

# Assignment: hispanic american diversity



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BUSTER**

As of today the Hispanic community forms the fastest growing ethnic minority in the United States. As of 2003, population data showed 37.4 million Latinos, outnumbering the 34.7 million African Americans. Today, 25 million, or two-thirds of Hispanics in the United States, are Mexican American. The term Hispanic is used for all people from the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America and from Spain.

As I continue this essay, I will be identifying the linguistic, political, social, economic, religious and familial conventions of four different Latino groups; Mexican-American, Puerto Ricans, and people from various parts of Central and South America. Mexican Americans, which is the biggest minority, share the heritage of the Spanish language. About 23 percent of Mexican Americans are English dominant, 26 percent are bilingual, and 51 percent are Spanish dominant.

Over the last 30 years, with the ever expanding Hispanic population growing, major political parties have begun to acknowledge that Mexican Americans form a force in the election process. This is why certain policies have been passed to allow non-English voters the chance to vote using multilingual ballots. Although Hispanics' incomes have increased over the last 20 years, the income gap between non-Hispanic Whites has remained the same. Mexican Americans' religion remains to be Catholic faith, well at least for 75 percent of the Mexican American population.

Family continues to play a major part for every Mexican American, often time's family members will send money to other family members so that they can have a better life, and most of the time family member will not

move out of their houses until they are married. Puerto Rican Americans are the third largest Hispanic subgroup living in the continental United States. Puerto Rican Americans just like Mexican Americans share the heritage of the Spanish language.

Unlike Mexican Americans who are dominantly Spanish speaking, Puerto Rican Americans are more English-language oriented, with 39 percent English-dominant, 40 percent bilingual, and 21 percent Spanish dominant. With the creation of multilingual ballots in the voting pole allowed Puerto Rican Americans to start considering voting on a regular basis, but for the most part Puerto Rican Americans continue to not play a huge role in politics. Family ties with Puerto Rican Americans are very traditional, and consider most of the family (grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins) extremely close relatives in the Puerto Rico family structure.

Cuban Americans are a significant ethnic Hispanic minority in the United States. Directly after the “ Cold War” and the “ Cuban Missile Crisis” 500, 000 in total arrived in the Key West, Florida area. After settling down, Cuban Americans began to flourish. Cuban Americans have college completion rates twice those of other Latinos. Along with their Hispanic counterparts, Cuban Americans native tongue is Spanish as well. Cuban Americans hold a powerful force in politics in Miami through the Cuban-American National Foundation.

Cuban Americans have different family ties compared to Cuban families and other Hispanics. Unlike other Hispanics who maintain traditional family structures, Cuban Americans often play different roles in their families. Since

Cuban American women are considered the greater workforce, they often hold greater authority in the family. Religion for Cuban Americans is primarily Roman Catholic, but more and more Cuban Americans are clamming nonreligious because of the antireligious bias of the Castro Revolution. Colombian Americans emigrated from the northeast section of South America.

Colombian Americans households primarily speak Spanish in the United States and their family ties usually are traditional: the husband is the wage-earner and head of house; the wife sets the tone of the household and rarely holds outside employment; children are taught to obey their parents and respect authority. Colombian Americans are primarily Catholic. Colombian Americans moved to the United States and flourished in professional careers, employment as laborers, factory workers, domestic servants, and opened small businesses.

Colombian Americans hold small ties with politics and government in the United States because most believe they will return to their homeland, so there is no reason to get involved. After reviewing the four different Latino groups, I found that most despite their problems with their homelands all have respectable backgrounds and flourished once they arrived to the United States, continued to practice their religious beliefs, and helped better the United States upon entering this country.