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The 2024 Presidential Election Through Latino Lenses: Priorities and Vote Choice

Abstract: This paper examines the Latino vote in the 2024 U.S. Presidential election. We examine the factors that were most important for Latino voters and investigate how these shaped their candidate choice. Specifically, we argue that it is important to explore the demographic heterogeneity *within* the Latino category, as well as to explore the various issues that different subsets of the group prioritize. In doing so, we focus on differences by gender and socioeconomic status and explore how those impacted vote choice in the 2024 election. We rely on data from Texas and nationwide to examine these differences. We find that Latino men were more likely to vote for Trump compared to women. Similarly, we explore the role of issue prioritization, finding that Latinos who prioritize various economic issues and immigration were more likely to vote for Trump. On the other hand, Latinos who prioritize abortion were more likely to vote for Harris. We also find notable differences in how issue prioritization worked distinctively for women, men and those with and without a college degree. This paper underscores that Latinos are not an ideologically cohesive group and that the label of "Latino" should not operate to homogenize the group's multifaceted interests. Instead, it gives us a better understanding of which specific issues were salient for different segments of the Latino community in 2024, and how these worked in particular ways to drive presidential candidate choice.

Keywords: Latino voters; 2024 presidential election; gender; education; political issues; political behavior

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1 Introduction

Undoubtedly, Latinos have become a critical segment of the electorate. In 2024, an estimated 36.2 million Latinos were eligible to vote as of the 2024 election (Krogstad et al. 2024). In the lead-up to the election, Latinos' partisan and candidate preferences were widely discussed, particularly due to President-Elect Trump's anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric, which were in contrast with the most pressing issues Latinos reported anecdotally or in surveys as their top political priorities. In the immediate aftermath of the presidential election, commentators, often citing exit polls, have speculated as to which candidate Latinos were more likely to support, how this differed from previous elections, and what this means about the Latino electorate.

In this paper, we take a deep dive and examine the Latino vote in the 2024 U.S. presidential election. In doing so, we pay close attention to the dynamics that shaped how Latinos perceived the sociopolitical climate in the run-up to the election. We examine the factors that were most important for Latino voters and examine how these factors shaped their candidate choice in the U.S. presidential election. The most common narrative that emerged in the aftermath of the election was the move of Latino voters toward Trump. This narrative often painted a homogenizing picture of the Latino community,[1] and even in some cases, blamed Latino voters[2] for the outcome of the election. While there is evidence that Latino voters did show increased support for Trump in 2024, we caution against narratives that present an oversimplified account. Instead, in this paper, we provide an empirically based assessment of Latino voters in the 2024 election. We examine the key factors that we argue allow us to understand *who, how, and why* Latinos either supported Donald Trump or Kamala Harris in the 2024 election. We assert that Latinos are a hetero-geneous community and should be treated as such. This election should serve as a reminder that Latinos are not an ideologically cohesive group and that the label of "Latino" should not operate to homogenize the group's multifaceted interests or to present a singular defining narrative. We argue that issue prioritization is an impor-tant avenue to understand the diverse desires and interests of the group, which ulti-mately shape their vote preferences and presidential vote choice. Furthermore, socioeconomic status and gender are two critically important demographic factors that shaped how Latinos behaved in the 2024 presidential election.

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1 https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2024/11/14/latino-voters-abandoned-democrats-for-trump-data-00189482. https://www.propublica.org/article/immigration-latino-trump-election-resentment-asylum. https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2024/11/04/latinos-decide-election-pennsylvania-00186534.
2 https://x.com/ElieNYC/status/1854025814603452667. https://x.com/DavidCornDC/status/1854033234708808162.

2 Political Attitudes – Stable or Shifting?

A long-standing debate in political science is whether Latinos are a segment of the electorate that can be persuaded by both parties, or whether their partisanship is more crystallized to support one party over another. While some research argues that due to their immigrant background, they do not strongly affiliate with a political party and their partisanship is less crystallized (Hajnal and Lee 2011), other research suggests that they do have inclinations leaning toward the Democratic Party (Sears, Danbold, and Zavala 2016). Historically, scholars have documented that Latinos have had a strong showing for some Republican candidates such as Bush in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections (Jones-Correa, Al-Faham, and Cortez 2018; Leal et al. 2005). Latino support for Republicans has increased in some elections but scholars have found it is not an indication that Latinos are abandoning their majority-level support for Democrats (de la Garza and Cortina 2007).

Latino partisanship has continued to be a topic of debate in recent elections. Some research has shown that it has remained stable and that the group has not become *more* Democratic in recent years (Hopkins, Kaiser, and Perez 2023), while other scholars claim that shifts toward Republicans among the group in recent elections suggest more durable changes (Fraga, Velez, and West 2025).

In this paper, we do not specifically address the partisanship debate. However, we offer a close view of the factors that shaped Latino vote preferences in the 2024 presidential election. This, we hope, can help demonstrate how shifts or movements toward either party may not always be the result of the same underlying reasons in each electoral cycle or political moment. Thus, we must carefully examine the heterogeneity of the Latino community and how movement in their vote choice can be indicative of distinctive elements that define the mosaic that encompasses the Latino community.

3 Issue Prioritization

Latino politics scholars have consistently demonstrated that issue prioritization is an important aspect of Latino vote choice. Specifically, attitudes on the issues of abortion, affirmative action, school vouchers, and government-funded health insurance have been shown to be associated with Latino partisan identification. Latinos who support easier access to abortion, support expanding affirmative action, are in favor of government health insurance, and oppose school vouchers are more likely to identify as Democrats (Alvarez and Bedolla 2003). Other research has shown that effective mobilization on the issue of immigration was particularly impactful for

Latino voters in their support of President Obama in the 2012 presidential election (Collingwood, Barreto, and Garcia-Rios 2014).

Economic evaluations have been among the most studied factors associated with presidential vote choice. Research indicates that incumbent parties benefit from a strong economy and are punished when perceptions of economic strength decline (Erikson and Wlezien 2012). Research on the impact of economic concerns on Latino political preferences in the 2000 election has shown that Latinos with more favorable views of the economy were more inclined to align with the Democratic Party, while those with more negative economic perceptions tend to identify with the Republican Party (Alvarez and Bedolla 2003).

Issue prioritization in the most recent presidential elections have been found to be impactful on Latino candidate favorability and vote choice. In 2020, different prioritization of COVID-19, as well as economic issues, drove Latino voter candidate perceptions in different directions. Latinos who prioritized the COVID-19 pandemic as the most important issue that needed to be addressed were significantly much more likely to favor Joe Biden (Ocampo, Garcia-Rios, and Gutierrez 2021). On the contrary, Latinos who felt that the economy was the most important issue were significantly more supportive of Donald Trump. These effects remained even after accounting for partisan affiliation, socioeconomic, and demographic factors (Ocampo, Garcia-Rios, and Gutierrez 2021).

In sum, Latino partisan affiliation and candidate choice appear to be driven by issues that are important to them. Given how salient issues of the economy and abortion were in the 2024 presidential election, we expect that diverging prioritization of these issues drove Latino political preferences and candidate choice in the election. Despite the economy's strong recovery during Biden's presidency[3] after the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, voters have consistently highlighted issues like the economy, taxes, inflation, and jobs as their primary concerns heading into the 2024 presidential election. This was largely due to high prices that directly affected their personal finances. Given that Latino voters consistently identified the economy as one of their top concerns during the campaign season, it's reasonable to assume that their perceptions of the economy and the prioritization of this issue significantly influenced their preferences in the 2024 election. We also expect that prioritizing legal access to abortion was a defining factor for Latino candidate choice in 2024. This is because since the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 the issue of abortion has emerged as a major priority for Latino voters.

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3 https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8xl5vnlzpwo. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/nov/02/joe-biden-economy-analysis.

4 Gender

Existing scholarly research suggests that Latinas and Latinos have different political attitudes. First, research suggests that panethnic identification and a desire to uphold their ethnic identity are more important for women than for men (Silber Mohamed 2015). While Latino men are more likely to become conservative with increased acculturation, Latinas are more likely to become more liberal (Bejarano 2014). Women are also more likely to endorse progressive policy positions compared to men, even when it comes to issues that are commonly perceived to be relevant to many members of the group, such as immigration. For example, Latinas are less likely to support restrictive immigration policies than men are (Corral 2024). Latinas also hold more liberal attitudes on other issues including military spending and the role of women in society. Some of these differences appear to be more apparent for some national origin groups of Latinas and Latinos (Bedolla, Monforti, and Pantoja 2007).

Considering gender-specific issues, Latinas are more likely to endorse modern and egalitarian gender norms (Bejarano, Manzano, and Montoya 2011; Montoya 1996), whereas men are more likely to hold sexist attitudes (Hickel and Deckman 2022). While sexism among all Latinos is associated with a greater likelihood of voting for Trump, sexism does not operate differently for men and women (Hickel and Deckman 2022). However, one area of similarity is that Latino men and women have similar preferences with regard to abortion (Holman, Podrazik, and Mohamed 2020).

Given the role that gender plays in shaping attitudes and behaviors among Latinas and Latinos, we expect gender to play an outsized role in the 2024 presidential election. First, as discussed above, given that Latinas and Latinos often hold different political attitudes, we expect that in the 2024 presidential election, Latinas and Latinos held different political priorities which shaped their electoral choices. Second, given the political context, including the gender of the candidates themselves, and the salience of certain issues such as abortion, we expect differences in vote choice between Latinas and Latinos.

5 Socioeconomic Status

Scholars argue that socioeconomic status plays an important role in political socialization and engagement, such that those with lower socioeconomic status (income and education) levels are less likely to be politically engaged (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995; Verba and Nie 1987). For Latinos, education has been associated with greater access to resources needed to engage in the political process (DeSipio 1998; Uhlaner, Cain, and Kiewiet 1989; Verba et al. 1993). Income has also been

associated with increases in both electoral and non-electoral participation (Hero and Campbell 1996). Thinking about the relationship between socioeconomic status and political attitudes more directly, early research has provided mixed evidence on the effects of income on party identification. Some early work has found that Latinos with lower levels of income are significantly more Democratic in identification than those with middle or high income (Cain, Kiewiet, and Uhlaner 1991). On the contrary, other research suggests that while income is not significantly associated with identifying with one party over another, Latinos with lower levels of educational attainment are more likely to be Democratic (Alvarez and Bedolla 2003). Considering the significant role prioritizing economic issues played in Latino voters' support for Trump in 2020 (Ocampo, Garcia-Rios, and Gutierrez 2021) and the continued focus on the economy among Latino voters heading into the 2024 election, we anticipate that socioeconomic status will influence Latino voters' choice of candidate in 2024. Since Latinos at the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum were most affected by the economic fallout after the COVID-19 pandemic and in the years that followed, we expect that those with the lowest socioeconomic status, as reflected by lower income and education levels, were the most likely to support Trump, compared to those with a higher socioeconomic status.

6 2024 Context

Overall, we argue that issue prioritization continues to be a key explanation of how Latinos make voting decisions. The top issues that defined the 2024 election dramatically impacted Latinos' vote choice, which, rather than suggesting a durable shift toward one party or another, suggests how Latinos are reflecting on the current political moment and making decisions based on their current realities. Rather than interpreting some of these choices as against their group interests, we also implore scholars and the public to think more broadly about what group interests mean for a heterogeneous group like Latinos.

To explore the relationship between sociodemographic factors, issue prioritization, and vote choice, we use several data sources. First, we explore how top issues have evolved for the group over time, from 2006 through 2020. This will provide some recent historical context for what issues have been important to members of the Latino community over time. To compile these descriptive statistics, we use data from the 2006 Latino National Survey, and the 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-election Studies. Second, we provide some unique context for Texas Latinos, through a survey collected right before the 2024 election, to explore the intersection of top issues by several sociodemographic factors. Then, we turn to national level data that was collected in August of 2024 to explore these factors among the community at a national level.

7 Campaign Focus

It is important to contextualize each election based on the issues each candidate emphasizes in their respective campaigns. In 2016, the election was primarily focused on immigration due to Trump's position on restrictive immigration and xenophobic rhetoric about immigrants from Latin America entering the United States. While Trump still maintains these anti-immigrant positions in 2024, we saw that in 2016 the Clinton campaign ran as the pro-immigrant candidate. This immigration appeal increased support for Clinton among Latinos who shared a sense of immigrant-linked fate (Gutierrez et al. 2019). However, other studies suggest that this hurt Democrats more than it helped them due to an increase in white voter backlash (Reny, Collingwood, and Valenzuela 2019). In 2020, both Biden and Trump framed the election about COVID and getting the U.S. out of a global pandemic. For many Latino voters, their concerns were focused on their immediate economic situation due to many COVID-19 closures and concerns about handling the COVID-19 pandemic (Ocampo, Garcia-Rios, and Gutierrez 2021). In 2024, the primary focus appeared to be on the economy and abortion rights. Inflation and high interest rates have been a concern in the United States, and Trump used this to his advantage. Immigration, while a hallmark of the Trump campaign, was not something that the Democratic candidates were running on. The Biden administration received a great deal of criticism regarding the number of migrants who had been entering the United States, and the perception from strategists was that a strong position on border security would be more helpful than discussing immigration reform and focusing on creating pathways toward citizenship. Because Democrats chose to strategically reduce their messaging on immigration, we see that immigration is not rated as a top concern for Latino Democrats as it is with Republicans.

8 Perspective of Issue Importance for Latinos

Given the importance of issues for the Latino community, we explore how issue importance has evolved for the group over time. While immigration was listed as a top issue by a large share of respondents in 2006 (29 %), immigration as a top priority for the group has fluctuated over time. It was less important throughout 2008 and 2012, but its importance surged again in 2016 and continued into 2020. Interestingly, the importance of the economy surged from 19 % in 2006 to a high of 87 % in the 2008 election. This is unsurprising given that the U.S. economy was at the beginning of an economic recession. While the importance of the economy decreased between 2012 and 2016, it slightly increased again in 2020 to 49 %. Healthcare as a top issue has also

Table 1: Top issues among Latinos, 2006–2020. 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS) and 2008–2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Surveys (CMPS).

	2006 LNS	2008 CMPS	2012 CMPS	2016 CMPS	2020 CMPS
Jobs/Economy/Wages	19 %	87 %	69 %	39 %	49 %
Immigration	29 %	16 %	15 %	30 %	34 %
Education	10 %	7 %	12 %	7 %	8 %
Healthcare	–	13 %	15 %	24 %	27 %
Iraq war	–	44 %			
Latino sample size	n=8,634	n=1,577	n=934	n=3,003	n=4,006

Note: 2008 and 2012 CMPS wording included: Jobs, Economy and Stock Market. 2016 CMPS question wording combined Wages with Jobs and Economy. 2008 CMPS wording allowed respondents to select up to two issues.

Table 2: Top 5 Issues Next President/ Congress Should Address, by Gender and College Education. Proyecto Latino Texas Likely Voter Survey fielded by YouGov (N = 652).

	All	Men	Women	Less than college	College
Cost of living/inflation	51 %	53 %	50 %	53 %	46 %
Health care costs	18 %	16 %	20 %	19 %	17 %
Jobs and the economy	31 %	37 %	27 %	31 %	30 %
Abortion/reproductive rights	28 %	20 %	35 %	28 %	29 %
Issues at the U.S.–Mexico border	18 %	18 %	18 %	20 %	11 %

Table 3: Presidential vote choice by gender and education. Proyecto Latino Texas likely voter survey (N = 652).

	All	Men	Women	Less than college	College
Democrat Kamala Harris	51 %	47 %	55 %	47 %	64 %
Republican Donald Trump	46 %	51 %	43 %	50 %	36 %
Other/No lean/Would not vote	2 %	1 %	2 %	3 %	0 %

grown in importance over time, rising from 15 % in 2012 to 27 % in 2020. In 2024, the economy was once again a key concern given the rise in inflation and cost of living in the United States (Tables 1–4).

9 Top Concerns About the 2024 Election

Proyecto Latino at UT Austin conducted a survey of 652 Latino likely voters in the state of Texas leading up to the election. While not a national study, this survey of

Table 4: Top issues facing the U.S. Today. YOUGOV/ Univision Survey Crosstabs by Gender (N = 1,100).

Main issue	Men	Women
Inflation	53 %	54 %
Jobs and the economy	48 %	40 %
Immigration	37 %	36 %
Abortion policy	26 %	35 %
The budget, taxes, and the federal deficit	31 %	23 %
Income inequality	18 %	14 %
Foreign trade	2 %	3 %
Healthcare policy, including Medicare and Medicaid	27 %	30 %
Social security	16 %	20 %
Gun policy	22 %	28 %
Climate change and the environment	25 %	27 %
Criminal justice reform	7 %	9 %
Terrorism	11 %	10 %
Housing and homelessness	24 %	32 %
Infrastructure and transportation	7 %	4 %
Education	13 %	15 %
Racism and race relations	14 %	13 %
LGBTQ rights	8 %	11 %
The drug war and the opioid crisis	14 %	14 %
COVID-19 Pandemic	2 %	3 %
Voting rights	11 %	8 %
Democracy	17 %	16 %
The conflict between Israel and Palestine	6 %	8 %
Crime	16 %	14 %
Other	2 %	2 %

registered likely voters in Texas can provide insight into the concerns of Latino voters in the 2024 election. In particular, focusing on Texas can help us evaluate the relative weight of an issue like abortion in a state where it is against the law in almost all circumstances. In addition, as it is a border state, focusing on Texas can also provide additional context with respect to immigration. This survey was fielded between October 25th and November 4th on YouGov's online panel. Respondents were able to complete the survey in either English or Spanish.

In this survey, we found that the three top concerns for Latino likely voters in Texas were the cost of living and inflation (51 %), jobs and the economy (31 %), and abortion/ reproductive rights (28 %). Issues at the U.S.–Mexico border and healthcare costs are tied for 4th top concern (18 %). While these issues are of concern to voters, we also find that not all voters were equally concerned with these issues. Below we examine the top issues by gender and education levels. Much of the media focus has discussed higher rates of Republican support among Latino men, and generally, in

the U.S. electorate, there has been a shift with more college-educated voters supporting Democrats over Republicans. Here we look at the breakdowns of these groups in the Latino electorate and see how the concerns of these groups may differ and how they may have impacted presidential vote choice in the 2024 election.

10 The Economy

In the Proyecto Latino survey, there were two economic priorities that respondents could choose. One was the cost of living / inflation, while the other was jobs and the economy. We see that men and women rank the cost of living and inflation similarly, with 53 % of men saying this is a top concern and 50 % of women saying this is a concern. Inflation is equally a concern for those who did not attend college (53 %), but is less of a concern for those with a college degree (46 %). Among men and women we see a larger split on jobs and the economy: 37 % of men cited this as a top concern, while 27 % of women said this is a top concern. Interestingly the numbers on this item are similar among both college (30 %) and non-college-educated Latinos (31 %). Even though the economy is doing well, many perceive high interest rates and inflation as a sign that the U.S. economy is struggling. Incumbent parties are penalized for poor economic conditions (Erikson and Wlezien 1999, 2012; Ramirez and Erickson 2014), and because Harris was Biden's Vice President, there was concern that the economy would not improve under a Harris presidency.

11 Abortion

This past electoral cycle, because of the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 and the strong Democratic performance during the 2022 midterms (Carson and Hitefield 2023; Kann et al. 2024), many thought that campaigning about reproductive rights would also be a sound strategy for Democrats. We see that abortion is a top concern for Latino voters in Texas, with 28 % of voters indicating this is a top issue. However, there is a very clear gender divide among those who list it as a top concern. Only 20 % of Latino men, compared to 35 % of Latinas, list reproductive rights as a top concern. There does not appear to be a big difference between college-educated and non-college-educated voters. Gender is playing a big role in this issue and is likely an important motivator in Latina support for Kamala Harris.

12 Immigration

In our sample, among all Latino likely voters in the state of Texas, 18 % said issues at the U.S.–Mexico border were a top concern. We do not see a gender split (18 % of both

men and women said this was a top concern), but we do see some marked differences between college-educated (11 %) and non-college-educated (20 %) voters. This contrasts with previous research that suggests Latinas have more positive immigration attitudes relative to men (Corral 2024). This may be because of the rhetoric claiming that immigrants are stealing jobs away from American citizens, and those without a college degree are more likely to view immigrants as an economic threat compared to those with a college degree. Furthermore, studies have found that saliency to immigrant identity may be weakening in the Latino community (Gomez-Aguinaga, Morín, and Sanchez 2023) and that in some cases, as Latino's social mobility increases, so does their immigrant resentment (Hickel, Oskooii, and Collingwood 2024) the lack of pro-immigrant emphasis from the campaigns coupled with weakening connections to immigrants and resentment in some cases may help explain why immigration did not motivate Latinos to vote for the Democratic candidate in 2024.

13 Vote Choice

While there is a large and significant gender gap in issue prioritization when it comes to abortion (15 % difference), the vote choice gender gap is about half this, with an 8 % difference between male support for Kamala Harris (47 %) and female support (55 %). When we look at net support for Trump among men and women, Latino men in Texas are slightly more likely to prefer Trump over Harris by a net +4 %. Trump's support among women, on the other hand, is net −12 %. While there are some clear differences among gender, we observe even larger differences in vote choice among those who did not attend college versus those who did attend college. Among those who did not attend college, Harris' support was 47 % compared to Trump's 50 %, resulting in Trump netting 3 % among non-college-educated Latino voters. However, among college-educated Latino voters Harris support was 64 % compared to Trump's 36 %, resulting in a net −28 % for Trump. The differences between college and non-college educated Latinos are very pronounced, much more so than what is seen among gender differences. An important aspect to consider is that as we discuss both gender and educational differences in voting is that Latinas are now more likely to attend college than Latino males (Sáenz, Ponjuán, and Figueroa 2023), and it will be important to disentangle the effects of both.

14 Multivariate Analysis

To further examine the impact of issue prioritization, gender, and socioeconomic factors on Latino voter candidate choice in the 2024 presidential election we rely on

data from the 2024 YouGov / Univision National Latino Survey. This national survey interviewed a representative sample of 1,100 Latino registered voters nationwide. It was conducted from August 10 until August 24. The survey was conducted by YouGov on behalf of Univision Noticias. This survey offers a unique opportunity to examine the political priorities of Latino voters given the large sample size and ample coverage of Latino voters nationwide. The survey includes a host of variables, such as demographic markers, partisan identification, gender, and place of residence. Most importantly, for our purposes, it asked respondents to report the top issues facing the U.S. at the present time.

Before delving into the multivariate analysis, we investigate the bivariate results for which issue respondents indicated was their priority during the 2024 election. We split these results by gender to explore potential differences between men and women. The top issue among men and women was inflation, which they rated similarly highly, at 53 and 54 %, respectively. Jobs and the economy is the second most important issue among both groups, although it is more often one of the top issues for men (48 %) than it is for women (40 %). Immigration is the third most important issue among both groups as well, with similar ratings of 36–37 %. However, the fourth most important issue is where there is some divergence between the two groups. For women, the fourth most important issue is abortion, which 35 % of women rate as a top issue. Interestingly, this percentage is similar to that in the Texas survey, even though Texas Latinas face a more immediate threat. For men, the fourth most important issue is the budget, taxes, and the federal deficit, which 31 % of men indicated was a top issue. Abortion is the sixth most important issue for men; 26 % of men rate it as a top issue. However, above the budget, taxes and the federal deficit, women are more likely to indicate healthcare policy, housing and homelessness, gun policy, and climate change as more important issues. Thus, while there is a fair amount of agreement between men and women on the importance of inflation, jobs / the economy, and immigration, there is less agreement on other issues.

In order to more thoroughly examine the role of issue prioritization vis-a-vis partisan affiliation, socioeconomic status, and gender, we model our key dependent variable *Trump vote* using logistic regression. To look at differences in support towards Trump among Latinas and Latinos we include a gender binary measure where *woman* takes the value of 1 for Latina respondents and 0 otherwise.[4] We also run separate models for Latinas and Latinos, which we detail below. We include a dummy variable for identification as a Democrat, which takes the value of 1 if respondents self-identified as Democrat and 0 otherwise. Independent is also

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4 The original item asked respondents what was their gender, with response options of man, woman, non-binary, other [open-ended].

measured through a dummy variable, where 1 stands for those who self-identified as Independent and 0 otherwise.

To account for household income, we rely on a 16-category item that assessed respondent's family household income in the past year, where 1 took the value of less than $10,000 a year and 16 took the value of $500,000 or more. We rely on a six-item categorical measure of education, which measures the highest level of education achieved by the respondent. The lowest value in this item is (1) having achieved less than a high school degree. The highest level is (6) having obtained a postgraduate degree. To account for religiosity, we include a measure of church attendance, which captures how often respondents attend mass or religious services. This 6-point item ranges from 1, representing attending religious services more than once a week to 6, representing never attending religious services. Age is measured through a 5-category item, where the first category ranges from 18-29 years old, and the fifth category is 65 years or older.

To tap into issue prioritization, we rely on an item that asks respondents to report the top issues facing the U.S. Respondents could select up to five issues. The most cited issues, in order of priority, were all related to the economy, such as inflation (53 %), jobs and the economy (43 %), immigration (36 %) and, abortion (31 %). Each of these are included as dummy variables if respondents chose these out of 24 possible categories, these received a 1, or a 0 otherwise.

The data includes a 3-point item to capture respondents' place of residence by type. This measure captures if respondents live in an urban place, a suburban area or a rural area. We include a dummy if respondents reside in suburban areas, and another dummy if respondents reside in rural areas. Living in urban areas is the omitted category. We account for country of origin, with dummy variables taking the value of 1 if respondents have Mexican origin, 0 otherwise. We include an additional dummy taking the value of 1 if respondents have Puerto Rican origin, 0 otherwise. Lastly, we account for nativity with a dummy variable if respondents were born outside of the United States.

We begin the multivariate analysis with our base model, column 1 from Table 5, where we predict vote for Trump as a function of only demographic variables. This model shows that women were less likely to vote for Trump. In addition, while higher levels of education are associated with a lower likelihood of voting for Trump, rising income is associated with a higher likelihood of voting for Trump. Similarly, as respondent age increases, individuals are more likely to report voting for Trump in 2024.

Model 2 includes relevant political covariates, including partisanship, national origin, whether the respondent was born abroad, and church attendance. Interestingly, with the inclusion of these covariates, the differences by socioeconomic status and age that were present in model 1 are no longer statistically significant. Democrats

Table 5: Vote Trump in 2024 U.S. Presidential Election. Base, political and issue models.

	Dependent variable: Vote Trump		
	Base **(1)**	**Political** **(2)**	**Issues** **(3)**
Woman	−0.368*** (0.137)	−0.448* (0.257)	−0.571** (0.273)
Education	−0.106** (0.053)	−0.120 (0.101)	−0.025 (0.109)
Suburban	0.206 (0.147)	0.001 (0.271)	0.114 (0.286)
Rural	−0.044 (0.244)	−0.305 (0.467)	−0.174 (0.503)
HH income	0.104* (0.062)	0.113 (0.114)	0.014 (0.124)
Age	0.155*** (0.050)	−0.006 (0.094)	0.002 (0.102)
Democrat		−5.415*** (0.309)	−5.061*** (0.322)
Independent		−2.074*** (0.333)	−1.928*** (0.362)
Church attend		0.202*** (0.074)	0.215*** (0.078)
Mexican		−0.220 (0.305)	−0.207 (0.324)
Puerto Rican		−1.003*** (0.387)	−0.889** (0.418)
Foreign born		0.277 (0.406)	0.078 (0.426)
Impt. of immigration			0.920*** (0.275)
Impt. of abortion			−0.757** (0.318)
Impt. of jobs			0.542* (0.280)
Impt. of taxes			0.446 (0.296)
Impt. of inflation			0.851*** (0.282)
Constant	−0.620** (0.262)	2.558*** (0.637)	1.169 (0.724)
Observations	919	902	902
Log likelihood	−609.842	−229.896	−205.790
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,233.683	485.793	447.579

Note: *$p < 0.1$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$.

and independents are significantly less likely to report voting for Trump. Church attendance is positively associated with voting for Trump. In addition, Puerto Ricans are less likely to report voting for Trump than Latinos from all other national origins.

Model 3 in Table 5 also includes respondents' top issues in the model, exploring the role that issue prioritization has on vote choice. Given that logistic regression coefficients are not directly interpretable in terms of magnitude, we also include Figure 1, which captures post-estimation min-max average marginal effects from our model.[5] While gender, partisanship, church attendance and Puerto Rican origin remain significant with all predictors included in the model, issues are also significant determinants of vote choice. Partisanship remains the most influential factor in

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[5] Identifying as a Democrat was the strongest predictor in the model, but it falls outside of the bounds of Figure 1. The scale reflected in Figure 1 allows us to better visualize the magnitude of the effects for the other predictors in the model. However, we have included a figure in the appendix that includes Democrat in the predicted probability plot.
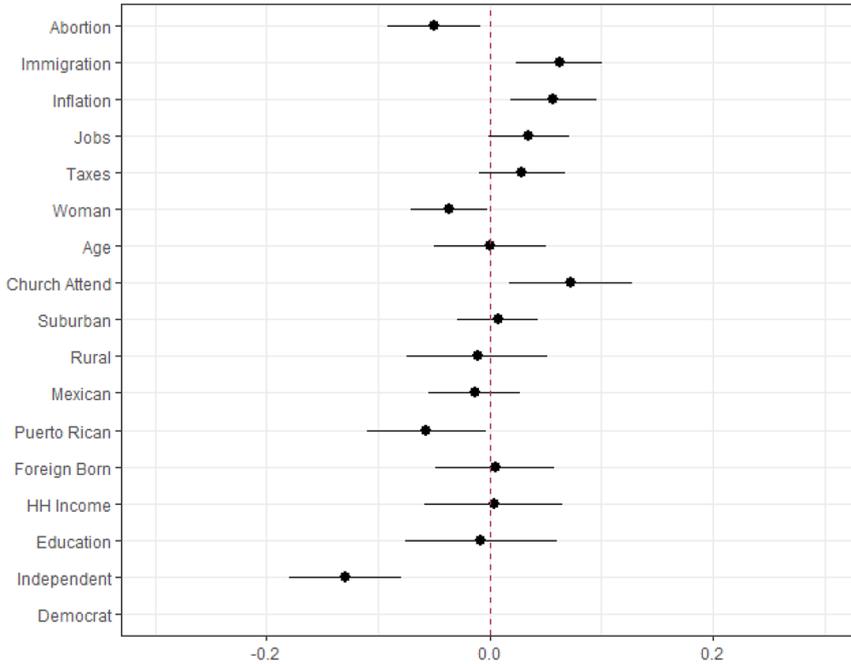
Figure 1: Average Marginal Changes in Predicted Probabilities of Vote for Trump. *Note: Source: 2024 YOUGOV/ Univision Survey. N = 1100. Predicted probabilities from Table 5, model 3. ** Identifying as a Democrat was the strongest predictor in the model, but it falls outside the bounds of Figure 1. The scale reflected in Figure 1 allows for better visualization of the magnitude of the effects for the other predictors in the model. The full figure that includes Democrat in the predicted probability plot can be found in the Appendix.

predicting support for Trump. Democrats are 75 % less likely to vote for Trump, while independents are 13 % less likely to vote for Trump. Women are less likely to vote for Trump than men by 4 %, whereas an increase in church attendance is associated with an 7 % increase in the likelihood of voting for Trump. The impact of issue prioritization is sizable in predicting voting for Trump. Respondents who rated abortion as one of their top issues are 5 % less likely to vote for Trump. On the other hand, prioritizing economic issues was an important motivation for voting for Trump. Respondents who say inflation is one of their top concerns are 6 % more likely to vote for Trump, while those who indicated jobs as one of their main concerns are 4 % more likely to vote for Trump. Immigration as an issue prioritization was also an important factor in predicting vote for Trump. Latinos who reported immigration as their top issue were 6 % more likely to vote for Trump.

To examine what factors shaped the candidate choice of Latinas, and for Latinos as well as by level of education, we run four split sample models predicting *Trump vote.* These are models 1–4 found in Table 6. Given the focus on gender differences and college versus non-college-educated voters, Figure 2 examines these subgroups in the Univision YouGov Latino survey. The panel on the left in Figure 2 examines Trump support among college and non-college-educated voters. Non-college educated Latinas are less likely to vote for Trump than non-college educated men. Listing abortion as one of their top issues leads the non-college educated to be less likely to vote for Trump. Non-college educated Latinos who reported that inflation was their most important issue were more likely to vote for Trump. Non-college educated who prioritized immigration as an issue were 8 % more likely to vote for Trump. On the other hand, college educated Latinos who prioritized jobs as a key issue to be addressed were more likely to support Trump.

While some factors appear to operate similarly for each gender group such as partisanship, there are differences in how issue prioritization operates for each of

Table 6: Vote Trump in 2024 U.S. Presidential Election. Split samples by gender and education.

|	Dependent variable: Vote Trump			
	College (1)	Non-college (2)	Women (3)	Men (4)
Woman	−0.260 (0.556)	−0.759** (0.332)		
Education			0.044 (0.160)	−0.032 (0.171)
Suburban	0.445 (0.591)	−0.007 (0.341)	−0.150 (0.437)	0.538 (0.419)
Rural	−0.384 (1.191)	0.006 (0.597)	−0.177 (0.677)	−0.313 (0.858)
HH income	−0.041 (0.246)	0.084 (0.154)	0.043 (0.185)	0.060 (0.186)
Age	−0.036 (0.212)	0.003 (0.122)	0.133 (0.151)	−0.037 (0.157)
Democrat	−5.282*** (0.723)	−5.207*** (0.393)	−5.565*** (0.498)	−5.305*** (0.531)
Independent	−2.923*** (0.797)	−1.551*** (0.437)	−1.719*** (0.516)	−2.220*** (0.585)
Church attend	0.289* (0.165)	0.191** (0.093)	0.208* (0.116)	0.204* (0.119)
Mexican	−0.278 (0.609)	−0.206 (0.395)	0.024 (0.484)	−0.457 (0.483)
Puerto Rican	−1.352 (0.921)	−0.756 (0.512)	−0.531 (0.637)	−1.276* (0.659)
Foreign born	−0.190 (0.801)	0.308 (0.523)	0.660 (0.585)	−0.641 (0.763)
Imp. Immigration	0.176 (0.582)	1.125*** (0.333)	−0.218 (0.440)	2.001*** (0.420)
Impt. of abortion	−0.367 (0.682)	−0.865** (0.372)	−1.330*** (0.484)	−0.562 (0.464)
Impt. of jobs	1.169* (0.637)	0.365 (0.331)	0.301 (0.418)	0.665 (0.415)
Impt. of taxes	0.975 (0.644)	0.280 (0.345)	0.522 (0.455)	0.363 (0.444)
Impt. of inflation	0.689 (0.586)	0.763** (0.331)	0.099 (0.435)	1.688*** (0.436)
Constant	1.077 (1.554)	1.226 (0.805)	1.178 (1.089)	0.468 (1.050)
Observations	266	636	472	430
Log likelihood	−52.181	−146.996	−97.107	−93.499
Akaike Inf. crit.	138.361	327.992	228.213	220.998

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.
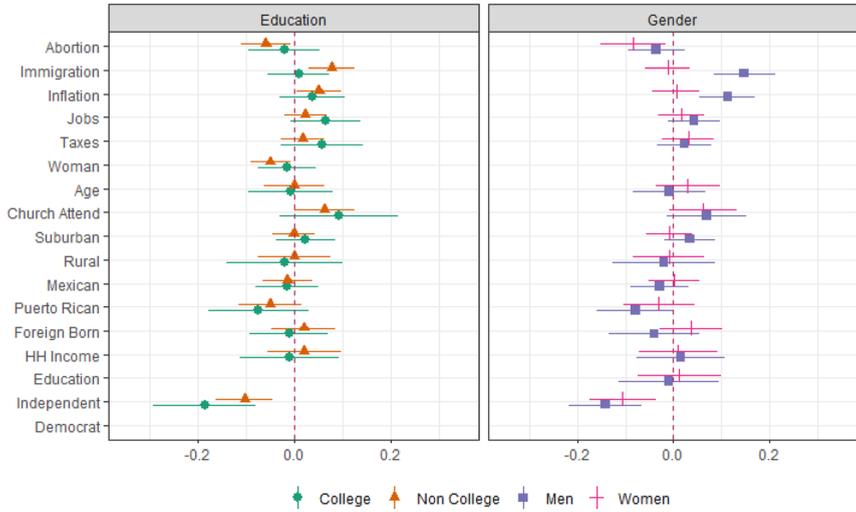
Figure 2: Average marginal changes in predicted probabilities of Vote for Trump. Education and gender split samples. *Note: Source: 2024 YOUGOV/ Univision Survey. N = 1,100. Predicted probabilities from Table 6, models 1–4. ** Identifying as a Democrat was the strongest predictor in the model, but it falls outside the bounds of Figure 2. The scale reflected in Figure 2 allows for better visualization of the magnitude of the effects for the other predictors in the model. The full figure that includes Democrat in the predicted probability plot can be found in the Appendix.

the two groups. Listing inflation as a top issue appears to have different effects for men and women. Men who consider inflation as one of their top issues are 11 % more likely to vote for Trump. Men who consider jobs as their main issue are 4 % more likely to vote for Trump. Men who reported prioritizing immigration as an issue were 15 % more likely to vote for Trump. These three issues, however, do not reach significance in predicting Trump vote among Latinas, and the point estimates are close to 0. On the other hand, when women list abortion as a top issue, they are 8 % less likely to vote for Trump. We do not find a statistically significant effect for abortion issue importance among men.

15 Conclusions

Our results showcase some of the factors that were important in shaping vote choice among Latinos in the 2024 election. Ultimately, we argue that it is essential to understand the complexities of the Latino community and how they view different issues to fully understand the motivations behind their vote choice. Exploring how issue prioritization has evolved over time, the economy continues to be a top issue

among Latinos. While other issues have been important, the economy continues to be prioritized among the largest segment of Latinos.

To explore what motivated Latino vote choice in the 2024 election, we present results from two surveys that were conducted before the election. Specifically, we focus on differences by gender and socioeconomic status. The first survey, a national study, conducted a few weeks before the election, showcases how Latino voters view key issues in a specific context. The second survey, focusing on Texas, provides us with a better understanding of whether there are any differences in public opinion toward issues such as immigration and abortion, which may not be as easily visible in national-level data.

Evidence from the Texas data provides a number of insights. Abortion is an issue where there is an immediate threat to women in Texas, whereas the threat may be less pronounced in other parts of the country. While abortion is more important to women than it is for men, we find that Texas Latinas do not differ from Latinas across the country in their prioritization of abortion as a political issue. Furthermore, as Texas is a border state, it also provides a unique perspective into public opinion on immigration at the border. Specifically, this allows us to explore the attitudes of Latinos who may support greater immigration enforcement. Individuals who have less than a college degree are more likely to view immigration and the border as an important political issue than those with a college degree, therefore suggesting that those of lower socioeconomic status may view this as more of a threat.

Furthermore, we explore differences in the role of gender, socioeconomic status, and issue prioritization at the national level. More directly, we measure the relationship between the above-mentioned predictors and the likelihood of voting for Trump in the 2024 election. While those with higher incomes are more likely to vote for Trump, these differences are no longer statistically significant once partisanship, national origin, and church attendance are taken into account. However, gender remains statistically significant; Latinas are less likely to vote for Trump, even after taking into account other relevant predictors. Considering the role of issue prioritization, those who prioritize jobs or inflation, as well as immigration as top issues, are more likely to vote for Trump, whereas those who prioritize abortion are less likely to vote for Trump.

This paper has shown evidence that issue prioritization continues to be an important factor in shaping Latino candidate choice well beyond the traditional factors (i.e. partisanship.) More importantly, the paper provides evidence that Latino voters' perceptions of economic factors – whether they are based on actual conditions or perceived – play a significant role in shaping their voting decisions. Although aggregate indicators suggested the economy was performing relatively well during the 2024 presidential election, Latino voters remained highly concerned about it. Furthermore, those most worried about inflation and job security were notably more

likely to support Donald Trump. Specifically, the significance of inflation and job-related concerns were strong predictors of Trump support among Latino men.

Similarly, we find that issue prioritization on two other issues: abortion and immigration, drove candidate choice among Latinos in the 2024 presidential election. Latinos throughout the nation felt the impact of the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in distinct ways, as some states moved to rapidly enact abortion restrictions whereas other states moved quickly to expand access and/or enshrine access to abortion in their state constitutions. In general, Latinos for whom abortion was one of the most important issues heading into the election were more likely to support Kamala Harris. Specifically, this issue galvanized Latinas and drove them to prefer Kamala Harris. This finding supports earlier work that has shown that Latinas tend to have distinct preferences to Latinos. Although Latino men and women have been found to have similar preferences with regard to abortion (Holman, Podrazik, and Mohamed 2020), we have uncovered that this issue isn't as equally motivating in support of certain candidates. The issue is especially motivating for Latinas (and not Latinos).

Immigration, although a rallying issue for Latinos in certain contexts (Pantoja, Ramirez, and Segura 2001; Zepeda-Millán 2017), has varied in its importance over time. It is also an issue with different underlying dimensions. Perhaps more than any other group, Latinos are sensible to the complexity of the issue. In the Texas Proyecto Latino survey, 68 % of Latinos reported that they preferred a balanced approach to the issue of immigration, one that focused on border security, protected Dreamers, and provided a pathway to citizenship. The remaining 32 % reported wanting only an enforcement approach that focused on border security. This suggests that Latinos view the issue of immigration through multiple perspectives, and this ultimately shapes their perceptions toward candidates who may propose immigration-related policies. At the same time, distinct segments of the Latino community view this issue in a different light, and our paper shows evidence of this. In the Texas data, we found close to a 10-percentage point gap in the differences between Latino college graduates and those without a college degree on the importance of border security. While we found that Latinos who prioritize the issue of immigration were more likely to support Donald Trump, we also found that this was a particularly important issue in the support of Latino men for Trump, and also those without college degrees.

The 2024 presidential election ultimately served as a referendum on the economy and the policies of the incumbent administration. Kamala Harris struggled to fully distance herself from the Biden administration, and many voters anticipated that her economic policies would largely mirror those of her predecessor. While the Biden administration passed the Inflation Reduction Act and the economy showed strong job growth, the lingering effects of inflation were still being felt. Moreover, the Federal Reserve did not lower interest rates until September 2024, which further

fueled economic concerns. The economy, thus, proved to be a much more salient issue than abortion.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump effectively reminded Latino voters of the strong economy during the early years of his presidency and persuaded many that he could lower prices and stabilize the economy. Like much of the electorate, regardless of the validity of these views, Latino voters formed durable opinions based on these two key dimensions – economic performance and stability – and those opinions remained largely unchanged throughout the election cycle.

In the end, we cannot determine how lasting the shifts in support for Trump or Republican candidates among Latino voters will be. However, it is clear that various segments of the Latino community were drawn to support Donald Trump for a range of reasons. While some might consider this as going against the group's interest, such an assumption falls into the overgeneralization pitfall that all Latinos have similar interests and care equally about the same issues. The study of the Latino community and its voting behavior warrants the same level of attention and consideration as we give to the broader electorate.
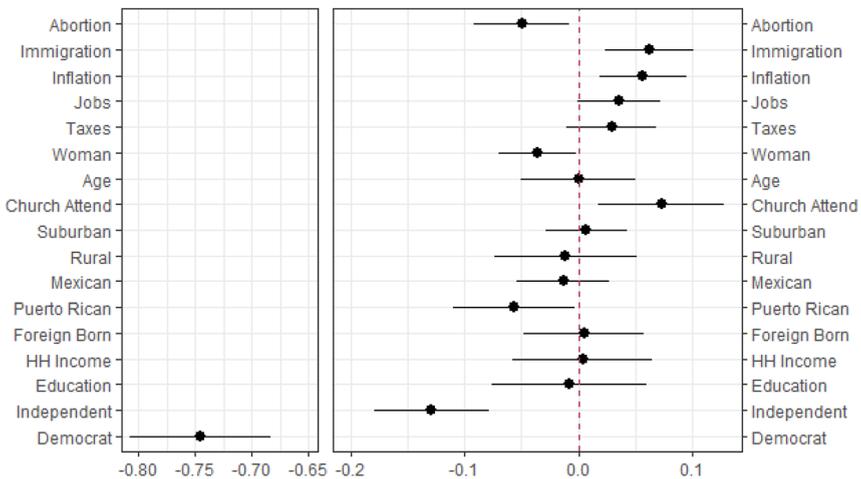
Appendix

See Figures A1 and A2.

Figure A1: Average marginal changes in predicted probabilities of Vote for Trump. (Full predicted probabilities, Model 3, Table 5).
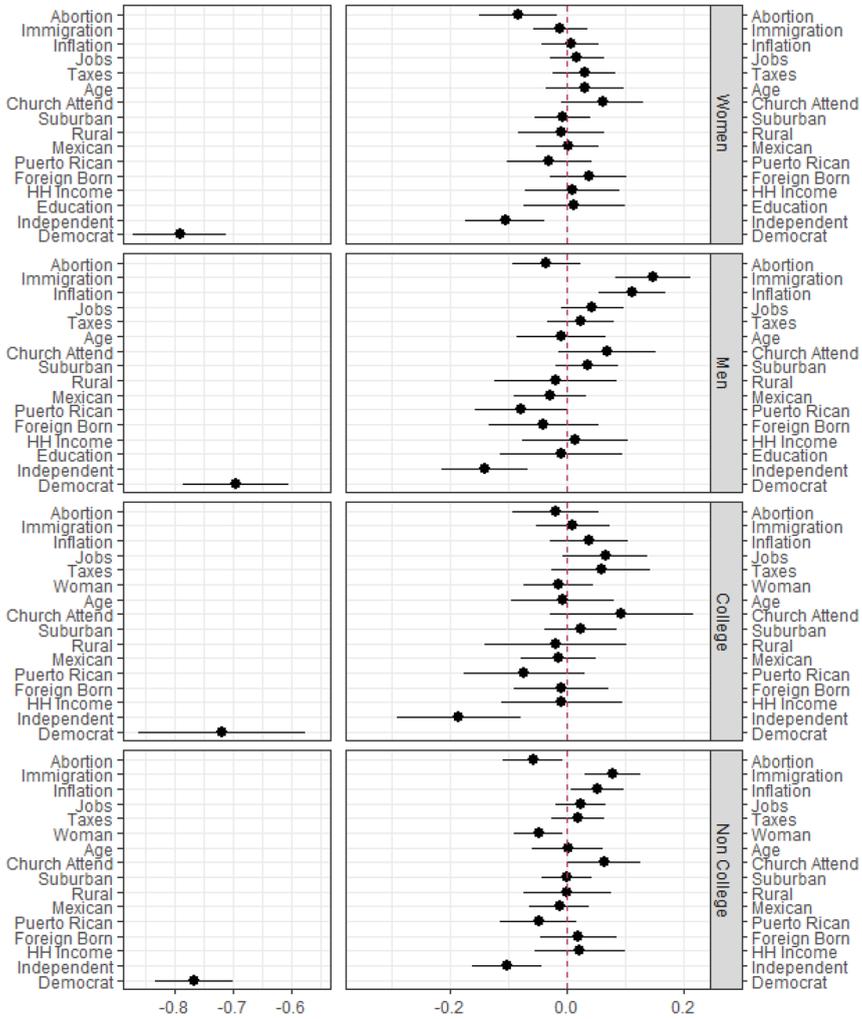
Figure A2: Average marginal changes in predicted probabilities of Vote for Trump (Full predicted probabilities, Models 1–4, Table 6).

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