

The Effect of Cultural Assimilation on the Importance of Family-Related and Nature-Related Recreation among Hispanic Americans

Sandra L. Shaull and James H. Gramann

Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Department of Rural Sociology, Texas A&M University

This paper examines the influence of Hispanic-American ethnicity on the family-related and nature-related benefits of outdoor recreation activity. Gordon's ethnic assimilation theory is used as a conceptual framework to examine patterns of Anglo-conformity in perceived recreation benefits, and to look for deviations in these patterns suggestive of selective acculturation. Data were collected through a telephone survey of 995 households in central and southern California. Hispanic respondents were classified as "least-acculturated," "bicultural," or "most-acculturated" based on their comprehension and use of Spanish *vs.* English. These three groups were compared to Anglo-Americans who had very low comprehension of Spanish. A strong Anglo-conformity pattern was found in the perceived importance of nature-related benefits from outdoor recreation participation. The more assimilated the Hispanic respondents, the more similar they were to Anglos in the importance of these benefits. This indicated that varying levels of assimilation are an important source of diversity within ethnic groups. Some support was found for the proposition that the Hispanic cultural value on "familism" is less prone to assimilation effects, as reflected in the greater importance that the bicultural Hispanic group placed on family-related recreation benefits compared to Anglos and the least-assimilated Hispanics.

KEYWORDS: *Ethnicity, assimilation, acculturation, Hispanic American, Latino*

This article applies ethnic-assimilation theory to the analysis of differences between and within ethnic groups in the perceived benefits received from outdoor recreation. Specifically, we examine the possible function of outdoor recreation in maintaining at least some core cultural values among Hispanic Americans in the face of countervailing pressures in the U.S. toward cultural assimilation. Using an approach based on the concept of "selective acculturation," Hispanic Americans and Anglo Americans are compared in terms of the relative importance of family togetherness and nature enjoyment as perceived benefits of recreation behavior.¹ The proposition exam-

This article is based on Sandra Shaull's M.S. thesis. Sandra Shaull is currently with the Chattahoochee Nature Center in Georgia. Funding for data collection was provided by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station Research Enhancement Program. Inquiries or requests for reprints should be sent to James H. Gramann, Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Department of Rural Sociology, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-2261, jgramann@rpts.tamu.edu

¹In this paper, Hispanic Americans are defined as residents of the U.S. with ancestral ties to Spain. These include Mexican Americans, Central Americans, Puerto Ricans, and other sub-groups. Anglo Americans are defined as residents who are white, but not of Hispanic origin.

ined is that certain core cultural values may be reflected in at least some of these benefits, causing the two groups to differ significantly in the importance they attach to them (Gramann, Floyd, & Saenz, 1993).

Theoretical Background

Cultural Assimilation

Keefe and Padilla (1987:18) have defined assimilation as the "social, economic, and political integration of an ethnic minority group into mainstream society." Gordon (1964) broke the assimilation process into seven subprocesses: acculturation, or behavioral assimilation; structural assimilation, or access to societal institutions; amalgamation, or marital assimilation; identificational assimilation; attitude receptional assimilation, or the absence of prejudice; behavior receptional assimilation, or the absence of discrimination; and civic assimilation, or the absence of value and power conflicts.

According to Gordon, acculturation (the first subprocess of assimilation) occurs when an ethnic group's cultural patterns change to those of the host society. In the North American context, this process has been labeled "Anglo-conformity" to distinguish it from other models of assimilation, such as the melting-pot metaphor (in which both the host and immigrant culture change) or cultural pluralism (in which ethnic differences are maintained and encouraged within a single political framework) (McLemore, 1991). Although Gordon felt that Anglo-conformity best described the assimilation process of most immigrants to the U.S., subsequent research has shown that assimilation does not always lead to complete replacement of one culture by another (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). A major reason for this is that different parts of a culture are transferred with varying degrees of success and speed (Yinger, 1981). Although material culture is relatively easy to share, the adoption of a host culture's basic values is a slower process and will only be achieved if individuals can find secure and rewarding places within the new culture.

Selective Acculturation

Moore (1976) was one of the first sociologists to argue that Mexican-American assimilation in particular deviates from the pattern of other Hispanic and non-Hispanic immigrant groups in the U.S. According to Moore, although Mexican Americans have been a recognized ethnic group in the United States since the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, they have not reached the final stage of assimilation that they should have if the Anglo-conformity process accurately described their assimilation experience.

Keefe and Padilla (1987) also have argued that Mexican-American assimilation patterns differ from those described by classic sociological models. These researchers introduced the concept of "selective acculturation" to account for this difference. Selective acculturation describes the retention by an ethnic group of certain core cultural traits, such as family organization,

child-rearing practices, and traditional foods and music preferences, while other traits of the majority group that contribute to socioeconomic advancement (such as language) are adopted fairly quickly. In the case of Mexican Americans, selective acculturation may be facilitated by the geographical concentration of this ethnic group, predominantly in the southwestern U.S., and by the continuing influx of new immigrants from Mexico into the United States.

Leisure and Selective Acculturation

Leisure behavior may be a major contributor to the selective-acculturation process. Gramann, Floyd, and Saenz (1993) argued that leisure in general has two characteristics that enable it to facilitate the expression of traditional cultural values, even in the face of strong pressures toward assimilation. First, leisure is often characterized by fewer social limitations than activity at work or school (Kelly, 1987; Kleiber & Kelly, 1980). Because it is freely chosen relative to the constraints on much other human behavior, leisure provides a potential for cultural expression that may not be possible in more restricted institutional settings.

Second, leisure activity occurs mainly in the context of family and friendship groups (Kelly, 1987; Carr & Williams, 1993). In the case of Mexican Americans and other Hispanic populations in the U.S., intimate social life within the home and family tends to be ethnically enclosed (Keefe & Padilla, 1987), i.e., people associate mainly with members of their own ethnic group. Thus, leisure activities in such environments can provide a secure and supportive space for the expression and transmission of subcultural identity.

In some cases, especially among children, leisure behavior may promote cultural assimilation, as when minority-group members adopt the recreational or sports pursuits of the majority group. However, even in these cases, similarities in activities may not reflect similarities in the *cultural meanings* of these activities to minority-group participants (Allison & Geiger, 1993). For example, the fact that the Japanese have adopted the American sport of baseball can hardly be considered evidence that the Japanese are assimilating into American culture (Allison, 1988). In general, leisure meanings tend to be firmly grounded in and reflect encompassing cultural values.

Selective Acculturation and Family-Related Benefits

In a study of Mexican-American assimilation in Phoenix, Arizona, Gramann, Floyd, and Saenz (1993) examined the process of selective acculturation as it related to the perceived benefits of outdoor recreation participation. They reported that some benefits, in particular those related to family cohesiveness, were perceived as more important to Mexican Americans than to Anglo Americans, even among the most culturally assimilated Hispanic groups. The authors concluded that this pattern reflected the continued influence of "familism" in Mexican-origin culture (Gonzales, 1992). Consis-

tent with a selective-acculturation pattern, the very high emphasis on recreation as a means to promote family cohesiveness occurred, even though many respondents exhibited substantial assimilation along other cultural dimensions, such as language. Other studies also have reported a greater emphasis on family participation in Hispanic *vs.* Anglo outdoor recreation (Baas, Ewert, & Chavez, 1993; Carr & Williams, 1993; Hutchison, 1987; Irwin, Gartner, & Phelps, 1990).

Strong attachment to the nuclear and extended family has been described as one of the most important aspects of Hispanic-American culture (Gonzales, 1992; Massey, 1981; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987). Moore (1976) found that more than two-thirds of Mexican Americans interviewed in her study believed that they had stronger family attachments than did other Americans. Keefe and Padilla (1987) reported that both Mexican Americans and Anglos believed that family attachment is valued more highly by Mexican Americans than by Anglo Americans. Keefe (1984) also found that although the most significant social ties for both Anglos and Mexican Americans were between parent and child and between siblings, Mexican Americans interacted more with a larger number of relatives and placed more importance on this interaction.

So central is familism to Hispanic culture that it tends to resist the effects of assimilation. According to Keefe and Padilla (1987), Mexican immigrants' local extended families in the U.S. continued to grow over time, even as immigrants became more assimilated. Sabogal et al. (1987) also reported that Hispanic families maintained stronger ties between members, even among more-assimilated groups. Although these investigators found that the strength of familism tended to diminish with increasing assimilation, family attachment continued to be strong, and significant differences were found between Hispanic and white non-Hispanic groups regarding the perceived importance of the family. In short, attachment to an extended kinship network appears to be a central value of Hispanic-American culture that is often preserved despite assimilation in other aspects of social life (Marín & Marín, 1991). Furthermore, the maintenance of this value may be facilitated through leisure behavior.

Selective Acculturation and Nature-Related Benefits

The Hispanic relationship to the natural world seems to be one that incorporates human beings as an integral part of the landscape (Gramann, 1996). Lynch's (1993) review of environmentally oriented essays and fiction by Latino writers concluded that Hispanic-American environmental perspectives differ from those of the Anglo-American mainstream in that Hispanic culture does not sever people from the natural landscape. According to Lynch, the ideal landscape depicted in Latino writings is "peopled and productive," in contrast to the Anglo idealization of natural landscapes that are unaffected by human activities.

Social science research on ethnicity and its effect on environmental attitudes, particularly with respect to Hispanic Americans, is in its infancy. Re-

sults thus far indicate that both differences and similarities exist between Anglo Americans and Hispanic-origin groups.

Noe and Snow (1989/90) compared the environmental values of Hispanic and non-Hispanic residents of south Florida. Their analysis showed that the two groups were similar in their agreement that humans must live in harmony with nature, that the balance of nature is easily upset, and that people are severely abusing the environment. However, there were also differences between the two groups. In particular, non-Hispanics were significantly more likely than Hispanics to believe that humans should dominate and exploit the environment. A study by Gramann and Saenz (1995) of the environmental values and attitudes of Anglos and Hispanics living in south Texas found similar patterns. Pizzini, Latoni, and Rodríguez (1993) interviewed local and international visitors to the Caribbean National Forest in Puerto Rico. International tourists emphasized the enjoyment of scenery as the reason for their visit, whereas Puerto Ricans reflected on the utilitarian and spiritual values of interacting with nature. These included being able to breathe clean and cool air and experiencing peace and tranquility in the presence of God's work.

Gramann, Floyd, and Saenz (1993) examined the perceived nature-related benefits from outdoor recreation behavior in their Phoenix study. They found that Mexican Americans rated "getting back to nature" as a more important source of enjoyment during recreation engagements than did Anglo Americans, although Anglos rated "being in a scenic area" as more important.

Thus, research to date has revealed both similarities and differences between Anglo Americans and Hispanic Americans in their views of nature and the importance of nature-related experiences in outdoor recreation. Nevertheless, there is no compelling evidence that attitudes toward nature hold the same central value in Hispanic-origin culture as do attitudes and values toward the family. Therefore, it may be that any culturally unique attitudes that exist among Hispanic Americans are more likely to change over time as the cultural assimilation process proceeds.

Cultural Assimilation and Intra-Group Diversity

Assimilation theory provides a conceptual framework for the empirical analysis of intra-ethnic diversity (Hazuda, Stern, & Haffner, 1988; McLemore, 1991). As one example, Floyd and Gramann (1993) employed cluster analysis to derive three levels of "language acculturation" among Mexican Americans that were then used to examine variation within that ethnic group in recreation activity patterns. After controlling for age and education, persons in the least-acculturated group differed significantly from other Mexican Americans in their participation in certain kinds of recreation activities. Similarly, Baas, Ewert, and Chavez (1993) found that U.S.-born Hispanics differed from Mexican-born immigrants (who were presumably less assimilated) in their participation rates in such activities as hiking, walking, and motorcycle riding. Finally, Carr and Williams, in their study of forest recreation in southern

California (1993), reported a relationship between a measure of assimilation among Hispanic Americans (number of generations of ancestral residence in the U.S.) and views on "showing respect for the forest." The majority of U.S.-born Mexican Americans interpreted this phrase to refer to specific behaviors—such as not littering—that protected the natural environment. Respondents born in Mexico were much more likely to explain the notion of respect more abstractly, using meanings related to enjoying clean air and water, preserving nature, and linking respect for the forest to respect for oneself and one's home.

The implication of these findings is that there may be as much cultural diversity within an ethnic group as there is between groups. One potential source of intra-ethnic diversity is variation within groups in the degree of cultural assimilation. This variation has implications not only for recreation behavior, but for environmental attitudes as well.

Hypotheses

The first hypothesis tested in this study examines the importance of family-related benefits from outdoor recreation participation. It predicts a pattern that is consistent with selective acculturation:

Hypothesis 1: Regardless of their assimilation level, Hispanic Americans will regard family-related benefits from recreation as more important than will Anglo Americans of the same socioeconomic status.

The second hypothesis posits a pattern of Anglo-conformity in the perceived importance of nature-related benefits among Hispanic Americans. It predicts that intra-group variation in the importance of these benefits will vary systematically with levels of cultural assimilation:

Hypothesis 2: As the level of cultural assimilation increases, the importance to Hispanic Americans of nature-related benefits from recreation will become more similar to Anglo Americans of the same socioeconomic status.

Methods

Data for this study were collected through a telephone survey conducted during the spring of 1991. The sample was designed to represent households with telephones in an 18-county region of central and southern California, an area with a high concentration of Hispanic residents. The sample was generated using random-digit dialing. Respondents within a household were chosen randomly by interviewing the family member who was over the age of 18 and had most recently celebrated a birthday. If this respondent was not at home at the time of the call, arrangements were made to conduct the interview at a later time.

Of the original 3,897 telephone numbers, 2,332 were unusable because of disconnections, bad numbers, being business or government offices, or the respondent spoke a language other than English or Spanish. From the 1,565 valid numbers reached, 1,007 interviews were completed, yielding a cooperation rate of 64%. Twelve of the completed interviews were subsequently dropped due to coding errors, yielding a final sample of 995.

Respondents were given the option of having the questionnaire administered in either Spanish or English. Interviews were conducted using computer-assisted telephone interviewing techniques. Calls were made primarily on Saturdays and Sundays in order to contact persons who worked during the week. All unanswered telephone numbers were called back on a weekday, both to identify business or government offices and to contact those households that did not answer during the weekend. Callbacks to person who initially refused to participate in the survey were made by the most experienced interviewers in an effort to convert these initial refusals into completed interviews.

Measuring Ethnicity

Ethnic identification was measured as a self-report from responses to the question, "Which of the following do you feel best describes your ethnic identification?" Alternatives were: "Anglo (or European, not of Spanish descent)," "Mexican American," "Chicano," "Central American," "other Spanish descent," "Black or African American," "Native American or American Indian," "Asian or Asian American," "Pacific Islander or Polynesian," or "another term not mentioned." Several of the original categories were subsequently collapsed for analysis purposes, resulting in three categories of ethnic identification. Those who identified themselves as Mexican American, Chicano, Central American, or Spanish were included in the Hispanic category. This group contained 189 respondents. Creation of an aggregated Hispanic category was supported by the results of a one-way ANOVA. This analysis indicated that the various Hispanic-origin groups did not differ significantly in their scores on the recreation-benefit measures that formed the dependent variables in the study.

The Anglo category, composed of 634 respondents, included all of those who identified themselves as Anglo in response to the ethnic-identification question.

Gordon (1964) pointed out that self-reported ethnic identification can measure an individual's level of assimilation, as well as his or her ethnic background. Thus, it was possible that Hispanic respondents who were most assimilated would respond "Anglo" to the ethnic-identification question. To check this, the data were examined for any respondents who identified themselves as Anglo, but who were born in Mexico and had fathers born in Mexico. Three such cases were found among respondents who had initially identified themselves as Anglo. These individuals were reclassified as Hispanic, increasing the total Hispanic sample to 192 respondents and reducing the Anglo sample to 631.

Measuring Assimilation

Cultural assimilation was measured in terms of "language acculturation." This indicator was comprised of three scales identified through principal-components factor analysis. A "Spanish-comprehension" scale consisted

of three questions asking respondents to rate their ability to read, speak, and understand Spanish (Cronbach's alpha = .95). An "English-comprehension" scale included three similar questions about the ability to read, speak, and understand English (Cronbach's alpha = .94). A "Spanish-use" scale measured actual use of Spanish *vs.* English. It was composed of four items asking respondents' language preferences for home use, watching television, listening to the radio, and reading newspapers and magazines. Response categories to these last questions were: "English only," "mostly English, some Spanish," "both English and Spanish equally," "mostly Spanish, some English," "Spanish only," and "another language." The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .87.

Summated scores on the three language-acculturation scales were computed for each respondent. The resulting total was then divided by the number of items in the each scale. A score of 1 on the Spanish- and English-comprehension scales represented low comprehension of the specified language, while a score of 5 represented high comprehension. For the Spanish-use scale, a score of 1 indicated complete reliance on English, while 5 indicated complete reliance on Spanish.

Measuring Recreation Benefits

The family-benefits scale contained two items designed to measure the importance of recreation benefits associated with family cohesiveness. Respondents were asked to rate "doing something with your family" and "bringing the family together more" as either not important, somewhat important, or very important in response to the question, "The last time you participated in your favorite recreation activity, how important were the following factors to your enjoyment?" It is recognized that one's *favorite* recreation activity might not be the same as one's most *frequent* activity and, therefore, responses may vary depending upon how such a question is phrased. However, if it is accepted that one strong motivation for recreation behavior is to satisfy needs that are unmet during non-leisure time (Driver, Tinsley, & Manfredi, 1991), then it is reasonable to assume that recreation activities that are considered "favorite" pastimes have achieved that status precisely because they satisfy significant needs. Furthermore, these needs may reflect central values of the respondent's culture more strongly than those met by other types of leisure and non-leisure behavior.

A nature-related benefits scale consisted of three items pertaining to respondents' perceptions of interaction with nature as a benefit of outdoor recreation. These items were: "getting back to nature," "being in a scenic area," and "feeling in harmony with nature." Response categories were identical to those for the family-related benefits scale.

Both the family and nature items were drawn from Driver's pool of scales designed to measure the preferred outcomes of recreation participation (Driver, Tinsley, & Manfredi, 1991). The scales have been tested for internal consistency across a wide range of population groups. In addition, the items

associated with family-related and nature-related benefits have been used in previous research comparing Anglo Americans and Hispanic Americans (Gramann, Floyd, & Saenz, 1993).

Factor analysis of the recreation-benefit questions confirmed that the two family-related items formed an internally consistent scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$). However, as a result of the factor analysis, a fourth item, "getting away from crowded situations," was added to the nature-related benefits scale, joining the three previously described questions. This four-item scale had a Cronbach's α of .76.

Respondents' scores on both benefit scales were calculated by summing the raw scores on each item and dividing by the number of items in the scale. A score of 1 on the benefit scales represented low importance, while a score of 3 indicated high importance.

Control Variables

Three control variables were employed in the analysis: educational attainment, annual household income, and the number of children 12 years old or younger in a respondent's household. Educational attainment was recorded as the number of completed years of schooling. Annual income was measured in \$10,000 increments, beginning with \$0-\$9,999 and ranging up to \$60,000 or more. The number of children 12 years of age or under was determined by an open-ended numerical response.

Results

Comparisons with Census Data

To determine whether or not the telephone-survey sample was representative of the population in the 18-county area of central and southern California from which it was drawn, comparisons were made between income, education, gender, and ethnic composition of the sample and similar information available from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Because the telephone survey was conducted in 1991, comparisons were made with 1990 census data.

In general, the sample closely tracked census statistics for ethnicity and gender. However, compared to the general population, the sample underrepresented low-income households (less than \$9,999 per year) as well as high-income households (\$50,000 or more annually). In addition, the telephone sample somewhat underrepresented persons with less than nine years of education, while overrepresenting persons who had attended at least some college.

Cluster Analysis by Language Acculturation

A cluster analysis was used to place Hispanic respondents in cultural-assimilation categories based upon their scores on the three language-

comprehension and use scales. The application used was SPSS Quick Cluster, a nonhierarchical clustering procedure that assigns each respondent to one, and only one, cluster.

A three-cluster solution provided the greatest conceptual clarity for Hispanic respondents. The first Hispanic cluster consisted of those individuals with a high Spanish-comprehension score (4.19 out of 5), the highest Spanish-use score (2.91 out of 5), and the lowest English-comprehension score (1.96 out of 5). This cluster, consisting of 48 respondents, was labeled "least-acculturated" due to its members' greater understanding and marked reliance upon Spanish compared to English.

The second Hispanic cluster consisted of 76 respondents. It was labeled "bicultural" because individuals belonging to it recorded both the highest average Spanish-comprehension score (4.53) and a high score on English comprehension (4.40). This pattern indicated familiarity with both languages. In addition, the Spanish-use score for this group (2.89) was almost as high as that of the least-acculturated cluster, also indicating a bilingual tendency.

The third Hispanic cluster exhibited the lowest mean score on both the Spanish-comprehension and the Spanish-use scales (2.58 and 1.21), but achieved the highest score on English comprehension (4.77). This cluster, composed of 57 respondents, was labeled "most-acculturated" because of the low Spanish comprehension score and the corresponding shift to higher English comprehension and use.

The three Hispanic clusters were compared to a subgroup of Anglo respondents (also derived from cluster analysis) that reported very low Spanish-comprehension scores (1.4 out of 5) and Spanish-use scores (1.02 out of 5). This group consisted of 505 respondents.

Hypothesis Tests

Both hypotheses were tested using analysis of covariance. The first hypothesis dealt with the importance of family-related recreation benefits among Anglo Americans and Hispanic Americans. Results are shown in Table 1.

Two of the covariates in this analysis, education and number of children 12 years of age or younger, were significant at $p < .05$. As indicated by the correlation matrix, as educational attainment increased, the importance of family-related recreation benefits tended to decrease ($r = -.19$). Conversely, as the number of young children in a household increased, family-related recreation benefits became more important ($r = .30$). There was also a significant main effect due to language acculturation. As seen in the pairwise comparisons in Table 2, bicultural Hispanic respondents differed from Anglos at $p < .05$. Anglos had the lowest adjusted mean on the family-related benefits scale (2.36), while the bicultural cluster had the highest adjusted mean (2.64). However, the least-acculturated and most-acculturated Hispanic groups did not differ significantly from Anglos or from each other.

TABLE 1
*Analysis of Covariance of the Effects of Language Acculturation
 and Three Covariates on the Perceived Importance
 of Family-Related Benefits (N = 600)*

	Degrees of Freedom	F	t-value	Significance
<i>Main Effect</i>				
Language Acculturation	3	2.56		.05
<i>Covariates</i>				
Education			-2.60	.01
Number of children (age 12 and under)			6.91	<.01
Income			-1.23	.22
Correlation Matrix				
	Family Benefits	Education	Number of Children	Income
Family benefits	1.00	—	—	—
Education	-.19	1.00	—	—
Number of children	.30	-.09	1.00	—
Income	-.12	.45	.01	1.00

Table 2 shows that before adjusting for the effects of the three covariates, a strong pattern of Anglo-conformity existed in the importance of family-related benefits. Consistent with research on Hispanic-American familism, the two lesser-assimilated Hispanic groups rated these benefits as most important (2.62 and 2.64), while Anglos rated them as least important (2.19).

TABLE 2
Pairwise Comparisons of Family-Related Benefit Means (N = 600)

Acculturation Clusters	n	Adjusted Mean	Unadjusted Mean	Significance of Pairwise Comparisons			
				Least Acculturated	Bicultural	Most Acculturated	Anglo
Least	38	2.39	2.62	—	—	—	—
Bicultural	65	2.64	2.64	.12	—	—	—
Most	54	2.48	2.39	.82	.12	—	—
Anglo	443	2.36	2.19	.84	.01	.53	—

Note: The response scale was as follows: 1 = not important; 2 = somewhat important; 3 = very important.

The most-assimilated Hispanics fell midway between these two extremes (2.39). This implies that much of the difference on the importance of family-related benefits may be due to demographic factors rather than purely cultural factors. In general, the Hispanic-American population in the U.S. is younger and has larger families than the Anglo population.

The second hypothesis tested for significant differences in the importance of nature-related benefits between Anglo Americans and Hispanic Americans. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
Analysis of Covariance of the Effects of Language Acculturation and Three Covariates on the Perceived Importance of Nature-Related Benefits (N = 597)

	Degrees of Freedom	F	t-value	Significance
<i>Main Effect</i>				
Language Acculturation	3	3.04		.03
<i>Covariates</i>				
Education			.19	.85
Number of children (age 12 and under)			.44	.66
Income			-2.08	.04
Correlation Matrix				
	Nature Benefits	Education	Number of Children	Income
Nature benefits	1.00	—	—	—
Education	-.09	1.00	—	—
Number of children	.03	-.09	1.00	—
Income	-.14	.45	.01	1.00

TABLE 4
Pairwise Comparisons of Nature-Related Benefit Means (N = 597)

Acculturation Clusters	n	Adjusted Mean	Unadjusted Mean	Significance of Pairwise Comparisons			
				Least Acculturated	Bicultural	Most Acculturated	Anglo
Least	37	2.54	2.58	—	—	—	—
Bicultural	64	2.35	2.36	.12	—	—	—
Most	53	2.15	2.15	.82	.12	—	—
Anglo	443	2.24	2.24	.84	.01	.53	—

Note: The response scale was as follows: 1 = not important; 2 = somewhat important; 3 = very important.

Of the three covariates, only household income had a significant effect on the importance of nature-related benefits. As income increased, the importance of these benefits decreased somewhat ($r = -.14$). The main effect of language acculturation was also significant. Table 4 shows that the adjusted and unadjusted means differed very little: the least-acculturated Hispanic Americans had the highest adjusted mean (2.54), indicating greater importance, and this was significantly higher than the means of the most-acculturated Hispanics and the Anglos (2.15 and 2.24). The pattern in both the adjusted and unadjusted means is consistent with an Anglo-conformity pattern.

Discussion

This study examined inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic differences in the reported importance of family-related and nature-related benefits of outdoor recreation participation. As a conceptual framework, Gordon's ethnic assimilation theory was used to look for patterns of Anglo-conformity in perceived recreation benefits and for deviations suggestive of selective acculturation.

Although previous studies have reported Anglo-conformity patterns among Hispanic Americans in such variables as site selection for recreation activities (Carr & Williams, 1993), patterns of activity participation (Baas et al., 1993), and recreation benefits sought by participants (Gramann et al., 1993), exceptions have been noted. Because theory and earlier research suggested that familism was a core Hispanic value that resisted assimilation pressures, the first hypothesis investigated the relationship between the importance of family-related recreation benefits and language acculturation. If selective acculturation accounted for this relationship, then family-related recreation benefits should have been more important to Hispanic Americans than to Anglo Americans, regardless of Hispanics' level of language acculturation. In fact, this was only partially the case. Although bicultural Hispanics placed more importance on these benefits than did Anglos, neither the least-acculturated nor the most-acculturated Hispanic Americans differed significantly from Anglos.

This pattern may indicate a blending of Anglo-conformity and selective-acculturation dynamics. The impact of recent immigration from Latin America may have repressed the importance of family benefits in recreation activities among the least-assimilated cluster of Hispanic residents. Almost all of the least-acculturated cluster (95.8%) were immigrants. Such persons would not necessarily have extensive local kinship networks in the U.S. Because of the disruption of kinship ties due to immigration, the relevance of family-related considerations in recreation behavior would be limited, but could be re-expressed in later generations after local kinship networks had been established. This could explain the greater importance of these benefits to the bicultural group, 54.9% of whom were born in the U.S. Even so, it appears that the perceived importance of family-related recreation benefits was not completely resistant to assimilation effects, as indicated by the similarity in importance ratings between Anglos and the most-assimilated Hispanics, two-

thirds of whom were at least third-generation residents (i.e., fathers born in the U.S.). While Sabogal et al.'s 1987 study reported that Hispanics of all assimilation levels differed from Anglos regarding familism, the authors also found a persistent pattern of decreasing importance attached to these values as the level of acculturation increased. Moore (1976) pointed out that in Los Angeles (where the largest number of respondents in the present study lived) there has been a decrease in those Hispanic residents who feel the obligation to accept only those jobs near their families. This would be a significant change for an ethnic group that has been regarded as geographically bound (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). Among established Hispanic Americans, as among many Anglos, increased mobility related to job relocation may be a factor in reducing the opportunity for frequent and face-to-face interaction with the extended family.

There is another intriguing explanation for the similarity found between Anglos and two of the three Hispanic subgroups. The Hispanic community is large and well-established in many parts of central and southern California, particularly in Los Angeles County, where Hispanic groups comprise 40 percent of the resident population. In culturally diverse areas such as this, the dynamic of Anglo-conformity may not be especially useful as an explanation for cultural change. Such areas may approach the status of true "melting pots," in which *both* Anglo and Hispanic residents have moved toward a point of greater cultural similarity, producing a pattern of values and behaviors that is neither completely Hispanic nor wholly Anglo. Although the focus of this analysis has been on diversity within the Hispanic population of California, future research should examine the possibility that at least some diversity in leisure behavior and meanings within Anglo populations is due to the adoption of cultural traits from so-called "minority" groups.

Unlike family-related benefits, no compelling evidence exists to suggest a core environmental orientation in Hispanic culture that would be resistant to assimilation pressures. While noting stronger support by less-assimilated Hispanic Americans for some dimensions of environmental concern, both Floyd and Gramann (1993) and Noe and Snow (1989/90) also found increasing similarities to Anglo Americans in environmentally related variables as the level of cultural assimilation increased.

In this study, language acculturation had a statistically significant effect on the importance of nature-related benefits. The least-assimilated Hispanic group rated nature-related benefits as significantly more important than did the Anglo cluster and the most-assimilated Hispanic Americans. The importance rating given by the bicultural group was intermediate between the other two Hispanic clusters. This pattern of increasing similarity to Anglos with greater levels of cultural assimilation is consistent with a process of Anglo-conformity.

In conclusion, the results of this study show that, among Hispanic Americans in central and southern California, both inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic differences in the perceived benefits of outdoor recreation exist. However, even though there was no strong support for selective acculturation being

reflected in perceptions of recreation benefits, previous research has reported such a relationship for family-related benefits. This effect may be more complex than hypothesized in this study. Disruption of kinship networks due to immigration and the persistent effects of assimilation on Hispanic-Americans whose families have lived in the U.S. for at least three generations seem to contribute to this complex pattern.

What implication does cultural assimilation hold for the policy and practice of recreation management? Recognition of intra-group diversity means that it is unrealistic to hope for a managerial approach to recreation provision that suits all members of an ethnic group such as Hispanic Americans. Although this may sound pessimistic, recreation managers have largely accepted this truth for Anglo Americans in developing such management systems as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum. The key seems to be in providing a range of recreation opportunities, from those attractive to a single individual seeking solitude to those desired by large groups seeking a primarily social experience. A further consideration for Hispanic Americans, tied closely to cultural-assimilation patterns, is that not all subgroups are equally fluent or at ease with the English language. Therefore, communication in both Spanish and English, particularly spoken communication (Gramann, 1996), is a necessity in culturally diverse areas such as southern California.

An increasingly diverse population also raises recreation policy issues that transcend day-to-day management. Gramann and Allison (in press) ask the question, "What will it mean to society when ethnic majorities cease to exist?" Demographic trends show that the day is fast-approaching in the southwestern U.S. when the phrase "minority group" may lose much of its significance as a social label. By the second or third decade of the 21st century, white Anglos will not even constitute the largest *minority* group in the Southwest (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994). Undeniably, leisure will both shape and be shaped by this demographic reality. One of the truly great challenges of the next century will lie our ability to accommodate unprecedented cultural diversity in a non-divisive and socially beneficial manner. Leisure, as a means of cultural expression and as a mechanism for cultural assimilation, has the potential to both assist and hinder in meeting this challenge. Understanding this potential is becoming ever more critical.

References

- Allison, M. T., & Geiger, C. (1993). The nature of leisure activities among the Chinese-American elderly. *Leisure Sciences, 15*(4), 309-319.
- Allison, M. T. (1988). Breaking boundaries and barriers: Future directions in cross-cultural research. *Leisure Sciences, 10*(4), 247-259.
- Baas, J. M., Ewert, A. W., & Chavez, D. J. (1993). Influence of ethnicity on recreation and natural environment use patterns: Managing recreation sites for ethnic and racial diversity. *Environmental Management, 17*, 523-529.
- Carr, D. S., & Williams, D. R. (1993). Understanding the role of ethnicity in outdoor recreation experiences. *Journal of Leisure Research, 25*(1), 22-38.

- Driver, B. L., Tinsley, H. E. A., & Manfredi, M. J. (1991). The paragraphs about leisure and recreation experience preference scales: Results from two inventories designed to assess the breadth of the perceived psychological benefits of leisure. In B. L. Driver, P. J. Brown, & G. L. Peterson (Eds.), *Benefits of leisure* (pp. 263-286), State College, PA: Venture.
- Floyd, M. F., & Gramann, J. H. (1993). Effects of acculturation and structural assimilation in resource-based recreation: The case of Mexican Americans. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 25(1), 6-21.
- Gonzales, Jr., J. L. (1992). *Racial and ethnic families in America*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American life: The role of race, religion, and national origins*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gramann, J. H. (1996). Ethnicity, race, and outdoor recreation: A review of trends, policy, and research. Miscellaneous Paper R-96-1, U.S. Army Engineers Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, MS.
- Gramann, J. H., & Allison, M. T. (In press). Ethnicity, race, and leisure. In T. Burton & E. Jackson (Eds.), *Leisure studies at the millennium*. State College, PA: Venture.
- Gramann, J. H., & Saenz, R. (1995). *Attitudes of Anglo and Hispanic residents toward the Lower Rio Grande Valley Wildlife Corridor*. Paper presented at the U.S./Mexico Border States Conference on Recreation, Parks, and Wildlife, Brownsville, TX.
- Gramann, J. H., Floyd, M. F., & Saenz, R. (1993). Outdoor recreation and Mexican American ethnicity: A benefits perspective. In A. W. Ewert, D. J. Chavez, & A. W. Magill (Eds.), *Culture, conflict, and communication in the wildland-urban interface* (pp. 69-84), Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Hazuda, H. P., Stern, M. P., & Haffner, S. M. (1988). Acculturation and assimilation among Mexican Americans: Scales and population-based data. *Social Science Quarterly*, 69(3), 687-706.
- Hutchison, R. (1987). Ethnicity and urban recreation: Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics in Chicago's public parks. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 19(3), 205-222.
- Irwin, P. N., Gartner, W. G., & Phelps, C. C. (1990). Mexican American/Anglo cultural differences as recreation style determinants. *Leisure Sciences*, 12(4), 335-348.
- Keefe, S. E. (1984). Real and ideal extended familism among Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans: On the meaning of "close" family ties. *Human Organization*, 43(1), 65-70.
- Keefe, S. E., & Padilla, A. M. (1987). *Chicano ethnicity*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Kelly, J. R. (1987). *Freedom to be: A new sociology of leisure*. New York: McMillen.
- Kleiber, D. A., & Kelly, J. R. (1980). Leisure, socialization and the life cycle. In S. E. Iso-Ahola (Ed.), *Social psychological perspectives on leisure and recreation* (pp. 91-137), Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Lynch, B. D. (1993). The garden and the sea: U.S. Latino environmental discourse and mainstream environmentalism. *Social Problems*, 40, 108-124.
- Marín, G., & Marín, B. V. (1991). *Research with Hispanic populations*. Volume 23, Applied Research Methods Series, Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Massey, D. S. (1981). Dimensions of the new immigration to the United States and the prospects for assimilation. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 7, 57-85.
- McLemore, S. D. (1991). *Racial and ethnic relations in America*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Moore, J. (1976). *Mexican Americans*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Noe, F. P., & Snow, R. (1989/90). Hispanic cultural influence on environmental concern. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 21(2), 27-34.
- Pizzini, M. V., Latoni, A., & Rodríguez, V. (1993). El Yunque or the Caribbean National Forest? Meaning, management, and culture in the urban-tropical forest interface. In A. W. Ewert, D. J. Chavez, & A. W. Magill (Eds.), *Culture, conflict, and communication in the wildland-urban interface* (pp. 69-84). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

-
- Sabogal, F. , Marín, G., Otero-Sabogal, R., Marín, G. V., & Perez-Stable, E. J. (1987). Hispanic familism and acculturation: What changes and what doesn't? *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 9(4), 397-412.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1994). *Projections of the population, by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin, for the United States: 1993-2050*. Current Population Report Series P25-1104. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Yinger, J. M. (1981). Toward a theory of assimilation and dissimulation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 4, 249-264.