Rumors Across Borders: Transnational Information Environments and Latino Support for Trump

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Abstract

Why has Latino support for Trump increased despite his xenophobic and anti-Latino rhetoric? I argue that exposure to rightward-leaning political misinformation has contributed to this shift. Many Latinos are embedded in transnational information environments sustained by cross-border ties and maintained through frequent social media use. These ties expand the political content Latinos encounter, while social media conditions whether that content is accepted as credible. Belief in misinformation, in turn, is associated with more favorable evaluations of Trump and a greater likelihood of reporting a 2020 Trump vote or intended 2024 Trump support. I test this moderated-mediation theory using an original 2024 YouGov survey with a Latino oversample. The findings show robust associations between transnational ties and exposure to misinformation, and between belief in misinformation and support for Trump. The conditional relationship among ties, social media use, and belief is consistent with the theory but sensitive to model specification. These results suggest that transnational information environments help shape Latino support for Trump and that Latino political behavior cannot be explained only by stable values, identities, or predispositions. More broadly, the paper underscores the importance of treating exposure and belief as distinct phenomena and of incorporating transnational networks into the study of political communication.

Keywords: Latino Politics, Misinformation, Transnational Ties, Social Media Use, Information Environments.

Why would a significant share of U.S. Latinos support a candidate who has repeatedly made xenophobic and anti-Latino statements, called immigrants from Latin America "people from shithole countries," vowed mass deportation, and built a political identity around anti-immigrant sentiment? Even more, why would this support increase over time? In 2024, 48% of Latinos supported Trump in the presidential election, compared to 32% in 2020, and 28% in 2016 (Fraga, Velez, and West 2025; Pew Research Center 2018; Pew Research Center 2025b; Roper Center for Public Opinion Research 2020). This puzzle is particularly vexing because issues related to immigration matter to Latinos (Branton 2007; Sanchez 2006), and a significant number are first, second, or third-generation Americans. Latino support has increased despite the anti-Latino xenophobic remarks and harmful policies implemented by the Trump administration.

Scholars have provided a range of explanations, involving ideological sorting, economic concern, religiosity, and gendered cultural norms. For instance, some scholars argue that Latinos hold conservative cultural and economic values that ultimately align them with the Republican Party, so recent voting behavior can be explained under an ideological sorting lens (Fraga et al., 2025; Cortina & Rottinghaus, 2022). Yet others argue that Latinos concerned about the state of the economy were more likely to support Trump (Garcia-Rios et al, 2025). Religious affiliation and gendered norms are emphasized by other scholars, as evangelism and more traditional conceptions of masculinity seem to map more closely to the values espoused by the Republican Party (Martinez & Martí, 2024; Geiger & Reny, 2024). Missing from these explanations is an account that considers Latinos' information environment, which often extends beyond U.S. borders and includes information transmitted through cross-border social networks.

Latinos are, on average, more likely than white or Black Americans to be embedded in transnational information environments because they maintain dense cross-border social networks, which I call transnational ties. These ties expose Latinos to political narratives circulating beyond U.S. domestic information environments. Social media facilitates the maintenance of these relationships and conditions the information transmitted through them. Recent work shows that Latinos are politically active on social media at rates comparable to those of whites and that Latino online political activity is especially pronounced on certain platforms, such as WhatsApp (Abrajano et al. 2025). I therefore argue that transnational ties shape exposure to

political mis/information, while social media conditions whether that exposure translates into belief. Because much of the misinformation circulating online leans right, this process ultimately increases support for Trump.

My theory consists of three causal steps. First, transnational ties expand the universe of political content to which Latinos are exposed. These ties expose Latinos to narratives imbued with credibility because they originate from trusted social contacts with direct experience abroad. Second, the exposure to information from transnational ties does not necessarily translate into belief unless a moderating factor is present. As emphasized in the misinformation literature, exposure and belief are conceptually and empirically distinct (Guess, Nagler, & Tucker, 2019; Tucker et al., 2018; Pennycook & Rand, 2021). What matters here are the conditions under which exposure becomes belief. I argue that social media is the central condition because platforms repeatedly surface reinforcing content, provide signals of social endorsement, and facilitate interpersonal sharing across networks (Bakshy, Messing, & Adamic, 2015; Avram, Micallef, Patil, & Menczer, 2020; Bail, 2021; Abrajano et al. 2025). As a result, heavier social media use increases both repeated exposure to and the perceived credibility of information encountered through transnational ties. Third, misinformation is politically consequential (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017; Tucker et al., 2018; Hopkins, Sides, and Citrin, 2019; Berlinski et al., 2023; Pennycook and Rand, 2021). Given that political misinformation is asymmetrically right-leaning (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Garrett & Bond, 2021; Freelon, Marwick, & Kreiss, 2020), belief in misinformation pulls many Latinos toward Trump.

I test this argument using an original survey. I fielded this survey in September 2024 via YouGov, and oversampled Latinos. The total number of respondents is 1,500. Both the general sample and the Latino oversample were matched to the sampling frames by gender, age, and education. The general sample was also matched on race. The sampling frames are politically representative and are modeled on the US adult population.[1] The instrument was administered in Spanish and English and includes measures of transnational ties, social media use, 2020 and 2024 vote choice, and overall opinion of Trump, exposure to, and belief in six

[1] The sampling frames are politically representative "modeled frames" of US adults (Hispanic only for the oversample), based upon the American Community Survey (ACS) public use microdata file, public voter file records, the 2020 Current Population Survey (CPS) Voting and Registration supplements, the 2020 National Election Pool (NEP) exit poll, and the 2020 CES surveys, including demographics and 2020 presidential vote. Find more information about the sampling, weighting, and matching procedures in Appendix.

stories,[2] four of which were misinformation narratives that circulated within U.S. Latino networks before the 2024 presidential election. I designed the instrument to permit conditional tests of the proposed mechanism.

The results provide support for several predictions of my theory. First, Latinos are more likely than non-Latinos to have transnational ties and to communicate more frequently with people living outside of the U.S. Second, transnational ties are associated with greater exposure to political misinformation. Within-respondent models with story fixed effects and respondent-clustered standard errors show that more frequent contact with transnational ties is associated with a higher probability of having heard the misinformation stories presented in the survey. These effects remain significant after controlling for partisan and demographic variables. Third, the relationship between ties and belief in misinformation is conditional on levels of social media use. In models that include the interaction, the coefficient on ties and social media use is positive and substantial ($\beta = 0.420$, $p < 0.01$). At low levels of social media use, the association between transnational ties and belief is indistinguishable from zero. At average and high levels of social media use, stronger ties are associated with greater belief in misinformation. Finally, belief in misinformation is positively associated with warmer evaluations of and support for Trump in 2020 and 2024, even after controlling for demographic characteristics and partisanship.

The current paper makes three contributions. Substantively, it provides a coherent account of recent Latino political behavior that complements existing explanations. Theoretically, it advances research on misinformation by separating exposure from belief, arguing that interpersonal networks shape what people encounter while digital environments condition how that information is evaluated. Methodologically, it uses the Latino case as a setting where cross-border ties make these processes observable. While Latinos are a strategic empirical case, the framework I develop likely applies to any diasporic community whose transnational ties intersect with asymmetric misinformation environments. I begin by reviewing existing explanations for Latino support for Trump. While prior work identifies several important factors, it does not account for how exposure to and belief in political information are structured by social networks and digital environments.

[2] The specific stories are listed in the methods section.

What previous work says about Latino support for Trump

Some explanations for the puzzle of Latino support for Trump emphasize ideological sorting, economic voting, religion and evangelical identity, gendered cultural norms, and the declining force of panethnic group appeals. These accounts generally argue that recent Latino support for Trump reflects underlying preferences and predispositions that align with positions increasingly associated with the Republican Party.

One prominent explanation is ideological and partisan sorting. For example, Fraga, Velez, and West (2025) argue that the Latino rightward shift is best understood as ideological sorting, since many Latinos hold conservative values better represented by the Republican Party. Carlos, Al-Faham, and Jones-Correa (2026) similarly find that partisanship is the strongest predictor of Latino support for Trump in 2020. In their analyses, Latino Trump supporters were more conservative, more likely to hold anti-immigrant attitudes, and more likely to believe the country was headed in the right direction. Further, Latino Trump supporters remained largely unmoved when exposed to information about Trump's anti-Latino rhetoric and policies. These studies suggest that recent Latino voting behavior could reflect a broader alignment between existing ideological predispositions and partisan choice. Emerging panel evidence points in a similar direction. Using panel data from the 2016–2024 American National Election Studies, Villegas et al. (2026, working paper) find that changes in support for Trump are associated with attitudes toward issues that the Republican Party increasingly emphasizes, like transgender rights. These findings suggest that at least part of the recent Latino shift reflects changes in partisan alignment. Nonetheless, these changes could also reflect responsiveness to changes in the information environment through which attitudes are formed.

Other scholars have proposed that economic factors explain Trump's support. For instance, Garcia-Rios, Gutierrez, Ocampo, and Ocampo-Roland (2025) find that Latinos who prioritized economic issues were more likely to support Trump over Harris in 2024. Carlos et al. (2026) also find that positive evaluations of the direction in which the country is headed predicted Latino support for Trump. While economic frustrations may have motivated Latinos, we would also expect a similar pattern among other groups affected by the same U.S. economic conditions. However, the increase in support among Latinos was far greater than that of any other

group, especially whites and Black Americans, whose support for Trump was mostly stable across presidential elections (Pew Research Center 2025b). Further, the increase from 2016 to 2020 challenges this claim, as those affected by economic hardship would more likely vote *against* Trump, since he was the incumbent in 2020. Instead, Latinos voted for Trump at even higher rates compared to 2016. Economic dissatisfaction alone does not specify the informational process through which voters assign responsibility or interpret political conditions.

Another set of explanations involves conservative religious values or gender traditionalism, sometimes labeled "machismo culture." Martinez and Martí (2024) find that Latinos' church attendance predicts support for Trump in 2020. While religiosity remains understudied and is likely an important factor, only 17% of Latinos identified as Evangelical in 2024, and a growing number, 30% in 2022, identified as unaffiliated (Nadeem, 2023). Further, the share of Latinos who identify as evangelicals has remained stable over the last decade (Pew Research Center, 2014). While religious identity and church attendance likely contribute to support for Trump among some Latinos, the stability of evangelical identification over time makes it difficult to explain the broader growth in Latino support for Trump solely through changes in religious composition. Additionally, sexism as the reason Latinos increasingly voted for Trump has seen mixed support in the literature. Some have postulated that sexist norms specific to Latino culture explain their voting behavior, especially among men (Geiger and Reny, 2024). However, other studies have found no link between Latinos' sexism and Trump support (Hickel and Deckman, 2022). Carlos et al. (2026) also find no significant gender differences in Latino support for Trump and no significant effect of beliefs about male leadership.

Another line of research emphasizes group identity, linked fate, and reactions to discrimination. Studies of Latino political behavior have long argued that perceptions of discrimination, anti-Latino rhetoric, and threats directed toward co-ethnics can increase political participation, strengthen Democratic attachments, and mobilize Latinos in defense of group interests (Pantoja et al. 2001; Pantoja and Segura 2003; Barreto et al. 2009; Sanchez and Masuoka 2010; Zepeda-Millán 2017; Gutierrez et al. 2019). Related work on linked fate and group consciousness suggests that many Latinos view their individual well-being as tied to that of the broader Latino community, leading them to respond politically to perceived attacks on co-ethnics (Sanchez 2006; Sanchez and

Vargas 2016; Sanchez et al. 2019). Yet recent scholarship has increasingly questioned whether panethnic solidarity uniformly shapes Latino political behavior. Alamillo (2019) finds that Latinos who view racism as a less important political concern were more likely to support Trump, while Hickel et al. (2020) show that co-ethnic identities do not always take precedence over other political commitments. Similarly, Marsh and Ramírez (2019) argue that the political consequences of group identity vary across contexts, and Hopkins et al. (2020, 2021) find remarkable stability in Latino partisan identities despite exposure to discrimination and threat. These works suggest that while group-based appeals and experiences of discrimination remain important, they are often filtered through broader political predispositions and partisan attachments.

Altogether, existing explanations identify important values, preferences, and characteristics associated with Latino support for Trump. However, they devote less attention to the information environments through which political beliefs are formed and reinforced. While these accounts explain who is more likely to support Trump, they provide less insight into how individuals come to adopt the beliefs and evaluations that underlie those political choices. The current paper argues that transnational ties and social media shape these processes by influencing exposure to and belief in political misinformation.

The Information Environment and Related Political Behavior

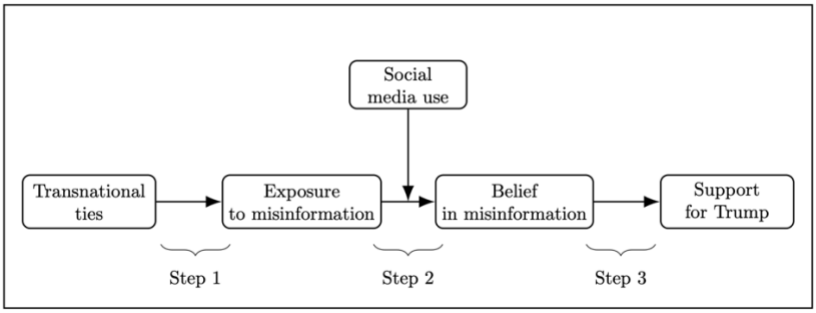
Previous research shows that a person's information environment influences their political life (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder, 1982; McCombs and Shaw, 1972). Work in political communication has established that mass-media coverage influences which issues citizens consider important (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), how they evaluate political actors (Iyengar, Peters, & Kinder, 1982), and what frames they use to evaluate their vote choice (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). Subsequent work has expanded on this by exploring other components that matter to a person's information environment. For Latinos, recent work shows that digital and linguistic information environments are especially important: many Latinos access politics through social media, and bilingual or Spanish-dominant users navigate media environments that differ from those of English-dominant Americans (Abrajano et al. 2025). For instance, interpersonal communication can shape the information someone hears, its source, and its perceived credibility (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1995;

Mutz, 2002). Beyond elite messaging, social processes influence the information people encounter, how it is discussed, and how it is validated (Zaller, 1992).

For many Americans, interpersonal networks are often composed of domestic ties, but Latinos have more diverse networks that include both domestic and transnational ties. Americans can find themselves bound by the U.S. media ecosystem and social networks that focus mainly on U.S. politics and news. By contrast, Latinos in the U.S. often maintain ties to communities abroad. These relationships are sustained for a variety of reasons, including family obligations, emotional attachment, continued interest in the fate of the nation of origin, and a desire to maintain cultural identity and a sense of belonging across generations. While these ties may be especially salient for more recent immigrants, they can exist beyond the first generation. Even more now, those ties can persist as social media platforms have reduced the costs of maintaining these relationships and facilitated the formation and maintenance of communities organized around shared national, ethnic, and Latino identities (Abrajano et al. 2025). Evidence of these robust transnational ties has been documented, for example, through remittances, which remain common even to countries where emigration to the United States has declined over time (Orozco, 2023; World Bank, 2024). Latinos' information environments, then, include information flowing through both domestic and foreign networks, about political content relevant to both contexts. As such, transnational ties may provide an important channel for exposure to political information.

The argument developed in this paper proceeds in three steps. First, transnational ties expand exposure to political information, including misinformation, circulating across borders. Second, social media conditions whether that exposure translates into belief by increasing repetition, reinforcement, and social validation. Third, belief in misinformation is associated with greater support for Trump. Figure 1 summarizes the theoretical framework and the relationships examined in the analyses that follow.

Figure 1: Directed Acyclic Graph for the Theory of How Transnational Ties Relate to Trump Support



Step One: Transnational Ties as a Channel of Exposure

Migration scholarship has established that contemporary migrants do not assimilate into purely domestic information environments. Levitt (2001), in her foundational ethnography of "transnational villagers," documented the durable cultural, social, and political exchanges between U.S. immigrant communities and their countries of origin. Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt (1999) provided the conceptual framework, defining transnational ties as regular, sustained, and institutionalized cross-border activities. Subsequent work has documented the consequences of these ties for civic engagement, partisan attitudes, and remittance flows, while also debating their scope and persistence (Eckstein & Najam, 2013; Waldinger, 2015; Orozco, 2023). Survey evidence consistently shows that Latinos report high rates of contact with people abroad (DeSipio, 2006; Pew Hispanic Center, 2007; Jones-Correa & McCann, 2016).

The implication of these cross-border exchanges for political communication remains underexplored. If transnational ties are, as I argue, real and significant, they may play an important role in Latinos' information environment and deserve further attention. I propose that these ties matter because they transmit more than casual apolitical information. Instead, these ties convey political narratives and attitudes, often framed by the lived experience of those living abroad. For instance, someone's relative in Caracas describing the collapse of public services under the Maduro government carries a different kind of authority than an English-language news report, particularly when the relative's account is repeated, embellished, or extended through social media.

A friend in Tijuana who describes the violence of the cartels carries a similar authority for U.S. immigration debates. These accounts are produced by trusted contacts whose physical presence is itself the central credibility cue.

Transnational ties function as conduits of exposure. Some of the content traveling through these ties is accurate, some is not. The key, analytically, is that the content is somewhat distinctive: transnational ties introduce frames, claims, and actors that domestic U.S. media do not always carry. Because of the asymmetry of contemporary U.S. political misinformation, much of which clusters around certain themes (such as socialism, crime, immigration, and election fraud) that resonate with the Latin American political experience, transnational ties information content tends to circulate right-leaning misinformation more than left-leaning misinformation (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Garrett & Bond, 2021; Freelon et al., 2020). I therefore expect transnational ties to predict exposure to political misinformation, controlling for partisanship and demographics. Given this, I propose that:

H1: Transnational ties are positively associated with exposure to political misinformation.

Exposure vs. Belief

Exposure does not necessarily translate into belief. Recent research on misinformation shows that these two processes, exposure and belief, are conceptually and empirically distinct (Guess, Nagler, & Tucker, 2019; Tucker et al., 2018). Among Latinos specifically, Abrajano et al. (2025) show that reliance on Spanish-language social media for news predicts belief in false electoral narratives. People often encounter false information online, but only some accept it as factual. Earlier studies of misinformation used exposure as a proxy for influence, but subsequent research has highlighted the important distinction between these phenomena. For instance, Guess et al. (2019) concluded that the population that retained or believed misinformation was significantly smaller than that who encountered misinformation. Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) also found that even with high exposure, the downstream effects on vote intention were modest, suggesting a model of the world in which simple exposure does not directly translate into electoral outcomes. Tucker et al. (2018) further clarified the distinction by arguing that identical messages can produce different effects in different people, through different channels of influence.

Certain characteristics can make misinformation more likely to be believed. A wealth of literature shows that messages are evaluated on more than just their factual content. For instance, people rely on cues such as familiarity with the claim, its source, the emotions it evokes, and whether it feels new or important. Thus, a message can be more persuasive if it is heard repeatedly, comes from credible sources, evokes emotions, provides novel or salient information, or aligns with prior attitudes and identities (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley 1953; Zajonc 1968; Cialdini 2009; Petty and Cacioppo 1986; Lodge and Taber 2013; Berlyne 1960).

Repetition is key because repeated exposure can create a sense of familiarity that may be mistaken for truthfulness. Experimental studies have shown that repetition *alone* increases perceived accuracy and the probability that a false claim is taken as factual, even when the claim is initially implausible or explicitly labeled as false (Pennycook, Cannon, & Rand, 2018; Fazio, Brashier, Payne, & Marsh, 2015). Given this, simply encountering a message multiple times can make that message appear factual. Social endorsement can reinforce this process in online settings. When a claim is liked or shared by others, it can influence whether a person engages with it, even beyond partisan cues (Messing, Solomon, and Sean J. Westwood, 2014).

Other characteristics, such as source credibility and social proximity to the sources, also make misinformation more credible. People are more willing to accept a claim when it comes from sources perceived as knowledgeable, trustworthy, or socially familiar (Pornpitakpan, 2004; Messing & Westwood, 2014; Jia et al., 2025). This matters because people residing in Latin American countries can be perceived as knowledgeable and trustworthy sources, given their personal experience with the local context. A Latino in the U.S. can use the physical presence of their transnational ties as a cue for knowledge and thus be more willing to accept information offered by those ties.

A claim is also more likely to be accepted if it is emotionally salient. Emotionally charged information is more likely to capture attention, spread through networks, and be remembered, while novel claims can feel informative or urgent (Brady, Wills, Jost, Tucker, & Van Bavel, 2017; Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018; Martel, Pennycook, & Rand, 2020). Latinos' transnational ties may enable them to learn of information that is particularly novel or surprising because it comes from contexts outside the U.S. information environment, which can help get the message across more easily.

Motivated reasoning also makes some individuals more likely to accept misinformation that is congenial or congruent with prior beliefs. Skepticism can be lower for claims that align with already held ideas than for those that contradict a person's priors (Kahan, Peters, Dawson, & Slovic, 2017; Strickland, Taber, & Lodge, 2011; Flynn, Nyhan, & Reifler, 2017). So, misinformation that confirm suspicions can be more easily accepted.

These studies point to several important factors that bridge the gap between exposure and belief. Social media provides an environment where these factors can simultaneously operate, as individuals can repeatedly encounter the same highly endorsed and emotionally charged claim they heard from a credible source, such as a person they know who lives outside the U.S.

Step Two: Social Media as a Conditional Amplifier

Social media platforms operationalize many of the factors identified in the misinformation literature. For instance, platform algorithms provide users with content that is congenial to previously engaged content, thus providing the repetition needed for false claims to appear truer. These can create repeated doses of content across days and weeks (Bakshy, Messing, & Adamic, 2015; Bail, 2021). Further, social media platforms provide an important proxy for social endorsement through features such as likes, shares, and comments (Avram, Micallef, Patil, & Menczer, 2020). It may be the case that seeing a false claim's popularity online signals credibility or social validation. Encrypted and semi-private messaging platforms compound these dynamics as forwarding obscures a message's origin, and interpersonal sharing increases exposure and trust (Resende et al., 2019; Valenzuela, Halpern, Katz, & Miranda, 2019). Lastly, social media plays a key role in the belief of misinformation because it helps to easily spread information that's more emotionally charged. We know from the literature that misinformation is often more emotionally arousing than accurate news, which aids in its "shareability" (Vosoughi et al., 2018; Brady et al., 2017).

For people with transnational ties, social media use matters in specific ways. This expectation builds on evidence that Latinos use social media for political information, and that Spanish-language social media use is associated with belief in political misinformation (Abrajano et al. 2025). Heavy social media use multiplies encounters with content originating in transnational networks; embeds those encounters in feeds that repeat

similar content; and surrounds them with social-endorsement signals from co-ethnic peers. A claim about Venezuelan socialism that begins as a single message from a relative becomes, in the heavy social-media user's feed, a recurring piece of content with apparent broad support. For users with low social media use, the same transnational tie produces a single, isolated encounter that is harder to mistake for consensus.

This logic implies that the effect of transnational ties on belief is conditional on social media use. At high levels of use, the digital environment can condition the transnational tie information into a repeated, validated stream of misinformation that results in belief. This conditional logic is an important theoretical claim of the paper and distinguishes the present argument from prior work that has treated transnational ties and digital media as independent influences. Given this, I propose the following:

H2: The association between transnational ties and belief in political misinformation becomes more positive as social media use increases.

Step Three: Trump Support as a Downstream Consequence of Believing Misinformation

The third step in my theory concerns the political consequences of believing misinformation. We know from prior research that when people believe misinformation, factors such as candidate evaluation, vote choice, policy preferences, and trust in institutions can be affected (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017; Tucker et al., 2018; Hopkins, Sides, and Citrin, 2019; Berlinski et al., 2023; Pennycook and Rand, 2021). For instance, some scholars have argued and shown that the 2016 presidential election outcome was influenced in favor of Trump by a Russian-led disinformation effort (Jamieson, 2018). These findings have been affirmed by others who show that exposure to misinformation was associated with at least some reduction in support for Clinton in 2016 compared to Obama voters in 2012 (Gunther, Beck, and Nisbet, 2019). Further, there may be an asymmetry in misinformation, with pro-Trump false stories more prevalent than pro-Clinton ones (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017). Notably, what may appear as modest, belief-induced shifts in support for candidates or policies can have larger consequences for the electoral system when aggregated across constituencies (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017). Since the supply of misinformation tilts right [CITE], belief in misinformation should pull believers to the right as well. For a respondent who has come to believe that the Democratic Party is pushing socialism,

that immigrants are responsible for rising crime, or that the 2020 election was stolen, support for Trump is the politically congruent response. Given this, I propose my last hypothesis:

H3: Belief in political misinformation is positively associated with support for Donald Trump.

Testing the Theory: Latinos as a Perfect Case

While the underlying logic of my theory can apply to other groups, Latinos are a particularly good test case. My theory emphasizes that transnational ties are associated with exposure, that social media use conditions belief, and that Trump support is correlated with belief. Since Latinos are more likely to have ties *and* to use social media to sustain those ties, they present an ideal case for testing my theory. If my theory is true, the case of Latinos should show the correlations I propose. I discuss the generalizability of this case in the discussion section.

The following examples illustrate my theory in more concrete terms. Consider, for instance, two ideal respondents. The first is Ana, who maintains contact with relatives in Venezuela, uses social media daily, and hears from them about state failure under the Maduro[3] regime. Her relatives share with her that socialism and Maduro are to blame for the current political situation they are experiencing. Ana later goes online and sees a claim on Facebook that the Democratic Party is pushing for socialism in the U.S. Ana does not encounter such a claim out of the blue. Instead, she hears this claim alongside her relatives' stories, which lends it more credence. It seems obvious because it is consistent with a motif expressed by her family and friends back home. The second example is Carlos, who does not communicate with people abroad but does use social media. Carlos sees the same claim about the Democratic Party pushing socialism in the U.S. In contrast to Ana, exposure to the claim is unaccompanied by any transnational anchors. This leaves Carlos much more room to ignore or discount the claim. My theory would predict, then, that Ana, but not Carlos, will come to accept the claim, and that will begin pushing her toward Trump. The empirical task of the current paper is to show that this conditional logic holds for the population from which Ana and Carlos are drawn.

Research Design

Instrument

[3] Nicolas Maduro was the President of Venezuela until 2026, before he was captured by U.S. authorities.

I test the proposed theory with an original survey, fielded by YouGov in September 2024, with a Latino oversample. The instrument was administered in Spanish and English. The final sample is N=1500: 750 respondents identify as Hispanic/Latino, and 750 do not. The respondents are drawn from YouGov's matched panel, weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population on age, gender, and education. Respondents in the main sample (not the oversample) are also weighted based on race. The main sample was also post-stratified by 2020 presidential vote choice and by a four-way stratification of gender, age, race, and education. Then, for the main sample, there was an additional three-way stratification between age, race, and education. Within the Latino oversample, a separate weight was post-stratified on 2020 presidential vote choice, followed by a three-way stratification by gender, age, and education. Further details about the instrument can be found in the Appendix.

Misinformation Stories

Exposure and belief are measured against four real misinformation narratives that circulated within Latino digital networks before the 2024 presidential election. The four narratives were chosen from a site[4] that tracks and verifies the veracity of Spanish stories shared online. Two more stories were shown to respondents as robustness checks: one factual story chosen from popular news circulating around the same time, and one false story that was not shared online and was fully fabricated by the author of this paper. The stories are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Specific Stories Shown to Respondents

Story	**Veracity**
Chinese loans and investments are better for Latin American countries than United States loans and investments	False
Biden and Congress are working on banning the Bible	False
Vice President Harris congratulated President Maduro for winning the 2024 presidential election in Venezuela	False
Venezuelan refugees are causing a rise in crime rates in Latin America	False
Some states now allow teachers to be armed in the classroom	True

[4] The site is https://factchequeado.com

Story	Veracity
Phil McClaren secretly owns all social media platforms	Fabricated by author, not a story that circulated online

Respondents were shown each story and asked whether they had heard it. If a respondent said they had heard the story, a follow-up question asked them to assess the claim's veracity. Respondents could choose from a five-item scale ranging from "definitely false" to "definitely true". Separating these questions permits independent examination of exposure (heard the story) vs. belief (evaluated the story as true). All respondents were debriefed at the end of the survey and shown which stories were false and which were true.

Independent Variables

The survey asked respondents demographic and partisanship questions in addition to questions about transnational ties and social media use. The transnational ties variable consisted of two questions. First, respondents are asked, "*Thinking about the people you know, do any of them live outside the U.S.*?" If the respondent selected yes, a follow-up inquired about contact frequency, presenting respondents with a set of options ranging from I do not talk to friends and family who live in other countries to I talk to friends and family who live in other countries more than once a week. In addition to questions about transnational ties, the survey also asked about social media use. Respondents were presented with a multiple-choice list of social media platforms. Follow-up questions asked whether they used the selected platforms daily, weekly, monthly, less than once a month, or not at all.

Dependent Variables

The survey asked respondents about their prospective 2024 vote choice, their recall of their 2020 vote, and their overall opinions of Trump, Biden, Harris, and Vance. The prospective vote-choice question included a follow-up asking how confident the respondent was in their choice. Respondents who did not vote in 2020 were asked how they would have voted *if* they did vote. The question asking respondents for their opinion of the candidates presented a list of options ranging from "extremely bad" to "extremely good" to "no opinion." The order of the candidates was randomized to diminish response order effects.

Data Preparation

All variables are rescaled to range from 0 to 1 to facilitate comparability of coefficients across models. Transnational ties are operationalized as a composite measure that incorporates both the presence of ties and the frequency of contact with individuals outside the United States. Respondents with no ties are coded as zero, and higher values indicate more frequent interaction among those with ties. Social media use is constructed as an index that averages self-reported frequency across multiple platforms.

Exposure to misinformation is measured using binary indicators for whether respondents report having heard each of several widely circulated political stories. These items are combined into an index of exposure to misinformation and are also analyzed separately to assess content-specific effects. I report specific story effects in the Appendix. Belief in misinformation is measured only among respondents who report prior exposure to a given story. For these respondents, belief is captured using both a continuous measure of perceived truthfulness and a binary indicator that distinguishes between those who consider the story likely true and those who do not.

All models include standard demographic and political controls, including gender, education, age, income, political interest, and partisanship. Analyses use survey weights to ensure representativeness of the target population.

Estimation Strategy

The empirical approach follows the theoretical structure outlined above. First, I examine exposure (H1), second, belief (H2), and third, downstream political attitudes (H3). Each stage corresponds to a distinct outcome and is estimated using models appropriate to the data's structure.

Exposure (H1: Transnational ties are positively associated with exposure to political misinformation)

To assess whether transnational ties are associated with greater exposure to misinformation, I estimate models in which exposure is the dependent variable and transnational ties are the primary independent variable. Exposure is analyzed both as an index and at the level of individual stories using logistic regression models. To evaluate whether the observed relationships reflect network-based exposure rather than partisan sorting, I estimate models within partisan subgroups and include controls for partisanship (as reported in the Appendix). I also estimate pooled models that combine multiple misinformation items and include story fixed effects,

thereby increasing statistical power and enabling a more general assessment of the association between transnational ties and exposure.

Belief (H2: The association between transnational ties and belief in political misinformation becomes more positive as social media use increases.)

The second stage examines whether social media use conditions the relationship between transnational ties and belief in misinformation. Because belief is only observed among respondents who report encountering a story, these models are estimated on the subset of respondents with prior exposure. I estimate both story-specific and pooled models in which belief is regressed on transnational ties, social media use, and their interaction. The interaction term evaluates whether the association between transnational ties and belief varies across levels of social media use. Pooled models include story fixed effects to account for differences in baseline credibility across narratives and cluster standard errors at the respondent level to account for repeated observations.

Downstream Consequences (H3: Belief in political misinformation is positively associated with support for Donald Trump)

Finally, I examine whether belief in misinformation is associated with attitudes toward Donald Trump. These models estimate respondents' evaluations of Trump as a function of belief in misinformation, controlling for exposure, social media use, and standard covariates.

Linking the Steps: Conditional Indirect Associations

To connect these steps, I estimate models that assess whether the association between transnational ties and Trump support is indirectly related by belief in misinformation, and whether this relationship varies with levels of social media use. This approach is motivated by the theoretical expectation that the relationship linking transnational ties, belief, and political attitudes is conditional rather than uniform across individuals.

Specifically, the argument implies a sequential pattern in which transnational ties are associated with exposure to political narratives, and social media environments shape how those narratives are evaluated. A standard mediation framework would summarize this relationship as a single average indirect association across all respondents. In contrast, the present approach allows the magnitude of this indirect association to vary with social media use. This provides a more precise test of whether the observed relationships are concentrated

among individuals embedded in information environments characterized by higher levels of social media use. Because the data are observational, these estimates are interpreted as descriptive patterns consistent with the proposed theoretical framework rather than as definitive evidence of causal mediation.

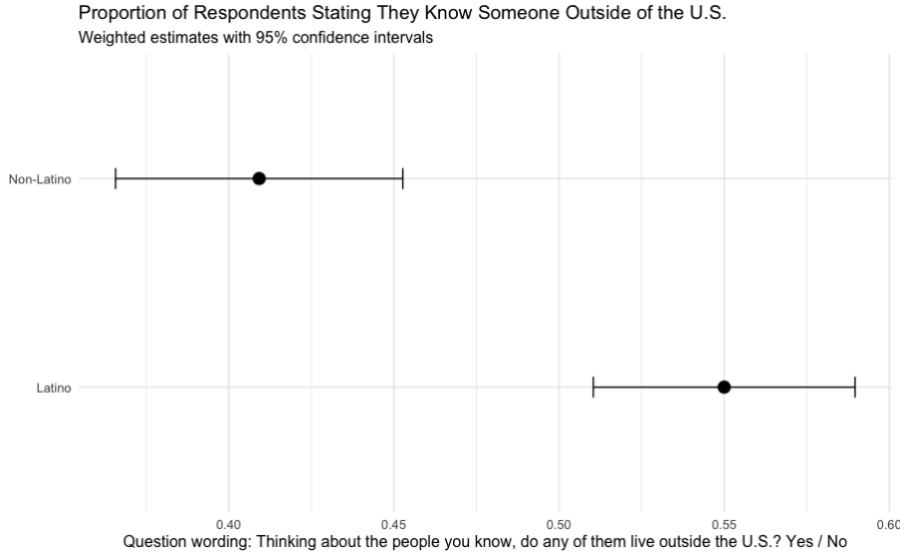
Results

The results are presented in the order of the hypotheses, beginning with descriptive comparisons. Each step is tested separately before a fourth analysis brings them together in a moderated mediation model. I also conduct robustness checks at each step by introducing controls for national-origin group and religious affiliation; the corresponding tables appear in the Appendix, but I discuss the findings in each section. In brief, the evidence is strongest and most robust for the first and third steps: transnational ties are consistently and positively associated with exposure to misinformation, and belief in misinformation is positively associated with support for Trump. The evidence for the second step, that social media conditions the relationship between transnational ties and belief, is positive and significant in the primary specifications but attenuates in the robustness checks, and should therefore be interpreted as suggestive rather than definitive.

Descriptive Differences in Transnational Ties and Social Media Use

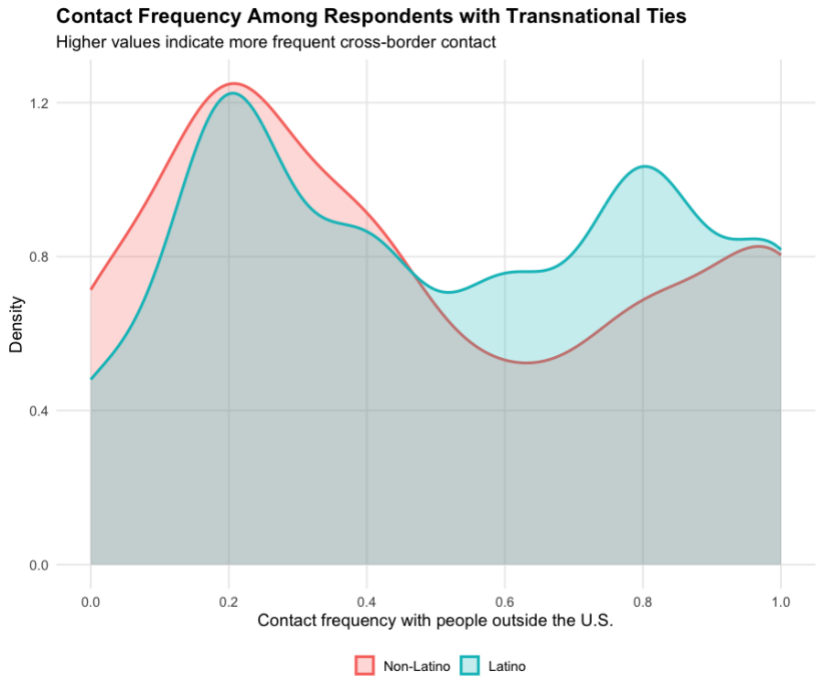
Latinos report more ties and more frequent contact with those ties compared to non-Latinos.

Figure 1: Proportion of Respondents Stating They Know Someone Outside of the U.S.



Latinos are substantially more likely than non-Latinos to report knowing someone outside of the U.S. The estimated proportion is approximately .55 for Latinos compared to .41 for non-Latinos. The confidence intervals around these estimates do not overlap, indicating a significant difference. Substantively, this figure indicates that Latinos are more likely to be embedded in transnational ties. Additionally, Latinos also report somewhat more frequent contact with those ties. The following figure is a density plot of respondents who indicate that they know someone outside the U.S. Among respondents with transnational ties, Latinos and non-Latinos display somewhat similar distributions of contact frequency, with an overlap. Latinos, however, show somewhat greater density at higher levels of contact. Taken together with the previous figure, this may indicate that group differences may be mainly driven by the prevalence of ties rather than by large differences in contact intensity conditional on having ties.

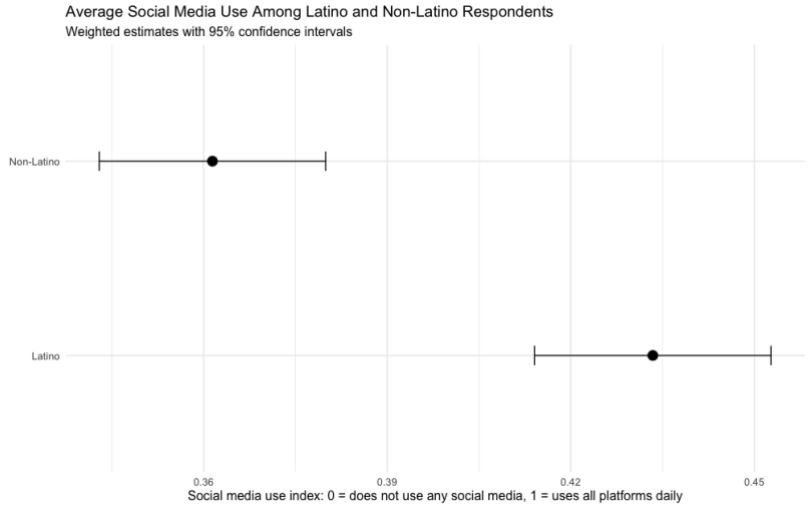
Figure 2: Contact Frequency Among Respondents with Transnational Ties



Further, I argue that Latinos use social media more frequently because it is a crucial way they sustain ties abroad. The following figure shows the average social media use among Latinos and non-Latinos in the sample. Latino respondents average about .43 compared to .36 for non-Latinos on a scale of 0 to 1, where

respondents who use social media platforms daily score 1, and those who never use social media score 0. Since the coefficients do not overlap, this difference is statistically significant. This pattern indicates that Latinos are more embedded in social media environments, a key condition under which exposure to information is more likely to be reinforced and evaluated as credible. This descriptive pattern is consistent with recent evidence that Latinos rely heavily on social media for political information and that Latino political activity online is comparable to, and sometimes often higher than, that of non-Hispanic whites (Abrajano et al. 2025).

Figure 3: Average Social Media Use Among Latino and Non-Latino Respondents



Descriptive Differences Between Latinos and Non-Latinos with Transnational Ties

To further assess whether transnational ties reflect broader demographic differences, I examine the characteristics of respondents with and without such ties within Latino and non-Latino populations. Figure 4 displays the distributions of age, education, income, and partisanship by transnational tie status for Latinos and Non-Latinos. Among Latinos, the distributions are largely similar across these characteristics, indicating that individuals with transnational ties are not systematically distinct from those without ties along key demographic or political dimensions. This suggests that transnational ties are broadly distributed within the Latino population rather than concentrated among specific subgroups.

Among non-Latinos, respondents with transnational ties exhibit modest differences, including somewhat higher income and education levels and a younger age profile. However, these differences are limited in magnitude, and partisanship remains broadly similar across groups. Taken together, these patterns indicate that transnational ties are not simply proxies for demographic or political characteristics, particularly among Latinos, strengthening the interpretation of ties as a distinct feature of the information environment rather than a reflection of underlying composition.

Figure 4: Characteristics of Latinos and Non-Latinos Who Have Transnational Ties

Figure 4a: Latinos

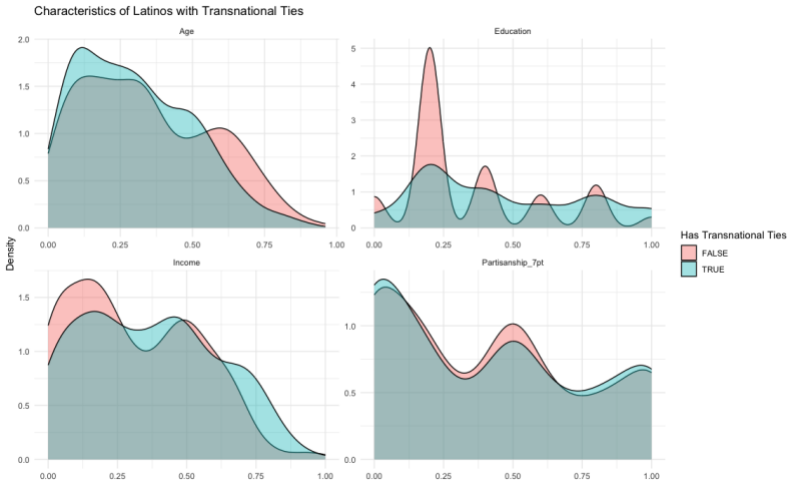
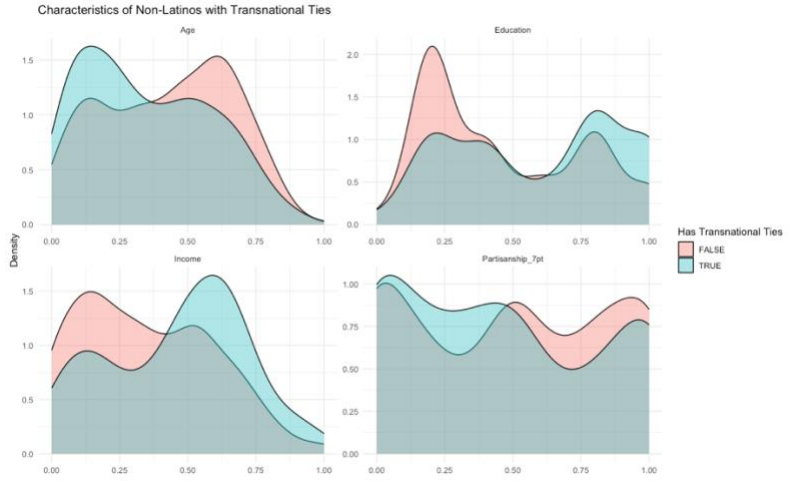


Figure 4b: Non-Latinos



Exposure via Transnational Ties

In Hypothesis 1, I proposed that *"transnational ties are positively associated with exposure to political misinformation."* If this hypothesis is correct, individuals with transnational ties should be more likely to report encountering misinformation. To assess whether this correlation exists, I estimate linear probability models using pooled respondent-story data. The dependent variable equals 1 if the respondent reports having heard a given misinformation story, and 0 otherwise. Because each respondent can choose from four misinformation stories, the data is structured in long format, with observations at the respondent-story level. The models include story fixed effects to account for differences across narratives. This strategy accounts for the fact that some stories may be more popular than others. Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level to account for within-individual correlations across repeated observations. The key independent variable is transnational ties, a continuous measure capturing the presence of ties and the frequency of contact.

Table 1 presents separate models for Latinos and non-Latinos. The key independent variable is the Transnational Ties index, a continuous measure that combines the presence of ties outside the United States with the frequency of communication through those ties. All models include controls for partisanship, gender, education, age, and income.

Table 1: Transnational Ties and Exposure to Misinformation

Table 2: Transnational Ties and Exposure to Misinformation by Latino Identity

	Latino	Non-Latino
Transnational ties	0.190***	0.136**
	(0.052)	(0.044)
Male	0.049	0.062**
	(0.036)	(0.023)
Education	0.000	0.016+
	(0.011)	(0.009)
Age	-0.003***	-0.003***
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Income	0.006	0.001
	(0.007)	(0.004)
Independent	-0.038	0.015
	(0.034)	(0.034)
Republican	0.033	0.110***
	(0.033)	(0.025)
Num.Obs.	2924	2168
R2	0.122	0.103
FE: story_label	X	X

+ p <0.1, * p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001
Entries are linear probability models where the dependent variable equals 1 if the respondent reports having heard the story. The data are structured in long format, with each observation corresponding to a respondent–story pair. Models include story fixed effects and standard errors clustered at the respondent level. The number of observations therefore exceeds the number of respondents.

The results provide support for Hypothesis 1. Among Latinos, a one-unit increase in transnational ties is associated with a 0.190 increase in the probability of reporting exposure to misinformation. The coefficient is statistically significant at conventional levels. Importantly, a similar pattern appears among non-Latinos. A one-unit increase in transnational ties is associated with a 0.136 increase in the probability of reporting exposure to misinformation. Although the effect is somewhat smaller than among Latinos, it remains positive and statistically significant.

These findings suggest that transnational ties serve as channels through which political information travels more generally. At the same time, the larger coefficient among Latinos is consistent with the expectation that transnational networks play a particularly important role for Latinos, as they are more likely to maintain such ties and do interact more frequently.

Several control variables also exhibit meaningful relationships with exposure. Younger respondents are significantly more likely to report having heard the misinformation stories, while gender has a positive effect among non-Latinos but not among Latinos. Education, income, and partisan identity are generally weak predictors of exposure. Most importantly, the association between transnational ties and exposure remains substantial after accounting for partisan affiliation, suggesting that the relationship is not simply a byproduct of partisan sorting into different information environments.

I conduct additional robustness checks for country of origin and religion, which can be found in the Appendix. These tests are particularly important because a third variable (such as religion or country of origin) could plausibly shape both ties and receptivity to information. If national-origin group or religiosity accounts for both, then the observed association would be less consistent with my proposed information-environment mechanism. Despite these concerns, the estimated relationship between transnational ties and misinformation exposure remains positive, substantively similar in magnitude, and statistically significant after the inclusion of these additional controls. This stability suggests that the relationship between transnational ties and exposure is not simply a proxy for national-origin composition or religiosity. Rather, it is consistent with the argument that transnational ties themselves serve as channels through which political information travels across borders.

The results and the robustness checks indicate that individuals with stronger transnational ties are more likely to encounter misinformation. This pattern is evident among both Latinos and non-Latinos and is especially pronounced among Latinos, providing support for the first hypothesis.

Step 2: Belief Conditioned via Social Media Use

In my second hypothesis, I proposed that *"the association between transnational ties and belief in political misinformation becomes more positive as social media use increases."* This implies that transnational ties expose individuals to information and narratives circulating outside of traditional U.S. information environments, while social media amplifies and reinforces those narratives. Given this, the relationship between transnational ties and belief should become more positive among those who use social media more frequently.

To evaluate those expectations, I estimate linear models in which the dependent variable is an index of belief in misinformation ranging from 0-1. The models include measures of transnational ties, social media

use, and an interaction between them. The interaction allows the association between ties and belief to vary across levels of social media use. A positive coefficient on the interaction term indicates that the relationship between transnational ties and belief becomes more positive as social media use increases.

Table 2 reports models that include transnational ties, social media use, and their interaction for Latinos, non-Latinos, U.S.-born, and non-U.S.-born individuals. The central result is the positive interaction between ties and social media use. Among Latinos, the interaction coefficient is 0.42. Similar positive and statistically significant interactions appear among non-Latinos and U.S. born respondents. These estimates indicate that the association between transnational ties and belief in misinformation becomes increasingly positive as social media use increases. In substantive terms, individuals with stronger transnational ties are more likely to believe misinformation when they are also frequent social media users.

Table 2: Factors Influencing Misinformation Belief

Table 2: Factors Influencing Misinformation Belief

	Latino	Not Latino	U.S. Born	Not U.S. Born
Transnational Ties	−0.112**	−0.116**	−0.089**	−0.042
	(0.051)	(0.054)	(0.044)	(0.072)
Social Media	0.186***	0.191***	0.170***	0.472***
	(0.050)	(0.049)	(0.034)	(0.101)
Transnational Ties × Social Media	0.420***	0.372***	0.397***	−0.005
	(0.096)	(0.104)	(0.084)	(0.139)
Generation	0.033	0.039		
	(0.022)	(0.028)		
Gender	0.019	0.031**	0.029***	0.036
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.011)	(0.027)
Education	−0.040	0.009	0.014	−0.065
	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.021)	(0.043)
Age	−0.078**	−0.046	−0.022	−0.241***
	(0.038)	(0.041)	(0.029)	(0.077)
Political Interest	−0.076***	−0.132***	−0.111***	−0.143***
	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.018)	(0.041)
Income	0.033	−0.042	−0.047*	0.162***
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.024)	(0.054)
Partisanship	0.056***	0.121***	0.114***	0.106**
	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.014)	(0.041)
Constant	0.064*	0.052	0.048*	0.028
	(0.037)	(0.038)	(0.028)	(0.063)
Num.Obs.	711	539	1043	207
Log.Lik.	266.808	−181.525	−443.755	−84.363

* p <0.1, ** p <0.05, *** p <0.01
Note: Dependent variable is an index of belief in misinformation ranging from 0 to 1.

Several additional patterns are worth noting. For instance, social media use is positively associated with belief in misinformation across all groups. Among Latinos, the coefficient is 0.186 and significant. Substantively,

this means that even in the absence of transnational ties, social media is associated with greater belief. Transnational ties, in contrast, are negatively associated with belief in the absence of social media use. In an interaction model, the coefficient on transnational ties represents the relationship between ties and misinformation belief when social media use equals zero. Among Latinos, for example, the coefficient of -0.112 indicates that, among respondents who report no social media use, stronger transnational ties are associated with lower levels of belief in misinformation. One possible interpretation is that interpersonal communication through transnational networks does not, by itself, increase susceptibility to misinformation and may even expose individuals to corrective information. This is consistent with work showing that direct interpersonal communication can be corrective in ways that algorithmically curated feeds are not (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1995). While this negative coefficient was not predicted by the theory, it is consistent with the broader argument that transnational ties alone are insufficient to increase belief in misinformation.

Other variables display expected relationships. Political interest is consistently negative across groups, indicating that more politically attentive respondents are less likely to evaluate misinformation stories as true. Partisanship is positively associated with belief in most models, suggesting that respondents who identify more strongly with the Republican Party are more likely to rate the stories as true. This pattern is consistent with the ideological content of several misinformation stories included in the survey.

Overall, the results are consistent with H2. The evidence suggests that transnational ties and social media operate jointly rather than independently. Stronger transnational ties are associated with greater belief in misinformation, particularly among frequent social media users.

Additional robustness checks reported in the Appendix provide a more demanding test of this relationship by introducing controls for national-origin group and born-again Christian identification. In these models, the interaction term remains positive but is no longer statistically significant. Because these specifications are estimated on substantially smaller samples and include additional controls that absorb variation associated with transnational ties, they provide a more conservative test of the argument. Consequently, the evidence for the moderating role of social media should be interpreted as suggestive rather than definitive. The primary specifications consistently indicate a positive interaction between transnational ties

and social media use, but the robustness checks suggest that the magnitude and precision of this relationship are sensitive to model specification and warrant further study.

Step 3: Trump Support as a Consequence of Belief

In my third hypothesis, I proposed that *"belief in political misinformation is positively associated with support for Donald Trump."* If my hypothesis is correct, we should see that belief in misinformation is positively associated with support for Trump, even after controlling for other characteristics. To test this, I estimate linear regression models in which the dependent variable is the respondents' evaluation of Trump, scaled from 0 to 1, with 1 indicating the most favorable opinion. The key independent variable is an index of belief in misinformation, which was also scaled 0-1, with 1 being those who evaluate the misinformation as *definitely true*. The models include standard demographic and political controls, including generation (coded as 0-1, with 0 being first generation). To assess whether the association between misinformation belief and Trump support varies across groups, I estimate models separately for Latino and non-Latino respondents, as well as for U.S.-born and non-U.S.-born respondents. Analyses use survey weights to ensure representativeness of the target population. Standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Table 3: Factors Influencing Liking Trump

Table 3: Factors Influencing Liking Trump

	Latino	Not Latino	U.S. Born	Not U.S. Born
Believes Misinformation	0.364***	0.460***	0.476***	0.137
	(0.050)	(0.061)	(0.044)	(0.090)
Generation	−0.072**	−0.072*		
	(0.031)	(0.041)		
Gender	0.019	0.002	−0.013	0.083**
	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.016)	(0.037)
Education	−0.006	−0.009	−0.006	−0.033***
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.012)
Age	0.000	−0.001	0.000	−0.005***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Political Interest	0.010	−0.009	−0.002	−0.013
	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.019)
Income	0.008**	−0.002	−0.001	−0.004
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.005)
Partisanship	0.126***	0.136***	0.138***	0.115***
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.009)
Constant	−0.123**	−0.033	−0.131***	0.350***
	(0.057)	(0.063)	(0.045)	(0.099)
Num.Obs.	865	635	1221	279

* p <0.1, ** p <0.05, *** p <0.01

Table 3 reports the association between belief in misinformation and evaluations of Trump across different groups. Across most of the models presented, believing misinformation is positively and strongly associated with having more favorable views of Trump. Among Latinos specifically, a one-unit increase in belief is associated with a .364 increase in giving a favorable evaluation of Trump. The relationship is larger for Non-Latinos and U.S.-born. While not significant, the association is still positive for non-U.S.-born respondents. As expected, partisanship is also a strong predictor of Trump favorability, though holding it constant does not make the effect of believing misinformation disappear.

Substantively, these estimates indicate that people who are more likely to evaluate misinformation as true are also more likely to report favorable attitudes toward Trump. This relationship holds even when controlling for partisanship and other characteristics. This may suggest that believing misinformation is associated with political evaluations that go beyond political predispositions.

The Appendix reports additional robustness checks that introduce controls for national-origin group and religious affiliation. These checks help assess whether the observed relationship reflects the mechanism

proposed here or is instead driven by a third variable correlated with both misinformation belief and support for Trump. For example, Cuban and Venezuelan respondents may be more likely to support Trump because of experiences and political histories associated with their countries of origin, while highly religious respondents may be more likely to support Trump because of shared positions on social issues. If these characteristics simultaneously influence both misinformation belief and Trump support, the observed association could be spurious. Reassuringly, the coefficient on misinformation belief remains positive, substantively similar in magnitude, and statistically significant after the inclusion of these additional controls. This suggests that the relationship between belief in misinformation and support for Trump is not simply a byproduct of national-origin composition or religiosity.

These results are consistent with Hypothesis 3, which proposed that belief in misinformation is positively associated with support for Trump. Further, these results hold when the outcome variable is voting choice rather than Trump favorability. Those results are presented in the Appendix.

Bringing it together

Together, the results test each link in the theory I have proposed. Transnational ties are associated with greater exposure to misinformation, social media use conditions whether exposure is associated with belief, and belief is, in turn, associated with more favorable evaluations of Trump. The general theory, however, specifies an ordered relationship in which the association between transnational ties and political attitudes operates through belief and is conditional on social media use.

To examine whether the proposed steps align when considered together, I estimate models to assess whether the association between transnational ties and Trump support operates indirectly through belief in misinformation, and whether the strength of this relationship varies with levels of social media use. Rather than testing a causal mechanism, this approach assesses whether the relationships observed in the previous analyses cohere in a manner consistent with the proposed theoretical framework. It particularly allows evaluation of whether these associations are concentrated among individuals embedded in higher-social-media environments, as suggested by the theory's conditional logic.

Given this, I estimate two models. First, I estimate the relationships between transnational ties, social media, and belief. This is modeled with the following equation:

$$Belief\_i = \alpha + \beta 1 * Ties\_i + \beta 2 * SocialMedia\_i + \beta 3 * (Ties\_i \times SocialMedia\_i) + \gamma X\_i + \varepsilon\_i$$

The interaction term allows the effect of ties on belief to vary with social media. Then, I estimate whether belief predicts Trump support:

$$TrumpSupport\_i = \alpha + \delta * Belief\_i + \gamma X\_i + \varepsilon\_i$$

Where:

- X_i = controls (age, gender, education, income, partisanship, etc.)
- $\beta 3$ captures how the association between ties and belief varies with social media

Using estimates from these models, I compute the conditional indirect association between transnational ties and Trump support through belief in misinformation at different levels of social media use. Specifically, the indirect association is calculated as the product of (1) the association between transnational ties and belief, which varies with social media use due to the interaction term, and (2) the association between belief and Trump support. This produces an estimate of how the association between transnational ties and Trump support through belief differs across low, average, and high levels of social media use. Confidence intervals are obtained via simulation based on the estimated variance-covariance matrix of the model coefficients. Figure 5, presented below, plots the *conditional indirect effect* calculated from these models.

Figure 5: Conditional Indirect Effect of Transnational Ties on Trump Support at Different Levels of Social Media Use

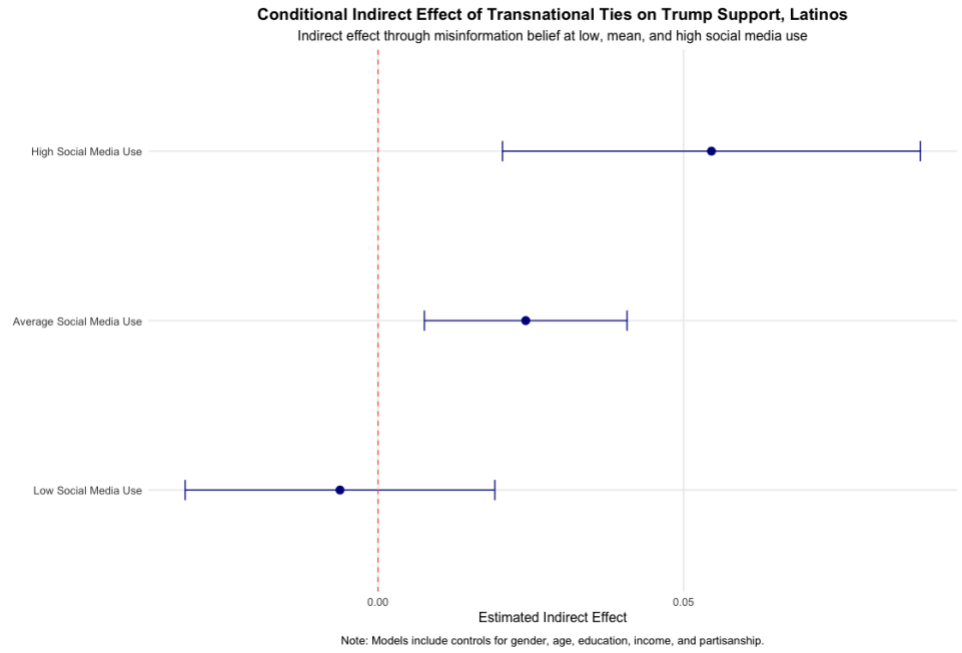


Figure 5 presents the estimated conditional indirect association between transnational ties and Trump support through belief in misinformation at low, average, and high levels of social media use. The conditional indirect associations underlying the figure are reported in Appendix Table F1. At low levels of social media use, the indirect association is close to zero and not statistically distinguishable from zero. At average and high levels of social media use, the association becomes positive and statistically distinguishable from zero. This pattern is consistent with the theory: transnational ties are associated with exposure to political narratives circulating across borders, while social media environments amplify and repeat these narratives, increasing the likelihood that they are accepted as true. Belief in these narratives, in turn, is associated with greater support for Trump. Because these estimates are derived from observational data, they should be interpreted as descriptive patterns consistent with the proposed framework rather than as evidence of causal mediation. Taken together, the results show that transnational ties are reliably associated with exposure to misinformation and that belief in misinformation is strongly associated with support for Trump. The evidence further suggests that social media

amplifies the pathway linking ties to belief, although this portion of the argument is less robust than the exposure and political-consequence stages.

Implications for the Study of Latino Political Behavior

The findings presented support an underexamined account that may help explain Latinos' support for Trump in recent elections. Transnational ties expose Latinos to political information that gets amplified for those who use social media more frequently. In turn, those who believe misinformation are more likely to report having voted for Trump in 2020, planning to vote for Trump in 2024, and having a more favorable opinion toward Trump. This pattern is consistent across standard controls.

The proposed theory does not replace or dismiss existing accounts of Latino political behavior. Instead, the current paper adds an explanation centered on the information environment, a feature that existing accounts often understate because they tend to emphasize relatively stable group characteristics, such as ideology, religiosity, or cultural conservatism. The argument is that political attitudes are shaped not only by predispositions but also by the networks through which people encounter and evaluate political information. What was once treated as a linear process of immigrant acculturation and declining ties to countries of origin is now more complicated. Technological change has made it easier and less costly to maintain regular contact with people abroad, while social media has expanded the reach and intensity of political information circulating through those ties. In this context, transnational ties and social media help structure exposure to political narratives, including misinformation. Latinos are a particularly important case for examining these dynamics because many remain connected to people and information environments outside the United States, while also participating in U.S. political life. This argument complements recent work showing that Latino online political activity is not peripheral to Latino politics but is central to how many Latinos encounter political information, especially across language-specific digital environments (Abrajano et al. 2025).

Implications for the Study of Political Communication

The current work also has implications for the political communication literature. While the misinformation literature has studied exposure, belief, and political consequences as fully separate phenomena, I examine these as interrelated conditional processes. By looking at the processes (exposure, belief, consequence) as interrelated, this paper highlights the importance of conditional relationships within the information environment. The results suggest that the association between exposure and belief depends on the broader informational context, particularly social media use. The conditions under which exposure is reinforced, repeated, and validated matter greatly for belief. Additionally, focusing on transnational ties extends the literature by identifying interpersonal networks as a key variable. Prior work has centered on individual-level traits such as knowledge, motivated reasoning, partisan identity, or on message-level features like repetition, emotionality, source, among others. The current paper shows that transnational ties are an important element of the information environment, especially for groups like Latinos whose networks extend beyond domestic ones. In doing so, it extends recent work on Latino social media use by identifying transnational ties as a network mechanism that may help explain why certain online information environments become politically consequential.

Generalizability

Although I frame this paper around the Latino case, my theory is likely more general. It can be expected that other groups that maintain transnational ties and use social media frequently may exhibit similar behavioral patterns. Latinos, however, are a strategic test given their ties and the content relevant in Latin America, which maps onto the U.S. political landscape. However, other diasporic communities, such as Asians, are also embedded in transnational information environments and could provide a valuable extension to the current work.

Alternative Explanations and Limitations

The most plausible alternative explanation to my proposed theory is partisan self-selection. It is possible that people who identify as Republican, or who are already inclined toward Trump, are more likely to

have transnational ties, use social media, and believe misinformation. However, the results are not fully consistent with this alternative explanation. The relationship between transnational ties and exposure to misinformation is still positive even after controlling for party identification. Additionally, the relationship between belief in misinformation and Trump support is robust to partisan controls and to changes in the dependent variable, including both favorability toward Trump and vote choice. This suggests that partisanship alone does not account for the relationships observed in the data.

A second concern is whether the observed associations reflect other individual characteristics that are correlated with both transnational ties and political attitudes. National origin is especially important to consider. Cubans and Venezuelans, for example, may be more likely than Mexican-origin Latinos to maintain transnational ties, hold conservative political views molded by experiences with left-authoritarian governments, and support Trump. Under this explanation, the association between transnational ties and misinformation could reflect the political predispositions of specific national-origin communities rather than the larger information environment process I propose. Religiosity may also matter if more religious Latinos are both more embedded in community networks and increasingly aligned with Republican social conservatism.

To assess these concerns, I estimate additional models that include national-origin group and born-again Christian identification as controls. The corresponding tables can be found in the Appendix. The results from the robustness checks are mixed. The association between transnational ties and exposure to misinformation is still positive and statistically significant after these controls are included. Similarly, the association between belief in misinformation and support for Trump remains substantively unchanged. However, the interaction between transnational ties and social media use in predicting belief in misinformation becomes smaller and is no longer statistically significant. This suggests that the belief stage of the argument is more sensitive to model specification than the exposure and Trump-support stages.

However, the attenuation should be interpreted cautiously. Belief is observed only among respondents who reported hearing at least one story, and the addition of national-origin and religious controls further reduces the analytic sample. Given this, the models are estimated on a much smaller subset of respondents.

Nonetheless, the robustness checks suggest that the evidence for the moderating role of social media is more suggestive than definitive. The results are consistent with my theory, but they do not conclusively show that social media conditions the relationship between transnational ties and belief independently of national origin and religiosity. More work is needed to understand this relationship.

More broadly, the paper is limited by its reliance on cross-sectional observational data. The theory implies a sequence in which transnational ties increase exposure to misinformation, social media environments shape whether that exposure translates into belief, and belief is associated with support for Trump. However, the data do not allow me to directly observe this sequence over time. The estimates should therefore be interpreted as conditional associations rather than causal effects. Respondents with stronger transnational ties may also differ from those without ties in ways the survey does not capture, for instance, in how recently they migrated, the political media environment of their country of origin, or the ideological composition of their specific transnational networks.

Given these limitations, a conservative interpretation is warranted. The findings supply the strongest evidence for the first and third parts of the argument: transnational ties are associated with greater exposure to misinformation, and belief in misinformation is associated with greater support for Trump. The evidence for the second part of the argument, that social media conditions the relationship between ties and belief, is weaker and more sensitive to additional controls. Subsequent studies should use panel data, behavioral measures of media exposure, and experimental designs to better test the proposed sequence.

Conclusion

A puzzling behavior gave rise to the current paper: why have some Latinos increasingly supported Trump despite his anti-immigrant agenda and anti-Latino rhetoric? I propose that part of the answer lies in the information environment in which political attitudes are formed. Latinos are embedded in U.S. and foreign information environments, often through personal connections that endure over distance and time. Changes in the affordances of that environment, such as using social media to sustain transnational ties, can reinforce

misleading or false claims that circulate within Latinos' networks. When the stories shared are right-leaning, belief in those stories can become politically consequential.

This paper shows that information environments are central to understanding Latino support for Trump. However, these findings do not replace existing explanations based on ideology, economics, religion, gender, or national origin. Instead, they show that those accounts are incomplete without attention to how political information is encountered and evaluated. Political attitudes are shaped not only by predispositions, but also by the networks and platforms through which people receive information.

The paper has important limitations. The data are observational and cross-sectional, so the results should be interpreted as associations rather than causal effects. Future work should use panel data, behavioral measures of media exposure, and experiments to better test the proposed sequence. Still, the findings point to an important conclusion: for many Latinos, political information does not stop at the border, and understanding Latino political behavior requires understanding the transnational and digital environments in which political claims circulate.

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Appendix A. Survey Instrument and Measurement

Appendix Table A1. Survey Question Wording

Transnational Ties

Presence of Transnational Ties

Thinking about the people you know, do any of them live outside the United States?

- No
- Yes

Frequency of Contact with Transnational Ties

How often, if at all, do you talk to friends or family who live in other countries?

- More than once a week
- About once a week
- Every other week
- About once a month
- Less than once a month
- I do not talk to friends or family who live in other countries

Social Media Use

How often do you use each of the following social media platforms?

- Facebook
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Reddit
- X (formerly Twitter)
- Discord
- Other (please specify)

Response options:

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less than once a month
- Do not use this platform

Exposure to Political Information

Please indicate whether you have heard each of the following stories.

1. Chinese loans and investments are better for Latin American countries than U.S. loans and investments.
2. Biden and Congress are working on banning the Bible.
3. Vice President Harris congratulated President Maduro for winning the 2024 presidential election in Venezuela.
4. Some states now allow teachers to be armed in the classroom.
5. Venezuelan refugees are causing a rise in crime rates in Latin America.
6. Phil McClaren secretly owns all social media platforms.

Response options:

- I have heard this story
- I have not heard this story

Belief in Political Information

Respondents who reported having heard a story were asked:

You indicated that you have heard the following story: [Story Text]. To the best of your knowledge, is this story true or false?

- Definitely true
- Probably true
- Could go either way
- Probably false
- Definitely false

Vote Choice and Candidate Evaluations

Prospective 2024 Vote Choice

If the presidential election were held today, who would you support?

- Donald J. Trump
- Kamala Harris
- I would not vote
- Other (please specify)

Vote Choice Confidence

How confident are you in that choice?

- Fully confident
- Mostly confident

- Somewhat confident
- Mostly not confident
- Not confident at all

Recall of 2020 Presidential Vote

Do you recall whether you voted in the 2020 presidential election? If so, for whom did you vote?

- Donald Trump
- Joe Biden
- A third-party candidate
- I did not vote
- I do not recall

Respondents who did not vote or could not recall were asked:

Had you voted in 2020, which candidate would you have supported?

- Donald Trump
- Joe Biden
- Other (please specify)

Candidate Favorability

Please indicate your overall opinion of each of the following individuals:

- Donald Trump
- Joe Biden
- Kamala Harris
- JD Vance

Response options:

- Extremely bad
- Somewhat bad
- Neither good nor bad
- Somewhat good
- Extremely good
- No opinion

Appendix Table A2. Variable Construction and Coding

Variable	Construction	Original Range	Final Range
Transnational Ties	Composite measure combining the presence of ties outside the United States and frequency of contact with those ties. Respondents reporting no ties were coded 0. Higher values indicate more frequent communication with people living abroad.	0–5	0–1
Social Media Use	Average frequency of use across all reported social media platforms. Platform-specific responses were coded from 0 (non-user) to 1 (daily use) and averaged.	0–1	0–1
Misinformation Exposure	Binary indicator coded 1 if the respondent reported having heard a story and 0 otherwise. Exposure was analyzed both at the story level and as an average index across misinformation stories.	0–1	0–1
Misinformation Belief	Respondents who reported hearing a misinformation story were asked whether the story was true or false. Responses were coded from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater belief that the story was true. The index averages belief across the four misinformation stories for which the respondent reported exposure. Respondents who did not report hearing any misinformation story are missing on this measure.	1–5	0–1
Trump Favorability	Five-point evaluation of Donald Trump ranging from "Extremely bad" to "Extremely good." Responses were rescaled to range from 0 to 1. Respondents selecting "No opinion" were treated as missing.	1–5	0–1
2020 Trump Vote	Binary variable coded 1 for respondents reporting a vote for Donald Trump in 2020 and 0 otherwise.	0–1	0–1
2024 Trump Support	Binary variable coded 1 for respondents indicating support for Donald Trump in the 2024 election and 0 otherwise.	0–1	0–1
Partisanship	Seven-point party identification measure rescaled to range from 0 (Strong Democrat) to 1 (Strong Republican).	1–7	0–1
Age	Respondent age, rescaled to facilitate coefficient comparability across models.	Varies	0–1
Education	Educational attainment, rescaled to facilitate coefficient comparability across models.	Varies	0–1
Income	Household income, rescaled to facilitate coefficient comparability across models.	Varies	0–1

Story	Veracity	Topic	Circulated Online Prior to Survey
Chinese loans and investments are better for Latin American countries than U.S. loans and investments	False	Foreign Policy	Yes
Biden and Congress are working on banning the Bible	False	Religion	Yes
Vice President Harris congratulated President Maduro for winning the 2024 Venezuelan presidential election	False	Venezuela	Yes
Venezuelan refugees are causing a rise in crime rates in Latin America	False	Immigration and Crime	Yes
Some states now allow teachers to be armed in the classroom	True	Education Policy	Yes

Story	Veracity	Topic	Circulated Online Prior to Survey
Phil McClaren secretly owns all social media platforms	False (fabricated by author)	Placebo Story	No

Appendix Table A3. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
Transnational ties	0.249	0.344	0	1	1500
Social media use	0.401	0.215	0	1	1500
Belief in misinformation	0.641	0.227	0	1	748
Trump favorability	0.406	0.417	0	1	1468
Heard Chinese loans story	0.175	0.380	0	1	1500
Heard Bible ban story	0.104	0.305	0	1	1500
Heard Maduro story	0.182	0.386	0	1	1500
Heard Venezuelan refugees story	0.363	0.481	0	1	1500
Partisanship	3.626	2.157	1	7	1442
Political interest	0.666	0.329	0	1	1453
Age	45.037	17.278	18	94	1500
Education	3.252	1.486	1	6	1500
Income	6.396	3.694	1	16	1320

Appendix Table A4. Correlation Matrix

Variable	Transnational Ties	Social Media	Exposure	Belief	Trump Favorability	Partisanship	Political Interest	Age	Education	Income
Transnational Ties	1.000	0.284	0.208	-0.001	0.006	-0.030	0.069	-0.172	0.129	0.119
Social Media	0.284	1.000	0.284	-0.005	0.030	-0.086	0.050	-0.482	0.146	0.138
Exposure	0.208	0.284	1.000	-0.003	0.265	0.159	0.145	-0.142	0.046	0.059
Belief	-0.001	-0.005	-0.003	1.000	0.265	0.234	-0.005	0.042	-0.109	-0.067
Trump Favorability	0.006	0.030	0.265	0.265	1.000	0.717	0.033	-0.024	-0.062	0.026
Partisanship	-0.030	-0.086	0.159	0.234	0.717	1.000	0.003	0.043	-0.065	0.005
Political Interest	0.069	0.050	0.145	-0.005	0.033	0.003	1.000	0.229	0.210	0.236
Age	-0.172	-0.482	-0.142	0.042	-0.024	0.043	0.229	1.000	0.033	0.024
Education	0.129	0.146	0.046	-0.109	-0.062	-0.065	0.210	0.033	1.000	0.412
Income	0.119	0.138	0.059	-0.067	0.026	0.005	0.236	0.024	0.412	1.000

Appendix B. Misinformation Stories

Story	Veracity	Topic	Circulated Online Prior to Survey
Chinese loans and investments are better for Latin American countries than U.S. loans and investments	False	Foreign Policy	Yes
Biden and Congress are working on banning the Bible	False	Religion	Yes

Story	Veracity	Topic	Circulated Online Prior to Survey
Vice President Harris congratulated President Maduro for winning the 2024 Venezuelan presidential election	False	Venezuela	Yes
Venezuelan refugees are causing a rise in crime rates in Latin America	False	Immigration and Crime	Yes
Some states now allow teachers to be armed in the classroom	True	Education Policy	Yes
Phil McClaren secretly owns all social media platforms	False (fabricated by author)	Placebo Story	No

Appendix Table B2. Exposure and Belief Rates by Story

Story	Heard Story (%)	Mean Belief	Believed Story (%)	N Exposure	N Belief
Chinese loans and investments	17.5	0.586	43.5	1500	262
Biden and Congress banning the Bible	10.4	0.529	42.3	1500	156
Harris congratulated Maduro	18.2	0.639	53.8	1500	273
Venezuelan refugees and crime	36.3	0.700	63.4	1500	544
Teachers armed in classrooms	55.3	0.713	65.1	1500	829
Phil McClaren owns social media	8.7	0.569	43.1	1500	130

Note: Mean belief ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater belief that the story is true. Believed Story (%) is the percentage of respondents who rated the story as definitely true or probably true. Belief questions were asked only of respondents who reported hearing the story.

Appendix C Robustness Checks

Appendix Table C1. Exposure Models with National-Origin and Religion Controls

Table 8: Robustness Check: Transnational Ties and Exposure to Misinformation

	Latino	Non-Latino
Transnational Ties	0.156***	0.134**
	(0.042)	(0.043)
Independent	-0.032	0.010
	(0.031)	(0.033)
Republican	-0.000	0.096***
	(0.036)	(0.025)
Male	0.052+	0.063**
	(0.031)	(0.023)
Education	0.004	0.015+
	(0.010)	(0.008)
Age	-0.003***	-0.002***
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Income	0.005	0.002
	(0.006)	(0.004)
Born Again	0.128**	0.079**
	(0.040)	(0.027)
Cuban	0.109*	
	(0.048)	
Venezuelan	0.127	
	(0.080)	
Other Latino	0.092***	
	(0.024)	
Num.Obs.	2924	2168
R2	0.155	0.111
R2 Adj.	0.151	0.106
R2 Within	0.101	0.065
R2 Within Adj.	0.097	0.061
AIC	2677.7	2033.0
BIC	2767.5	2101.2
RMSE	0.38	0.38
Std.Errors	by: id	by: id
FE: story_label	X	X

+ p <0.1, * p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

Appendix Table C2. Belief Models with National-Origin and Religious Controls

Table 9: Robustness Check: Transnational Ties, Social Media Use, and Belief in Misinformation

	Latino	Non-Latino
(Intercept)	0.620***	0.523***
	(0.073)	(0.080)
Transnational Ties	-0.027	-0.093
	(0.085)	(0.089)
Social Media	0.062	0.004
	(0.085)	(0.085)
Male	0.011	0.033
	(0.024)	(0.026)
Education	-0.012	-0.021*
	(0.009)	(0.010)
Age	0.001+	0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Political Interest	-0.098*	0.093+
	(0.042)	(0.052)
Income	-0.002	-0.003
	(0.003)	(0.004)
Partisanship	0.020***	0.025***
	(0.005)	(0.006)
Born Again	0.002	0.002
	(0.026)	(0.027)
Cuban	0.042	
	(0.052)	
Venezuelan	-0.040	
	(0.139)	
Other Latino	-0.031	
	(0.026)	
Transnational Ties × Social Media	0.107	0.172
	(0.151)	(0.153)
Num.Obs.	367	260
R2	0.082	0.122
R2 Adj.	0.048	0.086
AIC	-10.7	-53.6
BIC	47.9	-10.9
Log.Lik.	20.329	38.802
RMSE	0.22	0.20

+ p <0.1, * p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001
Dependent variable is an index of belief in misinformation ranging from 0 to 1. The index includes the four misinformation stories only.

Appendix C3. Trump Favorability Models with National-Origin and Religious Controls

Table 10: Robustness Check: Belief in Misinformation and Trump Favorability

	Latino	Non-Latino
(Intercept)	-0.129	-0.164+
	(0.086)	(0.098)
Belief in Misinformation	0.196**	0.235*
	(0.068)	(0.091)
Male	-0.026	0.063+
	(0.030)	(0.038)
Education	0.000	-0.008
	(0.011)	(0.015)
Age	-0.001	-0.002+
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Political Interest	-0.058	0.143+
	(0.053)	(0.076)
Income	0.009*	-0.003
	(0.004)	(0.006)
Partisanship	0.122***	0.128***
	(0.007)	(0.009)
Born Again	0.123***	0.088*
	(0.032)	(0.039)
Cuban	0.076	
	(0.068)	
Venezuelan	-0.076	
	(0.177)	
Other Latino	-0.016	
	(0.034)	
Num.Obs.	365	257
R2	0.554	0.558
R2 Adj.	0.540	0.543
AIC	169.0	124.7
BIC	219.7	160.1
Log.Lik.	-71.501	-52.326
RMSE	0.28	0.29

+ p <0.1, * p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001
Dependent variable is Trump favorability scaled from 0 to 1.

13

Appendix Table E3. Trump Vote Choice Models (2020)

Table 5: Factors Influencing Trump Support in 2020

	Latino	Not Latino	U.S. Born	Not U.S. Born
Believes Misinformation	0.311***	0.399***	0.357***	0.402***
	(0.062)	(0.076)	(0.055)	(0.113)
Generation	0.031	−0.041		
	(0.039)	(0.051)		
Gender	0.007	−0.051*	−0.060***	0.043
	(0.026)	(0.028)	(0.020)	(0.047)
Education	0.010	−0.015	−0.007	−0.017
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.015)
Age	0.002***	0.004***	0.004***	0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Political Interest	−0.045***	−0.065***	−0.051***	−0.096***
	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.011)	(0.024)
Income	0.001	0.004	0.002	0.002
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.007)
Partisanship	0.109***	0.135***	0.140***	0.080***
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.012)
Constant	−0.227***	−0.227***	−0.295***	0.045
	(0.070)	(0.078)	(0.056)	(0.125)
Num.Obs.	865	635	1221	279

* p <0.1, ** p <0.05, *** p <0.01

Appendix Table E4. Trump Vote Intention Models (2024)

Table 6: Factors Influencing Trump Support in 2024

	Latino	Not Latino	U.S. Born	Not U.S. Born
Believes Misinformation	0.148***	0.327***	0.306***	0.210**
	(0.057)	(0.069)	(0.049)	(0.104)
Generation	0.024	−0.012		
	(0.036)	(0.046)		
Gender	−0.008	−0.027	−0.034*	0.005
	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.018)	(0.043)
Education	0.006	−0.013	0.001	−0.063***
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.014)
Age	0.001*	0.002**	0.002***	0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Political Interest	−0.038***	−0.035**	−0.022**	−0.084***
	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.010)	(0.023)
Income	0.009***	−0.003	−0.003	0.000
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.006)
Partisanship	0.157***	0.167***	0.171***	0.134***
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.011)
Constant	−0.275***	−0.204***	−0.279***	0.112
	(0.065)	(0.071)	(0.050)	(0.116)
Num.Obs.	865	635	1221	279

* p <0.1, ** p <0.05, *** p <0.01

Appendix F. Moderated Mediation Analysis

Table 1: Appendix Table F1. Conditional Indirect Associations

Social Media Level	Conditional Indirect Association	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Low Social Media Use	-0.006	-0.032	0.019
Average Social Media Use	0.024	0.008	0.041
High Social Media Use	0.055	0.020	0.089

Note: Entries are conditional indirect associations of transnational ties with Trump favorability through belief in misinformation at low, average, and high levels of social media use. Models are estimated among Latino respondents. Estimates are descriptive associations, not causal mediation effects.

Appendix G. Sample and Weighting

Appendix G reports additional information about the sample and weighting procedures. The survey was fielded by YouGov from August 29 to September 11, 2024. YouGov interviewed 1,600 respondents, including a main sample of 795 U.S. respondents and an oversample of 805 Hispanic respondents. These cases were matched down separately to two samples of 750 respondents each, producing a final analytic sample of 1,500 respondents. Both samples were matched to sampling frames on gender, age, and education; the main sample was also matched on race. The final dataset includes a combined survey weight, weight_combined, which is used in the main analyses.

Appendix Table G1. Sample Composition

Sample	Interviewed N	Final Matched N
Main sample	795	750
Hispanic Oversample	805	750
Total	1600	1,500

Appendix Table G2. Weighted vs. Unweighted Sample Characteristics

Characteristic	Unweighted	Weighted
Latino	0.577	0.156
Female	0.532	0.515
Age	45.037	47.676
Education	3.252	3.467
Income	6.396	6.730
Partisanship	3.626	3.845
Political interest	0.666	0.690

Appendix Table G3. Country of Origin Distribution Among Latinos

Country/Territory	Unweighted N	Weighted Percent
Mexico	333	37.8
United States	178	20.4
Puerto Rico	108	11.4
Spain	73	7.8
Cuba	49	5.2
Colombia	18	2.1
Other	18	2.2
Dominican Republic	16	1.4
El Salvador	16	1.9
Ecuador	13	1.4
Guatemala	13	1.5
Costa Rica	9	1.2
Honduras	9	1.0
Venezuela	9	0.9
Brazil	8	0.9
Argentina	6	0.9
Chile	6	0.8
Nicaragua	6	0.9
Peru	6	0.7
Panama	3	0.2
Uruguay	2	0.2

Note: Respondents could select more than one country or territory of family origin. Percentages therefore may sum to more than 100.