Article

Not Bowling Alone: Revisiting Partisan Types and Participatory Behaviors Using the Communication Mediated Model

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Abstract

Drawing on the two-wave 2020 American National Election Studies (ANES) survey, this study revisits partisan types by categorizing individuals' party identification and positions on party-divided issues. A Latent Class Analysis reveals six types of partisans, which were further clustered into three types: polarized partisans (i.e., polarized Democrats and polarized Republicans, 47.85%), incongruent partisans (i.e., conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans, 28.23%), and floating citizens (i.e., hesitant citizens and apathetic citizens, 23.92%) based on the partisan typology proposed in this study. Employing the O-S-R-O-R model, this study found that polarized partisans (O), who are the most politically active citizens, are more likely than incongruent partisans and floating citizens to seek pro-attitudinal news on multi-platforms (S), then to discuss politics (R), then to be politically knowledgeable (O), which finally leads to higher levels of political participation. The results highlight a worrisome tendency in US politics as participation is largely by biased polarized partisans. Nevertheless, incongruent partisans also have the potential to make contributions to both deliberative and participatory democracy because they are also politically active. Their discussion and participatory behaviors can be attributed to their mixed issue positions and counter-attitudinal news consumption on multi-platforms.

Keywords

partisan type, multi-platform news consumption, interpersonal political discussion, political knowledge, political participation

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People's capability to influence the political decision-making process is the essence of democratic development (Dalton, 2007). However, scholars are concerned that citizens have become increasingly detached from public schools, political parties, and civic groups and are thus unable to fulfill their participatory roles (Bennett & Iyengar, 2008). Putnam (2000) presented statistics that reflected a decline in political engagement among Americans from the 1970s to the 1990s, showing worrisome signals that Americans voted less, signed fewer petitions, belonged to fewer organizations, knew their neighbors less, and even got used to bowling alone. However, political participation in recent years has shown an increase (Boulianne, 2020). For instance, the 2020 US presidential election recorded the highest voter turnout of the 21st century, with 66.8% of adult citizens participating (US Census Bureau, 2021).

The increasing voter turnout can be explained by the expanded opportunities to participate in politics provided by the development of digital technologies. Various affordances on digital platforms allow citizens to participate in politics in various forms with lower cost and effort (Dahlberg, 2011). The phenomenon can also be explained by the polarized environment in which politicians can energize supporters to actively participate in politics (Hetherington, 2008). Studies have consistently shown a positive relationship between political polarization and participation that concerns many scholars (Simas & Ozer, 2021). Thus, in this study, we revisit partisan types considering political polarization as an important factor and examine how different types of partisans contribute to political participation in order to present a more up-to-date picture of the current political environment in the US.

Specifically, we first adopted an innovative approach to propose a typology of partisan types by considering both party identification and issue positions. Through matching party identification and issue positions, we can better understand the extent to which citizens' political orientation is polarized. Partisanship acts as social norms to help structure how people think and behave. The stability of party identification sets a baseline for citizens' voting choices and provides cues for their issue positions to follow the party's lead (Fieldhouse et al., 2022). However, the predictive power of Democratic versus Republican party identification has begun to weaken because the proportion of people with clear party identification is shrinking (Dalton, 2007). For instance, based on the ANES datasets, only 25% of voters claimed to be Independents in the 1950s (Dalton, 2007), but 34.4% of respondents claimed that they did not belong to either the Democratic or Republican party in 2020 (American National Election Studies [ANES], 2021). Accordingly, to understand citizens' political orientation, we believe it is essential to go beyond the traditional Democratic versus Republican classification and examine partisan types by incorporating citizens' issue positions. In this study, we drew on two properties of partisan types (i.e., party identification and issue positions) to re-classify US citizens.

Second, we employed the O-S-R-O-R (Orientation-Stimulus-Response-Orientation-Response) model to examine whether and how different types of partisans engage in various forms of political participation through multi-platform news consumption (S), interpersonal political discussion (R) and political knowledge (O) (Cho et al., 2009). In particular, we specify multi-platform news consumption into two

different types (i.e., pro- and counter-attitudinal exposure) to obtain a more nuanced understanding of how different types of partisans exercise the selectivity which may lead to different outcomes. The O-S-R-O-R model emphasizes the critical role of communication and reasoning activities in channeling the effects of psychological and social factors toward political outcomes (Cho et al., 2009). However, in most tested models, the independent variable (social psychological orientation) has been confined to controlled demographic factors (e.g., Borah et al., 2022; Chan et al., 2017) without empirically testing how political predispositions could play a role in mediated political participation. Thus, after classifying partisan types according to our proposed typology, we introduce partisan types as the antecedent (i.e., an orientation factor) in the O-S-R-O-R model to examine how different partisan types indirectly contribute to various political behaviors, including voting, campaign activities, political advocacy, and civic engagement. Such efforts help broaden the conceptual map of political participation. Assessing pro- and counter-attitudinal exposure in multi-platform news consumption in the model also provides a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms for whether and how different partisan types contribute to deliberative and participatory democracy.

Operationalizing Partisan Types

Partisanship is a crucial factor in influencing political behaviors. From the functional approach, partisanship explains how average citizens manage issue preferences, understand public affairs, and respond to ongoing events (Dancey & Goren, 2010). In this sense, partisanship is assumed to be a type of standard-setting for a significant proportion of citizens and therefore has predictable correlations with their political perceptions and actions (Campbell et al., 1954). From the social identity approach, partisanship is an identity that remains stable even as policy and leadership change (Greene, 2002). In this sense, partisanship involves motivated reasoning and expressive behaviors in defense of one's own party, which results in action-oriented emotions that mobilize political activities (Bankert et al., 2017).

In this study, we follow Hilton and von Hippel (1996) to define partisanship more generally as socially shared beliefs about political characteristics, attributes, and behaviors. In the US context, the two major political parties often adopt opposite stances on specific issues, resulting in political polarization and party conflicts. However, not all partisans adopt stances on various issues strictly in line with their party membership. Although partisanship and ideology are closely related, self-identified conservatives continue to represent a significant segment of the Democratic party and self-identified liberals continue to make up a portion of the Republican party (Carmines & Berkman, 1994). Therefore, it is possible that on some political and social issues, people's positions could be in opposition to the position of their political party. This provides a suitable context for us to examine the dynamic interplay between party identification and issue positions.

We propose a typology for partisan type based on the relationship between party identification and issue positions (Table 1). We apply two criteria in understanding

Table 1. Partisan Type Typology.

Partisanship identification	Personal issue position vs. party issue position		
	Totally consistent	Partially consistent and partially incongruent	Hesitant or apathetic
Yes	*Polarized partisan* (i.e., polarized Democrats and polarized Republicans)	*Incongruent partisan* (i.e., conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans)	*Floating citizens*
No	NA	NA	

partisan types. The first is whether or not a person has a confirmed party identification, and the second is if a person has an attitude toward political issues. Then, among those who hold issue stances, we distinguish if their issue positions are consistent with their party's stances. In other words, among those who identify with a party (Democrat or Republican), some hold issue opinions strictly consistent with the stances of their party while others do not (e.g., a Republican may favor abortion rights). Some who do not have a clear party identification or issue positions may have ambiguous attitudes or stay in the middle, and some can be completely indifferent toward politics. In short, we classify partisan type into three possible categories: polarized partisans, incongruent partisans, and floating citizens.

Polarized partisans are citizens with a clear party identification whose positions on various issues are in line with the stances of their party. In a two-party system, polarized partisans often divide consistently along party lines in their support for various issues (Jacobson, 2012). "Polarized" also implies extremity of their political opinions. They usually adopt issue positions advocated by party leaders through motivated reasoning rather than deliberative self-reflection (Jacobson, 2012).

Incongruent partisans have a clear party identification, but some of their issue positions are opposite to the stances of the party they belong to. Their mixed political views might be driven by long-term cultivated ideology, patterns of information selection, and opinions from their media diets (Hameleers & van der Meer, 2020). "Incongruent" implies that they are not effectively persuaded by the opinions of party leaders on some issues, but rather depend on their own judgment, which suggests a certain level of deliberative characteristics among this type of partisans as they form their political orientation with cross-cutting issue positions. Therefore, their affiliations and preferences for a certain party or candidate may not be as strong as those of polarized partisans to mobilize intuitive voting or passionate supportive activities.

There are also citizens who exhibit a complete lack of interest in politics, as well as those who are hesitant to become involved in political issues (i.e., sometimes care and sometimes don't). We define these "floating citizens" as those who are either apathetic or hesitant toward politics and without a clear party identification or concrete issue stance (Zaller, 2004). Floating citizens are usually poorly informed about politics and express no reactions or opinions about either party (Daudt, 1961; Zaller, 2004). However, their "ideological innocence" does not mean that they are isolated from

political life. They may vote for candidates whose policy plan echoes a particular interest of theirs. They can also serve their communities based on their own sense of belonging (Zaller, 2004). Thus, their decision-making and issue involvement are less likely to be explained by their political attitudes and do not exhibit a clear pattern.

To test the above theoretical frames of partisan type classification, we employ Latent Class Analysis (LCA) to cluster citizens by their party identification and issue positions through empirical data. As a probabilistic and model-based technique, LCA clusters respondents into different groups. Individuals belonging to the same class are similar to one another such that their observed scores on a set of indicators are assumed to come from the same probability distributions (Vermunt & Magidson, 2002). LCA has previously been used to classify social media users, voters, and nationalists (e.g., Bonikowski et al., 2021; Chang & Wu, 2022) and has proven to be a valid way to verify classification based on individuals' attitudinal or behavior patterns. We raise a research question:

> RQ1: Based on US citizens' party identification and positions on party-divided issues, does LCA identify partisan types as polarized, incongruent, and floating partisans?

Partisan Types and Political Participation

Partisanship is a type of value that influences one's attitude toward issues and mobilizes personal involvement and actions (Campbell et al., 1954). We believe the proposed typology of partisan types could provide a more comprehensive picture of citizens' political characteristics, and these different types of political orientation should play a significant role in influencing various forms of political participation.

Political participation refers to actions by citizens to influence government or politics, or to change existing power structures (Milbrath, 1981). In the US, citizenship norms are shifting from duty-based citizenship (e.g., voting) to engaged citizenship (e.g., civic engagement; Dalton, 2008). With the development of the Internet and the proliferation of social media, citizens can interact with, play a role in, and influence the political landscape via numerous channels, which broadens the arena of political participation. As the concept of political participation has broadened, van Deth (2014) provides four basic rules for a minimalist operational definition of political participation: it should (a) have behavioral aspects, (b) be done by citizens, (c) be located in the political sphere, and (d) be optional and voluntary. In line with van Deth (2014), this study adopts conventional and unconventional dimensions and specifies four types of political participation (i.e., voting, campaign participation, political advocacy, and civic engagement) to provide a clearer conceptual map and nuanced inquiry on the relationship between partisan types and participation.

The first two types include campaign participation and voting as the conventional dimension. Voting is the most common form of political participation as it embodies the most fundamental democratic principle of political rights and social equality (Putnam, 2000). Participation in electoral campaigns is closely related to elections and

includes activities such as attending a campaign meeting or rally, fundraising, and persuading others to vote for a certain candidate or party (Converse et al., 1961). Compared to campaign participation, voting is more of a dutiful political action and involves making a final decision.

The other two types, political advocacy and civic engagement, fall into the unconventional dimension. Participation in political advocacy refers to political activities like signing petitions, attending demonstrations or protests, and joining a boycott or buycott. In this way, citizens can have their voices heard when they feel elected officials do not recognize their will. Different from voting or campaign participation, political advocacy is a way for citizens to speak their beliefs out loud to influence others (Richey & Taylor, 2012). Civic engagement is another kind of participatory behavior that could impact civil society or change the patterns of societal systems. Civic engagement generally refers to organized voluntary activities in problem-solving and supporting the community (Zukin et al., 2006). We consider it a distinct participation type as the purposes and motivations of civic engagement and other participation types could be fundamentally different.

As sub-types of political participation, the four participation categories specified above do share commonalities. However, their potential distinctions drive us to rethink the relationships between partisan types and sub-types of political participation separately in a more subtle manner. Descriptively, we explore how different modes of political participation differ across the LCA-identified partisan types by answering the following research question:

RQ2: Do individuals from LCA-identified partisan types differ in (a) voting, (b) campaign participation, (c) advocacy participation, and (d) civic engagement?

From Partisan Types to Political Participation: The O-S-R-O-R Model

The O-S-R-O-R model combines insights from both the communication mediation model (McLeod et al., 1999) and the cognitive mediation model (Eveland, 2001) to study how personal characteristics (first O, orientation) lead to political participation (second R, response) through communication channels and cognitive reasoning. Scholars have long argued that partisanship is a political guide for behavioral actions that provides cues to citizens in making political choices (Campbell et al., 1954). Partisanship also serves as a group identity that mobilizes collective activities in fulfilling political goals (Dalton, 2007). To further examine how citizens of different partisan types take action in politics indirectly, we apply the O-S-R-O-R framework and incorporate partisan types (first O), multi-platform news consumption (S), interpersonal discussion (first R), political knowledge (second O), and political participation (second R) in the model. In other words, instead of using demographic profiles as the typical first O, we introduce partisan types as the first O to investigate how different types of partisans participate in politics.

Before testing the whole process, we first explore the direct participatory gap between partisan types. Political participants have a partisan affiliation, ideological inclination, and a preference for policy. Attachment to a political party provides an efficient heuristic cue for individuals to engage with and support "people like themselves" (Dalton, 2007, p. 275). For example, some voters turn out only if their preference for the favored candidate is sufficiently strong (Chen, 2013). Therefore, it is expected that polarized partisans may participate in politics more actively than others and be more willing to campaign for a certain party or candidate since their in-group identity is solid and consistent with their political views.

However, different partisan types may contribute to politics differently. Floating citizens, who are hesitant or apathetic toward parties and policies, may apply avoidance strategies in their political life to eschew political information and activities. However, they could engage in politics in their own ways and focus more on problem-solving and community support (Chang & Wu, 2022). Given the insufficient empirical research, it is unclear whether incongruent partisans would be as active in political participation as polarized partisans due to their opinion conflicts with their party. The cross-cutting perspective in their political orientation can trigger the internalization of competing arguments, prompt attitude ambivalence, and make them less likely to act (Chan et al, 2021). However, they can be expected to be more involved in politics than floating citizens because of their clear party identification and interest in political issues. Being less politically polarized, incongruent citizens have the potential to engage in politics in a less polarized way and act as deliberately engaged citizens. Concerning the direct effects of partisan type on political participation, we propose the following hypotheses:

> H1: Compared with floating citizens, polarized partisans are more likely to participate in (a) voting, (b) campaign participation, (c) advocacy participation, and (d) civic engagement.
> H2: Compared with incongruent partisans, polarized partisans are more likely to participate in (a) voting, (b) campaign participation, (c) advocacy participation, and (d) civic engagement.
> H3: Compared with floating citizens, incongruent partisans are more likely to participate in (a) voting, (b) campaign participation, (c) advocacy participation, and (d) civic engagement.

Multi-Platform News Consumption as Stimulus (S): Differentiating Pro- and Counter-Attitudinal Exposure

We next examine the underlying mechanisms of the influence of partisan types on political participation. News organizations actively employ multiple media platforms to distribute their news content. As a result, news users have become more active in combining sources from different platforms to construct their media diets. The key stimulus of this study is multi-platform news consumption, which is the habit of relying on more than one information and communication modality for news consumption

(Diehl et al., 2019; Guo & Chen, 2022). Multi-platform news use helps people to stay informed about public affairs and encourages them to fulfill their civic obligations (Li & Chan, 2017). Thus, it should be a key indicator suggesting how actively citizens make efforts to consume political news, which further influences other political outcomes.

Two types of multi-platform news consumption—exposure to pro- and counter-attitudinal information—should be considered when discussing media consumption across platforms among different types of partisans. Studies have shown that polarized partisans are more likely to select news that supports their party's positions to reinforce their political identity and avoid news that conflicts with their beliefs (i.e., partisan selective exposure; e.g., Stroud, 2010). As a process of self-affirmation and attitude confirmation, selective exposure strengthens one's political attitude (Knobloch-Westerwick & Meng, 2011), encourages political discussion (Stroud, 2007), and mobilizes participation (Dvir-Gvirsman et al., 2018).

Although selective exposure mobilizes political behaviors, scholars have raised strong concerns about it because it polarizes society and impairs the development of deliberative democracy (Sunstein, 2001). Selective exposure involves not only a selective approach to pro-attitudinal information but also selective avoidance of counter-attitudinal information, an essential aspect of deliberation. Counter-attitudinal exposure encourages people to consider diverse viewpoints (Gutmann & Thompson, 2009), facilitates respect for oppositional positions, and promotes awareness of rationales for challenging perspectives (Chen et al., 2020; Mutz, 2002). As such, it helps to reduce bias and generate balanced political judgment (Gutmann & Thompson, 2009).

However, findings on the (de)mobilizing effects of counter-attitudinal exposure on participation have been inconsistent (Matthes et al., 2019). Some findings from prior studies echo the deliberative-participation paradox (Mutz, 2002), finding that counter-attitudinal exposure makes people uncertain of their political positions and increases ambivalence, which inhibits participation (Chen & Lin, 2021). Others suggest that counter-attitudinal exposure can prompt greater cognitive effort to engage with information (e.g., seeking more information or having more discussion), which in turn can bolster political participation (Chan et al., 2021). A systematic examination of the potential mediating paths in the effect of counter-attitudinal exposure on participation is therefore needed (Matthes et al., 2019). Our study contributes to this line of work by applying the O-S-R-O-R model to investigate how different types of partisans consume pro- and counter-attitudinal multi-platform news and how the consumption further influences discussion, knowledge, and participation.

Based on the literature, polarized partisans should be more likely than incongruent partisans and floating citizens to seek news from various platforms that are pro-attitudinal. In addition, given that incongruent partisans have a clearer party identification than floating citizens who are less politically informed, incongruent partisans should consume more pro-attitudinal news from multi-platforms than floating citizens (i.e., pro-attitudinal: polarized partisans > incongruent partisans > floating citizens). For counter-attitudinal exposure, polarized partisans should be less likely than incongruent partisans and floating citizens to consume counter-attitudinal news from

multi-platforms. Meanwhile, incongruent partisans who have mixed political views and issue positions should be more likely than floating citizens to consume counter-attitudinal news from multi-platforms (i.e., counter-attitudinal: incongruent partisans > floating citizens > polarized partisans).[1]

Interpersonal Political Discussion as Reasoning (R)

Interpersonal political discussion is considered the reasoning process in the O-S-R-O-R model. News consumption promotes interpersonal discussions on political topics, which in turn enhances political participation (Cho et al., 2009). The mediating role of interpersonal discussion in mobilizing political participation points to the importance of interpersonal influence (Finkel et al., 1989). In other words, political discussion allows participants to gather information about the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of collectives outside of their media diets and reflect on their own thinking.

Exposure to pro- and counter-attitudinal viewpoints from various news sources across platforms can facilitate political discussion. For instance, attitude-consistent information can be useful evidence to support political arguments and prompt people to share their thoughts and express opinions (Weeks & Gil de Zúñiga, 2021), while exposure to counter-attitudinal viewpoints can encourage cognitive elaboration on diverse arguments and deliberative discussion (Matthes et al., 2019). However, counter-attitudinal information can also trigger those who are defensively motivated to counter-argue and protect their attitude. For example, due to their strong and consistent attitudes, polarized partisans may either selectively engage with like-minded co-partisans during political talks or espouse defensive arguments to counter the out-party's views after seeing news from multiple platforms (McCoy & Somer, 2019). Thus, interpersonal political discussions are likely to be promoted after consuming either pro- or counter-attitudinal news from multi-platforms.

Political Knowledge as the Second Orientation (O)

In the O-S-R-O-R model, the second O is the learning outcome of news consumption and discussion (McLeod et al., 1999). As an important element in a healthy democracy, political knowledge has often been examined as the second O. Political discussion provides opportunities to be exposed to and engage with information that may not have been known previously. In addition, as an interactive and reasoning behavior, political discussion can elicit cognitive elaboration (Eveland, 2004) and enhance political learning (i.e., objective political knowledge). It can also enhance belief in one's competency to understand political issues (i.e., subjective political knowledge; Chan et al., 2017). Although there have been contradictory results related to this prevalent theoretical perspective (e.g., Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2017), a recent meta-analytical study shows that the effect of interpersonal discussion on political knowledge is positive and significant (Amsalem & Nir, 2021).

An active and informed citizenry is a desirable democratic outcome. Scholars have suggested that political knowledge predicts engagement in politics (e.g., de

Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006). However, most of the studies supporting this positive relationship are grounded in traditional media. More recent studies on political learning on social media have found that it is the perceived sense of knowledge (i.e., subjective knowledge) instead of actual objective knowledge that is being enhanced and further mobilizing participation (Lee et al., 2021; Yamamoto & Yang, 2022).

Given that the setting of our study is multi-platform news consumption rather than focusing on social media only, we believe that objective knowledge should encourage participation. We further conduct pairwise comparisons between partisan types and investigate the indirect effects of partisan types on political participation through multi-platform news use, interpersonal discussion, and political knowledge based on the O-S-R-O-R framework (an analysis of subjective knowledge is also conducted and included in Supplemental Appendix E). The following hypotheses are proposed:

> H4a: Polarized partisans are more likely than floating citizens to consume *pro-attitudinal* news from multi-platforms, which will indirectly influence political participation through political discussion and political knowledge.
> H4b: Polarized partisans are more likely than incongruent partisans to consume *pro-attitudinal* news from multi-platforms, which will indirectly influence political participation through political discussion and political knowledge.
> H4c: Incongruent partisans are more likely than floating citizens to consume *pro-attitudinal* news from multi-platforms, which will indirectly influence political participation through political discussion and political knowledge.
> H5a: Polarized partisans are less likely than incongruent partisans to consume *counter-attitudinal* news from multi-platforms, which will indirectly influence political participation through political discussion and political knowledge.
> H5b: Polarized partisans are less likely than floating citizens to consume *counter-attitudinal* news from multi-platforms, which will indirectly influence political participation through political discussion and political knowledge.
> H5c: Incongruent partisans are more likely than floating citizens to consume *counter-attitudinal* news from multi-platforms, which will indirectly influence political participation through political discussion and political knowledge.

Figure 1 presents the theoretical framework that illustrates the indirect effects of partisan types on political participation.

Method

Data

To classify different partisan types and test the proposed model, we draw on the two-wave 2020 American National Election Studies survey (ANES, 2021). The pre- and post-election panel design enables researchers to make causal inferences about media effects on the political attitudinal and behavioral changes of US individuals. The
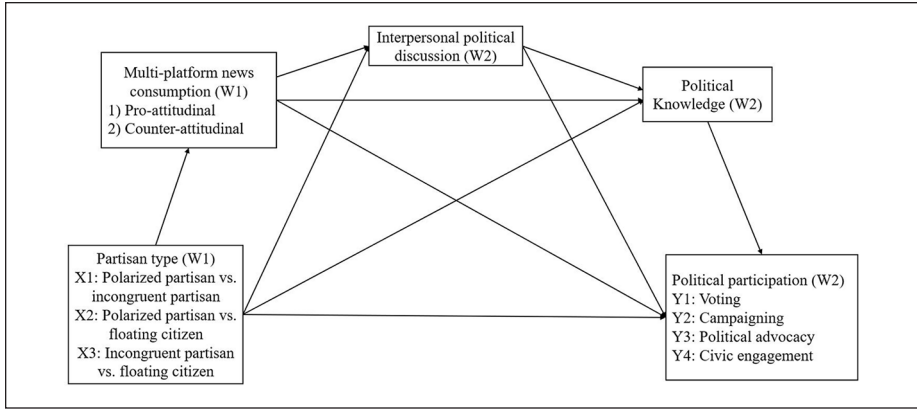
Figure 1. Proposed O-S-R-O-R model underlying the effects of partisan type on political participation.

first-wave pre-election survey was conducted between August 18, 2020, and November 3, 2020. The second-wave post-election survey was conducted between November 8, 2020, and January 4, 2021. A total of 7,453 respondents completed two waves of the surveys via web, phone, and video interviews, yielding a good retention rate of 90.01%. Among the 7,453 respondents, 54.4% were female, the mean age was 51.83 years, and 46.5% self-identified as Democrats. The study sample matched the demographic distributions of the US adult population in the 2020 US Census report (See Supplemental Appendix A for sample profile).

Measures

Diagnostic Characteristics for the Classification of Partisan Type. Following Chang and Wu (2022)'s approach to classifying voter types in Taiwan, we used six indicators from the pre-election survey to classify respondents' partisan type. Respondents first indicated their partisanship on a 1 (strong Democrat) to 7 (strong Republican) scale. We recoded their answers to measure self-identified partisanship as three types: Democrat ("1"), Republican ("−1"), and others ("0"). Then we employed respondents' positions on five party-divided socio-political issues, including immigration, racism, the death penalty, abortion rights, and same-sex marriage (see Supplemental Appendix B for all the different measurement details). For each issue, a respondent's support for the position advocated by the Democrat/Republican was coded 1/−1. Neutral positions, neither, or don't know responses were given a value of 0.[2] Then, the six (partisanship and five issue positions) indicators were entered into the LCA model to identify the clusters.

Multi-Platform News Consumption. Respondents were asked in the pre-election survey whether they received information about the presidential campaign from TV, newspapers, Internet or radio. If they selected "yes" on any of the four platforms, they contin-

ued to answer if they consumed specific media sources on that platform at least once a month. This study includes 50 cross-platform media sources (i.e.,16 TV programs, 4 newspapers, 15 Internet sites, and 15 radio programs). The multi-platform news consumption is the total number of sources people have used ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 4.07$).

In addition to general news consumption, this study specifies the consumption of pro-attitudinal and counter-attitudinal sources. Based on previous studies (Gill, 2022; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009) and recent ratings on media bias in the US (AllSides, 2023), we further coded each media source's ideological stance into three types: conservative-leaning, liberal-leaning, and neutral). This enabled us to identify the number of exposure to pro-attitudinal and counter-attitudinal sources after matching with respondents' partisanship.[3] Following Gill (2022), we calculated a counter-attitudinal exposure score by dividing the total number of consumed counter-attitudinal sources by the total number of consumed sources ($M = 0.23$, $SD = 0.32$). The pro-attitudinal exposure score is the total number of consumed pro-attitudinal sources divided by the total number of consumed sources ($M = 0.42$, $SD = 0.40$). Those who did not belong to any parties or who had not viewed any of the 50 sources received a score of "0" on pro- and counter-attitudinal exposure.

Interpersonal Political Discussion. A single-item measurement from the post-election survey was used to measure interpersonal political discussion. Respondents were asked, "How many days in the past week did you talk about politics with family or friends?" ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 2.47$).

Political Knowledge. In the post-election survey, respondents were asked to recall which office the following politicians held at the moment: US Vice President Mike Pence, Speaker of the US House Nancy Pelosi, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts. The right answer was given 1 point while other responses were given a value of 0. The summed score was used to indicate the level of political knowledge ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 1.28$, $\alpha = .65$).[4]

Political Participation. Based on previous studies (van Deth, 2014), political participation was specified into four different types (i.e., voting, campaign activity, political advocacy, and civic engagement). In the post-election survey, respondents were asked whether they had been involved in a list of political activities in the past 12 months. For each item, a "yes" answer was given a value of 1. Scores were summed up to indicate political participation. For voting (range: 0–4, $M = 2.18$, $SD = 1.13$), voting for candidates for various positions during the 2020 election was counted. For those who had voted before Election Day ($N = 375$), their voting participation was calculated based on the counts in the pre-election survey. For campaign participation (range: 0–7, $M = 0.78$, $SD = 1.32$), activities in support of a candidate or party (e.g., fundraising, political meetings, and rallies) were included. For advocacy participation (range: 0–3, $M = 0.95$, $SD = 0.88$), activities like protest, petition, and political consumerism were counted. For civic engagement (range: 0–5, $M = 1.28$, $SD = 1.35$), activities like volunteer work and charitable giving were included.[5]
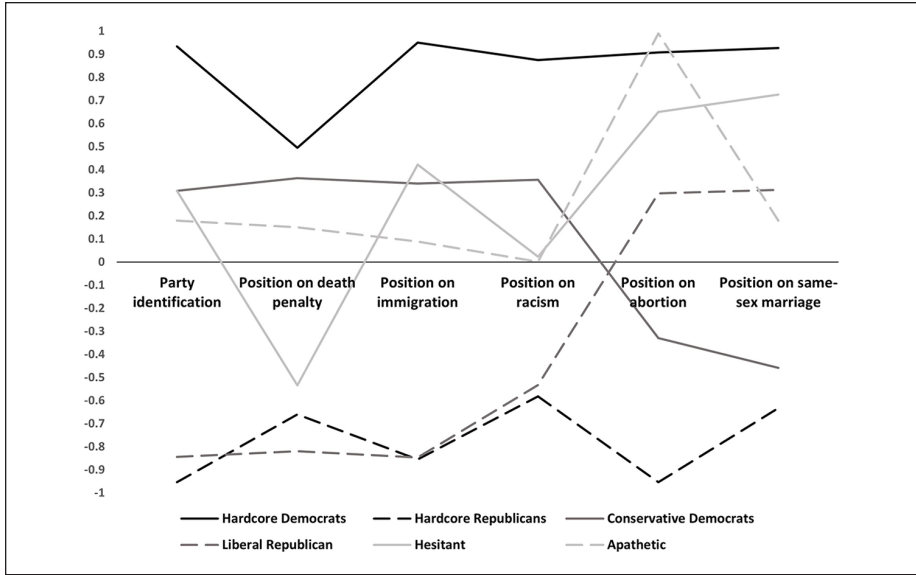
Figure 2. Profile plot for the six-class model based on the mean.

Demographics and Political Characters. Respondents indicated their age, gender, education level, household income, and ethnicity as demographic data. To explore the differences among identified partisan types in terms of political characteristics, we also measured respondents' ideology (conservative-liberal), political interest, and affective polarization.

Results

Partisan Type Classification

Using the respondents' answers to six questions as indicators, we ran an LCA with Mplus 8. To select the model with the best fit, we applied three criteria: information criterion measures (i.e., Akaike's Information Criterion and Bayesian Information Criterion), likelihood ratio statistical test methods, and entropy-based quality criterion (Tein et al., 2013). According to the Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio tests, five or more classes are acceptable in our analysis. We found that the Bayesian information criteria for the six-class model is lower than the five-class and the seven-class models, suggesting a better fit for the six-class model. Entropy of the six-class model (0.71) indicates that the latent classes are discriminant (Celeux & Soromenho, 1996). Therefore, we adopted the six-class model, which fits our theoretical expectations and proposed typology of partisan types. The profiles of the six classes are depicted in Figure 2. We report the model details in Supplemental Appendix C (See Supplemental Table C1 for fit indicators with two through seven classes and Supplemental Table C2

for the proportion of responses pertaining to the various indicators in the six estimated classes).

As expected, two classes (polarized Democrats [$N=2280$, 30.59%] and polarized Republicans [$N=1286$, 17.26%]) depict polarized partisans. These two classes are respondents who self-claimed a certain partisanship and whose positions on all five issues were strongly in line with the stances of the party to which they belong. Two classes (i.e., conservative Democrats [$N=624$, 8.37%] and liberal Republicans [$N=1480$, 19.86%]) depict incongruent partisans. These participants self-claimed a certain party identification but held some opinions that were in opposition to their party's stances. The last two classes (i.e., hesitant and apathetic citizens) capture floating citizens. Hesitant citizens ($N=1,655$, 22.21%) are partisans without clear party-affiliated stances on the five issues, while apathetic citizens ($N=128$, 1.71%) did not claim a certain partisanship and did not have clear opinions on the issues. Thus, through LCA, we identified six types of citizens who differ in their affiliation with the political parties and patterns of support for party-divided issues: polarized Democrats, polarized Republicans, conservative Democrats, liberal Republicans, hesitant citizens, and apathetic citizens. RQ1 is answered. As the six types of citizens are different in their demographic and political characteristics, we explain and report the differences in Supplemental Appendix D (see Supplemental Appendix D for the descriptive statistics, ANCOVA, and multinominal logistic regression results).

Political Participation Differences Across Partisan Types

To explore the differences in political participation among the six LCA-identified partisan types, we conducted a series of ANOVA. The results confirm that the six groups differ in four types of political participation behaviors (see Supplemental Appendix D Table D2 for detailed statistics). Polarized Democrats are the most active participants in campaigning and political advocacy, followed by polarized Republicans and liberal Republicans. For civic engagement and voting, there are no significant differences between polarized Democrats and polarized Republicans. Polarized partisans participate more than people from other types. In general, hesitant and apathetic citizens are the least involved in all kinds of political participation. RQ2 is answered.

Mechanisms of Relative Effect on Political Participation

To test the mediation model, we re-classified the respondents into three broad types based on our proposed typology (i.e., polarized partisans, incongruent partisans, and floating citizens) and the LCA results. The six classes can be grouped into the three categories not only because they fit the typology we proposed based on the nature of the political characteristics as we discussed above, but also because the re-classification offers more meaningful results and clearer comparisons when testing the O-S-R-O-R model. A balanced sample distribution was also achieved in the three broad categories, while in the six-class LCA model, only 1.71% of respondents were classified as apathetic citizens. A similar analytical process was adopted by Chang and Wu

(2022). PROCESS macro template 6 was adopted with 10,000 bias-corrected boot-strap resamples and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) (Hayes, 2017). We entered parti-san type into the model as a multi-categorical independent variable with dummy coding. Since we have two types of multi-platform news consumption (i.e., pro- and counter-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption) and four types of political par-ticipation as the outcomes, eight models were analyzed separately.[6] Demographic vari-ables including age, gender, education, income, and ethnicity were included as controls. Statistical significance ($p < .05$) is achieved when lower bound and upper bound CI do not include zero.

Before analyzing the serial mediation, we examined the relative total effect of par-tisan type on participation. Compared with floating citizens, polarized partisans are more likely to participate in all different political activities (voting: $B = 0.4344$, $SE = 0.0328$, 95% $CI = [0.3702, 0.4987]$; campaign participation: $B = 0.6335$, $SE = 0.0396$, 95% $CI = [0.5560, 0.7111]$; political advocacy: $B = 0.5239$, $SE = 0.0259$, 95% $CI = [0.4732, 0.5747]$; civic engagement: $B = 0.4978$, $SE = 0.0394$, 95% $CI = [0.4205, 0.5752]$. Similarly, compared with incongruent partisans, polarized par-tisans are more likely to participate (voting: $B = 0.2126$, $SE = 0.0308$, 95% $CI = [0.1523, 0.2729]$; campaign participation: $B = 0.5112$, $SE = 0.0371$, 95% $CI = [0.4384, 0.5841]$; political advocacy: $B = 0.4475$, $SE = 0.0243$, 95% $CI = [0.3999, 0.4951]$; and civic engagement: $B = 0.2906$, $SE = 0.0370$, 95% $CI = [0.2181, 0.3632]$). In addition, incon-gruent partisans are more likely than floating citizens to take action in the four partici-pation types (voting: $B = 0.2218$, $SE = 0.0360$, 95% $CI = [0.1514, 0.2923]$; campaign participation: $B = 0.1223$, $SE = 0.0434$, 95% $CI = [0.0372, 0.2074]$; political advocacy: $B = 0.0764$, $SE = 0.0284$, 95% $CI = [0.0208, 0.1320]$; and civic engagement: $B = 0.2072$, $SE = 0.0433$, 95% $CI = [0.1224, 0.2920]$). Thus, the results support H1, H2, and H3.

For the serial mediation of pro-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption, the results presented in Table 2 show that compared to floating citizens, polarized parti-sans have a higher level of pro-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption ($B = 0.22$, $SE = 0.01$, $p < .05$), which indirectly leads to a higher level of political participation through pro-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption, interpersonal political dis-cussion, and political knowledge in serial (voting: $B = 0.0020$, $SE = 0.0003$, 95% $CI = [0.0014, 0.0026]$; campaign participation: $B = 0.0013$, $SE = 0.0003$, 95% $CI = [0.0008, 0.0019]$; political advocacy: $B = 0.0014$, $SE = 0.0002$, 95% $CI = [0.0010, 0.0019]$; and civic engagement: $B = 0.0009$, $SE = 0.0002$, 95% $CI = [0.0000, 0.0001]$). H4a is supported.

Similar indirect effect patterns were found when comparing polarized partisans with incongruent partisans (voting: $B = 0.0020$, $SE = 0.0003$, 95% $CI = [0.0014, 0.0027]$; campaign participation: $B = 0.0014$, $SE = 0.0003$, 95% $CI = [0.0009, 0.0019]$; political advocacy: $B = 0.0015$, $SE = 0.0002$, 95% $CI = [0.0011, 0.0019]$; and civic engagement: $B = 0.0009$, $SE = 0.0002$, 95% $CI = [0.0005, 0.0015]$). This is because polarized partisans also show higher levels of pro-attitudinal multi-platform news con-sumption than incongruent partisans ($B = 0.23$, $SE = 0.01$, $p < .01$). H4b is supported.

As incongruent partisans and floating citizens do not differ in terms of pro-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption ($B = -0.01$, $SE = 0.01$, $p > .05$), the three-mediator

Table 2. Serial Mediation Model of the Effects of Partisan Type on Political Participation through Pro-Attitudinal Multi-Platform News Consumption, Interpersonal Political Discussion, and Political Knowledge.

	Model A1: Voting			Model A2: Campaign			Model A3: Advocacy			Model A4: Civic Engagement		
	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3
Predicted relations												
X→M1	0.23 (0.01)***	0.22 (0.01)*	−0.01 (0.01)	0.23 (0.01)***	0.22 (0.01)*	−0.01 (0.01)	0.23 (0.01)***	0.22 (0.01)*	−0.01 (0.01)	0.23 (0.01)***	0.22 (0.01)*	−0.01 (0.01)
X→M2	0.57 (0.07)***	0.75 (0.07)***	0.18 (0.09)*	0.57 (0.07)***	0.75 (0.07)***	0.18 (0.09)*	0.57 (0.07)***	0.75 (0.07)***	0.18 (0.09)*	0.57 (0.07)***	0.75 (0.07)***	0.18 (0.09)*
M1→M2	0.85 (0.08)***			0.85 (0.08)***			0.85 (0.08)***			0.85 (0.08)***		
X→M3	0.28 (0.32)***	0.34 (0.03)***	0.06 (0.04)	0.28 (0.32)***	0.34 (0.03)***	0.06 (0.04)	0.28 (0.32)***	0.34 (0.03)***	0.06 (0.04)	0.28 (0.32)***	0.34 (0.03)***	0.06 (0.04)
M1→M3	0.26 (0.03)***			0.26 (0.03)***			0.26 (0.03)***			0.26 (0.03)***		
M2→M3	0.08 (0.01)***			0.08 (0.01)***			0.08 (0.01)***			0.08 (0.01)***		
X→DV	0.11 (0.03)***	0.32 (0.03)***	0.21 (0.04)***	0.32 (0.04)***	0.42 (0.04)***	0.10 (0.04)*	0.30 (0.02)***	0.35 (0.03)***	0.06 (0.03)*	0.22 (0.04)***	0.41 (0.04)***	0.19 (0.04)***
M1→DV	0.11 (0.04)***			0.34 (0.04)***			0.23 (0.03)***			−0.06 (0.05)		
M2→DV	0.03 (0.01)***			0.10 (0.01)***			0.08 (0.00)***			0.08 (0.01)***		
M3→DV	0.13 (0.01)***			0.09 (0.01)***			0.10 (0.01)***			0.06 (0.01)**		
Covariates→DV												
Male	−0.10 (0.03)***			0.00 (0.03)			−0.10 (0.02)***			−0.10 (0.03)**		
Age	0.01 (0.00)***			0.01 (0.00)***			−0.01 (0.01)***			0.00 (0.00)***		
Education	0.10 (0.01)***			0.07 (0.02)***			0.07 (0.01)***			0.24 (0.02)***		
Income	0.01 (0.00)***			0.01 (0.00)*			−0.00 (0.00)**			0.01 (0.00)***		
White	0.17 (0.03)***			−0.01 (0.04)			−0.03 (0.02)			0.07 (0.04)*		

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Relative effects	Model A1: Voting			Model A2: Campaign			Model A3: Advocacy			Model A4: Civic Engagement		
	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]
X→DV	**0.1107** (0.0316) [0.0488, 0.1726]	**0.3178** (0.0336) [0.2519, 0.3837]	**0.2071** (0.0354) [0.1376, 0.2765]	**0.3224** (0.0375) [0.2490, 0.3959]	**0.4230** (0.0399) [0.3448, 0.5013]	**0.1006** (0.0420) [0.0182, 0.1830]	**0.2966** (0.0240) [0.2495, 0.3437]	**0.3534** (0.0256) [0.3033, 0.4036]	**0.0568** (0.0270) [0.0040, 0.1097]	**0.2187** (0.0381) [0.1441, 0.2933]	**0.4069** (0.0405) [0.3274, 0.4863]	**0.1882** (0.0427) [0.1045, 0.2718]
X→M1→M2→DV	**0.0063** (0.0012) [0.0040, 0.0088]	**0.0061** (0.0012) [0.0039, 0.0086]	−0.0002 (0.0004) [−0.0009, 0.0005]	**0.0194** (0.0024) [0.0151, 0.0243]	**0.0187** (0.0024) [0.0144, 0.0236]	−0.0006 (0.0011) [−0.0028, 0.0015]	**0.0155** (0.0018) [0.0122, 0.0192]	**0.0150** (0.0018) [0.0117, 0.0187]	−0.0005 (0.0009) [−0.0022, 0.0012]	**0.0154** (0.0020) [0.0116, 0.0196]	**0.0149** (0.0020) [0.0112, 0.0190]	−0.0005 (0.0009) [−0.0022, 0.0012]
X→M1→M3→DV	**0.0078** (0.0014) [0.0053, 0.0107]	**0.0075** (0.0013) [0.0052, 0.0103]	−0.0003 (0.0004) [−0.0012, 0.0006]	**0.0052** (0.0011) [0.0033, 0.0076]	**0.0051** (0.0011) [0.0032, 0.0073]	−0.0002 (0.0003) [−0.0008, 0.0004]	**0.0057** (0.0010) [0.0039, 0.0077]	**0.0055** (0.0010) [0.0037, 0.0076]	−0.0002 (0.0003) [−0.0008, 0.0005]	**0.0036** (0.0010) [0.0018, 0.0058]	**0.0035** (0.0010) [0.0018, 0.0057]	−0.0001 (0.0002) [−0.0006, 0.0003]
X→M2→M3→DV	**0.0060** (0.0011) [0.0041, 0.0083]	**0.0079** (0.0012) [0.0056, 0.0105]	**0.0019** (0.0009) [0.0002, 0.0037]	**0.0040** (0.0008) [0.0025, 0.0058]	**0.0053** (0.0010) [0.0034, 0.0075]	**0.0013** (0.0006) [0.0001, 0.0026]	**0.0044** (0.0007) [0.0030, 0.0059]	**0.0057** (0.0009) [0.0041, 0.0076]	**0.0014** (0.0006) [0.0002, 0.0022]	**0.0029** (0.0008) [0.0014, 0.0044]	**0.0037** (0.0010) [0.0019, 0.0057]	**0.0009** (0.0005) [0.0001, 0.0019]
X→M1→M2→M3→DV	**0.0020** (0.0003) [0.0014, 0.0027]	**0.0020** (0.0003) [0.0014, 0.0026]	−0.0001 (0.0001) [−0.0003, 0.0002]	**0.0014** (0.0003) [0.0009, 0.0019]	**0.0013** (0.0003) [0.0008, 0.0019]	−0.0000 (0.0001) [−0.0002, 0.0001]	**0.0015** (0.0002) [0.0011, 0.0019]	**0.0014** (0.0002) [0.0010, 0.0019]	−0.0000 (0.0001) [−0.0002, 0.0001]	**0.0009** (0.0002) [0.0005, 0.0015]	**0.0009** (0.0002) [0.0000, 0.0001]	−0.0000 (0.0001) [−0.0001, 0.0001]

Note. X1: Polarized versus Incongruent; X2: Polarized versus Floating; X3: Incongruent versus Floating; Partisan types were classified through pre-election survey data; M1: pro-attitudinal exposure (pre-election); M2: interpersonal political discussion (post-election); M3: political knowledge (post-election); DVs were all measured during the post-election survey. Bootstraps resample = 10,000; estimates were unstandardized and calculated by PROCESS macro (Model 6) with dummy coding of categorical IV. Numbers in bold indicate significant effects.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

serial relative indirect effects are insignificant when comparing incongruent partisans with floating citizens across participation types. H4c is rejected.

For the serial mediation of counter-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption, the results presented in Table 3 show that compared to floating citizens, being a polarized partisan indirectly leads to a lower level of political participation through counter-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption, interpersonal political discussion, and political knowledge in serial (voting: $B=-0.0001$, $SE=0.0000$, 95% $CI=[-0.0001, -0.0000]$; campaign participation: $B=-0.0000$, $SE=0.0000$, 95% $CI=[-0.0001, -0.0000]$; political advocacy: $B=-0.0000$, $SE=0.0000$, 95% $CI=[-0.0001, -0.0000]$; and civic engagement: $B=-0.0000$, $SE=0.0000$, 95% $CI=[-0.0001, -0.0000]$) because polarized partisans are less likely to consume counter-attitudinal news from multi-platforms compared to floating citizens ($B=-0.02$, $SE=0.01$, $p<.05$). H5a is supported.

In addition, as polarized partisans also consume less counter-attitudinal news from multi-platforms than incongruent partisans ($B=-0.09$, $SE=0.01$, $p<.01$), their political participation is demobilized serially through counter-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption, interpersonal political discussion, and political knowledge (voting: $B=-0.0003$, $SE=0.0001$, 95% $CI=[-0.0005, -0.0001]$; campaign participation: $B=-0.0002$, $SE=0.0001$, 95% $CI=[-0.0004, -0.0001]$; political advocacy: $B=-0.0002$, $SE=0.0001$, 95% $CI=-0.0004, -0.0001]$; civic engagement: $B=-0.0001$, $SE=0.0000$, 95% $CI=[-0.0002, -0.0000]$). H5b is supported.

Further, compared with floating citizens, incongruent partisans consume more counter-attitudinal news from multiple platforms ($B=0.07$, $SE=0.01$, $p<.001$), which indirectly mobilizes their political participation through counter-attitudinal multi-platform news consumption, inter-personal political discussion, and political knowledge (voting: $B=0.0002$, $SE=0.0001$, 95% $CI=0.0001$ to 0.0004; campaign participation: $B=0.0002$, $SE=0.0001$, 95% $CI=[0.0000, 0.0003]$; political advocacy: $B=0.0002$, $SE=0.0001$, 95% $CI=[0.0000, 0.0003]$; and civic engagement: $B=0.0001$, $SE=0.0000$, 95% $CI=[0.0000, 0.0002]$). H5c is also supported.

Discussion

As the 2020 US presidential election saw the highest voter turnout of the 21st century, it is important to know who the active political participants are and how they are driven to participate, particularly when political participation may not represent the healthy development of a democratic society given that it is often linked to political polarization. As the political landscape has become more sophisticated, citizens' political orientation is not likely to be based solely on their partisanship. Accordingly, we revisited the types of partisans and re-classified citizens by considering not only political identification but also positions on party-divided issues. Then we investigated how Americans of different partisan types engage in political actions when participation can take place in different forms.

The results supported our theoretical understanding of partisan types that some citizens are polarized partisans (polarized Democrats and polarized Republicans) with

Table 3. Serial Mediation Model of the Effects of Partisan Type on Political Participation Through Counter-Attitudinal Multi-Platform News Consumption, Interpersonal Political Discussion, and Political Knowledge.

Predicted relations	Model B1: Voting			Model B2: Campaign			Model B3: Advocacy			Model B4: Civic Engagement		
	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3	IV: X1	IV: X2	IV: X3
X→M1	−0.09 (0.01)**	−0.02 (0.01)*	0.07 (0.01)***	−0.09 (0.01)**	−0.02 (0.01)*	0.07 (0.01)***	−0.09 (0.01)**	−0.02 (0.01)*	0.07 (0.01)***	−0.09 (0.01)**	−0.02 (0.01)*	0.07 (0.01)***
X→M2	0.79 (0.07)***	0.94 (0.07)***	0.16 (0.08) (p=.052)	0.79 (0.07)***	0.94 (0.07)***	0.16 (0.08) (p=.052)	0.79 (0.07)***	0.94 (0.07)***	0.16 (0.08) (p=.052)	0.79 (0.07)***	0.94 (0.07)***	0.16 (0.08) (p=.052)
M1→M2	0.25 (0.09)***			0.25 (0.09)***			0.25 (0.09)***			0.25 (0.09)***		
X→M3	0.34 (0.03)***	0.40 (0.03)***	0.05 (0.04)	0.34 (0.03)***	0.40 (0.03)***	0.05 (0.04)	0.34 (0.03)***	0.40 (0.03)***	0.05 (0.04)	0.34 (0.03)***	0.40 (0.03)***	0.05 (0.04)
M1→M3	0.08 (0.04) (p=.06)			0.08 (0.04) (p=.06)			0.08 (0.04) (p=.06)			0.08 (0.04) (p=.06)		
M2→M3	0.09 (0.01)***			0.09 (0.01)***			0.09 (0.01)***			0.09 (0.01)***		
X→DV	0.15 (0.03)***	0.34 (0.03)***	0.19 (0.04)***	0.38 (0.04)***	0.48 (0.04)***	0.11 (0.04)*	0.33 (0.02)***	0.39 (0.03)***	0.07 (0.03)*	0.21 (0.04)***	0.40 (0.04)***	0.19 (0.04)***
M1→DV	0.19 (0.04)***			−0.13 (0.05)**			−0.17 (0.03)***			0.02 (0.05)		
M2→DV	0.03 (0.01)***			0.11 (0.01)***			0.09 (0.00)***			0.08 (0.01)***		
M3→DV	0.13 (0.01)***			0.10 (0.01)***			0.10 (0.01)***			0.06 (0.01)**		
Covariates→DV												
Male	−0.10 (0.03)***			−0.00 (0.03)			−0.10 (0.02)***			−0.10 (0.03)**		
Age	0.01 (0.00)***			0.01 (0.00)***			−0.01 (0.00)***			0.00 (0.00)***		
Education	0.10 (0.01)***			0.07 (0.02)***			0.07 (0.01)***			0.24 (0.02)***		
Income	0.01 (0.00)***			0.01 (0.00)*			−0.00 (0.00)*			0.01 (0.00)***		
White	0.17 (0.03)***			−0.02 (0.04)			−0.03 (0.02)			0.07 (0.04)*		

(continued)

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Table 3. (continued)

Relative effects	Model B1: Voting			Model B2: Campaign			Model B3: Advocacy			Model B4: Civic Engagement		
	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]	B (SE) [95% CI]
X→DV	**0.1513** (0.0311) [0.0904, 0.2123]	**0.3432** (0.0330) [0.2785, 0.4079]	**0.1919** (0.0355) [0.1222, 0.2615]	**0.3772** (0.0371) [0.3045, 0.4450]	**0.4827** (0.0394) [0.4055, 0.5600]	**0.1055** (0.0424) [0.0224, 0.1886]	**0.3254** (0.0238) [0.2788, 0.3720]	**0.3912** (0.0252) [0.3318, 0.4407]	**0.0659** (0.0272) [0.0126, 0.1191]	**0.2093** (0.0375) [0.1357, 0.2828]	**0.3966** (0.0398) [0.3186, 0.4747]	**0.1874** (0.0429) [0.1034, 0.2714]
X→M1→M2→DV	**-0.0008** (0.0003) [-0.0016, -0.0002]	**-0.0002** (0.0001) [-0.0005, -0.0000]	**0.0006** (0.0003) [0.0002, 0.0012]	**-0.0025** (0.0010) [-0.0047, -0.0007]	**-0.0006** (0.0004) [-0.0014, -0.0000]	**0.0020** (0.0008) [0.0005, 0.0037]	**-0.0020** (0.0008) [-0.0037, -0.0005]	**-0.0004** (0.0003) [-0.0011, -0.0000]	**0.0016** (0.0007) [0.0004, 0.0030]	**-0.0019** (0.0007) [-0.0034, -0.0005]	**-0.0004** (0.0003) [-0.0010, -0.0000]	**0.0015** (0.0006) [0.0004, 0.0027]
X→M1→M3→DV	-0.0008 (0.0003) [-0.0016, -0.0002]	-0.0002 (0.0002) [-0.0006, -0.0000]	0.0008 (0.0004) [-0.0000, 0.0017]	-0.0007 (0.0004) [-0.0016, 0.0000]	-0.0002 (0.0001) [-0.0005, 0.0000]	0.0006 (0.0003) [-0.0000, 0.0013]	-0.0007 (0.0004) [-0.0016, 0.0000]	-0.0002 (0.0001) [-0.0005, 0.0000]	0.0006 (0.0003) [-0.0000, 0.0013]	-0.0004 (0.0003) [-0.0010, 0.0000]	-0.0001 (0.0001) [-0.0003, 0.0000]	0.0004 (0.0002) [-0.0000, 0.0008]
X→M2→M3→DV	**0.0090** (0.0013) [0.0065, 0.0118]	**0.0108** (0.0015) [0.0080, 0.0139]	0.0018 (0.0010) [-0.0001, 0.0037]	**0.0067** (0.0012) [0.0046, 0.0092]	**0.0081** (0.0014) [0.0056, 0.0109]	0.0013 (0.0007) [-0.0000, 0.0029]	**0.0070** (0.0010) [0.0052, 0.0090]	**0.0084** (0.0011) [0.0063, 0.0107]	0.0014 (0.0007) [-0.0000, 0.0029]	**0.0040** (0.0010) [0.0020, 0.0061]	**0.0047** (0.0012) [0.0025, 0.0073]	0.0008 (0.0005) [-0.0000, 0.0018]
X→M1→M2→M3→DV	**-0.0003** (0.0001) [-0.0005, -0.0001]	**-0.0001** (0.0000) [-0.0001, -0.0000]	**0.0002** (0.0001) [0.0001, 0.0004]	**-0.0002** (0.0001) [-0.0004, -0.0001]	**-0.0000** (0.0000) [-0.0001, -0.0000]	**0.0002** (0.0001) [0.0000, 0.0003]	**-0.0002** (0.0001) [-0.0004, -0.0001]	**-0.0000** (0.0000) [-0.0001, -0.0000]	**0.0002** (0.0001) [0.0000, 0.0003]	**-0.0001** (0.0000) [-0.0002, -0.0000]	**-0.0000** (0.0000) [-0.0001, -0.0000]	**0.0001** (0.0000) [0.0000, 0.0002]

Note. X1: Polarized versus Incongruent; X2: Polarized versus Floating; X3: Incongruent versus Floating; Partisan types were classified through pre-election survey data; M1: counter-attitudinal exposure (pre-election); M2: interpersonal political discussion (post-election); M3: political knowledge (post-election); DVs were all measured during the post-election survey. Bootstraps resample = 10,000; estimates were unstandardized and calculated by PROCESS macro (Model 6) with dummy coding of categorical IV. Numbers in bold indicate significant effects.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

alignment between their partisanship and issue positions, while some are incongruent partisans who have party identity but disagree with their party's stances on some issues, and others are hesitant or apathetic citizens (i.e., the floating citizens) who oscillate between parties or remain indifferent about social and political issues.

With the partisan types being classified, we further explored their association with different types of political participation. In the current political environment, the continuous expansion of participation modes has confronted many researchers as different participation types are not contingent on theoretical approaches and empirical findings (Fox, 2014). Some political actions are creative and personalized (e.g., buycotts and boycotts), some are expressive (e.g., petition and protest), while others are non-political activities used for political purposes (e.g., street parties and community service; van Deth, 2014). Distinguishing different types of participation can help us extend the umbrella term of political participation and assess its changes and trends in a more nuanced and valid manner.

Based on the O-S-R-O-R framework, we first tested the relative total effects of partisan types on various political participation activities (i.e., voting, campaign participation, political advocacy, and civic participation). Compared with both floating citizens and incongruent partisans, polarized partisans, who constituted nearly half of the study sample, exhibit significantly higher levels of participation across different types of political actions. Polarized partisans, who are considered the core of Americans' political polarization, are the most active in politics, as others may have conflicting issue opinions against their party that would arouse cognitive dissonance and attitude ambivalence, or they may not care about politics at all. Polarized partisans and incongruent partisans share certain similarities in their political characteristics: they both have a clear and confirmed party identification (the differences lay in their attitude toward political issues in that the political identification is aligned with the issue position among polarized partisans, but not among incongruent partisans), but polarized partisans were more active in all four types of political actions. This finding highlights the significant role of the alignment between party identification and issue positions in facilitating different types of participation. Compared with polarized partisans, incongruent partisans are ambivalent due to their cross-cutting issue positions, which would lead to their lower levels of political involvement.

To have a more nuanced understanding of the indirect effects in the O-S-R-O-R framework, we explicate the stimulus variable (i.e., multi-platform news consumption) into two types of news consumption (i.e., pro-attitudinal and counter-attitudinal exposure). Compared with both incongruent partisans and floating citizens, polarized partisans are more likely to consume pro-attitudinal news and less likely to consume counter-attitudinal news from different kinds of platforms. A higher level of pro-attitudinal exposure triggers political discussion, which then increases political knowledge, which mobilizes all types of political participation. In contrast, a lower level of counter-attitudinal exposure leads to lower levels of discussion and knowledge and finally demobilizes all types of participation. Polarized partisans with strong motivated reasoning and confirmation bias are likely to exercise partisan selective

exposure to consume like-minded information and avoid challenging viewpoints. Their participatory behaviors, which represent a large percentage of political engagement in the US, are therefore mainly driven by pro-attitudinal exposure, which has alarming implications for the development of a healthy democracy.

Although incongruent partisans are less likely than polarized partisans to use multi-platforms for pro-attitudinal news, they are more likely to seek counter-attitudinal news from various platforms, which in turn contribute to political discussion and political knowledge and further enhance political participation. This finding highlights the potential contribution of incongruent partisans to deliberative and participatory democracy. By nature, incongruent partisans have a confirmed party identification, but their views diverge from their party's views on certain issues. Their party affiliation and issue involvement serve as strong motivations for incongruent partisans to engage more in various political actions than floating citizens. More importantly, given their mixed viewpoints on different issues, they may be more tolerant to and feel less challenged by disagreeing information and therefore be more likely than polarized partisans and floating citizens to seek information with diverse perspectives from various platforms. Accordingly, incongruent partisans, who constitute one-third of the study sample, also engage in various political actions, potentially in a more deliberative way as they are not only guided by partisan cues but also mobilized by their mixed issue stance and by hearing the other side.

This finding also provides insights into the unsettled question regarding the relationship between counter-attitudinal exposure and political participation (Matthes et al., 2019) and eases concerns about the demobilizing effects of counter-attitudinal exposure. As incongruent partisans are more open-minded and likely to access counter-attitudinal information from various platforms, the counter-attitudinal exposure does not make them hesitate to take political action. Instead, it can prompt active reasoning (i.e., discussion), which in turn increases knowledge and further mobilizes participation. Thus, counter-attitudinal exposure may not cause them to feel uncertain of their own positions with respect to issues but instead to have a greater engagement with the information, such as political discussion. We are not able to distinguish whether the discussion is cross-cutting or like-minded in this study due to the limitation of the discussion measurement. However, the general political discussion driven by counter-attitudinal exposure among incongruent partisans should make them deliberate about competing arguments and learn certain aspects they had previously not taken into consideration, all of which should contribute to healthier political participation compared with activities conducted by polarized partisans.

This study contributes to the field in several different ways. First, we proposed and tested a partisan typology that reflects a more up-to-date partisan structure of the American citizenry. We believe this is a pioneering step to advance our understanding of active political contributors and bystanders.

Second, based on the O-S-R-O-R framework, we investigated a more comprehensive underlying mechanism of the effect of partisan types on political participation. Instead of testing the first orientation, most prior studies have controlled this factor in the model (e.g., Chan et al., 2017; Cho et al., 2009). In contrast, we proposed partisan

type as the first orientation and formally tested it in the model. In addition, we differentiated two different types of multi-platform news consumption (i.e., pro- and counter-attitudinal exposure). Our findings support the O-S-R-O-R model that news media, interpersonal effects, and knowledge acquisition can work together as a chain to mobilize various political actions. However, this seemingly simple relationship varies when it comes to different types of partisans because they have different patterns of multi-platform news consumption.

Third, scholarship on political participation is growing with more detailed explication and specification, paying more attention to different participation types, forms, and channels (Shah et al., 2005). Following this trend, we further specified four types of political participation to broaden and expand upon the concept. Although, empirically, we found similar relationships and mechanisms between partisan types and different modes of political participation, we emphasize that the factors that drive participation should be paid attention to. For instance, polarized partisans are especially passionate about all kinds of political activities to fulfill their political purposes and psychological needs; however, their participation may be biased as it is largely driven by their consumption of pro-attitudinal news from various kinds of media platforms.

Before concluding the study, some limitations should be acknowledged. First, due to the availability of secondary data, there are limitations in the measurements. Several key variables (i.e., multi-platform news consumption and political participation) are recorded in "yes/no" format. We counted the number of "yes" choices to indicate a respondent's involvement level. However, this measurement directly captures an individual's diversified activities of a certain participation type. Measuring the frequency and dedication of their participation behaviors is more ideal. In addition, the political knowledge measures are limited to asking respondents to identify the position held by a given politician or governor. Although this approach has been adopted in other studies (Cacciatore et al., 2018; Jung et al., 2011), it would be better if more diverse factual questions about issues and events that occurred between the two waves could be included.

Second, this study was confined to the context of a presidential election, when campaign news floods citizens' media diets and centers their personal discussion topics, especially for polarized partisans. Thus, the media consumption and discussion patterns tested in this study may be unique to the election period. Future researchers could consider testing the relationships in a more general context.

Third, the typology of partisan types tested in this study is solely based on American partisanship and issue perceptions. Future researchers could use a similar but adjusted design to structure partisan type in various cultural and political contexts.

Despite the limitations, the identified partisan types and tested O-S-R-O-R model demonstrate more up-to-date and detailed communication-mediated effects of partisan type on political participation. Every 4 years in the US, election candidates, political consultants, and scholars turn their attention to swing voters in an attempt to persuade them to cast their ballots on one side or the other (Mayer, 2008). These undecided voters are believed to be the key to winning elections and are an interesting subject of

political research. We found that incongruent partisans constitute another type of middle-range political participants. They are conceptually different from swing voters as they have a confirmed party identity and strong issue involvement even though their positions on some issues are inconsistent with those of their party. These incongruent partisans have the potential to strengthen a deliberative and participatory democracy if their political participation can be further mobilized.

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Supplemental Material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Notes

1. The attitude we discussed refers to the partisan attitude.
2. In the ANES survey, the measurements on different issue positions do not consistently use the same scale. For example, agreement with the death penalty was measured with a 4-point scale, but opinion on immigration was measured with a 7-point scale. Therefore, we did not use an averaged index to capture the respondents' issue consistency. For our recoding strategies for each issue, please see Supplemental Appendix B.
3. We would like to highlight that we utilize individuals' partisan attitude to determine whether the exposure is pro-attitudinal or counter-attitudinal. To be more specific, the operationalization of pro-attitude and counter-attitude refers to the pro-partisan attitude and counter-partisan attitude, respectively.
4. Although this study focused on objective knowledge (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996), it also examined the role of subjective knowledge (Lee et al., 2021), which reflects how confident citizens are in their ability to *understand* politics. It is a dimension of internal political efficacy which has often been tested as the second O in the O-S-R-O-R model. The questions ask the extent to which respondents (1) consider politics and government to be so complicated that they cannot understand what is going on (reversely coded) and (2) understand the important political issues facing the country ($M=3.35$, $SD=0.82$, Spearman-Brown Coefficient$=0.52$, $r=.35$, $p<.001$). The results with subjective knowledge as the second O were very similar to those for objective knowledge (see Supplemental Appendix E).
5. We explicate different types of political participation based on van Deth (2014)'s conventional and unconventional dimensions of political participation. This classification does not differentiate online and offline forms of action. For instance, political advocacy can be exercised in an online setting. To understand online participation specifically, the

frequency of online political posting is the only item of the measure that can be tested due to the limitation of the secondary data. We included a supplementary analysis in Supplemental Appendix F. The results show similar patterns to the four types of participation we analyzed.

6. We also analyzed the proposed relationships with general multi-platform news consumption (without separating pro- and counter-attitudinal exposure). The results are reported in Supplemental Appendix G.

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