

Ballew
African-Americans and Latino-Americans

Key Words: Latino, African-American, labor, unemployment, politics

Description: This brief discusses the relationship between African-Americans and Latino-Americans. Two particular topics that are addressed throughout the paper are voting and employment, and how the growing population of Latino-Americans affect both minority groups.

Key Points:

- **The Latino-American population in the U.S. is surging and has surpassed the African-American population.**
- **There are worries presented about the African-American power in the world of politics being affected by this.**
- **Worries presented about jobs being lost by African-Americans due to the influx on Latino-Americans.**

Issue Brief:

By looking at the 2000 United States Census it is evident that the largest growing racial group in the United States is Hispanic or Latin American. The introduction of the choice “Latino” to the Census followed with a record number of 35.3 million people, or 12.5 % of the population taking advantage of this option on their Census. In a 2002 report by the U.S. government new details were presented with another 2 million Latinos recognized as citizens of the U.S., causing the population to rise to 37.4 million and 13.3 % of the United States total population. With their surging population Latinos are becoming increasingly important in the United States both politically and socioeconomically in our changing society.

For years the African-American population stood as the largest minority population present in the United States. As of the last US Census the population stood at 36.4 million, or 12.9% of the US. population. The minority population has been associated with African-Americans throughout the history of the U.S., so seeing this population finally being surpassed by a different group is an alarming idea. With the influx of Latinos in the United States it is very interesting to take a look at how African-Americans are or are not being affected by the population increase.

The question that arises when looking at the increase of the Latino population is the possible political ramifications that may stem from the spike in its population. It seems that a popular idea is that since the Latino population has surpassed the African-American population, and still is seeing a steady growth in their population that we will see African-Americans losing power politically in a number of different ways whether it be through representation or with the lawmakers creating favorable laws for them. However, the Census provides information that leads me to believe something completely different. The African-American population in some sense is largely unaffected by the Latino population’s growth because of the regional breakdown of the populations’ distributions. In African-American’s the population is heavily concentrated in the Southern region of the United States. Latinos on the other hand have their most densely

populated areas located in the Western region of the U.S. For African-Americans, the Western Region represents the smallest percentage of their population in the U.S., with only 8.9% of African-Americans being residents of Western U.S. The only overlap seen in these statistics are that the Latino population makes up 65% of the population in Miami, Florida, which lies in the Southern Region that we see the greatest presence of the African-American population. In essence, the idea of seeing a noticeable affect in the representation of government officials, or laws favoring African-Americans is dispelled by the statistics presented.

A greater issue in the relation between African-Americans and Latino-Americans is the effect that their population is creating in terms of employment. In my experiences there seems to be a myth that Latino-Americans are taking jobs from African-Americans. Obviously, when such a large population of Latinos exists in the U.S. then logically we'd expect them to take some jobs from African-Americans. Recent statistics show that African-Americans have the largest unemployment of all races in the US. , with 12.6% being unemployed, compared to 9.7% of Latino-Americans. After looking at a regional breakdown of the two populations part of this could be partly attributed to the economic struggles that resulted in major cutbacks among industrial companies, and in the car industry located in the Midwest, where there is a strong presence of the African-American population. The Southern region also showed noticeably higher unemployment rates relative to the rest of the country. So the unemployment rates from African-Americans can be attributed more to the regional locations of the population, in opposition to losing jobs to the Latin-American population.

Works Cited and References

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