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ABSTRACT

An examination was undertaken of the relationship between some socioeconomic variables, particularly communication exposure variables, and the political participation of Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Cubans living in Chicago, Illincis. Data for the investigation were taken from an earlier survey of the communication patterns and organizational activities of that city's Hispanic-American residents. Interview data gathered from 388 respondents were analyzed to determine two types of political behavior (voting and nonvoting activities) and media exposure. Socioeconomic background data were also analyzed (sex, age, years of residence in the United States, level of education, and income). The analysis revealed that political participation of Hispanic Americans, both voting and nonvoting activities, was not equal across ethnic groups. Results with respect to one background variable, years of residency in the U. S., indicated that with the passing of time, the Hispanics in general might become more involved in political activities. In addition, the findings suggested that the effects of mass media exposure are important for understanding and predicting how each ethnic group may or may not participate in United States politics. (FI)

THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ON THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF PUERTO RICANS, MEXICAN-AMERICANS, AND CUBANS IN CHICAGO

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Until the presidential elections of 1976, the influence of the Hispanic political vote had never before been felt at the national level. It was then that Mexican-Americans in Texas, for example, helped Jimmy Carter to win an important 26 electoral votes. Carter, as president, reciprocated by appointing more Hispanics to federal positions than any of his predecessors (It's your turn in the sun, 1978). At the state and local level Hispanics have also shown their increasing political strength by electing during the last decade more of their own ethnic representatives than ever before.

These changes have received incidental notice, but have not been systematically studied. While the particularities of the blacks' political behavior are beginning to be understood, the circumstances leading to similar behavior of Hispanics are practically unknown.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the relationship between some socioeconomic variables--but in particular of a number of communication exposure variables-- and the political participation of Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Cubans in Chicago. Political participation, the dependent variable, is a concept which has been elaborated since its initial treatment as only the act of voting. Through the years of research, various forms of campaign and outside of campaign activities have been incorporated to the extent that political participation is now a multidimensional concept. Thus, in the present discussion, voting and non-voting related political behavior is studied.

At the time of the alleged "awakening" of minorities in the national political processes (Howard, 1970), it remains important to understand some of the factors leading to this awakening among the nation's Hispanics, the second largest of the minority groups in the United States. The general hypothesis that underlies this study is that there are differences in the level of political participation among each Latino* group and that not only socioeconomic status but also the communication patterns related to such participation affect each group somewhat differently.

The literature

The studies of minority groups' social and political participation have been done mostly about blacks, among whom there has been an increase in different forms of activism as

*Latino is used interchangeably with the term Hispanic.

compared to whites (Olsen, 1970; Pomper, 1975; Verba and Nie, 1972). In these black-white comparisons the differences in the participation rates have been described mostly on the basis of socio-economic inequalities, but on theoretical grounds they have been argued on the basis of either Myrdal's (1944) "compensation" thesis or more recently Olsen's (1970) "ethnic community" thesis.

The first thesis explains higher rates of participation among blacks as a response to prejudice and discrimininations. Areas where there is less discrimination -- social organizations and politics -- thus provide special outlets for action. The findings of Babchuck and Thompson (1962) and Orum (1966) support this thesis as they concluded that lower class blacks were more likely to be active in social organizations -- such as civic and fraternal groups -- than whites of a similar class. Babchuck and Thompson's study also indicated positive associations among education, occupation, and income and association membership.

The second thesis, Olsen's "ethnic community" thesis, proposes that "blacks who identify as members of an ethnic minority tend to be more active than non-identifiers" (p. 682) because the identification provides the meaning and support for the ethnic members' involvement in political actions. For example, this hypothesis was confirmed in all 14 activity areas in his study comparing blacks and whites in Indianapolis. It was also supported in Verba and Nie's (1972) national study.

McPherson (1977), supports both theories with his finding that political efficacy and self-esteem were significantly associated with social and political participation for blacks but only weakly for whites. Kuo (1977), on the other hand, concludes that caution must be used when interpreting the results of black-white participation in the light of the said theories, because only partial confirmation exists for them. His own investigation of the topic found that blacks, even with socio-economic status variables controlled, were continuously less active than whites in political participation, especially in voting and citizen initiated contact; and that only in a few instances did their participation exceed the whites'.

In spite of the ongoing debate about blacks' politics, the factors related to the Latinos' participation in the political world of their adopted land are hardly known. The

studies of Puerto Ricans in the United States are mostly socio-anthropological descriptions of their lives, especially in New York (Cordasco and Bucchioni, 1973a,b; Fitzpatrick, 1971; Marden and Mayer, 1973; Mills, Senior, and Goldsen, 1967; Senior and Watkins, 1973; Myers, 1968; Nieves-Falcon, 1975; Wagenheim, 1975; and Wagenheim and Jimenez de Wagenheim, 1973). Similar studies of Cubans are just emerging (Alexander, 1966; Fagen and Brody, 1964; and Portes, 1969). However, more is known about the Mexican-Americans from studies which have applied both of the above theories to this group's social and political participation.

Williams, Babchuck, and Johnson (1973), studying voluntary association membership, found higher rates for blacks than for Anglos, but the lowest rates were g Mexican-Americans. Upon controlling for the socioeconomic disparity between Anglos and Mexican-Americans, the participation rate in voluntary association of this latter group equaled that of Anglos . The authors contend that the findings tend to support the compensatory and ethnic community theories. Antunes and Gaitz (1975), studying the same three groups, found only partial support for these theories with regard to eleven participation variables. When the social class variable was controlled for, black levels of participation generally exceeded or equaled those of whites; however, Mexican-Americans participation remained lower than the whites'. Welch, Comer, and Steinman (1975), also confirmed lower social and political participation of Mexican-Americans as compared to Anglos. Even when socioeconomic variables were controlled, political participation did not increase for the Mexican-Americans but social participation did, and was approximately equal for both groups. The authors argue that the differences between these two groups partially resembled those between blacks and whites fifteen years ago, and thus conclude that "the data provide additional evidence that social participation preceeds political participation" (p. 377).

Welch, Comer, and Steinman (1975), like Kuo (1977), take a cautious approach in the interpretation of the findings. They conclude that their data "would seem to indicate the overlapping and incomplete nature of the socialization [ethnic community] and compensation hypothesis" (p. 377).

The call for caution by these authors is well taken, especially because no cross-regional surveys have been made in which major structural variables could be controlled in

analyzing differences in participation. For examp[illegible] d proportion of the ethnic group as compared to the Anglos and other ethnic [illegible]ce of restrictive laws or historical social conflicts between groups hav[illegible]ly studied (Moore, 1970). Though studies of Mexican-Americans have been in diffe[illegible]parts of the country, the studied variables, for example social class [illegible]itical [illegible]ipation, have been defined in different ways that allow for only restrict[illegible] The reader is thus left with an overall limited knowledge about the variable[illegible] or structural--which can help predict the participatory dynamics of the L[illegible]inc

The usefulness of such literature to the comm[illegible]tion scholar is also limited because the information variables, (e.g., exposure/[illegible] of r[illegible]io, television, press, etc.) have been ignored as independent predictors of the political behavior of minorities, but not of the general white population. As Allen and Clarke (1978) note, there is only a small body of research literature on minorities and mass communication and "most of it has focused on blacks, with comparative studies on black-white differences being the mode." Findings from those few studies--in which the media use/exposure is the dependent variable--point out that there is no media access poverty for the poor who live in the cities (--where most Latino ethnics are bound to live--) and that blacks spend more time with electronic media and less with print than do Anglos. Reading has also been found to be very low for Mexican-Americans (Bogart, 1970; and Greenberg and Dervin, 1970, 1972). In addressing the issue of whether ethnicity or socioeconomic status was the most determining variable affecting media use, Greenberg and Dervin (1970) concluded that poor black and poor white populations were more similar to each other than to the general population in media behavior and practices, but that poor blacks were the most disadvantaged of all. Antunes and Gaitz (1975), however, found that across income levels, Mexican-Americans do show less media exposure than blacks and whites.

In Duran and Monroe's (1977) study of Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Cubans, some ethnic as well as demographic and socioeconomic variables were found to be associated with media use, but the associations varied with the type of media question that was analyzed. Using the same groups and data and adding a sample of blacks from San Francisco, Allen and

Clarke (1978) also found a mixture of ethnic and socioeconomic variables as predictors of different media uses and exposures.

Only two studies address the issue of media use as a predictor of minorities participation. Jackson (1971), describing the political behavior of black college students in the south, found a 46 percent increase in political activity including both protest and other forms through normal channels. Though the author attributes the increase in participation to media use and peer groups, the specific effects of the media are not described. Allen and Chaffee's (1979) present a more detailed analysis of the issue.

These authors point out that there is a noticeable effect of the media on the political participation of blacks: "adding the mass communication variables to the factors dealt with in prior research on black political participation (anomie, black identity, etc.) doubles the explanatory power of our analysis." Among their specific findings is the one dealing with involvement in local politics, where "the media variables add an increment of some 22 percent to the total R^2." Attention to political issues on television and in newspapers, and reading of general news magazines were the variables most linked to the political behavior; while campaign participation was best predicted by exposure to black public affairs on TV, news magazines, and black news magazines. They conclude: "In general, media use can be seen as an important stage in the process by which education is consumated in political activity. The various media also account for differential patterns of activity by different age groups...The most reasonable interpretation of media exposure, then, is not as an independent variable isolated from other social processes but as a facilitating factor that helps to explain the translation of background and psychological variables into political participation."

With explanations like these, Allen and Chaffee indeed bring to the forefront the role of the media in blacks' political behavior. However, a question that remains unanswered is -Does the media have similar effects or any effects on the political behavior of other minority groups', i.e. Latinos'?

In order to address this issue, we must bring forward some media use/exposure--as well some background--characteristics of the Latino minorities in the United States

and discuss how these characteristics could be related to our subjects' responses to the political system.

The Latinos' media and background characteristics

In terms of the Latinos' media characteristics we must first state that the majority of Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Cubans share a common background characteristic. They--or their parents within a generation or two at most--are foreigners in the United States. This fact is particularly true for the subjects of this study, of whom over 75 percent were born in their respective countries and who have a mean of less than sixteen years of residence in the United States.[1] Under these circumstances, the effect of the mass media on political participation--and on other types of behavior--is bound to be different than that on blacks or other minority groups whose background is more akin to that of the dominant society. In other words, for the transplanted ethnic, socialization to American politics is achieveable through fewer channels than it is for native born whites, blacks, or other ethnics.

One reason for this difference is that for the majority of our Latino population, the political socialization role of the school is restricted to whatever was achieved in the homeland. Although once in the U.S. many migrants enroll in school, the learning tends to focus on skills (e.g., English proficiency) rather than on the general or civic culture. Second, the political socialization role of the mainstream church, civic organizations, and even many major labor unions, is restricted. Such entities, more often than not, discriminate against Latinos who find it very difficult and not to their interest to belong to them. And third, the family and friends, though they help Latinos solve a broad range of problems, also are mostly foreigners and cannot provide the total information linkage with the city and national polity and the respective available and desirable political alternatives.

There remains the mass media which, as has been noted, are very much physically available and have the potential to play a functional role in the ethnics' political socialization and bahvior. However, the current media envrionment for the Latino community in the U.S. does not allow for any unqualified assertion about its effects.

On the one hand, the Latinos are overwhelmingly surrounded by "foreign" (i.e., Anglo) media. Such media, hardly, if ever, convey explicit political messages about the ethnics and their group interests. However, it is through these media that most national and city issues are constantly presented to the public. Inasmuch as the Latinos can derive information about their concerns and develop alternatives for action through exposure to the Anglo media, this exposure should enhance these people's political participation.

On the other hand, in Chicago, (as well as in the Northeastern industrial states, in the Southwestern region of the country, and in California and Florida) there are some Hispanic based print and electronic media. Such media convey the ethnic groups' own messages, but at the same time also may be means of reinforcing the messages of the establishment, particularly those messages pertaining to the basic ideology. This dual role of the ethnic media has been explained clearly by Battistelli (1975) in his study of Italian Canadians. He points out that "Even the mass media as organized and maintained by Italian Canadians over a period of time reveals the tendency to reflect much of the 'establishment' sociopolitical ideology while preserving Italian linguistic and cultural features." But inasmuch as the ethnic media help sensitize, educate, and provide information concerning the Latino's own sociopolitical problems they also should enhance these people's political participation.

Up to this point, we have referred to mass media in general. In hypothesizing the different effects of exposure to electronic vs. print media, some specifications are required.

First, it is expected that print media have more effect than television on political participation. On the one hand, regarding the electronic media, we must recall that for the Anglo population, television as an information source has not been found to relate nearly as closely to political activity as has the use of print media (Atkin, 1972; Chaffee, Jackson-Beeck, Durall, and Wilson, 1977; Kuroda, 1965-66; Patterson and McLure, 1976). The electronic mass media in English (or Spanish) has an overwhelmingly entertainment and escapist content. Thus, we expect exposure to electronic media to be negatively associated

to the Latinos political participation. Newspapers, on the other hand, as the medium generally oriented toward scrutinizing, to a certain extent, the political and economic affairs of the nation and city, can provide the needed linkages to induce and guide political participation. We therefore hypothesize that newspaper exposure will be positively associated with participation among Latinos. This positive relation should be even stronger with the Spanish than with the English press, --that is, if the former medium in Chicago plays the advocacy role many of its counterparts are alleged to be playing in New York, the Southwestern U.S. or the Florida areas.

Second, group differences can be expected in the effect of the press. For Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans, newspaper exposure can enhance the political participation more than for the Cubans. This should be true to the extent that members of these groups live in longer established communities for which the Spanish and English press should have more information relevant for these people's political lives.

In addressing the Latinos' background characteristics and how these may affect their political participation, we must begin by pointing out some ethnic particularities of each of our Latino groups. First, there are differences in the historical presence of each of these groups in the United States. Though there have been pockets of Puerto Ricans and of Cubans since the last century, the majority of the first group came after the 1940's (particularly to New York), and the latter group came after 1960 (especially to Florida). The presence of the Mexican-Americans is much longer and those now liging in the Midwest are of either direct Mexican or Southwest U.S. origin. Second, the Puerto Ricans and the Mexican-Americans share the most common social class background in respect to occupation, income, and education characteristics,[2] and more often than not, in respect to "race." Third, the roots of their socioeconomic conditions in the U... are also similar. Most came from an impoverished homeland with limited opportunities, to a neighbor nation that needs limited skill, and cheap labor (Marden and Meyer, 1973). The Cubans, on the other hand, are principally "white" political emmigrants who arrived to the U.S. with higher skills and have enjoyed almost unrestricted job and achievement opportunities, which have maintained for them a high social status. (Alexander, 1966; Fagen and Broday, 1964).

Hispanic group differences also stem from the fact that all Puerto Ricans, as U.S. citizens,[3] automatically have constitutionally guaranteed political participation rights in the U.S. In comparison those rights are shared only by those of the remaining Latino population who are born in the U.S. or have become naturalized citizens. But again, even among the Latino citizens, only the Puerto Ricans have a legally unrestricted travel right to and from a "homeland;" an island that has maintained a long tradition of "democratic" political structure but where the political issues and processes are very different from those in the United States (Pabon, 1972). Mexican-Americans were either born in the Southwest U.S. and have been socialized in the American political processes, or come from Mexico, a polity with limited participatory opportunities, where they cannot return to vote at will. Cubans still cannot travel to their homeland and prior to their emmigration, had little, if any, democratic political experience.

With the above in mind, the following variables were selected as background predictors. Socioeconomic status. Levy and Kramer argue that, "with increasing levels of income and job opportunities, Spanish-Americans will move into a position where voting will be a more meaningful part of their lives" (1972:94). Such statement lends itself to logical agreement as it generally coincides with the traditional literature and the other studies, especially those by Verba and Nie, about the socioeconomic status variables and their effects on peoples' political activities. However, the inverse could well be the case: Voting will be most meaningful when it can be seen as a channel through which the socioeconomic conditions can be improved. In other words, political participation is not to defend a comfortable socioeconomic status--which is not very common among such minorities--as much as it is an indirect attempt to achieve one. Thus, it is understandable that in the studies about the political behavior of Mexican-American--and a few about the Puerto Ricans--it has been shown that only a small number of those eligible are registered to vote; and those who do (whose number can vary by many thousands from election to election) vote for the Demicratic Party and its candidates, even if that means voting against one of their own who may be running on the Republican ticket or as independents.

The political consequences of the Latinos' socioeconomic status disparities may reflect itself in having the Cubans identifying with the system and as they advance in society, wanting more power in it in order to help guarantee their privileges. Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans, on the other hand, having felt the socioeconomic (and racial) discrimination across a wider span of their status, may be less compelled to engage in the political process. But these two latter groups may differ to the extent that the Mexican-Americans have only one system in which to seek to overcome their grievances, and have recognized their political capabilities and engaged in the system. This might also be true for some Puerto Ricans, but to a lesser extent as long as they can hope for a better future upon returning to Puerto Rico, where they have more clout in the political processes.

The above discussion leads to hypothesize that socioeconomic status is associated to the political participation of some Latino groups; it is a positive predictor for Cubans' participation; it is a negative predictor for Mexican-Americans' participation; and it has little or no effect on the Puerto Ricans' participation.

The above arguments are the bases for our decision to analyze each Latino group individually in addition to studying the Latinos as a whole. We propose ethnicity to be a sufficient condition for differences in the political behavior of our subjects.

Time. Since it is an important contributor to ethnic acculturation, it was expected that time would also have its effects on the Latinos' participation. Thus, two time related variables were tested: age and years in the United States. Each one of these was expected to be positively related to the dependent variable, i.e., the older the person as well as the greater the years in the U.S., the greater the political participation. The underlying assumption here is that greater age and years of residency could imply experiences the Latinos may have had and learned in order to adapt to the environment; and participation in politics should be one of those experiences. The time effect should be particularly stronger for Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans, the two groups who have some option in returning home if their American experiences are not satisfactory. The members of these groups who have stayed may well be those who have succeeded and integrated.

Sex. In a number of studies, it has been found that males and females respond somewhat differently to the political system. Since sex roles are known to be even more defined regarding many aspects of Latinos' lives, we also expect it to make a difference in predicting their political behavior. In specific, we hypothesize that under equal socioeconomic and media exposure conditions, males are bound to be more active than females.

The Data and Limitations

Research design: Data for the study were taken from Duran and Monroe's (1977) survey research, conducted in Chicago during early 1977, which studied the communication patterns and organizational activities of this city's Hispanic residents. For the survey ethnicity of the interviewers was matched with that of the respondents and interviews were conducted in Spanish or English, depending on the respondents' preference. And, a stratified cluster probability sample was used to make sure that the three major nationalities would be included.[4] Of a total sample of 400 subjects, the present study selected data from 388 of which there are 115 Puerto Ricans,[5] 162 Mexican-Americans, and 111 Cubans.

The dependent variables: As stated in the introduction, two types of political behavior were studied, one pertaining voting related activities, the other pertaining non-voting related activities. The first type was measured with two dichotomous and one ordenal level items. The first dichotomous item (Yes=1, no=0) asked "Were you registered to vote in the November 1976 presidential election?" The other read "Some people were not able to vote even though they were registered because they had to work or were sick. What about you, did you vote or not vote?" The ordenal item read "How often have you voted in Chicago elections in the last five years?" Answers to this question were scored on a scale of 4-0 based on a respective answer of "always, mostly, rarely, or never."

The non-voting political participation was measured by eight dichotomous items (Yes =1, no=0) "During political campaigns have you in the past (a) tried to persuade others to vote for a particular party or candidate? (b) attended political rallies or meetings? (c) contributed money to a party or candidate? (d) worked for a party or candidate? Outside of political campaigns have you in the past (a) signed a petition addressed to a government

representative? (b) written a letter to a local official? (c) written your senator or congressman? (d) contacted in person one of your representatives?"

The items in each type of participation were standardized and then summed to form two respective indices which were also standardized prior to analysis in the regression equations.

The independent variables: Five personal background variables--sex, age, years of residence in the United States, education (last school grade finished), and family income--were selected as indicators of some important social structural factors. In the whole sample there were 202 females, and 186 males distributed across groups as follows: for the Puerto Ricans 69 females, 46 males, for the Mexican-Americans 73 and 89, and for the Cubans 60 and 51. Age, years in the U.S., and education were measured at the ratio level while family income stems from an interval level scale. For each group the means and standard deviations for these background variables (as well as for the media variables) are shown in Table 1. For the whole group, the mean age was 39 years (s.d.=14), the mean number of years in the U.S. was 15 (s.d.=14), the mean education was 7.2 (s.d.=4) and the mean reported family annual income was about $9,492 (s.d.=86,597). While this mean family income places the group as a whole slightly above the poverty level, Table 1 indicates a great variation among Latinos, and the educational data shows that on the average our sample has completed less than junior high school education. It is interesting to note that the Puerto Ricans, in spite of their having a higher average number of years in the United States are the worst off economically and almost at par in education, while the Mexican-Americans, with less number of years in this country and similar education to the Puerto Ricans, enjoy a higher economic standing. In terms of the Cubans, it is clear that they hold the highest status among the Latinos in both education and income.

The media exposure variables require a more detailed presentation. First, of the over twenty media related variables in the Duran and Monroe data, only fifteen were used in the initial stage of the present analysis. Of the fifteen items, eight explicitly refer to Spanish media, but only one to an English medium (i.e., press). The other six items do not specify language; four of them deal with electronic media, the other two with print media. In order to determine if the unspecified language items were related to one another

and/or to the Spanish and English items, all fifteen items were factor analyzed. (See Table 2. In order to not violate one of the assumptions of factor analysis, i.e., of having at least 10 cases per variable, this statistical procedure was not performed with each Hispanic group.) Using the principal component procedure and varimax rotation, the factor analysis produced a solution in which two electronic media exposure clusters could be clearly identified. The principal variables in each factor--those having a loading of .4 and above and no cross loading--were then standardized and summed in two indexes.

The first, TV exposure, is a four item index composed from the following questions: (a) "During the last seven days, how often did you watch Spanish language television?" (coded: every day=4, a few days a week=3, one day=2, did not watch at all=1); (b) "We would like to know how much you depend upon TV to learn about the Latino community--would you say that you depend on TV to learn about the Latino community a lot, somewhat, or hardly at all?" (code: 3,2,1 respectively); having watched two specific news programs: (c) "Informacion 26--from 6:30-7:00 p.m.; (d) Informacion 26--from 10:00-10:30 (both these items were coded dichotomously yes=1, no=0). The alpha coefficient representing internal consistency for the whole sample was .77; for the Puerto Ricans it was .79, for the Mexican-Americans .73, and for the Cubans .79.

The second index, Radio exposure, is composed from the following questions: (a) "During the last seven days, how often did you listen to the radio?" (b) "During the last seven days, how often did you listen to Spanish language radio programs?" (both these questions were coded with values of 4-1 respectively to the options of every day, a few days a week, one day, and did not listen at all); (c) "Still thinking about the last seven days, on the average day, how many hours did you spend listening to the radio?" (coded: 0-n, the range was from 0-16); (d) Radio dependence for Latino community information (phrased and coded similarly to the television dependency question); and (e) listening to a specific radio news program "El periodico del aire" (coded dichotomously as the TV items). The internal consistency coefficients for this index were, for all Latinos, .66, for Puerto Ricans .65, and for Mexican-Americans and for Cubans .66.

A third cluster of variables pertaining print media was not used as a summated index. Instead, one of the items of the cluster--number of Spanish newspapers read--was used as a single item independent variable in order to compare its effect with the English counterpart--number of English newspapers read--an item that did not load clearly in any factor. For purpose of simplicity, the remaining four variables were discarded from further analyses, and, in all 388 cases, missing data was replaced by each Latino groups' own mean.

Finally, three statistical tests were performed on the data, the most simple one being a t-test to check for significance of the differences of the means of the dependent variables across groups. Then there was the zero order correlations followed by hierarchical regression analysis which was the operational procedure used to test the strength and independence of associations as well as the predictive power of the variables. As stated above, each item composing the dependent and independent variables was standardized and then summed into the respective indices which themselves were standardized across the whole sample prior to performing the regression analyses. The independent variable controls for sex, age, and years in the U.S. were entered in the regression equation individually and in that order. These were followed by the simultaneous inclusion of education and family income, and finally the four mass media variables which were also entered as a single block.

Before going on to the results, two major limitations of the study must be pointed out. First, the concept of political participation is restricted to traditional American establishment politics, alternative forms of action are not considered. An implication of this limitation is that our dependent variable is only a measure of external acculturation to one aspect of the American life. We cannot test for the subjects' knowledge or perception of issues, nor do we know the subjective orientation of the subjects, i.e., if they identify or seek to identify most with their own community or with that of the Anglos. Thus, neither support or rejection for the compensation or ethnic community theses is sought. Instead we will simply argue that the media plays an important role as a predictor of political participation. In doing so, we follow Allen and Chaffee (1979) in prefering to treat political participation as the dependent variable and simultaneously do not assume a unidirectional media effects model as the only possible model, just the best one at present time.

Second, the survey is limited to Chicago, which restructs the generalization of findings. However, the Chicago setting lends a uniqueness to this study for that city is the only big U.S. metropolis where there are comparable concentrations of each of the major Latino groups. The city holds the second largest number of Puerto Ricans after New York, it is increasing its numbers of Cubans, and it has Mexican-Americans in numbers not overwhelmingly greater than the Puerto Ricans (City of Chicago, 1973). Nevertheless, no group is concentrated enough in any one area to make it a decisive political force on its own.

Results[6]

One of the first things that must be pointed out is a major difference in the frequency of voting versus non-voting participation: for each group there is at least an average of one participatory act of the first type, but less than half of that of the second type. The Puerto Ricans have the highest frequency in the voting related acts with a mean of 2.77 from an unstandardized range of 0-5 (s.d.=2.19) while the Mexican-Americans and Cubans each have a mean of 1 (the respective s.d.=1.94 and 1.83). For the non-voting political acts, Cubans have the "highest" mean, .39, of an unstandardized range of 0-8 (s.d.=1.11). The Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans have almost equal means: .28 (s.d. =.79) and .26 (s.d.=.89) respectively. Based on this alone, it could be argued that all three Latino groups are equally inactive in politics since there is no statistically significant difference ($p \leq .05$) for the means across groups.

Table 3 presents the zero order correlation coefficients and Tables 4 and 5 summarize the findings with the full model regressions. All these tables do show that with and without controls, the background and media variables have some significant effects on whatever little political participation the Latinos engage in, and these effects are different across groups.

For the Puerto Ricans, years in the U.S. has a significant correlation of r=.24 with the voting behavior but this association does not show significance when the other independent variables are held constant. In fact, in the full regression model there is no statistical significance for any of the variables. It is only regarding non-voting behavior where

education, but not any of the other variables, is a significant predictor without controls (r=.23) and with controls (beta=.31; R^2=7.66, along with family income, which is not significant).

For Mexican-Americans a different picture emerges. With simultaneous control for all independent variables there are two predictors of this groups' voting participation: years in the U.S. (beta=.45) and number of English newspapers read (beta=.22). The first of these accounts for almost 20 percent of the variance while the media block, in which the English press variable is included, produces an R^2=6.43. Age, though it presents the second largest R^2=10.23, does not have a beta high enough (.02) to be significant. Pertaining non-voting participation, the Mexican-Americans' situation is similar to the Puerto Ricans' voting participation: none of the variables are significant predictors. This is true in spit of the fact that four of the variables are significantly correlated with non-voting participation at the zero order level (years in the U.S., r=.24; education, r=.25; English press, r=.30; and TV exposure, r=.17).

Regarding the Cuban sample, the best predictor of their voting participation is years in the U.S. (beta=.44, R^2=21.25). Also, both the socioeconomic status variables of education and family income, which together account for an R^2=11.33, have significant betas (.25 and .24 respectively). With this Latino group, however, none of the media variables show significant predictive power in the full model for voting participation. For the Cubans' non-voting participation, years in the U.S. continues to be significant in the full model (beta=.27 and R^2=5.25) but the socioeconomic status variables lose significance. In this second type of political participation, it is the media block which accounts for the largest R^2=12.49 for which two significant variables, number of Spanish newspapers read (beta=.27) and TV exposure (beta=.24), together hold the best predictive power.

This overview of the significant relationships indicates that given equal background and media variables, sex nor age are significant predictors of voting or non-voting political participation of either Latino group. The positive association at the zero order level between sex and voting participation (in this case meaning that females participate more) among Mexican-Americans is washed out with controls as does the negative association for

the non-voting type of participation among Cubans. The only significant correlation for age is with Mexican-Americans' vote and this, too, was lost with the controls.

By and large, years in the U.S. is the best single background predictor on both measures of political participation in all cases where it shows significance, i.e., with the Cubans' and Mexican-Americans' voting and the Cubans' non-voting behavior. For Mexican-Americans' non-voting behavior the significance of this variable at the zero order level is washed out with the full equation. For the Puerto Ricans this independent variable is the only one that shows a significant correlation for this group's voting behavior.

Regarding the effects of socioeconomic status, our hypothesis was partially supported for the Puerto Ricans: neither of the two status indicators was a significant predictor of their voting participation, but education was a significant predictor of their non-voting participation. For the Cubans our socioeconomic hypothesis was also supported but only regarding their voting participation. For the Mexican-Americans the hypothesis was not supported since education was a significant predictor but in the opposite direction of what we expected.

Regarding the hypothesized effects of the mass media variables, the most surprising result is the null effect of the Spanish press in the full model as well as the simple correlations. In five of the six possible relationships with the full regression model, it showed no significant predictive power and even two of those five associations were in the negative direction. It is only with the Cubans' non-voting participation that this variable has any significant positive effect. Otherwise, in the full model it is the English press variable which indicates positive associations, yet only one of these is significant (i.e., with Mexican-Americans' voting). Without controls, English press shows six positive associations, two of which are significant.

The hypothesis about the effects of the electronic media receive some support with the TV index but not with the radio index. In the full model for the Puerto Ricans' and Mexican-Americans' vote and non-vote participation, the TV index shows associations which are in the negative direction but these are non-significant (though in one case it reaches $p=<.06$). At the zero order level, the TV index is significantly associated for both types of

participation of the Mexican-Americans'. For the Cubans' non-vote participation, the TV index is one of the significant media variables at the zero order level and in the full model. The radio exposure index, on the other hand, fails to achieve any significance at any level of analysis and its weak associations vary in direction across groups and type of participation.

Discussion

We have presented data on Latino group differences in two types of political participation. The findings are quite revealing for they show more contrasts than similarities regarding the predictive variables, in spite of the non-significant difference across groups in the means of voting and non-voting participation. Since the major difference lies in the type of participation we will discuss each of these separately across groups, and limit our review to the results of the full regression models.

The Puerto Ricans, though having the highest mean voting participation, are the least predictable with the variables presently analyzed. Considering the best beta weights (i.e., years in the U.S. and age, though again, these are non-significant) we would be inclined to speculate that it is the acculturated Puerto Ricans who may go out to register and vote. We could also speculate that exposure to Spanish and English language newspapers may have some positive effect on their participation while exposure to the electronic media may curtail that.

The voting participation of Mexican-Americans is clearly part of an acculturation process since years in the U.S. (even when age is controlled) and reading English language newspapers significantly enhances such behavior. The effect of the latter variable partially supports our previous discussion where we stated that exposure to the mass media is a necessary link for the Latinos incorporation to American politics. On the other hand, the socioeconomic status variables are among the least helpful in predicting either the Mexican-Americans' or the Puerto Ricans' voting behavior. This also coincides, though does not give unqualified support, to our evaluation about these groups' status in society and how this affects their political activity (in this case vote behavior).

For the Cubans, in contrast, there is a strong and positive effect of the socioeconomic variables on their voting participation. This effects also attests to our

propositions about this group's status in society. However, for the Cubans, the mass media need not be their link for their voting participation. The political information is probably found elsewhere since the development of their ideological stances may be a process achieved in the civic, social, or business organizations from which the Cubans are less discriminated, if at all, as compared to their Latino counterparts.

Turning to the non-voting political participation, there are, once again, relatively different pictures for each ethnic group. For the Puerto Ricans, our data shows that education increases the involvement. At the same time, it is very interesting to note that family income (though non-significant) is a negative predictor. We are inclined to look at this combination of variables as giving some meaning to our proposition stating that lower class Latinos would engage in politics in order to achieve higher status, not to defend a non-existant one. Apparently, this applies to the Puerto Ricans and with respect to the non-voting participation. A rationale for this linkage may lie in the 'godfathering' approach these Latinos may have to social mobility; i.e., jobs and financial advancement opportunities are sought via the personal contact with someone in power. Under such circumstances, the media need not play a significant role, but interpersonal contacts (a variable not tested here) may.

For the Mexican-Americans, a slightly different picture emerges. None of the variables are significant, but of those that approximate significance, education and English newspaper reading, do tell us something. It is possible that the non-voting participation has a different meaning or purpose for these Latinos. In other words, we can speculate that this type of participation is a channel for the continued civic acculturation to the American society, to which the better educated and English press readers actually seek.

For the Cubans we could argue that the non-voting political participation is a means for achieving their best interest as privileged ethnics in the American society, for which the residency experience (years in the U.S.) is most necessary. But at the same time, in order to seek their interests as Cubans, they must have their ethnic information linkage. Given the fact that one of the major Spanish language newspapers in the U.S. (Diario Las Américas) is owned and operated by wealthy former Cuban emmigres in Miami, we believe that

this is the cause for the associations which emerge with the Spanish newspaper variable. Finally, the almost significant (it reaches p=.10) negative effect of age could be an indicator that the above is particularly true for the younger Cubans.

In conclusion, the political participation of Latinos, be it in voting or non-voting related activities, is not equal across ethnic groups. One background variable i.e., years of residency in the U.S. (our major acculturation variable), does indicate that as time goes by the Latinos in general may get involved in the American political scene. But other than this, the other measures do not provide a clear picture to generalize for all Latinos. In fact, had we analyzed the results of the sample as a whole, we would have come to very different, erroneous, conclusions about most associations. Finally, our findings indicate that the effects of exposure to the mass media are important for understanding, and predicting how each ethnic group may or may not participate in American politics.

Notes

1. To the question of place of birth, 108 (94%) of the 115 Puerto Ricans responded it was Puerto Rico, 6 (5%) said it was U.S., and one said Mexico. To the same question, 122 (75%) of the Mexicans said it was Mexico, 37 (23%) said it was U.S., and 3 (2%) responded Puerto Rico. For the Cubans, 109 (98%) responded Cuba, and 2 (2%) said Mexico.

2. These similarities can be seen in certain nation wide data in, e.g., U.S. Bureau of the Census, and in the Chicago data itself, as partially portrayed in Table 1, and more specifically in Duran and Monroe (1977).

3. See, e.g., Wagenheim and Jimenez de Wagenheim (1973: 123-139) for a brief account on the process of how the U.S. citizenship was forced on the Puerto Ricans.

4. A four stage sampling process was carried out, beginning with the selection of 155 census tracts, each of which more than 400 Latinos. A selection of 45 those tracts (15 tracts per Latino group) completed the first stage of the sampling process. Then, blocks within the census tracts, i.e., neighborhood, were selected. This was followed by the selection of housing units in each neighborhood. Finally, heads of household, or their spouse from the units, were selected as respondents. An N=400 with an acceptable confidence rate of 95 percent composed the total original Latino sample.

5. Only those respondents who explicitly identified themselves as members of this group were included as part of the Puerto Rican subsample. This resulted in a loss of twelve of the 127 cases of this subset from the Duran and Monroe study.

6. This is only an abbreviated presentation of the results and discussion. Also, the discussion does not include our evaluation nor value judgments of the fruitfulness or futility of Latinos' participation in American politics.

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Table 1. Means and standard deviations of the personal background characteristics of the three Latino groups.

Background Variables	Puerto Ricans $\bar{x}$	(s.d.)	Mexican-Americans $\bar{x}$	(s.d.)	Cubans $\bar{x}$	(s.d.)
Age	37.6	(14.8)	36.5	(13.2)	44.5	(12.4)
Years in U.S.	16.0	(9.8)	14.5	(13.0)	9.7	(5.3)
Education	6.8	(3.9)	6.4	(3.9)	8.8	(3.9)
Family Income	$4,725.0	($6,858.)	$9,087.0	($6,144.)	$10,420.0	($8,280.)
	N=115		N=162		N=111	

Table 2: Principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation procedure of the fifteen media related items.

Variable	1	2	3	4	
Freq. of tv/ week	.554	.013	.071	.606	
Hours of tv/ day	.085	.050	-.029	.824	
Spanish tv/ week	.848	.067	-.056	.137	
6:30 p.m. news	.895	.021	-.023	.019	
10:30 p.m. news	.822	.080	.016	.030	
Spanish tv dependency	.664	.204	.066	-.147	
Freq. of radio/ week	-.037	.848	.131	.177	
Freq. of radio/ day	-.200	.594	-.053	.399	
Spanish radio/ week	.130	.856	.113	-.060	
Radio news program	.222	.445	.005	.020	
Spanish radio dependency	.170	.754	.061	-.248	
Any newspaper/ year	-.165	-.016	.855	.209	
Any magazine/ year	.061	.091	.543	.010	
Spanish press exposure	.126	.116	.721	-.175	
English press exposure	-.335	-.065	.445	.477	
Eingenvalues	3.569	2.536	1.815	1.423	N=388
Percent of total variance	21.6	17.7	12.0	11.0	Total = 62.3

Table 3: Zero order correlation coefficients between the independent variables and both types of political participation for each ethnic group.

A: Voting related political participation

Independent variables	Puerto Ricans	Mexican-Americans	Cubans	(Whole Sample)
Sex	-.133	.179[b]	-.132	.037
Age	.158	.324[a]	.025	.144[a]
Years in the U.S.	.243[b]	.566[a]	.472[a]	.442[a]
Education	-.007	.183	.300[a]	.109
Family income	.111	.057	.347[a]	.095
Spanish press	.068	-.056	-.005	-.021
English press	.160	.423[a]	.181	.269[a]
TV exposure	.001	-.265[a]	-.188	-.195[a]
Radio exposure	-.041	.028	-.044	-.012

B: Non-voting related political participation

Independent variables	Puerto Ricans	Mexican-Americans	Cubans	(Whole Sample)
Sex	-.106	.112	-.234[b]	-.062
Age	-.018	.083	-.119	.005
Years in the U.S.	.098	.238[a]	.276[a]	.167[a]
Education	.234[a]	.247[a]	.247[a]	.249[a]
Family income	-.024	.125	.270[a]	.152[a]
Spanish press	-.037	-.107	.239[a]	.011
English press	.178	.301[a]	.137	.206[a]
TV exposure	-.135	-.171[b]	-.296[a]	-.204[a]
Radio exposure	-.139	-.017	.062	-.012
	N=115	N=162	N=111	N=388

a=$p<.01$ b=$p<.05$

Table 4: Standardized regression coefficients for the independent variables on the voting related political participation of each ethnic group.

	Puerto Ricans		Mexican-Americans		Cubans		Whole S.	
Independent vars.	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ
Sex	-.10	1.76	.10	3.22	.03	1.74	.05	.13
Age	.16	3.12	.02	10.23	.13	.08	.06	2.03
Years in U.S.	.18	3.78	.45[a]	19.98	.44[a]	21.25	.38[a]	17.39
Education	.00	.41	.03	1.75	.25[a]	11.33	.06	1.84
Family income	.03		-.01		.24[a]		.03	
Spanish press	.11	1.67	.03	6.43	.00	.94	.04	2.40
English press	.10		.22[a]		-.11		.11[a]	
TV exposure	-.02		-.14		-.05		.12[b]	
Radio exposure	-.00		.12		-.01		.04	
	Total R^2=10.74		R^2=41.61		R^2=35.34		R^2=23.79	
a=p<.01	p=n.s.		p=.000		p=.000		p=.000	
b=p<.05	N=115		N=162		N=111		N=388	

Table 5: Standardized regression coefficients for the independent variables on the non-voting related political participation of each ethnic group.

	Puerto Ricans		Mexican-Americans		Cubans		Whole S.	
Independent vars.	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ
Sex	-.08	1.12	.05	1.25	-.08	5.48	-.04	.38
Age	.13	.00	.05	.66	-.16	1.28	.05	.01
Years in U.S.	.06	1.00	.12	5.19	.27[a]	5.25	.13[b]	3.10
Education	.31[a]	7.66	.17	4.95	.10	4.73	.20[a]	6.61
Family income	-.15		.07		.14		.06	
Spanish press	-.02	3.37	-.09	3.02	.27[a]	12.49	.02	1.62
English press	.06		.15		-.16		.04	
TV exposure	-.09		-.05		-.24[a]		-.13[b]	
Radio exposure	-.14		.06		.08		.02	
	Total R^2=13.15		R^2=15.07		R^2=29.23		R^2=11.72	
a=p<.01	p=.084		p=.003		p=.000		p=n.s.	
b=p<.05	N=115		N=162		N=111		N=388	

Table 4: Standardized regression coefficients for the independent variables on the voting related political participation of each ethnic group.

	Puerto Ricans		Mexican-Americans		Cubans		Whole S.	
Independent vars.	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ	beta	R^2_Δ
Sex	-.10	1.76	.10	3.22	.03	1.74	.05	.13
Age	.16	3.12	.02	10.23	.13	.08	.06	2.03
Years in U.S.	.18	3.78	.45[a]	19.98	.44[a]	21.25	.38[a]	17.39
Education	.00	.41	.03	1.75	.25[a]	11.33	.06	1.84
Family income	.03		-.01		.24[a]		.03	
Spanish press	.11	1.67	.03	6.43	.00	.94	.04	2.40
English press	.10		.22[a]		-.11		.11[a]	
TV exposure	-.02		-.14		-.05		.12[b]	
Radio exposure	-.00		.12		-.01		.04	
	Total R^2=10.74		R^2=41.61		R^2=35.34		R^2=23.79	
a=p<.01	p=n.s.		p=.000		p=.000		p=.000	
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Age	.13	.00	.05	.66	-.16	1.28	.05	.01
Years in U.S.	.06	1.00	.12	5.19	.27[a]	5.25	.13[b]	3.10
Education	.31	7.66	.17	4.95	.10	4.73	.20[a]	6.61
Family income	-.15		.07		.14		.06	
Spanish press	-.02	3.37	-.09	3.02	.27[a]	12.49	.02	1.62
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	Total R^2=13.15		R^2=15.07		R^2=29.23		R^2=11.72	
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Years in U.S.	16.0	(9.8)	14.5	(13.0)	9.7	(5.3)
Education	6.8	(3.9)	6.4	(3.9)	8.8	(3.9)
Family Income	$4,725.0	($6,858.)	$9,087.0	($6,144.)	$10,420.0	($8,280.)
	N=115		N=162		N=111	

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Variable	1	2	3	4	
Freq. of tv/ week	.554	.013	.071	.606	
Hours of tv/ day	.085	.050	-.029	.824	
Spanish tv/ week	.848	.067	-.056	.137	
6:30 p.m. news	.895	.021	-.023	.019	
10:30 p.m. news	.822	.080	.016	.030	
Spanish tv dependency	.664	.204	.066	-.147	
Freq. of radio/ week	-.037	.848	.131	.177	
Freq. of radio/ day	-.200	.594	-.053	.399	
Spanish radio/ week	.130	.856	.113	-.060	
Radio news program	.222	.445	.005	.020	
Spanish radio dependency	.170	.754	.061	-.248	
Any newspaper/ year	-.165	-.016	.855	.209	
Any magazine/ year	.061	.091	.543	.010	
Spanish press exposure	.126	.116	.721	-.175	
English press exposure	-.335	-.065	.445	.477	
Eingenvalues	3.569	2.536	1.815	1.423	N=388
Percent of total variance	21.6	17.7	12.0	11.0	Total = 62.3