

# *LATINO DATA PROJECT*

## LIVING ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS AMONG THE LATINO POPULATION IN NEW YORK CITY

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## **Living Arrangement Patterns Among the Latino Population in New York City<sup>1</sup>**

This report analyses the data on living arrangements and households configurations reported in the U.S. Census 2000 for New York City. Four ethnic/racial groups, Whites, Blacks, Asians and Latinos/Hispanics<sup>2</sup> will be examined followed by a comparison among the eight largest Latino/Hispanic national groups across the five boroughs. These groups are Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Mexicans, Ecuadorians, Colombians, Cubans, Salvadorians and Hondurans. These national groups were selected because they represent the eight countries with the largest populations among the Latino/Hispanic population of NYC (See Table 1).

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<sup>1</sup> Data Sources - Census Data 2000 – Summary Files 4 – PCT9: Household Type (Including Living Alone) by Relationship.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this report these ethnic/racial categories are defined as follows:  
Whites – White only and no other race/s, non-Hispanic origin  
Blacks – Black only and no other race/s, non-Hispanic origin  
Asians – Asian only and no other race/s, non-Hispanic origin  
Latino/Hispanic – Those reporting a Latino nationality and/or Latino/Hispanic origin, race non-specified. This category also includes those reporting Spaniard nationality which was included in the total Hispanic population.

**Table 1. Percentage of Latino/Hispanic Population in New York City by Country of Origin**

	<b>Total Population in NYC</b>	<b>Percentage of Latino/Hispanic Population</b>
<b>Puerto Rican</b>	<b>784,297</b>	<b>36.3 %</b>
<b>Dominican</b>	<b>425,739</b>	<b>19.7 %</b>
<b>Mexican</b>	<b>177,527</b>	<b>8.2 %</b>
<b>Ecuadorian</b>	<b>106,617</b>	<b>4.9 %</b>
<b>Colombian</b>	<b>81,566</b>	<b>3.8 %</b>
<b>Cuban</b>	<b>41,474</b>	<b>1.9 %</b>
<b>Honduran</b>	<b>29,732</b>	<b>1.4 %</b>
<b>Salvadorian</b>	<b>25,102</b>	<b>1.2 %</b>
Peruvian	23,665	1.1 %
Panamanian	18,327	0.8 %
Guatemalan	15,674	0.7 %
Argentinean	10,163	0.5 %
Nicaraguan	7,291	0.3 %
Venezuelan	7,090	0.3 %
Chilean	5,436	0.3 %
Costa Rican	5,049	0.2 %
Bolivian	2,806	0.1 %
Uruguayan	1,383	0.1 %
Paraguayan	1,302	0.1 %

The definitions used by the U.S. Census Bureau for collecting and grouping people are not always obvious. A **household** is understood as one or more persons living in a housing unit which could be a house, an apartment, a mobile house, a group of rooms, or a single room. Households can be divided into **family** and **non-family** households. In a **family household** people are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. A **non-family household** may be constituted by a person who lives alone or a householder who shares the housing unit with other people that are not related to him/her by birth, marriage, or adoption. Therefore non-married couples cohabiting and/or same-sex partners will be considered a non-family household. The person designated as **householder** is the person in whose name the housing unit (house, apartment or room) is either rented or owned.

## Comparing Latinos/Hispanics to other Ethnic Groups in NYC

National figures presented by the U.S. Census Bureau in their Census 2000 brief “America’s Families and Living Arrangements: 2003” (Fields, 2004)<sup>3</sup> highlight a decline in the number of family households from 81 % of all households in 1970 to 68% in 2003. This also indicates that non-family households had a greater increase (23 %) than family households (11%) from 1990 to 2000 (Simmons & O’Neill, 2001). According to Field’s (2004) Census 2000 brief, 31% of all households in the United States were located in only 4 states: California with 11.5 million households, Texas with 7.4 million households, New York with 7.1 million households and Florida with 6.3 million households. It should be noted that the definition of family units used by the U.S. Census Bureau is limited to couples and partners who are married and therefore excludes unmarried couples living together and same-sex partners. Therefore the national changes and declining rates of family households are perhaps reflective of changes in the United States social definitions of family and marriage.

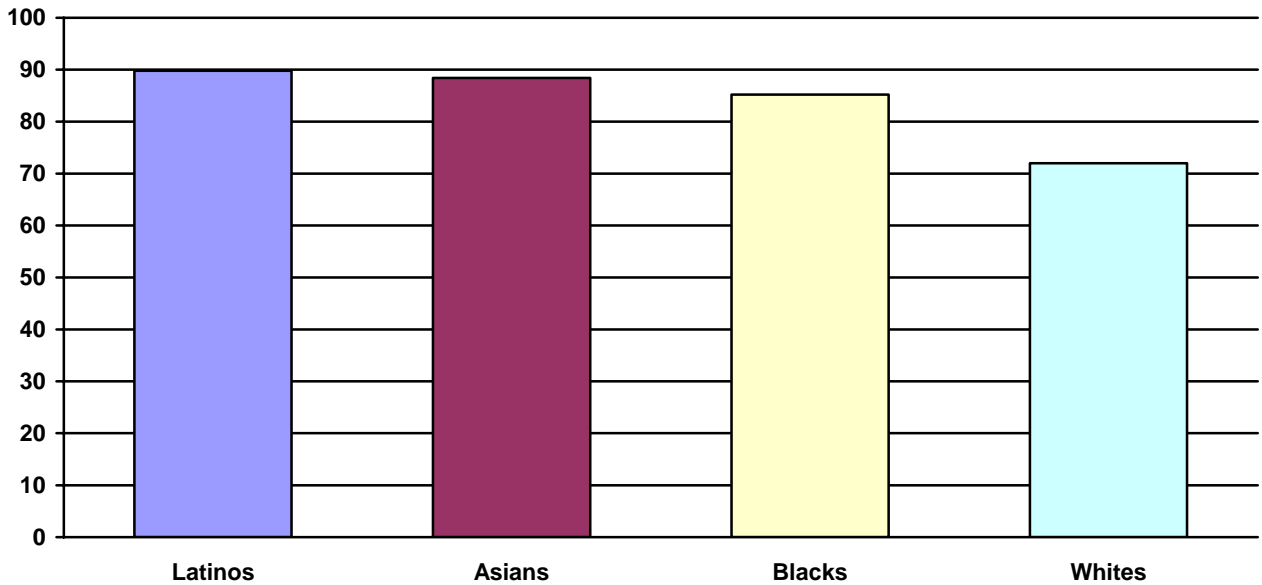
New York State is the third ranking state in population and households in the country. Data for New York City (NYC) indicate that national patterns are not replicated when the number of family households by ethnic group are compared (See Figure 1). The percentage of family households among Latinos/Hispanics (89.8%), Asians (88.4%) and Blacks (85.2) is higher than the national percentage (68%). Whites are at the lowest end of the spectrum on family households in NYC with 72% of households defined as family households. This means that Latinos/Hispanics, Asians, and Blacks are more likely to live with family members in New York City than Whites. Twenty one percent of Whites living in New York City (within the five boroughs) actually lived with a roommate or non-relative (possibly including non-married

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<sup>3</sup> See Fields, J. (November, 2004) *America’s Families and Living Arrangements: 2003; Census 2000 Brief*. U.S. Census Bureau. Available [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) (get exact address)

partners and/or same-sex) compared to 13% of Asians, 10% of Latino/Hispanics and 8% of Blacks.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1. Percentage NYC Population Living in Family Households by Ethnic Group**



**Table 2. Family Households in New York City by Ethnic Group**

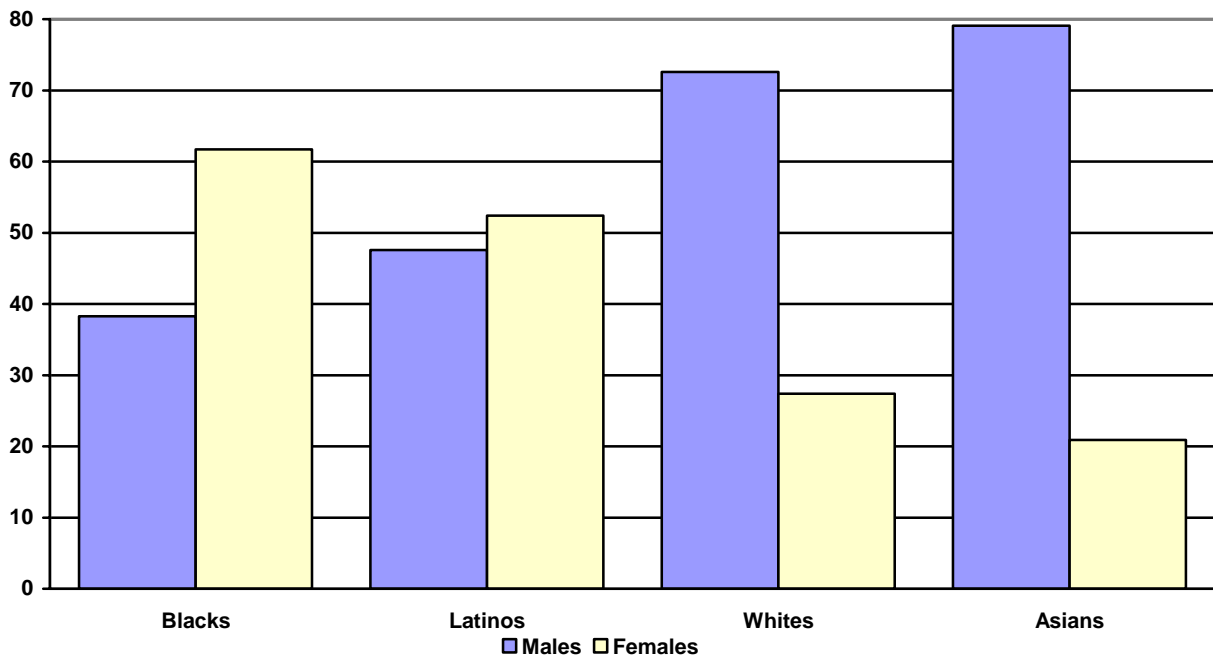
	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Population in Family Households</b>	<b>Percentage of Population in Family Households</b>
Latino/Hispanic	2,161,530	1,911,222	<b>89.8 %</b>
Asians	781,736	683,216	<b>88.4 %</b>
Blacks	1,952,953	1,610,691	<b>85.2 %</b>
Whites	2,801,995	1,963,963	<b>72.0 %</b>

When considering the sex of the householder by ethnic groups interesting patterns may be observed. In NYC, females are more likely to be householders among Blacks and Latinos/Hispanics than males. Sixty two percent (62%) of Black women were householders in

<sup>4</sup> These figures may be deceiving if we keep in mind that unmarried couples, including same sex partners, are not considered family members by the U.S. Census Bureau.

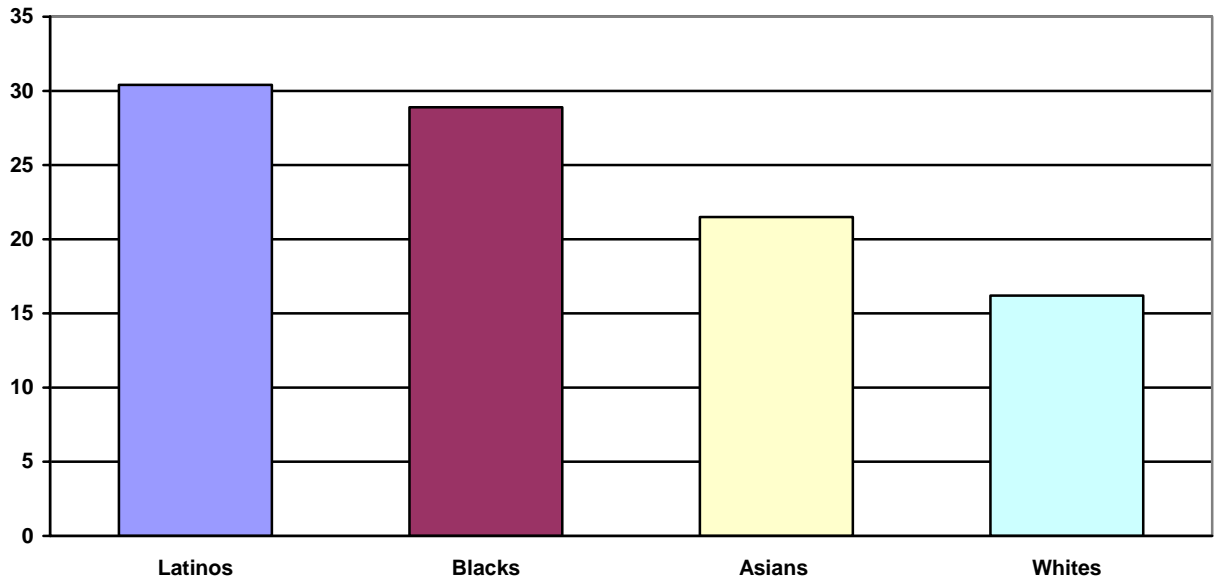
black households and fifty two percent (52%) of Latino/Hispanic females were householders in Latino/Hispanic households. In contrast, males are more likely to be householders in White households (73%) and in Asian households (79%) (See below, Figure 2 and Table 3). At the national level, only 47% of Black and 68 % of Latino/Hispanic family households compared to 80% of Asian and 82% of White family households reported being married-couples.<sup>5</sup> Thus, there seems to be a correlation between being married and having a male householder in the family. This suggests lower marriage rates among Black and Latino/Hispanic males.

**Figure 2. Percentage of NYC Population who are Householders by Sex and Ethnic Group**



<sup>5</sup> See Fields (2004), *ibid* 3.

**Figure 3. Percentage of Children (under 18) in the NYC population by Ethnic Group**



It is important to emphasize that the percentage of children under the age of 18 years old in NYC is closely related to the householder's sex. Ethnic groups where the family householder is more likely to be female have higher percentages of children among their population. As may be noted in Figure 3, Latinos/Hispanics (30.4%) and Blacks (28.9%) have proportionally higher percentages of children among their populations than Asians (21.5%) and Whites (16.2%). According to Fields (2004)<sup>6</sup>, in the United States women are the householders in 3 out of 4 family groups of unmarried couples. We can therefore conclude that in a high proportion of family households where the householder is a woman, she is the main source of support of the family.

The census uses data on household size, householder, and family vs. non-family households to compare family and household incomes and to derive national poverty levels. The patterns depicted in Figure 2 and 3 indicate that families headed by females are more likely to

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid 3.

have higher numbers of children among them. This is important to consider because the national poverty level for female householder families (26.5%) with no spouse present was higher than that of male householder families (13.6%) in 1999.<sup>7</sup> Blacks (24.9%) and Latinos/Hispanics (22.6%) had higher poverty rates than did Asians (12.6%) and Whites (8.1%). These national poverty rates among different ethnic groups correlate with the patterns observed among family households with a female householder in NYC (See Figure 2). It is also important to note that the highest poverty rates are found among children (16.6%) under the age of 18. Although this number declined between 1989 and 1999, children were still more likely to live in poverty than any other age group in 1999.<sup>8</sup>

#### Comparing Different Latino/Hispanic National Groups in NYC

As indicated previously, the Latino/Hispanic population in NYC has the highest percentage of its population living in family households. Among Latinos/Hispanics, only 1 in 10 households is not occupied by individuals related to each other by birth, marriage partner, or adoption. This is much higher than the national percentage of family households (68%). Most Latino/Hispanic national groups have similar patterns of household configuration when comparing household types. Among Dominicans, Ecuadorians, Mexicans, Salvadorans and Hondurans the percentage of family households is above 90% (See Figure 6). The percentage of family households among Colombians is 87.9% and among Puerto Ricans it is 86.5%. Among Cubans, however the number of family households drops very close to the national average, with only 74.5% of households qualifying as family households. It should be noted that Cuban household type patterns resemble those of white households where only 72% are family

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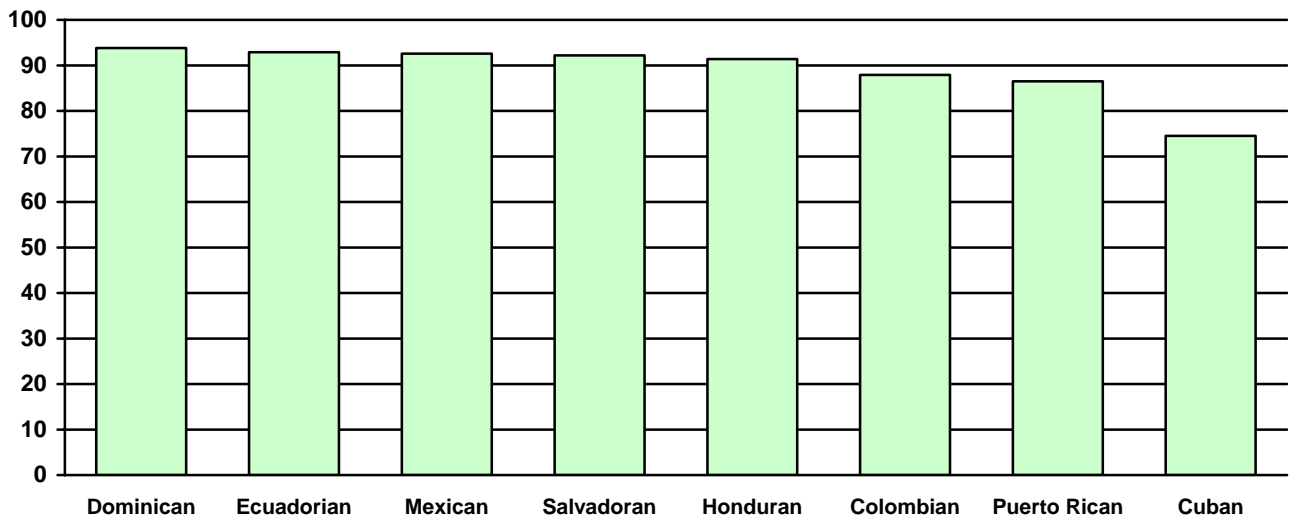
<sup>7</sup> See Bishaw, A & Eceland, J. (May 2003) *Poverty: 1999; Census 2000 Brief*. U.S. Census Bureau. Available [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) (get exact address).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid 7.

households as opposed to Latino/Hispanic households where 89.9% are family households (See Figure 1).

It is also interesting to highlight that the percentage of non-family households among Cubans (25.5%) is much higher than among other groups (less than 13.5%). This might be due to acculturation patterns and changing family structures. The data suggests that Cubans behave more like white Americans and that their living arrangements may begin to change towards living alone and not with relatives. Another explanation would point to more economic independence and less of a need to rely on sharing living quarters to reduce living costs. These numbers may also be the result of immigration policies that favor and/or facilitate family reunification and discourages work or education-related migration.

**Figure 6. Percentage of NYC Latino/Hispanic Population Living in Family Households by Country of Origin**



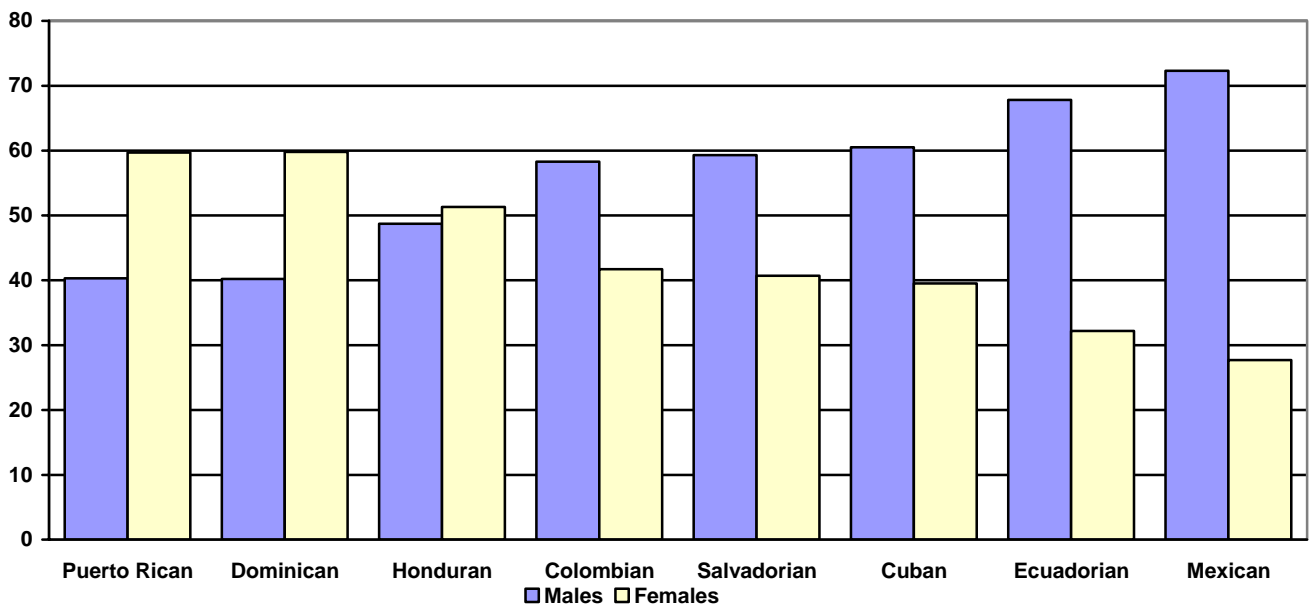
**Table 3. Latino/Hispanic Family Households in New York City by Country of Origin**

	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Population in Family Households</b>	<b>Percentage of Population in Family Households</b>
Latino/Hispanic	2,161,530	1,911,222	<b>89.8 %</b>
Asians	781,736	683,216	<b>88.4 %</b>
Blacks	1,952,953	1,610,691	<b>85.2 %</b>
Whites	2,801,995	1,963,963	<b>72.0 %</b>
Cuban	41,474	30,199	<b>74.5 %</b>
Puerto Ricans	784,297	667,440	<b>86.5 %</b>
Colombians	81,566	71,223	<b>87.9 %</b>
Hondurans	29,732	27,023	<b>91.4 %</b>
Salvadorans	25,102	23,063	<b>92.2 %</b>
Mexicans	177,527	163,014	<b>92.6 %</b>
Ecuadorians	106,617	98,796	<b>92.9 %</b>
Dominicans	425,739	397,736	<b>93.3%</b>

The data representing the distribution of householders by sex among different Latino/Hispanic national groups reveal a different picture than the one observed when we only look at household type. The differences between the percentage of male and female householders among national groups doesn't seem to correlate with either size of population or household type (family vs. non-family). Rather it appears to evoke more culturally and country-of-origin specific patterns in determining sex disparities. For example, even though Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic have one of the lowest and highest percentages of family households (85.5% and 93.3% respectively; see Figure 6), they have the same percentage of households headed by females (59.7% and 59.8% respectively; see Figure 7). Colombia and Puerto Rico have very similar rates of family households (87.9% and 86.5% respectively; see Figure 6), yet they have contrasting patterns in the sex distribution of householders. Among Colombians, householders are a majority male (58.3%) while among Puerto Ricans they are primarily female (59.7%).

Puerto Rico (59.7%), Dominican Republic (59.8%) and Honduras (51.3%) are the three Latino/Hispanic national groups where the number of women among householders is greater. It is worth noting that the Bronx (61.5%) and Manhattan (58.1%) have the highest percentages of female householders compared to Staten Island (37.8%) and Queens (37.3%), and they are also where the majority of Puerto Ricans and Dominicans in New York City are concentrated (see Figure 9). Among Colombians, Salvadorians, Cubans, Ecuadorians and Mexicans, most householders are male. Mexicans have the highest percentage of male householders with 72.3% followed by Ecuadorians with 67.8%, and Cubans, Salvadorians and Colombians closely together with 60.5%, 59.3% and 58.3% respectively (see Figure 7).

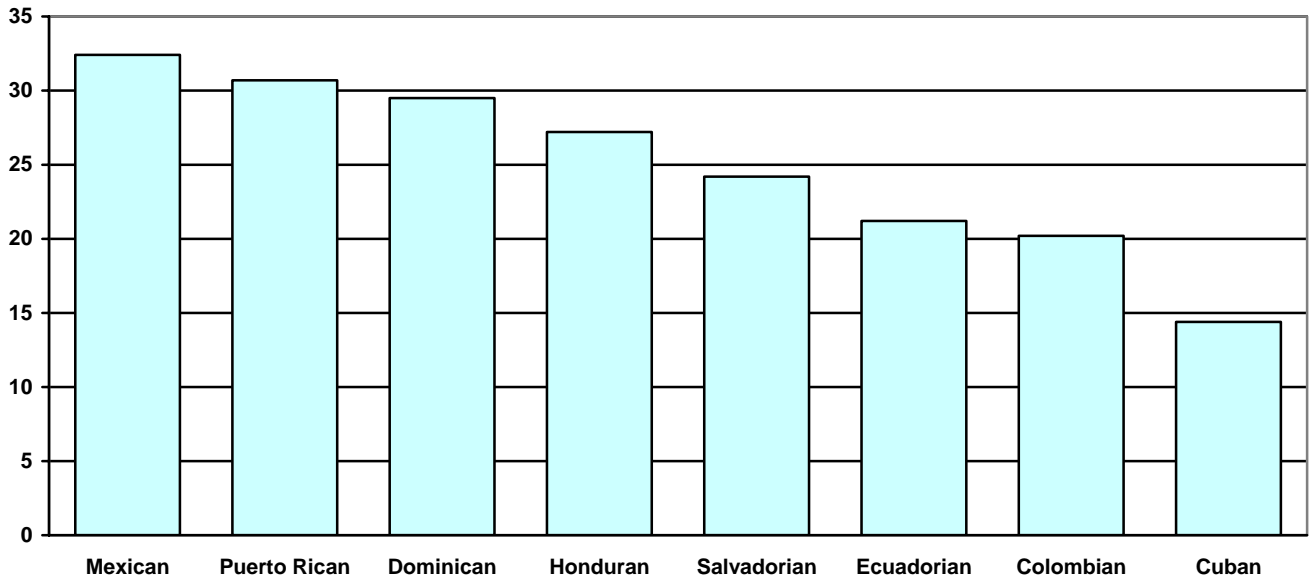
**Figure 7. Percentage of NYC Latino/Hispanic who are Householders by Sex and Country of Origin in NYC**



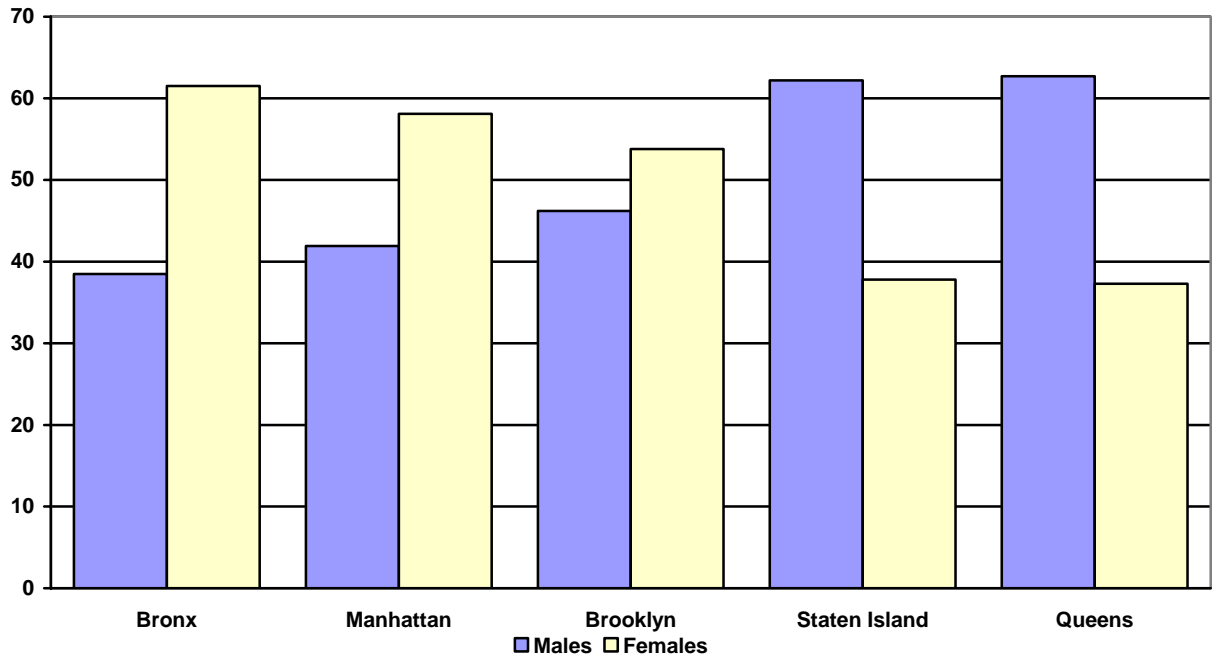
The child population presents yet another picture. There is a significant difference in the proportion of children within the Mexican population and the Cuban population. In NYC, 3 out of 10 Mexicans are children under 18 years old while only 1 out of 10 Cubans is likely to be under the

age of 18. Mexicans (32.4%) and Cubans (14.4%) represent the high and low end of the child population among Latino/Hispanic national groups in New York City. Puerto Ricans (30.7%), Dominicans (29.5%) and Hondurans (27.2%) with percentages above 25% are in high end of the range, while Salvadorans (24.2%), Ecuadorians (21.2%) and Colombians (20.2%) with percentages below 25% are in the low end of the range. These proportions don't seem to correlate with the overall size of the population of each national group.

**Figure 8. Percentage of Children (under 18) in the NYC Latino/Hispanic population by Country of Origin**



**Figure 9. Percentage of NYC Latino/Hispanic Population who are Householders by Sex and Borough of Residence**



Some patterns emerge which should be noted:

- Puerto Ricans and Dominicans households are overwhelmingly female headed and have higher proportions of children which have been correlated to higher poverty levels. They are highly concentrated in neighborhoods and boroughs characterized by high levels of poverty, higher levels of female headed households and higher proportions of children among their populations.
- Latinos have much higher proportions of children among their population.
- Cubans behave much more like whites than like Latinos. Perhaps, they represent a model minority among Latinos and appear to have higher levels of acculturation despite traditional division of labor among sexes (given sex distribution among householders).