
AC 2011-2429: AN INITIAL STUDY OF GEORGIA'S HISPANIC PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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An Initial Study of Georgia's Hispanic Participation in Higher Education

Abstract

We have many studies researching Hispanic population growth in the U.S. These studies predict possible future demographic composition using profiles or generations to classify the different Hispanic groups. Our university system has used these studies to prepare for the educational needs of this Hispanic community. Currently we have noticed a change in the admission criteria for state universities. Some students graduating from United States' high schools encounter road blocks when applying for state higher education because of questions regarding citizenship and/or residency. The definition of citizen versus non-citizen presents a moving target in the state universities. This may affect the predicted enrollment for the Hispanic community in higher education. A report of Georgia's Hispanic population enrolled in Higher Education will enable academia to study the historical progression of the Hispanic population, as an example. Enrollment predictions have been made. Are the numbers agreeing with the predictions? The implications of the enrollment evolution can help us address the overall impact of this population in academia. Specific information is needed. We want to insure access to educational opportunities for the Hispanics. Others can use this study to understand what the hindering issues are and what opportunities are available.

Introduction

The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are complex and include a range of cultures, races, ethnicities, nationalities, and even languages. One approach to defining "Who is Hispanic?" is rooted in the 1976 Act of Congress and the regulations that stem from it. In 1976, the U.S. Congress passed the only law in this country's history that mandated the collection and analysis of data for a specific ethnic group: "Americans of Spanish origin or descent." The language of that legislation described this group as "Americans who identify themselves as being of Spanish-speaking background and trace their origin or descent from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America and other Spanish-speaking countries." Standards for collecting data on Hispanics were developed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1977 and revised in 1997. Using these standards, schools, public health facilities and other government entities and agencies keep track of how many Hispanics they serve (which was a primary goal of the 1976 law).

However, the Census Bureau does not apply this definition in counting Hispanics. Rather, it relies entirely on self-reporting and lets each person identify themselves as Hispanic or not. The 2000 Census form asked two distinct questions, ethnicity and race.

Hispanic Profiles

This initial study proposes specific personas as possible profile for Hispanics seeking higher education in the state schools. Why? These personas define the different historical background in the young Hispanics we want to study. The Census Bureau perform historical analyses and projections with the use five generation Hispanic groups:

“*Foreign-born Population or First Generation—individuals born outside the United States who were not U.S. citizens at birth.

*Puerto Rican-born Population—U.S. citizens (at birth) born in Puerto Rico, U.S. territories, or other outlying areas.

*Foreign- and Mixed-Parentage Population or Second Generation—U.S.-born citizens with one or both parents born outside the United States (including persons born as U.S. citizens in foreign countries with one or two foreign-born parents).

*Natives of Puerto Rican Parentage or the Second Puerto Rican Generation—U.S.-born citizens with one or both parents born in Puerto Rico (including persons born as U.S. citizens in foreign countries with one or two Puerto Rican-born parents).

*U.S. Natives with Native Parentage or Third-and-higher Generations—U.S.-born citizens with both parents born in the United States (including persons born as U.S. citizens in foreign countries with two U.S.-born.”[8]

The Hispanic profile we would like to study are Hispanic currently or recently enrolled in K-12 that consider going to higher education. The following table describes the personas.

Table 1 - Personas

	Born	K-12 Education	Parents
1. Joseph	Non US	US	US citizen
2. Judy	US	US	Non-US citizen
3. John	Non US	Non US	US citizen
4. Jane	US	Non US	Non US citizen

1. Joseph – Moved to a state at age 2 with parents. Parents applied for U.S. citizenship (but did not apply for the child) Parents are U.S. citizens and also Joseph’s younger siblings born in U.S.
2. Judy – Born in U.S. – has citizenship – parents did not apply for citizenship
3. John – Born away from U.S. where parents were living – Entire family has moved to U.S. – John finished High School in the other country.
4. Jane – Born in U.S. – Family lived away from U.S. for the last 18 years – Family is back in U.S.

Georgia’s Hispanics

In the Georgia Hispanic Population, the Hispanics (Latinos) compose about 3% of the population with the census in 1999 pointing to 475,000 Hispanics. In 2000 U.S. Census, Georgia’s Hispanic population was 5.3%. The Hispanic population is predicted to increase to 665,000 in 2005 and 825,000 in 2010. The average age of Hispanics in Georgia in 1999 was 26.4 years old. In 2006 U.S. Census Bureau, Georgia was ranked 2nd with a 59.4% growth rate for Hispanics. The U.S. Census predicts the average age will be 28.1 in the year 2015.

Nationally, the Hispanic population is younger than other populations; for example, under 15 years of age, Hispanic 30 %, African American 21%, White non-Hispanic 20 %. What are the implications? Predictions were made in describing Hispanics as:

- more likely to be unemployed,
- to earn less, and

- to live below the poverty line.

The table below shows the percent increase from 1990 to 2000 of Georgia's Hispanic community to be 300 %. Academia focused on educational strategies to serve this community.

Table 2 - Georgia by Race and Ethnicity, 1990-2000 [6]

Absolute Change 1990-2000				Share of Total Change (%) 1990-2000			Percent Increase 1990-2000		
Total	White	Black	Hispanic	White	Black	Hispanic	White	Black	Hispanic
1,708,237	585,236	594,300	326,305	34	35	19	13	34	300

Some of the past statistics regarding students who do complete high school in Georgia and enter the University System of Georgia (USG) as freshmen are:

- Hispanic 34.3 %,
- All Georgia population 38.8 %.

The rate of graduation in six year in Georgia (USG) is:

- Hispanic 43.2 %,
- all others 46.7 %.

What are the current numbers today?

Between 1971 and 2009, the percentage who had attained a bachelor's degree increased from 19 to 37 percent for Whites, from 7 to 19 percent for Blacks, and from 5 to 12 percent for Hispanics. During this period, the gap in bachelor's degree attainment between Blacks and Whites increased from 12 to 18 percentage points, and the gap between Whites and Hispanics increased from 14 to 25 percentage points.[8]

Table 3 - Enrollment by Self-Declared Race/Ethnicity in the University System of Georgia [3]

	University System Total % of Hispanics at this time	University Hispanic total Enrollment	Percent of increase in Hispanics from the last year	University System Total Student Enrollment	Percent of increase in total students
Fall 2010*	4.7%	14,581	14.5%	311,442	3.16%
Fall 2009*	4.2%	12,734	28.9%	301,892	6.6%
Fall 2008	3.5%	9,874	12 %	282,978	4.7%
Fall 2007	3.3%	8,815	12.6%	270,022	3.8%

*In accordance with federal government guidelines, the collecting and reporting is slightly different starting in 2009. Individuals report using two separate questions: ethnicity and race.

Past Predictions

Immigration to the United States has risen rapidly and steadily for decades as a result of increasing globalization and population movements, changes in U.S. immigration laws, the growing linkages of immigrant families within this country to communities abroad and labor market factors. Not only have the numbers of new U.S. immigrants increased over recent

periods, but the rate of immigration also has risen steadily, whether measured from 1930, 1960 or 1980.

In the face of these strong and persistent trends, most U.S. government projections, whether done by the Census Bureau (1996, 2000, 2004) or the Social Security Administration (2007) have assumed constant or even decreasing numbers of immigrants, implying sharp and sometimes immediate declines in the rate of immigration. As a result, official projections over the last several decades have consistently underestimated actual population growth.^[7]

This initial study presents a proposal for additional analysis of Georgia's Hispanic current population and the implications of the numbers found. An approach for facilitation of the specific Hispanic profiles into higher education and methods to facilitate that increase is needed. The conversations and continue research addressing the specific Hispanic profiles set in this paper will be addressed during the presentation of the paper in July 2011.

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