

Salience at the intersection: Latina/o identities across different campus contexts

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Introduction

- Latina/os comprise 16.5% of all college enrollments
- Population growth not accompanied with more profound understanding of Latina/o identity
- Latina/os are heterogeneous population – there is even variability in racial identification
- Important to know how students think about their own identities because it shapes how they experience college

Purpose

- Employ an intersectionality framework to examine the salience of different social identities across a variety of campus contexts
- Testing Distinctiveness Theory (McGuire, 1984): distinctive traits more salient

Data and Sample

- 2010-2011 Diverse Learning Environments survey
- 34 institutions
- N=4,200 students
 - Mexican-American 61%
 - Puerto Rican 2.6%
 - Central American 8.4%
 - Other Latina/o 28%

Measures

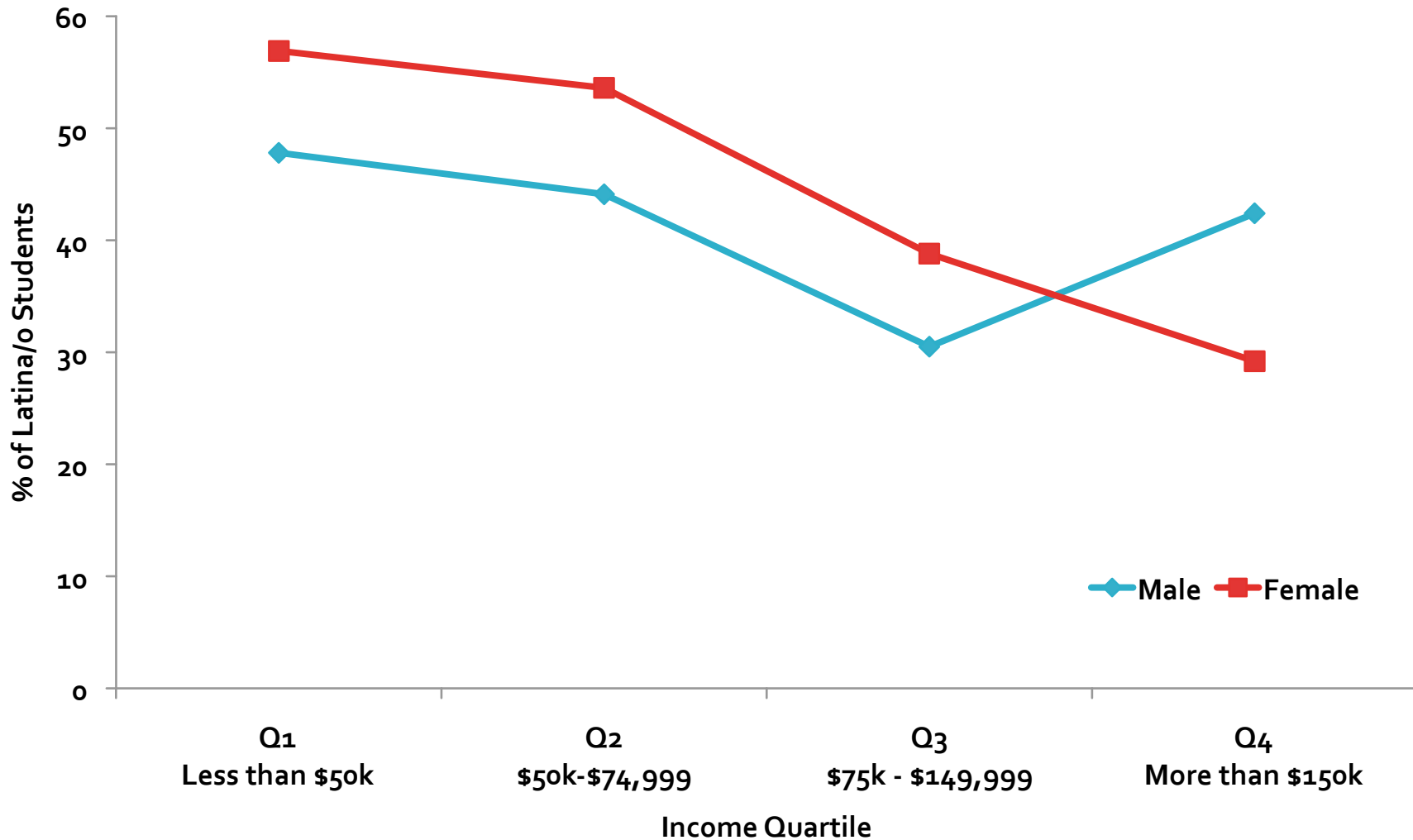
- Salience
 - “How often do you think about your (social identity)?”
 - Race, Class Gender, Sexual Orientation, Citizenship
- Intersectionality
 - Ethnicity, generation status, citizenship status, income, and sexual orientation by gender
- Context
 - Percentage of full-time undergraduate students that are URM, Latina/o, female, Latina female, and federal Pell Grant recipients

Salience Across Intersecting Identities

- Race: 47.3% have high salience
 - 57.5% of Central American females
 - 52.5% of first-generation Latina/os
- Class: 49.3% have high salience
 - 59.6% of Central American females
 - 53.9% of Mexican American females
 - 46.2% of Central American males
- Citizenship: 20.2% have high salience
 - 77.4% of Latina/os with Other Citizenship

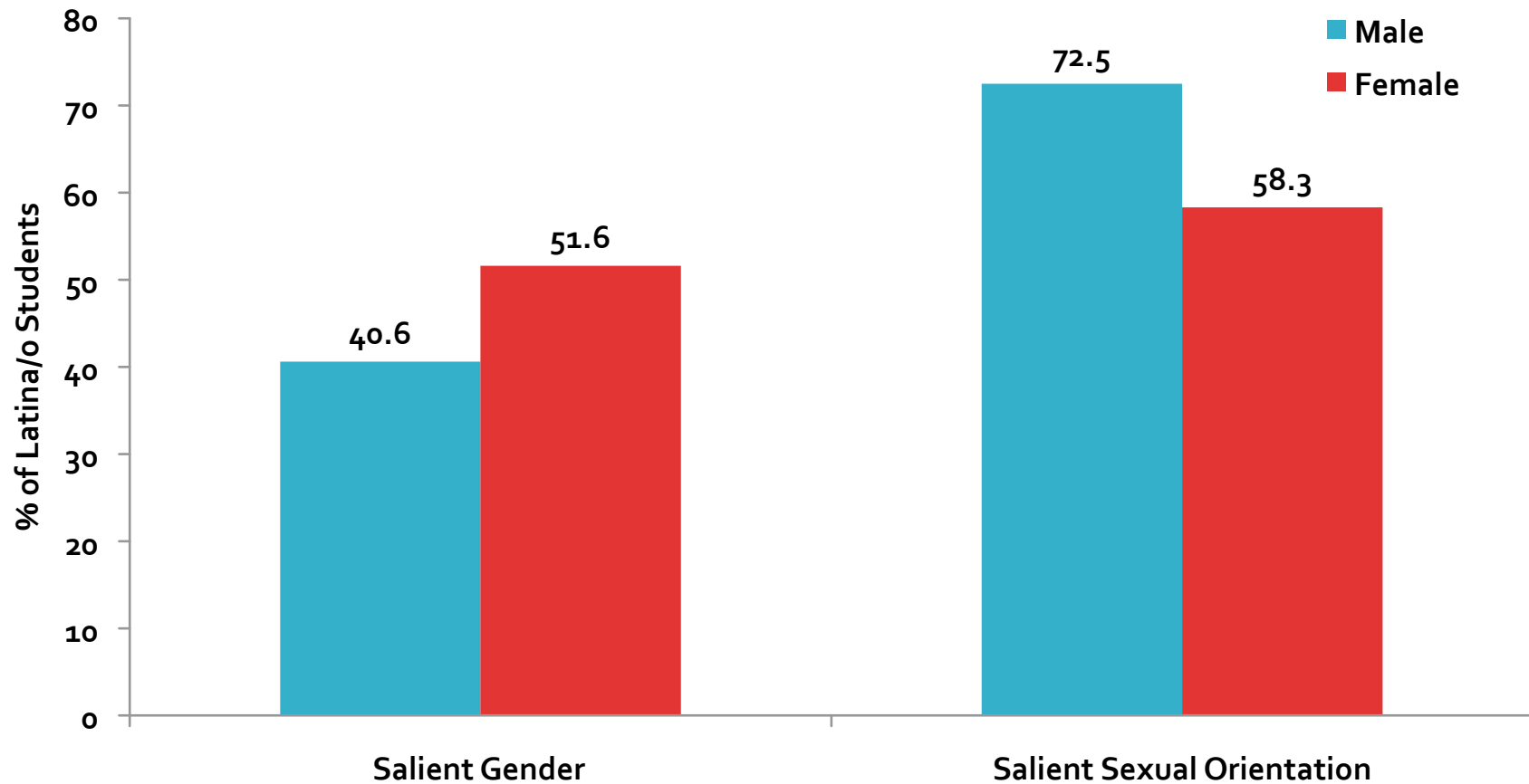
Salience Across Intersecting Identities

Percent Indicating High Class Salience, by Income Quartile



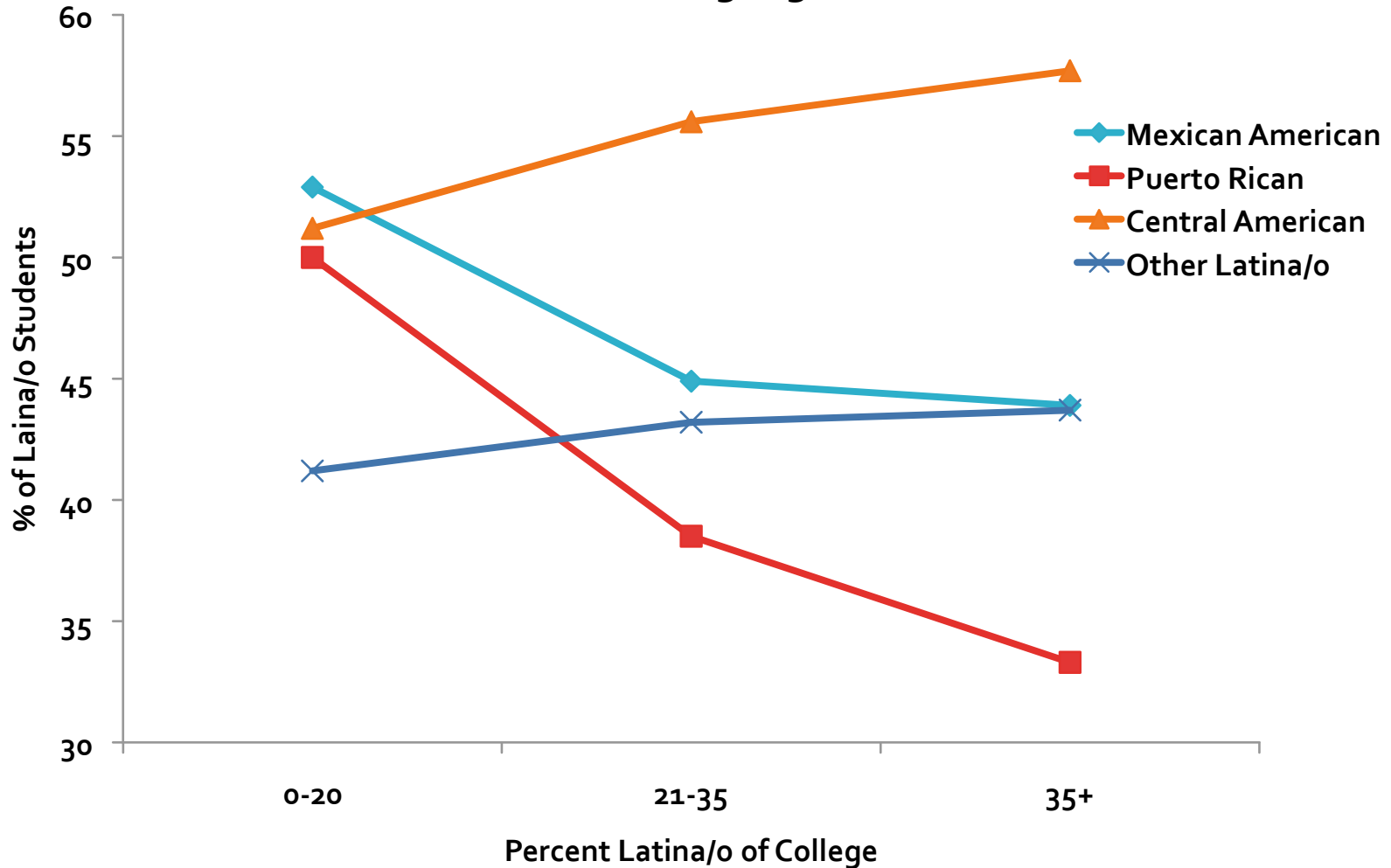
Salience Across Intersecting Identities

Percent of LGBT Students Indicating High Salience of Gender and Sexual Orientation

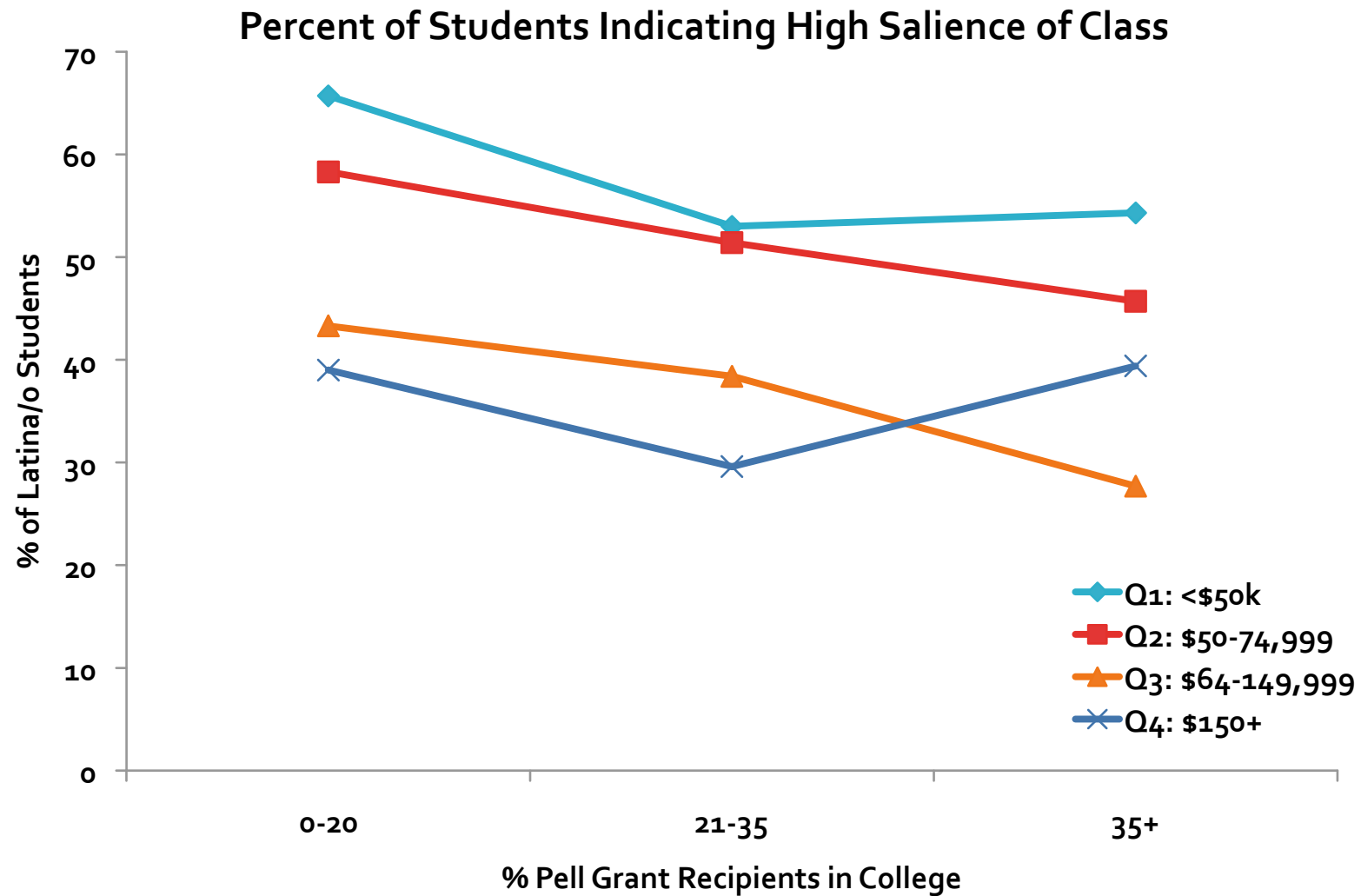


Salience Across Different Contexts

Percent of Students Indicating High Salience of Race

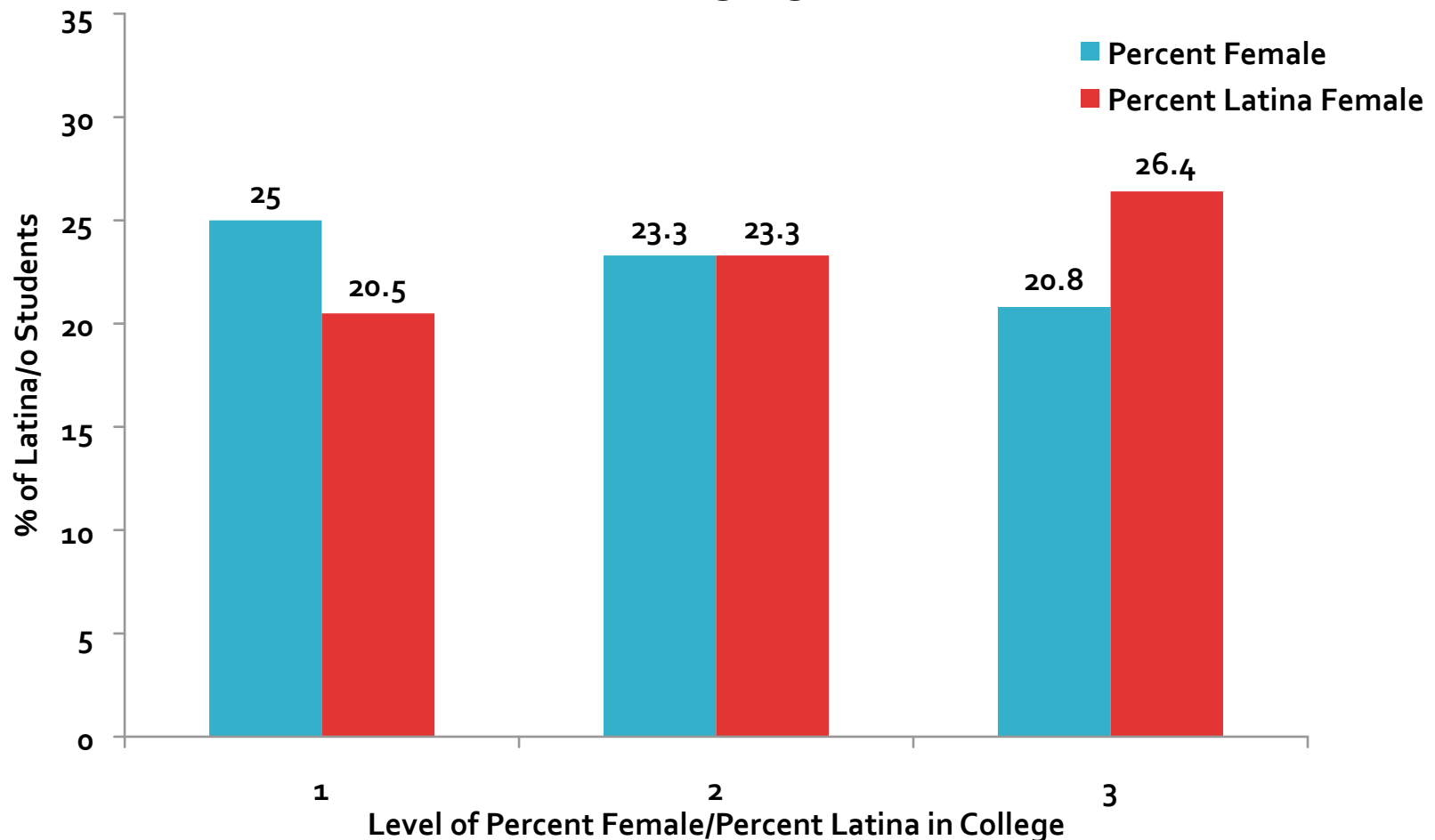


Salience Across Different Contexts



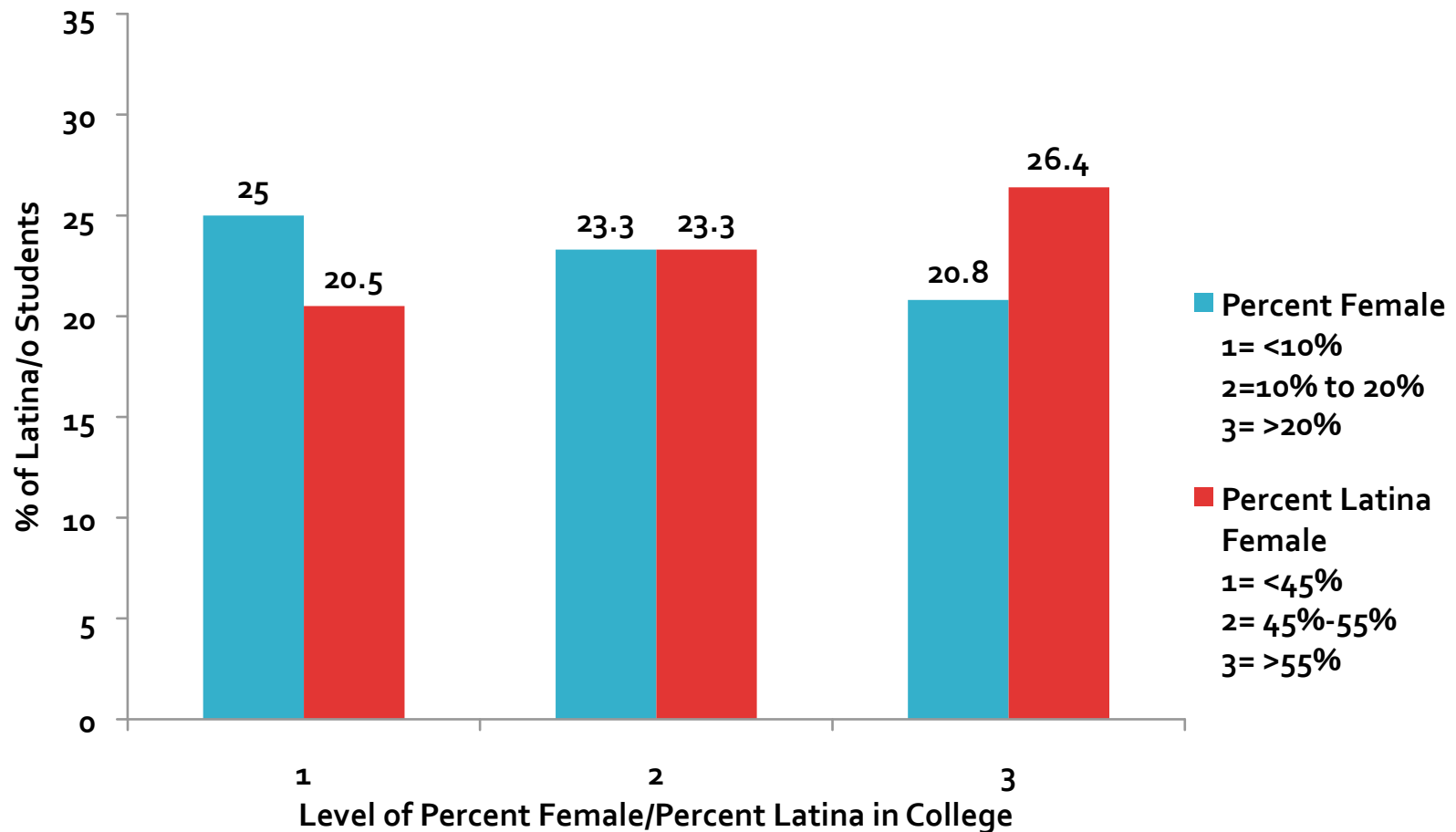
Salience Across Different Contexts

Percent of Males Indicating High Gender Salience



Salience Across Different Contexts

Percent of Males Indicating High Gender Salience



Conclusion

- There is support for distinctiveness theory, but there is also a phenomenon of societal underrepresentation – all of the less privileged identities had higher salience
- Exploring intersections and salience can reveal sources of strength or vulnerability
- Intragroup differences are important to consider because they may determine educational outcomes