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Exploring the Intersections of Group Consciousness, Denial of Racism, and Traditional Machismo: Implications in Contemporary Politics

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**Exploring the Intersections of Group Consciousness, Denial of Racism, and
Traditional Machismo: Implications in Contemporary Politics**

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Departmental Honors Thesis

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1 April 2024

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Abstract

In recent decades, there has been an influx in academic focus on the pan-ethnic identity of Latinos as a political group. Current scholars demonstrate correlations between high denials of racism and low group consciousness as markers of conservative ideology. However, very few have examined the rationale behind these correlations. In my study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with Latinos who both did and did not vote for former President Donald Trump in the 2016 elections. I aim to discover the degree of group consciousness, denial of racism, and machismo attitudes within these individuals. By examining these factors through an intersectional lens, the study seeks to uncover nuanced insights into the diverse motivations behind Latino support for a candidate who often faced criticism for his positions on immigration and racial issues. I expect to find that a low sense of group consciousness, a high sense of denial of racism, and a high sense of machismo all contribute to an individual's likelihood of voting for a conservative, anti-immigrant candidate.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank those who have helped me on this academic journey, it is a feat I never could have imagined for myself.

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Introduction

Trump's 2016 presidential campaign was marked by his anti-immigrant and anti-Latino rhetoric. He famously announced his candidacy by claiming that Mexican immigrants are “bringing drugs, they're bringing crime. They're rapists and some, I assume, are good people,”. Throughout his campaign, Trump continued to make derogatory remarks about Latinos, such as proposing to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border and promising to deport millions of undocumented immigrants. Despite his hateful rhetoric, Trump's victory in the 2016 presidential election came as a surprise to many, driven partly by a large proportion of about 18-29% of U.S. Latinos who voted for Trump in the 2016 presidential election.¹ (Barreto et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2016).

In this paper, I will be utilizing the Latino pan-ethnic identity. This term has developed over recent decades. In 1989, the Latino National Political Survey asked U.S. Latinos about their connection to one another and found that most saw themselves through the lens of their nation of origin. This personal assertion persists today with 69% of Latinos answering that “U.S. Hispanics have many different cultures” (Pew Research Center, 2012). This idea of connection in the U.S. Latino population has not been claimed in personal use yet there is a certain cohesion found in political activity. This paper will be looking at U.S. Latinos through a political lens, one in which they have a shared identity to act politically. The Latino pan-ethnic political unity can be seen in the pattern of many leaning progressive and in support of more government engagement in solving society's problems (Segura, 2012). For the clarity and cohesiveness of this paper, I will be using it.

¹ Percentage varies based on the data source referenced, I have included both for the reader to ascertain the scope.

The inception of Trump's political campaign took the United States by storm. His untraditional rhetoric and mannerisms made many flock to him but turned others away. One of his biggest polarizing characteristics was his rhetoric surrounding Mexicans and their inherent inferiority in the United States. So much so did Trump repeat and rely on this hate speech that it became a pillar of his presidency. Despite this overt manner of racism, Trump continually claims he is “the least racist person you’ve ever encountered”. This disconnect between the objective analysis of his words and the way he characterizes their meaning perfectly encapsulates the enigmatic power he holds over his followers. To his followers, Trump does not exist as a mortal abiding by the social contract. Instead, Trump operates in a world of his own creation, where what he says becomes fact. In playing by his own rules, he displayed to his followers that he was a force to be reckoned with. Unfortunately, his neglect of the rules included bolstering bigotry and xenophobia.

Although Trump was racist to many minority groups, Mexicans and the border wall became a hot-button issue during his remaining time on the campaign trail and into his presidency. Despite this hateful and seemingly off-putting argument, many Mexican-Americans saw their future president in this man. In the past several decades there has been a movement of Latinos towards the Democratic Party. This is the result of overtly racist policies and actions taken by the Republican Party such as California Proposition 187 and Arizona’s SB 1070. Both looked to put strict restrictions on U.S. citizens who were helping undocumented immigrants, among many other restrictions. This blatant chastisement of the immigrant experience was a galvanizing issue for many U.S. Latinos. Of the 60 million Latinos in the U.S., 20 million are immigrants and 19 million have at least one parent who is an immigrant (Pew Research Center, 2020). These continual attacks from the Republican Party struck personal nerves with the

majority of U.S. Latinos leading to a flight from the party and a realignment with the Democratic Party. In recent decades there has been a strong lean towards the Democratic Party (Segura, 2012).

Within the context of the history that led many U.S. Latinos to be a part of the Democratic Party, it came as a surprising turn of events that such a large portion of the voting bloc opted for an overtly conservative anti-immigrant candidate. We see surprising gains during the 2016 presidential election not only against the Democratic Party but within Trump's respective party. In the 2016 presidential election, Trump (28%) was up one percentage point from Romney (27%) in 2012 (National Election Pool 2016). Conversely, Clinton (66%) dropped five percentage points in 2016 from Obama (77%) in 2012 (NEP, 2016). This shift raises the question of what the cause of this change in such a short period was.

With the rise of Trump, there has been an influx of academic literature dedicated to his character and preeminence in the political arena. Much of this literature surrounds the non-Hispanic White voters who found an outlet for their fear and hatred through him. One of the biggest indicators of voting for Trump was a shared perception of prejudices (Smith & Hanley, 2018). On the other hand, there is much research demonstrating that U.S. Latinos who did not vote for Trump did so because of his racial discrimination and a feeling of immigrant-linked fate (Ocampo et al., 2019). Although there is much literature to be found about these two groups, there is little written about U.S. Latinos who did vote for Trump. I will be using the dearth of literature investigating the motives of Latinos who voted for Trump in the 2016 election as my starting point. I will be theory-testing three existing U.S. Latino predictive voting factors. These include group consciousness, denial of racism, and traditional machismo.

Literature Review

Theories

Initial arguments surrounding the party affiliation of the Latino community were lacking in comprehensive research and relied heavily on observation. Specifically, the understanding of Latino affiliation with the Republican party. Much research explaining the conservative leanings of some Latinos left it at just that, researchers claimed that some Latinos voted for conservative candidates because they were registered republicans, which completely negates the diversity and complexity of the pan-ethnic identity of Latinos. More specifically, early research pushed the narrative that Latinos are tied to their self-chosen political party, and that is the only indicator regarding the amount of engagement and their decisions at the polls. There have been many articles to dispute this, showing that a multi-identity partisan scale reveals much more about the individual than self-placement in an ideological identity (Huddy, et al. 2015).

In recent years there have become more fine-tuned competing theories that stem from the idea that Latinos, like non-Hispanic Whites, voted for a conservative, anti-immigrant candidate because of a lack of perception that his words and actions were racist. More critically it was found that the bigger indicator of voting for Trump amongst Latinos was if they held some sort of hostility towards other members of their group (Alamillo, 2019). The first theory finds its basis in the idea that, unlike the experience of Black people as a group in America, Latinos do not have a singularly unifying linked fate. However, research has demonstrated a feeling of linked fate among Latinos who are immigrants or are closely tied to immigrants. This feeling of kinship among some Latinos slowly fades in the later generations as they no longer bear witness to the struggle of immigrants, specifically undocumented immigrants, in the United States (Feigenbaum et al., 2019). Conversely, continual immigration poses the problem of attributing

characteristics to an ever-fluctuating and evolving group. This is due to the new immigrants crossing the border every year. With the inclusion of new immigrants comes a lack of understanding of the established racial climate and history of Latino discrimination (Florida, 2017). Many new Latinos in the United States have not lived through historical moments that define many Latino voting behaviors, such as the 1968 East L.A. Walkouts and the threat of California Proposition 187. Because some Latinos have not experienced this racism in an up close and personal way, they are quicker to disregard the rhetoric as racist.

The second competing theory highlights that the decision of some Latinos to vote for Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election may have been driven, in part, by a desire to assimilate into the dominant culture and avoid discrimination. This phenomenon can be explained by Social Identity Theory, which posits that individuals derive their sense of self from their membership in various social groups and that they will often seek to maintain or enhance their status within these groups (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). In the case of Latinos who voted for Trump, the fear of social rejection from the dominant White culture may have motivated them to support a candidate who was openly hostile towards immigrants and minorities. This fear of ostracism can be seen as a form of social identity threat, which occurs when an individual's membership in a particular social group is challenged or devalued by others. Assimilation can be seen as a coping mechanism for dealing with social identity threats, as it allows individuals to conform to the norms and expectations of the dominant culture in order to gain acceptance and avoid negative consequences. However, this process can also result in internalized racism and a loss of connection to one's cultural heritage.

Latinos, Race, and Citizenship

To understand Latinos as a group, it is important to understand how their establishment in the United States came about. A complex and dynamic history starts with the annexation of Northern Mexico during the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) when tens of thousands of Mexicans were turned into U.S. citizens overnight. Under the treaty, they were granted White legal status, yet this was not implemented, and their social status rendered them in a state of limbo making them neither “white” nor “black” (Gómez, 2018). For much time after this, Mexicans and other Hispanic individuals existed in a state of limbo regarding their identity in the United States. Within the next century, a more diverse group of Latinos entered the United States. In 1899 Puerto Rico became part of the United States after Spain ceded it through the loss of the Spanish-American War. Then Puerto Ricans gained U.S. citizenship status in 1917 through the Jones-Shafroth Act, leading to increased migration to the mainland in search of economic opportunities. New York City became a major destination for Puerto Rican migrants, forming vibrant communities in neighborhoods like East Harlem and the South Bronx. Although Puerto Ricans enjoyed citizen status there was still much debate about the second-class nature of their existence within the United States.

It wasn't until 1936 that the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) pressured the U.S. government to reclassify the label of “Mexican” to “White” on the U.S. census; these changes were reflected in the 1940 census. Mexicans were legally recognized as White in the United States, which was intended to encourage Mexican immigration while maintaining the White majority (Gómez-Quñones, 2010). As well as recognizing that U.S. Latinos are not a monolith with one designated race and to circumvent a loss of rights when people are classified as non-White (Molina, 2010). Although this decision was seen as a vie for

equality some argued it was an erasure of a connection to cultural heritage. Even so far as contributing to a phenomenon among some Latinos known as "passing," which involves identifying as White to gain access to the benefits and privileges associated with whiteness in the United States (Gómez, 2019). However, this recognition did not necessarily translate to social acceptance or inclusion for Mexicans and other Latino groups.

In the United States, Latinos have been understood as a group with diverse racial and ethnic identities. This complexity is reflected in the fact that Latinos were not included as a distinct category on the US census until 1970 (Borjas, 2017). This delayed recognition of Latinos as a distinct group reinforces the idea that Latino identity in the United States has been shaped by a history of marginalization and exclusion. The term Latino is not a racial group, rather it is an ethnic identity. Over the years Latinos have been grappling with their identity within the United States.

The history of Latinos in the United States demonstrates the complexity of racial and ethnic identity in a country that has historically been defined by a White majority. The recognition of Latinos as a distinct group and the evolution of their relationship with Whiteness is an ongoing process that continues to shape the experiences of Latino individuals and communities in the United States. This relationship with the majority group was fraught with the question of Latinos as a racial or ethnic group. The definition of race is based on qualities that are deemed inherent to a particular skin color² (Barrera, 2008). Since this rhetoric has not necessarily been seen around the conversation of Latinos, I fail to choose this definition of the greater U.S. Latino population. Instead, I will be highlighting the more fitting idea of a pan-ethnic identity surrounding the U.S. Latinos. This definition

²Race is a social construct with identity assigned based on rules made by society. There are no inherent biological differences between people of different skin colors.

It is evident that the Latinos who voted for Trump in the 2016 presidential election did not feel his rhetoric was racist and did feel animosity towards other members of their group (Alamillo, 2019). What has not been explored is why there is a lack of perceived racism and, at times, overt hostility towards those in the same group. Likewise, previous research has demonstrated that low Latino identity and group consciousness leads to conservative ideology yet fails to demonstrate the underlying reason (Nauman, et al., 2017). This opens the conversation to how some Latino voters may be aligning themselves with the dominant culture, represented by Trump, which could bring them social and economic benefits. In this sense, voting for Trump could be seen as a way of assimilating into the dominant culture and rejecting their own cultural identity in pursuit of "Whiteness" as a means of social advancement.

Traditional Machismo and Caballerismo

As he was overtly racist, Trump was also overtly sexist. Yet Trump's bigotry, regardless of what form it takes, has a unique quality of being vehemently denied by the speaker. This is why I chose to include this facet in my research, specifically as there has been a dearth of literature surrounding how those U.S. Latinos who voted for him felt on this front. I look to see how Latin American masculine culture is passed down from the nation of origin to Latinos who immigrate to the U.S. and who are born here. As well as how the dominant gender roles in the U.S. interact with these norms that are brought across the border.

Social factors, such as cultural norms, socioeconomic status, education, family dynamics, and access to resources, significantly influence how men fulfill gender roles. In traditional Latino cultures, Traditional Machismo traits such as strength, dominance, and assertiveness are often emphasized, leading men to feel pressure to conform to these expectations for social approval

and respect. However, individuals' adherence to these norms varies based on personal beliefs, upbringing, and exposure to diverse perspectives. Socioeconomic status plays a role, with men from lower socioeconomic backgrounds facing additional pressure to conform to traditional notions of machismo as a means of asserting their masculinity amidst economic challenges. Education and exposure to diverse perspectives can influence men's perceptions of masculinity, with access to education and opportunities for personal growth enabling men to question traditional gender norms and explore alternative expressions of masculinity. Family dynamics also shape gender roles, as parental expectations and reinforcement of gendered behaviors impact how men perceive and enact their masculinity from an early age. Overall, social factors interact to shape how men fulfill gender roles, highlighting the complexity of masculinity and the importance of understanding diverse experiences within Latino communities.

The main piece of literature that drives this paper's understanding of Latin American gender roles focuses on men, specifically the social phenomenon that is typically dubbed "machismo". Although this concept has been fraught with disagreement and contradiction, I use a comprehensive scale that has reduced the actions associated with this label into two categories: Traditional Machismo and Caballerismo. Traditional Machismo is defined as the negative aspects associated with the roles typical of men including aggressive/antisocial behavior, an inability to feel empathy, and the use of wishful thinking as a coping mechanism (Arciniega et al., 2008). Conversely, Caballerismo is defined as positive behavior and emotional connectedness including affiliation, identification with ethnicity, and problem-solving coping mechanisms (Arciniega et al., 2008). A higher score on both scales was associated with greater ties to the nation of origin, in this case, Mexico. As the paper references, this is because traits associated with both facets of machismo are cornerstones of Mexican culture.

I plan to assert myself in the literature by engaging in conversations with individuals to test the theories discussed earlier and to explore potential discrepancies between scholarly perspectives on behavioral patterns and participants' own interpretations of these patterns. By amplifying participants' voices and understanding their perspectives, I aim to shift the focus away from solely ascribing intent based on empirical evidence and instead prioritize the subjective meaning that individuals attribute to their actions. This emphasis on participants' understanding of their actions will be a central aspect of my contribution to the literature, allowing for a more nuanced interpretation of behavioral patterns within the context of their lived experiences.

My Argument

I argue that a lack of connection to Latino identity, a strong denial of racism, and strong feelings of Traditional Machismo lead to voting for a conservative, anti-immigrant political candidate. I will explain the dependent variable of whether Latinos supported or opposed Trump in 2016 by looking at the interactions of three independent variables. They are as follows: the degree of Latino Group Consciousness, the belief in the degree of racism in U.S. society, and the degree of traditional machismo attitudes.

Group Consciousness

Group consciousness refers to the cognitive aspect of group attachment. Specifically, an individual draws part of their social identity from the group to which they belong. This also makes the individual aware of the group's position within society. The individual then feels a strong attachment and pull to their particular social group. The group in question is Latinos, I define Latinos using the pan-ethnic definition agreed upon by many scholars. Pan-ethnic identity

in the case of Latinos refers to a shared sense of identity and solidarity that transcends specific national or regional backgrounds within the Latino community. It encompasses a broader, inclusive identification with being Latino or Hispanic rather than solely identifying with one's specific country of origin. (Segura, 2012).

In viewing oneself as an individual who is not part of a specific community, one can create a divide between what is best for the group and what is best for the self. Distinguishing that one's sense of well-being is not derived from the community's sense of well-being distances oneself from a Latino ethnic identity. This allows the dismissal of anti-immigrant comments from a candidate. Consequently, individuals who do not see themselves, their family, and their community as "targets" of Trump's attacks may disassociate themselves from other Latinos and begin to agree with Trump. This trend is typically observed as Latinos spend more time in the United States. The later the generation, the more likely they are to assimilate into American culture (Feigenbaum et al., 2019). By departing from their family's country of origin and existing in the United States, these individuals feel less allegiance to their elders and more towards the dominant culture in which they were brought up. Specifically, when there is a lack of cultural influence from their elders' country of origin, for example, if a Latino does not speak Spanish, celebrate certain customs, or observe certain holidays, they have lost robust connections to the parts that make them feel connected to their Latino identity (Lopez et al., 2017). This schism seen more in the later generations of Latinos gives a good understanding of a feeling of disconnect to the Latino identity and in turn a low group consciousness.

Conversely, Latinos who hold a high sense of Latino identity are more likely to want to uplift the entirety of the social group. These feelings are cultivated through a strong connection to one's Latino identity which is brought about through keeping Latinos cultural traditions alive

as well as being part of newer immigrated families. A strong sense of Latino identity fosters a sense of belonging, pride, and cultural preservation. It creates a foundation for individuals to draw strength from their shared experiences and to build networks of support within the community. This connection to the Latino identity often translates into a desire to celebrate and promote Latino culture, language, traditions, and values. Moreover, a high sense of Latino identity can serve as a protective factor against acculturation pressures and assimilation into mainstream society. It helps individuals maintain a connection to their roots and resist the erasure of their cultural heritage. This, in turn, contributes to the preservation and revitalization of Latino cultural practices and customs.

Denial of Racism

The second concept, belief in the degree of racism in the United States, is defined as a denial of racism. This is seen as a desire for whiteness through claims that racism is no longer a problem in the United States. Previous research done regarding those who supported Donald Trump in the 2016 and 2020 elections reveals that Latinos have higher rates of denial of racism (Alamillo, 2019). This allows those Latinos to look past the racist rhetoric employed by an anti-immigrant candidate, such as Trump.

Research suggests that some Latinos may engage in denial of racism as a psychological defense mechanism to cope with the discomfort of acknowledging and confronting racism. This denial can manifest in various ways, including minimizing or ignoring instances of racism or attributing discriminatory behavior to factors other than systemic racism, such as individual actions or economic issues. Consequently, Latinos who deny racism may believe that they are exempt from discrimination or that racism does not personally affect them. These beliefs may

lead them to support politicians like Trump, despite accusations of racism leveled against them (Alamillo, 2019).

One factor that can contribute to this denial is the lack of a unified narrative or shared experiences of discrimination within the Latino community. Unlike other racial and ethnic groups, such as African Americans who have a long history of systemic racism and oppression, Latinos have diverse immigration experiences and legal statuses. For instance, Cuban immigrants have often enjoyed relatively easier immigration processes and Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens by birthright. However, Mexicans have many barriers to entry through copious forms, long wait times, and high costs. This variation in experiences can lead to a lack of linked fate, where some Latinos may not identify strongly with the experiences of discrimination faced by other Latino subgroups.

Another contributing factor is the influence of cultural values and narratives that emphasize hard work and individualism, often associated with the "bootstrap theory." This belief system suggests that individuals can overcome adversity and achieve success solely through their efforts and merit. Consequently, some Latinos may perceive that their advancement and success depend primarily on their individual hard work and fail to recognize the systemic barriers and discrimination that can hinder their progress.

Furthermore, limited awareness of the broader social and historical factors that perpetuate racial inequalities can contribute to this perspective. Some Latinos may not fully grasp the extent to which systemic racism operates in areas such as education, employment, housing, and criminal justice. Consequently, they may overlook or underestimate the impact of these structural barriers on their own experiences and the experiences of other Latinos.

Some Latinos have low denial of racism because they possess a heightened awareness of structural racism and racist relations in the United States. This awareness often stems from various factors, such as firsthand experiences, historical knowledge, and the changing racial climate in the country.

Moreover, Latinos who are knowledgeable about pivotal historical events that have shaped the Latino experience in the United States tend to have a deeper understanding of the systemic nature of racism. They may be familiar with historical struggles for civil rights, such as the Chicano movement, the fight for farmworkers' rights led by figures like Cesar Chavez, or the ongoing battle for immigrant rights. These historical events highlight the systemic barriers and injustices faced by Latinos and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of racism as a structural issue rather than viewing it as isolated incidents.

Furthermore, the younger generation of Latinos, particularly those who were born and raised in the United States, often possess a heightened awareness of the racial climate. Growing up in an era marked by heightened discussions of race, social media activism, and movements like Black Lives Matter, they are more attuned to the structural inequities and systemic racism prevalent in society. The pervasive nature of racial discourse and social movements has made it increasingly difficult to deny or overlook the existence of racism.

Traditional Machismo

The last concept is traditional machismo attitudes, this is a form of performative hypermasculinity sometimes found in Latin American culture that includes controlling, aggressive behaviors, and being demeaning toward women (Arciniega et al., 2008). This study was done on a group of Mexican-American men and was extended to apply to non-Mexican men, finding similar results.

When identifying the women and men who voted for Trump it was found that the influence of sexism and racial resentment cut across gender and affected individuals from diverse backgrounds and political affiliations. The study highlights the importance of considering these biases as key determinants of voting behavior, shedding light on the complexities of political decision-making. By identifying the strong sexism that is pervasive among Trump's voters, the door is opened to understanding the reasoning for these feelings.

Latinos who adhere to traditional machismo ideas may be attracted to the way Trump presents himself. They may identify with his portrayal as a strong, authoritative figure who exudes power and dominance. Trump's self-presentation as a "boss" or "CEO" resonates with the traditional machismo ideals of being in charge and exerting control over others.

In Traditional Machismo, there is an emphasis on hierarchical power structures and the expectation that men should occupy positions of authority. Trump's public persona, characterized by his confident and assertive demeanor, may align with the traditional expectations of male leadership that some Latinos who embrace traditional machismo hold.

Additionally, Trump's outspokenness and confrontational style may appeal to Latinos who associate these traits with strength and toughness. Some individuals who subscribe to traditional machismo notions perceive these qualities as desirable attributes of masculinity. Trump's willingness to challenge opponents, make controversial statements, and even mock those who threaten his position may be seen as signs of strength and assertiveness, which can resonate with individuals who hold traditional machismo values.

There are several reasons for perspective such as cultural upbringing and socialization and how they play a significant role in shaping individual values and beliefs. Traditional gender roles and expectations can be deeply ingrained in cultural and familial contexts, and passed down

through generations. In some cases, these beliefs are reinforced by societal norms and cultural practices that emphasize traditional gender roles.

Additionally, the desire to maintain cultural identity and preserve cultural heritage can contribute to the perpetuation of traditional machismo beliefs. For some Latinos, adherence to traditional gender norms may be seen as a way to preserve cultural traditions and maintain a sense of continuity with their cultural heritage. There may be a sense of pride and connection to one's roots associated with embracing traditional gender roles.

Latinos also hold low levels of traditional machismo. Education and exposure to diverse ideas and perspectives can play a crucial role in challenging and transforming traditional beliefs. Access to education, exposure to different cultures, and engagement with broader social networks can broaden individuals' perspectives and lead to the questioning of traditional gender norms, including machismo. Likewise, with each new generation, there is often a gradual shift away from traditional beliefs and practices. Younger generations of Latinos, particularly those born or raised in the United States, may be influenced by the values and norms of the broader society, which tend to be more egalitarian. The process of acculturation can lead to a reevaluation of traditional gender roles and a rejection of machismo ideals. Because of this, the empowerment of women within the Latino community and beyond has contributed to a reevaluation of traditional gender roles. As women gain more opportunities for education, career advancement, and leadership positions, they challenge and dismantle traditional notions of male dominance and female subordination.

Research Design

My control variables will include nativity or generation, age, gender, educational status, religiosity, and political ideology. In doing this I hope to obtain the most diverse and representative sample possible. To measure my independent concepts, I will be instating skeletal structures of previously used measurements from different researchers. To measure my concept of group consciousness I will be using Sanchez's (2006) three-dimensional approach and the questions that accompany each dimension. The dimensions are the general identification with a group, an acuity regarding that group's relative position in society, and the desire to partake in collective activities that focus on improving the situation of that group (Gurin Miller, 1980; Padilla, 1985; Garcia, 2003). I will be measuring an individual's strength or weakness to these through an open dialogue with my interviewee. To measure my concept of denial of racism I will be using the three-statement scale by Schaffner, et al. (2018), these were previously accompanied by a six-point strength scale, but I will be altering it to reflect a more dynamic scale that can be used in a conversational setting. To measure my concept of traditional machismo I will be using the "The Machismo Measure" designed by Arciniega et al. (2008) and create an outline of topics of conversation I will guide my interviewees to talk about. I will be separating the questions that were proven to operationalize the negative/hyper-masculine side of machismo, traditional machismo, from the positive/emotionally connected side, Caballerismo. This is because I am only testing for a high or low amount of Traditional Machismo, not Caballerismo.

Hypothesis

The primary theory that drives this analysis is that the degree of group consciousness, degree of denial of racism, and degree of traditional machismo shape whether or not a Latino supported Trump during the 2016 presidential election.

H₁: Latinos who have low ethnic identity are more likely to support conservative anti-immigrant candidates.

H₂: Latinos who deny the existence of societal discrimination are more likely to support conservative anti-immigrant candidates.

H₃: Latinos who have a high degree of traditional machismo are more likely to support conservative authoritarian candidates.

Case Selection and Rationale

I will be studying the singular case of the U.S. 2016 presidential election. I chose this case because it is theoretically more interesting than the 2020 presidential election. The 2016 presidential election has more to do with personal identity and characteristics within politics while the 2020 presidential election was largely driven by economic stability in the face of Covid-19. In addition, I plan to use the 2016 presidential election to move forward the prevailing theory that Latinos who have low group consciousness and high denial of racism are less interested in liberal policy. As well as includes the layer of traditional machismo to show the relationship between all three aspects and how they influenced an individual's decision to have supported or not supported Trump in the 2016 presidential election.

Data Sources and Availability

I will be using individuals as my unit of analysis to collect ordinal data. I will be sampling my data from 10 semi-structured interviews with Latinos who voted or held political beliefs during the 2016 presidential election. The interviewees were selected from snowballing inquiries to interview acquaintances to others in their lives, therefore my data sources include individuals I knew and did not know before the inception of this research project. I use an alias for all participants to protect their identities. The demographics of the interview participants were Mexican, Guatemalan, El Salvadorian, Argentinian, and Spanish. They are self-identifying men and women³, ages 26 years to 64 years, from the Southwest region of the United States; their educational level ranged from having completed high school to having doctoral degrees; approximately 80% of the sample were married. My participants were 50% of individuals who supported Donald Trump and 50% of individuals who supported Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election. All participants speak English. My interviewees will have been at least 18 years of age and living in the United States during the 2016 presidential election. A constraint of this study is that the sample size is relatively small, and it exclusively includes participants residing in the geographical region of Southern California. As well as excluding individuals with Caribbean and most South American lineages. Though efforts were made to maximize respondents' sense of privacy and comfortability, it is possible that self-consciousness about the perception of their character and identity altered an individual's responses in unknown ways.

³ All interviewees identified with either being a man or woman. There were no gender queer individuals included in this study.

Results

The results section of this research study delineates between U.S. Latinos who expressed support for Donald Trump and those who favored Hillary Clinton in the election. These distinct political affiliations shed light on divergent attitudes toward group consciousness, denial of racism, and traditional machismo within the Latino community. Specifically, Trump voters are more likely to have a low group consciousness, high denial of racism, and high traditional machismo.

Trump Voters Fig. 1

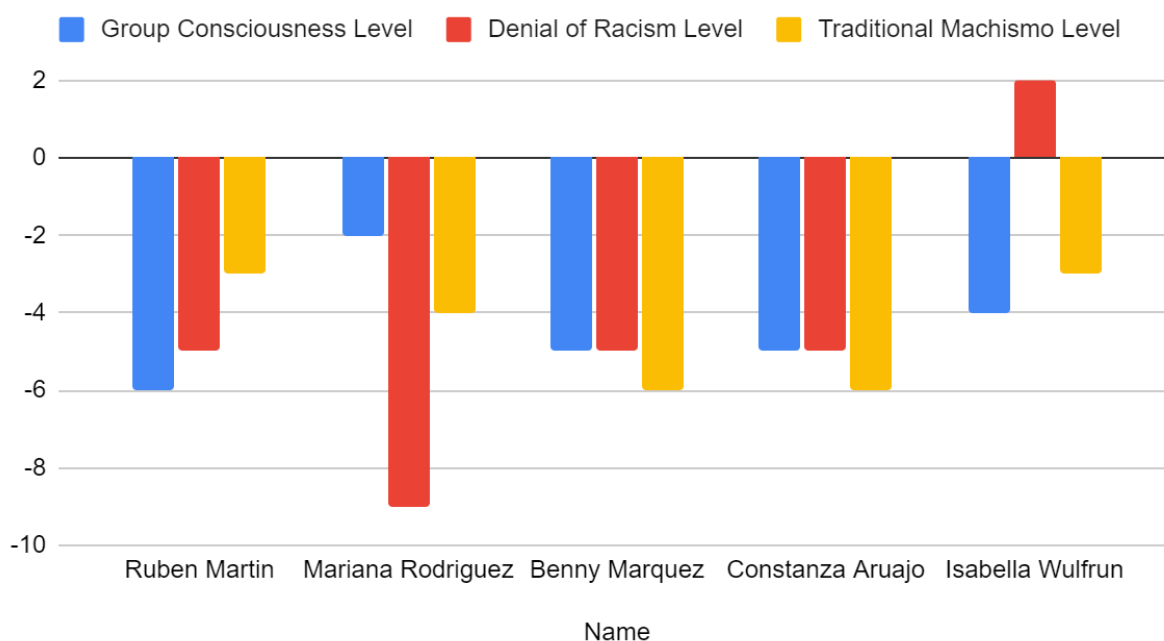


Fig. 1 displays a graph of the instances in which an individual gave a statement that displays a high or low sense of the three categories of group consciousness, denial of racism, or Traditional Machismo. This table uses the negatives to display a negative attribute to the

betterment of a more equitable society. As we can see, the majority of Trump voters display a low sense of group consciousness, a high denial of racism, and high Traditional Machismo. These were also dependent on the zeal of voting for him. Isabella Wulfrun marginally strays from the pattern viewed in the others. Wulfrun was the only Trump voter who displayed remorse for her vote or said she would not vote for him again.

Low group consciousness was a strong indicator if an individual voted for Trump. Participants who identified strongly with American culture often prioritized themes of patriotism and national pride. They viewed themselves as integral members of American society, embracing symbols of American exceptionalism and traditional values. This sense of belonging to the broader American community fostered a connection with Trump's message, which emphasized themes of national unity and pride. For these individuals, Trump's rhetoric resonated with their own aspirations for societal cohesion and a return to perceived traditional values.

Many of these individuals also expressed little interest in understanding their cultural heritage nor looked to make sure their future generations understood it. Likewise, the majority of these individuals expressed very little connection to any immigrant from their nation of origin, let alone any undocumented individuals. These individuals express an understanding of their ancestral heritage but do not display any emotional connectivity to others in the community or empathy with those who are struggling based on their membership in this group. Instead, these individuals were more concerned with individual responsibility and self-reliance as the most important thing for themselves as well as to pass on to their future generations.

High denial of racism was a strong indicator that an individual voted for Trump. The participants expressed two forms of denial of racism: denying the racial implications and denying responsibility.

Most of these voters used denial of racial implications to justify their support for Trump by emphasizing his commitment to national security. They argue that Trump's policies and rhetoric prioritize protecting the nation against perceived threats, such as terrorism or illegal immigration, over considerations of race or ethnicity. For these individuals, concerns about national security overshadow any reservations they have about Trump's attitudes or behavior towards racial and ethnic minorities. They view Trump as a strong leader who is willing to take decisive action to safeguard the country, even if it means implementing controversial policies or making inflammatory statements. These voters interpret Trump's emphasis on national security as a reflection of his commitment to upholding American values and interests. They believe that Trump's policies, such as stricter border enforcement or travel bans targeting certain countries, are necessary measures to protect the country from external threats. In this context, concerns about national security serve as a justification for supporting Trump despite evidence of racism or discrimination. These voters prioritize what they perceive as the greater good of national security over concerns about racial injustice or inequality, viewing Trump as the best candidate to address these perceived threats.

Some of the voters justified their support for Trump by denying their responsibility for racism, particularly in instances where racist actions or statements are attributed to his supporters. One of the interviewees referenced the January 6th insurgency and dismissed the role of Trump's prior racist and antagonizing words in fueling the violence, instead attributing the events strictly to the individual will of Trump followers. This denialism allowed individuals to distance themselves from uncomfortable truths and maintain their support for Trump without confronting the implications of his behavior. By denying his responsibility for racism, these voters shifted the blame away from Trump and onto external factors, minimizing the significance

of racism within the political movement. This allowed them to reconcile their support for Trump with their own beliefs and values, without grappling with the uncomfortable realities of systemic inequality and injustice.

One of the interviewees' sentiments was a little different from the majority themes. They expressed a high connection to their Guatemalan heritage but opposed the sentiment that they had a linked fate to Mexicans, the dominant U.S. Latino group. Like the others he bought into the idea of stereotypes and expressed that they exist for a reason. Yet he displayed his understanding that Trump's rhetoric was deeply racist but then said that this racism had a bettering effect on society. It allowed him to openly challenge racist stereotypes about his character. He said this as an opportunity to show he is not like other U.S. Latinos. He is hoping to reduce the social space between himself and the White majority.

High Traditional Machismo was a strong indicator that an individual voted for Trump. Many expressed an affinity for rugged individualism and how Trump satisfied this role. They saw him as an individual who only answered to himself and took loyalty very seriously. This disregard that they are citing within him is emblematic of an authoritarian style leader. They displayed that he was a no-nonsense type of leader often disregarding his bigoted rhetoric as something we already knew about him. Many talked about his time on "The Apprentice" as the period in which they got to know him on a personal level so they were sure they would not be deceived by him because they had already seen how he acts in a real manner. They saw his crude representation as a signal of authenticity, this is something they thought was missing from Washington. They also emphasized his ability to line his own pockets as a positive aspect. They thought that he did not have to answer to anyone but himself because he could fund his campaign

at the end of the day. Also cites his bankruptcy as a marker of growth rather than an indicator of an inability to handle money.

Many also expressed a line of reasoning discrediting Clinton as a candidate as their draw towards Trump. The subjectivity of likability heavily influenced many of the participants' decision to support Trump over Clinton. Despite her extensive political experience, Clinton faced enduring criticism and negative portrayals, often labeled as unlikable or untrustworthy due to media biases and entrenched gender stereotypes. One interviewee cited Clinton's involvement in Benghazi as the reason for her discontent. Another interviewee touted Clinton's political experience and competence but discredited her based on not liking her without being able to give a concrete reason why. One interviewee went so far as to say he did not think women should fill a role such as president. These perceptions were exacerbated by Trump's relentless attacks on her character, contributing to a narrative that overshadowed her policy proposals and qualifications. As I've stated, Trump's outsider status and plain-speaking persona appeared more relatable and authentic than Clinton's polished image to many of the participants.

Hillary Voters Fig. 2

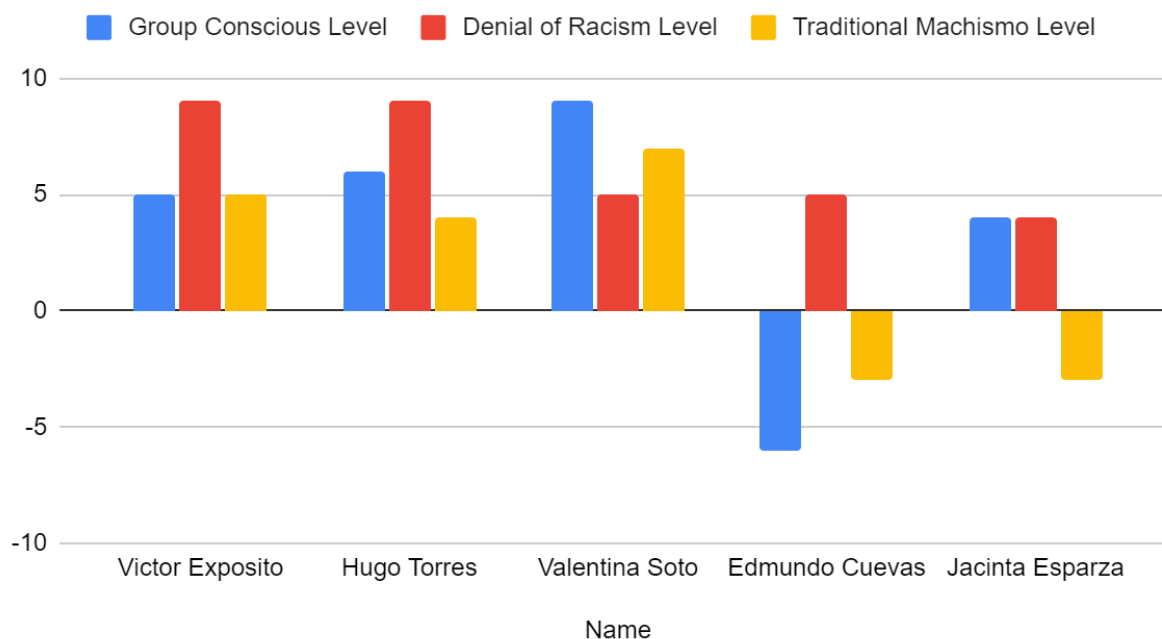


Fig. 2 displays a graph of the instances in which an individual gave a statement that displays a high or low sense of the three categories of group consciousness, denial of racism, or Traditional Machismo. This table uses the positives to display a positive attribute to the betterment of a more equitable society. As we can see, the majority of Hillary voters display a high sense of group consciousness, a low denial of racism, and low Traditional Machismo. The intensity of these feelings also varied based on how strongly the participant felt about the topic at hand. Both Edmundo Cuevas and Jacinta Esparza displayed apprehension for expressing firm beliefs about the candidate they voted for.

Participants who leaned towards Clinton expressed concerns about issues such as structural racism, immigration, and social justice. They tended to critique aspects of dominant White American culture, noting instances of hate and bigotry. For example, some participants highlighted disparities in education, where advanced classes were predominantly populated by

white and East Asian students, reflecting systemic inequalities. Additionally, there was a shared sense of empathy towards marginalized communities, particularly undocumented immigrants, driven by personal experiences or familial ties.

A higher sense of group consciousness was found amongst those who voted for Hillary. Moreover, participants' cultural backgrounds and experiences shaped their political perspectives. Immigrant status often played a significant role, with some individuals drawing on firsthand experiences of immigration to critique prevailing narratives and challenge stereotypes. For instance, participants who had family members with undocumented status highlighted the fear and uncertainty associated with immigration enforcement, contributing to a broader critique of Trump's policies and rhetoric on immigration.

These individuals also displayed an understanding that U.S. Latinos are excluded from the dominant group that politicians are typically catering to. They use an “us” versus “them” rhetoric to express the interests they view that belong to U.S. Latinos in comparison to those that benefit the White American majority. The distinction between in-group versus out-group helps create a sense of community among those who share their ethnicity.

Likewise, these individuals expressed the importance of cultural heritage retention. Some specifically cited the need for bilingual education in U.S. school systems. This concern for heritage retention came about as an opposition to assimilation into the main White American culture. These individuals see assimilation as a threat to their personal identity and think that language retention, specifically, will help people feel connected to their cultural heritage. Many of my interviewees who had high group consciousness cited the importance of language as a facet of culture even if they did not specify the need for bilingual education.

Low denial of racism was found among Hillary voters, this is evidenced by their personal experiences with racism and their recognition of its structural existence. Many participants recounted instances of personal racism, such as discriminatory treatment or prejudiced attitudes directed towards them based on their race or ethnicity. Additionally, participants observed the structural presence of racism in various contexts, including disparities in their children's advanced high school classes and encounters while working at voting polls. These experiences highlight the tangible impact of racism on individuals' lives. These individuals have a heightened awareness and acknowledgment of racism regarding its existence and pervasiveness in society.

Low Traditional Machismo was found among Hillary voters. The participants who voted for Clinton were more pushed away from Trump because of his rhetoric around openly racist rhetoric surrounding immigrants but they also perceived his domineering and aggressive behavior as unbecoming of a U.S. President. Many did not have much to say on the matter besides referring to him as a bully and as a racist. Their distaste for his behavior seems to reduce their need for a complex conversation. They displayed that they were steadfast in their definition of his character and thought it was plain to see. As well as being off put by Trump's open bigotry, they were drawn towards the idea of having a female president. Many of these individuals expressed a progressive push towards voting for Clinton by acknowledging her intellect and wanting to see a woman in a position of power.

Discussion

Group Consciousness

The low levels of group consciousness that we find from the Trump voters can be seen in one common trend, a divergence from their proximity to Mexico. This presents itself in two

ways, the first is a strong claim of being American and the second is a strong affiliation to the individual's nation of origin.

Existing literature finds that those who have cultural practices handed down from their nation of origin from their immigrant ancestor typically identify with an ethnic label rather than an American label (Zhou, 1997). This is seen amongst the Trump voters. Isabella Wulfrun is the child of an immigrant from Mexico and yet does not feel a connection to the label of Mexican. Rather she views herself through the lens of the culture she grew up in, which is the American culture. She does not speak Spanish and the only cultural tradition that she continues is making tamales during Christmas, a tradition she adopted from her aunt. These feelings of not being Mexican enough stem from Wulfrun's childhood when she mentioned that in high school "the people that I knew that were in MECHA, that group MECHA, I had problems with them because they thought I was a white Mexican,". This displays her lack of connection to her cultural heritage and the ostracization of her from the Latino group because of it. This translates to today as she does not feel any affinity for U.S. Latinos.

This feeling of Americanness is found in many of my interviews with the Trump voters. Many of them feel no connection to their Latino ancestry but rather connect more with White American culture. Constanza Aruajo, who is a third-generation U.S. Latina and does not speak Spanish, shares similar sentiments to Wulfrun. When asked about her cultural identity Aruajo said she is "very big on just being an American,". She reveals there is no Mexican heritage left in any traditions handed down to her by her parents. Aruajo acknowledges that her grandparents immigrated from Mexico but does not feel any connection to their nation of origin. This gap between being a Latino on paper and feeling like a Latino is the biggest factor contributing to low group consciousness.

These individuals have assimilated into the dominant White American culture. This is substantiated by their inability to speak Spanish or have any connection to undocumented immigrants. Both factors have been shown to connect a person emotionally to their Latin nation of origin and, in turn, connect them to the broad pan-ethnic identity here in the United States.

Another facet of this lack of connection to Mexico is seen in Ruben Martin, who is the son of a Guatemalan immigrant (his mother). His biological father is still in Guatemala, and he does not have contact with him. He grew up speaking only a small amount of Spanish in the home because his stepfather was a non-Hispanic Black man who spoke only English. Nor did he indulge in many Guatemalan traditions because his stepfather's culture took precedence. Because of this, the only iota of Latino culture he found was with the Mexican majority at school, yet Mexican Spanish and Guatemalan Spanish noticeably differ in the use of slang. Martin expressed, "I don't belong. So then like, what do I do? And so, I just wouldn't associate with that. And so then, I just didn't try to learn that culture or any kind of Hispanic culture, too." Martin felt different than the domain Mexican-Latino group in Southern California so he decided that he would not identify with that culture.

Denial of Racism

Trump voters were found to have a higher denial of racism than Clinton voters. The interviews revealed that Trump voters felt that racism was a thing of the past, that it exists on an individual level, or that racist stereotypes were true. This rationalization allowed them to feel comfortable also parroting the racist sentiments Trump has expressed.

Some participants bought into the notion of denying racism's persistence within the United States, exemplified by Constanza Aruajo's perspective. Aruajo's stance reflects broader research

indicating that many U.S. Latinos attempt to downplay or overlook instances of racism in their lives, often treating racism as a relic of the past (O'Brien, 2008). This denial of racism's enduring presence within American society underscores a significant barrier to addressing systemic inequalities and fostering genuine racial equity. Aruajo claims that the U.S. dealt with racism in the 60s and no longer grapples with it on a systemic level. When asked about racism in the United States and if some individuals are systematically disadvantaged, she responded by saying "A lot of that stuff is just kind of ridiculous if you stop and think about it. I mean if we do our historical research here in the United States of America. Our country has already experienced that and went through it. I mean, we already addressed racism and all that,". This denial of facts allows voters to feel comfortable voting for a conservative, anti-immigrant candidate because they do not acknowledge the racist nature of Trump's rhetoric.

Many of these voters also removed racist responsibility from the shoulder of Trump. Instead, they blamed a moral failing of the individual. Existing literature has shown this denial of responsibility not only obscures accountability but also perpetuates a culture of impunity for racist actions (Brief et al., 2000). Benny Marquez exemplified this with his denial of Trump's deliberate words and actions leading to the January 6th insurgency. While the January rioters unquestioningly followed Trump's orders, Trump absolved himself of any accountability for his role in inciting the violence. Similarly, Benny Marquez's belief that the rioters acted out of personal will rather than being influenced by Trump's rhetoric highlights the complexity of attributing responsibility in cases of racially charged incidents.

Another way Trump voters denied his statements as racist was to agree that racial stereotypes are true. Ruben Martin understands himself as a minority in the U.S., he is the child of a Guatemalan immigrant and has visible mestizo characteristics, because of this his rhetoric

tracts more with the idea of Black respectability politics (Jefferson 2023). The phenomenon, characterized by a conscious effort among Black individuals to emulate White behavior in pursuit of inclusion, validation, and protection, sheds light on Martin's inclination toward voting for Republican candidates and supporting restrictionist policies (Basler, 2008). Martin acknowledges that racial stereotypes exist yet dismisses them as racist because of his perception that they are the truth. He expresses typical racist rhetoric surrounding those who must rely on welfare and expresses that the individual needs to pull themselves out of poverty. Yet when it comes to applying these stereotypes to himself, he is quick to dispel them as the truth and instead wants to talk about how he is not like those stereotypes. Martin uses the chastisement of his nonethnics to lift the perception of himself above them and reduce the social distance between himself and Whites.

Existing literature has established stronger predictors of opposition to public welfare programs are negative feelings toward minority groups (Gilens, 1999). Likewise, there is a sentiment that those who receive welfare are not deserving of it. In using racist rhetoric, Trump aims to establish a stronger perceived connection between minority groups and their exploitation of welfare programs. The interviewee Mariana Rodriguez, a Trump voter, supported this existing finding. Rodriguez explained that she was drawn to Trump because he was a businessman and would “know what to do with our money”. This expressive concern for the financial direction of the country directly pertains to her views in connection with the preexisting literature. Rodriguez feels that “The ones that take the most advantage of our welfare system here in California is our own Hispanic culture born to American parents.” She sees U.S. Latinos as a leech on a system that does not benefit those who are deserving. She goes on to claim that these individuals have made a habit of relying on the welfare system, using it as their only source of income. Rodriguez

displays the quintessential predictor that negative feelings of minorities are perpetuated through the lens of welfare use.

Traditional Machismo

Traditional machismo manifests in Trump voters through their admiration for a strong, domineering leader, reminiscent of authoritative figures commonly associated with traditional masculinity.

The participants expressed affinity for these qualities, for example, Isabella Wulfrun's reference to Trump's catchphrase "You're fired" from "The Apprentice" reflects an image of Trump as someone who commands authority and makes tough decisions without hesitation. Similarly, Mariana Rodriguez's acknowledgment of Trump's past business challenges followed by his ability to overcome them portrays him as a resilient and determined leader, traits often associated with traditional notions of masculinity.

Moreover, Trump's emphasis on national security resonates with his supporters, tapping into both racial anxieties and the desire for a strong leader. Trump's promises to bolster national security and protect the country from perceived threats align with traditional machismo ideals of defending and safeguarding one's territory. This narrative reinforces the perception of Trump as a strong, decisive leader who prioritizes the nation's interests above all else. Benny Marquez thinks the United States has portrayed itself as weak in recent years and stated that Trump was helping to turn this image around. Marquez stated, "I don't think that people wanted to mess with the United States during that time. Because he would definitely have no problems going to war with somebody,". For many Trump voters, this portrayal of strength and assertiveness is appealing, as it embodies their idealized image of masculinity and leadership. Thus, the combination of

admiration for Trump's authoritative demeanor and his focus on national security serves to reinforce traditional machismo values among his supporters.

Traditional Machismo is not correlated with actual dominance in personal relationships, solely the understanding that, in an ideal world, there would be gender roles that are rigid and should be filled accordingly (Arciniega et al., 2008). This is why in my interviews many of the individuals who voted for Trump had fluid and communicative relationships. Instead of having one partner, the man, being the sole decision maker and one partner, the woman, being completely subservient. Rather their lives exist in a much more equal manner, yet their opinions hold different values which allowed them to apply this idea to an abstract character in their life. In this instance, a chauvinistic and entertaining political candidate for president, or rather a conservative authoritarian candidate. This was the same for both the men and women I interviewed. Benny Marquez exemplifies a healthy and equal marriage with his wife but expresses that a woman should not be president. He said, "I really think that it should be a male. Not like the woman is weaker. I just feel for that. It should be a male. I really,". This displays the distinct gender roles that Marquez expects individuals to fill, specifically seeing a strong and assertive woman as off-putting but a domineering man as illustrious.

Caballerismo was found to be positively associated with being born in Mexico, speaking Spanish in the home, having a high ethnic identity, and being accepting of other ethnic identities. Those who harbor these traits are less likely to vote for a conservative authoritarian candidate. This is corroborated by one of my interviewees, Hugo Torres. Torres moved to Escondido, California from Tijuana, Mexico when he was in elementary school. He grew up speaking Spanish with his parents in the home and celebrated many traditional Mexican holidays, giving him a strong sense of identity in his Mexican culture. As English was his second language, he

found a community with other international students, whose second language was English, when he moved to college. Torres states “I don’t feel plugged in into the nationalistic type of community, I see myself more as an international.” This identification with a common struggle of all non-White Americans in the U.S. displays his capacity to understand the origins of his emotions and extend his understanding to others.

Traditional Machismo also has a counterpart called Marianismo that expects women to fulfill certain gender roles. The negative aspects of Marianismo expect women to be generous, self-sacrificing team players (Torres et al., 2002). Many of the voters who fell into line with Traditional Machismo also pushed the expectation that Clinton should fill the negative roles of Marianismo. We see this with Isabella Wulfrun when spoke highly of Clinton’s political career thus far but discounted Clinton based on likeability, stating “I just don’t like her.” When asked to give specifics about what Wulfrun did not like about Clinton she was not able to answer. We see setbacks women face concerning likeability, how it affects them, and how women regularly and unknowingly help to perpetuate them. Clinton suffers in her career because of the inability to fit the expectation of a subservient wife that is prescribed from the negative aspects of Marianismo.

It is important to acknowledge that while traditional machismo may exist within certain segments of US Latino populations, it intersects with and is influenced by dominant US misogyny. Traditional machismo, characterized by traits such as dominance, toughness, and assertiveness, can perpetuate harmful gender norms and expectations that marginalize and disempower women. However, within the context of the United States, these notions of masculinity are also shaped by broader societal attitudes and structures, including systemic misogyny and patriarchy. Dominant US misogyny often reinforces traditional gender roles and

stereotypes, which may exacerbate the manifestations of machismo among some Latino populations. The intersection of these forces can result in complex and multifaceted expressions of gender dynamics within Latino communities, where traditional machismo intersects with and is reinforced by broader systems of oppression. Therefore, while traditional machismo is a significant factor to consider, further research must understand the broader context of dominant US misogyny and its impact on shaping gender norms and behaviors within Latino populations. Recognizing this intersectionality is crucial for addressing the complexities of gender dynamics and working toward gender equity and social justice within Latino communities.

Conclusion

In recent years, scholarly attention has increasingly turned towards exploring the pan-ethnic identity of Latinos as a political group. While existing research has highlighted correlations between high levels of denial of racism and low group consciousness as indicative of conservative ideologies, there remains a notable gap in understanding the underlying rationale behind these associations. In response to this gap, this study conducted semi-structured interviews with Latinos who both supported and opposed former President Donald Trump in the 2016 elections. The primary aim was to investigate the extent of group consciousness, denial of racism, and machismo attitudes among these individuals and test the theories supporting these indicators. Employing an intersectional framework, the study sought to unveil nuanced insights into the diverse motivations underlying Latino support for a candidate often criticized for his stances on immigration and racial issues. It was hypothesized that individuals exhibiting low levels of group consciousness, high levels of denial of racism, and strong machismo attitudes would be more inclined to vote for a conservative, anti-immigrant candidate. Through the

examination of these factors, the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted dynamics shaping Latino political behavior. By elucidating the complex interplay between identity, ideology, and political choices, this study seeks to offer valuable insights into the complexities of Latino political engagement in the contemporary American landscape.

Moving forward, future research should aim to expand upon the findings of this study by exploring additional factors that may influence Latino political behavior. One avenue for further investigation could involve examining the role of socioeconomic status, education, and generational differences in shaping attitudes towards conservatism and support for anti-immigrant policies. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide insights into the long-term effects of denial of racism, group consciousness, and machismo attitudes on voting behavior over time. Furthermore, comparative analyses between different Latino subgroups, such as Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban-Americans, could elucidate the nuanced variations within the Latino community and their implications for political engagement. Lastly, qualitative research methods, such as focus groups or ethnographic studies, may offer deeper insights into the lived experiences and cultural dynamics that inform Latino political identities. By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of Latino political behavior and inform efforts to foster inclusive and equitable political participation among diverse communities.

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