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RACIAL BIAS IS ALIVE

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Recent data collected by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan reveals that Hispanics face widespread discrimination in many important areas of life. The study, which surveyed 5,000 current ethnic minority and White undergraduates and 5,000 alumni who graduated between 1998 and 2008, revealed that Hispanics routinely face discrimination and inequality in employment, salary, education, politics, and in everyday interpersonal interactions. In addition, the survey revealed that Whites continue to hold negative attitudes about Hispanics.

INCOME DISPARITIES

The survey revealed that Hispanics earned only 75% of what Whites earned, even for the same job, even when they had equal amounts of experience. Even with high levels of education, Hispanics are still vastly underpaid relative to Whites. For example, among the 2000 graduates who majored in business administration, the average starting salary for Hispanics was \$9,575 less than it was for non-minorities. Furthermore, statistical analyses based upon data from the recent graduates revealed that the average Hispanic student graduating in the year 2009 is projected to make approximately \$523,000 less than the average non-minority graduate during his or her working life.

RACISM STILL PERVASIVE

The data also showed that stereotypes and negative attitudes about Hispanics have remained pervasive in recent years. The study revealed that between 70% and 75% of the surveyed White respondents held prejudiced attitudes and would discriminate against Hispanics if given the opportunity. White respondents generally also rated Hispanics as more irrational, weak, over-emotional, and less competent than majority group members. Over 65% of the surveyed Whites indicated they would be upset if their work supervisor was Hispanic.

The survey also revealed that most Whites hold a racial bias, whereby they tend to associate positive qualities with White people and negative qualities with Hispanics. The SRC survey showed that over 80% of Whites held these associations.

MENTAL HEALTH RISKS

Whites' attitudes definitely have an impact on Hispanics. The survey revealed that 60% of current Hispanic students reported experiencing some form of ethnic harassment from White students, faculty, and work supervisors. Hispanics were also eight times more likely than White students to report hearing prejudiced assumptions made about their personal and academic interests, to be the target of derogatory ethnic remarks, and to be treated disrespectfully because of their ethnicity. This type of discrimination-related stress is known to lead to increased physical and psychological health problems. In fact, Hispanics were more than three times as likely as Whites to report experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression. The research study concluded that the stress associated with experiencing discrimination likely contributed to these mental health disparities.

NOT EXPECTING THIS

Finally, 90% of the Hispanic alumni reported that while in college they did not recognize the extent to which prejudice would cause personal and professional barriers for them.

In short, the Survey Research Center demonstrated that Hispanics face pervasive discrimination on a regular basis and lack opportunities compared to Whites.