

The Truth About Hispanic Men

By David Burgos and Hortensia Aldana - Millward Brown

Hispanic men have a common and unique cultural background that defines who they are as a group. However, Latinos are far from being folks that think, feel and behave alike. Indeed, they are a fairly diverse segment.

Furthermore, in spite of the cultural nuances that differentiate them from the mainstream, the truth is that in many aspects men will always be men, regardless of their ethnic background.

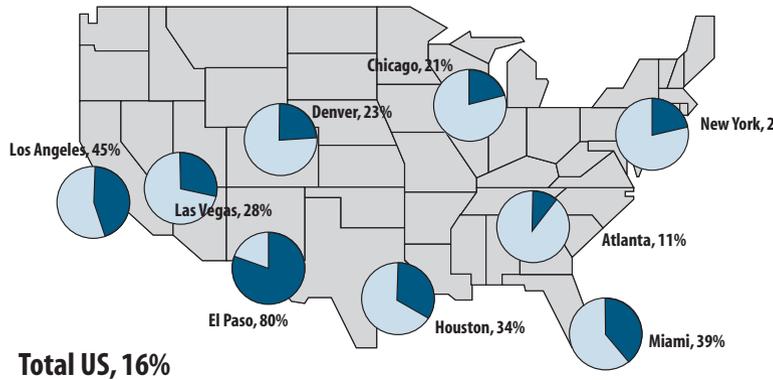
A crucial first step in the road to understanding Latino males is to acknowledge the fact that they do not live in silos. Hispanics constantly interact with the mainstream and people from other ethnic groups. This, in combination with their own personal values and culture, is what eventually defines Latinos' lifestyles.

Size does matter

We normally focus on variables such as population size and purchasing power to illustrate the potential of the Hispanic market. And there is certainly no wrong in doing it. When talking about men, more than 22 million Latinos definitely represent a huge opportunity for marketers targeting male consumers.

However, other factors to which we often pay less attention are perhaps even more important. The influence that Hispanic men are having on their mainstream counterparts is with no doubt one of them.

Proportion of Latino Men Within Total Male Population



Source: Census 2006 American Community Survey.

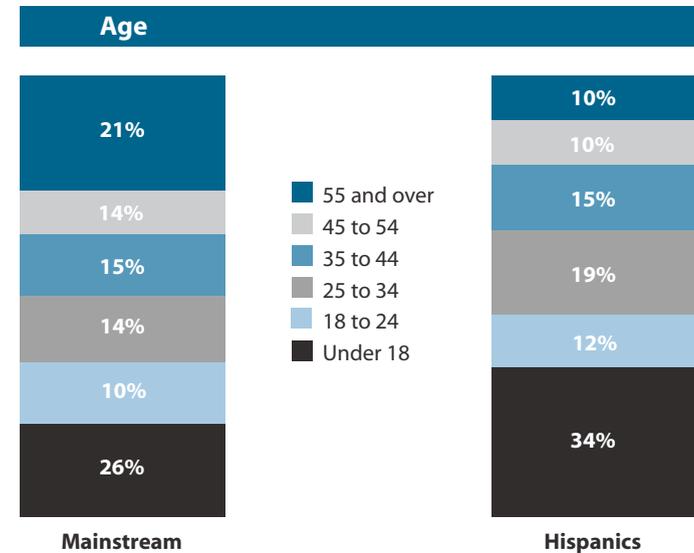
Latinos are re-shaping the mainstream in many ways. Not surprisingly, their impact is more evident in metropolitan areas, where young Hispanics have become real trendsetters in industries like fashion, music and food, among others. When targeting markets like Los Angeles, Houston or Miami, we cannot longer afford not incorporating the Latino segment into our mainstream marketing plan or research work. Otherwise, we will be only getting a partial read of the facts.

Profiling Latino men

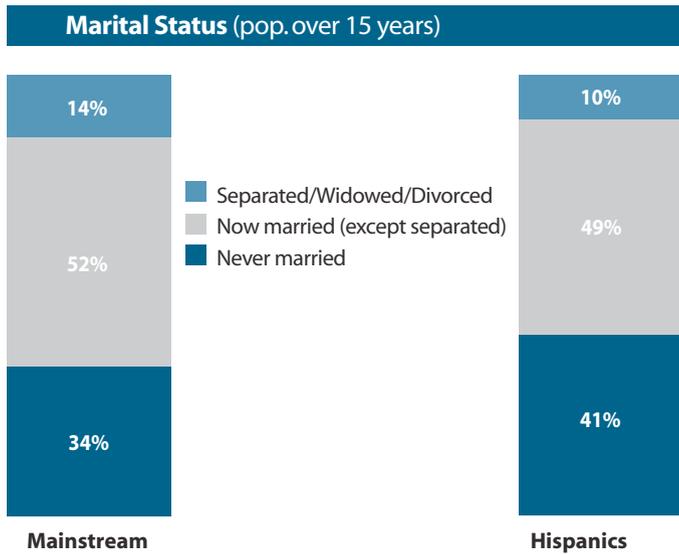
Hispanics, in general, are the youngest ethnic segment in the United States. This holds true within the male population. While half of mainstream men are 25 years old or older, roughly two thirds of Hispanics are still below the age of 25. This fact alone points up interesting trends in terms of population growth and the impact that Latinos will continue to have in the future of the country.

It also helps us understand some important differences between Latino and non-Latino male consumers though. Being younger, many Hispanics have not gone through some of the typical life events that their general market counterparts have already experienced. A simple example could be the higher proportion of single, never married Latino men— 41% versus only 34% of the total US male population.

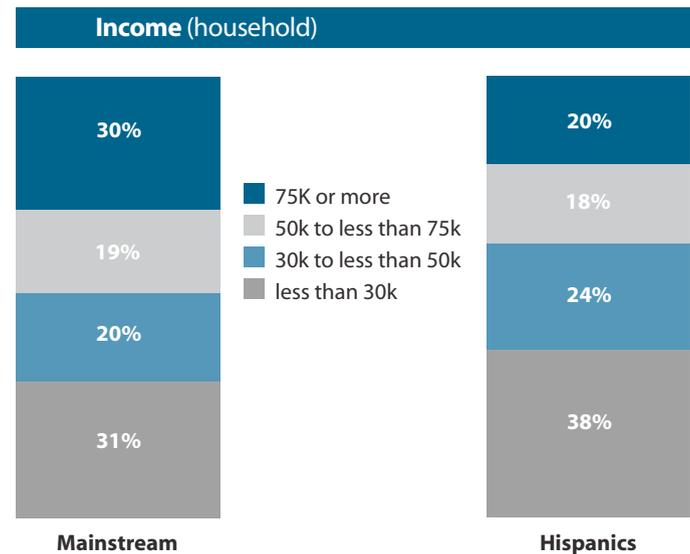
Lower average age of Hispanic males also explains some consumption patterns that are frequently discussed in industry forums. One very important is related to the adoption of technology. It is well known that, in general, Hispanics over index the general market in the adoption of technology products. We believe that this trend is due in great part just to the fact that Hispanics are young, not necessarily because they are Hispanics.



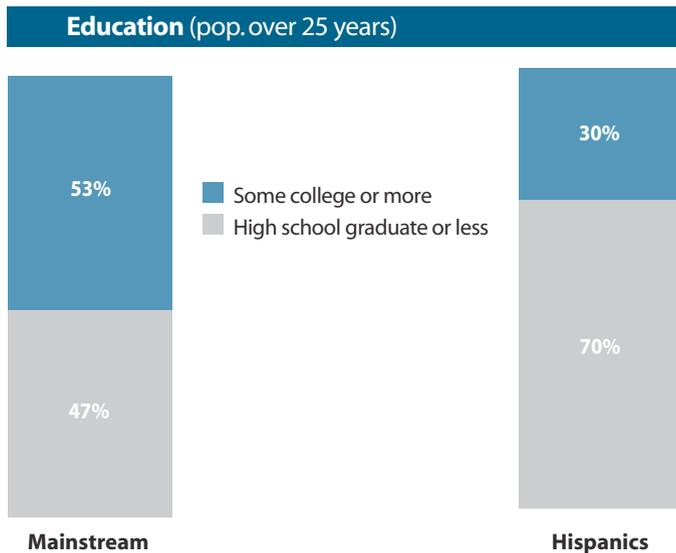
Source: Census' 2006 American Community Survey



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To some extent, Hispanics having an overall lower income – 39k versus a median income of 48k with in the mainstream - is also related to the lower average age of Latinos. However, the fact that many Hispanic men are immigrants who started their lives in the United States later than the average American man certainly plays a key role as well.

However, it is important to emphasize that having a lower income does necessarily mean having a similarly lower disposable income. There are several factors that support this idea. One, quite relevant, is related to household composition among Latino consumers.

Roughly 40% of Hispanic households have at least three adults over 18 years living in the same house. This may include grown up children or, in many cases, other relatives or even friends sharing the same residence. Quite frequently, these additional adults also contribute to the economy of the household, resulting in an overall higher disposable income for the family.

Another key differentiating factor between Hispanic and non-Hispanic males is related to level of education. While slightly more than half of mainstream men have gone beyond high school, only three out of ten Hispanics have been able to go that far in their education. This is an obvious reflection of the limitations that most Hispanics suffer back in their countries or origin in Latin America, where education systems still tend to be deficient.

However, even among Latinos with some or completed college or professional schooling, education does not necessarily guarantee fulfilling the American dream, at least not from a career development standpoint. Fifty eight per cent of Latino men with post high-school education work or (if already retired) have worked in a field other than the one they studied for.

There are other aspects that differentiate Hispanic men from their general market counterparts. Some are more notorious than others. For example, a key characteristic that many Hispanics praise is the flexibility they have in their relation with other Hispanics. This is a difficult concept to explain and many actually say that one have to be Hispanic to really understand it.

Flexibility in Hispanic interpersonal relationships is all about not being so strict in timing. One o'clock can be one ten or even one fifteen – no big deal! Flexibility is also about space. Kissing hello is fine; giving a hug too. For many, flexibility also has a lot to do with just having fun! Regardless of what approach one uses to define this flexibility, what matters is that it is quite relevant to Hispanics and needs to be taken in to account when targeting this group.

Men will always be men

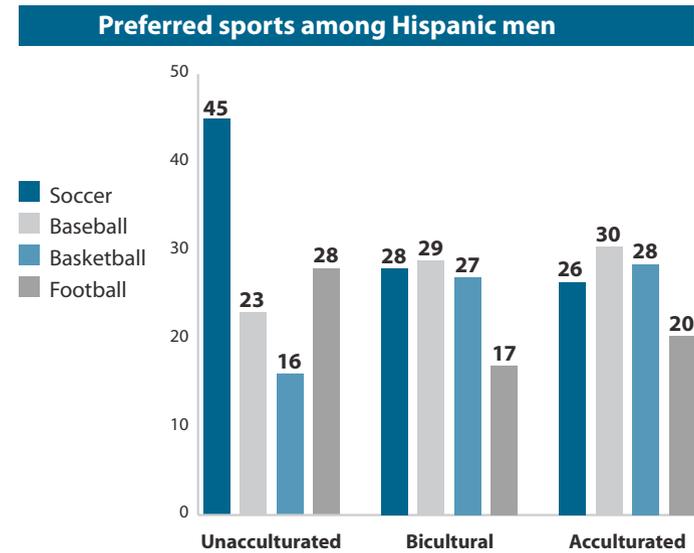
In spite of the differences between Hispanic and non-Hispanic males highlighted above, men in both segments do have several things in common. For example, both Latino and non-Latino guys see boy-girl relationships from a comparable perspective. Further, a correspondingly buddies bond typically exists among male friends or boy-boy relations. As a consequence of this, a number of similarities can also be observed in their consumption patterns of some products and services.

Below are some examples of consumption and behavior patterns that differentiate Hispanic men and women. Directionally comparable differences can be observed among mainstream consumers.

| | Hispanic men | Hispanic women |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| Drinks beer most frequently | 41% | 14% |
| Drinks wine most frequently | 7% | 11% |
| Drives a pick-up truck | 19% | 11% |
| Drives a sedan | 39% | 44% |
| Purchased chocolates last week | 41% | 36% |
| Purchased yogurt last week | 53% | 66% |
| Prefers action movies | 42% | 19% |
| Prefers romantic movies | 4% | 15% |
| Believes that sex is a top priority in life | 37% | 20% |
| Believes that religion is a top priority in life | 50% | 62% |

Sports are definitely another field that brings most men together. However, differences between Hispanic and non-Hispanic males can be significant depending on the formers' level of acculturation.

While soccer is clearly the preferred sport among unacculturated and bicultural Hispanic men, American football is the most popular game among acculturated Latino. Acculturated consumers are mainly Hispanics born in the United States or, if foreign born, they have been living in the country for many years. Therefore, their experience and preference for football is similar to that of mainstream men. Baseball and basketball have a similar level of acceptance across all levels of acculturation, basically because both sports are known and practiced in the United States and Latin America.



Source: Millward Brown

Another interesting sport-related difference between Hispanic and non-Hispanic men is that while the latter perceive sports basically as a way to exercise, the former also see in this type of activities a way to socialize with friends and family. Indeed, most Hispanics prefer group sports over individual games. That's why, not surprisingly, Latinos' participation in activities like skiing or hiking is very low.

Hispanic men's evolving role within their households

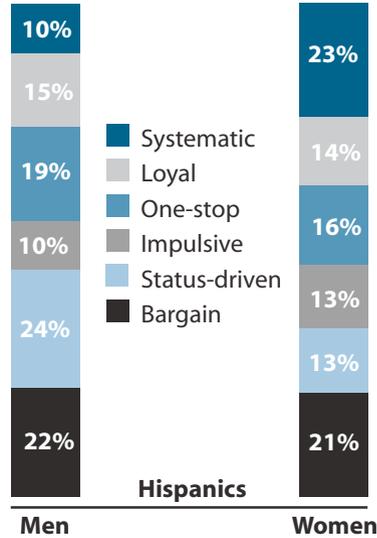
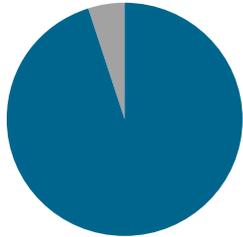
As more women join the workforce and get involved in activities that used to be exclusively done by men in the past, the role of male consumers within their households is evolving and becoming more active. This is occurring in the United States and in most countries in Latin America. Therefore, we are seeing this evolution happen not only among more acculturated Latinos, but also among those that have recently migrated to the country.

From a marketing perspective, an important way in which this evolution is being expressed is through the increased participation of men in grocery shopping. More and more, Hispanic men are becoming involved with the process and actually being the primary decision makers of many categories. Roughly 95% of adult Latino men do the grocery shopping for their homes with some frequency.

Marketers must take this into account not only when putting together a marketing plan, but also when doing the research that will eventually help them decide what direction to take.

Hispanic men's involvement in grocery shopping

95% of Latino men do the grocery shopping for their homes



Source: Millward Brown

Marketers also need to understand some of the differences between men and women when it comes to grocery shopping – and there are many ways in which these can be analyzed.

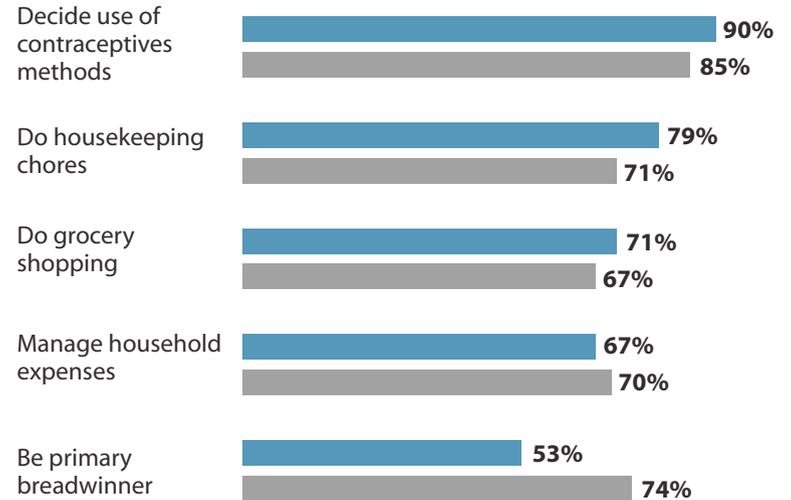
For example, in a recent grocery shopping segmentation conducted by Millward Brown, we could find that more Hispanic men than women tend to be Status-driven when deciding what brands to buy. They also tend to be more practical and more men than women prefer the One-stop options. Females, on the other hand, seem to be more Systematic during the shopping process; although the proportion of Impulsive buyers is also slightly higher among ladies than gentlemen.

Men's new role in the family is also impacting the actual relationship between them and their female partners. Even though the word machismo still comes up in many conversations and quite frequently in jokes, significant advances have been made in reducing this type of behaviors.

Today, for example, the vast majority of men believe that both, men and women, should be responsible for household chores that in the past were either exclusively assigned to women or men. In fact, in some of these cases, men seem to be less machistas than women.

There is a well known joke among Hispanics that describes this new men-women relationship well. This joke talks about men still having the final word at home: "Si querida" ("Yes darling").

Machismo



Source: Millward Brown

Latino men come in different shapes and colors

So far, we have mainly focused on attitudes and behaviors that are likely to be common to most Hispanic men. However, it is very important to understand that not all Latinos are the same. There is no such thing as a monolithic culture within Hispanic male consumers.

As we have seen earlier in this article, demographic variables like age can also be very useful to better understand how and why Hispanic men react in such different ways to similar stimulus. Country of origin is certainly another very important variable to look into the market's diversity.

Acculturation is perhaps the approach that has been more used to segment the Hispanic male market. It certainly provides very good insights on how men adapt themselves to the culture of their host country and, based on this, on how they evolve as consumers.

Still, acculturation misses many of the insights marketers need to really understand Latino males, regardless of whether we are talking about the more acculturated groups or the Spanish-dominant segments.

Millward Brown has developed a segmentation approach that goes beyond language and traditional acculturation variables and profiles Hispanic consumers in a diverse array of dimensions, including lifestyles.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Pragmatic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older group; low income level (2/3 under 30k); lower education • Radical thinking: 'the end justifies the means' • Some level of resentment • Conservative • Money is important |
| Social | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young adult; lowest income level (2/3 under 30k) • Family people • Friendship is very important, solidarity • Image is important • Different economic aspirations |
| Virtuous | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle age; higher income (9% over 100k) • Religious people, charitable • Family is important, image not • Committed to personal development • Somewhat conservative thinking |
| Go-getter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young; highest income level (11% over 100k) • Yuppie - leader, power • Image oriented • Adventurous • Liberal thinking |
| Progressive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youngest segment; 2/3 of them is below the 30k income level • Entrepreneur, independent • Open minded, leader • Family and personal development have similar weight • Want to stand out in a crowd |

When focusing the analysis on Hispanic men, it is interesting to see the differences between lifestyles of young and older Latinos. Roughly half of 35+ Latinos are either Virtuous or Pragmatic. As noted in the summary descriptions, individuals in both segments tend to be conservative, less open to change and risk-adverse.

Among younger Hispanic men, however, the two predominant clusters are comprised by more liberal consumers. They are different in many aspects and express their liberalism in different ways, but they both have more open mentalities and represent a huge potential as consumers.

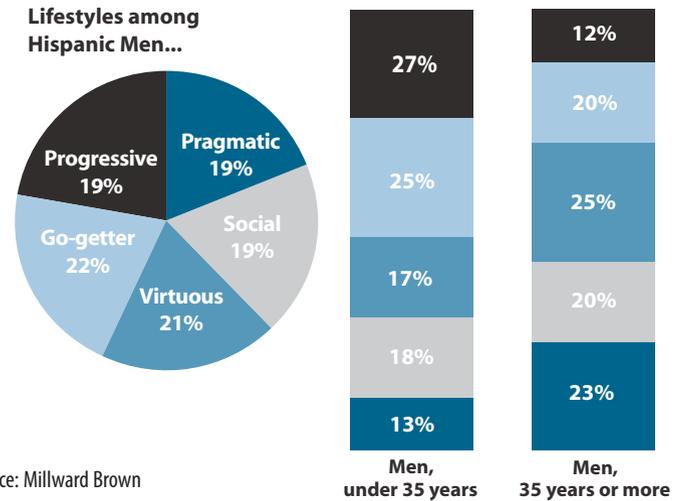
Obviously, having a higher proportion of liberal consumers among younger people illustrates in what direction market trends will aim to.

Reaching Hispanic males

Now that we have described several aspects about Hispanic males and how that compare to their mainstream counterparts, the question that remains is how do I reach these consumers?

The short answer is that we can reach Hispanic men either through English or Spanish media. The majority of them Latinos consume both, especially when it comes to television and radio. Obviously, things are not that simple in the real life. Many other considerations play a key role when targeting Latinos.

Millward Brown's Hispanic Lifestyles Segmentation:

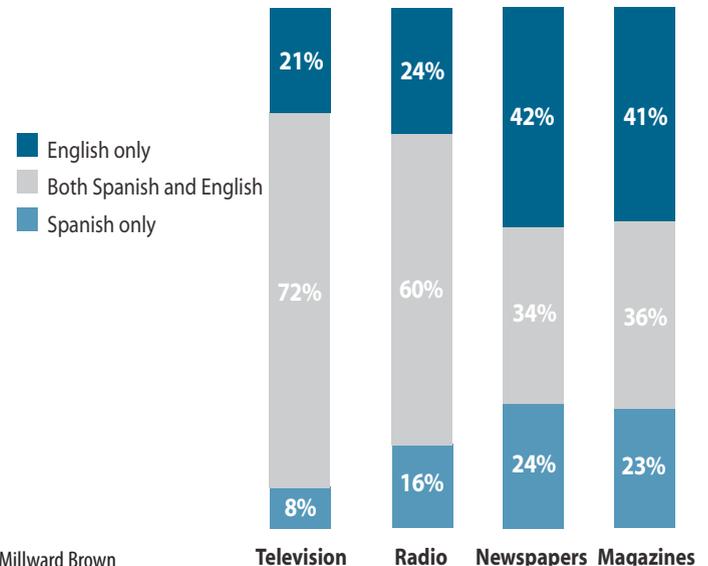


Source: Millward Brown

However, a point that should be clear is that the basic marketing and advertising principles that guide the development of mainstream strategies are equally valid for the work we do with Latinos.

When referring to advertising, for instance, we know that cultural elements help make commercials more relevant to Hispanic consumers. However, we need to be careful when using them. We must not forget that they are just a tool to make the message more relevant, not the message itself.

Preferred sports among Hispanic men



Source: Millward Brown