

Daniel Indacochea: A Farewell to Army Segregation: The Effects of Racial Integration During the Korean War

Discussion

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Super-Short Summary

- Two papers sharing source of 'experimental' variation (integration of regiments), data and some metrics
- Paper 1: The effect of integration on Army efficiency as measured by survival rate of injured
 - integration measured by relation between timing of injuries among white and black soldiers
 - 1-dissimilarity index (nonstandard, but plausible) where unit is a day within longer time period
 - no evidence of an adverse effect on efficiency
- Paper 2: Social contact hypothesis; how integration affects white soldiers' acceptance of black people
 - primarily measured by integration of neighborhood where they end up living
 - also measured by probability of intermarriage
 - evidence supports positive effects

Effects on Efficiency

- Reasonable case that survival rate is a good measure
 - caveats
 - survival after leaving the unit
 - missing/captured presumed dead
 - Vietnam shows much higher proportion of non-combat deaths
 - Consider using injury rates (or injuries)
- Main econometric concern: survival rate increasing over time; (suggest dropping estimates without time dummies)
- Secondary concern: regression towards the mean
 - integration caused by large losses (blacks fill in)
 - prefer estimates with lagged dependent variable
 - but this causes econometric problems

Main Results: Paper 1

- Without lagged dependent variable, survival rates:
 - White wounded: up 3.1 pp; Black wounded down 1.3 pp (insignificant)
 - Overall: up 1.9 pp
 - Different samples, time periods (if weight by proportions up 2.5 [s.e. 1.1])
- With lagged dependent variable:
 - White wounded: up 2.3 pp; Black wounded down 3.6 pp
 - Overall, weighting results: up 1.5 pp (s.e. .8)
- Perhaps fairer to conclude no evidence of adverse effect on this measure of efficiency. Still interesting:
 - integration motivated by desire for increased efficiency
 - but not necessarily by this metric
 - reasonable to be concerned that black and white soldiers might take fewer risks to save each other
 - but repeated game

Paper 2

- Positive effect on integration of neighborhood
 - Calculate (dis)similarity index by zip code using block as observation
 - Normalize by how many standard deviations (within CBSA) from mean
 - Why this metric?
 - 02493 (Weston) 2.0% black
 - 02140 (North Cambridge) 17.0%
 - Also, be careful about conclusions from results for blacks
 - often larger than for whites and never statistically different
- Positive effect on intermarriage among white men
 - Sample unfortunately limited (664 observations)
 - This generation: % white married men married to black women .1-.2%

Concluding Remarks

- Paper 1 solid
 - but be careful not to oversell
 - no adverse effect is a fine result
- Paper 2 promising
 - concentrate on residential result
 - probably use % black in zip code and/or census block
 - can use CBSA fixed effects if so desired