instead, I've elected to make simpler, generalized claims based on the countries' aggregate responses. These too, however, must be taken lightly as they do not possess full support from the data.

Using my independent and dependent variables, I settled on two statistical tests to run my data analysis. First, I utilized cross-tabulation between each combination of independent and dependent variables per country to summarize the frequency of combinations in a tabular format. After doing this, I repeated the process with regression analysis to determine statistical significance between the variables.

Independent Variable: Individual's Perception of Economic Situation (IDIO2)

Establishing a viable independent variable for this research proved to be a difficult task. One issue which arose was the lack of a common set of variables across the various LAPOP datasets. Specifically, the 2012 iteration of the LAPOP survey contained two variables, labeled as soct1 and soct2, which measured a person's perception of their country's economy over the previous twelve months. Additionally, the variables labeled idio1 and idio2 measured an individual's perception of their economic situation over the past twelve months. When combined,

these variables provided a very holistic view of a person's perception of their personal and national economic situation. However, only the variable idio2, which measured a person's perception of their personal economic situation over the prior 12 months, was present on both the 2012 and 2021 iterations of the LAPOP survey.

For this study, the variable idio2 was selected as the sole independent variable. While it does not provide as holistic a picture regarding how the surveyed individual views their own economic situation, and that of the country, it does still provide a relatively strong point of reference. The variable works in the following way:

- **Feeling Thermometer:** The variable idio2 functions as a feeling thermometer which measures the surveyed individual's opinion on how their economic situation has changed across the previous twelve months on a 10-point scale. A rating of 1 signifies a very negative change while a rating of 10 signifies a very positive change for the individual.
- **Split of Scope:** For this study, I have categorized ratings of 5 and below as "negative" perceptions of one's economic situation, and ratings of 6 and above as "positive". The purpose of this split is to understand how individuals rate Chinese investment in their country when compared to their views of their own personal economic makeup.

Dependent Variable: Individual's trust in China (MIL10A)

For this study, the variable MIL10A, which measures an individual's trust in China was selected as the dependent variable. This was done because MIL10A was one of the few variables between the 2012 and 2021 datasets which remained the same without any rephrasing of the question. Like the independent variable, the dependent variable also operates as a feeling

thermometer on a scale of 1 to 4. A score of 1 represents a high degree of trust in China, while a score of 4 represents a strong distrust in China.

Method of Analysis #1: Cross-Tabulation

The first method of analysis which will be used in this study is cross-tabulation. Cross-tabulation is used to compare an independent and dependent variable by illustrating a grid showing all the possible combinations of responses between both variables. For example, we can see how many individuals reported having a worsening economic situation and reported having a low degree of trust in China. I will perform cross-tabulation analysis on 20 Latin American countries in both the year 2012 and 2021. The goal of doing this is to see if sentiment for China has greatly changed in any direction across the years.

Method of Analysis #2: Regression Analysis

This method serves as a statistical test to establish a significant relationship between the independent variables. Why is this test placed second and not first? This is done so because I would like to first examine the trends of the cross-tabulations. Once this is done, the regression analysis can be brought in to verify whether those trends are statistically valid, or if confounding variables and alternative explanations are responsible for the visible trends. Once both of these tests have been conducted, we can examine whether there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

Verification Method One: Cross-Tabulation Analysis

This section focuses on the cross-tabulations between the independent variable, IDIO2, which measures a person's perception of their economic situation over the previous twelve months, and the dependent variable, MIL10A. This dependent variable measures the individual's general trust of China. These tables can be analyzed by looking at the corresponding value counts in the rows and columns. For example, the top row of 1,2,3,4 signifies the corresponding responses which individuals could give to MIL10A. 1 represents "Very Trustworthy" while 4 represents "Not at all trustworthy". For the vertical numbers 1,2,3, these corollate to the dependent variable IDIO2. 1 represents an improved economic situation, 2 represents a neutral change in economic situation, and 3 represents a worsened economic situation over the prior 12 months. This section will tabulate the counts for the 20 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean where data was available by looking at how many individuals voted for various combinations of responses.

Mexico 2012:

```
                      Mexico: MIL10A
                       1    2    3    4
      Mexico: IDIO2   1    3   26   18    8
                      2   13  127  102   77
                      3   10   73   66   50
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Mexico 2021:

```
                      Mexico: MIL10A
                       1    2    3    4
      Mexico: IDIO2   1   24   37   40   12
                      2   36  107   80   38
                      3   48  113  143   91
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The above figures contain the results of the cross-tabulations for Mexico in the years 2012 and 2021. In 2012, only 3 surveyed individuals said they had an "improved economic situation" and a high degree of trust for China. In fact, only 26 of the surveyed individuals reported having a high degree of trust in China, while 135 had a high degree of distrust in China. In 2012, 518 of the 555 surveyed individuals reported having a neutral or worse economic situation, and 295 of them reported being either distrustful or highly distrustful in China. Looking at 2021, 352 individuals reported having either a neutral or worsening economic situation and a distrust of China, with only 204 reported a neutral or improving situation and a positive trust in China.

Guatemala 2012:

Guatemala: IDIO2	Guatemala: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	1	18	10	2
2	35	106	55	17
3	8	59	34	14

Guatemala 2021:

Guatemala: IDIO 2	Guatemala: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	14	24	26	11
2	27	86	83	36
3	55	79	114	56

The figures above display the cross-tabulations for Guatemala, the first Central American country to be analyzed. In 2012, 160 individuals surveyed reported having either a neutral or improving economic situation and some degree of trust in China. This is compared to 120 individuals who reported having a neutral or worsening economic situation and a degree of distrust in China. The 2021 data reported an interesting trend, individuals that reported a worsening economic situation in their lives had a higher trust in China (134), than those that reported a neutral or improving economic situation (113 and 38 respectively). Despite this, overall, more individuals reported some degree of distrust in China (326) than a trust in China (285).

El Salvador 2012:

El Salvador: IDIO2	El Salvador: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	4	26	20	9
2	16	94	74	48
3	19	38	69	33

El Salvador 2021:

El Salvador: IDIO2	El Salvador: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	41	47	38	11
2	47	104	111	36
3	62	79	114	39

The above graphs examine the country of El Salvador. In the year 2012, individuals that reported having a neutral or worsening personal economic situation had a higher distrust of China (224 individuals) than trust in China (167 individuals). Additionally, individuals that reported having an improving economic situation were split nearly equally in terms of trust vs distrust for China (30 vs 29 individuals). For 2021, these trends stayed the same. Specifically, individuals that reported having a neutral or worsening personal economic situation had a higher distrust of China (300 individuals) than trust in China (292 individuals) again. This trend was much closer than in 2012. Additionally, those who reported an improving economic situation were much more in favor of China (88 individuals) than being distrustful of China (49 individuals).

Honduras 2012:

Honduras: MIL10A

Honduras: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	14	11	5	7
2	66	111	65	36
3	41	81	42	30

Honduras 2021:

Honduras: MIL10A

Honduras: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	8	16	21	13
2	30	51	48	23
3	65	109	124	81

For Honduras, the trends tell a more nuanced tale. In general, in the year 2012, more individuals showed support for trust in China (324 vs 185). Across personal perceptions of economic situation, individuals put more trust in China than distrust. By 2021, this trend had changed. For example, those who reported an improving economic situation held more distrust for China (34 individuals) than trust in China (24 individuals). While those who believed their economic situation was neutral were closely split (81 in favor of trust vs 71 in favor of distrust), those who believed their economic situation had deteriorated across the previous twelve months held a disdain for China. 205 of these individuals did not trust in China while 174 did.

Nicaragua 2012:

                  Nicaragua: MIL10A

Nicaragua: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	22	85	39	6
2	37	144	77	39
3	13	56	47	29

Nicaragua 2021:

                  Nicaragua: MIL10A

Nicaragua: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	13	29	26	14
2	31	93	107	57
3	39	90	207	82

Nicaragua represents a shift in perspective by individuals between 2012 and 2021. In 2012, Nicaraguans clearly favored trusting China than distrusting China. Specifically, 357 individuals trusted China while 237 distrusted China. By 2021, this trend had flipped. 493 individuals expressed a distrust in China while only 295 expressed some form of trust in China. Except for the group saying their personal economic situation had improved, each other group held more distrust for China in 2021 than trust.

Costa Rica 2012:

                  Costa Rica: MIL10A

Costa Rica: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	25	50	32	14
2	51	156	105	39
3	21	58	40	22

Costa Rica 2021:

                  Costa Rica: MIL10A

Costa Rica: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	6	27	36	16
2	22	97	106	63
3	38	114	131	107

In 2012, Costa Rica held more trust in China (361 individuals) than distrust (252 individuals). In 2012, all three groups of individuals categorized in IDIO2 expressed more trust in China than distrust. By 2021, this sentiment changed. Overall, 459 individuals expressed some degree of distrust compared to 304 individuals that expressed a degree of trust. Additionally, each category of individuals in IDIO2 expressed more distrust in China than trust.

Panama 2012:

Panama: MIL10A

Panama: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	21	74	11	5
2	49	196	54	23
3	38	95	21	14

Panama 2021:

Panama: MIL10A

Panama: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	7	17	21	13
2	18	100	94	44
3	35	121	195	150

Panama followed a trend very similar to Costa Rica. In 2012, Panama held a majority trust in China before switching opinion in 2021. Specifically, in 2012, 473 individuals reported trusting China compared to a mere 128 that distrusted China. Like Costa Rica, each category of individuals in IDIO2 held more trust for China than distrust. By 2021, 517 individuals reported distrust in China, while only 298 reported trusting in China. Additionally, each group categorized in IDIO2 held more distrust in China than trust in China.

Colombia 2012:

Colombia: MIL10A

Colombia: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	9	78	44	20
2	7	104	67	29
3	4	44	26	10

Colombia 2021:

Colombia: MIL10A

Colombia: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	6	15	17	14
2	23	52	74	41
3	55	85	172	113

In 2012, Colombia held a trend like Costa Rica and Panama. Overall, there was more trust in China (246 individuals) than distrust (196 individuals). Each category of individuals under IDIO2 showed more trust in China than distrust. By 2021, this sentiment switched. For example, 431 individuals displayed a distrust in China compared to 236 that trusted China. What is most interesting is that individuals who reported an improvement in their personal economic situations across the last twelve months held more distrust in China in 2021 (31 individuals vs 21 individuals). This is a trend which had not been observed in prior countries.

Ecuador 2012:

Ecuador: MIL10A

Ecuador: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	14	58	37	19
2	31	131	95	47
3	10	41	38	25

Ecuador 2021:

Ecuador: MIL10A

Ecuador: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	9	23	20	14
2	24	72	96	33
3	47	106	178	104

In the aggregate, Ecuador follows the same pattern as Panama, Costa Rica, and Colombia. While in 2012 there was a majority trust for China, this trust was the minority sentiment in 2021.

Bolivia 2012:

Bolivia: IDIO2	Bolivia: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	10	94	43	24
2	12	247	196	50
3	7	107	80	40

Bolivia 2021:

Bolivia: IDIO2	Bolivia: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	10	15	24	12
2	17	70	102	56
3	24	110	205	163

Bolivia represents a departure from the trends seen across the prior countries. In 2012, individuals that reported a worsening personal economic situation across the past twelve months held more distrust for China (120 individuals) than trust (114 individuals). This was the only group to be distrustful of China as each of the other two groups held more trust than distrust in China in 2012. By 2021, each group of individuals held a clear distrust in China.

Peru 2012:

Peru: IDIO2	Peru: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	9	70	37	13
2	41	150	127	40
3	8	29	31	8

Peru 2021:

Peru: IDIO2	Peru: MIL10A			
	1	2	3	4
1	1	14	25	6
2	41	89	83	39
3	78	188	256	127

Peru represents a trend like Ecuador in that in 2012, each group of IDIO2 held more trust in China than distrust except for the group which reported a worsening economic situation (39 individuals vs 37 individuals). Interestingly, in 2021, the group reporting a neutral economic

situation remained trusting in China (130 individuals vs 122 individuals) while each other group expressed a distrust in China.

Paraguay 2012:

Paraguay: MIL10A

Paraguay: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	22	82	33	22
2	30	118	76	40
3	19	31	31	13

Paraguay 2021:

Paraguay: MIL10A

Paraguay: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	13	21	29	23
2	27	83	76	47
3	52	102	150	110

Paraguay demonstrates a return to the trend seen previously in other countries. In 2012, all three categories of individuals held more trust for China than distrust (302 individuals vs 215 individuals). By 2021, each of these groups switched opinions and each expressed a distrust in China.

Chile 2012:

Chile: MIL10A

Chile: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	3	37	15	7
2	27	183	80	36
3	12	89	44	22

Chile 2021:

Chile: MIL10A

Chile: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	4	22	34	30
2	16	89	158	86
3	20	81	143	105

Chile's data trends replicate those seen in Paraguay. A trend has begun to emerge, many countries held a high degree of trust for China in 2012, but a majority distrust in China by 2021.

Uruguay 2012:

Uruguay: MIL10A

Uruguay: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	6	65	31	19
2	9	70	41	29
3	4	15	14	12

Uruguay 2021:

Uruguay: MIL10A

Uruguay: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	10	21	34	29
2	12	74	170	97
3	14	66	139	73

For Uruguay, in 2012, the only group which expressed a higher degree of distrust in China than trust was the third group which reported a worsening personal economic situation (26 individuals vs 19 individuals). By 2021, each of the three groups under the variable IDIO2 held a strong distrust in China as a country.

Brazil 2012:

Brazil: MIL10A

Brazil: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	16	66	57	26
2	18	98	84	42
3	2	34	32	15

Brazil 2021:

Brazil: MIL10A

Brazil: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	8	20	54	77
2	15	93	94	115
3	50	141	144	152

The trend observed in Uruguay is also seen in Brazil, where only the third group expressed distrust in China in 2012. By 2021, each group held a distrust in China.

Argentina 2012:

Argentina: MIL10A

Argentina: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	13	55	41	18
2	28	102	52	56
3	12	37	39	26

Argentina 2021:

Argentina: MIL10A

Argentina: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	10	20	27	14
2	24	75	78	43
3	40	89	164	131

Argentina continues the data trend observed in both Brazil and Uruguay.

Dominican Republic 2012:

Dominican Republic: MIL10A

Dominican Republic: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	15	56	15	15
2	6	65	16	16
3	24	85	28	27

Dominican Republic 2021:

Dominican Republic: MIL10A

Dominican Republic: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	26	43	39	10
2	27	49	42	24
3	88	101	113	81

The Dominican Republic is the first Caribbean nation to be documented in this study. As seen in many other countries across Central and South America, in 2012, The Dominican Republic showed support for trust in China across all three categories of individuals in IDIO2 (250 individuals vs 117 individuals). Interestingly, in 2021, individuals that reported a neutral or improving economic situation remained in support of trust in China (145 individuals vs 115 individuals). This is one of the first cases where support for trust in China is seen both in the year 2012 and 2021 across multiple groups.

Haiti 2012:

Haiti: MIL10A

Haiti: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	22	24	11	8
2	95	127	105	87
3	38	56	49	50

Haiti 2021:

Haiti: MIL10A

Haiti: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	9	6	8	10
2	5	9	5	6
3	131	73	38	62

In 2012 in Haiti, the only group which did not show trust in China was the group which reported a worsening personal economic situation, though the split was near even (99 vs 94). What is most interesting is that by 2021, a supermajority of Haitians reported having a worsening economic situation (304 out of 362). Despite this, 204 of these 304 individuals reported holding a trust in China. The case of Haiti introduces a trend not previously seen: an overwhelming majority of individuals suffering continuous economic hardship grew to support China between 2012 and 2021.

Jamaica 2012:

Jamaica: MIL10A

Jamaica: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	7	50	14	10
2	17	189	41	15
3	7	79	30	12

Jamaica 2021:

Jamaica: MIL10A

Jamaica: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	14	23	33	39
2	1	42	47	32
3	13	85	71	107

Jamaica illustrates trends seen across several other Central and South American countries: in 2012, each group showed trust in China while in 2021 each group showed severe distrust in China. What is most notable is that the group reporting a neutral economic position went from strongly supporting China in 2012 to strongly distrusting China in 2021.

Guyana 2012:

Guyana: MIL10A

Guyana: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	5	67	33	9
2	32	218	56	36
3	7	63	27	27

Guyana 2021:

Guyana: MIL10A

Guyana: IDIO2	1	2	3	4
1	6	47	38	31
2	5	40	31	33
3	19	99	91	92

Guyana holds to the trends seen across many countries examined in this study: a strong trust for China in 2012 which turned to a strong distrust for China by 2021.

Verification Method Two: Regression Table Analysis

The following section will examine the regression tables measuring the relationship between the independent variable, IDIO2, and the dependent variable, MIL10A. The goal of this section is to see if there is a statistical relationship present between the two variables. Rather than analyze these graphs individually, I have elected to write a concluding section which aggregates the results and discusses whether there is a statistically significant relationship to reject the null hypothesis. I have elected to do this to avoid cluttering the paper with regressions that are not being explained individually. **All regression graphs can be found in the appendix.**

Analysis of Regression Models

The purpose of utilizing regression analysis in this study is to reject the null hypothesis which states there is no relationship between the independent and dependent variables, IDIO2 and MIL10A. Upon examining these regression tables, while some hold higher degrees of statistical significance than others, not all meet the threshold to be considered statistically significant. Since each regression does not meet the requirements necessary to reject the null hypothesis, it is impossible to say that the chosen variables are, by themselves, sufficient to satisfy the statistical needs of this thesis. This section will breakdown the various components of the regression analysis tables and explain why certain tables were not statistically satisfactory.

Coefficient: In regression analysis, the coefficient represents the anticipated impact which the independent variable will have on the dependent variable. Specifically, for a one-unit increase in the independent variable, the coefficient measures how much the dependent variable changes. Additionally, there are certain thresholds in which the coefficient is considered statistically significant (i.e. $p<0.1$, etc.). In this study, on too many occasions, the coefficient was not in accordance with the threshold of statistical significance. This means that many of the regression tables were not deemed to show a statistically significant relationship between the

independent and dependent variables. While some countries did, for example Bolivia in 2012 and 2021, the fact that many regression tables did not meet this criterion shows that this data analysis is not strong enough on its own to reject the null hypothesis.

R-Squared: The R-Squared value represents how much of the data is covered by the regression model. In this study, in multiple instances, the R-Squared value was low. For example, the Guatemala 2012 model had an R-Squared value of just 0.005. This means that only half of 1% of the data could be explained by this model. Another example can be seen in Peru in 2021, where the R-Squared came out to 0.002. This means that only one-fifth of 1% of the data could be explained by this model. In the context of this study, this means that the regression models used simply do not possess the capability to accurately explain the entirety of the data. For this reason, I cannot generalize the results of these regression models, and say that they confidently reject the null hypothesis, because not enough of the data can be explained and proven by them. For this reason, these regression tables are not enough to swiftly reject the null hypothesis.

Residual Standard Error (RSD): The Residual Standard Error is designed to measure the distance between the values predicted by the model and the actual values. The RSD measures the amount of error between the predicted values made by the model and the actual values. In this study, far too many models had high RSD values. For example, El Salvador, in 2021, had an RSD of 0.938. Ecuador, in 2021 had an RSD of 0.915. Jamaica, in 2021, had an RSD of 0.931. This means that the models employed in this study not only struggled to explain high percentages of the data, but they also failed to make accurate predictions with the data at hand. This means that these models were not only limited, but they were also inaccurate. For these

reasons, I cannot reject the null hypothesis regarding the independent variable, IDIO2, and the dependent variable, MIL10A.

Summary of Findings

After conducting the data analysis, there is not sufficient evidence present to reject the null hypothesis. While this is largely due to a lack of statistical significance, as present in the data analysis, this section will also examine the trends present in the cross-tabulations.

Cross-tabulation trends:

Trend #1 – General trust in 2012 shifts to general distrust by 2021: The first trend in the cross-tabulations which became apparent was the general shift from trusting China to distrusting China between 2012 and 2021. Numerous countries had data in which all three people groups, those who reported either an improving, neutral, or worsening personal economic situation, showed some degree of trust in China in 2012 before showing distrust in China by 2021. Most interestingly, many of these countries showed strong support for one side or the other, only on a few occasions were countries split nearly evenly.

Trend #2 – Countries rarely remained divided. In the data, one trend which was noticed was that countries rarely remained divided when making changes across the years. If a country flipped from trusting China in 2012, to distrusting China in 2021, usually every group of individuals joined in the switch. Only on a few occasions did one group stay the same while the other two changed.

Trend #3 – Trust in China was not contingent on economic perception: Across various countries, a trend that appeared was that trust in China was not contingent on economic perception. For example, in many countries in 2012, even those with a poor economic situation

were reporting high degrees of trust in China. By 2021, even those with an improving personal economic situation were reporting a high degree of *distrust* in China. This signifies that regardless of economic perception, nations were holistically switching perceptions of China across the decade. Additionally, this likely means that there are external factors at play which impact an individual's trust in China more than just their perception of their economic situation.

A Note on Statistical Significance

While the trends in the cross-tabulations paint a picture of what the data says, the regression analysis is ultimately what is used for verification. In this study, the regression analysis has shown that the data utilized is not statistically significant. As discussed at the end of the previous chapter, the models utilized in this study failed to explain sizeable portions of the data, and they failed to accurately model the small quantities of data they could explain. This means that the null hypothesis, which states that there is no relationship between the independent and dependent variables, has failed to be rejected.

The Bottom Line

What does this mean for this study? In short, the flaws exposed in the regression analysis point to one conclusion: there are other factors that influence an individual's perception of China more than their personal economic situation. While strong trends may have been visible in the cross-tabulations, these must be taken with a grain of salt. There are likely other variables out there which explain this relationship much better, and there is a need to utilize additional variables to establish a robust picture of what many Latin American countries truly feel toward China. For example, more economic, social, and political variables, available on a more frequent time series, are necessary to get a more detailed look. This finding serves as an inspiration to

conduct further research to understand the true relationship between Chinese investment and

Latin American public opinion.

<u>Limitations in the Data</u>

From the beginning, there were obstructions in the data which prevented a thorough analysis from being conducted. In turn, this led to a failure to reject the null hypothesis and prove my own hypothesis. This section will discuss what obstacles occurred and how they can be rectified in future analysis.

1. **Lack of consistency in variables:** One issue that occurred in selecting variables from the LAPOP dataset was the lack of consistency and continuity in variables. For example, the 2012 dataset originally had 12 variables discussing a person's view on China through political and economic lenses. However, these variables either disappeared on future iterations of the survey or were rephrased in a different way. Moreover, the 2021 variation of the survey had new variables which measured an individual's perception of China which had not been asked previously. This made it difficult to incorporate these variables since there was no reference point. This is by no means meant to blame the pitfalls of this study on the data itself, it is merely meant to show that future research will require identifying more consistent variables, from a plethora of viewpoints, to establish a holistic understanding of topic at hand.

2. **Impossible to measure personal change in opinion:** Another issue which plagued this study was that the LAPOP data surveyed individuals but did not survey the same individuals across each year the survey was offered. This means that an individual who distrusted China in 2012, with a poor economic situation, may not have been interviewed again. Therefore, it would not be possible to directly see how this one individual's perspective changed over time. This means that while the research question for this study

focused on personal change, only aggregate measurements on a country level could be conducted because there was no way to verify if each person surveyed was re-surveyed in future years. In future research, this will require either switching the goal of the research question, or finding a data source which does guarantee the individuals surveyed remain the same across multiple years.

3. **Missing data:** Many of the LAPOP datasets contained high numbers of missing responses. Often, a question was offered to certain individuals surveyed, but not to others. This means that the full scope of a country's opinion could not be measured because only a certain portion of the population was being given the question. While this is not a major obstacle to future research, this will be something to identify early in the methodology to ensure that proper research is conducted.

In short, the data utilized for this project contained intrinsic characteristics which presented obstacles along the way. Upon completion of the data analysis, it is evident that many of these obstacles hindered the possibility of rejecting the null hypothesis and establishing a clear solution to the research question. This is not meant to blame the results on the data and numbers, instead it serves as an opportunity to analyze places of improvement for future research on this topic.

Conclusion: What About the Future of Latin America?

In conclusion, this study fails to prove that an individual's perception of their personal economic situation impacts their trust in China significantly. The null hypothesis stands, which means there is room to research more and reapproach this topic with fresh ideas. While there are observable trends in the cross-tabulation analysis which show that trust in China is fluctuating amongst countries, there are likely other variables and other explanations that can better explain why that is. This motivates me to reopen this study in the future and seek out alternative explanations which can show a more complete picture of Chinese influence in Latin America.

Aside from the statistics themselves, theoretically, what does this all mean for the future of Latin American relations with China? Should countries continue to pursue economic and political policies which closely align them with China? Many scholars make the argument that doing so will lead to national entrapment, despite the pleas of the Chinese Communist Party to insist that the interests of both parties will be held in equal regard. More importantly, what does this mean for a struggling United States which is trying to hold on to its grip as the lone hegemon? With political divide ravaging the country, how should the United States respond to the influence of China in the west? These rhetorical questions are meant to stir an intellectual debate inside the minds of political scientists across the world. The 21st century still has much left to be written, and it is these questions which will ultimately determine the course of action for countries in Latin America, as well as the United States and China. It is imperative that this matter be examined further to truly understand its impact on the world around us.

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Appendix

**For access to the full dataset please contact me.

Mexico: 2012

```
================================================================
                                      Dependent variable:
                              --------------------------------
                                      Mexico: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Mexico: IDIO2                              0.078
                                          (0.059)

Constant                                 2.575***
                                          (0.137)

----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                               573
R2                                         0.003
Adjusted R2                                0.001
Residual Std. Error              0.866 (df = 571)
F Statistic                      1.757 (df = 1; 571)
================================================================
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Mexico 2021:

```
==================================================================
==
                                      Dependent variable:
                              --------------------------------
--
                                      Mexico: MIL10A
------------------------------------------------------------------
--
Mexico: IDIO2                             0.190***
                                          (0.047)

Constant                                 2.119***
                                          (0.115)

------------------------------------------------------------------
--
Observations                               769
R2                                         0.021
Adjusted R2                                0.020
Residual Std. Error              0.936 (df = 767)
F Statistic                      16.614*** (df = 1; 767)
==================================================================
==
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Guatemala 2012:

```
=================================================================
                                    Dependent variable:
                             ------------------------------
                                   Guatemala: MIL10A
-----------------------------------------------------------------
Guatemala: IDIO2                          0.100
                                         (0.072)

Constant                                2.113***
                                         (0.166)

-----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                              359
R2                                        0.005
Adjusted R2                               0.003
Residual Std. Error               0.808 (df = 357)
F Statistic                      1.953 (df = 1; 357)
=================================================================
Note:                         *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Guatemala 2021:

```
=================================================================
========
                                    Dependent variable:
                             --------------------------
--------
                                   Guatemala: MIL10A
-----------------------------------------------------------------
--------
Guatemala: IDIO2                          0.042
                                         (0.055)

Constant                                2.446***
                                         (0.137)

-----------------------------------------------------------------
--------
Observations                              611
R2                                        0.001
Adjusted R2                              -0.001
Residual Std. Error               0.949 (df = 609)
F Statistic                      0.563 (df = 1; 609)
=================================================================
========
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

El Salvador 2012:

```
==============================================================
==
                                             Dependent variable:
                                          ----------------------------

--
                                          El_Salvador: MIL10A
--------------------------------------------------------------
--
El_Salvador: IDIO2                             0.074
                                              (0.064)


Constant                                      2.512***
                                              (0.148)


--------------------------------------------------------------
--
Observations                                    450
R2                                             0.003
Adjusted R2                                    0.001
Residual Std. Error                       0.891 (df = 448)
F Statistic                             1.343 (df = 1; 448)
==============================================================
==
Note:                                     *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

El Salvador 2021:

```
==============================================================
===========
                                                Dependent
variable:
                                          ------------------------

------------
                                          El_Salvador: MIL10A
--------------------------------------------------------------
------------
El_Salvador: IDIO2                               0.125***
                                                (0.047)


Constant                                        2.114***
                                                (0.110)


--------------------------------------------------------------
------------
Observations                                      729
R2                                               0.010
Adjusted R2                                      0.008
Residual Std. Error                         0.938 (df = 727)
F Statistic                               7.049*** (df = 1;
727)
==============================================================
===========
Note:                                            *p<0.1;
**p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Honduras 2012:

```
================================================================
                                         Dependent variable:
                               --------------------------------
                                       Honduras: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Honduras: IDIO2                              0.075
                                            (0.073)

Constant                                   2.095***
                                            (0.173)

----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                  509
R2                                           0.002
Adjusted R2                                  0.0002
Residual Std. Error                    0.980 (df = 507)
F Statistic                          1.077 (df = 1; 507)
================================================================
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Honduras 2021:

```
======================================================================
======
                                         Dependent variable:
                               ----------------------------
------
                                       Honduras: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------------
------
Honduras: IDIO2                              0.021
                                            (0.062)

Constant                                   2.497***
                                            (0.162)

----------------------------------------------------------------------
------
Observations                                  589
R2                                           0.0002
Adjusted R2                                  -0.002
Residual Std. Error                    0.999 (df = 587)
F Statistic                          0.112 (df = 1; 587)
======================================================================
======
Note:                               *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Nicaragua 2012:

```
========================================================================
                                        Dependent variable:
                                     ----------------------------
                                          Nicaragua: MIL10A
------------------------------------------------------------------------
Nicaragua: IDIO2                              0.222***
                                               (0.049)

Constant                                      1.962***
                                               (0.103)

------------------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                    594
R2                                             0.034
Adjusted R2                                    0.032
Residual Std. Error                      0.843 (df = 592)
F Statistic                            20.552*** (df = 1; 592)
========================================================================
Note:                                  *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Nicaragua 2021:

```
========================================================================
=======
                                        Dependent variable:
                                     --------------------------
--------
                                          Nicaragua: MIL10A
------------------------------------------------------------------------
--------
Nicaragua: IDIO2                              0.143***
                                               (0.047)

Constant                                      2.368***
                                               (0.119)

------------------------------------------------------------------------
--------
Observations                                    788
R2                                             0.011
Adjusted R2                                    0.010
Residual Std. Error                      0.892 (df = 786)
F Statistic                             9.140*** (df = 1; 786)
========================================================================
=======
Note:                                  *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Costa Rica 2012:

```
=================================================================
                                        Dependent variable:
                                   ------------------------------
                                        Costa_Rica: MIL10A
-----------------------------------------------------------------
Costa_Rica: IDIO2                             0.078
                                             (0.055)

Constant                                    2.216***
                                             (0.118)

-----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                   613
R2                                            0.003
Adjusted R2                                   0.002
Residual Std. Error                     0.892 (df = 611)
F Statistic                           2.020 (df = 1; 611)
=================================================================
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Costa Rica 2021:

```
=================================================================
=========
                                        Dependent  variable:
                                   -------------------------
----------
                                        Costa_Rica: MIL10A
-----------------------------------------------------------------
----------
Costa_Rica: IDIO2                             0.038
                                             (0.049)

Constant                                    2.667***
                                             (0.122)

-----------------------------------------------------------------
----------
Observations                                   763
R2                                            0.001
Adjusted R2                                   -0.001
Residual Std. Error                     0.919 (df = 761)
F Statistic                           0.615 (df = 1; 761)
=================================================================
=========
Note:                              *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Panama 2012:

```
================================================================
                                         Dependent variable:
                                    ----------------------------
                                         Panama: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Panama: IDIO2                                 0.019
                                             (0.047)

Constant                                     2.064***
                                             (0.103)

----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                   601
R2                                            0.0003
Adjusted R2                                   -0.001
Residual Std. Error                      0.770 (df = 599)
F Statistic                            0.161 (df = 1; 599)
================================================================
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Panama 2021:

```
================================================================
==
                                         Dependent variable:
                                    ----------------------------
--
                                         Panama: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
--
Panama: IDIO2                                0.186***
                                             (0.050)

Constant                                     2.342***
                                             (0.131)

----------------------------------------------------------------
--
Observations                                   815
R2                                            0.017
Adjusted R2                                   0.015
Residual Std. Error                      0.891 (df = 813)
F Statistic                          13.802*** (df = 1; 813)
================================================================
==
Note:                               *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Colombia 2012:

```
================================================================
                                      Dependent variable:
                                -------------------------------
                                      Colombia: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Colombia: IDIO2                              0.012
                                            (0.052)

Constant                                    2.510***
                                            (0.103)


----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                  442
R2                                           0.0001
Adjusted R2                                  -0.002
Residual Std. Error                     0.780 (df = 440)
F Statistic                             0.050 (df = 1; 440)
================================================================
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Colombia 2021:

```
======================================================================
======
                                      Dependent variable:
                                --------------------------
------
                                      Colombia: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------------
------
Colombia: IDIO2                              0.060
                                            (0.059)

Constant                                    2.620***
                                            (0.155)


----------------------------------------------------------------------
------
Observations                                  667
R2                                           0.002
Adjusted R2                                  0.00003
Residual Std. Error                     0.966 (df = 665)
F Statistic                             1.023 (df = 1; 665)
======================================================================
======
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Ecuador 2012:

```
================================================================
                                     Dependent variable:
                              ------------------------------
                                      Ecuador: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Ecuador: IDIO2                             0.102*
                                          (0.057)

Constant                                  2.343***
                                          (0.118)

----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                546
R2                                         0.006
Adjusted R2                                0.004
Residual Std. Error                   0.884 (df = 544)
F Statistic                         3.210* (df = 1; 544)
================================================================
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Ecuador 2021:

```
================================================================
====
                                     Dependent variable:
                              ------------------------------
----
                                      Ecuador: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
----
Ecuador: IDIO2                             0.120**
                                          (0.052)

Constant                                  2.409***
                                          (0.134)

----------------------------------------------------------------
----
Observations                                726
R2                                         0.007
Adjusted R2                                0.006
Residual Std. Error                   0.915 (df = 724)
F Statistic                         5.421** (df = 1; 724)
================================================================
====
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Bolivia 2012:

```
==============================================================
                                      Dependent variable:
                              --------------------------------
                                      Bolivia: MIL10A
--------------------------------------------------------------
Bolivia: IDIO2                            0.090**
                                          (0.037)

Constant                                  2.383***
                                          (0.081)

--------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                910
R2                                         0.006
Adjusted R2                                0.005
Residual Std. Error                  0.746 (df = 908)
F Statistic                        5.851** (df = 1; 908)
==============================================================
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Bolivia 2021:

```
==============================================================
====
                                      Dependent variable:
                              --------------------------------
----
                                      Bolivia: MIL10A
--------------------------------------------------------------
----
Bolivia: IDIO2                            0.199***
                                          (0.049)

Constant                                  2.413***
                                          (0.127)

--------------------------------------------------------------
----
Observations                                808
R2                                         0.020
Adjusted R2                                0.019
Residual Std. Error                  0.871 (df = 806)
F Statistic                       16.752*** (df = 1; 806)
==============================================================
====
Note:                              *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Peru 2012:

```
================================================================
                                    Dependent variable:
                               -----------------------------
                                      Peru: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Peru: IDIO2                              0.047
                                        (0.058)

Constant                               2.371***
                                        (0.116)


----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                             563
R2                                       0.001
Adjusted R2                             -0.001
Residual Std. Error              0.820 (df = 561)
F Statistic                      0.654 (df = 1; 561)
================================================================
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Peru 2021:

```
================================================================
                                    Dependent variable:
                               -----------------------------
                                      Peru: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Peru: IDIO2                              0.069
                                        (0.052)

Constant                               2.438***
                                        (0.141)


----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                             947
R2                                       0.002
Adjusted R2                              0.001
Residual Std. Error              0.923 (df = 945)
F Statistic                      1.759 (df = 1; 945)
================================================================
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Chile 2012:

```
===============================================================
                                       Dependent variable:
                                 ------------------------------
                                         Chile: MIL10A
---------------------------------------------------------------
Chile: IDIO2                               0.034
                                          (0.055)

Constant                                 2.335***
                                          (0.125)


---------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                               555
R2                                        0.001
Adjusted R2                               -0.001
Residual Std. Error                  0.793 (df = 553)
F Statistic                         0.378 (df = 1; 553)
===============================================================
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Chile 2021:

```
=================================================================
                                       Dependent variable:
                                 --------------------------------
                                         Chile: MIL10A
-----------------------------------------------------------------
Chile: IDIO2                               0.002
                                          (0.045)

Constant                                 2.930***
                                          (0.110)


-----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                               788
R2                                        0.00000
Adjusted R2                               -0.001
Residual Std. Error                  0.851 (df = 786)
F Statistic                         0.002 (df = 1; 786)
=================================================================
Note:                            *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Uruguay 2012:

```
================================================================
                                      Dependent variable:
                              --------------------------------
                                      Uruguay: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Uruguay: IDIO2                             0.109
                                          (0.071)

Constant                                  2.402***
                                          (0.134)


----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                               315
R2                                         0.008
Adjusted R2                                0.004
Residual Std. Error               0.861 (df = 313)
F Statistic                       2.371 (df = 1; 313)
================================================================
Note:                         *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Uruguay 2021:

```
================================================================
====
                                      Dependent variable:
                              --------------------------------
----
                                      Uruguay: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
----
Uruguay: IDIO2                            0.0003
                                          (0.045)

Constant                                  2.953***
                                          (0.107)


----------------------------------------------------------------
----
Observations                               739
R2                                        0.00000
Adjusted R2                               -0.001
Residual Std. Error               0.826 (df = 737)
F Statistic                       0.0001 (df = 1; 737)
================================================================
====
Note:                              *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Brazil 2012:

```
================================================================
                                    Dependent variable:
                              ----------------------------
                              Brazil: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Brazil: IDIO2                           0.076
                                       (0.056)

Constant                               2.480***
                                       (0.109)


----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                             490
R2                                      0.004
Adjusted R2                             0.002
Residual Std. Error             0.850 (df = 488)
F Statistic                     1.854 (df = 1; 488)
================================================================
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Brazil 2021:

```
==================================================================
==
                                    Dependent variable:
                              ----------------------------
--
                              Brazil: MIL10A
------------------------------------------------------------------
--
Brazil: IDIO2                          -0.208***
                                       (0.041)

Constant                               3.428***
                                       (0.101)


------------------------------------------------------------------
--
Observations                             963
R2                                      0.026
Adjusted R2                             0.025
Residual Std. Error             0.948 (df = 961)
F Statistic                   25.624*** (df = 1; 961)
==================================================================
==
Note:                          *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Argentina 2012:

```
===============================================================
                                       Dependent variable:
                                  -----------------------------
                                       Argentina: MIL10A
---------------------------------------------------------------
Argentina: IDIO2                              0.094
                                             (0.061)

Constant                                    2.397***
                                             (0.127)

---------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                   479
R2                                            0.005
Adjusted R2                                   0.003
Residual Std. Error                     0.939 (df = 477)
F Statistic                            2.402 (df = 1; 477)
===============================================================
Note:                           *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Argentina 2021:

```
=============================================================
=======
                                    Dependent variable:
                               ---------------------------
--------
                                    Argentina: MIL10A
-------------------------------------------------------------
--------
Argentina: IDIO2                          0.184***
                                           (0.052)

Constant                                  2.339***
                                           (0.135)

-------------------------------------------------------------
--------
Observations                                715
R2                                         0.017
Adjusted R2                                0.016
Residual Std. Error                  0.939 (df = 713)
F Statistic                         12.360*** (df = 1;
713)
=============================================================
=======
Note:                             *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Dominican Republic 2012:

```
======================================================
                                  Dependent variable:
                             -------------------------
                                     DR: MIL10A
------------------------------------------------------
DR: IDIO2                              0.023
                                      (0.056)

Constant                             2.304***
                                      (0.130)


------------------------------------------------------
Observations                           368
R2                                    0.0004
Adjusted R2                           -0.002
Residual Std. Error             0.890 (df = 366)
F Statistic                   0.164 (df = 1; 366)
======================================================
Note:                      *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Dominican Republic 2021:

```
===========================================================
                                     Dependent variable:
                               --------------------------
                                        DR: MIL10A
-----------------------------------------------------------
DR: IDIO2                                 0.095*
                                         (0.052)

Constant                                2.210***
                                         (0.131)


-----------------------------------------------------------
Observations                              643
R2                                       0.005
Adjusted R2                              0.004
Residual Std. Error                1.020 (df = 641)
F Statistic                      3.426* (df = 1; 641)
===========================================================
Note:                        *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Haiti 2012:

```
==============================================================
                                        Dependent variable:
                                   ---------------------------
                                          Haiti: MIL10A
--------------------------------------------------------------
Haiti: IDIO2                                0.209***
                                            (0.069)

Constant                                    1.988***
                                            (0.158)

--------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                  672
R2                                           0.013
Adjusted R2                                  0.012
Residual Std. Error                   1.062 (df = 670)
F Statistic                        9.057*** (df = 1; 670)
==============================================================
Note:                             *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Haiti 2021:

```
================================================================
                                          Dependent variable:
                                     ---------------------------
                                            Haiti: MIL10A
----------------------------------------------------------------
Haiti: IDIO2                                  -0.257**
                                              (0.101)

Constant                                      2.877***
                                              (0.283)

----------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                    362
R2                                             0.018
Adjusted R2                                    0.015
Residual Std. Error                     1.165 (df = 360)
F Statistic                           6.507** (df = 1; 360)
================================================================
Note:                               *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Jamaica 2012:

```
===============================================================
                                    Dependent variable:
                              -----------------------------
                                    Jamaica: MIL10A
---------------------------------------------------------------
Jamaica: IDIO2                           0.035
                                        (0.049)

Constant                               2.197***
                                        (0.108)

---------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                              471
R2                                       0.001
Adjusted R2                             -0.001
Residual Std. Error             0.699 (df = 469)
F Statistic                     0.524 (df = 1; 469)
===============================================================
Note:                         *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Jamaica 2021:

```
===============================================================
====
                                    Dependent variable:
                              -----------------------------
----
                                    Jamaica: MIL10A
---------------------------------------------------------------
----
Jamaica: IDIO2                           0.052
                                        (0.051)

Constant                               2.823***
                                        (0.126)

---------------------------------------------------------------
----
Observations                              507
R2                                       0.002
Adjusted R2                             0.0001
Residual Std. Error             0.931 (df = 505)
F Statistic                     1.037 (df = 1; 505)
===============================================================
====
Note:                              *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```

Guyana 2012:

```
===================================================================
                                      Dependent variable:
                             --------------------------------------
                                        Guyana: MIL10A
-------------------------------------------------------------------
Guyana: IDIO2                               0.102**
                                            (0.052)

Constant                                   2.167***
                                            (0.109)

-------------------------------------------------------------------
Observations                                  580
R2                                           0.007
Adjusted R2                                  0.005
Residual Std. Error                    0.795 (df = 578)
F Statistic                         3.923** (df = 1; 578)
===================================================================
Note:                               *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
```

Guyana 2021:

```
=====================================================================
==
                                      Dependent variable:
                             --------------------------------------
--
                                        Guyana: MIL10A
---------------------------------------------------------------------
--
Guyana: IDIO2                               0.037
                                            (0.048)

Constant                                   2.745***
                                            (0.119)

---------------------------------------------------------------------
--
Observations                                  532
R2                                           0.001
Adjusted R2                                  -0.001
Residual Std. Error                    0.918 (df = 530)
F Statistic                          0.577 (df = 1; 530)
=====================================================================
==
Note:                                 *p<0.1; **p<0.05;
***p<0.01
```