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Latinos and Violence in America

Key Words:

Women, Latinos, Culture, Crime, Domestic, Immigration

Description:

The issue brief will focus on the “Latino Paradox” of violence within American culture.

Furthermore, this brief will explain how violence within the Latino population is more prone in domestic rather than in public affairs.



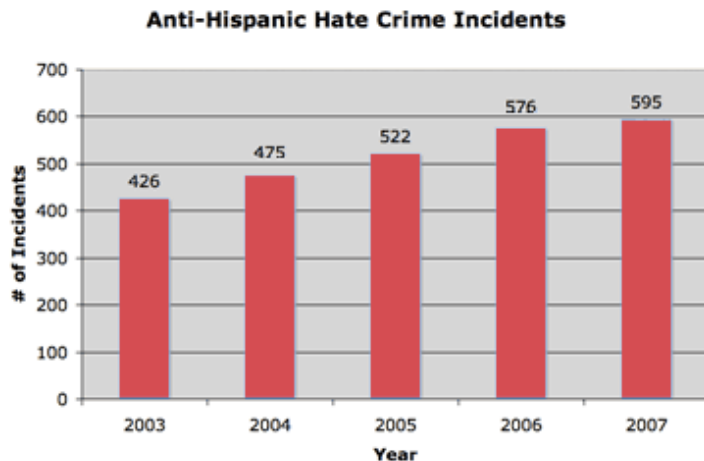
Source: <http://bronxboropres.nyc.gov/images/press/2009-09-28.jpg>

Key Points:

1. Latinos are one of the least violent of all immigrant groups in the country (Latinos have one of the lowest crimes rates, after Asians; this is due to their immigration status).
2. Violence among Latinos is usually found within the household; men beating their wives or children are being declined.
3. Latina women are more prone to domestic violence due their culture and immigration status.

4. Violence and verbal abuse against Latinos; this usually occurs when Latinos are linguistically isolated and economically deprived – i.e., racism.

5. Criminal Latinos are usually second or third generation American born.



Source: http://www.splcenter.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/hc_chart08.gif

Issue Brief: Latinos and Violence

The Hispanic/Latino ethnoracial group is the largest minority in America, and like many immigrant groups they have faced many stereotypes towards violence. The Social disorganization theory states that large groups of immigrants create disorder and chaos while integrating into American neighborhoods; furthermore, because these immigrants are usually economically deprived, they are more prone to criminal tracks and violence. This brief will discuss: the paradox of the social disorganization theory among Latinos, violence within the household against women, and the culture behind disciplining children.

While the social disorganization theory was suitable for European immigrants in the 1920's and 30's, recent studies have shown that Latino immigrants do not suit this stereotype. Sociologists call this the "Latino Paradox," indicating that Latinos are actually one of the most peaceful immigrant groups in the country. This is due to the following: immigration status, first generation work ethic, and their residential community. Many of the Latinos in America are first

generation (especially people from Mexican decent) immigrants, and in some cases their parents are illegally in the United States, or they themselves have an illegal status. Because their status is unsure, the fear of leaving the country at any moment influences their behavior. In order to avoid deportation, Latino people tend to have a much stronger work ethic.

Immigrants facing economic deprivation come to America looking for a better opportunity. This means they have a strong motivation to work, and are more willing to do physically intense jobs for a low paying wage. The strenuous work among the Latino immigrants leaves little motive for crime or other violent activities. According to Robert Sampson, Latino immigrants tend to build communities within urban areas of the country. Known as “traditional areas” or “safe zones,” these Latino communities provide a network base for Latino immigrants to find work and a home within a short period of time. Because these communities provide essential tools for life in America, Latinos have no need to turn to crime or violent means. However, economically deprived and linguistically isolated Latinos are more vulnerable to become victims of violence when found outside of their traditional areas. This is due to language barriers and immigration status, thus, they are very vulnerable and can be easily taken advantage of.

Unlike Latino immigrants, low-income Latino migrants are more prone to violence and crime. As new Latino immigrants populate the Latino urban communities, other Latinos are forced to move out to different communities. Latino migrants are USA citizens, usually second or third generation. These Latinos are not afraid to respond or provoke violent acts because they are American citizens and have no language barrier. They move to communities that are usually low-income urban neighborhoods. These urban communities are more vulnerable to drug-related

and robbery crimes. Thus, Latino citizens are imprisoned in disproportionately higher rates than other racial minorities. There are roughly 1 to 27 Latinos in prison.

Eben Ingram explains that Latina women tend to suffer more from domestic violence, not because Latino men are women beaters, but because Latina women are less likely to seek formal help when dealing with intimate partner violence, compared to other ethnoracial groups. Latina women are especially least likely to seek formal help because of cultural reasons and immigration status. Women who are undocumented would rather suffer than report their partners, for fear of deportation.

In addition to immigration status, “machismo” culture in Latino households largely endorses domestic violence. “Machismo” means that men are given full power to dispose of the household. Often, “machismo” implies male domination of the household. Due to this man-power, women fear their husbands and do not seek formal assistance.

The “machismo” carries over to disciplinary methods for the children. Misbehavior among children is dealt differently in Latino families, especially among immigrant Latinos. They tend to be more physically and verbally harsh. This more violent way of disciplining children carries over to future intimate partner violence. Thus, while Latinos are not violent in overall American society, they continue to have high rates of domestic violence within their ethnoracial group.



Source: http://www.apramp.org/upload/CAM35_machismo%20mata.jpg

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