

# Ethnic Concentration, Co-Ethnic Participation: Mexican-American Civic Participation and Destination Context

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## **ABSTRACT**

Immigrant dispersion to non-traditional destinations offers scholars the opportunity to better understand the contextual mechanisms associated with immigrant civic and political incorporation. This paper analyzes how immigrant civic participation varies with co-ethnic concentration for the largest immigrant ethnic group in the United States. That is, do Mexican immigrants participate more amidst greater concentrations of their own group? Previous studies have offered different theories about the role of ethnic concentration in immigrant participation and produced conflicting findings. While some research suggests that ethnic concentration fosters immigrant participation by reducing linguistic and cultural barriers to participation, others argue that it hinders participation by isolating immigrants among resource-poor peers. Drawing on the insights of spatial assimilation theories, I predict that the effects of ethnic concentration on co-ethnic participation will vary with immigrant generation. Employing new questions from the September supplement to the Current Population Survey, I analyze four types of civic participation using probit models that interact first-generation immigrant status with state-level Latino concentration. In line with predictions, I find that for Mexicans/Mexican-Americans as a whole, ethnic concentration is associated with declines in civic participation. In the same analyses, however, ethnic concentration is associated with a differential boost in participation for first-generation Mexican immigrants. Future analyses remain necessary to disentangle whether ethnic concentration or factors associated with it, such as the presence of immigrant-serving institutions, play the crucial role in supporting Mexican immigrant civic participation.

Since the late 1980s, immigrants to the United States have increasingly settled outside of traditional immigrant gateways, at times in destinations with no recent experience of immigration. Immigrant dispersion to non-traditional destinations offers scholars the opportunity to better understand the contextual mechanisms associated with immigrant civic and political incorporation.<sup>1</sup> If participation among similar immigrants differs across destinations, several factors could be at work, including variations in the presence of a co-ethnic community, the capacity of immigrant-serving institutions, and the characteristics of local response. An ideal analysis of the role of local context would examine how all of these factors interact with immigrant characteristics to shape civic and political incorporation over time. This paper takes the preliminary step of identifying how immigrant civic participation varies with co-ethnic concentration for the largest immigrant ethnic group in the United States. That is, do Mexican immigrants participate more amidst greater concentrations of their own group?

Previous analyses have offered different theories about the role of ethnic concentration in immigrant civic and political participation and produced conflicting findings. While some studies suggest that ethnic concentration fosters immigrant participation by reducing linguistic and cultural barriers to participation, others argue that it hinders participation by isolating immigrants among resource-poor peers. Drawing on the insights of spatial assimilation theories, I offer an explanation for these conflicting accounts. I predict that the effects of ethnic concentration on co-ethnic participation will vary with immigrants' duration of residence in the United States, as well as with immigrant generation.<sup>2</sup> Spatial assimilation theory posits that while new immigrants rely on the resources of the ethnic enclave, longer-term immigrants can access additional opportunities by moving beyond the enclave. Thus, I hypothesize that longer-term immigrants and those from earlier immigrant generations are positively selected for greater participation outside of traditional immigrant gateways. Recent immigrant arrivals, on the other

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<sup>1</sup> No scholarly consensus exists on an exact definition of traditional gateways vs. non-traditional destinations (e.g. Suro & Singer 2002; Singer 2004, 2008; Hempstead 2007; McConnell 2008; Hall 2009). For my purposes, traditional gateways can be thought of as places with long-stranding immigrant and co-ethnic minority populations, such as California, Texas, New York, and Illinois. Non-traditional destinations are places that until recently have not been home to concentrated foreign-born populations and continue to have comparatively low levels of co-ethnic concentration today.

<sup>2</sup> The immigrant first-generation is defined as those born outside the United States who originally migrated here. The second generation includes children of at least one immigrant parent. The third generation and beyond includes those with no immigrant parentage. I will use the term "Mexican-American" to refer those of Mexican descent in the second immigrant generation and beyond. The term "Mexican immigrant" refers to the first-generation of Mexican descent.

hand, will participate more in traditional gateways because they rely on co-ethnic networks and institutions to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers to participation.

Employing new questions from the September supplement to the Current Population Survey, I analyze four types of Mexican/Mexican-American civic participation using probit models that interact first-generation immigrant status with state-level Latino concentration. In line with predictions, I find that for Mexicans/Mexican-Americans as a whole, ethnic concentration is associated with declines in civic participation. In the same analyses, however, ethnic concentration is associated with a differential boost in participation for first-generation Mexican immigrants. The results hold when controlling for a range of potentially confounding individual and contextual predictors of participation.

Cross-sectional analyses of contextual effects must contend with the possibility of selection effects. I conclude by discussing the ways in which patterns of selection could explain my findings. While selection effects present a compelling explanation for why Mexican-Americans in the second-generation and beyond participate more outside of ethnic enclaves, they do not as convincingly explain why first-generation Mexicans would then participate less in the same places. For Mexican immigrants, settings with a greater concentration of co-ethnics appear to support civic participation. Future analyses remain necessary to sort out whether ethnic concentration or factors associated with it, such as the presence of immigrant-serving institutions, play the crucial role in supporting early immigrant civic participation.

## **IMMIGRANT POLITICAL INCORPORATION AND DESTINATION CONTEXT**

After a sustained period of immigration restriction in the mid-twentieth century, the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act ushered in the modern era of United States immigration. By 2010, the foreign-born proportion of the population reached 13 percent, steadily nearing the 1910 high of 14.7 percent (American Community Survey 2010, Campbell & Lennon 1999). The retreat from national origin quotas in the Hart-Cellar Act ensured the increasing ethnoracial diversity of immigrants to the United States. In 2010, 28 percent of the U.S. foreign-born population was Asian and 53 percent was Hispanic (American Community Survey 2010).<sup>3</sup> As the immigrant

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<sup>3</sup> I use the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” interchangeably.

population grows, political scientists increasingly are investigating what contemporary immigrant political incorporation means for American democracy.

To date, most studies have focused on immigrant naturalization and electoral behavior (DeSipio 2001, Ramakrishnan 2005), with fewer devoting attention to non-electoral forms of political participation and to civic participation. If we are to understand processes of immigrant political incorporation, however, an understanding of immigrant civic participation is essential (Ramakrishnan & Bloemraad 2008). Unlike naturalization and voting, civic activities such as voluntarism, charitable giving, public meeting attendance, and community project participation are not barred to recent immigrants. Moreover, such activities may serve as a pre-cursor to electoral participation, in that they embed immigrants in social networks and increase their likelihood of receiving political information and being mobilized to action (Ramakrishnan 2006). Several studies have found that the well-established connections between organizational membership and political participation (Verba, Scholzman & Brady 1995, Putnam 2000) also hold for ethnic minority groups (Diaz 1996, DeSipio 2002). In fact, for today's immigrants, civic participation may be a particularly important pathway to political incorporation. Contemporary political parties play a less prominent role in mobilizing the foreign-born than they did in the past, thus increasing the relative importance of voluntary associations and religious organizations in incorporation processes (Jones-Correa 1998, J. Wong 2006). Finally, for a society that relies on volunteers for many crucial roles, from tutors and soup kitchen servers to some emergency responders, understanding the factors that support immigrant civic participation is important for societal functioning as the foreign-born population grows.

Traditional models relating individual socioeconomic resources to civic and political participation explain less of the variation in participation for immigrants than they do for native-born Americans (Ramakrishnan 2005). Thus, scholars have explored the ways in which immigrant socialization, in terms of duration of residence in the United States, English-language ability, and national origin characteristics, affect foreign-born political behavior (Cho 1999, Ramakrishnan 2005, DeSipio, Masuoka & Stout 2006).<sup>4</sup> Very few studies have considered the effect of the characteristics of destination context on immigrant participation.

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<sup>4</sup> A smaller number of studies have investigated the role of political institutions in shaping immigrant participation, particularly the role of laws relating to naturalization, voter registration, and bilingual ballots (Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001, Ramakrishnan 2005) and the mobilization incentives and capacity of institutions (Pantoja, Ramirez & Segura 2001, Ramakrishnan 2005).

Today, the increasing diversity of immigrant destinations offers scholars the opportunity to sort out the contextual factors that contribute to immigrant political incorporation over time. While most immigrants to the United States remain concentrated in metropolitan areas in certain states, since the late 1980s, immigrants have also dispersed to new areas of the country and to rural and suburban destinations (Singer 2004, Suro & Tafoya 2004, Marrow 2005, Waters & Jiminez 2005). In 1990, 73 percent of U.S. immigrants lived in six traditional gateway states – California, New York, Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and Illinois. By 2010, the proportion of immigrants living in these gateway states had fallen to 65 percent (American Community Survey 2010). A combination of factors, including federal legislation and economic conditions, combined to push new and existing immigrants away from traditional gateways and pull them toward new destinations.<sup>5</sup>

The increasing variety of immigrant destination contexts could affect civic and political incorporation in a variety of ways. To the extent that immigrant-serving institutions play a key role in enabling incorporation, we would expect to see faster rates of incorporation in traditional gateways, where such institutions have developed capacity over time. If we find that immigrants indeed participate more in established gateways than in new destinations, an alternative hypothesis is also possible. Perhaps the long-standing presence of co-ethnics facilitates immigrant civic and political participation through the development of networks and skills within the co-ethnic community that can be shared with newcomers. Finally, it is possible that destination context affects immigrant political incorporation in ways not linked to the simple presence of immigrant-serving institutions or co-ethnic communities, but to the content of local response. Perhaps a key factor in immigrant civic and political incorporation is the degree to which local elites and mainstream institutions accommodate immigrant needs versus restrict access to services.

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<sup>5</sup> In 1986, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which offered 2.3 million undocumented workers amnesty, enabling freedom of movement throughout the country. IRCA also enhanced security at the U.S. border, essentially militarizing high traffic crossings, particularly those in California (Massey *et al.* 2002). In addition to the heightened challenge of entering via California, the state was suffering from a protracted recession that reduced employment opportunities and increased anti-immigrant sentiment (Durand *et al.* 2005). Scholars have argued that “saturation” in traditional gateways (Latapi *et al.* 1997) served to “deflect” immigrants to new destinations (Light 2006). Meanwhile, the Midwest and the South experienced rates of economic growth over this period that outpaced the rest of the nation (Johnson *et al.* 1999, Duchon & Murphy 2001). The availability of jobs plays a major role in attracting migrants to new destinations (Donato *et al.* 2007), but other issues are also important, including the attraction of raising children in the more tranquil environment of smaller towns (Fennelly 2005, Zuniga & Hernandez-Leon 2001, Valentine 2005, Schaid & Grossman 2003, Williamson 2006).

An ideal analysis of the role of immigrant destination context in immigrant civic and political incorporation would differentiate the relative importance of these factors and how they interact with immigrant characteristics to shape incorporation over time. Lacking complete data on institutional presence and the content of local response across immigrant destinations, I focus here on assessing the relationship between co-ethnic concentration and immigrant civic incorporation. Identifying a link between co-ethnic concentration and immigrant civic participation does not mean that co-ethnic community plays the crucial role in immigrant incorporation. Rather, institutional factors correlated with the presence of co-ethnic community could be responsible for the relationship. Nevertheless, identifying such a link suggests that destination context can affect immigrant civic and political incorporation in ways that warrant further analysis.

### **Ethnic Concentration and Co-ethnic Participation**

A well-developed literature in political science explores the effect of racial context on non-Hispanic white attitudes and electoral behavior (Key 1949, Wright 1977, Glaser 1994, Taylor 1998, Hill & Leighley 1999, Oliver & Mendelberg 2000, Giles & Bruckner 2003, Glaser 2003). Recent studies also suggest that individuals are less likely to engage in some forms of civic participation amidst ethnic diversity (Alesina & La Ferrara 2000, 2002; Costa & Kahn 2003, Putnam 2007). It is unclear, however, the extent to which similar effects are present for immigrants amidst concentrations of co-ethnics. Moreover, it is likely that the mechanisms through which racial context affects non-Hispanic white participation differ from the mechanisms through which co-ethnic concentration affects immigrant participation.

Scholars hypothesize that ethnic concentration affects immigrant participation in multiple and conflicting ways. On the one hand, ethnic concentration may be related to enhanced participation. Residence in an ethnic enclave may lower linguistic or cultural barriers to participation, allowing immigrants greater access to information and opportunities, whether through a transfer of knowledge among co-ethnics or the presence of ethnic media and immigrant-serving institutions (Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001, Ramakrishnan 2006). Likewise, living in a co-ethnic community may imbue immigrants with a greater sense of efficacy, given their local strength in numbers (Ramakrishnan 2006). Forces outside the ethnic enclave may also contribute to increased levels of participation there. When attempting to

engage members of an ethnic group, mainstream institutions may target areas of high concentration for cost-effective mobilization (Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001, Ramakrishnan 2005, Ramakrishnan 2006, Cho, Gimpel & Dyck 2006).

On the other hand, residence in an ethnic enclave could be related to lower levels of participation since ethnic concentration is often linked with poverty and isolation from mainstream institutions (Cho 1999, DeSipio 1996, de la Garza 1996, Espenshade & Fu 1997, Pearson-Merkowitz 2008). Pearson-Merkowitz (2008) argues that ethnic concentration indirectly impacts political participation by lessening opportunities for socioeconomic mobility and constraining the development of bridging social ties. Co-ethnic concentration can be particularly pernicious, she suggests, when it isolates immigrant newcomers among other non-citizens with limited English skills, constraining opportunities for political learning.

In studies that assess the effect of ethnic concentration on co-ethnic voting, a complex mix of findings emerges, likely due to these cross-cutting influences. Ramakrishnan and Espenshade (2001, 891) find that ethnic concentration at the state and metropolitan level is a poor predictor of electoral participation among immigrant ethnic minorities, except for Asian-Americans in the third generation and beyond, who vote at higher rates amidst greater concentrations of Asians. In a separate piece, Ramakrishnan (2005, 103) finds that ethnic concentration is unrelated to voting for first-generation Latinos and only weakly related for first-generation Asian immigrants, even when controlling for confounding contextual factors such as residential poverty. Analyzing voter registration lists from a variety of counties across the United States, Cho, Gimpel & Dyck (2006) find that the probability of Asian-American voting is consistently greater in the high Asian concentration state of California. At the same time, however, greater levels of ethnic concentration at the county level place downward pressure on voting outside of California, as well as inside California for some Asian ethnic groups. The authors explain these disparate findings by suggesting that ethnic concentration may have negative consequences for voting until it reaches a certain threshold at which the ethnic group's presence becomes influential in politics. In combination, these studies suggest that the effect of ethnic concentration on voting differs by ethnic group and with the degree of ethnic concentration.

An additional study by DeSipio, Masuoka & Stout (2006) finds that the effect of ethnic concentration on immigrant participation also varies with the type of participation investigated.

Using the 2000-2004 November Current Population Survey (CPS), these authors find that for Asian immigrants, co-ethnic concentration is associated with an increased likelihood of naturalization, but a decreased likelihood of voter registration and voting. For Latino immigrants, on the other hand, co-ethnic concentration is related to increases in the likelihood of voting and decreases in the likelihood of voter registration, and is not related to differences in naturalization.

To my knowledge, only one study has touched upon the role of ethnic concentration in shaping immigrant civic participation. Ramakrishnan (2006) employs the 2002 September CPS to examine whether ethnic concentration affects immigrant voluntarism. Using measures of ethnic concentration at the metropolitan area level, he finds that ethnic concentration is not associated with voluntarism among native-born Asians and Latinos. First-generation Asians and Latinos, however, are more likely to volunteer in places with higher proportions of co-ethnics. Ramakrishnan (2005, 2006) acknowledges that ethnic concentration may have different effects on immigrants of different generations. Despite this acknowledgement, none of these studies model the effect of ethnic concentration in a way that allows for such differential effects.

Variation in the effect of ethnic concentration across immigrant generations may explain the existence of previous contradictory theories and findings. Even so, it is important to recognize the limits of all of these cross-sectional contextual analyses. Examining cross-sectional data does not allow us to draw definitive conclusions about the relationship between contextual factors and participation since associations between context and behavior could be evidence of selection. It remains possible that immigrants select their destinations in ways that influence the distribution of immigrant participation. In fact, my theory of how ethnic concentration affects civic participation acknowledges the possibility of such a selection effect. In the following section, I describe how a variation on spatial assimilation theory predicts that more established immigrants and co-ethnics will participate at greater rates outside of areas of ethnic concentration, whereas earlier immigrants will not, since their participation relies on the linguistically and culturally specific resources of the ethnic enclave.



## **Theory: Spatial Assimilation and Participation Across Destination Contexts**

Spatial assimilation theory posits that as immigrants acculturate, gaining host country education, experience, and networks, they are no longer as reliant on co-ethnics for resources. Thus, established immigrants and co-ethnics from earlier immigrant generations can achieve socioeconomic mobility by moving beyond the initially crucial, but limited, resources of the enclave to access additional resources available elsewhere (Massey & Denton 1987, Alba & Nee 1997). Traditionally, spatial assimilation theory was primarily interested in moves from center city immigrant enclaves to suburbs in the same metropolitan area. The same basic mechanisms, however, could equally apply to moves from immigrant gateway states to non-traditional destination states.

To be clear, spatial assimilation does not account for all migration to non-traditional immigrant destinations. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, just under a third of the foreign-born who reside outside of traditional gateway states come from other U.S. states (Perry & Schachter 2003). Many residents of non-traditional destinations come directly from abroad. Non-traditional destinations that began to experience foreign-born growth during the 1990s have the highest proportion of immigrants that arrived in the United States during that decade (Singer 2004, 12). Thus, the dispersion of immigrants to non-traditional destinations does not simply represent well-established foreign-born residents moving away from gateways. Nonetheless, the basic insight of spatial assimilation theory remains useful when considering how immigrant and co-ethnic participation vary with ethnic concentration. The theory predicts that civic participation among more established immigrants will increase with moves away from areas of co-ethnic concentration, while participation among recent arrivals will decline in the absence of co-ethnic networks and institutions.

The central challenge in identifying the effect of context on outcomes is determining which immigrant characteristics precede arrival, versus which develop through exposure to local context. It is possible that different types of Mexicans/Mexican-Americans select their residences in ways that affect patterns of civic participation across states. I discuss in the conclusion why I find selection to be an unconvincing explanation for Mexican immigrant patterns of participation amidst ethnic concentration. For second- and third-generation Mexican-Americans, on the other hand, I allow that higher levels of participation in non-traditional

destinations could be evidence of selection, evidence of exposure to greater opportunities, or a combination of the two.

A few recent studies support the theory that spatial assimilation explains different patterns of incorporation across immigrant generations amidst varying levels of ethnic concentration. Stamps & Bohon (2006) investigate differences in levels of education among Latino immigrants in traditional immigrant gateways, versus new destinations. They find significantly higher levels of education among Latinos in new destinations, but further investigation reveals that the results are limited to Latinos who are new to non-traditional destinations, having received their education elsewhere in the United States. They conclude that their findings are the result of a selection effect with more educated Latinos moving toward opportunity in new destinations (Stamps & Bohon 2006, 1234). Hall (2009) investigates economic outcomes for immigrants migrating from one U.S. state to another. He finds that immigrants who move to states with lower proportions of immigrants demonstrate more marked improvement in employment status and earnings as compared to immigrants who move to states with higher concentrations of immigrants (Hall 2009, 68-70). Additional investigation, however, reveals that it is only *naturalized* immigrants who benefit from moves to states with lower concentrations of immigrants. Non-naturalized immigrants benefit from interstate moves in general, but, if anything, they benefit more from moves to states with higher concentrations of immigrants (*ibid.*, 72). As spatial assimilation theory suggests, new immigrants fare better in traditional gateways where they can access co-ethnic resources, while more established immigrants benefit from moves to new destinations where they access greater opportunities.

With these findings in mind, I argue that in order to understand how ethnic concentration affects civic participation among immigrants and co-ethnics, it is essential to differentiate effects for recent arrivals versus longer-term immigrants and those from earlier immigrant generations. I predict that longer-term immigrants and those from earlier immigrant generations will participate at greater rates amidst less co-ethnic concentration because they are able to access resources beyond the ethnic enclave. On the other hand, recent immigrant arrivals in less concentrated destinations will participate at lower rates, because they lack access to the co-ethnic networks and institutions they rely on to take part in civic affairs.

## **DATA AND METHODS**

To sort out conflicting explanations for the role of ethnic concentration in co-ethnic participation, I use new questions from the September supplements to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS provides a unique opportunity to explore immigrant civic and political participation due to its national scope, large sample size, and the fact that is conducted annually (Ramakrishnan 2005, DeSipio, Masuoka & Stout 2006). Since 2002, the supplement has asked respondents about the type and extent of their volunteer activities. In 2006, the CPS added questions about public meeting attendance and participation in community projects and, in 2008, the CPS included an additional question on charitable giving. The CPS has been used to examine immigrant voluntarism before (Ramakrishnan & Viramontes 2006, Ramakrishnan 2006), but to my knowledge scholars have not yet made use these newer civic participation questions.

Though the CPS is an untapped resource for examining immigrant civic participation, it also has some shortcomings. One key weakness of the CPS for analyses of participatory behavior is the absence of data on political attitudes or partisanship (Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001, DeSipio, Masuoka & Stout 2006). Another is that in some cases the CPS allows an alternate household member to answer questions on behalf of the intended respondent. Thirty percent of respondents in my sample answered questions on behalf of another household member. On average, these proxy respondents report lower levels of civic participation. Because proxy responses appear to be non-randomly distributed across immigrant generations and destinations, I address this potential source of bias by controlling for proxy response in my analyses.

An additional weakness of the CPS as compared to some non-governmental surveys is the relatively limited information on respondents' geographic location. To protect respondents' privacy, the CPS includes geographic identifiers below the state level only for counties and metropolitan areas with a population greater than 100,000. I conduct my analysis at the state level due to a substantial loss of geographic variation when conducting analysis at the county

level and inconsistencies in metropolitan area definition that generate potential inaccuracies in other contextual variables.<sup>6</sup>

### **Population of Interest**

Because immigrant participation varies with national origin (Cho 1999; Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001; Ramakrishnan 2005; Cho, Gimpel & Dyck 2006; DeSipio, Masuoka, & Stout 2006) in ways that the CPS does not enable me to fully control, I focus my analysis here on Mexicans/Mexican-Americans, the single largest immigrant ethnic group in the United States by a substantial margin.<sup>7</sup> To ensure adequate sample sizes across immigrant generations and destination context, I aggregate data from the years 2004-2008, obtaining a sample of 30,092 Mexicans/Mexican-Americans age fifteen and older who were asked about civic participation.

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<sup>6</sup> Conducting analysis at the county level is attractive, since it is the lowest geographic level identified in the CPS. However, because states differ markedly in terms of county size and population density, the CPS practice of excluding all counties with populations fewer than 100,000 substantially reduces the geographic variation in the sample. Although twice as many respondents have metropolitan identifiers than have county identifiers, metropolitan identifiers are inconsistent across waves of the survey. In some cases, metropolitan identifiers refer to a large, consolidated metropolitan area, while in others they refer to primary metropolitan areas. Consistent identifiers at the county level enabled me to reliably merge in U.S. census data from 1980-2000 in 2000 boundaries from Geolytics. At the metropolitan level, such data was an inexact match for 67 of the 302 CPS-identified metropolitan areas. For these reasons, I present state-level analysis here. I also conducted the analysis at the metropolitan area level (excluding unavailable contextual variables) and the county level (with full contextual variables) and I note in footnotes the few cases in which results differ.

<sup>7</sup> The CPS provides data on the national origin of the respondent and the respondents' parents for first- and second-generation immigrants. It also includes a question on Hispanic origins that disaggregates Latinos as a whole, including those in the third-generation and beyond, into major population groups (Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central/South American, and other Hispanic). Unfortunately no such question on Asian origins is available, so national origin information is available only for first- and second-generation Asians. Given the relatively imprecise information on national origin, I err on the side of caution by presenting evidence for the largest Latino national origin group, Mexicans/Mexican-Americans. I also conducted analysis for Latinos as a whole and findings were essentially the same with the few exceptions noted in footnotes below. Since I have no data on third-generation and beyond Asian national origins, I do not present results for Asians here, but they are available upon request. In brief, living amongst greater proportions of Asians is associated with greater levels of charitable giving and volunteering for all Asians, without differential effects for first-generation immigrants. Asian concentration is not associated with changes in neighborhood project participation for Asians in the second immigrant generation and beyond, though longer-term first-generation immigrants do experience a differential boost in participation amidst greater ethnic concentration. For Asians, only public meeting attendance follows a pattern similar to that of Mexicans/Mexican-Americans in which greater ethnic concentration is associated with a decline in participation for those in the second-generation and beyond, but first-generation immigrants experience a differential boost in participation amidst ethnic concentration. These preliminary findings should be treated with caution since they may be related to the fact that my data does not allow for sufficient differentiation by national origin group. Both Cho, Gimpel & Dyck (2006) and DeSipio, Masuoka & Stout (2006) found that co-ethnic concentration had varying effects on voting for different Asian national origin groups.

## **Dependent Variables**

My analysis of Mexican/Mexican-American civic participation focuses on four key dependent variables measuring whether or not the respondent attends public meetings, takes part in neighborhood projects, gives to charity, and volunteers. In addition, I assess whether the likelihood that volunteers serve primarily religious organizations varies with co-ethnic concentration. The question on public meeting attendance asks respondents whether they have “attended any public meetings in which there was discussion of community affairs,” during the preceding twelve months. The question on neighborhood project participation asks respondents whether they have “worked with other people in [their] neighborhood to fix or improve something,” in the same time period. Regarding charitable giving, the question asks whether respondents have “donate[d] money, assets, or property worth a combined value of more than \$25 to charitable or religious organizations” during the last year. Finally, in terms of voluntarism, the CPS asks respondents whether they have “done any volunteer activities through or for an organization” in the last year. A follow-up prompt reminds respondents who reply in the negative that volunteering can include infrequent activities or those done “for children’s schools or youth organizations.”<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the four dependent variables measuring different forms of civic participation, I also analyze the extent to which volunteers report that the main organization they serve is a religious organization. Some studies of civic participation have found that religiously-oriented service is less likely to serve as a bridge to political participation. Pearson-Merkowitz (2008), for instance, finds that Latino church attendance is negatively associated with political activity. Her assessment suggests that participation in Latino churches is zero-sum – drawing from other forms of activity that might encourage the development of broader social networks and contribute to civic and political mobilization.<sup>9</sup> The degree to which immigrant volunteers are concentrated in service to religious organizations amidst varying co-ethnic concentrations may also indicate the opportunities available to them for participation. Traditional gateways may offer a broader menu of institutional affiliations to recent immigrant arrivals, whereas religious

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<sup>8</sup> It is worth noting that the focus on volunteering through an organization may undercount participation in informal associations (Ramakrishnan & Viramontes 2006, 3). If immigrants disproportionately participate in such informal activities, as Ramakrishnan & Viramontes (2006) and Ramakrishnan & Bloemraad (2008) suggest, the CPS would underestimate their levels of civic participation.

<sup>9</sup> This finding may well be traced to the fact that most Latinos are Catholics, a denomination that does not consistently encourage lay leadership (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995).

organizations may be among the few institutions reaching out to immigrants in non-traditional destinations. I thus predict that Mexican immigrant volunteers will be less concentrated in service to religious organizations in states with proportionally larger Latino populations.

### **Individual Variables and Civic Participation**

In order to better isolate the effect of ethnic concentration on civic participation, I control for a variety of individual-level predictors of participation. Age and socioeconomic status are well-established predictors of participation, in that they provide individual knowledge and resources for participation (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, Rosenstone & Hansen 1993). They also explain some of the variation in participation among immigrants (Cho 1999, Ramakrishnan 2005). Since age often has a curvilinear relationship with participation, I include controls for age and its square (Rosenstone & Hansen 1993).<sup>10</sup> Likewise, I include controls for years of education and a categorical variable for annual family income.<sup>11</sup> The degree to which an individual is embedded in social networks also affects his levels of civic participation (*ibid.*). I thus include controls for two common measures of an individual's social connections, namely marital status and home ownership. Finally, I control for the respondent's gender using a binary variable that equals one if the respondent is female.

In addition to these general predictors of civic participation, for immigrants in particular the extent of socialization in the United States is a key factor (Cho 1999, Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001, Ramakrishnan 2005). Thus, I include controls for first-generation duration of residence in the United States and immigrant generation.<sup>12</sup> Because I aim to sort out the differential effects of ethnic context on recent immigrants versus longer-term residents, in addition to controlling for second-generation status, I divide first-generation immigrants into two groups – those who have lived in the United States for less than a decade and those who have

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<sup>10</sup> Age is capped at 85 in the CPS to avoid releasing information that could identify respondents.

<sup>11</sup> Scholars often use binary variables to indicate educational attainment, since an additional year of education from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade is substantively less meaningful than an additional year of education that corresponds with a high school or higher degree. Typically, the excluded category in the model is “less than high school.” I choose instead to use a constructed continuous variable for years of education since much of the variation in Mexican immigrant education is within the “less than high school” category. The average Mexican immigrant in the sample has a tenth- to eleventh-grade level of education.

<sup>12</sup> The CPS provides data on foreign-born place of birth and second-generation place of parents' birth. No further information exists to delineate those in the third immigrant generation from others with longer roots in the United States.

been residents for ten or more years.<sup>13</sup> I then create two variables that interact Latino concentration with these first-generation immigrant variables.<sup>14</sup>

### **Contextual Variables and Civic Participation**

I measure ethnic concentration using a continuous variable for state percent Hispanic acquired from the 2000 U.S. Census. While my central focus here is on the role of ethnic concentration in shaping participation, it remains highly possible that states differ in ways other than ethnic concentration that also shape civic participation. To correct for this potential omitted

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<sup>13</sup> Ramakrishnan & Espenshade (2001) employ a similar strategy.

<sup>14</sup> In the analyses I present here I choose to exclude a few variables that have been used elsewhere in similar models of immigrant civic and political behavior. For the following reasons, I do not control for citizenship status, linguistic ability, or the year in which the respondent took the survey.

Naturalization serves as an additional indicator of immigrant socialization to the United States. I do not control for it here because it only varies in the first immigrant generation and my model incorporates Mexican-Americans in the second-generation and beyond who are all citizens by birth. In addition to this methodological consideration, other scholars recommend caution when using self-reported information on naturalization. DeSipio, Masuoka, & Stout (2006), for instance, suggest that unauthorized immigrants may report that they are citizens out of fear of detection, particularly when taking surveys conducted by the government. Whether for this or other reasons, in the 2004-2008 September CPS, 232 Latino immigrants and 142 Asian immigrants report that they are citizens despite living in the United States for fewer than five years. Even if we assume that all of the naturalized citizens who have arrived in the United States between three to five years ago acquired citizenship via the spousal exception, at least 2 percent of Latinos and 1 percent of Asians who report that they are naturalized citizens must have misreported their status. Additional analyses that add citizenship status to the models presented here (not shown) find that among Mexicans, citizenship status is associated with higher levels of voluntarism, public meeting attendance, and charitable giving. In no case, however, does citizenship status change the effect of ethnic concentration on co-ethnic participation.

English-language ability serves as an additional indicator of immigrant socialization for Mexican/Mexican-American immigrants. The CPS includes a rather limited measure of English-language ability, in that a single variable indicates whether all members of the household older than age 15 speak only Spanish. In addition to the rather blunt nature of this measure, in my dataset this variable was inconsistent across waves of the survey. In some years the variable coded only those who were Spanish-only and did not differentiate English-speakers from possible missing values among other respondents. Due to the inaccuracy of the variable, I exclude it from analyses here. When I tentatively assume that all those who are not Spanish-only indeed speak some English and include a Spanish-only variable in the model, the pattern of how ethnic concentration affects Mexican/Mexican-American participation remains unchanged, though the statistical significance declines slightly in some cases. This issue deserves further attention, assuming a corrected variable is available from the Census Bureau.

DeSipio, Masuoka & Stout (2006) include a control for the year in which the respondent was surveyed. They find that naturalization of Asians and Latinos increases across waves of the CPS, suggesting the increasing political incorporation of these immigrant populations over time. Including a control for survey year produces no such consistent findings of increasing immigrant civic participation and does not alter any findings related to the effect of ethnic concentration on participation. Among Mexicans/Mexican-Americans, survey year is associated with declines in voluntarism over time, but increases in neighborhood project participation. Additional analyses looking specifically at whether levels of Mexican/Mexican-American participation spiked in 2006 following the Latino immigrant rights marches also produced no theoretically consistent pattern of findings, showing only that being a 2006 respondent was associated with a statistically significant decline in neighborhood project participation. Given the inconsistency of the results and the lack of a theoretical explanation for them, I exclude a variable for survey year from the analyses presented here.

variable bias, I control for four additional state-level demographic variables associated with civic participation, namely the proportion of state residents holding a Bachelor's degree, and the state-level median household income, Gini index of income inequality, and population density (Putnam 2007).

Following Ramakrishnan & Espenshade (2001), I also include a measure indicating the state's culture of civic participation. Due to cultural and historical factors, contexts differ in their rates of participation in ways that may affect resident immigrant participation. While Ramakrishnan & Espenshade (2001) control for state-level electoral participation in their analysis of immigrant voting, I control for the state social capital index developed by Robert Putnam (2000). The index consists of 14 different state-level measures of organizational participation, organizational leadership, community project participation, volunteering, socializing with friends, public meeting attendance, electoral participation, non-governmental organizations per capita, and social trust, drawn from several data sources.<sup>15</sup> Finally, I control for residence in California. Because Latinos are so disproportionately concentrated in this state and because Latino political behavior bears a distinct character in California (Skerry 1993), it is worthwhile to reduce the relative weight of California in the analysis (Ramakrishnan 2005).<sup>16</sup>

### **Analytic Method**

Given the dichotomous nature of all five dependent variables, I conduct probit regression analysis. Probit models assume that the error terms across observations are independent of one another, an imperfect assumption when state-level contextual variables are identical across respondents within a state (Cho, Gimpel & Dyck 2006). As a result, the number of fully independent observations is reduced to the number of states (or more generally, "clusters") included in analysis, rather than the number of respondents (Primo, Jacobsmeir & Milyo 2007, 449). Overlooking the effects of clustering can result in understated standard errors and the possibility of overstating the statistical significance of findings. Following Primo and his colleagues (*ibid.*), I conduct analyses using clustered standard errors, a method that retains the

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<sup>15</sup> Since the social capital index is available only for the continental United States, analyses that include full contextual controls do not include Mexicans/Mexican-Americans in Alaska and Hawaii.

<sup>16</sup> In the full model, residence in California is negatively associated with charitable giving, positively associated with voluntarism, and not statistically associated with other measures of civic participation. Analyses conducted without controls for California residence produce substantively identical results.



probit point estimates, but corrects the standard errors to account for the clustering of observations within states.<sup>17</sup>

## **FINDINGS**

Across four different types of civic participation, I find a consistent pattern in which Mexican-Americans participate less in areas of high Latino concentration, while Mexican immigrants participate more. In the paragraphs that follow, I first present the raw frequencies of Mexican/Mexican-American civic participation across varying levels of ethnic concentration. I then present the predicted probabilities of participation generated from probit analyses with clustered standard errors, controlling for confounding individual and contextual variables.

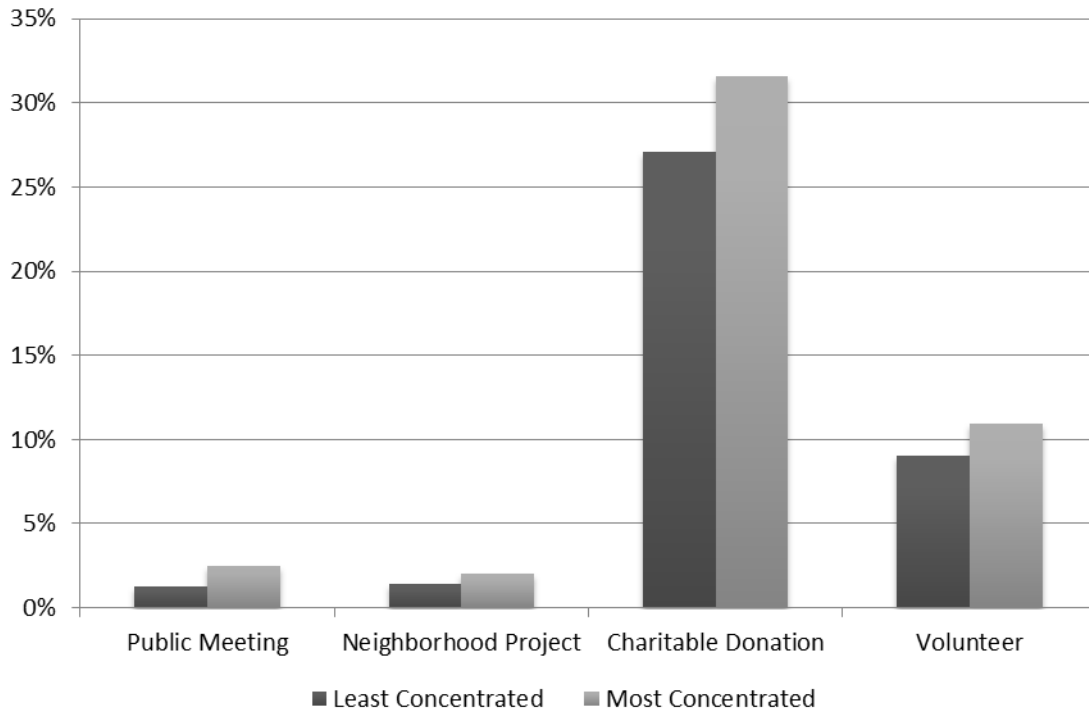
For the sake of clarity, I present the predicted probabilities of Mexican/Mexican-American civic participation at low, average, and high Latino concentration. In 2000, the average state was 8 percent Latino. I define the “least concentrated” Latino states as those that collectively comprise less than 10 percent of the U.S. Hispanic population in the year 2000 (27 states). On average, these states are 3 percent Hispanic. The “most concentrated” Latino states are those that collectively comprise more than half of U.S. Hispanic population in the same year (4 states). On average, these states are 33 percent Hispanic. Figure 2.1 presents these two groups of states.

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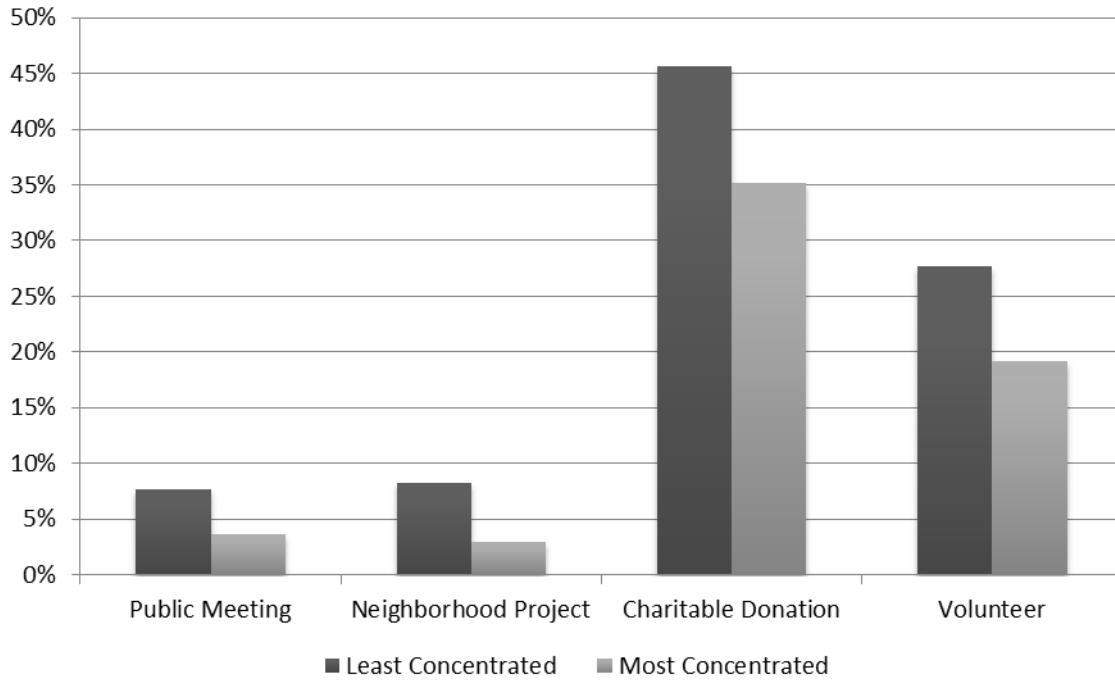
<sup>17</sup> Multi-level modeling offers an alternative solution to address this methodological challenge. Primo and his colleagues demonstrate the suitability of using clustered standard errors as compared to multi-level modeling by replicating an article with methodological issues quite similar to my own. In a piece on the role of state voter registration laws in shaping turnout, Wolfinger, Highton, and Mullin (2005) employ CPS data across the United States with multiple cross-level interaction effects. Primo *et al.* find that while multi-level modeling has the potential to provide greater information about certain questions, in analyses with multiple cross-level interactions, multi-level models can fail to converge. Primo *et al.* were unable to successfully run the Wolfinger *et al.* analysis using standard multi-level modeling techniques, a problem I also encountered. Thus, like Primo and his colleagues, I conclude that clustered standard errors are a sufficient and practical way to adjust for clustering. In a blog response to the Primo *et al.* paper, Andrew Gelman, who has published extensively on multi-level models, agrees that in addressing “global questions” such as the effect of state characteristic X on outcome Y, “multi-level modeling doesn’t have such a big comparative advantage.” Gelman (2007) also agrees that complex multi-level models can fail to converge at times in both Stata and R, contributing to the greater practicality of the clustered standard error approach in these cases.



**Figure 2.2 Mexican Immigrant Civic Participation Frequencies by Ethnic Concentration**

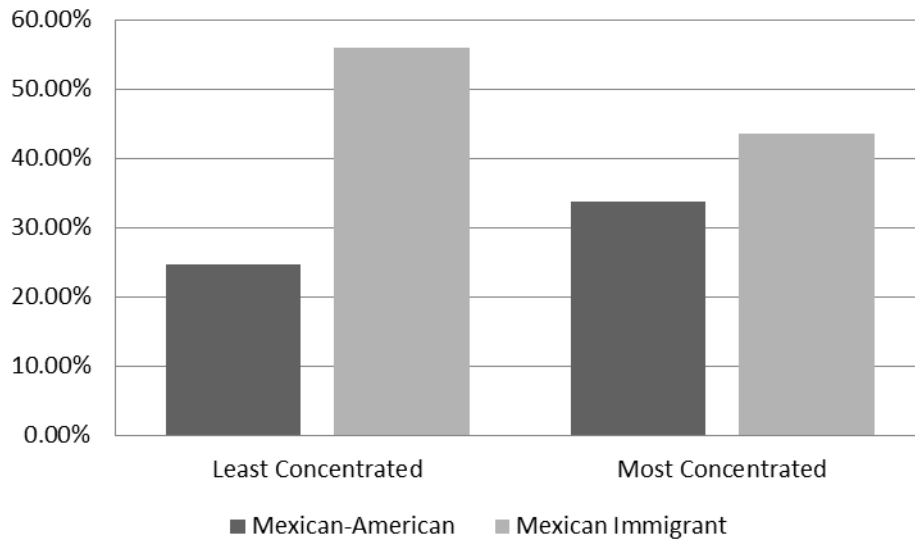


**Figure 2.3 Mexican-American Civic Participation Frequencies by Ethnic Concentration**



volunteers, on the other hand, are less concentrated in service to religious organization in the least concentrated Latino states by a margin of 9 percentage points.<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 2.4 Prominence of Religious Volunteering by Ethnic Concentration**



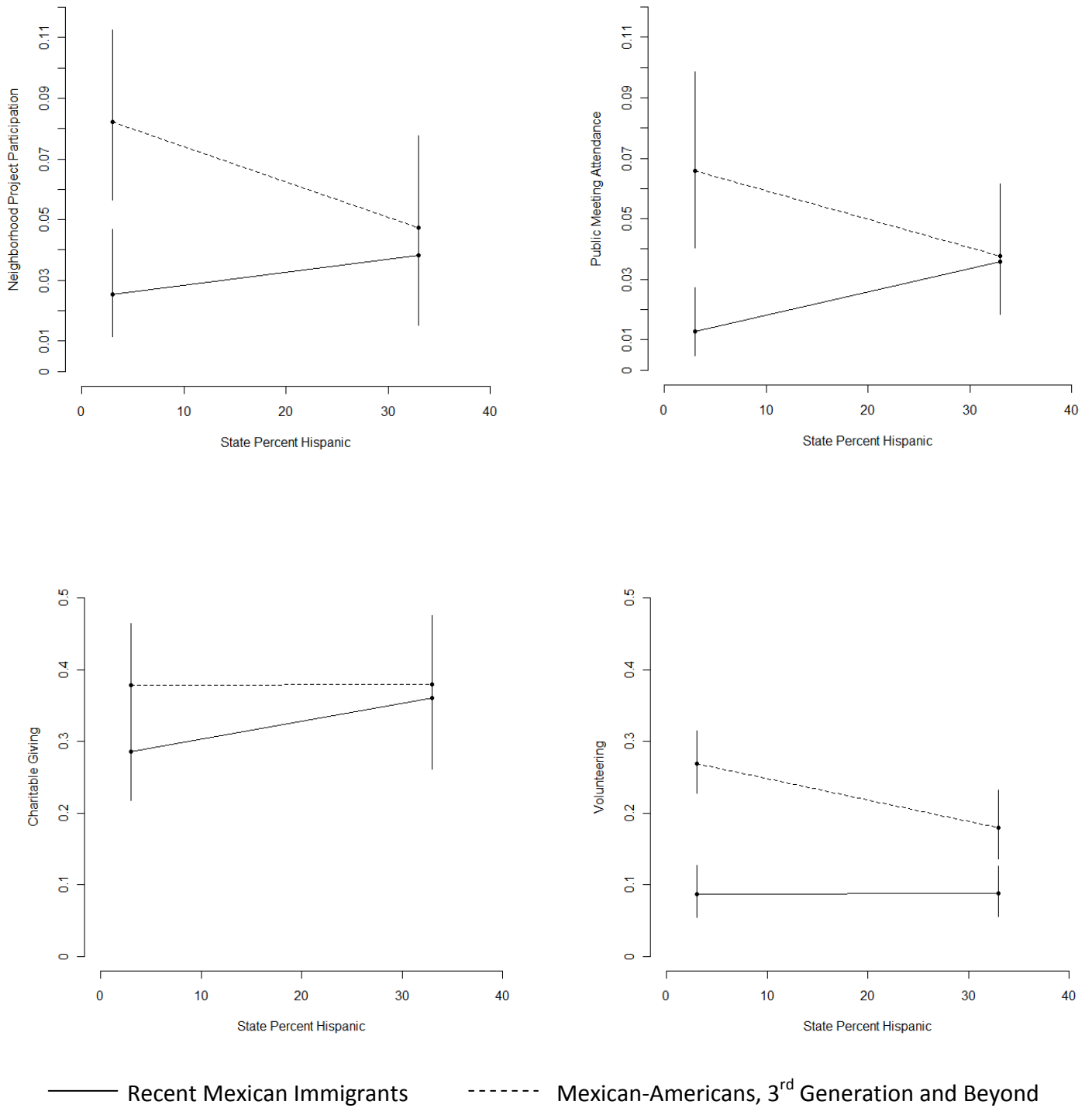
It remains possible, however, that Mexicans/Mexican-Americans differ across varying levels of Latino concentration in ways that contribute to this distribution of civic activity. Alternatively, perhaps state characteristics other than Latino concentration contribute to this pattern. For this reason, I run a series of probit regressions for each form of civic activity, including interactive variables that allow the effect of ethnic concentration to vary with immigrant generation and duration of residence in the United States. I then predict the probability of each form of civic activity across immigrant generations in a 3-percent Hispanic state, an 8-percent Hispanic state, and a 33-percent Hispanic state, holding all other variables at their respective means. I employ a technique that both generates these quantities of interest and offers measures of uncertainty about the estimates (King, Tomz & Wittenberg 2000). Regression results are presented in Appendix A. Figure 2.5 presents the pattern of results,

<sup>20</sup> In t-tests comparing religious volunteering between the least concentrated Latino states and the most concentrated Latino states, these differences were statistically significant at the  $p \leq 0.05$  for both Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans.

contrasting patterns of civic participation amidst varying co-ethnic concentration for recent first-generation Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans in the third-generation and beyond.

As Figure 2.5 demonstrates, the negative association between Latino concentration and civic participation persists for Mexican-Americans in the third-generation and beyond, as does the positive association for recent Mexican immigrants. The converse pattern for religious volunteering also persists. At high levels of Latino concentration, the gap between third-generation Mexican-Americans and recent Mexican immigrants in terms of neighborhood project participation, public meeting attendance, and charitable giving, almost disappears. Below, I discuss the findings for each form of participation in greater detail. For the sake of parsimony, tables present the predicted probabilities of participation for recent first-generation immigrants and Mexican-Americans in the third generation and beyond, but the pattern of results is consistent across the other groups. With few exceptions, both recent Mexican immigrants and Mexican immigrants who have lived in the United States for longer than a decade experience a differential boost in participation amidst ethnic concentration, while their counterparts in the second-generation and beyond participate less amidst concentrations of Latinos.

**Figure 2.5 Mexican/Mexican-American Participation amidst Varying Latino Concentration**



**Table 2.1 Predicted Probability of Mexican/Mexican-American Neighborhood Project Participation amidst Varying Ethnic Concentrations**

	<b>3% Latino</b>	<b>8% Latino</b>	<b>33% Latino</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>First-Generation, &lt; 10 years in U.S.</b>	2.54%	2.66%	3.82%	1.3 p.p.
	(0.012, 0.047)	(0.015, 0.043)	(0.015, 0.077)	
<b>Third-Generation and beyond</b>	8.21%	7.49%	4.73%	-3.5 p.p.
	(0.056, 0.112)	(0.053, 0.100)	(0.026, 0.078)	

For Mexicans/Mexican-Americans, participation in neighborhood projects increases with years of residence in the United States and with immigrant generation, though differences between the second- and third-generation and beyond are not statistically significant. As Table 2.1 demonstrates, among Mexican-Americans, increasing Latino concentration is associated with declines in neighborhood project participation. For a Mexican-American in the third generation and beyond, living in a Latino gateway as compared to a non-traditional destination state is associated with a decline in neighborhood participation of 3.5 percentage points, holding all else constant. The substantial shift is similar in magnitude to doubling the average years of education from a ninth-grade level to a Masters’ degree, while holding other factors constant.

For both recent and longer-term Mexican immigrants, Latino concentration is associated with a differential increase in neighborhood project participation. The relatively small magnitude of the differential boost means that the predicted probability of neighborhood project participation increases by only a slight margin in areas of high Latino concentration. Thus, while Latino concentration is associated with substantial declines in neighborhood project participation for Mexican-Americans in the third-generation and beyond, for Mexican immigrants, the predicted probability of neighborhood project participation amidst greater Latino concentration increases only by 1 percentage point.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> This exact pattern of neighborhood project participation amidst varying levels of Latino concentration is evident in analyses at the metropolitan and county level. Differential increases in neighborhood project participation for the first-generation are robust to county-level contextual controls. Likewise, this pattern of results is evident in analyses conducted for Latinos as a whole.

**Table 2.2 Predicted Probability of Mexican/Mexican-American Public Meeting Attendance amidst Varying Ethnic Concentrations**

	<b>3% Latino</b>	<b>8% Latino</b>	<b>33% Latino</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>First-Generation, &lt; 10 years in U.S.</b>	1.28%	1.51%	3.58%	2.3 p.p.
	(0.005, 0.027)	(0.007, 0.028)	(0.018, 0.061)	
<b>Third-Generation and beyond</b>	6.60%	6.00%	3.76%	-2.8 p.p.
	(0.040, 0.099)	(0.040, 0.085)	(0.021, 0.058)	

Similar to neighborhood project participation, Mexican/Mexican-American public meeting attendance increases with years of residence in the United States and across immigrant generations, though again the difference between the second-generation and the third-generation and beyond is not statistically significant. Among Mexican-Americans, increasing Latino concentration is associated with declines in public meeting attendance. For a Mexican-American in the third-generation and beyond, living in a high-concentration Latino state as compared to low-concentration Latino state is associated with an almost 3 percentage point drop in the likelihood of public meeting attendance, all else constant. The shift is similar in magnitude to that associated with moving from a ninth-grade education level to some college education.

Recent and longer-term Mexican immigrants, however, experience a differential boost in public meeting attendance amidst ethnic concentration. For a Mexican immigrant who arrived in the United States less than ten years ago, living in a high Latino concentration state is associated with a differential boost in public meeting attendance of 2 percentage points, holding other factors constant.<sup>22</sup>

**Table 2.3 Predicted Probability of Mexican/Mexican-American Charitable Giving amidst Varying Ethnic Concentrations**

	<b>3% Latino</b>	<b>8% Latino</b>	<b>33% Latino</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>First-Generation, &lt; 10 years in U.S.</b>	28.56%	29.73%	36.05%	7.5 p.p.
	(0.218, 0.359)	(0.233, 0.364)	(0.262, 0.462)	
<b>Third-Generation and beyond</b>	37.82%	37.84%	38.00%	0.2 p.p.
	(0.301, 0.464)	(0.306, 0.457)	(0.289, 0.476)	

<sup>22</sup> In analyses conducted at the county and metropolitan level the directionality of results is similar, but the coefficients do not rise to levels of statistical significance. The same pattern of results is evident when analyses are instead conducted for Latinos as a whole.



For those of Mexican descent, charitable giving displays a pattern of “second-generation advantage” (Ramakrishnan 2005, 78) in which early first-generation immigrants donate at the lowest rates, donations surge in the second-generation, and then fall back by a statistically significant margin in the third-generation and beyond. Increasing Latino concentration is associated with a pattern of declining charitable giving among Mexican-Americans in the second-generation and beyond, but a differential boost for early first-generation immigrants. Perhaps due to the fact that the question on charitable giving was asked for the first time in 2008 and sample sizes were thus substantially smaller, these differences do not consistently reach levels of statistical significance. In the full model, including other state contextual controls, Latino concentration is associated with a differential increase in levels of charitable giving among recent Mexican immigrants that nears but does not reach levels of statistical significance ( $p = 0.126$ ).<sup>23</sup>

**Table 2.4 Predicted Probability of Mexican/Mexican-American Volunteering amidst Varying Ethnic Concentrations**

	<b>3% Latino</b>	<b>8% Latino</b>	<b>33% Latino</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>First-Generation, &lt; 10 years in U.S.</b>	8.6%	8.6%	8.8%	0.1 p.p.
	(0.054, 0.127)	(0.058, 0.122)	(0.056, 0.126)	
<b>Third-Generation and beyond</b>	26.86%	25.24%	17.99%	-8.9 p.p.
	(0.227, 0.315)	(0.210, 0.298)	(0.136, 0.232)	

Among those of Mexican descent, volunteering increases with years of residence in the United States and immigrant generation, though rates of second-generation volunteering are not statistically different from volunteering rates in the third generation and beyond. Increasing Latino concentration is associated with declines in voluntarism for Mexican-Americans in the second-generation and beyond. For instance, for third-generation Mexican-Americans, living in a highly concentrated Latino state as compared to a low-concentration Latino state is associated with a nine percentage point decline in the likelihood of volunteering, all else constant. For the

<sup>23</sup> In analyses conducted at the metropolitan area, Latino concentration was not associated with Mexican/Mexican-American charitable giving. At the county-level, including contextual controls, Latino concentration was associated with increased charitable giving across Mexican/Mexican-American immigrant generations, as well as a differential boost in donations among Mexican immigrants in the United States for at least ten years. The pattern is not evident in analyses of Latinos as a whole.

average third-generation Mexican-American, the shift is similar in magnitude to increasing education from a ninth-grade level to having completed some college.

Both early and later first-generation Mexican immigrants experience a statistically significant differential increase in volunteering amidst ethnic concentration. The differential boost, however, is not sufficient in magnitude to overcome the negative coefficient on Latino concentration. Therefore, as Table 2.4 displays, despite the statistically significant differential boost, the predicted differences in Mexican immigrant voluntarism associated with living in a high as supposed to low concentration Latino state are miniscule.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 2.5 Predicted Probability of Mexican/Mexican-American Volunteers' Religious Organization Service amidst Varying Ethnic Concentrations**

	<b>3% Latino</b>	<b>8% Latino</b>	<b>33% Latino</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>First-Generation, &lt; 10 years in U.S.</b>	56.59%	55.33%	48.87%	-7.7 p.p.
	(0.440, 0.680)	(0.444, 0.653)	(0.400, 0.578)	
<b>Third-Generation and beyond</b>	28.47%	29.67%	36.09%	7.6 p.p.
	(0.225, 0.350)	(0.242, 0.358)	(0.292, 0.440)	

The likelihood that a Mexican/Mexican-American volunteer primarily works with a religious organization declines with years of residence in the United States and with immigrant generation, though the second generation is not statistically different from the third generation on this measure. In a state with an average-sized Latino population, being in the third generation or beyond, as compared to a recent Mexican immigrant, is associated with a 26 percentage point decline in the likelihood that a volunteer will mainly work with a religious organization.

For Mexican-Americans, greater Latino concentration is associated with an increase in the likelihood that a volunteer's primary organizational affiliation is religious. This relationship falls to insignificance when additional state contextual controls are included in the model. Among recent Mexican immigrant volunteers, however, increasing Latino concentration is associated with a differential decline in service to religious organizations that remains robust to

<sup>24</sup> An identical pattern of results is evident in analyses conducted at the metropolitan and county level, including with full county-level contextual controls. The pattern of results is the same for Latinos as a whole.

full contextual controls.<sup>25</sup> Regardless of local co-ethnic concentration, more than half of recent Mexican immigrant volunteers primarily serve religious organizations. But the predicted probability that a recent Mexican immigrant volunteer will primarily serve a religious organization is 8 percentage points lower in a high-concentration Latino state as compared to a low-concentration state.<sup>26</sup>

## **DISCUSSION**

As predicted, Mexican-Americans who live in high concentration Latino states in the second generation and beyond participate at lower rates, while Mexican immigrants participate more in such environments, even when controlling for confounding individual and contextual variables. Spatial assimilation theories suggest that the negative relationship between Latino concentration and Mexican-American participation could be related to greater opportunities for participation outside of gateways, or it could be related to the characteristics of those who move away from gateways. For Mexican immigrants, however, I argue that lower rates of participation outside of gateways are related to the characteristics of these places, rather than attributable to selection. Mexican immigrants participate less outside of gateways since they rely on co-ethnic networks and institutions to lower cultural and linguistic barriers to participation.

Even so, I consider two alternative explanations that attribute the positive relationship between Latino concentration and Mexican immigrant civic participation to a selection effect. First, some suggest that undocumented immigrants might disproportionately choose non-traditional destinations to avoid enhanced surveillance in traditional gateways. Clearly, unauthorized status has the potential to constrain civic participation due to fears of detection. If illegal immigrants are disproportionately concentrated in non-traditional destination states, this factor could explain some of the differences in civic participation across contexts. Available evidence, however, suggests that undocumented Mexican immigrants do not choose their destinations in this way. McConnell (2008) finds that unauthorized immigrants are likely to

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<sup>25</sup> Mexican immigrants who have lived in the United States for ten or more years also display a pattern of differential decline, though not by a statistically significant margin.

<sup>26</sup> The same pattern of results is not evident at the metropolitan area or county level, but is evident in analyses conducted for Latinos as a whole.

choose large metropolitan areas over small cities and rural destinations. Among large cities, though, they are equally as likely to choose non-traditional destinations as gateways.

A second alternate explanation posits that more civically active immigrants choose gateways specifically for their co-ethnic networks and institutions, while less active immigrants choose to go elsewhere. While I cannot definitively rule out this explanation, I find it less plausible. For Americans in general, non-traditional destinations are more participatory, including for Mexican-Americans in the second-generation and beyond. If we accept the possibility that Mexican-Americans in non-traditional destinations are positively selected, for Mexican immigrants to be negatively selected in these settings the mechanisms bringing these groups to new destinations would have to be entirely disparate. It strains logic to imagine that for Mexican-Americans residence in a new destination is associated with entrepreneurialism and integration, while for Mexican immigrants it is associated with a desire to lay low. Additional analysis incorporating information on respondents' history of residential mobility could assist in determining whether differences in rates of participation are attributable to recent arrivals in non-traditional states (suggesting a selection effect) as supposed to shared by longer-term residents of these states (suggesting a contextual effect).<sup>27</sup> At the very least, the higher levels of Mexican-American civic participation amidst lower Latino concentration suggests that nothing inherent in new destinations prevents ethnic minority participation.

Having demonstrated these patterns for Mexicans/Mexican-Americans at the state-level, future research is warranted to investigate the extent to which they apply at lower levels of geographic generality and to other national origin groups. Preliminary analyses conducted at the metropolitan and county level indicate that the pattern of results holds for Mexican/Mexican-American neighborhood project participation and volunteering, as well as for public meeting attendance at reduced levels of statistical significance. Further examination of these results is warranted, if more accurate geographic identifiers can be ascertained. Additional analyses conducted for Asians/Asian-Americans suggest a divergent pattern of participation across differing levels of ethnic concentration. These results must be treated with caution, however, since I cannot adequately differentiate Asians by national origin and previous studies suggest that effect of ethnic concentration on voting differs by Asian national origin group (Cho, Gimpel

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<sup>27</sup> CPS information on residential mobility is limited to a question on residence one year ago, which provides insufficient leverage on this issue. Thus, these additional analyses will require different data.

& Dyck 2006, DeSipio, Masuoka & Stout 2006). Moreover, the mechanisms through which pan-ethnic concentration affects participation should be different for Latinos and Asians, since Asians do not share a common language and pan-ethnic concentration may not consistently reduce linguistic barriers to participation for recent immigrants.

In addition to the general findings on patterns of civic participation across destinations, I find that Mexican immigrants who volunteer are more concentrated in service to religious organizations in non-traditional destinations than in gateways. These findings suggest that for leaders in new destinations, religious organizations offer a good place to seek out active immigrant community members. On the other hand, findings for second- and third-generation Mexican-Americans indicate that concentration in religious voluntarism does not result from a limited menu of institutional options. Mexican-American volunteers in the second-generation and beyond are more concentrated in service to religious organizations in gateways, where alternate co-ethnic institutions abound. Perhaps religious organizations offer particularly low barriers to entry for the least participatory, a hypothesis that deserves further exploration in future work.

Differentiating the effects of ethnic concentration on co-ethnic civic participation by immigrant generation contributes to reconciling previous conflicting accounts. Nonetheless, my account does not indicate whether co-ethnic concentration plays the crucial role in fostering Mexican immigrant participation, or whether factors associated with concentration, like immigrant-serving institutions and local government responses, are the key contextual components. Scholars agree that the effect of context on immigrant participation is “understudied,” (DeSipio, Masuoka, & Stout 2006) but few advances have been made in measuring context. Immigrants’ long-term concentration in established gateways and recent dispersion to new destinations offers scholars the opportunity to explore the factors that facilitate immigrant civic and political incorporation. To do so more effectively, however, we must move beyond simply classifying destinations by the characteristics of their co-ethnic community to more directly measure how local institutions and policy responses shape processes of incorporation.

**APPENDIX: REGRESSION RESULTS**

**Table A1. Neighborhood Project Participation**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:	Neighborhood Project			Neighborhood Project			Neighborhood Project		
MODEL:	PROBIT			PROBIT			PROBIT		
SAMPLE SIZE: n =	15,760			15,760			15,385		
	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.
Proxy = 1	-0.45	***	0.05	-0.45	***	0.06	-0.45	***	0.06
First-Generation, less than 10 year in U.S. = 1	-0.22	***	0.08	-0.64	***	0.19	-0.60	***	0.20
First-Generation, 10 or more years in U.S. = 1	-0.15	***	0.06	-0.60	***	0.16	-0.55	***	0.17
Second-Generation = 1	-0.08		0.06	-0.08	***	0.03	-0.07	***	0.03
Female = 1	-0.16	***	0.05	-0.17	***	0.04	-0.17	***	0.04
Age	0.01		0.01	0.01	*	0.01	0.01		0.01
Age squared	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00
Years of Education	0.04	***	0.01	0.04	***	0.01	0.04	***	0.01
Income (categorical variable)	0.03	***	0.01	0.03	**	0.01	0.03	**	0.01
Married = 1	0.05		0.05	0.05		0.05	0.05		0.05
Homeowner = 1	0.03		0.05	0.04		0.03	0.03		0.04
California = 1				0.10	**	0.04	0.16		0.12
State Social Capital Index							0.14		0.12
State Percent with Bachelors' Degree							-1.90		2.89
State Gini Index of Income Inequality							-0.35		4.12
State Household Median Income							0.00		0.00
State Population Density							0.00		0.00
State Percent Hispanic, 2000				-1.57	***	0.36	-1.31	***	0.52
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US < 10 years				1.66	*	0.90	1.52	*	0.89
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US 10+ years				1.65	***	0.51	1.55	***	0.55
Constant Term	-2.63	***	0.18	-2.25	***	0.14	-1.34		2.29
Pseudo R-Squared	0.06			0.07			0.07		
F-test - Contextual Variables							42.53	***	

\*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$     \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$     \*  $p \leq 0.10$

**Table A2. Public Meeting Participation**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:	Public Meeting			Public Meeting			Public Meeting		
MODEL:	PROBIT			PROBIT			PROBIT		
SAMPLE SIZE: n =	15,749			15,749			15,374		
	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.
Proxy = 1	-0.32	***	0.05	-0.32	***	0.03	-0.32	***	0.03
First-Generation, less than 10 year in U.S. = 1	-0.22	***	0.08	-0.92	***	0.22	-0.87	***	0.24
First-Generation, 10 or more years in U.S. = 1	-0.03		0.05	-0.37	**	0.15	-0.29	**	0.15
Second-Generation = 1	-0.06		0.06	-0.05		0.07	-0.04		0.07
Female = 1	0.04		0.04	0.03		0.02	0.03		0.02
Age	0.01		0.01	0.01	*	0.01	0.01	*	0.01
Age squared	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00
Years of Education	0.07	***	0.01	0.07	***	0.01	0.07	***	0.01
Income (categorical variable)	0.05	***	0.01	0.05	***	0.01	0.05	***	0.01
Married = 1	0.11	**	0.05	0.11	***	0.04	0.12	***	0.04
Homeowner = 1	0.02		0.05	0.02		0.04	0.02		0.05
California = 1				0.05		0.03	0.06		0.11
State Social Capital Index							0.20	*	0.11
State Percent with Bachelors' Degree							-2.00		2.56
State Gini Index of Income Inequality							2.19		5.49
State Household Median Income							0.00		0.00
State Population Density							0.00		0.00
State Percent Hispanic, 2000				-1.36	***	0.31	-1.18	**	0.50
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US < 10 years				2.83	***	0.75	2.71	***	0.77
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US 10+ years				1.29	***	0.45	1.08	***	0.43
Constant Term	-3.42	***	0.19	-3.08	***	0.20	-3.37		2.63
Pseudo R-Squared	0.10			0.10			0.11		
F-test - Contextual Variables							42.36	***	

\*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$     \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$     \*  $p \leq 0.10$

**Table A3. Charitable Giving**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:	Donate			Donate			Donate		
MODEL:	PROBIT			PROBIT			PROBIT		
SAMPLE SIZE: n =	5,424			5,424			5,306		
	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.
Proxy = 1	-0.15	***	0.04	-0.15	***	0.04	-0.16	***	0.04
First-Generation, less than 10 year in U.S. = 1	-0.16	**	0.07	-0.40	***	0.14	-0.29	*	0.15
First-Generation, 10 or more years in U.S. = 1	0.06		0.05	-0.09		0.14	-0.03		0.14
Second-Generation = 1	0.13	**	0.06	0.13	**	0.06	0.15	***	0.06
Female = 1	0.11	***	0.04	0.11	**	0.06	0.11	**	0.06
Age	0.04	***	0.01	0.04	***	0.00	0.04	***	0.00
Age squared	0.00	***	0.00	0.00	***	0.00	0.00	***	0.00
Years of Education	0.06	***	0.01	0.06	***	0.01	0.06	***	0.01
Income (categorical variable)	0.05	***	0.01	0.05	***	0.01	0.06	***	0.01
Married = 1	0.28	***	0.04	0.28	***	0.04	0.28	***	0.05
Homeowner = 1	0.11	**	0.04	0.10	*	0.06	0.08		0.06
California = 1				-0.02		0.03	-0.16		0.10
State Social Capital Index							0.29	***	0.10
State Percent with Bachelors' Degree							-6.15	***	2.25
State Gini Index of Income Inequality							6.95	*	4.25
State Household Median Income							0.00		0.00
State Population Density							0.00		0.00
State Percent Hispanic, 2000				-0.38		0.30	-0.32		0.46
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US < 10 years				1.00	**	0.44	0.73		0.48
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US 10+ years				0.58		0.41	0.48		0.40
Constant Term	-2.81	***	0.16	-2.71	***	0.17	-5.55	***	2.21
Pseudo R-Squared	0.11			0.11			0.11		
F-test - Contextual Variables							22.49	***	

\*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$     \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$     \*  $p \leq 0.10$



**Table A4. Voluntarism**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:	Volunteer			Volunteer			Volunteer		
MODEL:	PROBIT			PROBIT			PROBIT		
SAMPLE SIZE: n =	25,810			25,810			25,179		
	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.
Proxy = 1	-0.26	***	0.02	-0.26	***	0.02	-0.27	***	0.02
First-Generation, less than 10 year in U.S. = 1	-0.54	***	0.04	-0.79	***	0.14	-0.76	***	0.13
First-Generation, 10 or more years in U.S. = 1	-0.19	***	0.03	-0.53	***	0.07	-0.49	***	0.08
Second-Generation = 1	-0.03		0.03	-0.04	*	0.02	-0.03		0.02
Female = 1	0.27	***	0.02	0.27	***	0.01	0.27	***	0.01
Age	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00
Age squared	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00
Years of Education	0.06	***	0.00	0.06	***	0.00	0.06	***	0.00
Income (categorical variable)	0.03	***	0.00	0.02	***	0.00	0.03	***	0.00
Married = 1	0.23	***	0.02	0.23	***	0.03	0.23	***	0.03
Homeowner = 1	0.08	***	0.02	0.09	***	0.03	0.09	***	0.03
California = 1				0.08	***	0.02	0.16	***	0.05
State Social Capital Index							0.10	***	0.04
State Percent with Bachelors' Degree							0.70		1.30
State Gini Index of Income Inequality							3.08		2.06
State Household Median Income							0.00		0.00
State Population Density							0.00		0.00
State Percent Hispanic, 2000				-0.96	***	0.16	-1.21	***	0.20
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US < 10 years				0.92	*	0.51	0.90	*	0.48
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US 10+ years				1.18	***	0.24	1.10	***	0.25
Constant Term	-1.99	***	0.08	-1.75	***	0.09	-2.48	**	1.09
Pseudo R-Squared	0.09			0.09			0.09		
F-test - Contextual Variables							170.27	***	

\*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$     \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$     \*  $p \leq 0.10$

**Table A5. Religious Voluntarism**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:	Religious Volunteer			Religious Volunteer			Religious Volunteer		
MODEL:	PROBIT			PROBIT			PROBIT		
SAMPLE SIZE: n =	4,087			4,087			3,976		
	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.	$\beta$		S.E.
Proxy = 1	0.10	**	0.05	0.10	***	0.03	0.11	***	0.03
First-Generation, less than 10 year in U.S. = 1	0.47	***	0.09	0.84	***	0.21	0.76	***	0.20
First-Generation, 10 or more years in U.S. = 1	0.19	***	0.06	0.48	***	0.18	0.42	***	0.17
Second-Generation = 1	0.07		0.06	0.09		0.07	0.09		0.07
Female = 1	-0.15	***	0.05	-0.14	***	0.03	-0.14	***	0.04
Age	0.00		0.01	0.00		0.01	0.00		0.01
Age squared	0.00	**	0.00	0.00	**	0.00	0.00	**	0.00
Years of Education	-0.04	***	0.01	-0.04	***	0.01	-0.04	***	0.01
Income (categorical variable)	-0.01	**	0.01	-0.01	*	0.01	-0.01	*	0.01
Married = 1	0.01		0.05	0.00		0.06	-0.01		0.06
Homeowner = 1	0.20	***	0.05	0.17	***	0.06	0.18	***	0.06
California = 1	-0.07		0.17	-0.17	***	0.03	0.12		0.09
State Social Capital Index							-0.19	***	0.09
State Percent with Bachelors' Degree							2.86		2.08
State Gini Index of Income Inequality							-5.14		4.32
State Household Median Income							0.00	***	0.00
State Population Density							0.00		0.00
State Percent Hispanic, 2000				0.84	***	0.27	0.51		0.43
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US < 10 years				-1.53	**	0.72	-1.20	*	0.68
State % Hispanic * 1st gen, in US 10+ years				-0.96		0.64	-0.78		0.63
Constant Term				-0.26		0.19	3.11		2.11
Pseudo R-Squared	0.05			0.05			0.05		
F-test - Contextual Variables							118.00	***	

\*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$     \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$     \*  $p \leq 0.10$

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