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**The Sociopolitical Challenges Facing the Assimilation and Acculturation of
Hispanics in the America's Multicultural Society**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in
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Abstract

The United States of America has always been the country of immigrants; it has received people from different ethnicities. Hispanics have been among those newcomers though their presence in the land has marked a precedent in the American history. At that time many theories has emerged to facilitate immigrants' inclusion in the US society. The theme of this paper analyzes how researchers often disagree over the incorporation's theory that better describes Hispanic presence in the United States. They believe that all immigrants ought to leave behind all traits of their culture and change toward the culture of the mainstream, while Hispanics' continued attachment to their culture of heritage has caused troubles, and doubts have appeared about their acculturation in the country. Such status is well analyzed in the present dissertation through specific statistics that express Hispanics' social and political engagement. For the first domain, the work clarifies how their educational, intermarriage, and cultural enclaves' position stand in front of Latinos intergradations in the host society reinforcing by that their acculturation. For the second domain, this research evaluates Hispanics' inclusion in the political life of the United States and which in part strengthen their assimilation. The role that has been performed by this minority in the US elections, precisely in both presidential elections; 2008 and 2012, has revealed other facts about Hispanics assimilation in addition to the impact they can experience over politics allowing them either to transform or to dominate the US day to day life.

ملخص

لطالما كانت الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية قبلة للمهاجرين، فقد استقبلت أناسا من مختلف الأعراف. كان اللاتينيين من بينهم إلا أن تواجدهم في المنطقة أحدث سابقة في تاريخ الولايات المتحدة. في ذلك الوقت ظهرت العديد من النظريات قصد تسهيل عملية ادماج المهاجرين في المجتمع الأمريكي. يحلل موضوع هذه الدراسة اختلاف الباحثين حول نظرية الادماج الأنسب لوصف تواجد اللاتينيين في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. فهم يعتقدون أنه ينبغي على كل المهاجرين التخلي عن كل ما يربطهم بثقافة بلدانهم و المضي نحو اعتناق ثقافة البلد المضيف، لكن ارتباط اللاتينيين المتواصل بميراثهم الثقافي القديم أحدث ازعاجا وشكوك حول بداية عملية تبادلهم الثقافي في البلاد. هذا الوضع حل بطريقة جيدة في هذه المذكرة من خلال احصائيات محددة تصف حالة اللاتينيين الاجتماعية و ارتباطاتهم السياسية. بالنسبة للمجال الأول، يوضح هذا العمل حالة اللاتينيين في التعليم و الزواج بالإضافة الى مقاطعاتهم الثقافية في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، و كيف لهذه العوامل أن تقف في وجه محاولاتهم نحو الاندماج في المجتمع الأمريكي، والتي بدورها تساهم في عملية تبادلهم الثقافي. أما بالنسبة للمجال الثاني، فالبحث يقيم اندماج اللاتينيين في الحياة السياسية الأمريكية و الذي من شأنه أن يقوي عملية الاندماج. فالدور الذي لعبته هذه الأقلية في الانتخابات الأمريكية و خاصة في الانتخابات الرئاسية سنة 2008 و 2012 يكشف حقائق أخرى حول اندماج اللاتينيين، بالإضافة إلى التأثير الذي يمكن أن تمارسه هذه المجموعة في المجال السياسي الأمريكي، و الذي يتيح لها فرصة تغيير الحياة اليومية للولايات المتحدة الأمريكية أو السيطرة عليها.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|-------------|---|
| ACA | Affordable Care Act |
| DaCa | The Deferred action for Children arrivals |
| ELLs | English Language Learning students |
| MBK | My Brother Keeper |
| U.S | United States |
| USA | United States of America |
| WASP | White Anglo Saxon Protestant |

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Introduction

Since its discovery, America became the land of homogeneous population. Throughout its history, millions of people all over the globe have left their homelands to explore the new world and start a living in that rich fertile land, which provided many opportunities for better life. Although the reasons behind coming to the United States differed from one group to another, they have collectively formed a multiracial society. The fortune found in America made it the target of many European conquests, especially those of the Spanish empire which began to settle in 1492 and continued for over three centuries. It colonized large areas of what is today the American southwest and west coast, including present day California, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas. During the colonial period, a total of 18.6 million Spaniards settled in the Americas and a further 3.5 million migrated during the post-colonial era composing of what is today known as Hispanic population. Hispanics or Latinos have been the fastest growing group in the United States, their rapid evolution and diversity seemed to change the United States make up.

Hispanics as a minority in the USA, they suffer from many problems in the host society where they are lost between two different countries, two different cultures and two different languages. And as a wise decision, it becomes necessary to adjust with the new society. In accordance to the system and organization of the country, Hispanic immigrants are required to assimilate in the community as much as possible to achieve better status in most fields. Based on different theories generated to help immigrants in integrating into the host society, American government had been inspired by the desire to make homogeneous society through assimilation and melting pot. Therefore, Hispanics like any other ethnic group in a host country have attempted to go through the way of assimilation where they have been entailed to abandon their cultural traits and change their attitudes toward new ones more acquainted with the American community. Hence, the process of assimilation has never been an easy

task. They have faced many impediments that have shattered their desires to incorporate into the American society. Alternatively, Latinos' huge population in addition to their tenacity on the cultural heritage have offered opportunities and new longing for acculturation empowered mainly by the miscarriage to melting in the mainstream culture.

The Hispanics situation has been substantiated to be a precedent that has never happened in the United States of America. The demographic power this population has possessed since their arrival to the American land has hampered the ethnic group from integrating in many social fields but also, it has donated the chance to be recognized in a large society as well as the prospect to quit the ceiling that has been put on immigrants for many decades. These circumstances lead to the following questions: Do Hispanics assimilate or acculturate in the United States? How can social aspects influence Hispanics acculturation? What is the relationship between American politics and Hispanics' assimilation and acculturation?

This study will explore the situation of Hispanic immigrants in the United States as well as the patterns they follow to assert their presence in their new country. While they were obliged to assimilate in a way that classifies them with other minorities, Hispanics' speedy growth can allow them achieve social and political recognition. Thus, the work also examines the social state of Latino immigrants including the investigation in an important sector in the society which is education. Based on the results, an analysis is made aiming at finding a way to scrutinize the assimilation or the acculturation of Hispanics in US society. Besides, the study presents the debate about Latinos assimilation or acculturation taking into consideration results from other vital domain like in politics answering the questions: what is the role of Hispanics in US politics? And to which extent this group can impact politics? While most importantly; what are the conclusions that can be drawn about Hispanics incorporation in USA as far as the political sector is measured?

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first one is entitled “Incorporation of Hispanics into the American Society: Assimilation or Acculturation”. It intends to put the subject in its historical and theoretical framework because it includes information about the history of Hispanics in the United States, their first arrivals in the country, where they are situated in addition to their demographic characteristics. The theoretical part encompasses the explanation of old theories about immigrants’ incorporation including a detailed description of both assimilation and acculturation. In the second chapter which is entitled: “Social Factors Challenging the Hispanic Assimilation and Empowering their Acculturation in the US society”, aside from Hispanic social life in USA is depicted as an attempt to clarify the conditions facing the assimilation or the acculturation of the group. “Does Hispanic Political Participation Empower their Acculturation or their Assimilation in the US Society?” is the title of the third chapter where Hispanic political status is explained, shedding light on two significant elections in Hispanics’ political life in the United States.

As far as the methodological framework is concerned, the issue in question is closely associated with the history of the Hispanic population in the United States. In this regard, the historical method is more than necessary, since, it will extremely aid in tracing the origins of Hispanics in the United States, the different stages they go through in their presence in the country in addition to their social and political development. In reading, reporting and portraying facts about Hispanic life in USA and analyzing statistics from their actual participation in both society and politics, it is essential to adopt the descriptive, qualitative and quantitative methods in addition to discourse analyses and speeches, as the nature of the topic requires a detailed exploration and deep investigation, to reveal the target audience’s variety of positions. Consequently, the use of a mixture of methods is inevitable with the overcome of the qualitative approach.

While discussing Hispanic's situation in the United States, opinions are divided in two stands. The first one has entailed that Hispanics remain a minority group in the United States despite of all the privileges they have, so that, they should be treated the way other minorities used to be treated with. They ought to assimilate in the country, take off all the traits of their culture of heritage and get away from all their beliefs and traditions. Whereas, the second one reveals that Hispanics are establishing a new culture in the US society while protecting their old identities and coming up with the way of life they used to in their old countries. The latter is empowered by the fear from Hispanics influence in America that may help in the emergence of culture equal to the US one.

Hispanics were famous of presenting the paradox in the United States, their assimilation and acculturation were a subject of debate since their first presence in the country. Their presence in schools, their eagerness to study, the intermarriage with white Americans as well as their strong participation in politics reveal a lot of evidences confirming their assimilation. However, the conservation of Spanish language, practicing bilingualism in addition to maintaining small Hispanic communities in different parts of America, indicate that Hispanics are tracing their footsteps toward being an influential group in American society. They are changing American culture which strongly indicates acculturation.

Statistics, findings, and all the gathered information prove that achieving conclusion about Hispanics assimilation and acculturation in the United States is not an easy task. Its complexity is highly related to the differences which exist within the group. Hence, the degree of Hispanics' assimilation differs from one region to another and from one sector to another. When acculturation appears as a result of incomplete assimilation and it also varies from place to another. But, the impact of Hispanics over the US society cannot be ignored; their existence can be noticed in each part of the country's territories. They are shaping the future of America.

For the purpose of being more accurate, the research needs various authentic references as a basis of the enduring study. It is important to state a sort of literature review by mentioning some previous works that investigated the subject of sociopolitical challenges facing the assimilation and acculturation of Hispanics in the American society. Many articles and books have tackled the subject of Hispanics in the United States. For example; Marta Tienda and Faith Mitchell in their book "*Hispanics and the future of America*" presented details about the complex story of Hispanics in America. Furthermore, the book provided a clear description and explanation of the contours of this population from many perspectives including history, education, family, economy, and political engagement. Also, the writers showed their uncertainty about the future of Hispanics in the United States and the ability of Hispanics to improve their situation by providing invaluable information to explore those issues.

Hellen.G McDonald and Pallassana. R Balgopal in their article "*Conflicts of the American Immigrants: Assimilation or Retain Ethnic Identity*" they emphasized on the difficulties facing immigrants when they tried to assimilate into the American society and which are caused by racism and discrimination. Also, they presented many theories applied by immigrants to integrate in the new life, with providing the issues and the obstacles included in each theory. Within the same context, "*Latinos in The United States in 2000*" is an article written by Silvia A. Marotta and Jorge G. Garcia, in which they shed the light on the dramatic growth rate of Latinos in the United States , in addition to presenting the challenges and opportunities resulted by this fast demographic development.

In her article, "*The History and Experience of Latinos /Hispanics in the United States*", Ana Maria Pineda discussed the history and the diversity of Hispanics in America. She also explained the religious problems and their effect on Hispanics' life. Moreover, she highlighted some obstacles in the Hispanics' integration process with the provision of interesting statistics.

Chapter One

Incorporation of Hispanics into the American Society: Assimilation or Acculturation

Throughout its history, the United States of America has always been a nation of immigrants. It is a country of people from different ethnicities and cultures who form together a heterogeneous society. Immigration becomes a significant part in the United States demography, whose population has grown to 300 million people. The nation's inhabitants are composed almost entirely of immigrants; they began arriving since the early 1500's and continued to arrive five hundred and fifteen years later. Those newcomers have gone through many different phases; the latest one encompasses the years since 1960's and it is considered as a period of shift in the immigrant's origin countries from Europe, passing through Asia to reach Latin America. They came to the American shore to escape famine, poverty, political and religious persecution, in search for opportunities to fulfill the needs either for themselves or their families.

Hispanics are among the foreigners who choose to immigrate to the United States. Moreover, they are the oldest ethnic group to inhabit much of the American land establishing firm ties traced in the history of the nation. Because Spain has colonized large areas of what is today the American Southwest and West Coast, many have Native American ancestry. Later, Hispanics have been subsequently settled in the country through large waves of immigrants. They descend from many Latin American countries forming the largest and the fastest growing group in the country. Although Hispanics do not constitute a single racial group; there are black Hispanics, white Hispanics, and Asian Hispanics. Their number surpassed 48 million in 2009 (Wilson et al. 84); their rapid growth gives strong evidence that Hispanics or Latinos are an exception minority in the American history.

Immigration has been a major contribution to the growth in the Latino population, for that their integration in the US society has opened the door to a long debate for many years, and

has allowed many sociologists to interfere and investigate the incorporation of Hispanics into the new American society. This issue has led to the appearance of different theories whose validity has been tested by employing them within minor groups in the United States. The assimilation has always been a long topic for discussion since it is seen as the most appropriate method as well as the most difficult one; transforming foreign-born to native-born population with all the characteristics that have just typified Americans, has never been an easy task.

The immigrants' second challenge in their new country is acculturation. It encompasses different phenomena which are the result of all contacts between groups from various cultural backgrounds. The changes that subsequently appear in the original culture of the groups are also involved in the process. So that, both immigrants and the native inhabitants go through a development toward exchanging values and beliefs in order to achieve peaceful living together. Through this chapter, an attempt is made to investigate the history of Hispanics and to understand the most important phases in their long history in a large country like the United States. In order to draw conclusions empowered by historical background, the information presented in this chapter are primarily relied on giving a good understanding about the theoretical approaches for assimilation and acculturation.

1.1. Hispanics Presence in the America's Multicultural Society

Hispanic's history in the United States is wide-ranging; covering more than four hundred years. Speaking about their historical background in the nation must begin by mentioning the successive conquests that invaded the continent few years after its discovery by Christopher Columbus in 1492 ("Spanish Colonization..." 1). Spanish people were the first Europeans to come and explore America. Their first landing was in 1513 by Spaniard Juan Ponce de Leon, after that, many other Spaniards explored the region and they were able to investigate half of the nation before the English colonization (Bannon 8).

Later on, many Spanish people preferred to settle in the discovered land. In the 16th century, about 240.000 Spaniards immigrated to America, in the 17th century, 500.00 emigrated to Mexico and Peru. In parallel, Spain brought African slaves into the Americas, they all met in the American land with the natives who were Amerindian inhabitants whose grandparents had migrated from Asia thousands years before. Moreover, during the Spanish Civil war and the Franco government, Spanish people chose the Spanish former colonies as political exiles and travelled to live there, of course America was their first target. The contact between those residents resulted in a new groups of people from mixed blood lived in Mexico, Central America, South America, the Caribbean and the United States (Pineda1).

In fact, immigration has been a very important concept throughout the United States' history. The land has received a huge number of immigrants from different parts of the world. According to Laid W.Bergad and Herbert S.klein, the Americas have been identified by two different kinds or categories of immigration. The first has been presented in the immigration of free workers who ought to travel to the Americas in search for good job status. The second largest part has been the forced immigrants or the slaves who were brought to the new land to be exploited in farming and other jobs. Slaves were numerically larger than free peoples' immigration in America, besides the country is famous for having a long history of debate and conflicts about slaves and slaves' issues (9).

Many years later and inspired by the American dream, Hispanics left the region of Latin America and migrated to the United States looking for better life. They have recognized that life in their countries was not that easy, inhabitants were suffering from poverty, economic troubles, and political conflicts. So, because of those differences between the South and the North, Latinos have moved to the United States and hoped to have better life, job opportunities, and constancy.

1.1.1 Hispanics' Population in the United States

Despite of the common history and the shared ancestral ties to Spain and Latin America in addition to the common ability to use the Spanish language, diversity is clearly apparent among Hispanics. It is true that those factors are highly contributed in reaching a level of cultural similarity, but they are not enough to eliminate the variety since the settlement of those people and their experiences as immigrants differed from each other and created different populations with distinct demographic characteristics related to Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and other Hispanic groups. Thus, Hispanics are of many races; all the complexities and obstacles that are faced in defining ethnicity are strongly represented in Hispanic population in the United States of America, this is mainly related to the flow of immigrants coming from Latin America and being mixed with Spanish speaking Caribbean countries. The blending of those ethnicities has resulted in what is called Hispanic population (Bean and Tienda 9). Regardless of their diversity, they have proved to be a demographic force in the American society via the continuous increase in number.

There has been a debate concerning the differences between the two terms; Hispanics and Latinos and their use in the American society. Hence a slight variance exists between them; both terms have been coined by the US government, exactly during Nixon's administration. The word Hispanic is more attached to a person whose first language is Spanish, his or her ancestry is related to one of these areas: Spain, Mexico, Central America and South America. Moreover, Hispanics are more likely to identify themselves with the Spanish culture and history, the name is used to depict the culture of the former Spanish colonies. Whereas, the term Latinos is limited to people who descend from Latin American origin and come to live in the United States, it is more referred to geography (Fernandez). Cafferty and Engstrom in 2002 have provided a definition to the term Hispanic by saying "the term Hispanic is used to describe people in the United States who are descended or have migrated from countries in

which Spanish is spoken. Because the term is rooted in the use of language rather than in race..." (qtd. in Houben 25). Though, the terms have always been used interchangeably.

Understanding Hispanic origins was the interest of many scholars, represented in several censuses. The problem of Hispanic origins was first issued in the 1970's census, since then, many questions were included in polls aiming at discovering the Hispanics' roots, such as: place of birth, the ability to use the Spanish language and the Spanish surname, which were used as indicators in identifying Hispanic population in early censuses. However, many modifications were added afterwards for the purpose of improving the quality of Hispanic origin data. The 2010 census provided a brief definition of Hispanic origins as "Hispanic or Latino refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race" (qtd. in Ernis et al. 2).

According to the 2010 census, 50.5 million were Hispanic residents in the United States, making up 16 percent of the population overall. This percentage was increased to 43 percent over a decade; Hispanic population increased from 35.3 million in 2000 to 50 million in 2010. However, this growth was differed by groups. On the one hand, the Mexican population had the largest numeric change, from 20.6 million in 2000 to 31.8 million in 2010. On the other hand, Puerto Ricans reached 4.6 million in 2010 after being 3.4 million in 2000 (Ernis et al. 2).

According to Census Bureau in 2006, the total of Hispanic population was 44.252.278 million. 64 percent are Mexicans, 9 percent are Puerto Ricans, 3.4 percent are Cubans, 2.8 are Dominicans, 7.6 percent are Central Americans, 5.5 percent are South Americans, in addition to other groups of Hispanics who represent 7.7 percent of the general population. Geographically, the majority of Hispanics is still occupying nine states which contain 76 percent of large, long standing Latinos communities; those states are: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New Mexico, New Jersey, New York and Texas, without ignoring

the fact that the number of Hispanic residents in other town has been growing. The Hispanics' presence in those nine states has never been in that intensity before the year of 2010; in 2000, 50 percent of Hispanics lived in California and Texas. This percentage decreased to 46.5 percent in 2010; and it could be justified by Hispanics' spread to the other towns. More precisely, Hispanics have been concentrated in some states where they have represented the large share of population, those states are: New Mexico, Texas, California, Arizona, and Nevada in which Latinos are more than one in four state residents. Earlier statistics are clarified in the following table numbered 1 (Passel et al. 2).

Table1

States with Largest Hispanic Share of Total Population 2010

| State | Hispanic Share |
|-------------|----------------|
| New Mexico | 46.3% |
| Texas | 37.6 |
| California | 37.6 |
| Arizona | 29.6 |
| Nevada | 26.5 |
| Florida | 22.5 |
| Colorado | 20.7 |
| New Jersey | 17.7 |
| New York | 17.6 |
| Illinois | 15.8 |
| Connecticut | 13.4 |
| Utah | 13.0 |

Source: Passel, Jeffrey S., et al. "50 Million Hispanics Account for More than Half of Nation's Growth in Past Decade." *Pew Hispanic Center* (March. 24, 2011).
Web. 14 Apr. 2017.

America is always known for its cultural diversity while, the rise of Hispanic population is totally different from any other minority group in the United States' history. Expectations deem that by the mid-century, one in four Americans will be of Hispanic descent, not only this, but also, the whites would be considered as minority by 2044, as it is declared by the

Census Bureau. The Hispanic population reached 58.2 million in 2015 according to new statistics by Business Wire which indicates an increase of 2 million during a year. Many scholars argued that Hispanics are shaping the future of the United States as far as the population's number is considered; their rapid growth allows them to interfere in all the domains, which pushes the scientists to highlight their important presence in economy, and politics of the United States (Klausner).

1.2. Theories of Incorporation about the terms “Assimilation” and “Acculturation”

Since the late 19th century, the majority of Western societies witnessed the phenomenon of immigrants or refugees. Those people chose the settlement in other countries searching for better life conditions in new prosperous societies that could offer more helpful opportunities. However, immigration has become a very serious and important issue that has required the interference of sociologists in an attempt to find solutions for many problems facing the immigrant groups as well as the natives. Undoubtedly, the most hotly debated issue related to immigrants all over the world is incorporation; how to involve those groups in the host society and what kinds of strategies that can be used in helping them adjusting within the new nation's way of living.

Immigrants' integration has been a source of conflicts and a divisive problem in many countries. Yet, the United States has never been an exception in which discussion has been made for many years on the status of those newcomers and on how they should be treated socially, economically, and politically, taking into consideration the native inhabitants' rejection of immigration on the first hand, and the immigrants' anticipation for justice on the other. “What happens when people meet” (qtd. in Gordon 60). Sociologists and cultural anthropologists described the situations when people from different ethnic origins met together and the results of that demographic confusion through two concepts; assimilation and acculturation.

Consequently, many theories have raised proposing ways of dealing with the newcomers; those theories have been also developed to analyze one of the most important ways which is assimilation. Some sociologists have classified assimilation as a means of integration; others have claimed that assimilation and acculturation are two synonymous terms since both concepts are applied to refer to immigrants' relations with the host country. Nevertheless, some scholars prefer integration to describe the social process of incorporation because it seems more generalized and more closed to adjustment, organization society and the relationship between immigrants and non-immigrants. Whereas, assimilation is more attached to physiological implication due to the sense of melting into the new environment and ignoring the immigrants' culture of origin while acquiring new social and cultural mores instead, which are better suited the composition of the new society. Bulcha **claims** that assimilation denotes an unintentional process of change towards homogeneity in which the dominant culture of natives is widely accepted by the immigrant groups who try to adopt the contemporary values spread around in the host society as quickly as possible. Integration instead includes the immigrants' possibility to live freely in new environment, participating actively in life and intelligently retaining their culture of origin (84-85).

1.2.1 Gordon's Definition of Assimilation

Assimilation theory was emerged in the early part of the 20th century to describe the way immigrants go through in their endeavor for incorporation into the host country to be more consistent with the dominant culture. Assimilation is a process through which groups from different backgrounds change their attitudes, values, and beliefs toward new ones more similar to the host society. In the most general terms, assimilation can be defined as the total disappearance, the decline, and the end of racial and cultural differences among peoples within the same society (Hirschman et al.159).

Milton Mayron Gordon; a famous American Sociologist was born in 1918, he has developed a theory of assimilation in his attempt to comprehend and explain the situation when people meet, in which he breaks out the process into seven sub processes. He constructed a typology of seven stages, each stage can occur at different degrees (Bakalian 36). Gordon, in his book “the Role of Race, Religion and National Origin” tries to describe the experiences of immigrants in the United States during the 20th century. He reached a summary which expresses his understanding of the progress of ethnic identity throughout the history of America, in doing so Gordon summarizes assimilation in stages which collectively make a complete assimilation only if the minority group members respectively go through all the phases. Some groups go through the entire process in which they follow all the types or stages to achieve a full Assimilation. However, others can achieve only some stages and they also can be considered as assimilated while those who are separated from all the previous stages are not assimilated yet into the dominant culture.

The very first assimilation’s stage by Gordon is “behavioral assimilation” which is also called assimilation. This stage encompasses the minorities’ beginning of change in their behaviors to achieve others more similar to the core culture starting from food habits, traits, and dress to the language. The second process is “structural assimilation” in which members of immigrants enter into the larger society via two sectors, primary and secondary. The immigrants should firstly integrate into the social life such as, institutions, workplaces, and schools in which the immigrant would be able to meet people and start social relationships like friendships and neighborhood with the members of the dominant society. According to Gordon, “structural assimilation” occurs when large scale relationships between the two groups take place which permit the immigrants to be more involved in the host society. The following type is “marital Assimilation”. Through this stage, intermarriage is occurring among groups across ethnic lines; it is termed amalgamation and is highly related to

“structural assimilation” since marriage is the result of the social relations that achieved in this type (Healey 47).

The fourth type is “identification assimilation”. The latter involves the development of people hood among inhabitants, which can be reached via race, religion, national origin, nationality, and identification with ethnic groups. The following stage is “attitude reception assimilation” during which immigrants can achieve a level of equality and acceptance from the host society’s inhabitants who change their attitudes into positive ones toward the new residents (Hashem 94). When the prejudice is illuminated in the host country, the discrimination also is becoming to be lost during the next sub process which is called “behavioral reception assimilation” where the behaviors of the segments are widely accepted by the natives. The last stage is “civic assimilation”, in which, no conflicts between the natives and minorities are taking place and a kind of collaboration is emerging within the society to achieve common goals and value premises (92-95).

Gordon identified three theories that can be helpful for both immigrants and minorities; they are primarily applied in the United States society. The first model is Anglo Conformity, under this model, all immigrants are required to ignore their cultural heritage and norms and adopt cultural institutions and beliefs which came from England based on the idea that the first immigrants to the United States were from England so that, all the other immigrants should follow their Anglo culture. Only those who succeed in adopting that culture can assimilate and be accepted within the society in addition to benefiting from all the privileges of Americans in their country (Healey 44). Segments were asked to attend schools to learn English language and everything related to WASP’s culture encompassing: customs, values, traits, and behaviors. Through following these patterns, immigrants would be able to enter to the social, economic, and political life. Unfortunately, many have refused to assimilate this

way in the American society thus; the expectations behind this theory were not fully accumulated in reality (Gupta 29).

The second theory is the “melting pot”. This perspective was viewed as more generous and idealistic than the Anglo Conformity. It is a process of different groups’ contribution in creating national culture and a new, unique society in a common region (Healey 44). The resulting culture should not belong to any groups’ previous culture. In other words, the fusion of many groups’ various cultures should generate a new one which is considered as common and general culture to which all the members of the community must assimilate (“Hispanic American ...” 50). The concept has been first introduced to the American audience by the playwright Israel Zangwill in his 1990 play. Furthermore, the theory has come into consideration in the United States during the 1960’s after omitting the immigrants’ quota system and the success of African Americans in achieving civil rights. Then again, the “melting pot” is a theory and its actual practice in real contexts varies from its theoretical aspects so, some immigrants have refused to leave behind their cultural heritage and way of life while feeling reluctance to only one unique culture; a national culture (Gupta 27-28).

The Third model, “cultural pluralism” has existed earlier in the United States where it was imposed and practiced by ethnic groups in which minorities formed cultural enclaves and they participated normally in the US civic life; they had their own schools, own churches and at the same time, they were identified as American citizens. Yet, other minority groups were not permitted into the “melting pot” theory; such as: African Americans and American natives because they were obliged to develop their own cultural institutions. In 1915 Horace Kallen, through his articles, argued that “cultural pluralism” better works with the American diverse society (qtd. in “Hispanic American ...” 50).

1.2.2. Park's Definition of Assimilation

Robert Park was a member in a group of scholars who contributed in establishing sociology as a discipline on its own in the United States in the 1920's and the 1930's. Park developed the "race relation cycle" which referred according to him to a predictable set of phases that minority groups go through when they came into contact with each other. He believed that when people from different ethnic groups first interacted together, conflict and competition characterized their relation. Ultimately, the process or cycle moved toward assimilation or "the interpenetration and fusion" (Healey 445).

Park had outlined four stages to what he had called "race relation cycle": contact, competition, accommodation, and assimilation; when people had come into contact with each other, they might fall in competition which could lead to conflicts and then, resulted in accommodation appearing in some degrees and ending up at assimilation. However, Park's theory was criticized since it was not readily applicable to many groups; not all groups can succeed in going through the cycle and completing the four stages (Bakalian 34).

Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess define assimilation as follows: "assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life" (qtd. in Gordon 62). The definition suggests that assimilation is a process through which people forget about their culture of origin and try to incorporate into new environment by adopting the natives' way of life. The definition also includes the concept of acculturation in the expression "sharing their experience and history" (Gordon 62).

Arnold Green has discussed assimilation shedding light on Park and Burgess's definition of the concept. He notes that newcomers could acquire memories, sentiments, and attitudes of the other persons or groups but this has not always led to the sharing of experience and

achieving the full incorporation within a common cultural life, because inside each society there have been properties which have been attached only to the native inhabitants and highly related to their common history. They do not permit others to take part in that history or share those characteristics by which they are identified (Gordon 66). Thus, they refuse the presence of strangers in their community, and therefore, they allow neither for their assimilation nor for acculturation. The dominant group's rejection of immigrants resulted in the barriers and obstacles the segments face during the integration process.

Assimilation in its broader sense is a process by which formerly diverse and separate groups started to have the same culture and merge together socially. Yet, the immigrants change their attitudes, behaviors, and values and try to acquire new ones which can be totally different from their cultural and ancestral background for the purpose of quickly adjusting within the host society and achieving an identical way of living (Healey 43). So that, the characteristics of both the immigrant groups and the members of the host society become alike, assimilation also has economic and socio-cultural trends starting with the first generation of immigrants and continued through next ones.

1.2.3. Definition of Acculturation

A further comprehensive of immigrants' incorporation into their new societies includes acculturation which has been taking place for centuries as a process through which newcomers adjust and find way toward living successfully in the host country. The latter represents for them a labyrinth of a different history, culture, and belief. Historically, acculturation has received various definitions. Redfield et al. have provided the very first definition of the concept stating: "this phenomena results when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first- hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (qtd. in Zigelbaum and Carlson 149). Acculturation is a process that occurs when people from different ethnicities meet, where a

change in their cultural aspects takes place due to the contact among members. This contact results in an exchange of attitudes, cultural norms, and behaviors among groups of individuals.

Acculturation was the result of study on the effects of European domination on indigenous peoples. After that, the focus was on the changes that follow immigrants after their entry into the host society later on. Acculturation became emphasizing on the consequences of cultural changes when people from different ethnicities are sharing the same region in which they have started a contact of cultures for the purpose of living successfully together in a multicultural society. Recently, acculturation encompasses all these phases as it is mentioned in the above definition (Berry 700). In fact, acculturation is sometimes considered as one aspect from the concept of cultural change. The latter is the result of intercultural change and it is supposed to cause modification in either or both groups; a kind of impact of one culture on the members of the other different culture. Hence, acculturation appears in the dominant group the same way it does within the minority group or groups.

Acculturation is a dual process, it is not understood merely as a simple, normal process of reaction to change in the social atmosphere, but rather, as an active, adaptive and creative approach to challenges faced immigrants confronted with cultural change. It involves both individuals and groups, acculturation's effects can be noticed on both the group and individual level that is named by Graves in 1967 as "psychological acculturation" that refers to the results of acculturation noticed on individuals and includes the individuals' changes in behavioral repertoire. Whereas, the group level refers to a more generalized consequences which are large enough to reach all the group members including changes in social and cultural activities (Berry 698-699).

Psychological acculturation includes changes in person's psyche when he or she witnessed a situation of acculturation, encompassing mutations in an individual's experiences such as:

attitudes, identity, language behavior, and values, due to the continuous first hand contact with the members of the other groups. Some scholars treat the phenomenon of acculturation as an individual process. For example, Spiro in 1955 has argued that acculturation at the individual level is highly influenced by acculturation at the group level. Similarly, Dohren Wend and Smith have emphasized the importance of individual acculturation in enforcing group acculturation (qtd. in Teske and Nelson 352). Acculturation may take short time as it may take years and expand over generations.

On the one hand, it is evident that acculturation can be studied as both individual and group process because this is firstly related to the level that the scholar or researcher depends on in analyzing the operation. On the other hand, scholars have argued that acculturation is more applicable in the case of subcultures especially for the studies made on American ethnic groups which are considered as the most appropriate example since American society is more famous by having different subcultures (Teske and Nelson 352). Consequently, all definitions and scholar's theories have agreed that acculturation is an interactional process experienced by individuals who are put among different cultures. Yet, the cultures' meeting and the interaction between members can lead the individuals to build their own cultural identity through a gradual change (Sandhu 125).

1.3. Are Hispanics Assimilating or Acculturating in the US Society

The United States has been a country of immigrants from early settlers to the present entrants. When the country was still small, its population was heterogeneous which required integration that can be framed by many policies and measures that had helped newcomers to quickly adjust within the American society since the cultural diversity within the nation was not welcomed. Hence, assimilation has been the most difficult solution for immigrants but the most suitable one to be accepted in the host society. Hispanics' situation has not been an exception because the debate over Latinos assimilation or acculturation in the United States is

not new. Along their presence in the country, their ways of incorporating into the society have been sort of conflicted opinions; scholars have argued that Latinos assimilate at rates similar to other groups. Others have maintained that their assimilation is slower than any other minority group in the country.

The huge population of Hispanics in the United States can provide strong evidence about the success of Hispanics' acculturation in which both the newcomers and the hosts exchange some of their cultural aspects when the groups start the contact together. However, Hispanics have struggled to get a respectful position in the United States' politics, economy, and society. Latinos, like all other immigrants have been put between two processes; either to assimilate or acculturate. One process is harder than the other; to abandon their values, attitudes and adopt new ones, has never been an easy task, or to retain the cultural and ethnic identity as an attempt to live successfully within two cultures seems like a big dream.

1.3.1. Standards of Latinos' Assimilation

Social scientists have followed many methods and measures to investigate the evolution of Latinos and their children as they try to adjust in the host society. Ethnographers have submerged themselves in enclave neighborhoods. In their turn, sociologists have interested in survey results and interviews. For economists, they have relied on data from different sources to review and explore patterns of English language acquisition, intermarriage, and naturalization. However, no type of study could draw generalizations as far as the process of assimilation is concerned. Despite of these limitations and difficulties, literature generates some steady findings. The latter have supported that the first generations of Latinos in the United States are able to make some advancement toward the mainstream culture, whereas the second generations assimilate very quickly and become indistinguishable from native-born Americans (Vigdor 7).

Assimilation can be evaluated or ensured via standards or measures. When the weak groups achieve a specific level in the host society, it can be considered as assimilated. In other words, when the members of the minority group acquire some features which characterize only the members of the dominant culture, assimilation is successfully accomplished. Citizenship, homeownership, English language proficiency, job status, and earning better income are the most important measures or indicators that push immigrants toward further assimilation.

It is argued that integration is occurring faster in the areas of citizenships and homeownerships accompanied by high school completion and the rise in earnings. According to statistics in 2008, the share of foreign born men's earning which was above low income levels, was 66 percent, this number was increased in comparison to 35 percent in 1990. For homeownership, 58 percent Latinos achieving this feat was in the same year (2008), the Hispanics' homeownership percentage achieved a remarkable rise since 1990, where it was 9.3 percent. Latinos' levels in earnings and homeownership rise as a result of their long standing time in the US, not surprisingly. The rates of assimilation in education and occupation are higher among the second generation of immigrants, because the first generations' aim behind coming to the US was job status rather than education. Since 2000, immigrant children are more able to benefit from opportunities for educational advancement (Myers and Pitkin 2).

Another important measure is language proficiency; the most important factor in confirming immigrants' assimilation. Language has strong ties with cultural and group identity; it expresses the position of both groups and individuals in a given society. Language is more than words connected together; rather it is a set of rules by means of which group's members find it easy to communicate. Moreover, language has always been an indicator of assimilation throughout the history of the United States that recognized earlier the importance

of the language proficiency on attaining the national identity. By the middle of the 19th century, the importance of acquiring English for immigrants has been confirmed thus, speaking English has come to be acknowledged as the most significant quality of being an American. Yet, it has become the most useful feature separating native-born from foreigners (Cafferty and Engstrom 73).

Hispanics are different from the other immigrants in the United States. According to the 2002 national survey of Latinos, 47 percent of Hispanics are primarily Spanish speakers, 28 percent indicating they are bilingual, and 25 percent declared that they are English speakers (“2002 National...” 1). These statistics are explained in accordance with the period that the foreigners spend in the host country, in addition to the age; Hispanic children are more likely to learn English since they have the chance to attend schools and learn the English language and grow up in English speaking society, unlike the first voyagers whose main focus was on working and how to be employed.

1.3.2. Huntington’s Thesis about Hispanics Acculturation in the US Society

Through his thesis in 2004, Huntington ignored the fact that Hispanic immigrants are assimilating into the US society. He argued that this portion of immigrants is less likely to assimilate and they are forming a separate culture. The evidence supporting Huntington’s claim is that Latinos have remained linguistically isolated since the 1970’s. Huntington has added that Hispanics, especially those deriving from Mexican ancestry, are establishing a society along Mexico and the US border; their community is based on the Spanish language. Also, Mexicans are extending their enclaves along the Southwest border; the societies are not attached to the United States culture (Ugues et al. 3). Illustrating, over 30 percent of foreign born Americans are natives of Mexico, which provokes a feeling of fear among Americans about the massive inflow of people from the same foreign country influencing negatively the American culture. Not only Huntington believed on this, but also, many other social scientists

have expressed their fear about Hispanics' establishment of their own culture which is a threat to American identity and history. Huntington has declared his anxiety in his 2006's saying: "the persistent inflow of Hispanics immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures and two languages..." (qtd. in Vallejo 40).

Many scientists have conducted studies about the Hispanic impact on American traditional identity and the changes they may bring to the meaning of being an American. As has been mentioned above Samuel P. Huntington has been a leading figure in this regard who has emphasized on the uniqueness and significance of this population in American History and hypothesized their possible influence on the country. Huntington has argued that Hispanics have possessed some characteristics that extremely differentiate Latinos from other ethnic groups in the United States (Maas 245); he has asserted that the absolute scale, period, and local concentration of Latino immigration have obstructed any substantial level of assimilation.

Huntington has been famous of his nationalism which has justified his fear about the United States future under immigration's shadows. He has suggested that the existing of immigrants especially those with large demography could affect the American culture and even the country's national independence (Mansbach 220). In other words, he has declared that Hispanics have been a threat to the United States since they have refused to assimilate and have rejected "the American dream" (Aldridge). Yet, they have started to establish their own enclaves which have been very strong evidence to his view.

The political scientist Jack Citrin and his colleagues from the University of California have verified Huntington's thesis about Hispanic immigrants. The findings have opposed Huntington's views. Through time, Hispanics are far more likely to embrace and imitate, rather than to reject or modify the American political culture. The thesis is empowered by some arguments including; the linguistic adaptation, which is represented in Hispanics'

ability to speak English as their first language; regardless of their age, educational level or place of residence (Wilson et al. 84).

The second argument is the hyphenated American identity, which is concerned by the Hispanics' identification. Most Hispanics identify themselves as Hispanic Americans and after getting the citizenship, they become more likely to identify themselves as Americans or Hispanic Americans. The third evidence is religiosity; scientists have proved that Hispanics are no more or less than non-Hispanic whites. Moreover, 19 percent of Hispanic Americans have declared their love to America and 86 percent have expressed pride in the American flag, hence Hispanics' patriotism is apparent through these percentages (84).

Chapter Two

Social Factors Challenging the Hispanic Assimilation and Empowering their Acculturation in the US Society

Hispanics story in the United States is rich, convoluted and energetic. Its complexity is highly related to the diversity of Hispanic population's cultures, nationalities, and races.

Some Hispanics are recent immigrants, whereas others have lived in the country for generations. Strangers in new country, new culture, new way of life and new society's structure and habits, this is exactly the case of Hispanics in their new multicultural country, a large group, a huge number of population and a noticeable diversity trying to innovate social inclusion and achieve number of rights guarantee the leading to more respectful position in the society. Such ambition is faced by the reality of the hard life controlled by the Native Americans discrimination and alienation which in part have permitted them to undergo their impact on the American society's culture and life in many ways.

Lots of evidences indicate that Hispanics are unlucky enough to be an exception in the American society. This fact has led them to face many problems and fall in number of paradoxes within the host community; they lack English language proficiency but they want to integrate in the educational sector. They prefer to live in their own enclaves and in the same time they want to be welcomed by the American citizens. They want to intermarry with Americans while keeping their cultural backgrounds and beliefs. All these circumstances have left Latinos in a doubtable position and have presented many challenges as a part of their trials to live within new culture while preserving the old one.

Language, intermarriage and social acceptance are considered as the most significant needs of each society's newcomers through which they can trace their footsteps towards assimilation. But, Latinos' inabilities to reach satisfied results and the barriers they have faced in the new community have negatively influenced Americans' plans toward a unified

society where the members share a common culture. Contrarily, they have provoked a feeling of fear about Hispanics' strength which might enable them to establish their own culture in the United States as well as to be influential in a multicultural society.

This chapter will offer a detailed explanation about Hispanics' situation in the American society taking into consideration their status in education, their intermarriage and cultural enclaves in the country. Through the information gathered in each of the domains, conclusions can be drawn about the assimilation or the acculturation of the minority group in the USA. Also, the chapter sheds light on the barriers faced by Latinos and their interrelationship with the Hispanics' inhibition towards total assimilation and relatively the emergence of their influence in the US society as a challenge to overcome those obstacles leading to their acculturation.

2.1. Hispanics' Education in the United States

Language has always been an important factor through which immigrants can largely integrate into the host society. However, it is continued to be an obstacle for many Hispanics preventing them from fully participating in life, one in five Hispanics in the American society is not able to speak English. This problem has been considered as a wall that especially thwarts Hispanic children from entering the society of school (Verdugo¹³). Most educators and social scientists have argued that, it is vital for immigrant children to acquire English language and being capable to use it well (McCarthy 9). The mastery of English language can allow them to enter into the educational mainstream and guarantee a post-graduation employment, thus to improve their likelihoods to have a good social status.

Rumbaut in 1997 has reached significant results concerning immigrants' English proficiency; those results were confirmed by Oslen in 1998. For example; Latinos were unable to be fluent English language speakers at the beginning of their arrival. On the one hand and according to Rumbaut, immigrants' English acquisition is a matter of age;

essentially, the capacity to learn and to speak a language[...] is especially good between the ages of three and the early teens; immigrants who arrive before the age of 6 are considerably more likely to speak English without accent, while those who arrive after puberty may learn it, but not without a telltale accent (qtd.in McCarthy10).

On the other hand, Rambaut has emphasized on the role of school and school environment in offering immigrants with the essential help to acquire the language as well as to adjust in the new society (10). Indeed acquiring the language of the new country has been a key feature toward inclusion in both the society and the educational mainstream, but this acquisition has required time, more efforts and many changes in schools altogether.

The continuous influx of immigrants into the United States as well as their presence in the nation have made the challenge more serious, it has faced both guests and Americans; how to overcome language barrier? In dealing with the issue, many states have passed English only laws aiming at generalizing the English language and obliging immigrants to learn and use it to facilitate their assimilation. However, teaching the language to newcomers has always remained a topic for debate among many educators. Latino pupils' first language is Spanish which through time its use has been prohibited even in the school playgrounds (Schmidt et al.167). The American's first trial to delete the Spanish language was empowered by the aim of including the Hispanic ethnic group in the US society and omitting any trait of their cultural heritage.

The incapability of Hispanics to learn English language has been the most powerful impediment in their road toward assimilation. According to Gordon's explanation of the assimilation process, immigrants ought to go through stages to achieve assimilation; the accomplishment of all stages or some of them has meant the reaching of a complete assimilation ("Hispanic American..." 48). While in the case of Hispanics, the failure in

acquiring the English language have demonstrated their inability to complete the very first stage in Gordon's analysis, which is "behavioral assimilation" in which he has suggested that segments could change their food habits, customs and language toward new ones suited more the new society.

The Pew Hispanic Center in its second survey on Latinos has investigated the different points of view of the group members about public schools and many other issues primarily related to the educational sector. Latinos have shown a strong faith in their local schools and in all their institutions of education. Moreover, the survey has demonstrated Hispanics' eagerness and optimism to study in the United States' schools and reach a high educational level so that to have a good job status in future. However, many have expressed their fear toward the American educational system that may not treat Latinos equally and the teachers who may not be able to bridge the cultural gaps in their classrooms ("National Survey ..." 1). In fact, the Latinos fear has transformed into reality since the first presence of Hispanic children in schools has not seemed to be positive or fruitful.

Young people who are entitled to enter school and college, between the ages of 5 and 24 make up 37 percent of the Hispanic population compared to only 27 percent of non-Hispanics; this young portion of Latinos is projected to increase by 82 percent (1). Despite these statistics, Hispanics have low levels of educational attainment which does not necessary indicate that Hispanics do not appreciate education; rather the chances that are provided to this minority have a focal role in deciding their educational attainment (Cafferty and Engstrom¹⁴). Hence, the rise in educational attainment can be observed and evaluated at two Hispanics tendency towards completing their high school and continuing to Bachelor's degree or higher educational level (Ryan and Bauman 4).

The following table shows the educational attainment of Hispanics and Non-Hispanics aged 25 and older in the years 1990 and 1994. The data shows a clear gap between the two

groups; in 1990, Hispanics having high school diploma represented 51 percent while non-Hispanics represented 80 percent within the same year. Also, Hispanics having Bachelor's Degree represented 9 percent in 1994 compared to 23 percent non-Hispanics in the same year. Other statistics in 1996 has indicated that 86 percent of white adults and 75 percent of black adults were high school graduates, while 53 percent of Hispanics adults were high school graduates (Cafferty and Engstrom14). It is apparent that the percentage of Latinos has been improved in comparison to the previous years. Nevertheless, the fissure between groups has not disappeared yet.

Table 2

Educational Attainment, March 1990 and 1994.

| | Hispanics | | Non-Hispanics | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|----|---------------|----|
| High School Diploma or Higher | 51 | 53 | 80 | 83 |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher | 9 | 9 | 22 | 23 |

Source: Cafferty, Pastora San Juan, and David W. Engstrom.eds. *Hispanics in the United*

States: An Agenda for the Twenty First Century. Transaction Publ., 2002.Web.

5 May. 2017.

Education has always been viewed as a way through which mobility is increased especially for those who suffer from social and economic disadvantages. Hispanics children have achieved very interesting educational gains comparable with whites over the past two decades. But, they are among the minorities who have been grieyed from those disadvantages. This category enters the elementary schools with personnel experience less than white children. The gap that appears during this stage is getting wider through the coming phases (Smith1).

Hispanics educational situation is firstly justified by the lower average levels of Hispanics children's parents' education; in addition to their likelihood of living in poverty. Hence, the

majority of Latinos have found themselves obliged to attend disadvantaged schools where both the academic environment and the learning equipment are less appropriate to learning. Besides, language has always been perceived as an obstacle towards all immigrants' trials for involvement in the host country. Hispanics are less likely to speak English especially the foreign born ones, which has limited their chances to achieve educational success (1).

Another reason has been contributed to Hispanics' underachievement is school funding in which institutions containing Latinos students have been described as underfunded in comparison to Anglo schools. Mexican schools or Latin schools had been created in the past by whites. Locating in inferior buildings, it has lacked the basic resources such as: desks, chairs, and textbooks. Despite the fact that there are no Mexican schools in America nowadays, researches have shown that segregation is still existed in schools that comprising Hispanics as majority where resources are poorer and funding is lower (Mermin 23-24).

Indeed, the American primary educational promise is that all children can learn whereas, the expression "all children" is controversial in itself; since all children encompasses many cultures, many histories and many countries from which those children had come. Researchers have argued that the different historical and cultural factors have been the main reason behind children's educational failure. Yet understanding the pupils' cultural- historical circumstances and dealing with immigrant children according to them are the key elements by which children can achieve advanced levels of success at school (Padron et al. 7). Therefore, schools have been a battleground in ethnic conflicts at that time in the United States because of its inclusion of many children from different cultural, linguistically and religious backgrounds on the first side and teachers who have been attempted to follow the curriculum and affirm the American culture and the English language on the other.

Hispanics' academic success can also be hindered by the teachers and administrators' inability of understanding the cultural differences. Schhneider in 2002 has found that most

teachers who work in urban schools lack many information about their students and they cannot recognize their situation and the conditions where they grow up. According to a study conducted by Martinez in 2003, Mexican Americans are more than other students who feel better when they are not with their teachers. They feel happier and more excited and they better believe on themselves and their abilities (Schneider et al.). That is to say, the teacher has a significant role in students' educational attainment, their educational attitudes and their achievements.

Firm in 1989 has claimed that school success is highly linked to students' feeling of belonging to their school and the sense of close connections with their classmates. Thus, schools are presenting a very important aspect in their experience; students who have such feeling are more likely to succeed in school and they are aware enough to value school and relations with their peers in addition to their ability to participate in classrooms communication (Schneider et al.). Consequently, all these student's attitudes are dependent on their teachers who have great impact on their relations and outcomes because the tutor's negative stances and stereotype of minority students may deteriorate bonds for learning.

Facts of Hispanics' poor presence in schools and their passive role as a minority group within an institution mainly controlled by the culture of the dominant group have led to draw conclusion confirming the failure of their integration process through assimilation; Gordon has emphasized the role of immigrants' involvement in social structure in his second stage; structural assimilation which have required new comers to successfully build a relationship within social life, such as: work places and schools. However, Hispanics have suffered a lot from the outcomes of cultural and linguistic differences in educational institutions that have impeded their assimilation.

The main point consists on how to achieve the mastery of English has a direct relation with the mother language. Some European researchers have declared that one of the best

ways to facilitate second language acquisition is the development of the mother tongue, in other words, learning English is primarily achieved by the mastery of their first language. Those scholars have claimed that immigrant children are less likely to receive linguistic support at home. Therefore, they ought to have substitute assistance at school to better acquire the mother tongue (MacCarthy 9). Cropley has argued in 1983 that teaching only the English language while neglecting the mother tongue may lead to general language orientation; neither the native language nor English as a second language is well acquired (qtd in. MacCarthy 10). Hence bilingual education is a key element through which acquiring English is extremely facilitated by learning the mother tongue as first step to build a fluency in the target language. As a result, in recent years, there has been a debate over what language to be used in schools as far Hispanics are concerned. School officials who are unwilling to isolate Spanish speaking pupils have dispensed the majority of students to bilingual classes, however, the Hispanic parents have emphasized their children right to be taught in English too (Fiske). Then, bilingual education has appeared as an effective solution to all those problems. Though, it has had an essential impact on the future of immigrants' assimilation in the host community.

Bilingual education has been the result of strong efforts of Latino community in their search for cultural nationalism. Through the achievement of bilingual education, Latinos have confirmed their presence as citizens and have affirmed the survival of their cultural and linguistic traditions. It has been started to take place in United States schools after the Bilingual Education Act which has been passed by Congress in 1968, as a significant help to children who have been linguistically diverse and have faced many problems in their classrooms have been contributed to their failure. Hence, following the legislation, a lot of bilingual education programs have been used while two of them have gained popularity; the classical approach and ESL. The first one have taught immigrant students their native

language and the second has been characterized by combining courses for both languages Spanish native language and English as a second language (Schultz et al. 442).

Afterward, many problems have negatively influenced Hispanics bilingual education such as: the lack of qualified teachers. The shortage of adequately qualified teachers has contributed to the minority's noticeable failure in the educational environment. Lack of teachers and lack of teacher's appropriate preparation have been assembled among the main obstacles facing Latinos toward having a good education. For example, teachers of Hispanic English Language Learning students (ELLs) are challenged with teaching old academic content to learners who are in need to acquire English as a second language; 56 percent of public school teachers have at least one ELL student in their class while only 20 percent of those teachers are certified bilingual teachers (Padron et al. 9).

Despite the hitches in bilingual education, it has emerged as a very vital expression of Hispanics' culture and their Spanish language; it has offered too a strong evidence of the United States' recognition of the Hispanic cultural nationalism as well as its inability in blending all cultures in one; the culture of the host. Bilingual education through its approaches and programs has taught students that each race has its cultural traditions, yet the different races should live together peacefully; the bilingual programs have promoted tolerance and empathy between two cultures (Schultz et al. 442).

2.2. Intermarriage between Hispanics and Americans

Intermarriage or interracial marriage is a type of marriage outside a particular social group comprising spouses who belong to different socially-defined races or race-based ethnicities. Throughout the era following slavery, laws sprang up around the country prohibiting the marriage of blacks and whites that existed for many years. During the Civil Rights Movement many of these laws were abolished; the movement was a scuffle for social fairness during the 1950s and 1960s and was led by Blacks who were eager to achieve equal rights protected by

the law in the United States. Besides, in 1967 the US Supreme court reversed existing laws against interracial marriage which were still illegal in sixteen states (Thomas et al. 88). The abolishment of those laws in the United States has confirmed the country's confession about the presence of many ethnicities and races which cannot be ignored or melt in the dominant society.

On June 12, 1967, the United State Supreme Court decided that Americans should in fact be allowed to marry a partner of whatever race they want (Luscombe). The permission of intermarriage has been considered as an important event in American history since the interracial and the interethnic marriage in America has been a barometer of racial and intergroup social distance, taking into account the diverse nature of the society where the meeting of multiple ethnicities and cultures has been highly emphasized.

Looking at data since 1967, a dramatic increase of intermarriage has occurred in the United States. In 2015, 17 percent or one in six newlyweds chose a spouse of a different race or ethnicity. Besides, it has been remarkable that Hispanics-Americans' newlyweds have been the largest deriving factor in that apparent rise, the White Hispanic combination represents 42 percent of intermarriage in 1980. According to Pew Research Center, about 27 percent Hispanics married a non-Hispanic within the same year; however the rate of intermarriage has stopped growing among those groups. The number has declined from 1990, when 56 percent of all intermarried couples included one white and one Hispanic (Hernandez).

It has generally agreed that Hispanics are changing family life in America through intermarriage that has been considered as a long-standing theme in the study of assimilation by which the latter is successfully reached. Intermarriage between an immigrant group and the dominant one diminishes social restrictions and leads to the blurring of ethnic and racial boundaries among groups. Whereas, the case of Hispanics is different; when marriage

between Hispanics and Americans occurs, chances toward a successful assimilation in American society are in fact increased. At the same time, intermarriage between members of different Hispanic subgroups may strengthen Hispanics as an ethnicity group and effectively result in the adaptation of a unique Hispanic identity (Bradatan et al.139).

According to Gordon, assimilation is accomplished via different stages through which the new group can integrate gradually in the host community; marital assimilation is an advanced step where marriage among totally different groups occurs across ethnic lines. Indeed this what has been really happened when intermarriage has taken place among Hispanics and Americans in higher rates from 1970. The process of interracial marriage has provided a clear sign that the minority group members have successfully adopted the cultural patterns of the host population, including their language and customs as well as their attitudes and that has ended up into marriage which means fusion and full integration in the new society without any limitations or boundaries (Qian and Lichter 69-70).

Accordingly, intermarriage with the native born white population represents a pathway to assimilation, yet during the past decade, rate of intermarriage have hindered or retreated. The declines have been in part the outcome of the growing numbers of Hispanics in the United States. This growth has provided opportunities for members of the minority groups to marry within their own pan-ethnic group rather than only marrying out to whites (1). Hence, the new emerging patterns of Hispanic intermarriage challenge the old single path which has been agreed upon toward assimilation in the American society.

Within the same context, Comas Diaz has suggested that Hispanics have for a long time engaged in interracial unions which have been highly justified by the different races and ethnicities composing Latino population (Wehrly et al 36). In other words, Hispanics have been involved in marriages within their same race and ethnicity rather than white patterns. This change has been related to Hispanics' desire to confirm the group's identity and

solidarity which have been already reinforced by the rapid growth of Latino population in the United States.

Waters and Pinceau have provided another explanation to the process of Hispanics' assimilation in the United States as well as intermarriage is considered. According to them, "assimilation occurs in place"; which means marital assimilation has been highly related to the place where the group members as a whole used to live and where they first established a living. When Latinos have been more geographically dispersed across the United States this might offer them many opportunities to meet and contact people from different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds and possibilities for intermarriage are in fact increased, yet the diffusion of Hispanics into new destinations provide an evidence of spatial assimilation (Qian et al. 2). Whereas, when Hispanics choose to live together in traditional gateways, chances to marry co-ethnics who share common culture are seemingly greatest. Living together in the same place could strengthen the group's identity and raise the percentage of marital endogamy in addition to supplying the potential co-ethnic partners rather than white partners (2). In short, living together in one region lead to marital endogamy among Hispanics can confirm their presence in the country and help the minority group to rise as an independent cultural identity especially when they have been already measured as an important demographic force in the United States. Yet, chances for acculturation are increased.

2.3. Hispanics Cultural Enclaves in the United States

A cultural enclave is a geographical area in which a particular ethnic group is spatially clustered and socially distinct from the dominant group, being a part from a cultural enclave means to share with its members the same beliefs and cultural norms including language, food habits and customs, immigrants who newly settle in a country usually chose to live in those enclaves to increase family ties and strengthen the culture of the group (Lim et al. 2). Cultural enclaves are usually urban areas in which a culturally distinct minority groups

maintain their own identity through ways of life totally different from those of the larger community that surround them. In the United States, the enclaves have always been a measure to assimilation, while it has become apparent that they have prolonged assimilation periods, and their presence has perceived as a seditious refusal on the immigrants' part to join the American society.

Immigrants all over the world are famous of being cluster together in the same place. In the United States, Hispanic immigrants have also tended to cluster in ethnic communities situated in certain urban areas and certain states in which, they become easily identifiable. What is also common is that Hispanics from specific areas and towns of their native countries bunch together in specific areas and towns in the United States. Consequently, reports have shown that there has been a noticeable diffusion of Latino immigrants to more diverse set destinations in recent years; they are growing faster in Southern states establishing their own ethnic enclaves (Bodvarsson and Berg 330).

In the 1970's, Hispanics in all areas of the country, and especially those in the major metropolitan zones, were heading toward greater spatial concentration and isolation within predominantly Hispanic enclaves (Bean and Tienda 168). Hispanics have concentrated in a few states such as California, New York, Florida, and Texas, their geographic concentration has amplified the cultural impact of Latinos in those areas. The influence that Hispanics experienced in those regions has justified the Americans' latterly fear from the wider dispersion toward new regions of the United States (Bodvarsson and Van den Berg 318); the biggest American fear is that Hispanics will be able to establish a parallel culture in the society.

The enclaves have been a hindrance toward Latinos assimilation in USA. They have played a strong role in helping Hispanics to preserve all their cultural traditions and behaviors. Lazear in 2006 when he has contributed in the discussion about the reasons that

have complicated Hispanics' assimilation in the United States, he has mentioned the impact of enclaves where large proportion of Hispanic immigrants is located. The latter prefer to live with their relatives in large communities where they can hold on to their own customs longer and assimilate more slowly than others. In American cities which encompass those enclaves, there are Spanish newspapers, radio stations, and television stations (Bodvarsson and Berg 327). Also, the presence of Hispanics in their cultural enclaves gives strong evidence to the minority's preference of endogamy rather than marrying partner from other cultural background.

Immigration to the United States has presented the American society with ethno-cultural challenges. Their ethnic and cultural diversity has always been a threat to the so called core WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) culture. This fear has reached its peak with the coming of Hispanics; their rapid growth, their wide spread and their refusal to assimilate, all these circumstances have created "the Latino Peril" evidenced by Samuel P. Huntington who has declared that the new war is between the country's white majority and its burgeoning Hispanic population (Szabo). Huntington expresses the challenge in this way:

The persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages. Unlike past immigrant Group, Mexicans and other Latinos have not assimilated into mainstream US Culture, forming instead their own political and linguistic enclaves-from Los Angles to Miami-and rejecting the Anglos Protestant values that built the American dream. The United States ignores this challenge at its peril (qtd. in Szabo).

In short, the United States transforms its new Hispanic residents and is being transformed by them at the very same time. The culture of the host country is not changing rather it is being supplemented by the cultural values of the newcomers.

Consequently, in measuring assimilation and acculturation of Latinos in the United States, two points of view have been emerged as far as cultural enclaves have been considered. According to Huntington, the persistence of Hispanics enclaves in many American states especially along with the Mexican borders might help in maintaining the Spanish language and the culture of origin, which could negatively influence immigrants' assimilation in the host society and acquiring the values of the mainstream (Citrin et al.33). Huntington's fear has expressed many other Americans 'distress from the change that Hispanics could cause in their territories and the impact they could experience on their society's structure and cultural values besides their language.

Another important feature of those enclaves is their cultural restrictions that are imposed on their inhabitants. Members of a specific cultural background live within the same community with others who share the same cultural traits, which in part may prevent them from meeting other citizens as well as preventing them from neither knowing culture and system of the host society nor presenting their cultural values and way of life to the dominant population. In other words and when analyzing Latinos' case in the American country, it seems like, they are unable to achieve assimilation or acculturation as far as large numbers are insisting on being in their enclaves refusing to integrate in new and different life (Villarruel et al. 391). Hence, the challenges of acculturation are likely to be greater, among individuals who resist adopting the values and cultural norms of the host community.

2.4. Challenging the Social Barriers: A Road to Acculturation

Marta Teinda said: "although their experiences in some ways mirror those of previous immigrant groups, the size of the Hispanic population, its varied immigration experiences, the global economy, and an ongoing majority population have created unique challenges and opportunities for the nation" (qtd in. Population Gains bring...). As a group, Hispanics are away from monolithic; they differ in national origin, immigration, skin color in addition to

other social and economic background (Population Gains bring...). Despite their differences, people within this minority face the challenges; often every segment may encounter as immigrants in a new homeland but at higher levels and to a problematic degrees.

Aiming at gaining prosperous position and normal life in their new homeland, many Hispanics have tried to get out from the immigrants' aura that has banned them from participating in the American society. Assimilation was the first and most suitable strategy as well as the most difficult one. Statistics in all the domains have disclosed the impediments of Latinos integration's mission in the United States with their failure which can be justified by their inability to enjoy access in many important fields through which their assimilation can be measured. In short, their limited presence in education, their failure to speak English language, their sufferance from prejudice and racial discrimination has been contributed in the flop of Hispanics' assimilation.

The relationship between the social barriers faced by Hispanics, and their assimilation in the USA is interchangeable relation. On the first hand, the social obstacles have firstly prevented their assimilation at high levels, and their decrepitude in accessing vital societal needs has affirmed the failure of integration attempts. On the other hand, the incapability of Hispanics to identify themselves as American citizens who could enjoy their normal rights, their clustering in the enclaves, in addition to the social disapproval of the minorities, all in all has proved the Hispanics' inability to break the wall toward full assimilation in the US society. Looking to this situation from different side can improve other results. Hispanics retaining of their language and the living in the enclaves where they could freely preserve their cultural behaviors have reflected the Latinos' intent to not only be influenced in the United States, but also to be an influential part in society that can successfully transmit the aspects of their culture and way of life to Americans.

In other words, assimilation has been empowered by the idea that not all races are equal so that influence on them will be easier. The first American endeavor to influence the ethnic groups within its society was through the application of the melting pot theory, whereas, Hispanics were able to cause anxieties. There was a level of fear from the very first results about Hispanics failure in integrating; what might happen if that Hispanic demographic force did not change its culture and language toward the mainstream? Later on, learning English and retaining both the Spanish language and the culture of heritage through bilingual education have destroyed the desire for some level of assimilation, and have damaged the goal of unified country (Ballon 71). As well as, Latino communities in the United States are the strongest indication that those people have found it difficult to assimilate in the mainstream and that melting pot in America is becoming far to complete (Johnson 153).

Recent report published by the Pew Hispanic Center, has shown that 50 million Americans of Latino ancestry have huge gaps still to bridge if assimilation to American life is to be accomplished. It is apparent that it has not been realized yet for a worrying number of Hispanic immigrants, which has proved Huntington's thesis. He has written in 2004 about Hispanics' failure in assimilation into the United States' culture which may lead the country to be a nation of two cultures and two languages. The researcher has justified his view by many causes encompassing: the absolute number of Latinos, the juxtaposition of the United States to Latin America and the concentration of Latinos in the Southwest. The justification that has been given by Huntington is firstly related to the English language that most Hispanics could not achieve (Ciment 686) since language is the first and most powerful indicator to assimilation. Its absence means the absence of assimilation.

Hubert Blalock in his power threat thesis have suggested that as far as the size of the minority group becomes larger, the greater its impact on the host society is increased, so that, the minority becomes to be considered as a threat to the majority group whose members start

to show hostility and discrimination towards those new comers who also begin to ask about equal rights and similar opportunities to natives in the educational, the health care and the economic sectors (Markert). This thesis expresses to high degree the case of Hispanics in the United States whose growth provides an ideal opportunity to detect potentials that promote well-being and successful cultural interactions so that to improve the chances for effective acculturation.

In other words, the backlash against Hispanic presence in the American society by whites, their complains on the Latinos rapid growth in addition to their first oppositions toward teaching the Spanish language, have evidenced the power of Hispanic group in the United States as stated in Hubert Blalock's thesis. Ironically, in recent years, the case has been changed and Americans have relinquished their hopes for homogeneous society. Thus, the growing size of Hispanic communities has led to dichotomy in the United States society. Hispanics as an ethnic group has been accepted as never before and have been recognized as a major power in all the domains, also, whites have begun to discover their culture and learn their language.

When minorities overall compose nearly half of all the country, Hispanics accounting for almost 25 percent of them and upward at the fastest stride. Every 30 seconds, one Latino turns 18. This truth proves the importance of Hispanics in the USA as well as it justifies the need of American people to learn Spanish language, since they surely will engage in many contacts with each other and how can the communication will run if they do not understand each other. In short, the number of Latinos learning English is raising and the number of Americans learning Spanish language is rising too (Cartagena).

Spanish is by far the first spoken non English language in the United States, as Spanish use has developed, determined principally by Hispanic immigration and population evolution. It has become part of many aspects of life in America. Jennifer Ortman and Hyon B. Shin,

demographers in US Census Bureau, have declared in the 2011 paper that the number of Spanish speakers in American society is projected to surpass 43 million by 2020 (Lopez and Barrera). These results confirm that Latinos are in the right way toward influencing United States' society.

According to Chavez, the Civil Right Movement in addition to the American government efforts to safeguard equity all over the nation and among all ethnic groups in the country have helped Hispanics to maintain their cultural traits and preserve their separate identity and their Spanish language in the US society (Garcia 12). In other terms, due to Hispanics rapid demographic growth, their impact starts to appear in all the United States' societal aspects. This can be noticed in the floating popularity of Latin American food, music, the pervasiveness of Spanish language, advertisement and media. Both of the population growth and the emerging influence have helped in blurring of many boundaries that Hispanics have suffered from since their coming to the country.

Consequently, acculturation is a challenge in itself for Hispanics; families should start the process in their homes with their children by helping them understand and acquire both cultures; native culture and the mainstream one. Youths begin to discover the dominant culture in their schools because of the contact with their peers that can help in acquiring both the language and the mainstream cultural standards (Campos 134). Accordingly, aspects from their culture of origin should appear in constructing their personalities; such as: values, beliefs, and practices. Researchers have declared that the more Latino boys are exposed to the Latino culture, the more likely they are to be identified with their ethnic culture. The same happened when the immigrant is more exposed to the dominant culture through contacts in schools, neighborhoods, and so on (134-135). So, Latino boys in both school and society ought to succeed in two sides; the academic sector and the cultural one because Hispanic parents want their children to retain their native culture and language, but also, to be

successful in the American community. The latter cannot be achieved unless they integrate in the society.

Chapter Three

Does Hispanic Political Participation Empower their Acculturation or their

Assimilation in the US Society?

By the mid-20th century, all polls and censuses have started to spot light on immigrants' situation in the United States. Results have proved that Hispanics have seemed to make a miracle. They were growing in a surprising way and their population has been projected to exceed 50 million. This number has marked a precedent has never happened before in the US history. Their continued inflow and domestic birth rate accounts for more than half of the overall national growth; the growth that has included Hispanics among the political influential in the United States.

The demographic force of the Hispanic population has made them in the core interest of investigation. Researchers have shown many realities about their political engagement, their political interests in addition to their views and party affiliation. Thus, politicians and candidates have realized the fact that they should take the interests of this minority majority group into consideration since they could easily affect the results of any election; they could influence politics in general.

This chapter will explore and compare the participation and involvement of Latinos in two most important presidential elections; 2008 and 2012, as well as the campaigns and promises given by Barak Obama and his efforts to win Hispanic support in both elections. It spots light also on the achievements of Hispanic immigrants that the president could realize in his two terms for them. Through this analysis, conclusions can be attained about the importance of Latinos in addition to the degree of their influence in US politics and yet life in general.

Relating Hispanic political life in the United States to either assimilation or acculturation is too complicated mission. Its complexity may be associated with the Hispanics' different political actions besides, the Americans' different perceptions of minorities' trials to involve

and being a part of American politics. Hispanics “the sleeping giant” have caused a crowd in US politics and among politicians while Latinos have been confused to choose the side that would help them more as immigrants and strangers. So, neither acculturation nor assimilation is a choice, but rather an obligation caused by many social conditions and a collection of experiences.

3.1. Hispanics’ Status in the US Politics

Studies of Latinos’ presence in American politics including their civic engagement as well as their electoral participation have been a new phenomenon. They have started to gain interest after the extension of the Voting Rights Act to Hispanic communities in 1975 which has been the restitution of the Voting Act in 1965. The latter was signed as a law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, aimed to overcome barriers that prevented African Americans from voting. The act was amended in 1975 to necessitate the oral assistance or bilingual ballots using the minority languages in the US and the Spanish language has been among them (Yang and Gaines 224). The act has been an important beginning to the political recognition of the group, from which changes have started to appear in Latinos politics and have differentiated them from other minority groups in the USA. Latino politics encompasses shared interests and common experiences of Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans and all the other Hispanic groups who have unified their voice to definite their prerequisites (Desipio 440).

Many organizations have been emerged to improve Hispanics ‘situation in politics as well as to provide them with the help to be active participants in the political life. These organizations have also interested in encouraging Hispanics to pursue political office, some of them have stand in favor to one of the parties whereas, others have preserved their political independence. The oldest organization was the Mexican American Political Association which has appeared in 1960 and has undergone its impact on Hispanics in which, it has

hurled voter registration urges and sustained especially Mexican American candidates and concerns (Vigil 126).

Indeed, Hispanics represented the big share of the population growth in the United States between the years of 2000 and 2004. While during this period the percentage of Latino voters witnessed an increase. According to US Census Bureau, Latino population was raised of 5.7 million Hispanics between the years 2000 and 2004. Hence, in November 2004, the number of Latinos registered to vote was 9.3 million and the number of Latinos who cast ballots was 7.6 million, which indicated an upsurge in political participation over the 2000 election. Also, Hispanics composed 14.3 percent of the overall population in 2004; they reflected 6 percent of the country's voters compared to 5.5 percent from all voters in 2000. The rise was considered as larger than any other ethnic group in the United States, taking into account the youthfulness of Hispanic population; 30 percent were less than 18 years old. Besides, other 33 percent were not citizens (Suro et al.).

The 2008 presidential election was manifested by high turnouts throughout the nation. Hispanics were not an exception; more than one third Latinos cast ballots which comprised 36 percent just prior to the day of election. Afterward, according to data collected by the Pew Latino Center in 2008, there were 19,346,000 million Latinos voters in the nation and in 2012 presidential election, Latinos represented more than 10% of the grown population eligible to vote in 11 states while, in the remaining states, Latinos composed 5-10% of likely voters. Altogether, Latinos were able to influence the electoral results in 24 states. Hence, the four states where Latino could reach a perceptible influence have been: New Mexico, Florida, Nevada, and Colorado in which the number of Latinos has continued to raise day by day. Similarly, other states such as: Connecticut, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts, perceived Latinos voters growth (Ortiz 3). Year after the other, statistics

showed that Hispanics in voting were increasing which indicated the escalation of the political awareness among the group members.

Afterward, a record 11.2 million Hispanics voted in the election of 2012, generally 48 percent of Latinos eligible voters turned out to vote in 2012. The rapid growth of the Latino population powered the number of Latinos eligible to vote. Consequently, between 2008 and 2012, the eligible voters among Hispanics increased from 19.5 million to 23.3 million which presented a growth of 19 percent. Further, the voter turnout rate among Latinos aged 65 and older augmented from 58 percent in 2008 to 59.9 percent in 2012. The analysis of the 2012 election found that Hispanics encompassed a larger portion of the nation's electorate in 2012, presenting 8.4 percent of all voters which made up a rise in comparison to 2008 election's percentage of 7.4 percent. Moreover, among 3.8 million Latinos eligible voters, more than 3.7 million were Hispanics born in the United States who recently entered adulthood (Lopez and Barrera). Thus, much of the growth in the number of Latino eligible voters was driven by Latino youth who participated in votes for the first time, which also represented Hispanics' eagerness to enjoy political rights.

2016 presidential election has revealed the truth that the United States is being more ethnically and racially diverse. According to Pew Research Center, 27.3 million Latinos are eligible to cast ballots; the number represents 12 percent of the nation's eligible voters. Hispanic voters have risen by 4 million since 2012, representing 37 percent of growth among the American voters overall. This growth is viewed as noticeable despite of the concentration of most Hispanics in non-battleground states which has limited their political impact. In other words, Hispanics lived in states that are not competitive in the election, a truth that swayed the Latino influence on voting results (Krogstad). Earlier statistics are mentioned in the following figure.

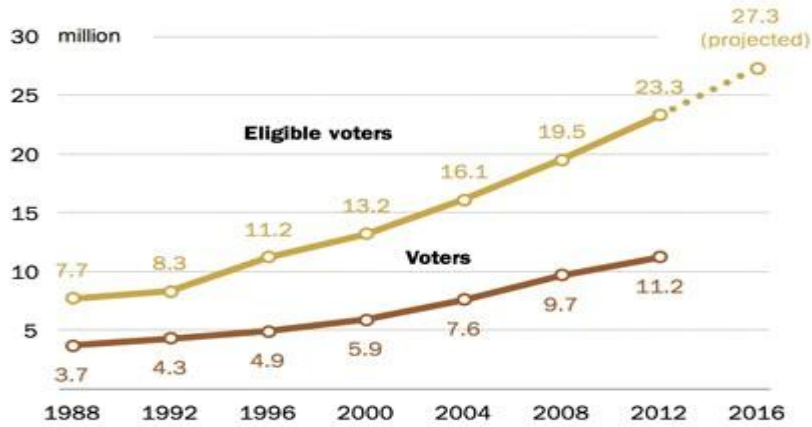


Fig.1. A Diagram Presenting the Number of Latino Eligible Voters in Comparison to Voters in Presidential Election Years (from 1988 to 2016). From: Krogstad, Jens Manuel. “Key Facts about the Latino Vote in 2016” *Pew Research Center* (Oct. 14, 2016). Web. 20 May. 2017.

In another context, Latinos held 115 legislative positions in United States extensive over 13 states; New Mexico has been in the top of the list by 12 numbers in its legislature in the State Senate which comprises 28 percent, in addition to 22 from 70 numbers in the House of Representatives forming 31 percent (Vigil 89). After the 2008 Election, the number of Latino representatives has been increased; they reached 23 Hispanics in the House of Representatives and three in the House of Senates. Though Hispanics have constituted 5 percent of the 111th Congress similar to African Americans, it is considered as a very little progress which has not mirrored the actual size of Latino population in the United States (Sidlow and Henschen 115).

3.2. Hispanics are Shaping American Politics

The rise of Hispanic voters as a major political force is arguably the most significant long-term trend playing out on the US political stage. Their emergence has already changed the electoral landscape in substantial ways, and their impact will only continue to grow, mainly

because of the growing number of Hispanics and the number of Hispanics eligible to vote; their population in the United States flowed from 35 million in 2000 to nearly 57 million. Latinos became the topic of a feel-good political yarn that bathed a downgraded minority in the radiance of demographic triumphalism, acting as a consistent political force which was used to support democrats and preserve the welcoming immigration policies they overwhelmingly favor (Suro).

Although Hispanics used to be voiceless and invisible in the American community, this status has not remanded after the Second World War. They have been transformed to a strong political power in the USA through their exciting presence and high influence. The voting rates of American Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Cubans have increased dramatically since then (Roberston et al.191). Despite of Hispanics' different views and objectives, they have tried to unify their voices in order to overcome their common issues as a first step to improve their situation in their new country.

Indeed Hispanics are supposed to have a submissive place in politics since they are still considered as a minority group. However, Latinos prove now that they are able to affect American politics. This impact is rising as well as the Latino population is growing (Desipio 466). The increase in Hispanic numbers and the spread of their communities over the American states help this portion of citizens to experience their cultural, economic and political influence. All what they need is some awareness especially among youths to have a better and clear view about their real opportunities along with their capacities.

In a survey conducted in 2008 about the assimilation and acculturation of Hispanic immigrants in USA, results were surprising. First generations of Latino respondents have believed that the degree of both assimilation and acculturation is highly related to the length of time newcomers have spent in the United States. In their turn, 53 percent of second generation Hispanics have believed that they need to be proficient English language speakers

in order to be considered as a part of US community, since according to them English language proficiency and voting are the primary indicators to assimilation. Whereas, third generation Hispanics have seemed to be more convinced that neither the English language nor the participation in voting would guarantee their complete involvement in the American society because they are still and will be perceived as outsiders even when having the American citizenship (Abrajano and Alvarez 31).

When Latinos have believed that their efforts for change toward the mainstream have been miscarried, they have found themselves in a different path. In it they could participate in American life freely; they can vote, choose their representatives, and ask for appointments and rights equal to others, while conserving their language and attitudes. But rather, they benefit from their privileges as American citizens to realize dreams and needs of other immigrants. Not only this, but also being an influential part in the country; that has been apparent in their latest impact on politics which could be depicted in the two presidential elections (2008 and 2012).

3.3. Hispanics in the 2008 Obama's Presidential Election

Assimilation which deals with the transformation and the blending of newcomers in the host society in all its facets of public and civic life; it seems like it is the right definition of Hispanics' political participation (Navarro and Mejia 135). Hispanics participation in US elections, their political involvement and their desire to realize their dreams and achieve their needs in a country full of differences are clear signs of their integration in the American wide community. Considering themselves as a part of the nation, asking for their rights as citizens as well as doing their duties while voting, confirm that Hispanics are in the pathway toward inclusion which means assimilation. What really confirms the Hispanic assimilation is the statistics from 2008 presidential election and the Americans' perception of this group's strong participation.

During 2008 election in the United States, most Latinos declared their support to the Democratic Party's candidate Barack Obama. According to an analysis by the Pew Hispanic Center, 9 percent of the electorate was Latinos, which have entailed that all the Latino sub groups have voted for Obama by heavily margin. Obama's ability to influence was firstly depicted in Hispanic youth support; 76 percent of youth voted for Obama versus 19 percent for McCain. Moreover, 64 percent Hispanic males and 68 percent Hispanic females chose Obama. It was apparent that the Democratic candidate gained considerable margins in states with large Hispanic population (Lopez).

Obama's advance was in Florida where he got 57 percent of Latino vote, though this state was famous for its support to the Republicans in which President Bush approved 56 percent of Hispanic vote in 2004. The voting results in other states with large Latino population showed the preeminence of Obama; he won 78 percent of the Latino vote in New Jersey and 74 percent in California (Lopez). Latino support to Obama marked their increase in the vote participation in comparison to the previous years, the rise accrued mainly in the states of larger Hispanic population. The remarkable involvement of Hispanics in US elections has opened the door to long speech about their full integration in the large American community.

The 2008 witnessed the Latino voters' shift toward supporting the Democratic Party in huge numbers, getting away from Republicans. The voting outcomes showed that Hispanics provided Obama with unexpectedly large margins of victory; Hispanic sustenance to the Democratic candidate raised by 14 points in general compared with 2004. Latinos came back to support the Democrats after a short-term flirtation with the Republicans; voters among Latinos arose as a mobilized Democratic voting bloc for the first time in states all over the country. Within the same context, Bill Richardson, the New Mexico's Hispanic Democratic Governor said: "they turned out, erasing the fame of Latino voters as a sleeping giant and making them an actual giant." (qtd in. Preston). Hispanics were known as the sleeping giant

because of their little participation in politics in spite of their large population number however, the 2008 presidential election and their support to Obama has awakened that giant to experience influence over voting results.

3.3.1. Obama's Promises to Hispanics during the Elections

Latinos shift to support Democratic Party and their big voter turnouts to the nominee Obama have been mainly related to the candidate's efforts to win their support. Obama's political agenda and the promises he gave during campaign have played a vital role in shaping opinions, Obama aimed firstly to have great influence on people who had not voted before and he tried to attract their attention especially Hispanics who have been famous of their youthfulness. For Hispanics, this was a call for further assimilations in the political life of the host country. Actually Obama's success was largely achieved via the participation of youths as has been shown in different censuses. Obama's second strategy was constituted in his efforts to prove his intent to improve ethnic groups' situation in the US society, mainly for Latinos because of their important demographic force. Indeed Obama's trials to influence political views have succeeded and marked the Hispanic change toward supporting Democrats and hence civic engagement.

In an attempt to attract Hispanics attention in his electoral campaign, Obama intended to address the most important issues and topics that more interested Latinos. He ought to realize that immigrants and economic problems including lack of jobs and low wages as well as taxes were the core problems facing Hispanics. Hence he prepared an agenda aiming at solving these tasks; the first promise to Latinos was immigration reform; in which he promised to allow millions of illegal immigrants a path to US citizenship ("Fact Box..."). Through this reform, he declared his support to a path to legalization for illegal immigrants that comprises learning English and paying penalties (Carter et al.). He emphasized the need

to give illegal immigrants a path to legal residency and provide them a chance to earn citizenship.

Through the immigrant reform, Obama promised to legalize all the illegal immigrant workers and impose penalties to the employers who exploited them because they were not protected by law. Obama argued that they should authorize immigrants to be legal citizens since they broke the law which caused problems to them and to the Americans. He also insisted that citizenship would allow many Hispanic illegal immigrants to participate in life normally; attending schools, getting jobs and so on (Carter et al.). Thus, the immigrants reform was the first factor persuaded Hispanics to trust Obama in 2008 election and which empowered them to vote for him with that huge turnout.

Obama in 2008 election mentioned the economic field in which he put a promise to restore fairness to the country's economy via imposing a tax cut in the pockets of employees and small business owners by make an end to tax breaks for factories that ship jobs overseas and give them to factories which established a work in USA ("McCain, Obama..."). Though Obama's economic plans benefited all the Americans, they also offered a big help to immigrants especially which reflected Obama's efforts to satisfy all the portions in the US society.

Obama continued his care about Hispanics when he mentioned that over 6.000 Latinos were not registered to vote in New Mexico and asked them to have a voice in the 2008 election. He said: "so while I know how powerful a community you are, I also know how powerful you could be on Nov. 4th if you translate your numbers into votes" (qtd in. "McCain, Obama..."). The attention gained by Hispanics from president Obama have reflected to greater degrees the position they have achieved and the importance of the role they could play in US politics. Obama via his 2008 political agenda has tried to attract Hispanics attention which has led to one clear truth that is the greatest political value

Hispanics would have in United States validated by Obama's consideration; a justification to their influence was their ability to decide the results of 2008 presidential election.

3.4. Hispanics in the 2012 Presidential Elections

The position of Hispanics in the 2012 vote has not been changed a lot from the previous presidential election. Hispanics used to recognize well their requirements in a country most of its inhabitants consider them strangers and minority. Hence, throughout every election cycle they were asking and searching for a good candidate who can defend the rights of immigrants and minorities. Hispanics' desire to ameliorate their situation in the United States via voting has always viewed as a clear admit that they are considering themselves as a part from American citizens, who in part have the right to ask for social and economic improvements. Clarifying, numbers from 2012 presidential election have demonstrated so.

Within the same context, according to the national exit poll in 2012 election, Latino voters were caring about what should happen to unauthorized immigrants working in USA. Moreover, 77 percent of Latino voters said that these immigrants should be given the opportunity to apply for legal status. While immigration's issues precede the Hispanics' list of needs, economic and health care issues have started to gain much more attention in 2012 election. 60 percent Latino voters identified economy as the most important problem facing the country when 18 percent have nominated health care as a core issue too (Lopez and Taylor).

In an attempt to realize their dreams in the United States, Hispanics voted for Obama over Republican Mitt Romney by 71 percent to 27 percent in 2012 presidential election. According to Pew Research Center, Obama's national vote share among Latino voters is the highest marked since 1996, Latinos as a group made up 10 percent of the electorate, up from 9 percent in 2008. They made up a rising share of voters in three main battleground states: Florida, Nevada and Colorado. Obama gained 60 percent to 39 percent of Florida's Hispanic

vote an improvement over his 57 percent to 42 percent in 2008. While in Nevada, Obama carried the Latino vote 70 percent to 25 percent, in Colorado, he won the Hispanic vote by a wide margin; 75 percent to 23 percent (Lopez and Taylor).

In a survey performed by an organization that facilitates full Latino participation in the American political process called: the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials in 2010, 54 percent of Hispanic registered voters declared that they were certain, very likely to vote against a party or candidate with immigration views they found disagreeable, even if that party or candidate shared most of the respondents' other views (Kurtzleben). Hispanics have always declared their support to the party or the candidate who really served in improving immigrants' situation in the country which gave evidence to their continued support to the president Obama in 2008. Such situation represented too a key element that should be included in the candidate's agenda so that they could gain the sustenance of the largest minority group in the United States for the coming presidential campaign.

3.4.1. Obama's Promises to Hispanics during the Elections

Images for Latino's political influence continue its presence and effects during the 2012 presidential elections. The statistics have shown that Hispanics have strongly voted for the Democratic Candidate Barak Obama. Their support to Obama was not a coincidence but rather a result of a long agenda full of promises to this minority majority group in the United States. Obama has worked to retain the Democrat's hold of the Hispanic vote, along the campaign trail, the president promised to tackle difficult issues ranging from immigration reform to college affordability. The importance and the consideration given to Hispanics especially in politics has always been a big sign that Hispanics are able to play a vital role in decision making in the United States.

The first thing Obama has emphasized on has been immigration reform. Though he has broken his promise concerning the reform in his first term, he has introduced the issue again in the campaign for the second term. Obama in October 24, 2012 has said:

The second thing I'm confident we'll get done next year is immigration reform. And since this is off the record, I will just be very blunt. Should I win a second term, a big reason I will win a second term is because the Republican nominee and the Republican Party have so alienated the fastest growing demographic group in the country, the Latino Community. (qtd in. Planas)

Hence, the president via this speech has admitted two important things. He has confirmed his promise to improve immigrants' life in the US society and he has declared his need for the Hispanic support as a demographic force.

In regard to immigration reform, Obama has promised to stop separating families by deporting hundreds of thousands of immigrants without criminal records. He has also promised to get tough on immigration enforcement as part of bargain for reform that never got off of the ground. The president has mentioned the Dream Act again in his agenda for the second term and he has remained committed to passing it. The dream Act which stands for the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors, was first introduced in 2001 and it was concerned with young immigrants; called dreamers who came to USA as children, the Act was an attempt to provide those dreamers with a pathway toward legal status (The Dream Act, DACA...). Obama has also promised to expand access to education. He has said: "we've got to reduce our deficit, but we've got to do it in a balanced way- asking the wealthy to pay a little bit more, along with cuts, so that we can invest in education" (qtd in. Planas). The expansion of access to education would be according to him, through investing in early childhood programs and making a college more affordable.

Obama's campaign team understood Hispanic's demographic trends, their implications, their political importance and more significantly how to secure their loyalty. This loyalty has become a political weapon for Obama, not only in 2008 but also in 2012 election (Balkaran). Obama's efforts to gain Latinos' aid and loyalty has marked the emergence of Hispanics as a very strong political power that has been able to enroll the results of the presidential elections, also, helped in the recognition of the impact that this minority group can experience over American politics.

Hispanic voters have confirmed their support to Obama through the results of 2012 election. The president has gained their votes due to his efforts to ameliorate immigrants' situation in the country and that was the strongest reason why Latinos preferred him. Although he has failed to get congressional approval for the pro-immigrant Dream Act, he used executive action to enable young immigrants to stay and work in the United States. Obama's action was widely welcomed by Latinos and emphasized their positive position about him. The role and position of Hispanic immigrants in US community have been changed during these two elections; the importance given to this proportion has never been given before to an immigrant group, which highly justified the strength of Latino population in America.

All the statistics have indicated that Hispanics are tracing their footsteps toward assimilation. They have gained a political recognition and political power through their participation in deciding the results of both 2008 and 2012 presidential election. Hispanics' eagerness to give their voices in addition to their attention on choosing the right person who could work in favor of them as a minority group as well as who could save their rights; all these are indicators fit neatly into assimilation in US Society. In short, understanding Latinos political behaviors has led to admitting that they have really **considered** themselves as

American citizens. Whereas, language keeps being an issue; being an American citizen without talking English is a paradox.

3.4.2. Hispanics' Gains after the Elections

Through his presidency, Obama has done his efforts to expand opportunities to Hispanics and keep up his promises; he has started by expanding job opportunities as an attempt to reduce unemployment rate. Indeed, 14.4 million private sector jobs have been added which resulted in the drop of the Hispanic unemployment rate to 5.6 percent in March 2016. Moreover, the president Obama has called for a minimum wage increase in 2013. Many states have responded to the call which according to the Department of Labor support legislation would raise wages of million Hispanic workers in the first place. Besides, the US Small Business Administration through its loans programs has risen its lending to Hispanic entrepreneurs who started more than one million small businesses, which has aided in increasing the number of Hispanic-owned firms to more than 3.5 million companies (“Obama Administration...”).

President Obama has recognized well the difficulty to access health care services especially for Hispanics. So, The Affordable Care Act (ACA) or Obama Care has been the solution, it is a US healthcare reform law through which access to healthcare can be improved and expanded. Under the ACA, the rate of uninsured Hispanic adults has dropped to 27 percent and 8.8 million Latinos have access to preventive services, encompassing immunizations and cancer screenings with no co-pay or deductible. ACA also invested 11\$ billion in Community Health Centers by which nearly 35 percent Hispanic patients have been able to have access to health care (“Obama Administration...”).

Obama has also helped in improving Hispanic education in the US. He has invested huge amounts of money to better support dual language learners in better quality as an attempt to benefit from bilingualism. Furthermore, Obama administration has devoted more than 12\$

billion in research grants for Hispanic-serving colleges, training programs and scholarships that would help Latino students enroll and succeed in college. The president has thought about the opportunity gaps that could be faced by Latino boys and young men because of their color or race, for that, Obama has launched the My Brother's Keep initiative to ensure that all young people could reach their full potential. By 2014, a lot of communities in all states have accepted the president's My Brother Keeper Community Challenge ("Obama Administration..."). MBK Community Challenge was announced by the White House on September 27th, 2014, it is a call to communities to offer all youth with full potential as an effort to improve young people's life regardless of who they are ("Fact Sheet..."). The presence of Spanish language has become a fact in American life that cannot be ignored, this has been apparent in Obama's encouragement of bilingualism.

Obama's first promise to Hispanics has been immigrants' reform. Indeed, he has tried to keep his promise by announcing a number of deferred action policies which would offer greater chances to immigrants who came to the nation as children and permanent residents who lived in the country for years. Not surprisingly that the majority of the action's recipients have been Hispanics. In other words, Obama's main achievement was the signing executive order to protect young people brought to the United States as children by their undocumented parents. Obama over his program could protect 750.000 dreamers as they have been called, by helping them to find job or to continue their schooling and been saved against deportation (Urbina and Alvarez 83).

Additionally, DaCa or the deferred action for Children arrivals is a federal government program created in 2012 under the administration of president Obama to permit children who were brought to United States as illegal immigrants to reside in the nation. Those children would have a temporary right to live, study and work in the United States; all actions to deport them are deferred for two years can be renewed (Ramos). President Obama has

established the White House Task Force on new Americans to sustain the inclusion of immigrants in the US community encompassing their linguistic, civic and economic integration. Not only this, but also Obama has launched a Citizenship Awareness campaign which called “Stand Stronger”. The latter aims to conserve the rights and responsibilities of citizenship among permanent residents eligible to become American citizens, among them 3 million are Hispanics (“White House...”).

Obama’s trials to keep his promises and his approval to satisfy Hispanics specifically have sustained in raising Latinos’ trust in the US government and have provoked a feeling of belonging cannot be neglected. When a president shares with immigrants all their interests and tries to solve their problems, may mean that this group of people is very important, not only this but also, the people can consider themselves as a part from the country whose needs and requirements are always welcomed and taken into consideration. Hence, Hispanics after those two prudential elections may start to think again about redoubling their efforts toward successful assimilation; they are real Americans now. But also, thinking about Obama’s correspondence to Hispanics requests and needs can lead to different interpretations. Among them, Hispanics are able now to get all what they ask for in the USA; they are having an impact directly and in all domains as has been shown in Obama’s reform acts.

3.5. Characterizing the Use of the Spanish Language in the US Presidential Elections

Acculturation recognizes the impacts of the host society on newcomers. However, the persons maintain their cultural practices and group identification and their values. Acculturation suggests that adjustment and incorporation are occurring but to lesser degrees; in employing such definition on Latinos, it could mainly mean practicing bilingualism (Navarro and Meja 135). Hispanics’ involvement in the US political life has led to draw conclusion about the group assimilation in the country, while the protection of their mother language and its use in politics has indicated a lot about their acculturation. The latter is

clearly maintained through politicians' efforts to make electoral advertisements via the Spanish language and their efforts to win Hispanic votes have marked the group's great influence in American society. Simply put, Hispanics are influenced and influence in their new country; they are acculturating.

Obama in his campaign released new Spanish-language TV and radio ads, both of which discuss education and point Hispanic voters to website where they can register to vote, the two ads guide people to Obama campaign web page in Spanish in which voters can register their information and relevant dates through a specific section (Lapan). The existence of Spanish language in US elections has a strong thing to do with Hispanics inability to use English as well as their continued connection to their native language and most important Americans' acceptance of Spanish language presence in many domains; in other words, Latinos have started to impose their identity traits in the American society and live within their differences beginning by language.

The Spanish language has involved and been utilized to galvanize the Hispanic vote in the United States for many years; it has played a focal role in deciding election results. Using Spanish language electoral advertisements has participated in raising Latino voter turnout. It is reasonable that Latinos would respond better to Spanish language ads while the message is comprehensive and understandable which results in a successful transmission that would guarantee a positive reaction (Ervin 13). Indeed, the contribution of Latinos in US elections has a great deal with their assimilation in the country; they begin to establish connections with the government but, the preferred language becomes a debatable point. Using Spanish language advertisements can provoke a feeling of non-complete belonging to a nation its first language has always been English.

Despite Hispanics strong presence in politics which indicates their assimilation in the United States, the language keeps being a factor enforces their acculturation. When a country

its official language is English uses Spanish ballots to encourage Latinos to vote, and when a president creates Spanish language TV and radio ads also to help Hispanics giving their voices, means that both the Hispanic population and their Spanish language are able to change aspects have always been stable and unchangeable in the country. Hispanics are able to experience influence over many American facets and Americans ought to correspond to these changes.

No one can deny the truth of Hispanic acculturation in the United States. Latinos are being involved in a rapid acculturation process; they are influenced by the American way of life and in the other part the American culture is influenced by them. Hispanics are becoming more like non- Hispanics, besides, mainstream Americans are becoming “Latinized” (Garcia and Sanchez). When applying this on the Hispanic position in politics, it is apparent on the first side that Latinos are acquiring behaviors of real American citizens when voting and asking for rights. On the other side, they use their political power and demographic force to have an influence over different sectors in US; for example, when Obama spent huge amounts of money to aid dual language learners or when he responded to Latinos’ request of Immigration Reform and he protected a lot of Hispanic dreamers through the Deferred Action Policies.

Hispanic political orientations differ from those of the mainstream US political culture. It is plausible that the Hispanic culture is totally different from the American one; this is justified by Hispanics’ inability to acquire a completely diverse cultural values and attitudes. Whereas, the point here is that the extent to which those differences can affect politics and the change Hispanics can provoke when bringing their distinct values and goals to the political system. Actually, it is not doubtful that culture is dynamic and changeable when people interact. Hence the core American culture is “Hispanicized”. Equally, the Hispanic

culture in the United States is being acculturated to the US mainstream every day (Garcia and Sanchez 115).

Conclusion

The United States is the most popular destination for immigrants in the world; they are the most important feature of the country. It is composed of people from different ethnicities and cultures, regardless of the conditions that have pushed them to come and settle in the United States, they form collectively the present existing American society. Hispanics were among those groups who preferred the United States as a home; they settled in the land many centuries ago, they are a mixture of people from diverse regions, assembled together under the name of Hispanics or Latinos.

Like all settlers in new country, Hispanics were supposed to integrate in the new society and adjust within its values and behaviors. Many Theories have been appeared to define the ways through which immigrants could build firm relations with the host country as well as to facilitate their inclusion in the society. Melting pot and assimilation have seemed to be the most appropriate for Americans. Via assimilation, immigrants are required to strip from their culture of heritage and melt within the new country's way of life. Whereas, early statistics about Hispanic groups' assimilation were not satisfied; Latinos have provoked feelings of distress since their early arrivals in the land. They have always been distinguishable from other Americans and also from other immigrants, their inability to integrate in the country has been apparent in more than one occasion and in more than one field, while their desire to be part from the American society has kept leading them.

Studies about Hispanics' assimilation have led to another description of their relationship with the United States; which is acculturation. It depicts the case of immigrants who are unable to assimilate to the host culture, so that they try to keep their own way of life and their behaviors as a trial to be an influential part in the new society; it is a matter of exchanging cultures. Relating acculturation to Latinos' presence in the USA is very logic, though this analysis has provoked a fear among Americans, the fear has been represented in Huntington's

thesis about Hispanics' establishment of their own culture whose influence in the country will be the same of the American culture.

As an attempt to achieve results about Hispanics assimilation or acculturation in the United States, the present study has been made firstly on the societal factors. Starting by the education; statistics have showed that Hispanics used to be in the bottom of the American educational system. Their presence in schools was not achieving any progress which has indicated that they have not been fully integrated in the educational field. Such situation has been justified by their inability to use English language well; the Language has always been barrier in face of Hispanics' inclusion in the educational sector. In search for solution to this issue, in 1968, the American government has passed the Bilingual Education Act which has permitted many Hispanics to attend classes in both languages; English and Spanish. Indeed language has been a factor that impeded Hispanics assimilation in the American society, but rather, it has undeniably empowered their acculturation when Spanish language which is the Hispanics' mother tongue has started to take place in the educational sector, not only that, but Americans also have started to learn this language.

Within the same context, which is society, the current dissertation goes further in analyzing the intermarriage issue in correlation with Latinos existence in the country. Statistics have indicated that Hispanics' rates of intermarriage with whites Americans and people from other ethnicities have been decreased dramatically. The interpretation of those data goes beyond a normal refusal; it is a refusal of fusion in a host society and refusal of assimilation in the culture of the mainstream, since marital assimilation is a very advanced stage toward full assimilation according to Gordon. In contrast, marriage rates among Hispanic groups are rising, which indicates Latinos' intent to strengthen their culture and save it from disappearance in the United States. Consequently, intermarriage is another factor faced Hispanics assimilation and authorizes their acculturation in American society.

Huntington's warning about Hispanics' acculturation in the United States is fueled by the existence of cultural enclaves. Latinos prefer to live together in communities where they can save traits of their culture; they talk their language, wear their customs, prepare their food and enjoy all what is relevant to their identity. Cultural enclaves are also helpful in strengthening the inter-relationships between the minority group members which leads to maintaining connections to the past or to the life before coming to the host society. Hispanics via living in enclaves, they confirm their over lasting attachment to their culture of heritage and that is in part denies any determination toward assimilation. Yet, the existence of Hispanic enclaves in the United States helps in confirming their acculturation in the country.

In another important context, which is politics, Hispanics are playing a vital role and their situation is a bit different. The participation of Hispanics in two significant presidential elections has been analyzed in this work in order to achieve conclusions about their inclusion in the political sector; both 2008 and 2012 are important in Hispanics' political career in USA, through which they have shown up like a very strong political power. Results from those elections have designated that the Hispanic minority group is really different from other minorities in American politics. Latinos have been able to decide the results of those elections and have depicted the good image of American citizens; their support to Barack Obama has included them in American political life from its widest door and under the name of American citizens.

Hispanics assimilation has been clearly apparent through their participation in the 2008 and 2012 presidential election. The huge numbers of Latinos going to vote, the recognition gained by president and candidate Obama, and his efforts to awaken the Latino giant, all conduct to one single ending which is the political assimilation of Hispanics. However, getting deeper into Obama's campaign and achievements concerning this minority group may cause uncertainty; Obama's use of Spanish ads to impact Hispanic opinions is an impediment

in the way of full assimilation, using Spanish language ballots is also an issue facing assimilation. Hence, Hispanics are voting in US elections, Hispanics are entering politics but they are bringing their Spanish language with them.

Additionally, Hispanics' impact in politics can be transformed to an impact over other domains. President Obama during his two terms has taken into account the immigrants' prerequisites generally, and the Hispanics needs specifically. He has done a lot to improve their situation in the country, Obama has made promises based on Hispanics requests and he has kept most of those promises, when the President responds to Hispanics' wants, it means that their influence is getting wider; it starts in politics but it can extend to many other domains. In other words, Hispanics through their political power emphasized by their demographic power, they can affect extra aspects in American life. Besides, Latinos are not merely participating in politics, but also they are bringing with them their culture, behaviors and attitudes by which the United States is Latinized; they are acculturating.

Latinos are becoming to understand the importance of their presence in the United States and the significant role they can have in American society and the political system. They account for more than 18 percent of the total US population. The Hispanic existence in the country has always had a specific sense, they have been able to differentiate themselves from other minorities in the United States and their acculturation to the American culture has had a different interpretation. When investigating Hispanics' relationship with America, it is possible to find a Latino who declares that he is an American citizen whose country of origin is the United States, but he cannot speak English, only because he grows up in a region where most of its people speak Spanish. This is composition of American multicultural society and Hispanics are the greatest paradox found in it.

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