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## **Study: Nielsen Ratings Slight Hispanics**

BY The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES Feb. 5 - Hispanic television viewers are undercounted by the company that has a monopoly on measuring TV audiences, hurting the odds of success for Hispanic-oriented programs, a group claims.

Nielsen Media Research's methodology is at fault, a study released by the National Latino Media Council contends.

Among other problems, the council said, is that the company fails to include enough U.S.-born Hispanics in its sample, skewing its ratings for Hispanic viewers of English-language shows.

The exclusion of Hispanics from the ratings is "shameful" and Nielsen "has been slow in remedying this despite the significant economic losses to the industry and our community," former Congressman Esteban Torres, the council's chairman, said Wednesday in New York.

"We stand by our sample and we make sure it represents everyone in the U.S., including Hispanics," Nielsen spokeswoman Karen Gyimesi said Thursday.

The study examined the ratings for "George Lopez," an ABC comedy about a Hispanic family. In late September it drew an audience of about 1.2 million viewers in 17 markets, according to Nielsen figures cited by the council.

But a survey conducted for the council by the Dallas-based market research firm Rincon & Associates between August and October suggested those ratings were too low. Using a telephone survey of 1,536 people in four of those markets New York, Los Angeles, Miami and San Antonio the report estimated that nearly 900,000 Hispanics regularly tuned in to the sitcom in those cities.

That likely means closer to 2 million Hispanics in the 17 markets watched the show, a council spokeswoman said Thursday.

The lack of an accurate ratings assessment of Hispanic-oriented programs leads to their early cancellation by networks and a reluctance to produce and air more such shows, the council said in a statement.

"This in turn leads to diminished employment opportunities for Latino actors, writers, directors and other behind-the-camera professionals," according to the study.

Undercounting Hispanic viewers also makes it more difficult to convince broadcast networks to create Hispanic-oriented programs, and hurts advertisers trying to reach Hispanic consumers, the group said.

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