

Research paper on hispanic groups

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



HISPANIC GROUPS

The United States population is composed of people from different racial backgrounds. One of these groups is the Hispanic group which is composed of people from Spain and the Hispanic regions of Latin America. Also included in the category of Hispanics is any person who lives in the United States and identifies themselves as a Hispanic. The Hispanics have a lot of racial diversity and are hence not considered a race but an ethnic category (Donovan, 2010, p. 23). Among the sub-groups in the Hispanic group include Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Central and South Americans. So as to understand the Hispanic community, it is necessary to first understand some of these groups which will help in showing the similarities and contrasts within the Hispanic ethnic category.

Mexican Americans

These are Americans that come from Mexico. Statistics show that this particular group of Hispanics comprised about 10% of the population in the United States in 2009. Also by this time the Mexican Americans made up 66% of the Hispanic community in the United States (Garcia, 2002, p. 33). This figures show that this Hispanic group is a not a minor group in the Hispanic community. A majority of the Mexican Americans are children of indigenous Mexicans or Spaniards. It should be noted that a Mexican American may also be a person who had one parent as an indigenous Mexican and the other an indigenous Spaniard.

Most of the Mexican Americans register as being from the white race in census activities conducted in the United States. A big majority of the

remainder register under 'other races.' This shows that the Mexican Americans consider themselves as white people as there is no specific race to identify them. Whenever the Mexican Americans list themselves as 'other races', the United States government later reclassifies them as white people. This shows that even to the American government this particular Hispanic group is considered as being part of the white race. An interesting thing to note is that the Mexican American community has a higher heterogeneity rate than other Hispanic groups. They also live in large extended families and this allows them to live around people they share a cultural preference with.

After the Guadalupe Treaty made in 1848, the Mexican Americans were considered white by law but socially they were not accorded the status other whites in the USA received (Meler & Ribera, 1994, p. 67). The Mexican Americans were given the opportunity to serve the USA in white units during World War II but were ironically denied treatment on getting back to America based on the fact that they were not whites.

On the economic level research has shown that the Mexican Americans are narrowing the gap between them and other white people. It has been identified that the descendants of most Americans are laying emphasis on improving their economic status and helping their parents improve their living conditions.

Puerto Ricans

Puerto Ricans are ranked second in terms of numbers in all the Hispanic groups in the US. These are people who moved from Puerto Rica and are also

made up of people that are born of Puerto Ricans living in the US. A common term while dealing with this group is stateside which refers to those Puerto Ricans that reside in city of New York.

Puerto Ricans living in the US have been identified as having strong ties to those living in Puerto Rico. This shows that even when this particular group of Hispanics immigrates, they do not lose their ties with their families in the motherland. Most stateside Puerto Ricans speak Spanish though they also learn English. In fact the Puerto Ricans are the majority of the New York population that is multi-lingual (Jorge, 2001, p. 103).

The Puerto Rican community in the US is mostly as living in poverty though there is a positive trend as these poverty levels reduces. In 2002, the total income for stateside Puerto Ricans was put at about \$ 55 billion which is above the about \$ 43 billion total income made in Puerto Rico (Thomas, 2010, p. 42). This shows that Puerto Ricans have better economic opportunities in the United States than in Puerto Rico and hence giving a good reason why they immigrate to the United States.

Cubans

A Cuban American is a U. S. citizen that traces their origin to the country of Cuba. Also, people born in the US by Cuban parents are considered Cuban Americans. The Cuban Americans are the fourth largest group among the Hispanics. However, this group has the largest percentage of European ancestry amongst other Hispanics. The largest population of about 0. 8 million Cuban Americans is in Miami, Florida (Gonzalez, 1998, p. 82). The reason for this is mostly because of the fact that the state is close to Cuba.

North Jersey and Tampa Bay follow after Miami in terms of Cuban American population.

Cuban Americans immigration to the United States began in the 16th century during the period when Cuba was still a colony of Spain. Spanish-Cuban army officers migrated to St. Augustine to start over a new life. Later several Cigar companies moved their operations to the United States to avoid the disruption to their business in Cuba. However many Cubans migrated to the United States after their government introduced communism after aligning itself with Soviet Russia.

Most of the immigrants were upper and middle class people who could afford starting over a new life in another country. However children from lower class families were sent over on their own as their parents feared that they would be sent to Russia. Many of these immigrants have now being assimilated into the American culture and it is hard to pick them out from other Americans.

This group of Hispanics has been successful in starting businesses as well as in starting political movements (Cuban & Shapiro, 2011, p. 114). The Cuban Americans success in business is one of the major reasons behind Miami's transformation to a business centre from a simple retirement community. Also the demographic of the area has changed from having pensioners as the majority to young people.

Central and South Americans

The history of this Hispanic group is the least known. For a long period they were even referred to as ‘ Other Hispanics’ in the United States’ census. This group is however composed of people from Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Paraguay, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Chile. These people speak Spanish and English and hence are a multi-lingual ethnic group. However there are members of this group that speak other indigenous languages such as Aymara and Quichua.

The Central and South America area has been getting refugees from various regions making the region heterogeneous; in fact the region is as heterogeneous as the United States (Bergad & Klein, 2010, p. 12). This makes it hard to identify whether the immigrants into the United States are natives of South and Central America or people who immigrated to the region from other areas.

After immigrating to the United States members of this group have become assimilated into the American culture though they maintain certain traits that link them to where they come from.

References

- Meler, M. & Ribera, F. (1994). Mexican Americans/ American Mexicans: From Conquistadors to Chicanos. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Garcia, A. (2002). The Mexican Americans (The New Americans). Michigan: Greenwood.
- Jorge, D. (2001). The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move. North Carolina:

University of North

Carolina Press.

Thomas, L. (2010). Puerto Rican Citizen: History and Political Identity in Twentieth Century New York City. Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Gonzalez, M. (1998). The Cuban Americans (The New Americans). Michigan: Greenwood Press

Cuban, M. & Shapiro, G. (2011). The Comeback: How Innovation will Restore the American Dream. London: Beaufort Books.

Donovan, S. (2010). The Hispanic American Experience. New York: Twenty First Century Books.

Bergad, L. & Klein, H. (2010). Hispanics in the United States: A Demographic, Social, and Economic History, 1980-2005. London: Cambridge University Press.