

How Hispanics Impact Political, Social and Economic Climate

A new study released Wednesday examines what influences the views of America's fastest-growing population group—Hispanics. The study, "Hispanic America: Faith, Values & Priorities," reveals Hispanic-Americans' attitudes about faith, family and societal issues and gives insights into how their views will impact the political, social and economic climate in the U.S.

The study, conducted by Barna Group in partnership with American Bible Society, the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and OneHope, found that:

- Seven out of 10 Hispanic-Americans (69 percent) think public schools should teach the values found in the Bible.
- 54 percent identify themselves first as Hispanic or Latino before American, Catholic or Christian.
- Hispanic-Americans are "very concerned" about school dropout rates (58 percent), immigration (53 percent), unemployment (57 percent), health care (54 percent and housing (52 percent).
- 42 percent say the Bible influences their views of political and social issues; however, four out of 10 Hispanics (43 percent) read the Bible less than once a year.
- Hispanics believe the No. 1 way they contribute to American society is through their commitment to family.
- 78 percent say the traditional family is the main building block of a healthy community

- When faced with a moral or ethical choice, approximately one-fourth (22 percent) of those surveyed make choices based on principles or standards they believe in say they should do; those standards were most commonly defined by their parents or the Bible.
- 97 percent of those surveyed indicated they are proud of their Hispanic heritage.

By 2050, it is predicted that there will be no ethnic or racial majority in the U.S. and Hispanics are projected to make up 25 to 30 percent of the population. Thus, the impact of beliefs and behaviors of Hispanic-Americans is becoming increasingly significant.

“Faith and family are the main building blocks of Hispanic-Americans,” said the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and named by CNN as a leader of the Hispanic Evangelical movement. “Given the rapid growth of Hispanics in America, it is time to give more attention to this important segment of the American landscape.”

Coinciding with the release of the report, Barna Group announces the creation of its Hispanic division.

“The election was yet another indicator of the growing influence of Hispanic America,” said Barna Group President David Kinnaman. “We think this group is so significant that we are creating a new division at Barna to take a deeper look at what this important demographic is really thinking about faith, values, churches and themselves.”