

This Should Not Be Groundbreaking Research: Male/Female Income Differences among the Largest U.S. Hispanic Population

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1. Introduction

The Hispanic population in the U.S. reached over 39 million in June of 2004. Mexican Americans, the largest group among Hispanics, make up 66.9 percent of all Hispanic groups (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). The triple controversy of citizenship rights, immigration, and participation in the U.S. labor market, bring Mexican American issues center stage. Comparisons of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic White wage differentials are abundant in academic and political literature. However, few studies focus on subgroups within this population. Based on an income determination model with three theoretical segments, this study examine this often neglected subgroup, Mexican Americans, and the income gap between men and women within this population.

2. Methodology

Using the March 2004 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS: 2004) data set, this study examines the effect of individual level, structural level, and gender/race level factors on the annual earnings of Mexican American men and women. After sample restrictions were applied, the final sample size is 3,408 with Mexican American men comprising 55.2% of the sample and Mexican American women 44.8%. Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analysis are used to examine the independent effects of independent variables on income as related to Mexican American men and women using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Univariate and bivariate analyses include descriptive statistics and T-test to determine significant differences between groups. At the multivariate level, Ordinary Least Square (OLS) multiple regression analysis allows testing for the effect of independent variables on income, net of other factors.

3. Conclusions

OLS regression results are shown on the following page. The adjusted R squared value for the full sample is .421, explaining 42% of variance on income. As hypothesized, Mexican American women earn less income than Mexican American men, net of other factors. In the sample, women earn \$3,228 less than men. Looking at individual-level factors, as hypothesized, income increases as age increases. However, the difference in economic return for men and women is evident. Mexican American women see an annual increase of \$210 while men are augmented by \$369, net of other factors. Last, being married advantages both men and women in the sample. Married men see a return of \$4,197 while married women only see a yearly increase of \$1,355. Of interesting note, women see a higher return for years of education compared to men. Despite advantageous economic returns for women with education, men still earn higher income. This finding suggests that more research needs to be done looking at education within this group and possible underlying cultural influences not well studied or understood as related to the Mexican American population.

4. Acknowledgements

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Table 5a
OLS Regression Analysis for the Income Determination Model
(Dependent Variable = Annual Earnings)

Variables:	Full Sample			Men			Women			
	Unstd.	¹	Std.	Unstd.	¹	Std.	²	Unstd.	¹	Std.
Independent Variables:										
<i>Individual-level Factors:</i>										
Age (years)	\$305	***	0.232	\$369	***	0.270	^	\$210	***	0.175
Age Squared	-\$13	***	-0.121	-\$15	***	-0.137		-\$11	***	-0.112
Years of Education	\$1,568	***	0.304	\$1,545	***	0.296		\$1,633	***	0.333
Rural (0,1)	-\$3,831	***	-0.083	-\$3,751	***	-0.082		-\$3,605	***	-0.082
Structural-level Factors:										
Work Hours per Week	\$566	***	0.038	\$538	***	0.287		\$596	***	0.345
Government (0,1)	\$1,592	**	0.024	\$4,195	***	0.088		-\$480		-0.013
Goods-Producing (0,1)	\$853		0.089	\$774		0.024		\$651		0.015
Number of Employees	\$3	***	0.156	\$3	***	0.072		\$4	***	0.119
High Skill (0,1)	\$4,712	***		\$5,672	***	0.183	^	\$3,346	***	0.116
Gender/Race:										
Female (0,1)	-\$3,228	***	-0.107							
Occ. Sex-Seg Index	-\$1,000	*	-0.045	-\$591		-0.020		-\$983		-0.038
Married (0,1)	\$2,912	***	0.097	\$4,197	***	0.134	^	\$1,355	*	0.049
With Children Under age 6 (0,1)	-\$18		-0.001	\$336		0.010		-\$1,213		-0.038
Immigrant (0,1)	-\$1,832	**	-0.050	-\$844		-0.023		-\$3,064	***	-0.089
Immigrant Parent (0,1)	\$408		0.014	\$194		0.006		\$510		0.018
(Constant):	-\$25,633	***		-\$27,870				-\$25,934		
Adjusted R-sq.	0.421	***		0.397	***			0.437	***	
N=	3,408			1,882				1,526		

¹ = *** p<0.001; **p<0.01; *p<0.05

² significant difference between men and women at the .05 level or higher