

YOUNG LATINO VOTERS: ARE YOUNG LATINOS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOMOGENOUS  
(TOCQUEVILLE) MODEL?

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Young people in the U.S. have a burden of proof when they are called “lazy”, “incompetent”, or just outright “uneducated” when it comes to voting (Wattenberg 2008; Shea & Green 2007). Over the decades young people, typically between the ages of 18-29, lack voting turnout on Election Day<sup>1</sup>. The voter turnout of youth (between the ages of 18-29) is very low compared to the rest of the voting age groups since the passing of the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1971 when the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 (Wattenberg 2008). In general, voter turnout has been on the decline with 60% turnout in the 1960s, 51% in 1988, less than 50% in 1996 and most recently is has remained around 50% (Shea & Green 2007; Niemi, Weisberg & Kimball 2011). The young voters have a lower voter turnout percentage with only 50% coming out to vote in 1972 and by 2000 it plummeted to 36% (Shea & Green 2007). During midterm elections it was even lower, with only 20% showing up at the polls (Shea & Green 2007). Not only do young people have a history of low voter turnout but they also seem to lack the interest in voting or campaigns. According to Shea & Green only 30% of young people were “very much” interested in campaigns and in 2000 it stood at 6% (2007).

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<sup>1</sup> November 2 (Federal Election)

The disengagement from politics, thus from voting, that young people exhibit seems to be an issue of generational origin (Niemi et al 2011). Because of the low voter turnout and disinterest compared to the rest of the voting age groups young people are known as the non-voters, amoral, lazy, and self-centered or “slackers” (Campbell 2006; Shea & Green 2007; Wattenberg 20008; Niemi et al. 2011; Levine 2003). The disengagement of young people is not much greater than with young Latinos. Research has shown that for the past several elections Latinos in general have the lowest voter turnout among racial groups and even lower among young Latinos (Hero, Garcia, Garcia & Pachon 2000; Connaughton 2005; Espino & Leal 2007; DeSipio 1996). Although the Latino population is one of the fastest growing in the nation with 16% (50.5 million) of the total U.S. population, which is 308.7 million as of 2010 (Sanchez 2011; US Census Brief 2010) no matter the age, still lack the voting numbers compared to African Americans and Whites (de la Garza, DeSipio & Leal 2010; Hero et al. 2000; Michelson 2005). Also, according to the U.S. Census 2010 report on *Voting and Registration Among Native and Naturalized Citizens by Race and Hispanic Origin* registered native and natural citizens for White alone is 114,482,000 (66.4%), for Black alone it is 16,101,000 (62.8%) and for Latino alone is 10,982,000 (51.6%). Apart from low voter turnout, Latinos also rank low among college completion rates and education (Martinez 2009) that can have an effect on voter turnout. Also, according to the U.S. Census report *Educational Attainment by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1970 to 2010*, Hispanics in 2010 accounted for 13.9% of the total college graduate population, compared to 30.3% of the White population and 19.8% of the Black population.

Several explanations have been posited to explain low voter turnout among Latinos, such as education, poverty, immigrations status or no support from the community. However, lack of civic education has not been considered, and I argue how it potentially affects turnout rates. This



thesis has the primary objective of understanding how the lack of civic education among young Latinos can affect voter turnout and determine whether young Latinos feel that voting is a civic duty or that it is in their best interest to vote. The voters who will be the focus of this thesis are young Latinos between the ages of 18-29. The central argument of this thesis is that *young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville) model*.

In this thesis I will use the term Latinos to represent all Hispanic groups. The definition of the term Latinos is “...ancestors from national origins in which Spanish is a significant and often dominant language” (Garcia & Sanchez 2008, 7). Although Spanish is the dominant language in Latino groups, English has become a language that young Latinos born in the U.S. have mixed with the Spanish dialect (Fraga, Garcia, Hero, Jones-Correa, Martinez-Ebers & Segura 2010). The new generations of young Latinos born in the millennial era have carried on the mix of Spanish and English dialect and regard themselves as Latinos. Also, I will regard Latinos as an ethnic group and not a racial group as defined by Garcia & Sanchez (2008). There are differences within the Latino ethnic groups such as the different racial characteristics of skin color and origin within various Latin American countries that make up sub-ethnic groups such as Mexico, Venezuela or El Salvador; however my argument defines Latinos as an ethnic group.

Regardless of the difference Latino sub-ethnic groups young Latinos today are growing up in a globalized society even among their own community. With a different society being established that differ from the past generations of Latinos in the U.S. are young Latinos establishing their own agenda for the future or are young Latinos following the same Latino agenda that has been in place for decades? The Latino agenda according to Garcia & Sanchez want to see people of their same heritage in powerful positions whether it be in public office, private enterprises, education, the entertainment industry or the media (2008). If the Latino

agenda focuses on increasing the number of Latinos in powerful positions there must also be a focus on improving the quality of life. What young Latinos should add into the agenda is increasing the voter turnout because “the most common and well-known form of participation in politics is the act of voting” (Garcia & Sanchez 2008, 83). The act of voting at higher numbers alone can change the course of the future generations of young Latinos towards a more prosperous future and political power. There is also a lack of research that civic education is not being looked at carefully in Latino voting behaviors.

Civic education is defined to “enhance the civic engagement of young people” (Peter & Levine 2007, 1). Civic education requires for an individual to be politically knowledgeable which means that the individual has a “minimum understanding of the political system in which they express preferences and elect representatives” (Niemi & Junn 1998, 1). Yet, only a small proportion of the American voters are knowledgeable about the politics while the majority of American voters lack political knowledge needed to satisfy political theorists (Niemi & Junn 1998). The reason civic education is important is because it gives the political knowledge that

“helps citizens operate effectively in a democracy, heightens their awareness of the limits of both governmental and citizen behavior, increases attainment of democratic goals by promoting more equal access among citizens, and contributes to the extent to which citizens regards their government with confidence and satisfaction” (Niemi & Junn 1998, 11).

Other than the political knowledge component to civic education, civic engagement is broadly defined as “any action that affects legitimately public matters (even if selfishly motivated) as long as the actor pays appropriate attention to the consequences of his behavior for the underlying political system” (Peter & Levine 2007, 13). The definition of civic education is broadly but factors into consideration that civic engagement has three main categories; community participation, political engagement and political voice which according to some scholars say that if an individual performs several of the actions from this list they are being

civically engaged (Peter & Levine 2007). The main categories are each defined differently beginning with community participation that includes the measures “of membership in various types of nonprofit voluntary associations; regular volunteering and fundraising...” (Levine 2007, 2).

Political engagement includes behaviors such as registering to vote, voting and activities that influence people’s votes such as campaigning and displaying political campaign material such as stickers and signs (Levine 2007). The last category, political voice includes “protesting, canvassing, signing petitions, contacting the mass media, contacting elected officials...” (Levine 2007, 2). The three categories resonate well with civic education because it formulates a strong educational program that can provide the political knowledge needed for young Latinos to be civically educated.

Civic education is important because young Latinos must know how voting can affect the outcomes of their community and to voice through voting, which can put force an elected official to compromise with the community needs or be forced out of office by being voted out and replaced with someone who fits the needs of the community. Unfortunately, throughout the school systems in the U.S. there is less educating students about voting, citizenship and civic engagement, “which is one reason we see less engaged population of young Americans” (Levine 2003, 63). That is why civic education is the main key to increasing the voter turnout among young Latinos. The other components such as political knowledge, community participation, political engagement and political voice have or are being conducted in Latino communities at a much higher rate than civic education. Whether it is marching for immigration rights, better education or safer neighborhoods Latinos are being engaged but are young Latinos being civically educated?

Political parties play a role in the civic education of young Latinos. Political parties have “largely neglected and marginalized Latino leaders, voters, and campaign staff in the primaries and in the general election” (de la Garza et al. 2010, 2). When political parties are ignoring a growing number of political voters during a crucial U.S. election then what will political parties do for the Latino population once they are in office? Latino leaders in the community have a hard time getting the two major parties (Democrat and Republican) to “invest extensively in mobilizing Latinos new to the voting process” (de la Garza et al 2010, 2). The new voters can range from recent Latinos who obtained U.S. citizenship and ready to vote or young Latinos born in the U.S. who just turned 18 and also ready to vote. It is crucial that political parties target the newly 18 year old Latino voter because if they do not then what will motivate that young person to vote in future elections if their vote is being ignored by the parties.

One of the ways to increase the influence of Latinos in the political system is to ally with other groups, such as a political party or interest group (Garcia & Sanchez 2008, 182). Political parties have various demographics that support the base of the parties’ issues but in order for a party to succeed in today’s political diversified culture it must accept all types of demographic characteristics regardless of the party members ethnic or economic background. Latinos, for example, have predominately voted for The Democratic Party since the 1930s and until recently have been a major voting bloc that can decide federal, state or local elections (depending on the state) (Garcia & Sanchez 2008). Yet, in the 2004 presidential race “Latino voters were ultimately marginalized by the campaigns” (de la Garza et al. 2010, 2). With the increase in Latino population over the decades, especially in key electoral states such as Florida, both parties, Democrats and Republicans “have exerted considerable effort to court the perceived swing bloc Latino population” (Garcia & Sanchez 2008, 196). It should be noted that the Latino vote is not a

permanent attachment to The Democratic Party, as the research shows that in 2004 President Bush won a considerable amount of the Latino vote which gave him a second term in office. Will political parties fight for the Latino vote in upcoming elections? Or will young Latinos be deceived by voting bloc for elections to come?

The theory that I use to test my central argument is the Dual Motivations Theory of Public Engagement, whether young Latinos believe that voting is a duty or an interest. The interest in voting derives from the Madison Model, which curtails the voters in this model as a heterogeneity group that vote because they wish to advance their policy interests (Campbell 2006). The second model from the Dual Motivations Theory is the Tocqueville Model which states that the voters are a homogeneous group that vote out of sense of duty (Campbell 2006). The difference between the Madison and Tocqueville Model is that the Madison Model fosters political efficiency in the sense that one can make a difference in the wider political environment because of the competitiveness that elections have in a heterogeneous community (Campbell 2006). The Tocqueville Model represents the homogeneous communities, has similar voter turnout as heterogeneous (Madison Model) communities but the presidential elections are less competitive (Campbell 2006). There is a possibility that the Madison Model may resonate well with increasing voter turnout because “racially integrated neighborhoods receive better service...suggesting that government is responsive to citizen contact or can at least be counted on to fulfill its minimum functions” (Gimpel & Pearson-Merkowitz 2009, 89). On the other hand schools in urban communities that are homogeneous “seem unsuccessful in preparing youth academically...” (Hart & Kirshner 2009, 102).

Young Latinos today are not being educated and raised in the same environments. There are young Latinos being educated in the most elite schools and universities and there are other

young Latinos being educated and raised in the worst schools. Inner-city young Latinos may not have experience a political environment where both the Republican and Democrat Party are competing for votes since the Democrat Party for decades has been "...meeting the interests of the lower socioeconomic and ethnic racial groups" (Hero et al 2000, 531). The reason for using the Dual Motivations Theory of Public Engagement is because the theory states that

"In places characterized by conflict, politically motivated public engagement is more common. Conversely, communities where there is relative consensus are more likely to host civic engagement, because these communities have strong civic norms encouraging engagement in publicly spirited activities" (Campbell 2006, 6).

There are pundits in media and political organizations that believe the Latino community is a homogeneous group that votes in unison. This may not be true because Latinos from the New Mexico area may not have the same political or social ideologies as Latinos from New York City would or as Latinos from the southern regions of Florida, Miami to be precise. One of the reasons why the Latino population is not a homogenous group is because Mexicans and Puerto Ricans are known as being loyal to Democrats and Cubans to Republicans (De Sipio 1996). If Latino were a homogenous group than all Latinos would be loyal to Democrats but this is not the case when Latinos make up the largest minority delegates in the National Republican Conventions (de la Garza et al. 2010). Because Latinos from the different regions of the U.S. have different political and social beliefs there should not be a conclusion that all Latino communities are homogeneous. Also, as the Latino population continues to increase "the partisan direction of Latino voting will become even more significant" (Hero et al 2000, 532). Young Latinos play a major role in determining whether they fall into the Tocqueville and Madison Model. One of the reasons is because young Latinos are better able to develop different identities than their parents because they adapt to the cultural surroundings (Gracia & De Greiff 2000). Also, young Latinos start to develop their own sense of identity growing up in the U.S. which is

different from the environment that their parents were raised in, if they immigrated to the U.S. (Gracia & De Greiff 2000).

As the Latino population continues to increase the political dynamics of the Latino community will also change. Young Latinos have an abundance of resources to choose from when it comes to obtaining information such as internet, smartphones, television and word of mouth. Technology has given a young Latino the ability to Google or Bing any political candidate or political parties website to determine if they resonate well with the Latino community and the needs of the young Latino. When a young Latino has the resources readily available will the individual use it or continue the trend of not following politics because he/she believes that it “boring” or “a waste of time”? Voting for young Latinos has not become the social norm<sup>2</sup>. As Latino communities across the country continue to grow with young Latinos being born in the U.S. and growing up and being educated in the American environment will they grow up believing that voting is a duty or an interest?

Get Out the Vote (GOTV) initiatives also play an important part in civic education. GOTV initiatives such as Rock The Vote, *Voto Latino* others affiliated with the Democrat or Republican party have a general focus of getting people within their specific target range, whether it is age (Rock The Vote), political affiliation (College Republicans) or racial background (*Voto Latino*), to register to vote and motivate them to vote in the upcoming elections. Rock The Vote, for example, states on their website that their “mission is to engage and build political power for young people in our country” (Rock The Vote website 2011). Rock The Vote claims to have registered a significant amount of young people, more than any other organization or campaign (Rock The Vote website 2011). *Voto Latino*, another GOTV initiative, targets young Latinos

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<sup>2</sup> Social norm is something people generally do or a sense of obligation as defined by Campbell 2006.

throughout the country and “dedicated to bringing new and diverse voices unto the political process by engaging youth, media, technology and celebrities to promote positive change” (*Voto Latino* website 2011). *Voto Latino* is intended for a specific group of voters, unlike Rock The Vote who have a broad audience of young people, yet the voting turnout among young Latinos is still lower among other racial groups. I will further discuss what the initiatives of GOTV’s and whether they are targeting young Latinos to the best of their potential in order to increase the voter turnout.

When it comes to GOTV initiatives one group in particular that has been at the fore front of getting Latinos registered to vote is the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project (SVREP) which has engaged in voter registration drives in the southwest (Garcia & Sanchez 2008). Other Latino groups such as the Mexican American Legal Defence and Education Fund (MALDEF) and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund also engage in voter registration but they mostly focus on voter protection in the courts and other issues going on in the Latino communities that require court attention (Garcia & Sanchez 2008). The political mobilization that GOTV initiatives conduct should not be determined by political elites because political elites “determine whom to target because of efficiency and outcome-driven concerns” (Ramírez 2007, 94). GOTV groups must recognize that Latinos not only need to be civically educated but also maintain a “presence of politicized institutions with the necessary resources to engage in mobilizing activities” (Ramírez 2007, 95).

### **Overview of the Thesis**

Chapter two examines who are young Latino voters and why they should not be considered the “sleeping giant” as previous generations of Latino voters has been recognized. Young Latino voters have not had a significant dedication of study and that is why this chapter



will focus on discussing what determines a young Latino voter. Also examining Get Out the Vote (GOTV) attempts to increase the voter turnout among young Latino voters and will derive that information to make an analysis of whether they have made any change over the years in the voter turnout. Do political parties make an effort to win the young Latino vote or is it being taken for granted as previous generations of Latino votes have been also taken for granted? Political parties will be discussed in terms of party mobilization and determining whether parties are making an effort to win the young Latino vote. Chapter one will also focus on civic education among young people in America and whether young Latinos are either lacking these resources or being undermined of the civic education that should be given to young Latinos throughout the U.S. The reason for looking at civic education is because it could be the reason why young Latinos have a low voting turnout, as a connection with the determining if there is a lack of civic education among young Latinos causing a low voting turnout.

Chapter three will discuss how the dual motivations theory of public engagement plays a role in the voting behaviors of young Latinos and determining whether young Latinos are a homogenous or heterogeneous group of voters. Chapter two will also analyze whether young Latinos are driven to vote because they believe they have a duty (Tocqueville Model) or it is of an interest (Madison Model) for young Latinos to vote? The theory determined for the thesis will explain why young Latinos have a low voting turnout rate compared to other racial minorities.

Chapter four will discuss the development of my interview questions and research survey. I will discuss how the interviews done over the summer of 2011 and how it played a role in developing the research survey. The independent (voting) and dependent (civic education) variables will be discussed and how the hypothesis was established from the independent and

dependent variable. The discussion of the research survey will include the survey database (KwikSurveys) and how it was created. Chapter three will also discuss the data collected from The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, book chapters, Latino Decisions data and comparing the results to the survey.

Chapter five will discuss the results of the survey using the STATA software and whether or not my hypothesis holds true or not. There will be a display of survey data compared to data from groups that deal with young voters such as CIRCLE and Rock The Vote to determine if there are similarities, differences or changes in the results. Chapter four will also discuss the establishment and conducting of the survey on KwikSurveys. Chapter five discusses the end results of the survey and the overall general conclusion of the thesis and whether or not young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville) model.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ROLE OF YOUNG LATINOS IN SOCIETY

#### Latino Voters

Latinos are not the newest group of immigrants arriving to the U.S. Latino presence in the U.S. has been around since the beginning of the early colonies. Latino population was not a concern in political issues because elected officials simply ignored them or did not even bother to know the Latino needs. Yet over the decades as the Latino population started to rise in proportional numbers, their presence could not be ignored. Latino population from 1980 to 2000 went from 14.6 million to 35.3 million (Espino, Leal & Meier 2007). Over the past decades though the Latino population has increased again and according to the U.S. Census Latinos is the largest and fastest growing minority group (Espino et al. 2007) with a population of 46.8 million in 2008 that consists of 15.4% of the nation's population (Lopez 2010). Not only has the population being growing but will continue due so that by 2050, "a quarter of the American population may be Latino: by the end of the century, one in every three Americans may be Latino" (Espino et al. 2007, 3). The 2010 U.S. Census report stated that minorities were about 70% of the growing U.S. voting-age population and from that 70%, Latinos accounted for 40% of it (Daniels 2011). Even though Latinos are growing in population and are the largest minority in the U.S., the Latino voting numbers are lower compared to other ethnic population in the U.S. which has been a problem for number of years (Connaughton 2005; Espino et al. 2007; DeSipio 1996).

The voting turnout has caused scholars to generalize Latino voters as the “sleeping giant” or the “ignored voice” (Espino & Meier 2007; Connaughton 2005; Hero et al. 2000). In terms of voting population Latinos have 19.3 million eligible voters that make up only 9.2% of the 211 million eligible voting populations in the U.S. (Lopez 2010). From the population of eligible voters, 2/3 comes from states such as Texas, Florida, California and New York (Lopez 2010). A reason such generalizations can be made is because Latinos have a lower voting turnout rate than other racial groups (Barreto, Villarreal & Woods 2005). Looking at the Latino population from a closer perspective, young Latinos also face a low voting turnout among other racial groups (Rock the Vote 2008, CIRCLE 2008). The current literature focuses on the generalization of Latino voter turnout as the one population of voters, the immigration statuses that affect the Latino vote and the lack of political parties mobilizing Latino voters by political parties (Lopez 2010; Leal, Nuño, Lee & de la Garza 2008; Connaughton 2005; Chavez 2008; Barreto 2007; Espino et al. 2007; Gracia & De Greiff 2000; Hero et al. 2000; de la Garza 2004). Yet, the issue that needs more focus is civic education among young Latinos ages 18 to 29 and how their impact will make a contribution to the Latino voter turnout. There is the notion that Latinos have the potential to exercise some influence when it comes to political issues (Leal et al. 2008) but young Latinos have the potential to become major influence if they are civically educated.

The growing number of Latinos should be a calling to both political parties Democrat and Republican that the Latino vote cannot be taken for granted (Espino et al. 2007; DeSipio 1996). The Latino vote for some is looked at as being taken for granted by either party because they play a role in key primary and electoral states such as Florida, Texas, New Mexico, California and New York (where the Latino population is of the majority among minorities) (Connaughton 2005). Although the number of Latinos has been high in numbers, the voting turnout rate has

been low compared to other non-Latino ethnic groups. The number of eligible voters could be higher but factors such as U.S. Citizenship and age disqualified much of the Latino population that is either too young or not eligible because of U.S. citizenship. In a few years from now the number of Latino voters will increase when the current populations of young Latinos who are under 18 become eligible to vote.

The current research states that Latinos have the lowest voting turnout rate compared to other ethnic and racial groups although Latinos are considered the largest minority in the U.S and continues to grow (de la Garza 2004; Leal et al. 2008; Barreto et al. 2005; de la Garza et al. 2010). The voting turnout does not have to be a factor that must always be focused on. If political parties are to win votes from the Latino communities than political parties must make the effort to increase the voting turnout among Latinos. When looking at the statistical background of the Latino population in the 2010 Census there is the evidence that young Latinos ages 18 to 29 are increasing in population and voting registration numbers (U.S. Census 2010) and could possibly have a significant higher number than the rest of the Latino age population. Even though the Latino population is increasing there is argument from scholars that an increase in population has no correlation with the increase in voter turnout (de la Garza et al. 2010). There are issues such as immigration, non-citizens and the large young population (under 18) that need to be considered when looking at the overall population and voting turnout.

The current literature on Latino voters focuses on the general voting behaviors but do not focus on Young Latino voting behaviors (18-29). The focus of the thesis is on young Latino voters and the online resources available when it comes to Get Out the Vote (GOTV) initiatives come from organizations such as Rock The Vote, *Voto Latino*, Project Vote Smart, The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE), The New Latino

Movement and the Southwest Voter Registration Education Program (SVREP). Latino organizations such as League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and National Council of La Raza (NCLR) have civic engagement programs but do not make it their ultimate priority. Although much respect is given to organizations such as LULAC and NCLR for the service they have given to the Latino communities over the years their focus is primarily on education, health issues and immigration. The United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI) provides basic information on civic engagement but in order to gain the knowledge or what it means to be civically engaged you have to part of the Candidate Training & Campaign Management School, the Grassroots Leadership Development Program or Project SEED (USHLI 2011). The only document provided was the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda on 2008 Hispanic Policy Agenda (USHLI 2011).

The lack of literature for the study of young Latino voters makes it difficult to gather resources and methodologies in terms of determining whether this research is heading in a new direction or if the concepts talked about in Latino voting behaviors relate to young Latino voters. Young Latinos that are under 18 constitute the fastest growing population in the U.S. and account for more than 10.9 million of those students that are enrolled in k-12<sup>th</sup> grade (Kohler & Lazarín 2007). When it comes to high school enrollment, there are 2.9 million Latinos enrolled which constitutes about 17% of the secondary students (Kohler & Lazarín 2007). This increase in young Latino population will have a significant impact on voting turnout but in order to see the increase in voting turnout it is crucial that young Latinos are civically educated at a young age. What these numbers represented is that over one-third of the young Latino population (under 18) are still not eligible to vote but overwhelmingly 93% of these young Latinos are U.S. citizens (Daniels 2011). This is critical to the civic education that must go to the young Latinos

while they are in primary and secondary school. If they are civically educated during these years of school, the voting turnout rate will significantly increase and future generations of Latinos will no longer be the “sleeping giant”.

The Latino voting bloc has not reached its full influential potential. Although there is a growth among the Latino population the influence has not been reaching its tipping point (de la Garza et al. 2010). During election cycles, candidates running for public office mobilize their campaign team to target specific voters and national voting outcomes has not been determined by Latino voters only in unusual circumstances (de la Garza et al. 2010). Many candidates target people who vote the most, because candidates want to win and depending on the candidate’s campaign funding, they limit themselves regarding whom they target. For many election cycles, candidates have ignored Latino voters. Some would even go as far as labeling Latino voters as the “ignored voices” (Espino & Leal 2007) or the “sleeping giant” (Daniels 2011). In spite of the growing population, the democrats and republicans either choose to pursue the Latino vote or ignore it (de la Garza et al 2010). For the last several election cycles, Latinos tended to favor liberal candidates and the Democratic Party (Connaughton 2005; Espino et al. 2007; DeSipio 1996). This was not on republicans: Karl Rove, who was a campaign and senior advisor to President George W. Bush mentioned that to win the presidency a candidate needs to win the Latino vote (Connaughton 2005). There are two ways to look at the situation with the Latino vote. The first is that Latinos have themselves have to blame because they tend to vote in low numbers no matter which political party they align themselves with. The other is that political parties do not put enough resources into the Latino community to motivate and educate Latinos on the importance of voting and what it could mean to the Latino community.

The first situation stated that, “Latinos had a lower share of the registered voters who turned out and lower shares of citizen adults who registered voters” (DeSipio 1996, p.89). When there are a low number of registered voters and low turnout for one group of voters, their concerns will not likely be of great importance to candidates. Candidates focus on winning elections by concentrating their efforts on people who do come out to vote consistently. Due to time and budget constraints of some candidates, their resources cannot always focus on a group of people who are known to vote in low numbers compared to the rest. If the Latino population did come out to vote in high numbers, then candidates would not have a doubt as to whether they should add their resources into a population that will come out and vote. Although candidates have the choice to direct their resources toward certain voters, political parties always have one concrete short term goal: to make sure their candidate is elected (Connaughton 2005). Because at the end of the day no matter how a party or candidate decides to spend their resources, the only thing that matters is votes.

There is the issue that Latinos do not constitute one group of people because of the diversity in the population (Espino et al. 2007). The political culture of Latinos is different from that of White, Black or Asian ethnic groups because Latinos are an ethnic group that comes from over twenty different countries, each with its own cultural and political atmosphere. Latinos formulate a complex group of sub nationalities, political sub cultures, subcultures and economic groups that forming them under one group would perhaps “take a fractured and less-predictable course than it did for white ethnics” (Márquez 2007, 19). Although the majority of Latinos in the U.S. are from Mexican descent, the Latino population also comes from Puerto Rico, Peru, Venezuela, Cuba, Chile and other countries in the southern, central and Caribbean parts of the Americas. It would be unrealistic to believe that Latinos have one voice and one voting bloc that



will follow one party. For example, it is known that the majority of the Cuban communities in the U.S., especially in southern Florida, vote Republican (DeSipio 1996). The focus of these three groups is because they constitute the top three ethnic groups in the Latino population other Latino groups have not been researched enough to make a conclusive decision as to what party their group heavily favors. Although Mexicans and Cubans favor different political parties their vote towards one political party is never curtailed during the election cycle.

Although Cubans consist of a very small portion of the Latino population in the U.S. Cubans come out in large numbers to vote because of the voting education they have obtained and they feel they are obligated to vote because of what the U.S. did for the Cuban community during the rise of Fidel Castro (DeSipio 1996). The Cuban community since the 1960s has been a model of what the rest of the Latino community in the U.S. can accomplish with hard work, education and financial resources. Cuban immigrants who escaped the Castro regime in the 1960s were given financial resources to startup businesses, were given credit for their schooling and plenty of government help while other Latino groups such as Mexicans did not have such privileges.

The only other group in the Latino population that has automatic U.S. Citizenship is Puerto Ricans who were born in the Puerto Rico (Connaughton 2005). Although Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico cannot vote in the presidential election and have no elected official that has voting power in D.C., their privilege of being automatic U.S. citizen if born in Puerto Rico has caused many others in the Latino community to envy that perk. Cubans' history of receiving government assistance to succeed in the U.S. and Puerto Ricans' automatic U.S. citizenship has not only divided the Latino populations as to which are the dominant groups, but it has also divided the voting power. Cubans are known to vote Republican while Mexicans and Puerto

Ricans are known to favor the Democratic Party (DeSipio 1996). Although there is diversity within the Latino population the cultural identities that reflect each group within the Latino community can be strength to “a sense of loyalty that binds disparate members of a group to one another” (Márquez 2007, 18). There must be a political culture that united the Latino voting bloc instead of having different issues that separate the voting bloc. It seems that the political sub cultures of the Latino voting bloc is the current driving force that separates the unification needed in order to have stronger voting turnout. Another reason is because if the Latino community cooperated amongst one another regardless of the different racial group that they identify with, such as Puerto Rican, Salvadorian or Mexican, the unification of and cooperation as one group will make a better stance for the Latino voting bloc that currently lacks the unification that it needs. Although older generations of Latinos have not had a consistent record of unification it seems that young Latinos are changing the process and unifying than previous generations.

### Young Latino Voters

The technology that is provided to young people today it without a doubt a major surplus for rapid communication and mobilization if there is an issue that young people feel passionate about that they want people to make sure they get heard. Although young people have the technology at their hands in general have been known to lack the motivation to vote because “young people don’t vote, so candidates don’t talk about the issues, so they become further disillusioned with the process and stay away in greater numbers” (Eisner 2004, 46). Not only young people but particularly ethnic minority young people do not participate because “they choose to remain disengaged because they are not interested, believe their voices are not heard,

or prefer to exercise their right to self-determination using other strategies” (Rockey Moore 2004, 1). Although young people are unpredictable voters (Eisner 2004) that should not give the presumption that young Latinos lack the motivation to vote and the sense that they will not vote in large numbers as other ethnic groups. In general young people do not get into the habit of voting, unlike older people where they have a habit of voting at higher rates thus making parties invest more of their time and resources in getting older people to vote because it is a better investment of their time and resources (Wattenburg 2012).

Another generalization about young people is that they have been faced with a government that is “bureaucratic, disengaged, and distasteful—a negative political culture part reality and part fantasy, part historical truth and part media-driven illusion” (Sitaraman & Warren 2003, 21). This type of negative image of the government has led to the belief that government cannot solve anything and that the work that is done by the government is not really true service to the people (Sitaraman & Warren 2003). If this is the mentality of young people than would this lead to the disengagement of low voter turnout among all young voters regardless of ethnic group? The answer would probably be no but then again not every ethnic group has the same rational thinking of what the government has done or the disengagement that the government has done to different ethnic communities.

Over the years there has been concern of the lack of political interest of young people across the US and the democratic world (Niemi et al. 2011). The notion of young people being disengaged recently would be false because the disengagement from politics goes back to the 1960s (Niemi et al. 2011). Young people disengage themselves from being in the political process and from turning out to vote. The political knowledge and interest of young people has been on the decline rapidly and can be linked to the low voter turnout (Putnam 2000). Young

people have disengaged themselves not only from voting but also in political efficiency, less frequent newspaper reading, lower mobilization from the parties to engage young people and less of the face-to-face mobilization (Niemi et al. 2011). The younger generation does not have the same interest in political knowledge or have the mentality of going out to vote as either a moral or civic duty as the older generations (Putnam 2000). Younger people prefer to waste their time watching sports, reality TV shows or other forms of entertainment that has nothing to do with current or political issues. Some young people may regard TV shows such as The Colbert Report or The Daily Show with John Stewart as a form of political knowledge television programming. Yet The Colbert Report and Daily Show only depict certain segments of the news and poke fun at it by just giving the “sound bites” needed to make their audience laugh. If the blame is towards media, politicians or political parties not caring about young people voting than young people should realize that voting is not a barrier for those who are eligible. Voting becomes a barrier when young people decide that it is not in their duty or best interest to do so. As mentioned previously technology has allowed for an individual to have access to information on their fingertips. Yet young people still chose to let technology and media depict what they should now and what it is important to them instead of young people choosing what is right for them and seeking news that will help them know about the current and political issues occurring.

The young people being targeted are young Latinos because they are a growing population both from people that immigrated to the U.S. and from those born in the U.S. The fact that a portion of the Latino population are young and undocumented, meaning they cannot vote because of age requirement or legal status, has a major impact on the Latino voting numbers (Connaughton 2005; Espino et al. 2007; DeSipio 1996). That is why (young) Latinos are a complex voting population (Connaughton 2005) because although the number in population is

high the voting population is low. Even with the complex voting population there an advantage that young Latinos have and that is the social networking technology available that allows them to communicate with others on the issues that most affect them and that elected officials must be aware of.

The greatest advantage that Young Latinos today have, which previous generations did not, is the ability to connect with another through technology (e.g. smart phones, computers) and social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Skype). It gives young Latinos the advantage of making the issues that affect young Latinos be known to the politicians, community organizations and the country. There has been an enormous increase in education and technological in general and also among young Latinos which has made it easier for young people to access the news (Niemi et al. 2011). Yet neither the young people nor young Latinos in specific take the advantage to politically engage them. Young Latinos have the advantage to separate themselves from previous generations of Latinos because of the growth in U.S. born Latinos that are being educated and with the social networking that allows for faster mobilization and communication.

What makes young Latinos different from other ethnic groups is the low adversity of attention from media, political parties and the community. Young Latinos may or may not have the civic skills and education needed to cast their ballot but they can be taught the skills and be educated about voting if the community starts to pay attention to the issue of low voter turnout among young Latinos. Young Latinos, like young African-Americans, face disparities in their communities, especially when leaving in inner city communities. Young people, such as young Latinos that live in the inner city communities they face the “cultural reaction of nonparticipation in the dominant society’s norms, laws, and education leaves this group stigmatized and unable to escape” (Turley 2005, 31). Young Latinos, just like young African-Americans, are also facing

severe poverty issues that the majority of other non-Latino and non-African American ethnic groups face (Turley 2005).

What young Latino voters also lack is an organization/s that can has the reliance of making sure young Latinos get motivate to vote or give young Latinos the resources needed to advocate for their cause. In the African-American community, for example, you have organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Urban League, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the National Council of Negro Women (Rockey Moore 2004). Young Latinos do have organizations such as the United State Hispanic Leadership Conference (USHLI), *Voto Latino*, National Council of La Raza (NCLR) or the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and countless others but they focus on different agendas and do not have a central focus of coming together for one cause, such as the African-American groups coming together to advocate and protect Civil Rights among their communities, that all Latinos can join together. The only cause so far that has brought Latino organizations up in arms is the immigration debate but even that has several Latino organizations divided and worse off when it comes to Democratic and Republican Latino organizations.

In regards to the immigration debate, for example, The National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP) sent out various articles during the November 2011, to its list-serve members, regarding the controversy of Cecilia Muñoz's, current White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, role of the Secure Communities (S-COMM)<sup>3</sup> program by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE). S-COMM according to the ICE website "is a simple and common sense way to carry out ICE's priorities. It uses an already-existing

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ice.gov/secure\\_communities/](http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/)

federal information-sharing partnership between ICE and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that helps to identify criminal aliens without imposing new or additional requirements on state and local law enforcement” (2011). S-COMM brought a big fury to immigrant advocacy groups saying that it is hurting the Latino communities and that Ms. Muñoz should do more to stop the S-COMM program or resign from her position (NiLP 2011). Various Latino and non-Latino organizations that focus on immigration rights were divided on the issue of whether Cecilia Muñoz is fit for the job or if she should re-sign from her position. If Latinos are divided between the issue of one person being ousted out of their job for not doing enough than when do the issues such as civic education and the low voter turnout among young Latinos begin to take precedent?

As the young Latinos born in the U.S. continue to grow over the years the younger Latino generation starts to develop their own identity that can be different from their parents and adapt to their cultural surroundings (Gracia & De Greiff 2000). Young Latinos live in heterogeneous environments because they do not all grow up in impoverished neighborhoods, urban cities, suburbs or rural areas. Although young Latinos are experiencing a different environment than what their parent’s experience, young Latinos experience similar problems across the country, such as education inequality, racial discrimination, gang violence or lack of job employment, which can promote a sense of common identity (Gracia & De Greiff 2000). There is the sense that the diversity among young Latinos as new immigrants of Latinos that come in and the new generation of Latinos born in the U.S. grows who separate themselves from their parent’s cultural identities (Gracia & De Greiff 2000). Also, on the other side you have the diversity decrease young Latinos experience “common forms of discrimination and chauvinism in the US and an increasingly common cultural interpellation” (Gracia & Greiff 2000, 28).

One of the factors that play into young Latinos having lower voter turnout is family. Family members can have an impact into whether young Latinos go out to vote or not because either their family motivates them to vote or they feel no obligation to do so if their parents do not vote. Latinos hold very strong family values and with family members not voting it can affect the child's perception that voting is not important. Although there are family members that may not have the capability to vote due to immigration status, they can still play a role in encouraging their children to vote or telling them how important it is to vote and not waste the opportunity.

The question to young Latinos is do young Latinos see themselves as key players in contested elections? In *Latino lives in American: Making it Home* the scholars posed the similar question to Latino voters in general (Fraga, Garcia, Hero, Jones-Correa, Martinez-Ebers & Segura 2010). The answer should be yes and the reason is simple, because the number of Latino U.S. citizens is growing and political parties need to take the Latino vote seriously instead of taking it for granted. Just for background information, the Latino population will continue to grow because of the immigration and native birth rate increase (Fraga et al. 2010, Lopez 2010). In terms of percentage of native born Latinos, even though there is "only 44.4% of all Latinos currently residing in the US are native born, 85.6% of all Latinos under age 18 are native born, whereas 39.4% of Latinos over 18 are native born" (Fraga et al. 2010, 5). This shows that in the upcoming years once the younger Latinos are eligible to vote, the Latino voting base will become even stronger but there needs to be work done in terms of getting young Latinos civically engaged and civically educated.

The growing amount of young Latinos in the U.S. can possibly translate into key voters in battle ground states such as Florida and New Mexico. Yet young Latinos will need to



understand the issues that are being discussed by the political parties and in media. Although nonprofit organizations, Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiatives and political organizations advocate for young Latinos to vote, it is important that young Latinos themselves have a “basic grasp of what is going on in the political world (Wattenberg 2012, 55). Without knowing what is going on in the political world how can a young Latino vote or be motivated to vote and engage in the political process. Latinos are increasingly getting educated today than ever before. Latinos are increasing their numbers in community colleges and are graduating from with Bachelor and professional degrees yet they are still less likely than non-Latinos to be enrolled in college (Kohler & Lazarín 2007). Although there is an increase in educated Latinos it does not guarantee a higher voter turnout. In order for the voter turnout to increase among young Latinos is that they must be exposed media reports of current events and be civically educated in order to make a conscious decision as to what issues they have a strong opinion about which will then resonate to a stronger voting turnout.

Education is a major issue that young Latino voters must realize is part of the key to higher voter turnout. Even though Latinos school aged children are the fastest growing student populations in the U.S. with 32.1% of the Hispanic population are enrolled in U.S. schools (Kohler & Lazarín 2007). When it comes to educational obtainment, Latinos are behind other ethnic groups. For high school graduation, only 58% of Latinos graduate compared to 78% of White students and 28% permanently drop out of high school (Hageage 2011). In 2000, for example, “only 10% of Hispanics aged 25-29 had earned a bachelor’s degree or higher compared to 34% of Whites and 18% of African-American” (Nora & Crisp 2009, 317). Latino students compose 18% of the total college-age population and only 10.4% of all the 2002 undergraduate students (Kohler & Lazarín 2007).

Young Latino voters can also be categorized under first generation ethnic minority college students in term of education attainment. Although not all young Latinos are First Generation College students, the amount of second generation and beyond minority college student statistics have not been published widely as are for first generation college students. The first generation ethnic minority students that are young Latinos face issues such as lack of political knowledge, if their family has not been known to vote in general elections, or how to engage themselves in school and become civically educated. First generation college ethnic minority students also have a higher drop out rate than non-ethnic minority first generation college students because they typically have poor academic performance and lack college preparation (Dennis, Phinney & Chuateco 2005; Kohler & Lazarín 2007). The reasons for this could be from the lack of preparation that their previous school did not address correctly, family obligations distracting their college studies, learning disabilities, language barriers, lack of motivation or not enough support from the university to finish school and insufficient financial aid (Kohler & Lazarín 2007; Hageage 2011).

Since young Latinos fall under the ethnic minority category, many of them come from lower socio-economic backgrounds where they see education as a way to a better future than their parents (Dennis et al 2005). Yet young Latino students like young African-Americans on average “have lower grades and are more likely to leave college” (Fischer 2007, 128). Not only do young Latinos drop out of college at a much faster rate, but also they “are more likely to start school later and leave school earlier” (Kohler & Lazarín 2007, 13). If young Latino students leave college earlier than any other group and not receive the necessary education than how can they be engaged politically and have the civic educational knowledge needed for voting turnout to increase. Young Latinos must engage in their education not only by attending classes but by

engaging in themselves through clubs and organizations and comprehending the basics of American Government so that they begin the civic education process so that they can make their own conscious decision and not have it made for them.

What young Latinos need to do is start educating themselves on current and political issues. The excuses that are made from the young Latino community range from “my school does not provide the resources”, “I do not know how to find the resources”, “I think politics is boring”, “why should I learn about politics, I think they are all corrupt”. The mentality of making excuses only makes the young Latino community weaker, less educated on politics & civic education, and gives reason for why political parties need not bother with the young Latino community. In *Invisible Citizens: Youth Politics After September 11*, Sitaraman & Warren layout key actions needed for young people to unite “ideas of government and service in the minds of young people” (2003, 22), which are awareness and action and how both of these create engagement. I agree with the awareness, action and engagement aspect of bringing young people together but since my focus is on young Latino voters I will add the terms education and open-minded. The reason I added education and open-mindedness is because these are terms that seem to be misinterpreted by Latino communities and regard education and open-minded to have only one state of mind and not a variety of ways. I will explain the reason why education and open-minded are important in the conclusion. The open-mindedness of political parties seems to be either right or wrong on Latino voters, regardless of the age. No longer can political parties act as if they have an open-mind to inviting Latinos into their party with open arms.

### Political Parties (with relations to Latino and young Latino voters)

The Latino population is growing in vast numbers across the state. With the growing amount of Latinos in the U.S. there is an expectation that Latinos control an influence of politics. This may be true for certain parts of the country, such as Florida, but there are “mask population characteristics that dampen the Latino political voice” (DeSipio & Leal 2010, 35). The most current U.S. Census information listed the Latino voting age population at 48,419 million (7%) of the total voting age population, which is 229.7 million (2011). The amount of Latinos in this country does not translate well when it comes to voting because out of the Latino voting age population only 21 million (21,285,000 to be exact) can vote either because they are native or naturalized citizens (U.S. Census 2011). It translates to that out of the 21 million Latinos that can actually legally vote in elections only 10,982,000 reported that they registered and out of that only 6,646,000 million reported that they voted from the 2010 election (U.S. Census 2011). In the 2008 U.S. Census data there was a total voting population of 30,852,000 of which only 19,537,000 were legally eligible to vote, also known as total citizen population, either because they were naturalized or native citizens. From the 19 million (population) only 59.4% (11,608,000) reported that they registered to vote and 49.9% (9,745,000) reported that they voted (U.S. Census 2008).

In the final 2008 U.S. Census Data analysis only 31.6% of the total population reported that they voted. The numbers of the total voting population and the number of Latinos that are legally eligible to vote and reported that they voted is low compared to other ethnic groups and even lower among the Latino general population. Even though Latinos enjoy a growing population in the U.S. the voting population is low and needs to increase significantly in order to make a bigger impact on Election Day. Yet the impact just cannot just be focused on the

Presidential Election but also during Mid-Term Election, Local and State Elections. The analyses for the intended age target group that this thesis is researching cannot be done under the U.S. Census data because the age groups are divided between three different age groups. That is why the data to analyze the young voters will be gathered from a study done by CIRCLE and Rock The Vote in February 2008.

Political parties must understand that young Latinos are more at risk of being disengaged from education and employment which can be due to the barriers of learning disabilities, immigration status or language barriers (Hageage 2011). Political parties have also been “slow to produce electorate expansion commensurate with the growth of the Latino population (Daniels 2011, 4). Political campaigns lack the resources needed to communicate with the Latino community when it comes to voter mobilization (Daniels 2011; de la Garza 2010; Espino, Leal & Meier 2007; Connaughton 2005). Studies show that Latinos reside more with The Democratic Party when it comes to election time even though much of the Latino community hold traditional conservative social values (Connaughton 2005; Fraga, Garcia et al. 2010; Garcia & Sanchez 2008; Espino et al. 2007; de la Garza 2010). Yet neither party holds the ultimate Latino allegiance because of the shifts in political support during the presidential elections (de la Garza 2010). For instance in 2004 President Bush won 40% of the Latino vote (de la Garza et al 2010) thus winning him a second term. In 2008, over 60% of the Latino vote went to, then, Illinois Senator Barack Obama (Lopez 2010). Political parties from both sides have recently made efforts to capture the Latino vote whether it is recording radio commercials in Spanish, meeting with Latino leaders or interviewing in day time Spanish television (Connaughton 2005; Espino 2007). Both parties must realize that the Latino vote must not be taken for granted and that the

vote is not yet fully aligned to one party. Young Latinos can make a change to the political climate that Latino voters have faced since the 1960's Civil Rights era.

The young Latino voter turnout in the 2004 Presidential Election was 13.2% compared to 67.6% of the White voter turnout and 15.3% of the Black voter turnout. In the 2006 Midterm election that was a slight increase with 14.2% young Latino voter turnout compared to 68.4% of the White voter turnout and 12.8% of the Black voter turnout in the same age group (CIRCLE Feb 2008). In 2008 there was approximately 5,584,567 young Latinos eligible to vote, make up 17% of the youth electorate vote and 13% of the overall Latino electoral vote (Rock the Vote 2008). The issues most important to young Latinos in 2008 (ranked in order) was immigration followed by jobs & the economy, the environment and the war on Iraq. With the information provided by U.S. Census Bureau, CIRCLE and Rock The Vote there is a possible solution that young Latinos lack the civic education and voter turnout that can make a difference in an election.

It is said that Latinos are “portrayed as shopping for a political party” (Connaughton 2005, p.xiv). If Latinos are shopping for a political party then shouldn't the Democrats and Republicans do everything in their power to win the Latin vote? Unfortunately the fault lies within the Latino community because if Latinos continue to vote in low numbers then neither party will invest heavily to win their vote. Latinos as a voting bloc are strong supporters of the Democrat Party than Whites when it comes to partisan identification and voting in the presidential and congressional elections (Leal 2007). Latinos are more supportive of an activist government that supports bilingualism, ethnic diversity and immigration reform (Leal 2007). Latinos, just like African-Americans, have social conservative values such as less supportive on abortion and are well recognized for having strong favorable positions for faith and family issues

(Leal 2007). Knowing that Latinos are social conservatives how does the Democrat Party then continue to win a majority of the Latino votes and support when it comes to election time? If Latinos voted more on social conservative issues than it would be likely that the Republican Party would win a bulk of the Latino vote and have the Democrat Party fighting for votes.

When it comes to the issues that Latinos care about and take into consideration when deciding whom to vote for the issue priorities are not much different “than those of Anglos” (DeSipio & Leal 2010, 23). In fact Latino priorities are fairly similar to those of Anglo background, for example, in 2005 the most important issue for Latinos was the economy followed by terrorism and the war in Iraq and a fourth issue of priority was education (DeSipio & Leal 2010). In 2000 the most important issue to Latinos was health care followed by immigration and crime (DeSipio & Leal 2010). Other than the issue priorities, Latinos had a substantial growth in spending by Latino political action committees. In 2000 the spending of Latino PAC (Political Action Committee) was only \$605,000 but in 2004 it grew to \$1.8 million (DeSipio & Leal 2010). The Latino PACs were not just for Democratic candidates they also formed from the largest Latino Republican PAC called the Latino Alliance, which spent \$700,000 in 2004 (DeSipio & Leal 2010).

Although there are conservative values in the Latino community, for decades now the Latinos vote has been persuaded to vote for Democrats. The social conservative values that Latinos have do not show in when it comes to voter turnout because if Latinos votes in favor of social conservative values than the majority of the Latino vote would be for Republican candidates. The Latino community within itself is a divided front with the four major known groups (Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans & Cubans) at times debating what is best for the Latino community and not having a solid leader than can bring the Latino community together in

times of need or political unrest. There is one group, for example, within the Latinos community that has a favorable position for conservative and that is the Cuban community in Florida. The Cuban population makes up 3.5% of the total Latino population (U.S. Census 2010). Yet Cuban's are a powerful voting bloc especially because the majority of the Cuban population resides in Florida and plays "central role in selecting the president" (DeSipio & Leal 2010, 23). The Cuban community is more likely than any other Latino group to oppose any diplomatic relations with the current Cuban government and have strong support for the Republican Party (Leal 2007). Cubans in Florida are known for their fiscal conservative and capitalist stance on the economy. During Presidential Election, the presidential candidates pour out significant amount of money in Miami, which is a centralized location of the Cuban community. In the 2004 Presidential Election, for example, the Bush campaign spent nearly \$1.5 million in Miami while the Kerry campaign only spent \$197,000 along with \$1.2 million from the Democrat party donations (DeSipio & Leal 2010). For any presidential candidate to pour in that amount of money in one centralized location with the intention of targeting a specific group signals the power that the Cuban community has when it comes to election day.

In current politics, there is a significant increase of Republican Latino officials across the country. Some of the big three Latino stars in the Republican Party are U.S. Senator Marco Rubio from Florida, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval and New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez. All three of these elected officials have been making an impact for the Republican Party but are not considered to be prominent politicians for the Latino community because of their affiliated party or have been given little media attention which hinders their popularity among the Latino communities across the country. Immigration is a topic that the Latinos community is holding closely to their hearts and is a factor on deciding who to vote for in



regards to whether the official has a positive solution to immigration reform. The Latino vote can be seen as the democrat's favorable electorate yet there are Latinos who say that Latinos neither fall under the Democrat or the Republican ticket. Republicans have been known to claim that Latinos have social conservative and traditional values that fall to what the Republican Party desires but this can be exploited from the Cuban community or Latinos who live in mixed or majority-Anglo areas (Leal 2007).

There has been an increase in the amount of campaign funding going into winning the Latino vote since the 2000 Presidential election when Al Gore and President Bush campaigns started to campaign in Latino communities and did commercial and radio announcements in Spanish (Connaughton 2005). President Bush at the time of his 2004 campaign went even as far as hiring his nephew George P. Bush, who is half Mexican and speaks fluent Spanish, to campaign for him in Spanish and win the Latino vote. Al Gore did not have a family relative who spoke fluent Spanish so he had to rely on Latino outreach and the fact that Latinos tend to vote Democratic. Yet the financial resources to Latino outreach groups were not as great as those directed to non-Latino groups.

No matter what circumstances brought the 2000, 2004 or 2008 Presidential contenders to fight for the Latino vote, one thing is for certain: the Latino vote is starting to be of value to political parties. Yet the resources are still lacking in terms of financing mobilization efforts to increase Latino voters and having Latinos obtain key position on presidential campaigns that do not associate with being an outreach affiliate for the Latino community. What the Democratic and Republican parties bring to the Latino community is very different. For instance, the Democratic Party values diverse and ethnic coalition. The Democrat Party also views people as groups. The Republican Party does not view Latinos as an ethnic group; instead they value the

individual and their loyalty to the party (Connaughton 2005). Yet Democrats need Latinos to win as do Republicans and as Karl Rove once stated “the Latino vote is the basis for winning from now on” (Connaughton 2005, p.38). If such is the case will both parties do a better job of winning the Latino vote or take it for granted as has been done in previous elections.

It is a mistake for Democrats and Republicans to garner the Latino vote only during the election cycle and then ignore their needs in non-election years. Even though the Latino vote has a low turnout compared to other ethnicities, neither party should ignore the needs of the Latino community. Scholars have mentioned that Latinos will have a political role in the future of U.S but why not focus on now and not the future (Connaughton 2005; DeSipio 1996). The future was told almost thirty years ago that Latinos would have a political role in U.S. politics and yet here we are in 2011 and Latinos are still considered to be an afterthought by both parties. Although there have been changes such as the increase of Latino elected officials and also in the amount of educated Latinos, the increase in Latino voters has yet to be of high numbers where political parties will not take Latinos for granted.

#### GOTV (Get Out The Vote)

Educating young Latinos on the importance of voting and politics through civic education is important because it can enrich individuals’ lives (Niemi, Weisberg & Kimball 2010); promotes support for democratic values and political participation (Galston 2004). It is also important to civically educate young Latinos that “voting is extremely important aspect of the political system in which we live” (Rockey Moore 2004, 21). When there is a disparity that young people fail to vote or lack the motivation to vote it is not because they feel that it is not their duty it is probably because they lack the exposure to politics (Wattenberg 2006). Civic education is an important focus of why people vote and whether they believe it is a duty or to protect their

interests (Campbell 2006). What needs to be focused on among young Latino voters is the lack of civic education that is affecting the voter turnout. When young Latinos start to become civically educated than they will begin to understand that voting “affords them a measure of control over how their community runs” (Rockeymoore 2004, 21).

Latinos have consistently voted in low portions compared to other ethnic minorities and the answer to that comes from the low levels of education (Dennis et al. 2005; Kohler & Lazarín 2007; Hageage 2011; Garcia & Sanchez 2008; Dennis et al. 2005; Nora & Crisp 2009; Leal, Martinez-Ebers & Meier 2004), political parties disengaged from the Latino communities (Connaughton 2005; Espino & Meier 2007; de la Garza, DeSipio & Leal 2010), high number of undocumented Latinos (de la Garza 2004; Barreto, Villareal & Woods 2005; Hero et al 2000) or just simply not voting because they do not feel connected to the process (Hero et al. 2000; Espino & Meier 2007). Although Latinos are considered the “sleeping giant” (Connaughton 2005; Hero, Garcia, Garcia & Pachon 2000) there political voting bloc is highly concentrated in key electoral states such as Texas, Florida, California and New York (Connaughton 2005). Yet during the 1960s and 1970s whether a Latino was a political candidate or voter they had no visibility to the “mainstream” (Barreto 2007, 425). Now that we are living in a digital age where technology has made it easier to know what is going on in the world with a click of a button, while the new generation of young Latino voters be more mainstream than previous generations? Not only are political parties missing the facts about the growing population of Latinos in the U.S. but also political science as a discipline “has been slow to focus its attention on how this growing population might affect the polity” (de la Garza 2004, 91).

The focus for my thesis is civic education. There needs to be an understanding of how civic education has an impact on voting turnout. If young Latinos across the country are being

civically educated on current politics than there can be an increase on voting turnout among young Latinos. Voting is a privilege that gives citizens of the U.S. the right to elect a public official to represent them in a legislative body that makes the decisions that affect normal everyday functions. Voting has even become an easier process with the passage of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 also known as the Motor Voter Act that allows people to register to vote while applying for or renewing their driving licenses or other social services. Also, Get out the Vote (GOTV) groups, such as Rock The Vote, created online registration forms to make it easier for young people to vote. Yet young people, especially young Latinos, in general are becoming disengaged from the political process and voting turnout has suffered because of the disengagement.

#### Civic Education

The importance of civic education has been driven out in the past years with schools focusing on math, reading and science (Levine 2003). Yet it is important to educate young people, especially young Latinos when young people “have limited knowledge of government’s impact, either on themselves or on those they seek to assist” (Galston 2004, 263). Civic education must be an educational curriculum that every young Latino needs to know the importance of because it can educate them on the fundamentals of voting, how voting can make a significant impact on their community and send a clear message to political parties that young Latinos today will no longer be the “sleeping giant” as previous generations of Latino voters have been classified as or as the “ignored voice” (Connaughton 2005; Hero et al. 2000; Leal et al. 2008).

The civic education curriculum should focus on getting young Latinos motivated to politically participate in elections. Voter turnout is influence by political participation as

Campbell mentions as rooted in conflict and “that voter turnout is politically motivated” (2006, 19). Civic education should implement that the democratic pluralist system with an open and fair environment for young Latinos. The open and fair environment should allow for young Latinos along with what every citizen that “every citizen can participate in the political process and has the right to communicate with the decision makers, participate in elections, and be engaged in the formation of public policy...” (Garcia & Sanchez 2008, 18). If civic education for young Latinos focuses on participation, communication and engagement than the voting turnout among young Latinos should increase to higher levels in every election.

Scholars have given reasons for the decline of voting participation whether it is due to voting registration laws, political parties ignoring the young voters or young voters feeling disconnected from the political process (Hill & Matsubayashi 2005; Galston 2004; Wattenberg 2008). Yet what has been a major decline in voting participation is the lack of civic education, which has been ignored over the past years by schools throughout the country. If young Latinos start being more civically engaged than it can be affiliated with a higher voter turnout thus giving “a better representation of mass preferences in government policy” (Hill & Matsubayashi 2005, 215).

## CHAPTER III

### DUAL MOTIVATIONS THEORY OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: MADISON MODEL & TOCQUEVILLE MODEL

Young Latino voters are a group that has not attained a model that can predict their voting behavior or explain it. Although young Latinos fall with the rest of the young population that can care less about politics (Twenge 2006) and also the lack of faith in government and politics is still alive in the new generation of voters (Twenge 2006). That is why the dual motivations theory of political engagement will be used to determine whether young Latino voters vote based on interest (Madison Model – heterogeneous group) or a sense of duty (Tocqueville Model – homogeneous group) if so does the theory have a relation to the lack of civic education among young Latinos. Also, the Dual Motivations Theory could impel whether young Latinos a heterogeneous or a homogeneous group of voters. This model approach will better able to determine where the future of the young Latino vote is heading and what civic education can do in order to civically engage young Latinos in the voting process and make them aware of what is going on in politics.

The Dual Motivation Theory has not been used on young Latino voters from a Tocqueville Model or Madison model and the models can have a factor to play in the possible lack of civic education. The Madison Model, which is based on interest of voting, can have an impact on young Latino voters when they reside in a heterogeneous community. The Tocqueville Model, based on the duty of voting, can impact young Latino voters in a homogenous

community because they possibly do not feel the competition of elected officials trying to win their vote. The competition is not an issue when the majority of the homogenous community favors one party and only sees competition during the primary season. The Dual Motivations Theory resonates with the factor of explaining how Tocqueville and Madison Models differ in sense of civic participation and political motivation among young Latino voters. In the Tocqueville Model, for example, a person would have a sense of being duty driven which can be referred to as civic participation (Campbell 2006).

In the Tocqueville Model of homogeneous communities the students would be able to express their voices in schools and the educators (teachers) “are responsive to their students and the school environment is one of mutual respect” (Campbell 2006, 125). Also, in the homogeneous communities there is a tight discipline that is characterized by order in both the schools and homes of the students (Campbell 2006). The discipline would be to install a social norm such as voting. Civic participation from the Tocqueville Model standpoint refers to “public-spirited collective action that is not motivated by the desire to affect public policy” (Campbell 2006, 16). When stating that there is not desire for a person to vote a person has not lost intentions of voting but instead a form of civic participation would be to volunteer to tutor a child (Campbell 2006). On the other hand, if that same person were to write a letter to their Congressman stating their expression than it would be considered political motivation (Campbell 2006). In the Tocqueville Model of participation there is not a duty of political participation, which is rooted in conflict and the homogeneous community fosters tight-knit communities (Campbell 2006). The possible problem that young Latinos run into in political homogeneous communities is that opposition from the mass opinions can bring tension to the environment or

bring difficult dialogue that can result in tension that the educator would have to end the dialogue.

In the Madison Model elections that deal with political heterogeneity there is the political motivated participation. In the political homogeneity the political participation is not motivated to a higher extent because there is no competition among elected officials thus voting is a sense of duty. An explanation for why there is competitiveness in the heterogenous communities is because “political elites, particularly parties, strategically concentrate their resources in electorally competitive places” (Campbell 2006, 21). Political heterogeneity enhances political efficiency, which is a sense that a person can make a difference in the wider political environment (Campbell 2006). Also, in political heterogeneity communities there is a sense of political diversity where there is a tolerance base that allows for a person to communicate possible unpopular opinions in the community. Political heterogeneous environments, for example, would allow for a young Latino to voice his/her opposition opinion to immigration or political issues freely without having to worry about not resonating or being an outcast from their community if they disagree with the majority. Also, in politically heterogeneous community’s voter turnout is more than likely due to fact that the voters feel their interests are being threatened and that there is a political conflict in the community which will mobilize people to come out and vote (Campbell 2006).

Politically heterogeneous communities allow people to voice their opinion freely but where does it begin? Where do people begin to accept the fact that it is acceptable to voice an opinion that is different from the majority? In 2006 CIRCLE conducted the *Civic and Political Health of the Nation Survey*<sup>4</sup>(CPHS) which students were asked about their experiences in

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.civicyouth.org/featured-us-civics-instruction-content-and-teaching-strategies/>



classes where civics was included (Lopez & Kirby 2007). The survey also asked questioned in regards to whether students had the opportunity to discuss current events in the classroom. According to the survey three-quarters of the student's ages 15 to 25 mentioned that they did have the opportunity to discuss current political events on their civic classes (Lopez & Kirby 2007). Also, 80% mentioned that they were encouraged to give their own opinion in political and social issues discussed in class (Lopez & Kirby 2007). College students mentioned that they were given more opportunities to make up their opinions when it came to political and social issues than would high school students (Lopez & Kirby 2007). Also, college students were not required to follow government and politics unlike high schools (Lopez & Kirby 2007). The research shows that students who discuss current issues in the classroom setting have a "greater interest in politics, improved critical thinking and communication skills, more civic knowledge, and more interest in discussing public affairs out of school" (Lopez & Kirby 2007, 3). (Insert Figure 2 here)

It is empirical that young Latinos have the same opportunity to let out their opinions without facing the repercussions of being a fall out from the community if they do not agree with the classrooms stance on issues in social and political issues. When students are not allowed to have their opinions heard in a respectful manner than the students would feel as if voting was not important or view it as a duty rather than interests because they are complacent on the fact that voting is something that must be done since the rest of the community is doing it. For young Latinos there may not be the opportunity to debate political and issues depending on the school environment that they come from. Young Latinos may not have a sense of civic duty obligation or an interest in voting depending on their lifestyle, education or their views on politics. Yet in homogametic communities where there is a sense of civic duty by definition can reassess itself

into giving young Latinos in these communities a social norm of voting. The CPHS survey also shows how Latino students “were the racial/ethnic group least likely to attend classes that encouraged them to make up their own minds about different political and social issues” (Lopez & Kirby 2007, 5). The CPHS survey gives a more complacent argument for Latino communities being more of a Tocqueville homogeneous community where the opinion of a young Latino must be tied down to what the majority say instead of letting them voice their own opinion. Figure three shows the percentage amount for Latinos in red of the content in of U.S. civics courses by race/ethnicity. (Insert Figure 3 and Figure 4 here)

In general when people are civically oriented they are adhered to a social norm encouraging voting which means that people vote out of a sense of duty (Campbell 2006). Social norm means that it is a simple regular behavior and something that people generally do (Campbell 2006). Yet from the polls it seems that young Latinos do not have a social norm of voting in homogametic communities either because the education system does not install the importance of voting in the curriculum, voting is not possible because of legal immigration status or the community does not mention how voting can make a change in the community or the political elites are not mobilizing for the young Latino vote. Also, in predominately Hispanic schools students take the fewest civics classes but they do discuss current events more often their counterparts in heavily White or African-American schools (Niemi & Junn 1998). This can have an effect on the student from learning the importance of voting and how to be civically educated in order to know what are the current political issues occurring in their surroundings.

Campbell makes a compelling hypothesis that states how political heterogeneity has a sense of looking beyond the small-scale environments of the home and school and advocates for an outward-looking perspective on politics (Campbell 2006). If this hypothesis is correct than the

youth in political heterogeneous communities will have an outward look perspective that allows them to look beyond what the community has to offer (Campbell 2006). For instance a young person growing up in a politically heterogeneous community would be able to listen to what the opinion is on a political or social issue and question it with theories or other opinions that the young person may of heard or seen from a different environment. The political heterogeneity community allows for political efficacy were “one can make a difference in the wider political environment...politically diverse communities also appear to foster tolerance, more precisely a willingness to allow unpopular opinions to be expressed within one’s community” (Campbell 2006, 126). On the other hand the young people in politically homogeneous communities have an inward-looking perspective. The young people in this type of community only listen to the opinions from within their community and not question the opinions with knowledge from other environments (Campbell 2006). Perhaps the political homogenous environment do this because they do not like outside members voicing their opinion upon their community because they may feel as if the outside person does not know what the circumstances are or the situations in which the political homogenous community is going through.

With the politically heterogeneous and homogeneous communities differing in how political and social issues are being voiced out to the community the two methods that can differentiate these two communities is civic participation and political participation. Civic participation is the “public-spirited collective action that is not motivated by the desire to affect public policy” (Campbell 2006, 16) while political participation is “rooted in conflict...voter turnout is politically motivated and should rise as conflict heats up” (Campbell 2006, 19). With the current debates on immigration (e.g. DREAM Act<sup>5</sup>), education and the economy are young

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<sup>5</sup> Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (<http://dreamact.info>)

Latino voters civically participating or political participating when turning out at the poll stations. The Dual Motivation Theory suggests that the communities come out to vote due to either political motivations or where the community feels it a civic duty (engagement) to vote because they feel encourage by the “public spirited events” occurring in their communities (Campbell 2006). Young Latinos throughout the U.S. are not all growing up in homogenous communities where every young Latino has the same mentality or political beliefs. The current generation of Latinos is growing up in the “Millennial Generation” which is extremely heterogeneous and is one of the most ethnically and racially diverse generations in American history (Kawashima-Ginsberg 2011). Young Latinos in the southern states are socially conservative while young Latinos in the upper Midwest urban areas are social liberals. That is why the dual motivations theory will best be able to determine whether young Latinos are being civically educated and if so than do young Latinos feel it is a duty or is it an interest? Young Latinos have the possibility to fall under their own category of voters that separates from being called the “sleeping giants” or falling under the same category as young African-Americans “Hip-Hop Generation” (Kitwana 2002; Rokeymoore 2004). If young Latinos lack the civic education than there must be a way to increase the civic education among young Latinos in order to increase the voting turnout for the 2012 election and beyond.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The current literature conducts surveys through phone or online which explains the low voting turnout rate among Latinos and the reasons for it to give their qualitative proof and to determine whether their hypothesis is true. Yet there is no statistical data for why young Latinos have a low voting turnout rate and whether civic education is one of the reasons. Previous surveys focused on asking Latinos about their voting preferences in relations to whom they will vote for, do they vote, what is their political party affiliation (Latino Survey 2006). Therefore, rarely do any of the surveys focus on one specific age group and ask about their knowledge on politics and whether they believe they are being civically educated about politics. How can we tell if young Latinos to go out and vote when they possibly lack the civic education of knowing who to vote for and why? If there is to be a significant increase in young Latino voter turnout there needs to be focus on civically educating young Latinos on voting and politics. That is why I established a survey that focuses on young Latinos political party support, civic education support, civic knowledge, demographic, election related questions and about education.

The questions from the survey relate to the persons political knowledge, civic knowledge, voter preferences, voting history, political affiliation and demographic questions that are intended towards young Latinos. Also, the survey included a set of open-ended and close-ended questions. The closed-ended questions were multiple choice, which gave the respondent a set of answers to choose from. The reason for the survey is to determine whether my hypothesis is true or false

Hypothesis: *Young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville) model.*

and determine if young Latinos vote based on the homogenous (Tocqueville) model. If so then do young Latinos vote in unison based on major political parties<sup>6</sup> support and what is going on their communities in terms of voter turnout?

The establishment of the survey began with conducting personal interviews with people who are involved in the Latino community either as a member of the community (such as a college student, regular person), educator, community organizer or politician. A total of eight interviewees were conducted and each individual was either involved with the young Latino community either through their career, community service or actually being a young Latino. Answers given by the interviewees will not be published in the thesis due to the IRB procedures and the agreement that was established by the investigators and respondents. Also the agreement that was signed between the interviewer and interviewee stated that none of the responses would be published in the thesis only the questions asked. The thesis committee and the IRB Department of Oklahoma State University have authority to see the responses per signed

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<sup>6</sup> Major parties in the U.S. – Democratic Party & Republican Party

agreement. The interviews were conducted either in an office setting or public space that the interviewee felt comfortable to answer the questions. The option of doing the interview over the phone was also available of which one interviewee took advantage of. Questions from the interview asked the following questions:

- 1) What are the main issues facing young Latinos today?
- 2) Do you think legislators are aware of those issues that young Latinos are facing?
- 3) Do you vote<sup>7</sup>
- 4) From questions number three, what is your reason for voting or not voting?
- 5) Have you received political messages through social media?
- 6) What would make you vote for a particular politician?
- 7) Do you think that a political party invokes fear?
- 8) Which political party do you think brings fear into the community? if so why?
- 9) Do you feel as if either party is meeting the needs of the Latino community?
- 10) Do you think elections are important?
- 11) Do you think there are enough social media organizations that promote and advocate young Latinos to vote?<sup>8</sup>
- 12) How often do you use social media to obtain political news sources?
- 13) What are the top political news sources you utilize?

The answers from the interviews helped shape the questions used for the online survey<sup>9</sup>. There were a total of thirty-seven questions on the online survey (which can be found in the appendix) but originally there were forty-five questions. The original online survey questions were reduced to thirty-seven after condensing several questions together. The first twenty-nine

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<sup>7</sup> The choices were a)yes, regularly b)yes, sometimes c) no

<sup>8</sup> The choices were a)yes b)no

<sup>9</sup> The online survey questions can be found in the appendix.

questions asked the survey respondent questions about their voting history, political preferences, their stance on issues, awareness of civic education and whether they believe civic education is an important issue that should be talked more about in the Latino communities. Also, the last eight questions were demographic questions. I asked the person what their immigration status is, ethnic background, age, sex, educational attainment and employment status. The demographic questions help differentiate whether females and males have the same view points on issues or if they differ. Also, the demographic questions let me determine what is being represented in the young Latino community to determine different correlations such as the civic education attainment of a college educated and a non-educated Latino.

The online survey was conducted through KwikSurvey<sup>10</sup> and the data collected from the survey is analyzed and interpreted by STATA<sup>11</sup>. There are a total of thirty-seven questions that range from political knowledge, participation in Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiatives, how they support for political office and basic demographic questions of whom they are. The questions are multiple choices with various questions asking for their political opinion on issues such as education and voter preference. The survey lasted 15-20 minutes and could have only been taken once. The survey's intended audience was young Latinos between the ages of 18-29 but they do not have to be college students nor do they have to be registered voters or U.S. citizens. The survey was anonymous and did not ask for personal information. The reason for keeping much of the demographic questions anonymous was to protect the person's identity especially if the person is undocumented. I did not intend for the survey to make a person uncomfortable with answering questions about their legal status or if they voted.

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<sup>10</sup> [www.kwiksurvey.com](http://www.kwiksurvey.com) is a free online survey program

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.stata.com/whystata/>



## METHODOLOGY

The current literature on Latino voting behavior does not focus on the homogenous (Tocqueville) model as it relates to young Latinos and civic education and that is why I will use the dual motivations theory of public engagement (Campbell 2006) to determine whether young Latinos voting turnout will increase when they are motivated to vote because they feel it is a duty (Wattenberg 2008; Campbell 2006) or to protect their interests as suggested by Campbell (2006). Are the Latino communities that young Latinos from the survey reside in are a heterogeneous or a homogeneous society? If so which one allows for a higher voter turnout? In order to better understand how I will approach the dual motivations theory to my thesis there must be an understanding of the two variables (independent and dependent) that make up the hypothesis<sup>12</sup>. The independent variable is voting behaviors (homogenous – Tocqueville – model) and the dependent variable is voting. Both of these variables have been studied with different variations such as voting behaviors among the Latino community and civic education (Levine 2003; Galston 2004; Hill & Matsubayashi 2005) but they have not been combined to determine whether the lack of civic education among young Latinos is a determining factor of the low voter turnout that affects young Latinos to engage in politics.

There are two generalizations that can be made from the literature about voting turnout. The first is that Latinos have a low voter turnout among racial groups and the second is that young voters have lower rates of voter turnout than older voters (Niemi et al. 2011). If it is a generational gap between the old and young voters and Latinos vs. non-Latino racial groups than what issues do young Latinos face that causes the low voter turnout? Do young Latinos that are from a homogenous community feel that they vote based on duty thus giving the incentive vote a

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<sup>12</sup> H1: *young Latinos have a low voter turnout rate because they lack civic education.*

higher rate? Does the homogenous (Tocqueville) model have a positive impact on the voting behaviors of young Latinos? Is it because young Latinos are not being civically educated in school about voting or knowing the basic fundamentals of how a democracy functions and how voting has a role in its function? For the young Latinos that do vote today, do they do so because they feel they have a civic duty to do so or do they feel that their interests will be met if they vote?

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS

The hypothesis of this thesis, *young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville) model*, was tested with cross-tabulation, chi-square and logistic regression and the hypothesis was proven true. Belonging to a party is a sign of homogeneity in the community. The hypothesis was in correlation with the methods approach of the dual motivations theory of political engagement (e.g. Madison & Tocqueville Models). Determining whether the hypothesis was true or not could not be determined because the data set provided by the survey did not have a sufficient number of respondents, the majority of the survey questions had some theoretical relevance to the hypothesis or the dual motivations theory of political engagement. In general, the test's that were done provide three variables being statistically significant in a chi-squared test and one of the variables being statistical significance in a logistic regression. I will briefly explain the variables used, further explain the results of the cross-tab, chi-squared & logistic regression. Also why chi-squared, cross-tabulation and logistic regression were selected for the survey and explain the main variables that are of interest to the hypothesis and tests. I will finish off by stating the possible reasons for why hypothesis was proven true.

The reason for selecting the seven independent variables and one dependent variable was because of the theoretical relevance it pertained to the hypothesis and also the testing for the

variables would be a stepping-stone into future research that can develop a better comprehension of young Latino voting behaviors. Variable *political interest* was selected as part of the survey because it asked the respondent how interested they are in politics. The *importance of civic education* variable is asking the respondent to consider whether civic education has any importance to their educational setting. Civic education is a topic that has been misplaced in the educational setting and students of minority status, at times, lack the civic educational foundation because their household may not provide the civic education foundations (Niemi & Junn 1998). Although the variable *importance of civic education* has a limited number of respondents this variable can also be a step forward towards future research in young Latinos civic education.

The variable *support of civic education* is similar to previous variable mentioned (*importance of civic education*) but the variables is asking whether the respondents surrounding environment supports civic education. It is important to recognize that in order to further analyze the hypothesis it must be known whether the surrounding environment of young Latinos support civic education. If the surrounding environment does support civic education than future research can break down this variable and make an observation of whether it would coincide with the hypothesis. At this point *support of civic education* variable has theoretical relevance that is best tested with the dependent variable to determine the hypothesis. The *GOTV initiatives* variable is theoretically relevant to the hypothesis because it can be a determining factor of how young Latinos GOTV (Get Out the Vote) mobilization can lead to either a lack of or increase in civic education. The *political engagement* variable is a determining factor of the hypothesis. The reason is because higher political engagement can possibly lead to a higher civic education knowledge thus increasing the vote. Yet in order to determine whether the political engagement variable would make a difference in the hypothesis future research would have to make further

studies into the political engagement of young Latinos. The variable *major party support* was asked to determine if party support for major parties like the Democratic Party and Republican Party had relevance to young Latino voter turnout. I wanted to see if the variable, *major party*, had a significant impact as to whether young Latinos vote from a homogenous (Tocqueville) model. The variable *education* was tested because it was the number one issue that was selected by the respondents as a problem that young Latinos are facing. Please note that the variable, *education*, was only tested with a cross-tabulation because there was a sufficient number correlated to be tested with a chi-square and logistic regression. After this reasoning there will only be mentioning of six main independent variables because the seventh (*education*) was not tested in a chi-square and logistic regression. A reason for this is because I asked the respondents to choose more than one issue of the thirteen issues listed, which many of the respondents selected more than one. This made the variable (*education*) omitted from the logistic regression and of no relevance to the chi-square because of its small relevance factor in the testing. As mentioned before this survey was a first of its kind and it is preliminary studies that for future reference can be taken into consideration for future reference that only one issue should be chosen from the list of issues so that testing can be done on an issue variable. Also the issue variable was chosen to determine if there was a homogenous (Tocqueville model) relevance between issue and voting for young Latinos. What will be stated about the *education* variable is the cross-tabulation. Now that the variables have been identified and the theoretical relevance it has to the hypothesis I will explain the breakdown of the cross-tabulation, chi-square and logistic regression and why they were selected.

The cross-tabulation one-way table was formed to summarize the means and standard deviations of the independent and dependent variables. The reason for choosing a cross

tabulation one-way table was because there was only one dependent and independent variable to be tested so that each independent variable could be determined as to whether there was a statistical significance at the  $P > 0.05$  level. Also a cross-tab shows how one variable (independent variables) depends on the other variable (dependent variable) (Acock 2010).

(Insert table 1 here)

Table 1 presents a cross-tab test what tests the *political interest* variable (the question on the survey asked: *how interested are you in politics and current events?*). The independent variable was divided into don't know, very interested, somewhat interested and not interested. The results show that of the people that said yes to voting 1 person (33%) said that they don't know, 27 people (82%) answered very interested, 28 people (58%) answered somewhat interested and 4 people (27%) answered not interested. From the people that said that they do not vote, 2 people (67%) said that they don't know, 6 people (18%) said that they are very interested, 20 people (425) said that they are somewhat interested and 11 people (73%) said that they are not interested. This cross-tab test is important because it shows how interested respondents are when it comes to their interest in politics and if voting (dependent variable) has a factor in the relation of interest of politics.

(Insert table 1A here)

Table 1A presents the independent variable – *importance of civic education* (the question of the survey asked: *do you believe it is important to learn civic education while attending school.*) Of the people that said yes to voting (dependent variable) 58 people (62%) said yes and 2 people (40%) said not. On the other hand, of the people that said no to voting (dependent variable) 36 respondents (38%) said yes and 3 respondents (60%) said no. This shows how

valuable civic education must be among young Latinos. Also this result shows what young Latinos opinion is about civic education. Although this variable was not prove statistically significant from the logistic regression and chi-squared test the variable can still prove to having a significant understanding to future civic education research among young Latinos.

(Insert table 1B here)

Table 1B presents the independent variable *support for civic education* (question on the survey: *do you believe that you surrounding environment accepts civic education as part of a student's education?*) Of the total respondents who said yes to voting (dependent variable) 37 (60%) respondents said yes and 23 respondents (62%) said no. From the respondents that said no to voting (dependent variable) 25 respondents (40%) said yes and 14 respondents (38%) said no. The surrounding environment of young Latinos and the acceptance of civic education has a relation to the methodology used in the survey but further testing of theoretically significant relevant variables would need to be studied.

(Insert table 1C here)

Table 1C represents the independent variable *GOTV Initiatives* (question on the survey: *do you believe that Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiatives are actively engaging people in your community?*). Of the total respondents who said to voting (dependent variable) 23 respondents (66%) said yes and 37 respondents (58%) said no. On the other hand of the respondents that said no to voting (dependent variable) 12 respondents said yes (34%) and 27 respondents (42%) said no. What can be said about Table 2C is that GOTV initiatives is a way to engage people in voting but the GOTV initiatives must make the effort to engage in the Latino communities especially among young Latinos. If there is no engagement or presence of GOTV initiatives in

the Latino community that target the younger population than the number of voter turnout among young Latinos could possibly continue to suffer.

(Insert table 1D here)

Table 1D represents the independent variable *political engagement* (question on the survey: *are you engaged with any political activity such as volunteering for a campaign and/or for a political organization?*). Of the respondents who said yes to voting (dependent variable) 18 respondents (81%) said yes to being engaged and 42 respondents (55%) said no. Of the respondents who said no to voting (dependent variable) 4 respondents (18%) said yes and 35 respondents (45%) said no. From the cross-tabulation tests done on the five main independent variables there is a sense of determining whether the variables have a relevance to the hypothesis. Also the cross-tabulation test was able to give a breakdown of the respondent's determination of their engagement, involvement, civic education, and outlook as to how civic education plays a role in the respondent's community. The variables from the cross-tabulation test were put into a regression model testing on STATA to determine if any of the independent variables had statistical significance.

(Insert table 1E here)

Table 1E represents the independent variable *major party* (question on the survey: *what political party do you support?*). Of the respondents who said yes to voting (dependent variable) 15 respondents (38%) said that they support independent/other/none/don't know/Libertarian/Green for party affiliation, meaning they support another political party and/or



consider themselves independent and or support no party than the parties ones listed<sup>13</sup> in the survey (please that options for party support other than Democratic or Republican Party were combined together). It was not asked to list the party if they selected other. For future reference it will be asked to what party they support if they chose other. From the respondents who said no to voting (dependent variable) there were 25 respondents (62%) for the selection independent/other/none/don't know/Libertarian/Green party. Of the respondents who said yes to voting (dependent variable) 44 respondents (76%) selected the Republic Party or Democratic Party (Please note that both the Republican & Democratic Party were combined together to make the major party variable on the testing of variables) as the party they support. Of the non-voters 14 respondents (24%) said that they support the Republican Party or Democratic Party.

(Insert table 1F here)

Table 1F represents the independent variable *education* (question on the survey: *what are some issues facing young Latinos? (you may choose more than one<sup>14</sup>)*). Of the respondents who are voters 54 respondents (62%) said education was the most important issue facing young Latinos. Of the non-voters 32 respondents (37%) said education was the most important issue facing young Latinos. There were a total of 722 responses because of the selection of more than issue. From the 722 responses 86 respondents (12%) selected education as the most important issue facing young Latinos. As mentioned previously the variable *education* will only be mentioned in the cross-tabulation and not in the chi-square and/or logistic regression. The *education* variable was omitted from the chi-square and logistics regression for its small number

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<sup>13</sup> Political Parties choices: Republican Party, Democratic Party, Green Party, Libertarian Party, None, Don't Know, Other.

<sup>14</sup> Selection: education, the economy, lack of positive role models, financial resources to pay for a higher education, self-esteem, gang violence, drugs, sexually transmitted infection/s, lack of political engagement, immigration, healthcare, lack of employment opportunities, other (please specify).

for testing. For future reference only selection will be asked of the respondents instead of more than one.

The results of the chi-squared six main variables are presented in table 2. The independent variables were tested to the dependent variable – *voting*. As mentioned previously the six main variables were the theoretically closest to the independent variable (homogenous-Tocqueville-model). The reason for using a chi-squared test was to compare “the frequency in each cell with what you would expect the frequency to be by chance, if there were no relationship” (Acock 2010, pg. 121). My expectation of the chi-squared test will reveal whether there is relationship between the independent variable (homogenous Tocqueville model) and dependent variable (voting). If there is a relationship between the independent and dependent variables which of the variables are they and if they prove to be statistically significant, which would mean that there is a relationship that can lead to a proven fact that homogenous (Tocqueville) model and voter turnout have a relationship. To have statistical significance in the chi-squared would be of significance to determining whether the hypothesis can be proven true or not and also to prove that the homogenous (Tocqueville) model and voting have a relationship. For each variable in the chi-squared test there is relationship that can prove whether the variable has significance that prove the commonalities of homogenous (Tocqueville) model among young Latinos to either being true or not. The relationship to each variable would also give the opportunity to determine whether research on voting behaviors in relations to the dual motivation theory of public engagement among young Latinos is heading in the right direction and if so what variables should be carefully looked at for further answers and research. The chi-squared test would also allow a determination of whether there is any relationship among the independent variables and the dependent variable (voting) and if so what is the relationship.

(Insert table 2 here)

According to the table there were only three independent variables that were statistically significant *Political Engagement, Major Party & Political Interest*. The first independent variable (*political engagement*) had a significance of  $Pr = 0.021$ , the second independent variable (*major party*) had a significant of  $Pr = 0.000$  and the third variable (*political interest*) had a significance of  $Pr = 0.002$ . Having three statistically significant variables in the chi-squared test gives a step forward towards future research on voting behaviors, as affiliation with civic education, among young Latinos. Also the political interaction between the three independent variables can have significance as to whether young Latinos have a voting behavior from the homogenous (Tocqueville) model yet lack voter turnout. The three statistical significant variables in a chi-square test can have an impact on the hypothesis in terms of determining if young Latinos increase the chances of voting from a homogeneity (Tocqueville) model. In the meantime, future research can further enhance the three statistically significant variables and further expand questions that relate to the variables and the hypothesis. The other three variables (*importance of civic education, support of civic education & GOTV initiatives*) did not have statistical significance thus giving the assumption that the variables may not have any correlation the hypothesis. The variable *importance of civic education* had a value of  $Pr = 0.338$ . The variable *support of civic education* had a value of  $Pr = 0.809$  and the variable *GOTV initiatives* had a  $Pr = 0.447$ . Although the three variables that had no significance there can be a chance in future research to determine whether more respondents would make the variables statistically significant. The hypothesis cannot have any significance with the chi-squared testing seen in table 2.

The third test that was used was a logistic regression. The reason for running the logistic regression was because the dependent variable (voting) is a dichotomous (binary) variable because the dependent variable has a 1 for yes to voting and 0 for no to voting. Also the logistic regression would help in determining whether the independent variables tested with a dependent variable that is dichotomized, which can have the same number of statistically significant variables from the chi-squared test or will the logistic regression proved to have more or less statistically significant variables. The logistic regression best fitted the dependent variable (voting) dichotomous description of 1 (yes) and 0 (no) and with the voting of Yes or No one would be able to examine if a person who votes or does not vote would be in favor of the independent variables.

(Insert table 3 here)

After analyzing the logistic regression one of variables were proven to be statistically significant. The variable *Major Party* at  $P = 0.005$  has statistical significance the coefficient (1.351744). Although one variable was found to be statistically significant it means that belonging to a major party (and thus homogeneity) increases the chances of voting among young Latinos. Yet there needs to be continuous research on young Latino voting behavior and this preliminary research is just a stepping-stone for future research on young Latino voting behavior. The other five independent variables (*importance of civic education, support of civic education, political interest, political engagement & GOTV initiatives*) had no statistical significance. The independent variable – *importance of civic education* – had a P value of 0.783. The independent variable – *support of civic education* – had a P value of 0.987. The independent variable – *political engagement* – had a P value of 0.331. The independent variable – *political interest* – had a P value of 0.136 and the independent variable - *GOTV initiatives* - had a P value of 0.397.

The number of respondents (99) could or could not have a reason for just one of the variables being statistically significant. Yet there cannot be reason since this is preliminary research it can be said that more studies need to be done. The survey could have been structured to theoretically fit the hypothesis and methodology but again further studies need to be done. The independent variables that had no statistical significance should not be discarded but studied more carefully in future research and determine if the question was asked correctly or was the low number of respondents the cause for the variables having no statistical significance.

The constant for the logistic regression is .0300092, which means that the number (result) will stay the same throughout the logistic regression without changing. In regards to the R<sup>2</sup> (residual) the answer is 0.1520. The R<sup>2</sup> (residual) is referring to how well the model explains the data on the test. The R<sup>2</sup> was proven to be statistically insignificant thus explaining that the independent variables cannot explain the dependent variable. In other words the independent and dependent variables do not have a way to explain if the low number of voter turnout among young Latinos is the cause from a homogenous (Tocqueville) model. All of the independent variables were tested with the dependent variable – *vote* (do you vote). The analysis from the logistic regression (see table 3) differs from the chi-squared (see table 1) because the chi-squared test had three independent variables (*political engagement, major party & political interest*) statistically significant while the logistic regression had only one (*major party*). This can create debate as to whether the dichotomous variable (voting) in the logistic regression is of significantly more importance for future research or should the chi-squared testing be of the same importance as the logistic regression?

Thus the findings from the chi-squared and logistic regression on the statistical significance of the independent variables determines the variables that could best determine the

whether the hypothesis is true or not. With the survey not being correctly theoretically relevant to the hypothesis, methodology, having few variables being statistically significant from the chi-squared & logistic regression and only seven (six of which were tested in the chi-square and logistic regression) theoretically independent variables my hypothesis can be proven true since the *major party* variable in the logistic regression proves to be statistically significant. Yet the cross tab tests (see tables 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E & 1F) show the actual numbers of the variables and how respondents feel towards the variables (questions asked on the survey). None of the analysis from the chi-squared and logistic regression resulted in significant interactions and as mentioned before a conclusion could not be made to the hypothesis.

After running into some problems with the random testing using chi-square, logistic regression & cross-tabulation it was decided that a cohesive theoretical perspective was developed in choosing the survey questions that best related to the independent variables (homogenous (Tocqueville) model and dependent variable (voting)). This was done in order to run tests on STATA and the variables chosen were revamped to fit the best analysis for the survey questions. Instead of continuing with the chi-squared testing a different test was used. One that would be able to determine which of the theoretical variables best fitted to be tested with the dependent variable. Also with the number of respondents for the survey being 99 there could be a relation with why only three out of the five variables were statistically significant in a chi-square testing and one in the logistic regression.

According to the results from the tests done a conclusion to the hypothesis is that belonging to a party is a sign of homogeneity in the community and the positive coefficient (*major party*) means that belonging to a major party (and thus homogeneity) increases the chance of voting. Although there is a lack of research on young Latino civic education there seems to be

a step forward with this thesis in terms of what questions can be the leading factors into future research and observation.

What can be conclusive from the results is that the independent variables (see table 2 & table 3) that are statistically significant can be a start off point for future research on young Latino voter behavior. I conclude that although my hypothesis was proven true further research in to the independent variables can be a possibility for further development in the young Latino voting behaviors. Also a better approach to developing better survey questions would be to analyze classroom atmosphere in both heterogeneous and homogenous environment. Also, that within the environment there should be young Latinos from the ages of 15-21 and determine their behavior when it comes to politics and survey the students in order to develop a survey that is geared towards civic education instead of just random questions that are mixed with political, civic education and personal questions that may or may not have relevance to the hypothesis and the research. As mentioned this research is a step forward towards unlocking the answers needed when it comes to voting behaviors among young Latinos. Therefore, I reside to stating that my hypothesis: *young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville) model* is proven true and sets a standard for future young Latino voting behavior research.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

The past decades there has been a significant improvement on Latino voting behaviors by various scholars (Garcia & Sanchez 2008; Gracia & De Greiff 2000; Espino, Leal & Meier 2007; de la Garza, DeSipio & Leal 2010) in the social sciences<sup>15</sup>. The initial task of the thesis was written as a stepping stone to addressing the need of focusing on young Latinos and their voting behavior as it related to the dual motivations of public engagement among, which can have a factor on the low voter turnout rate among young Latinos. The thesis was accomplished by establishing a survey using a theory<sup>16</sup> that has not been used when studying Latino voters. The survey completion was due in large part to colleagues, friends and organizations that were able to distribute the survey to young Latinos across the United States. Since the results of the survey and testing were able to answer the hypothesis significant progress was made in the study of young Latinos voting behavior yet more needs to be done in order to increase the voter turnout of young Latinos. I will explain what can be concluded about the survey, what needs to be done for future research on young Latinos civic education, what young Latinos can do in order to increase the voter turnout in their own communities, and final thoughts on young Latinos civic education.

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<sup>15</sup> Please note that there are plenty of other scholars who contributed to Latino voting behaviors but due to space I had to condense the list. Other scholars can be viewed in the work cited pages.

<sup>16</sup> Dual Motivations Theory of Public Engagement



Although the survey may not have been all theoretically relevant to the hypothesis or theory it did assist in determining three statistically significant variables in a chi-square test (*political interest, political party support & political engagement*) and one statistical significant variable in a logistic regression (*major party*) that prove young Latinos do have political interest, and engagement, which can lead to voter turnout. The 99 respondents in the survey had a significant difference of political party support, political views on topics and whether they supported President Barack Obama<sup>17</sup>.

Young Latinos are the fastest growing population in the U.S. in general Latinos are making up the fastest growing sector of the U.S. Electorate (Rockey Moore & Rocky Moore 2007). Yet young Latinos continue to be ignored because they are younger, poorer, and less educated than other population groups, which are factors that lead to low voter turnout (Rockey Moore & Rocky Moore 2007). Evidently young Latinos are making strives to become more educated because in a recent study by the Pew Hispanic Center “Hispanics (Latinos) enrollment in colleges and universities has reached record highs, both in terms of numbers attending and slate of young college students....” (Larsen 2011, pg. 44). After completing the results and determining that my hypothesis: *young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville) model* was proven true there still needs to be significant progress for future research. Finding three key independent variables (*political interest, political party support & political engagement*) being statistically significant, in a chi-square test, proves that young Latinos show interest in politics, political party support and are either engaged or want to be engaged in politics thus giving the potential for higher voter turnout in the near future. Finding statistical significance for major party variable in a logistic regression shows that there is

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<sup>17</sup> Survey results can be found in the appendix.

a sign of homogeneity among young Latinos and that belonging to a major party increase the chance of voting.

Whether there is a relation of political interest and political engagement with young Latinos there still needs to be further studies done among young Latinos and voting behavior. The dual motivations theory of public engagement (Campbell 2006) is a starting point and could be a source guide to determine whether young Latinos fall under the Tocqueville Model, Madisonian Model or a hybrid of both models since young Latinos are growing up in different parts of the countries and in different environments that may or may not reflect an entire Latino community. What can be done in order for the Latino vote to gain momentum and higher voter turnout rates? The first thing is the mobilization efforts by political parties, non-profit organizations that focus on voting and other organizations needs to increase in the Latino community. There needs to be an effort to educate Latinos about why voting is important and to make sure that there are voting booths throughout the Latino communities, not just in one location. Candidates and political parties need to show they really do care about the Latino vote by actually attending community events and supporting legislation that Latinos deem important such as bilingual education and immigration reform. Candidates and political parties cannot just rely on stating one announcement in Spanish two weeks prior to the election and believe that with one statement they will win the Latino vote. Effort needs to be made from the beginning to put Latinos in important and top level senior positions, not just outreach positions that have limited or no resources available to mobilize. It is said that over the next fifty years a majority of the U.S. population will either be nonwhite and Latino, which means “that candidates will have to communicate not only bilingually but multilingual to get out the vote” (Semiatin 2008, pg. 96). With the increase in Latinos across the country along with other minority groups such as

Asians, “campaigns will need more field organizers who are bilingual or multilingual to canvass potential voters whose second language is English” (Semiatin 2008, pg. 96).

Although voter mobilization is an important factor in getting young Latinos to vote civic education could be a key component of political participation. A reason civic education is important is because without it then there will be a decreased motivation or influence to vote among young Latinos. Young Latinos face an even tougher task when being civically educated because they face other issues in their communities such as poverty, gang violence or immigration issues that disengage them from being civically educated or being civically engaged in their communities. Civic education in communities that face the problems that were just mentioned will fall back to either being placed in the backburner of the educational curriculum or leave it up to the households to teach them the importance of voting or what it means to be civically engaged and educated. The problem that is faced with leaving it up to the household is that many young Latinos parents do not have the knowledge about civic education or do not have the time to educate them because they “cannot provide vital instrumental support” (Dennis, Phinney & Chuateco 2005, 234).

The educational system needs to revamp their civic education curriculum because Young people in general are being educated in public schools systems that do not focus on civic education or do not engage the students to know the importance of voting and what political issues are being discussed in media or their communities (Galston 2004; Levine 2003; Wattenberg 2008). In the communities that many young Latinos live in have a political base that has a low competition rate for votes and thus candidates do not engage young Latinos in the voting process because they feel as if they do not need their votes. Although young Latinos face disparities with civic education, there are scholars who mention that Latinos in general,

regardless of age, are being politically engaged by participating in political rallies because 39% are noncitizen adults, which make them ineligible to vote (de la Garza 2004). Yet the effort to educate Latinos about why voting is important is not being emphasized in the schools and by community organizations. It seems as if being politically engaged in protests and rallies is a form of civically educated young Latinos.

Even though there has been an increase in Latino enrollment into higher education (Larsen 2011) and with the growing population of Latinos across the U.S. there needs to be an increase of Latinos in the voting booths and young Latinos must engage even more today than previous generations of Latinos. The technology is available in order to mobilize people to the voting booths and to get people registered to vote. GOTV groups such as Rock The Vote and *Movimiento Latino* have the resources available for people who want to engage in the voting process, register to vote or to educate people on the importance of voting. Although there are young Latinos who cannot register to vote or even vote due to immigration status or age it should not stop them from at least getting people engaged to in the voting process or educating their community about the importance of voting or what the impact can be if people do not vote. Rock The Vote, for example, has an even each year called *Democracy Class* where it gives teachers a lesson plan and supplies them with the material needed to have a class on what it means to vote why it is important to vote and how one can go about to register to vote. The initiative by Rock The Vote can be a model for what schools and communities can do in order to civically educate young Latinos about the importance of voting.

Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Google+ have made it easier for people to connect online and to mobilize people. The social media tools can benefit young Latinos because it can show the community, politicians and political parties that young Latinos do care

about the voting process and who the elected representative will be in their community. Voter mobilization in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century means “...creating a virtual community in which voters participate in the online campaign through blogs, e-mail, and Web campaign events, where they are part of an interactive audience even though they are at home” (Semiatin 2008, pg. 92). Even though campaigns are heading to what is known as a new era of customer-driven campaigning (Semiatin 2008) young Latinos can make sure that they engage not only in their community but with politicians, GOTV initiatives and political parties in order to show them that young Latinos do care about voting and that they do want to civically educate.

Apart from the new voter mobilization techniques and the need for civic education today's politicians and political parties must not “... ignore the smaller growing trees, as in the long run the future lies with them” (Wattenberg 2008, pg. 195). Even most importantly is that young Latinos who have the ability to vote should take advantage of such opportunity because they are amongst a privilege group that has the capability to choose their elected officials since over 2.1 million<sup>18</sup> children and young adults will not be able to vote because of their immigration status. For those who are eligible to vote and can vote must do so. Registering to vote has become an easier process with the passage of the National Voter Registration Reform Act of 1993 or also known as the Motor Voter Act, which allows people to register to vote while obtaining or renewing their driver's license or organizations such as Rock The Vote make registering to vote simple by typing in just a few words and a person is on their way to obtaining a voter registration card.

Voting for young Latinos is important and must be addressed. Young Latinos along with other racial minority groups “must become the new constituency that will confront and engage

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<sup>18</sup> Information was gathered from the Immigration Policy Center website [www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/dream-act](http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/dream-act)

the political system and the public policies that currently keep them marginalized” (Rockey Moore & Rocky Moore 2007, pg. 130). Even though Latinos have contributed to the population in the U.S. (de la Garza et al. 2010) Latinos especially young Latinos must vote and become civically educated. One reason for this is that President Obama has angered many Latinos by not addressing immigration reform as promised during his 2008 candidacy and the Republican candidates seem to be running an anti-immigration reform agenda or ignoring immigration reform because of the Tea Party movement. So will the young Latino voice be ignored yet again? Will young Latinos once again have a low voter turnout? Or will young Latinos vote with their belief in a candidate that they believe is right for them?

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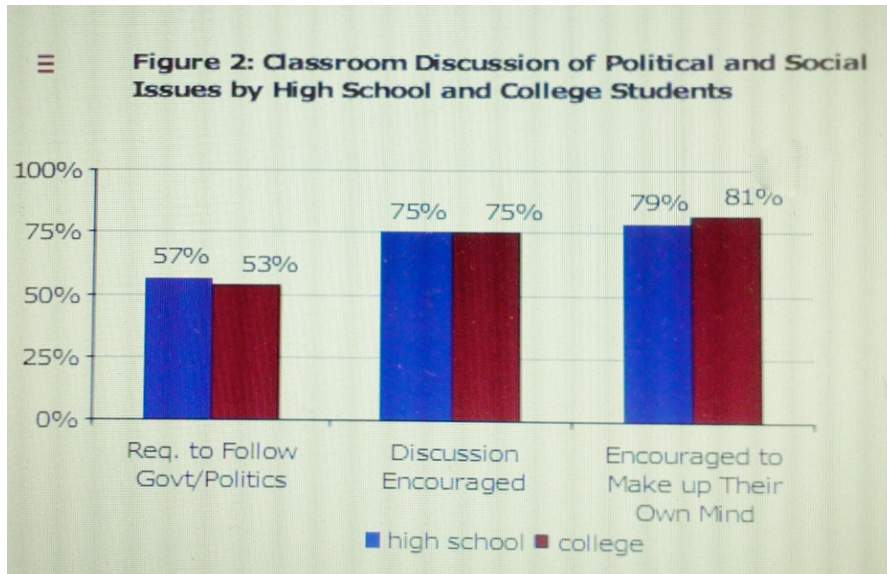
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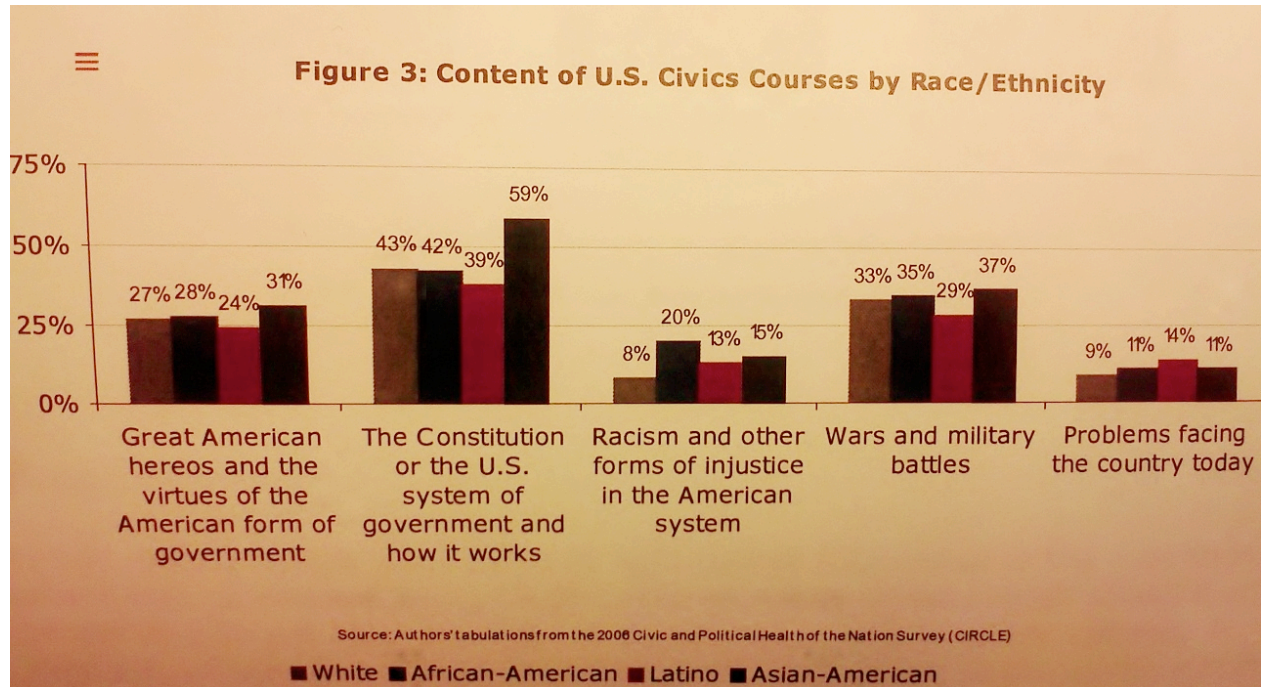
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# APPENDICES

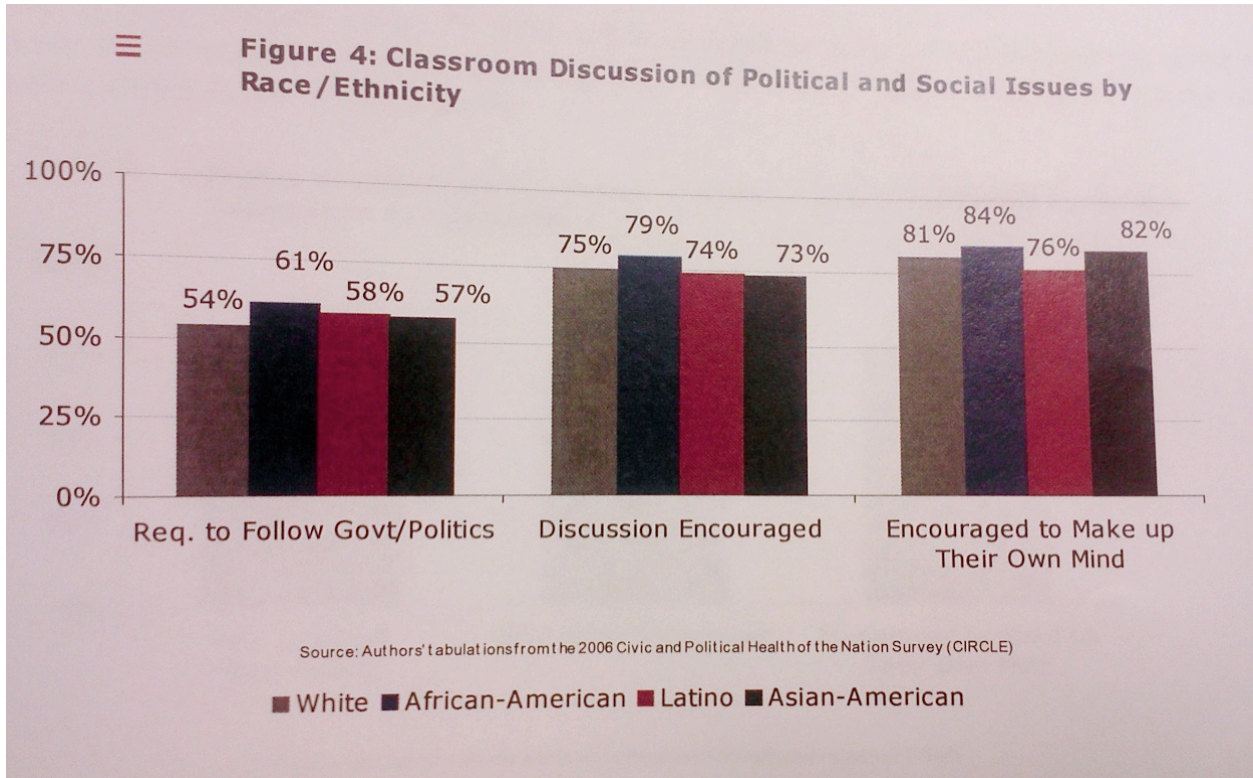
## Chapter II



Source: Authors' tabulations from the 2006 Civic and Political Health and Nation Survey (CIRCLE)



Source: Authors' tabulations from the 2006 Civic and Political Health and Nation Survey (CIRCLE)



Source: Authors' tabulations from the 2006 Civic and Political Health and Nation Survey (CIRCLE)



### Chapter III

#### Online Survey Questions:

1. What are some issues facing Young Latinos? (you may choose more than one)
  - a. Education
  - b. The economy
  - c. Lack of positive role models
  - d. Financial resources to pay for a higher education
  - e. Self-esteem
  - f. Gang violence
  - g. Drugs
  - h. Sexually transmitted infection/s (e.g. HIV/AIDS)
  - i. Lack of political engagement
  - j. Immigration
  - k. Healthcare
  - l. Lack of employment opportunities
  - m. Other (please list)
  
2. Of the issues from the previous question please choose five important issues and rank them in numerical order with number one being the most important and number five being the least important.
  
3. Which political party do you believe has a better approach in addressing the issues mentioned from the first question?
  - a. Democrat Party
  - b. Republican Party
  - c. None
  - d. Other (please specify)
  
4. How interested are you in politics and current events?
  - a. Very interested
  - b. Somewhat interested
  - c. Not interested
  
5. Do you believe legislators (Federal, State, Local) are aware of the issue that young Latinos are facing?
  - a. Yes
  
  - b. No
  
6. Are you a registered voter?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
7. Do you vote?

- a. Yes
  - b. No
8. If answered **no** to the previous question what is the reason for not voting?
9. How old were you when you first registered to vote?
10. Did you know that Latinos have the lowest voter turnout compared to other racial and ethnic groups?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
11. Since Latinos have a low voter turnout would this information motivate you to come out and actually vote in an election?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Don't know
12. Where you ever educated about the importance of voting?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Don't Know
13. Where you ever asked to register to vote?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
14. Do you believe you are educated about voting?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
15. Do you believe it is important to learn civic education while attending school?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
16. If so why or why not?
17. Do you actively participate in getting people registered to vote?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
18. Do you know where your local voting polling place is located?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

19. Do you believe that your surrounding environment accepts civic education as part of a student's education?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
20. Are you involved in any Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiative/s (any general voter registration initiative in your community or nationwide)?
  
21. If so, which one/s, please list.
  
22. Do you believe that Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiatives are actively engaging people in your community?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
23. Are you engaged with any political activity such as volunteering for a campaign or for a political organization?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
24. If so which one/s, please list.
  
25. What issues are important to you? (you may choose more than one)
  - a. Economy
  - b. Immigration
  - c. Education
  - d. Foreign Policy
  - e. Safety
  - f. Health care
  - g. Other (please specify)
  
26. How do you identify yourself politically?
  - a. Very Liberal
  - b. Liberal
  - c. Moderate
  - d. Conservative
  - e. Very Conservative
  - f. Independent
  - g. Don't know
  
27. What political party do you support?
  - a. Republican Party

- b. Democratic Party
  - c. Green Party
  - d. Libertarian Party
  - e. Other (please specify)
  - f. None
28. Do you believe that Presidential Elections are important?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
29. Did you vote in the 2008 Presidential Election?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
30. If you answered NO to the previous question please explain why you did not.
31. If you did vote in the 2008 Presidential Election for whom did you vote for?
- a. Barack Obama/Joe Biden (Democrat Party)
  - b. John McCain/Sarah Palin (Republican Party)
  - c. Chuck Baldwin/Darrell Castle (The Constitution Party)
  - d. Cynthia McKinney/Rosa Clemente (Green Party)
  - e. Bob Barr/Wayne A. Root (The Libertarian Party)
  - f. I did not vote in the 2008 Presidential Election
  - g. Rather not answer
32. If a candidate in the Presidential Election supported the issues important to you would you vote for the candidate on November 2 (Election Day)?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Don't Know
33. How likely are you to vote in the 2012 Presidential Election?
- a. Highly likely
  - b. Likely
  - c. Maybe
  - d. Unlikely
  - e. Highly Unlikely
34. How likely are you to vote for President Barack Obama in the 2012 Presidential Election?
- a. Highly likely
  - b. Likely
  - c. Maybe
  - d. Unlikely
  - e. Highly Unlikely

35. Do you believe the Latino community has a role model (to inform about the issues occurring) that they can look up for guidance during the 2012 Presidential Election?
- Yes
  - No
36. In regards to the previous question, who is the role model/s? ( you may list more than one person)
37. What best describes your racial or ethnic background?
- White or Caucasian
  - Black or African American
  - Hispanic/Latino
  - Asian or Pacific Islander
  - Native American/Alaskan Native
  - Mixed racial background (please specify)
  - Other (please specify)
  - Rather not answer
38. Where you born in the United States of America?
- Yes
  - No
39. If no, at what age did you immigrate to the U.S.? (skip to question #38 question if answered yes ).
40. Where were your parents born?
- Both my parents were born in the U.S.
  - Both my parents were born outside the U.S.
  - One of my parents was born outside the U.S.
  - I don't know/not sure.
  - Rather not answer
41. What is your current citizenship status?
- Currently applying for US citizenship
  - Planning on applying for US citizenship
  - Not planning on becoming a US citizen
  - I don't feel comfortable answering this question
  - Don't know
42. What is your age?

43. Are you male or female
- Male
  - Female
44. What is your highest level of formal education completed?
- None
  - Eighth grade or below
  - Some High School
  - GED
  - High School graduate
  - Some college
  - 2 year (Associates) college degree
  - 4 year (Bachelors) college degree
  - Graduate or professional degree
45. What is your employment status?
- Employed full-time
  - Employed part-time
  - Currently unemployed
  - A full time student
  - Retired or permanently disabled
  - Other, please explain

## Chapter V

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coding on Thesis &amp; Tables</b>
How interested are you in politics and current events?	<i>Political Interest</i>
Do you believe it is important to learn civic education while attending school?	<i>Importance of Civic Education</i>
Do you believe that your surrounding environment accepts civic education as part	<i>Support of Civic Education</i>

of a student's education?	
Do you believe that Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiatives are actively engaging people in your community?	<i>GOTV Initiatives</i>
Are you engaged with any political activity such as volunteering for a campaign and/or for a political organization	<i>Political Engagement</i>
What political party do you support?	<i>Major Party</i>
What are some of the issues facing young Latinos? (you may choose more than one)	<i>Education</i>
Do you vote?	<i>Vote</i>

**Notes:** This table is representing the variables and their coding. The reason for making a column named *Coding on Thesis & Tables* was because the original variable name and coding name on STATA were too long and confusing. Thus it was decided that making the code name shorter and simpler would be sufficient to make it easier for the reader to comprehend the variables.

Table 1 – The Interest of Politics and Current Events

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Very Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat interested</b>	<b>Not interested</b>	<b>N</b>
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<b>Yes</b>	1 (33%)	27 (82%)	28 (58%)	4 (27%)	60
<b>No</b>	2 (67%)	6 (18%)	20 (42%)	11 (73%)	39

**Note:** The independent variable being tested here is *how interested are you in politics and current events?*

Table 1A – Importance of Learning Civic Education

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
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<b>Yes</b>	58 (62%)	2 (40%)	60
<b>No</b>	36 (38%)	3 (60%)	39

**Note:** The independent variable being testes here is *do you believe it is important to learn civic education while attending school.*

Table 1B – Support from Communities for Civic Education

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Yes</b>	37 (60%)	23 (62%)	60
<b>No</b>	25 (40%)	14 (38%)	39

**Note:** The independent variable tested is *do you believe that your surrounding environment accepts civic education as part of a student's education?*

Table 1C – GOTV Engagement in Communities

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Yes</b>	23 (66%)	37 (58%)	60
<b>No</b>	12 (34%)	27 (42%)	39

**Note:** The independent variable tested is *do you believe that Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiatives are actively engaging people in your community?*

Table 1D – Individual Engagement in Campaign and/or Political Organization

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Yes</b>	18 (81%)	42 (55%)	60
<b>No</b>	4 (18%)	35 (45%)	39

**Note:** The independent variable tested is *are you engaged with any political activity such as volunteering for a campaign and/or for a political organization.*

Table 1E – Major Party

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Independent/Other/Green/Libertarian/Don't Know</b>	<b>Major Party</b>
<b>Yes</b>	15 (38%)	44 (76%)
<b>No</b>	25 (62%)	14 (24%)

Note: The independent variable tested is *what political party do you support?*

\*Please note that for Major Party the selection for Democratic Party and Republican Party were combined to make the variable *major party*.

Table 1F – Education

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Education</b>
<b>Yes</b>	54 (62%)
<b>No</b>	32 (37%)

Note: The independent variable being tested here is *what are some issues facing young Latinos? (you may choose more than one)*. \*Please note that respondents choose more than one response thus there was a total of 722 responses, which calculated to 12% of the responses. The education choice was the selection most chosen from the responses.

Table 2 – Descriptive Chi-Squared Statistics for the Six Main Independent Variables

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Pearson chi2(1)</b>	<b>Pr</b>
Political Engagement	5.3308	0.021
Political Interest	14.4946	0.002
Importance of Civic Education	0.9365	0.333
Support of Civic Education	0.0599	0.807
GOTV Initiatives	0.5917	0.442
Major Party	14.5412	0.000

**Notes:** Chi Squared testing of dependent variable *vote*  $P > 0.05$

Table 3 – The Effects of Homogenous (Tocqueville) Model on Voting among Young Latinos

Notes:

(99 total

Ind. Variable	Coef.	Std. Error	P>t	
Political Interest	-.5023721	.3370973	0.136	
Importance of Civic Education	.2750861	.9999754	0.783	
Support of Civic Education	.0080196	.486818	0.987	
GOTV Initiatives	.4176047	.4928948	.397	
Political Engagement	.6390615	.6571516	0.331	
Major Party	1.351744	.486807	0.005	
N				99
Constant				.0300092
R <sub>2</sub>				0.1520

observations) Logistic Regression of dependent variable doyouvote P > 0.05.

The variable political interest represents *how interested are you in politics and current events.*

Variable importance of voting represents *do you believe it is important to learn civic education while attending school.*

Variable support of civic education represents *do you believe that your surrounding environment accepts civic education as part of a student's education?*

Variable GOTV initiatives represents *do you believe that Get Out The Vote (GOTV) initiatives are actively engaging people in your community?*

Variable political engagement represents *are you engaged with any political activity such as volunteering for a campaign and/or for a political organization.*

Variable major party represents *what political party do you support?*



## Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Friday, September 16, 2011  
IRB Application No AS1198  
Proposal Title: Young Latino Voters: Is There a Lack of Civic Education Among Young Latino Voters  
Reviewed and Exempt  
Processed as:

**Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 9/15/2012**

Principal

Investigator(s):

Jose Fulgencio  
222 Murray Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078

Jeanette Mendez  
213 Murray  
Stillwater, OK 74078

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The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, [beth.mcternan@okstate.edu](mailto:beth.mcternan@okstate.edu)).

Sincerely,  
Shelia Kennison, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

## Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Monday, April 11, 2011

IRB Application No AS1143

Proposal Title Master Thesis- Young Latino Voters

Reviewed and Exempt  
Processed as:

**Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 4/10/2012**

Principal  
Investigator( s):

Jose Fulgencio  
222 Murray Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078

Jeanette Mendez  
213 Murray  
Stillwater, OK 74078

---

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

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Sincerely,  
Shelia Kennison, Chair,  
Institution Review Board

## VITA

Jose L. Fulgencio, Jr.

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: YOUNG LATINO VOTERS: ARE YOUNG LATINOS ASSOCIATED WITH  
THE HOMOGENOUS (TOCQUEVILLE) MODEL?

### EDUCATION

Oklahoma State University (OSU)                      Stillwater, OK  
    Anticipated: May 2012  
Master of Arts in **Political Science**                      **3.4 GPA**

### Experience

#### *Instructor*

August 2011 - Present

OSU Department of Political Science  
Stillwater, OK

- Teaching 75+ undergraduate students the fundamentals of American Government
- Modify and organize classroom exams, quizzes and homework assignments
- Develop course plan for classroom lectures

#### *Administrative Lead*

May – August 2010

NEIU Dean of Students Office  
Chicago, IL

- Organized and created Microsoft Excel spreadsheet budget of \$30,000 for Peer Leader payroll
- Documented and edited Orientation programs and presentations
- Coordinated content for Leadership workshops

#### *Office Assistant*

August 2006 – May 2010

NEIU Summer Transition Program  
Chicago, IL

- Established college recruiting programs including high school campus visits and building relationships with enrollment services
- Utilized Microsoft Excel software in updating and maintaining purchasing records
- Purchased office furniture and supplies

Name: Jose L. Fulgencio, Jr.

Date of Degree: May, 2012

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: YOUNG LATINO VOTERS: ARE YOUNG LATINOS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOMOGENOUS (TOCQUEVILLE) MODEL?

Pages in Study: 106

Candidate for the Degree of Master of Arts

Major Field: Political Science

Scope and Method of Study: Quantitative testing, Survey format by testing my hypothesis: young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville) using the dual motivations theory of public engagement.

Findings and Conclusions: Upon reviewing the literature, conducting a survey to measure young Latino voting behaviors and testing my variables through the dual motivations theory of public engagement to determine whether my hypothesis, *young Latino voter turnout is positively associated with the homogenous (Tocqueville)*, can be proven true or not the findings suggested that there is a positive effect. After running a cross-tab, chi-square and logistic regression on key independent variables my hypothesis was proven true. This means that belonging to a party is a sign of homogeneity in the community and the positive coefficient means the belonging to a major party (and thus homogeneity) increases the chance of voting.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Jeanette Mendez

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