

Navigating Cross-Pressures: How Acculturation Shapes Latino Political Behavior

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Latinos represent one of the fastest-growing segments of the American electorate, comprising approximately 14.7% of eligible voters in the 2024 election—a figure projected to grow significantly as younger Latinos reach voting age (Pew Research Center, 2024). Despite their electoral significance, Latino political behavior defies simplified assumptions of ethnic or political unity. Dominant theoretical frameworks, such as linked fate and group consciousness (e.g. Sanchez & Vargas, 2016; Sanchez & Masuoka, 2010), emphasize group solidarity, predicting Latino political cohesion in response to threats like anti-immigrant rhetoric (Barreto & Segura, 2014; Zepeda-Millán, 2017; Reny, Collingwood & Valenzuela, 2019). Yet recent Latino voting patterns clearly contradict these predictions, underscoring a fundamental gap in existing theoretical approaches (Fraga et al., 2024; Jones-Correa et al., 2018). Moreover, scholarship on Latino political behavior has uniformly adopted binary frameworks, which inherently ignore cultural hybridity experienced by many Latinos. To address these distinct but related critiques, this study introduces and validates the Multidimensional Latino Acculturation Model (MLAM), a bidirectional acculturation framework specifically designed to capture Latino political heterogeneity and cultural hybridity, overcoming the limitations of current frameworks.

These empirical shortcomings have prompted scholars to call for improved theoretical frameworks. Lee (2008) argues for frameworks that move beyond simplistic demographic categories to emphasize foundational processes—racialization, cultural negotiation, and boundary-making—through which immigrant-origin groups navigate. Similarly, McClain et al.

(2009) caution about the danger of overextrapolation—applying concepts developed in research on one group uncritically to others—underscoring the importance of developing frameworks tailored explicitly to each group being studied. Building on these critiques, Jones-Correa et al. (2018), in their review of Latino political literature, identify key empirical gaps including understanding Latino political responses to threat, recognizing ideological and partisan diversity, and accurately representing subgroup differences within the Latino electorate. Fraga et al. (2024) reinforce these critiques empirically, emphasizing that existing frameworks insufficiently capture immigrant-origin experiences and complexities in Latino political behavior. Collectively, these critiques demonstrate the urgent need for innovative, nuanced theoretical approaches that genuinely capture the full diversity of Latino political behavior.

One promising but underexplored alternative is acculturation. Latinos occupy a unique position in American society. Unlike European-origin groups, such as the Irish, who historically achieved acceptance into whiteness relatively quickly (Ignatiev, 1995), Latinos have faced persistent racialization and exclusion despite their longstanding presence predating U.S. sovereignty—notably since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 (Cobas & Feagin, 2015; Massey, 2015; Ngai, 2014). Additionally, Latino immigration differs from other immigrant-origin groups due to ongoing "replenishment," a process that continuously refreshes heritage ties as a result of geographic and cultural proximity (Jiménez, 2008). Acculturation captures the resulting identity shifts, aspirations, strategies, and the ways in which Latinos navigate this ongoing cultural negotiation. As a result, acculturation emerges as an essential theoretical framework for understanding Latino communities and, by extension, the full spectrum of Latino political behavior.

In political science, research on acculturation has exclusively relied on what I term binary acculturation, conceptualizing the acculturation process as a mutually exclusive choice between assimilation and cultural retention. This approach favors assimilation, casting cultural retention as inherently oppositional or problematic. Rooted in assumptions reflecting white cultural hegemony (e.g., Huntington, 2004; Park, 1928), binary acculturation characterizes cultural difference as threatening to American Anglo identity and social cohesion. Additionally, these frameworks fail to recognize cultural hybridity—the blending of heritage and mainstream American cultures—thus fundamentally discounting a legitimate acculturation orientation.

Binary acculturation models thus have significant theoretical, empirical, and ethical limitations, erasing the presence and importance of hybrid cultural experiences. This omission is not accidental; it reflects broader historical structures of colonialism, racial hierarchy, and systemic exclusion, which historically demanded assimilation as a means of cultural control and erasure (Fanon, 1967; Quijano, 2000; Smith, 2021). Consequently, continued reliance on binary acculturation reinforces this problematic cycle. While acculturation represents a fruitful avenue for understanding Latino communities and their political heterogeneity, current frameworks must evolve beyond binary conceptualizations to fully capture this complexity.

To overcome these critical limitations, this study introduces and empirically validates the Multidimensional Latino Acculturation Model (MLAM). Unlike binary acculturation which views assimilation and cultural retention as being in conflict, at opposing ends of a single continuum, MLAM conceptualizes acculturation as bidirectional, treating cultural retention and adoption as distinct, independent processes. The intersection of these dimensions yields four distinct orientations (Table 1):

Table 1: MLAM Acculturation Orientation Matrix

	High Retention of Heritage Culture	Low-Moderate Retention of Heritage Culture
High Adoption of the Dominant Culture	Bicultural (68.3%)	Assimilationist (14.7%)
Low-Moderate Adoption of the Dominant Culture	Culture-Affirming (9%)	Demicultural (7.9%)

Importantly, MLAM recognizes two distinct hybrid orientations—Bicultural and Demicultural. Bicultural individuals strongly identify with and actively participate in both heritage Latino and mainstream American cultures, whereas the Demicultural orientation represents a more moderate form of biculturalism. Demicultural respondents exhibit moderate identification with Latino and American identities, alongside less pronounced aspirational attitudes towards acculturation (e.g., expressing more varied preferences for speaking English or Spanish). Empirical validation using comparative cluster analysis of the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS) demonstrates that over 75% of Latino respondents fall into these hybrid categories (see Appendix A for empirical validation details). This reveals a critical oversight within existing binary frameworks, which systematically exclude hybrid orientations. As a result, binary acculturation frameworks fundamentally misrepresent Latino acculturation experiences, significantly constraining the analysis of acculturation within political science.

With robust empirical validation of MLAM’s four acculturation orientations established, this study applies MLAM within political science, with a specific focus on Latino voters. The analysis addresses two strategic research questions: (1) How do distinct acculturation orientations differ regarding political ideology, party identification, and immigration policy

attitudes? (2) Does MLAM offer analytical advantages over traditional binary frameworks (e.g., linked fate, group consciousness) in capturing Latino political behavior?

To answer these questions, the study employs a two-phase non-parametric analytical approach—including Kruskal-Wallis, Mann-Whitney U, Dunn’s tests, chi-square, Fisher’s Exact tests, and Cramer’s V—rigorously assessed through bootstrapping and cross-validation robustness checks. This methodological strategy explicitly avoids the restrictive assumptions (e.g., normality, linearity) of parametric methods such as regression and ANOVA, reducing statistical bias and allowing for a more exploratory analysis. The following sections begin by outlining the theoretical framework, critically examining limitations of binary acculturation and introducing MLAM, followed by detailed descriptions of the data and methodological design. Next, empirical results show meaningful political variation across MLAM orientations – ideology, partisanship, and immigration attitudes—highlighting how acculturation orientations tap into political cross-pressure that Latinos contend with. The paper concludes by discussing theoretical, empirical, and methodological implications, explicitly calling for a shift toward bidirectional frameworks that more authentically represent Latino communities and outperform existing frameworks in explaining Latino political diversity.

Theoretical Framework

Current political science frameworks fail to account for Latino political diversity due to reliance on oversimplified frameworks. This section addresses binary acculturation limitations, specifically, highlighting its incongruence with Latino lived experiences and emphasizing how binary logic reinforces white hegemony, perpetuates harm, and deepens division.

Empirical Incongruence

First, empirical evidence indicates that binary frameworks fail to align with how Latinos actually experience acculturation. In their quantitative analysis, Fraga et al. (2010) find strong evidence that most Latinos embrace aspects of their heritage culture while actively participating in American society. Rather than treating cultural engagement as mutually exclusive, Latinos commonly blend cultural practices—valuing Spanish language use and maintaining family and cultural traditions, yet also fully participating in American civic, economic, and political institutions. Fraga et al. ultimately find that Latinos widely engage in dual cultural maintenance and adoption.

Additionally, Michelson's (2007) critiques binary acculturation models, emphasizing that they "do not completely reflect the myriad ways in which Latino immigrants incorporate into American society" (Michelson, 2007, p. 26). Michelson speculates that Latino immigrants' acculturation experiences are segmented and influenced heavily by contextual factors such as racism, discrimination, community resources, and the dynamic interplay between generations. Rather than a linear or unidirectional assimilation process, Michelson underscores that acculturation among Latinos is significantly shaped by their broader social environment. Michelson further demonstrates the complexity of this process by highlighting how Latino immigrants often experience paradoxical feelings—simultaneously becoming part of mainstream society while maintaining feelings of alienation due to discrimination. As Michelson notes, "even among Latino immigrants who feel rejected by American society, who lack a sense of belonging and who may feel targeted as members of a racialized minority group, many individuals are adopting mainstream American political attitudes" (Michelson, 2007, p. 40). These findings indicate that acculturation involves navigating multiple identities and borders, simultaneously. (Michelson, 2007).

These studies underscore significant empirical misalignment: binary models misrepresent Latino identities, behaviors, and lived experiences.

Experiential Realities

Empirical evidence clearly reveals how binary models fail to represent Latinos. Yet beyond empirical critiques, it is essential to recognize the lived realities of cultural hybridity central to Latino life—realities powerfully articulated by Gloria Anzaldúa's concept of *mestiza consciousness*. Anzaldúa defines *mestiza consciousness* as a heightened awareness of tensions and contradictions arising from simultaneously existing within multiple cultural worlds. Far from passively straddling two cultures, Anzaldúa describes the *mestiza* as actively reconciling these cultural tensions:

"The new mestiza copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity... Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else." (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 79)

This continuous negotiation of multiple cultures—of actively juggling complexity—is central, not marginal, to Latino acculturation. Yet binary frameworks erase this normative reality by prioritizing assimilation.

Normative Implications

Binary acculturation frameworks are not just flawed theoretical constructs; they actively perpetuate harmful societal narratives rooted in racial exclusion and white cultural hegemony. As previously noted, these frameworks privilege assimilation and promote cultural erasure. This problematic binary logic is exemplified by Harvard professor Samuel Huntington's influential

essay, "*The Hispanic Challenge*" (2004). Huntington explicitly argues that Latino cultural retention fundamentally threatens American unity, culture, and white hegemony:

"The persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages... Unlike past immigrant groups, Mexicans and other Latinos have not assimilated into mainstream U.S. culture... forming their own political and linguistic enclaves—from Los Angeles to Miami—and rejecting the Anglo-Protestant values that built the American dream (Huntington, 2004, p. 30)."

Huntington's statement embodies binary logic, viewing acculturation in terms of assimilation or cultural retention, while clearly favoring assimilation and promoting cultural erasure. Cultural retention, and by extension cultural hybridity, is viewed as destabilizing and threatening to established racial hierarchies. This shows that binary acculturation logic is rooted in white cultural hegemony. Thus, binary logic is neither neutral nor objective; rather, it reinforces colonial patterns of racial hierarchy, marginalization, and cultural control (Fanon, 1967; Fraga & Segura, 2006; Quijano, 2000; Smith, 2021).

Leo Chavez's (2013) research reveals how binary logic is weaponized through the "Latino Threat Narrative." Chavez systematically documents how media portrayals, political discourse, and public opinion depict Latinos as a threat to American society due to their cultural maintenance (e.g., speaking Spanish, maintaining cultural traditions). These narratives position Latino cultural retention as inherently at odds with successful integration, perceiving it as a direct threat to American institutions, identity, and societal stability. Chavez shows how this

intolerance actively promotes discrimination, legitimizes exclusionary policies, and reinforces narratives that marginalize Latinos.

Ramirez and Peterson (2020) find that anti-Latino animus, rooted in perceptions of Latinos as culturally incompatible and threatening, significantly shapes White Americans' attitudes across multiple political and social domains. They show that this perspective extends far beyond immigration debates, influencing attitudes toward voting rights, criminal punishment, policing practices, and electoral decisions. They also provide robust evidence demonstrating how this narrative systematically drives anti-Latino sentiment, deepening racial divides and fostering discrimination and exclusionary policies. Collectively, these findings underscore the normative harm inflicted on Latino communities, demonstrating that binary logic actively promotes exclusion, marginalization, and the perpetuation of racial and cultural hierarchies.

Reframing Latino Acculturation

Recognizing these empirical, conceptual, and societal limitations, this study aims to position MLAM as a corrective framework to address the inadequacies of binary frameworks. MLAM reconceptualizes acculturation as a bidirectional process, treating assimilation and cultural retention as distinct, independent dimensions rather than as mutually exclusive categories. This fundamental shift allows previously overlooked hybrid cultural orientations—bicultural and demicultural—to emerge, aligning theoretical frameworks more accurately with Latino experiences documented by Fraga (2010), Michelson (2007), and Anzaldúa (1987). Adopting MLAM represents a necessary evolution within political science to address oversights, enhance theoretical clarity, and improve analytical accuracy.

Beyond analytical improvements, shifting from binary to bidirectional acculturation frameworks constitutes an urgent ethical and scientific imperative. Continued reliance on binary logic perpetuates damaging societal narratives that portray cultural retention as destabilizing, oppositional, or problematic. Such narratives actively promote cultural erasure, exacerbate divisions, and deepen harm within Latino communities. By conceptualizing cultural hybridity as both normative and legitimate, MLAM challenges these harmful, exclusionary paradigms.

As Kuhn (1962) emphasized, when established paradigms no longer adequately explain observed phenomena, scientific communities face a crisis. Such crises necessitate the adoption of new theories, methods, and standards—fundamentally reshaping how empirical realities are understood. Consistent with Kuhn’s perspective, this study advocates for precisely such a paradigm shift within political science. Adopting MLAM realigns political science frameworks with empirical realities and authentic Latino experiences, fulfilling the discipline’s fundamental scientific responsibility articulated by Goertz (2020): “the core goal of all sciences—natural and social—is to accurately describe the world.” At this critical juncture, MLAM offers political science a necessary corrective to address theoretical limitations, counter harmful narratives, and more fully capture Latino political diversity.

Data

This study uses data from the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS), a nationally representative survey of Latinos, with a subset of 4,785 eligible Latino voters. The LNS employed a sampling strategy across multiple states, was administered in English and Spanish, and included measures capturing cultural, social, and political attitudes (Fraga et al., 2006; ICPSR, 2008).

Acculturation Orientations (MLAM Framework)

Respondents' acculturation orientations are operationalized using MLAM (see Appendix A for details). MLAM conceptualizes acculturation as a bidirectional, psychologically grounded, and multidimensional process. MLAM includes two dimensions: Intercultural Identity, measuring respondents' strength of identification with heritage and mainstream American cultures separately, and Aspirational Attitudes, capturing respondents' motivations and strategies for navigating cultural differences (Table 2).

Table 2: Operationalizing MLAM Dimensions Using LNS Variables

MLAM Dimension	Survey Variables
Intercultural Identity	Heritage Identity: Panethnic (Latino/Hispanic), National-origin identity (Strongest identity score used) American Identity: Strength of identification as American
Aspirational Attitudes	Linguistic: Importance of preserving Spanish; Importance of learning English Cultural: Maintaining heritage distinctiveness; Desire to blend heritage and American cultures

MLAM was validated through comparative cluster analysis (CCA) of the 2006 LNS data. After comparing clustering algorithms (K-Means, Agglomerative Hierarchical, Gaussian Mixture Models [GMM]), GMM was selected for its statistical robustness and interpretability, allowing probabilistic cluster membership consistent with MLAM's conceptualization (see Appendix A for details).

From this analysis, MLAM identified four orientations capturing distinct patterns of identity and aspirations: Bicultural (68%), characterized by strong alignment with both heritage and mainstream cultures, balancing cultural retention with integration; Assimilationist (15%),

primarily identifying with mainstream culture and prioritizing integration; Culture-Affirming (9%), predominantly identifying with heritage culture and emphasizing cultural preservation; and Demicultural (8%), displaying moderate alignment and balanced integration aspirations across cultures. Each orientation thus reflects distinct psychological attachments and integration strategies, offering critical insight into how Latino individuals navigate complex cultural identities within broader societal constraints.

By focusing on psychological orientations and identity-driven dimensions, MLAM offers a significant methodological improvement over traditional demographic proxies (such as generational status or length of residence), which inherently reflect externally-driven conformity behaviors rather than authentic internal orientations. This methodological rigor allows for more nuanced and meaningful analyses of Latino political behavior, authentically reflecting how individuals respond psychologically and strategically to structural pressures and external expectations.

Political Variables

The analysis examines specific political variables presented in Table 3. Each variable corresponds to a question from the 2006 LNS, measuring respondents' political ideology, party identification, immigration policy attitudes, perceptions of immigrants, and support for the DREAM Act. Higher scores indicate more liberal-leaning responses, whereas lower scores indicate more conservative-leaning responses, facilitating clear comparative analyses across the acculturation orientations.

Table 3: Political Variables and Corresponding Questions from 2006 LNS

Variable	Question from 2006 LNS
Political Ideology	How would you describe your political ideology?
Party Identification	Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else?
Immigration Policy Attitudes	Do you favor or oppose policies like legalization programs and increased border security?
Immigrant Attitudes	Do you think immigrants strengthen American society, or are they a burden?
DREAM Act Support	Do you support or oppose a law providing undocumented youth a path to citizenship?

Methodology

Given the complex interplay between acculturation and Latino political behavior, the novelty of the MLAM framework, and distinctive data characteristics, this study employs a two-phase, non-parametric analytical approach. This methodological choice is directly informed by the innovative MLAM framework and the typically complex, non-normal distributions of political attitudes and behaviors (Conover, 1999; Hollander et al., 2014). Non-parametric methods reduce reliance on restrictive assumptions—such as normality, linearity, and homogeneity of variance—often unmet in social science survey data. Thus, they provide a more accurate, transparent, and conservative exploration of underlying patterns, ensuring identified differences and associations reflect genuine dynamics rather than methodological artifacts (Hollander et al., 2014).

The analysis consists of two complementary phases, each employing rigorous statistical techniques and validation strategies (summarized in Table 4).

Table 4: Analytical Overview

Analytical Phase	Objective	Statistical Method	Effect Size Measure	Robustness Checks	Rationale for Choice
Phase 1	Identify differences in political behaviors across MLAM orientations	Kruskal-Wallis; Dunn's pairwise tests (with Holm-Bonferroni correction); Mann-Whitney U	Clifford's Delta	Bootstrapping (1000 resamples), k-fold cross-validation (k=5)	Robustness against non-normality; accurately detects group differences without parametric assumptions (Hollander et al., 2014; Vargha & Delaney, 2000)
Phase 2	Examine associations between MLAM orientations and categorical political outcomes	Chi-square test; Fisher's Exact test (as needed)	Cramer's V	Bootstrapping (1000 resamples), k-fold cross-validation (k=5)	Robustly assesses categorical associations; standardized interpretation of association strength (Cohen, 1988; McHugh, 2013)

Phase 1: Identifying Differences across Acculturation Orientations

Phase 1 specifically investigates whether significant differences exist across MLAM acculturation orientations in key political behaviors. First, the Kruskal-Wallis test, a non-parametric equivalent of ANOVA, was employed to detect overall differences in the distributions of political variables across multiple independent groups without assuming normality (Hollander et al., 2014). When significant differences ($p < .05$) were identified, Dunn's pairwise tests (Holm-Bonferroni adjusted) were conducted to determine precisely which pairs of orientations differed significantly, reducing the risk of Type I error due to multiple comparisons

(Dunn, 1964; Holm, 1979). Additionally, Mann-Whitney U tests reinforced these pairwise comparisons, providing sensitivity to differences in rank distributions.

To quantify the magnitude of these pairwise differences, Clifford's Delta was employed. Clifford's Delta was chosen specifically because, unlike parametric alternatives such as Cohen's d , it accurately captures both the direction and magnitude of group differences without requiring normality, providing clearer interpretability for ranked data (Romano et al., 2006; Vargha & Delaney, 2000). Effect sizes were interpreted following established thresholds: negligible ($\Delta < 0.11$), small ($0.11 \leq \Delta < 0.28$), medium ($0.28 \leq \Delta < 0.43$), and large ($\Delta \geq 0.43$) (Romano et al., 2006).

To further validate findings, two additional techniques were implemented: bootstrapping and k-fold cross-validation. Bootstrapping involved 1,000 repeated resamples of the data with replacement, producing confidence intervals for Clifford's Delta and confirming the stability and precision of effect sizes (Tibshirani & Efron, 1993). The k-fold cross-validation ($k = 5$) evaluated the consistency of these differences across subsets of data, ensuring patterns were reliable and not artifacts of sampling or methodological bias (Kohavi, 1995).

Phase 2: Exploring Associations between Orientations and Political Outcomes

Building on Phase 1's identified differences, Phase 2 explored how acculturation orientations systematically associate with categorical political outcomes (e.g., partisan identification, policy positions). Chi-square tests assessed whether acculturation orientations were significantly associated with political outcomes, revealing whether distributions differed significantly from expected frequencies (McHugh, 2013). Fisher's Exact test was utilized in cases with small expected frequencies, ensuring precise estimation of associations (Fisher, 1922).

To account for multiple comparisons, the Holm-Bonferroni correction was again applied, maintaining robustness of conclusions by minimizing false-positive results (Holm, 1979). Subsequently, the strength of significant associations was quantified using Cramer's V, selected for its clear, standardized interpretation (Cohen, 1988; McHugh, 2013). Compared to alternative measures, Cramer's V provides a universally interpretable measure of association strength, ranging from 0 (no association) to 1 (perfect association), facilitating straightforward comparisons across variables (Cohen, 1988).

Robustness of associations was again confirmed through intensive bootstrapping (1,000 resamples) and k-fold cross-validation ($k = 5$). Bootstrapping generated confidence intervals for Cramer's V, enhancing interpretability and precision of association measures, while k-fold cross-validation confirmed associations were consistently present across subsets (Kohavi, 1995).

Results

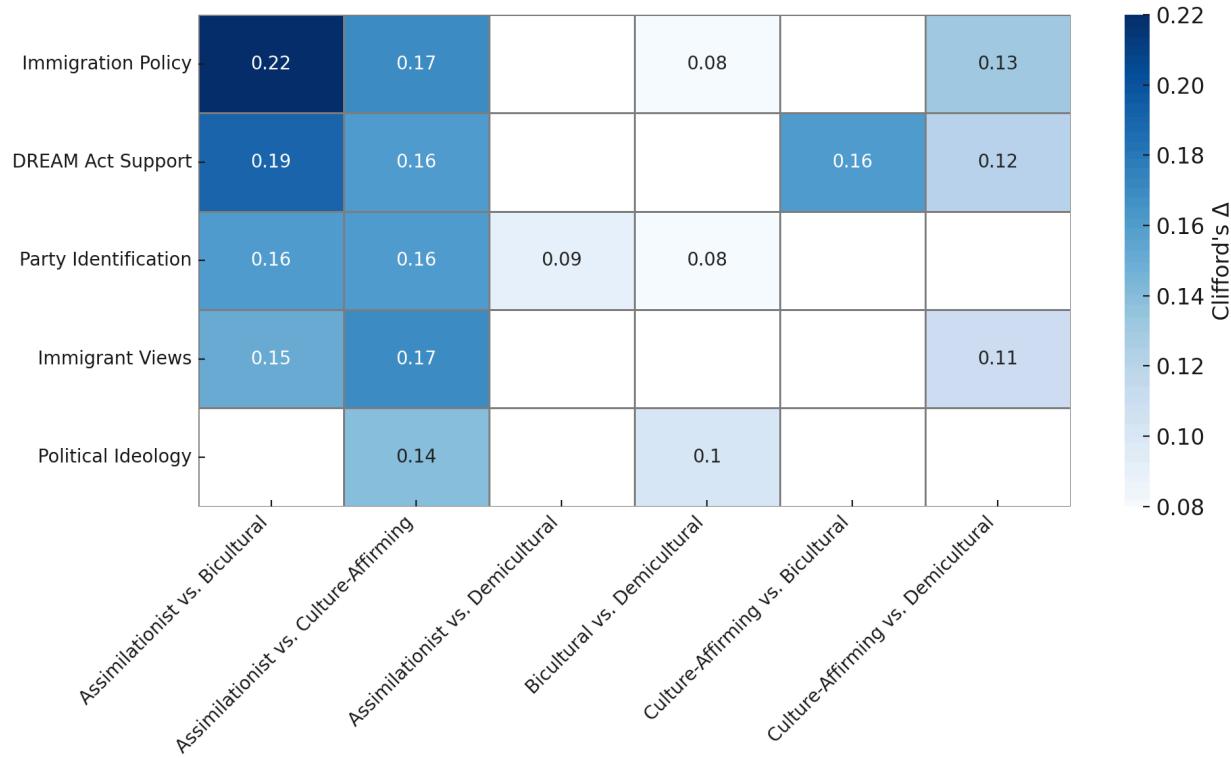
This section presents findings from two analytical phases that explore the relationship between four acculturation orientations derived from the MLAM and five political behaviors - partisanship, ideology, and three immigration (cross-pressure) issue positions. Detailed statistical results are provided in Appendix B.

Phase 1: Differences in Political Behaviors Across Acculturation Orientations

Phase 1 examined differences across the four MLAM orientations on key political variables. Kruskal-Wallis tests indicated statistically significant differences across all examined variables (all $p < .001$), justifying further pairwise analyses. Pairwise differences (Clifford's Δ) across orientations are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Heatmap of Pairwise Differences in Political Attitudes across MLAM

Acculturation Orientations (Clifford's Δ)



Note: Positive Δ indicates the first-named orientation is more liberal than the second-named orientation. Magnitudes were validated using bootstrapping (1,000 resamples) and k-fold cross-validation ($k = 5$).

Figure 1 shows the magnitude of political differences among acculturation orientations, with darker shading indicating stronger differences. Immigration-related attitudes—Immigration Policy, DREAM Act Support, and Immigrant Views—showed the most pronounced differences with effect sizes ranging from moderate to large ($\Delta = 0.15$ to 0.22), underscoring MLAM's strength in capturing nuanced political distinctions around immigration. Assimilationist and Culture-Affirming orientations emerged as clear political anchors, representing conservative and

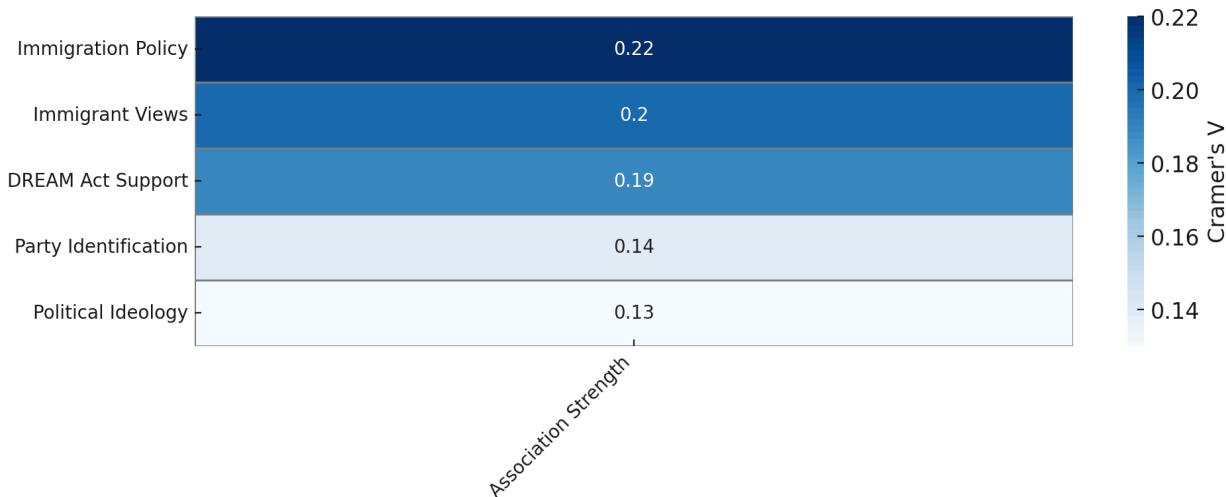
liberal extremes, respectively. These effects remained consistent across rigorous validation procedures, confirming their statistical reliability.

Importantly, Figure 1 shows that hybrid orientations—Bicultural and Demicultural—are politically meaningful and distinctly positioned. Bicultural respondents consistently lean toward moderate-liberal positions, placing them distinctly closer to Culture-Affirming orientations, yet separate from that group. Demicultural respondents, however, occupy moderate positions with a noticeable conservative leaning, aligning more closely with Assimilationist orientations.

Phase 2: Associations Between Acculturation Orientations and Political Outcomes

Building upon Phase 1, Phase 2 assessed associations between MLAM orientations and categorical political outcomes. Chi-square tests indicated statistically significant, robust associations across all political variables. The strength and robustness of these associations (Cramer's V) are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Heatmap of Associations between MLAM Acculturation Orientations and Political Outcomes (Cramer's V)



Note: Association strength (Cramer's V) was validated using bootstrapping (1,000 resamples) and cross-validation (k-fold, k = 5).

Figure 2 shows the strength of associations between MLAM orientations and key political outcomes, with darker shading indicating stronger associations. Immigration-related variables again demonstrated notably robust associations, emphasizing MLAM's unique analytical power in clarifying the complexities of immigration attitudes among Latinos. Associations with Party Identification and Political Ideology, though smaller, remained statistically significant and substantively important.

Examining individual orientations reveals clear political patterns. Assimilationist respondents consistently hold conservative immigration attitudes, conservative ideology, and Republican affiliation. Culture-Affirming respondents strongly associate with liberal immigration stances, liberal political ideology, and Democratic affiliation. The hybrid orientations further highlight MLAM's analytical strength: Bicultural respondents exhibit moderate-liberal political profiles, aligning distinctly with progressive immigration policies and liberal ideologies, yet remain notably more moderate than Culture-Affirming respondents. In contrast, Demicultural respondents demonstrate moderate-conservative associations, aligning with more conservative stances across variables compared to Bicultural respondents. Thus, MLAM captures a political landscape beyond binary frameworks.

Overall, these findings establish MLAM's unique capability to capture meaningful political diversity among Latino voters, particularly the hybrid orientations that binary frameworks systematically exclude, highlighting immigration-related attitudes as defining

cross-pressure issues. The following discussion section provides deeper insights into the implications of these results.

Discussion

The results demonstrate significant differences in political attitudes and behaviors across acculturation orientations, confirming MLAM's ability to identify meaningful political cleavages within Latino communities. This section explores the implications by examining the distinctive political profiles of each orientation, analyzing broader theoretical implications, highlighting methodological contributions, and addressing limitations and future research opportunities.

Political Profiles

This study directly tested the MLAM and the findings demonstrate its ability to capture nuanced Latino political behaviors across four empirically validated orientations. The Kruskal-Wallis tests revealed significant differences across all political variables (all $p < .001$), confirming that acculturation orientations meaningfully predict political attitudes and behaviors.

Assimilationist respondents (14.7% of the sample) consistently represented a politically conservative anchor across all variables. They identified with conservative ideologies, strongly affiliated with the Republican Party, and uniformly supported restrictive immigration policies. This conservative consistency was particularly pronounced on immigration issues, where Assimilationists demonstrated the most restrictive views on all measures, including strong opposition to the DREAM Act (Table 2, large effect sizes). The consistency of these conservative positions underscores Assimilationists' distinctive political profile, showing the smallest

within-group variance of all orientations and serving as a reliable reference point against which other orientations can be compared.

Culture-affirming respondents (9%) occupied the progressive end of the spectrum. Pairwise comparisons revealed their strongest differentiation from Assimilationists on immigration policy attitudes ($\Delta = 0.17$, moderate effect) and party identification ($\Delta = 0.17$, moderate effect), where they predominantly aligned with the Democratic Party and endorsed more progressive policies. Notably, on certain immigration issues, they showed the most progressive attitudes among all groups. However, they did not form as consistent a pole as Assimilationists, exhibiting more within-group variance.

Bicultural respondents, comprising the largest group (68.3%), occupied moderate-progressive positions with distinctive patterns. Their political profile was particularly notable on immigration issues, where they demonstrated the strongest contrast with Assimilationists on both DREAM Act support ($\Delta = 0.22$, large effect) and views on immigrants ($\Delta = 0.21$, large effect). While generally aligning with Culture-Affirming respondents on immigration attitudes, Biculturals displayed more moderation on certain policy specifics. This nuanced positioning suggests that Biculturals experience and navigate cross-pressure differently than other orientations, selectively adopting progressive stances on issues with direct relevance to immigrant communities while maintaining more moderate positions elsewhere.

Demicultural respondents (7.9%) displayed a distinctive moderate-conservative profile. While significantly more progressive than Assimilationists on DREAM Act support ($\Delta = 0.15$, moderate effect) and views on immigrants ($\Delta = 0.15$, moderate effect), they maintained more conservative positions than Biculturals across all measures. Their political positioning

consistently reflected a middle ground—more progressive than Assimilationists but more conservative than both Bicultural and Culture-Affirming orientations. Association analyses (Table 3) further confirmed their distinctive placement, showing them as a potential swing constituency with significant variation in political preferences.

Comparative Insights. The consistent patterns revealed through both phases of analysis demonstrate that acculturation orientations tap into meaningful cross-pressure experienced by Latino voters. While Assimilationists had political consistency (supporting conservative positions across all measures), hybrid orientations demonstrated more variable patterns reflecting different strategies for navigating cultural and political cross-pressure. This variability was particularly evident in immigration policy attitudes, where effect sizes between orientations were largest (Tables 2 and 3), suggesting that immigration serves as a critical domain where acculturation orientations most clearly shape political positioning.

These findings highlight the explanatory power of MLAM, clearly capturing the full spectrum of Latino political behavior. By identifying distinct acculturation orientations, MLAM reveals systematic differences in ideology, partisan affiliation, and immigration attitudes. Thus, MLAM effectively demonstrates that acculturation orientations represent a meaningful and politically consequential cleavage among Latino voters.

Theoretical Implications

The empirical findings underscore several critical theoretical contributions that extend beyond methodology, fundamentally reshaping how Latino communities are conceptualized and represented in political science. MLAM serves as a corrective framework that not only represents

Latino acculturation experiences more authentically, but also captures previously unexplored dimensions of Latino political behavior.

Bidirectional vs. Binary. Hybrid orientations account for more than 75% of respondents in this analysis. At the most basic level, MLAM's bidirectional approach inherently improves upon binary models by explicitly recognizing and incorporating hybrid orientations, making it inherently more inclusive and representative of Latino experiences. However, this study goes beyond establishing MLAM as a more inclusive model—it demonstrates that this inclusivity has substantial consequences for understanding Latino political behavior. The political distinctions observed across orientations reveal that by excluding hybrid identities, binary frameworks not only misrepresent Latino acculturation experiences but also miss critical insights into the drivers of Latino political diversity.

This empirical centrality of hybridity explicitly validates Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) theoretical concept of "mestiza consciousness," positioning cultural hybridity not merely as an anomaly but as foundational, complex, and constitutive of Latino lived realities. This study provides empirical support for that perspective, revealing how cultural hybridity translates into distinct patterns of political behavior. Politically, these hybrid orientations reflect Latinos' experiences of liminality—their distinctive position as immigrant-origin individuals of all generations, navigating multiple, often competing cultural pressures and boundaries. Specifically, Latinos experience cross-pressure as they simultaneously negotiate desires for inclusion in mainstream American society, loyalty and belonging to their heritage communities, and strategic responses to external racialization and discrimination. These multidimensional pressures generate distinct orientations, shaping Latinos' political identities and ideological

alignments in systematic and predictable ways. MLAM orientations explicitly capture these underlying psychological and identity-based mechanisms.

Thus, Latinos' liminality—their positioning at complex intersections of being members of an immigrant-origin group, integration, and racialization—operates through identifiable psychological mechanisms that shape responses to cross-pressure. Each MLAM orientation not only exhibits a distinct political profile, but also provides meaningful explanatory power for understanding the deeper, identity-driven bases of Latino political diversity.

Acculturation vs. Traditional Group Theories. MLAM captures more variation in Latino political behavior compared to linked fate and group consciousness. These established frameworks, while valuable in certain contexts, focus on ethnic and political cohesion among Latinos, and fail to fully explain the spectrum of political behavior (Jones-Correa et al., 2018). Therefore, providing limited insight when Latino voters operate from different motivational bases.

MLAM resolves this limitation by shifting analytical focus to the psychological mechanisms underlying how Latinos navigate cultural cross-pressure. Rather than assuming a singular ethnic response, MLAM recognizes distinct acculturation orientations as meaningful psychological strategies for navigating cultural differences, racial and ethnic boundaries, and social-political contexts. These orientations systematically shape political attitudes and behaviors.

Empirical findings from this analysis confirm MLAM's substantial advantage in explanatory power. Each acculturation orientation reliably predicts distinct patterns across political domains—ranging from partisan identification to immigration policy attitudes.

Moreover, because MLAM classifies all respondents into empirically validated orientations, it leaves no political positions unexplained or excluded, directly addressing the shortcomings of traditional frameworks in accounting for the full spectrum of Latino political outcomes, including conservative, progressive, and ideologically nuanced positions between the two.

Ultimately, MLAM answers scholarly calls (Lee, 2008; McClain et al., 2009) for theoretical innovation beyond simplistic demographic frameworks, emphasizing instead the acculturation processes—such as identity negotiation, racialization, and boundary-making—that immigrant-origin groups routinely navigate.

Methodological Contributions

This study provides the first analysis of bidirectional acculturation and Latino political behavior, addressing a significant gap in existing research. Given the lack of prior research linking these concepts, an exploratory, non-parametric approach was essential to allow patterns in political behavior to emerge naturally from the data.

First, traditional statistical methods (e.g., regression or ANOVA) require researchers to pre-specify relationships between variables and directions of expected effects before analyzing data, in addition to satisfying restrictive statistical assumptions (e.g., normality, linearity, homogeneity of variance). These requirements often cannot be fully met in exploratory contexts and can also constrain discovery or produce statistical artifacts. In contrast, the non-parametric framework adopted here explicitly minimizes pre-specification and restrictive assumptions, ensuring that the findings authentically reflect emergent patterns rather than being the results of specific methodological choices.

Second, the two-phase clustering design captures both between-group and within-group differences simultaneously, explicitly treating variance within clusters as meaningful rather than as error. Traditional approaches like regression analysis would treat internal cluster variance as unexplained noise, focusing only on average effects. The current approach instead provides a deeper understanding of how individuals within the same acculturation orientation exhibit diverse political behaviors. For example, what makes demiculturals distinct from bicultural voters is not just their average positions but their internal diversity: bicultural voters have more consistent views on immigration, while demiculturals exhibit more variation in their political behaviors, making demiculturals more of a swing group. This crucial nuance was detected as a result of the information retained by this non-parametric approach, and would have otherwise been obscured.

Third, this study employs innovative internal validation techniques to ensure reliability in the absence of external datasets. Exploratory research commonly faces validation challenges due to the lack of external data for comparison. This study explicitly addresses this issue by using bootstrapping, which generates robust confidence intervals, and notably by applying k-fold cross-validation. Although typically used in predictive modeling, k-fold cross-validation divides the dataset into multiple subsets ("folds") and systematically assesses the consistency of the identified patterns across these subsets (James et al., 2014). This method effectively verifies the reliability and stability of findings internally, even without external comparison datasets.

Overall, this methodological approach serves as a clear, rigorous template for analyzing complex phenomena. By prioritizing authentic discovery, preserving meaningful information at multiple levels of analysis, and rigorously validating internally, this framework provides enhanced empirical rigor and reliability for exploratory research contexts.

Limitations & Directions for Future Research

This study advances the scholarship on Latino political behavior, but several limitations highlight important directions for future research.

First, this analysis relied on data from 2006. Since then, Latino communities have experienced significant demographic shifts, increased political polarization, and evolving partisan dynamics. Future research should validate MLAM using contemporary (post-2020) data or, ideally, collect new nationally representative data replicating the original LNS design while adding measures of intergroup attitudes that explicitly capture processes of group categorization and include more detailed identity-related questions. Such data would enhance MLAM's capacity to capture how acculturation orientations shape perceptions of other racial, ethnic, and cultural groups within increasingly diverse social and political contexts.

Second, this analysis primarily focused on immigration policy attitudes due to their relevance as cross-pressure issues. However, future studies should extend MLAM analyses to other policy domains—including healthcare, education, and economic policy—to clarify MLAM's broader explanatory power and further illuminate the contours of the acculturation-based political cleavage identified in this study. Additionally, given current global trends of rising polarization and declining democratic trust (V-Dem, 2024), future research could strategically examine how acculturation orientations influence democratic tolerance and commitment to democracy. Existing cross-cultural evidence indicates bicultural individuals often demonstrate greater social tolerance (Huff et al., 2017; Tadmor et al., 2018), making this an especially promising direction for future research.

Lastly, future studies should explicitly incorporate intersectional subgroup analyses. Key factors such as generational status, nativity (foreign-born versus native-born), and gender likely intersect with acculturation orientations, shaping distinct political profiles. Gender warrants particular attention given the growing partisan gender gap among Latino voters (Center for American Women and Politics, 2024). Applying exploratory non-parametric approaches, as demonstrated here, provides a useful model for detecting nuanced subgroup differences without imposing restrictive assumptions—further enhancing MLAM’s theoretical clarity, empirical precision, and practical relevance.

Conclusion

Political science has relied on binary acculturation frameworks that categorize individuals as either assimilating or retaining their culture, inaccurately positioning these orientations as oppositional and disregarding cultural hybridity entirely. This approach fundamentally distorts reality (Fraga et al., 2010; Michelson, 2007; Anzaldúa, 1987) and misrepresents the approximately 75% of Latinos who hold hybrid cultural orientations. Traditional group-centric theories, such as linked fate and group consciousness, similarly fail to capture the full spectrum of Latino political behavior (Jones-Correa et al., 2018), leaving political science without effective frameworks for understanding Latino political heterogeneity.

MLAM addresses this gap by conceptualizing acculturation as bidirectional rather than binary, identifying four distinct orientations—including two hybrid orientations overlooked by binary models. Through empirical analysis, this study demonstrates that these orientations form meaningful political cleavages, deepening our understanding of Latino political attitudes, ideology, partisanship, and immigration-related cross pressures.

Beyond theoretical refinement, adopting MLAM has practical and ethical urgency. Binary frameworks perpetuate harmful narratives that stigmatize cultural retention, erase hybrid identities, and fuel anti-Latino rhetoric rooted in white hegemony (e.g., Chavez, 2014; Ramirez & Peterson, 2020). By providing an empirically grounded, neutral, and more inclusive model, MLAM better captures the complexity of acculturation, reflecting lived experiences instead of forcing individuals into simplistic categories that contribute to their political and social marginalization.

This research underscores the necessity of a paradigm shift in political science toward a bidirectional understanding of acculturation. MLAM offers a corrective framework that addresses conceptual inaccuracies, empirically accounts for varied acculturation orientations, and explains Latino political diversity more comprehensively. In doing so, it aligns with what Goertz (2020) identifies as the “core goal of all sciences—natural and social—to accurately describe the world.”

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Appendix A: Empirical Validation of MLAM Acculturation Orientations using Comparative Cluster Analysis

This appendix details the empirical validation of the Multidimensional Latino Acculturation Model (MLAM) orientations using comparative cluster analysis on data from the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS). Gaussian Mixture Modeling (GMM) was selected as the optimal clustering algorithm following a systematic comparison with alternative methods (K-Means, Agglomerative Clustering, DBSCAN, and Fuzzy C-Means). Multiple validation metrics—including cluster size, silhouette scores, Dunn’s index, and the Calinski-Harabasz index—were evaluated to assess cluster coherence, stability, and alignment with MLAM’s theoretical framework. Additionally, rigorous internal validation procedures (bootstrapping and k-fold cross-validation) confirmed the robustness and reliability of the identified acculturation orientations.

Software and Seed

Analyses were conducted in R, using libraries: mclust, cluster, dplyr, tidyverse, factoextra, flexclust, caret, dunn.test, MASS, boot, fpc, ggplot2, gridExtra, grid, kableExtra, PMCMRplus, FSA, fmsb, and GGally. A seed of 2500 was set for reproducibility.

Data Preparation

The dataset used was the cleaned Latino National Survey (LNS) dataset. Clustering variables included AMERICAN, CULTURAL_IDENTITY, KEEPSPLAN, DISTINCT, and LEARNENG, selected based on theoretical considerations. Variables were standardized prior to analysis to ensure consistency and comparability.

Validation through Comparative Cluster Analysis

The CCA validates three of MLAM's theorized acculturation orientations among Latino voters—Culture-Affirming, Assimilationist, and Bicultural—while also discovering a previously unidentified pattern we term "Demicultural." These findings directly challenge binary acculturation models by empirically demonstrating that cultural retention and cultural adoption operate as independent dimensions rather than opposing forces. The non-parametric approach allowed patterns to emerge organically from the data, revealing multiple hybrid orientations that binary frameworks systematically erase. The discovery of the Demicultural orientation—which would remain invisible under binary models—highlights the value of non-parametric methodological approaches that balance theoretical guidance with empirical discovery.

Optimal Cluster Solution

The analysis began with an evaluation of five algorithms: K-Means, GMM, Agglomerative Hierarchical Clustering, DBSCAN, and Fuzzy C-Means. Initial assessments revealed key limitations in DBSCAN and Fuzzy C-Means. DBSCAN exhibited sensitivity to parameter settings, leading to excessive noise points, while Fuzzy C-Means failed to differentiate cluster memberships effectively. As a result, these methods were excluded from further analysis, focusing on the three algorithms that produced stable and interpretable results.

A comparative analysis of K-Means, GMM, and Agglomerative Clustering at k=4 demonstrated convergence across key performance metrics (shown in Table 4). Small differences in Silhouette scores (ranging from 0.36 to 0.39) and Dunn Index values (0.06–0.07) suggest similar levels of cluster separation and cohesion. While the Silhouette scores fall within the lower to moderate range rather than the high range (scores of 0.5+ would indicate stronger separation), this is expected given the complex and overlapping nature of acculturation

orientations. This consistency across methodologically distinct algorithms provides strong evidence that the identified acculturation patterns represent genuine structures in the data rather than artifacts of any single clustering approach.

Table A.1: Comparative Analysis of Clustering Algorithms at k=4

Algorithm	Silhouette Score	Dunn Index	CH Index	Cluster Sizes	Interpretive Notes
K-Means	0.39	0.07	1458.53	671, 416, 2808, 890	Strong statistical performance but assigns individuals to single clusters only, limiting its ability to represent overlapping cultural identities.
Agglomerative	0.38	0.07	1353.55	999, 2748, 586, 452	Similar statistical performance but produces less interpretable clusters when mapped to acculturation theory.
GMM	0.36	0.06	1063.27	433, 705, 3269, 378	Selected as optimal despite slightly lower metrics because it allows probabilistic cluster membership, producing the most theoretically coherent and interpretable acculturation patterns.

Note: Higher Silhouette and CH scores indicate better-defined clusters with greater cohesion and separation. A higher Dunn Index reflects more compact and well-separated clusters, but its sensitivity to cluster size imbalances can affect interpretation.

Selection of GMM as Optimal

Despite marginally lower statistical scores, GMM was selected as the optimal clustering solution based on three key criteria: statistical stability, theoretical coherence, and

interpretability. This selection was validated through rigorous resampling techniques: k-fold cross-validation yielded a mean Silhouette score of 0.3566 (± 0.0081), while bootstrapping produced a mean Silhouette score of 0.3469 with a 95% confidence interval of 0.2316–0.3895. These consistent results across multiple validation methods confirm that the identified clusters represent robust patterns rather than statistical noise.

GMM's probabilistic approach offers a distinct advantage for studying acculturation by accommodating the fluid boundaries between acculturation orientations. Unlike K-Means and Agglomerative clustering, which force respondents into a single category, GMM's soft clustering aligns with the theoretical understanding that individuals often negotiate multiple cultural spheres simultaneously. This methodological alignment with MLAM's conceptual framework enabled the identification of the Demicultural orientation—a hybrid pattern that might have been obscured by algorithms with more rigid boundaries. The selection of GMM thus balances statistical performance with theoretical insights, providing the most accurate representation of complex acculturation processes using the 2006 LNS data.

Cluster Profiles

The analysis identified four distinct acculturation orientations within the MLAM framework: Culture-Affirming, Assimilationist, Bicultural, and a novel category, Demicultural. Mean scores across five key variables—American Identity, Heritage Identity, Retain Spanish, Maintain Distinctiveness, and Learn English—clearly differentiate these orientations (Table 5).

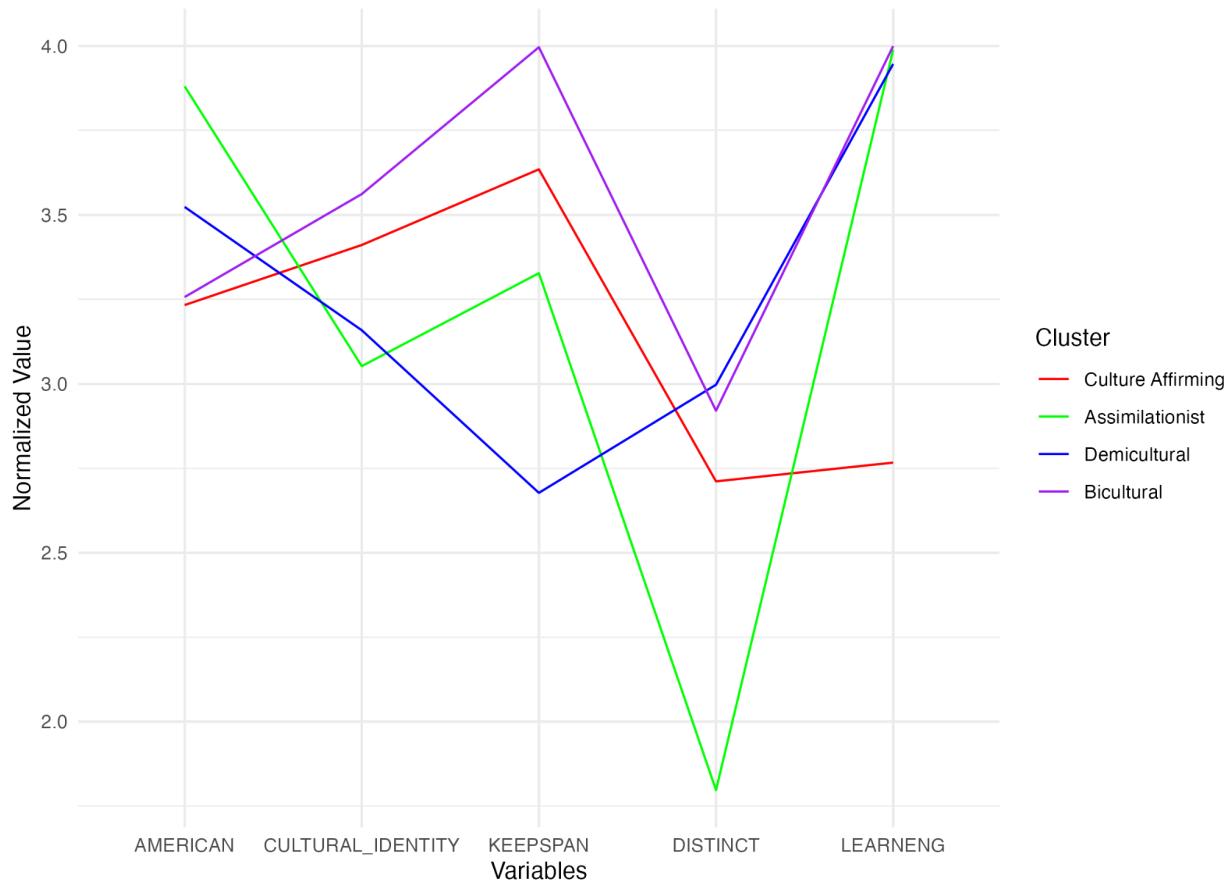
Table A.2: GMM Cluster Mean Values for Acculturation Variables (k=4)

Cluster	Size	American Identity	Heritage Identity	Retain Spanish	Maintain Distinctiveness	Learn English
Culture-Affirming	433	3.23	3.41	3.64	2.71	2.77
Assimilationist	705	3.88	3.05	3.33	1.79	3.99
Demicultural	378	3.52	3.16	2.68	2.99	3.95
Bicultural	3269	3.26	3.56	3.99	2.92	4.00

Note. Data derived from the 2006 Latino National Survey.

These profiles reveal the diverse strategies Latino voters employ to navigate cultural boundaries, challenging the assumption that cultural retention and adoption operate as opposing forces. To better visualize the distinct acculturation orientations, Figure 1 presents a parallel coordinates plot illustrating the average scores of each cluster across five key acculturation variables. This representation highlights how Bicultural and Culture-Affirming individuals emphasize heritage retention, while Assimilationists prioritize cultural adoption. The Demicultural cluster, identified through GMM, exhibits moderate engagement with both cultural spheres.

Figure A.1: Parallel Coordinates Plot of Acculturation Clusters



Culture-Affirming. Representing 9% of respondents, the Culture-Affirming cluster prioritizes cultural retention, as evidenced by high scores on Heritage Identity (mean = 3.41) and Retain Spanish (mean = 3.64). These individuals also value Maintain Distinctiveness (mean = 2.71), reflecting their commitment to preserving heritage culture as a central component of their identity. Their relatively low score on Learn English (mean = 2.77) indicates a strategic prioritization of heritage culture rather than rejection of the dominant culture. This orientation corresponds to MLAM's theorized Culture-Affirming pattern, characterized by stronger alignment with heritage cultural dimensions than with dominant cultural dimensions.

Assimilationist. Comprising 15% of respondents, the Assimilationist cluster prioritizes alignment with the dominant culture, as reflected in the highest scores for American Identity

(mean = 3.88) and Learn English (mean = 3.99). This group exhibits moderate levels of Heritage Identity (mean = 3.05) and comparatively lower aspirations for Retain Spanish (mean = 3.33) and Maintain Distinctiveness (mean = 1.79), indicating a reduced emphasis on heritage cultural retention relative to other orientations.

Demicultural. Representing 8% of respondents, Demicultural individuals exhibit moderate identification with both American Identity (mean = 3.52) and Heritage Identity (mean = 3.16), reflecting a hybrid orientation. Unlike Biculturals, this group displays less pronounced aspirations for both Retaining Spanish (mean = 2.68) and Maintaining Distinctiveness (mean = 2.99). While their high aspirations for Learning English (mean = 3.95) suggest a notable focus on cultural adoption, this orientation is characterized by balanced but moderate engagement with both cultural spheres rather than strong investment in either. This previously unidentified pattern represents a distinct form of cultural hybridity not captured in MLAM's original theoretical framework.

Bicultural. Representing 68% of respondents, the Bicultural cluster reflects high identification with both Heritage Identity (mean = 3.56) and American Identity (mean = 3.26), indicating a balanced engagement with both cultures. This group scores highest on Retain Spanish (mean = 3.99) and demonstrates a strong preference for Maintain Distinctiveness (mean = 2.92), underscoring a commitment to heritage cultural retention. At the same time, their maximum score on Learn English (mean = 4.00) highlights a strong embrace of cultural adoption. The predominance of this orientation—encompassing more than two-thirds of the sample—provides compelling evidence that most Latino voters successfully integrate both cultural spheres rather than experiencing them as competing influences. This finding directly

contradicts binary frameworks that assume cultural retention and adoption function as opposing forces.

Absence of Indifferent Orientation

Notably, the analysis did not identify a cluster corresponding to the hypothesized Indifferent orientation. Despite testing solutions with three, four, and five clusters, no group emerged with consistently low scores across both heritage and dominant cultural dimensions. It is possible that the survey questions did not adequately capture cultural detachment—this could be an artifact of survey design rather than a real-world phenomenon.

Appendix B: Detailed Statistical Results for Phase 1 and Phase 2 Analyses

This appendix provides detailed statistical results referenced in the main results section.

Tables B.1, B.2, and B.3 include statistical outputs, including non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis tests, pairwise comparisons (Cliff's Delta), and categorical associations (Cramer's V).

Robustness checks (bootstrapping and cross-validation) confirm the reliability of all presented effects. The complete results and reproducible R code are available in the R Markdown file.

Table B.1. Kruskal-Wallis Non-parametric Test Results

Political Variable	χ^2	df	p-value
Party Identification	38.69	3	< .001***
Political Ideology	31.29	3	< .001***
DREAM Act Support	100.64	3	< .001***
Immigration Policy Attitudes	98.62	3	< .001***
Views on Immigrants	142.18	3	< .001***

Note: All variables differed significantly across acculturation orientations. Results validated through bootstrapping (1,000 resamples, 95% confidence intervals) and cross-validation (5-fold). Full robustness details available in Supplement A.

Table B.2. Pairwise Differences Across MLAM Orientations (Clifford's Delta)

Political Variable	Orientation Comparison	Cliff's Δ	95% CI	Effect Size	Robustness †

Party Identification	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	-0.16	[-0.22, -0.10]	Moderate	✓
	Culture-Affirming vs. Assimilationist	0.17	[0.11, 0.23]	Moderate	✓
Political Ideology	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	-0.19	[-0.25, -0.13]	Moderate	✓
	Demicultural vs. Assimilationist	-0.12	[-0.18, -0.06]	Small	✓
DREAM Act Support	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	0.22	[0.16, 0.28]	Large	✓
	Demicultural vs. Assimilationist	0.15	[0.09, 0.21]	Moderate	✓
Immigration Policy	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	0.18	[0.12, 0.24]	Moderate	✓
	Culture-Affirming vs. Assimilationist	0.17	[0.11, 0.23]	Moderate	✓
Immigrant Views	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	0.21	[0.15, 0.27]	Large	✓
	Demicultural vs. Assimilationist	0.15	[0.09, 0.21]	Moderate	✓

Notes: Δ = Cliff's Delta; thresholds: Small (0.10–0.12), Moderate (0.13–0.19), Large (≥ 0.20);

Confidence intervals (95% CI) derived from 1,000 bootstrap resamples.; † Robustness confirmed by 5-fold cross-validation (consistency $> 90\%$).

Table B.3. Associations Between MLAM Orientations and Political Outcomes (Cramer's V)

Political Variable	Cramer's V	p-value	Effect Size	Key Contrast	Robustness †
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Party Identification	0.095	< .001***	Small	Culture-Affirming vs. Assimilationist	✓
Political Ideology	0.064	< .001***	Small	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	✓
DREAM Act Support	0.172	< .001***	Moderate	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	✓
Immigration Policy	0.114	< .001***	Moderate	Culture-Affirming vs. Assimilationist	✓
Immigrant Views	0.172	< .001***	Moderate	Bicultural vs. Assimilationist	✓

Notes: Cramer's V thresholds: Small (<0.1), Moderate (0.1–0.3). † Robustness validated with 1,000 bootstrap resamples (all p-values < .001) and 5-fold cross-validation (consistency > 90%).