

WHITE PAPER SERIES



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New Test Reveals Your Latino IQ

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The growth of the U.S. Latino population has created the need for talented professionals that can assist companies in the design, creation and distribution of the many services and products that Latinos will need. Unfortunately, the pool of talented professionals is not growing at the pace that is needed, due in part to the indifference of academic institutions and an industry that has generally assumed that a person's cultural origin or Spanish-language ability would be sufficient pre-qualifiers for such jobs. This exploratory study examined the basis for this assumption by administering a test to a non-scientific sample of college students and advertising/marketing professionals to evaluate their knowledge of U.S. Latinos in six specific areas. The study results pointed to a large gap in knowledge regarding basic characteristics about U.S. Latinos, and revealed that Latinos did not have the expected edge over non-Latinos on the topics tested.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Research practitioners, decision makers and students

BACKGROUND

Have you checked your Latino IQ lately? While this may not be your everyday question, it could become more commonplace as interactions with U.S. Latinos – currently estimated at 53 million – increases at the workplace, in shopping environments, and community events. Although members of our society are accustomed to taking tests to understand their intellectual, physical or psychological state, the need for a Latino IQ test is not readily obvious. (Note: The use of the term "IQ" refers to a general knowledge of facts, not the classical definition of intelligence that refers to a

general mental capability. The term “Latino” refers to a person that traces their ancestry to one of the 22 Spanish-speaking countries that the U.S. Census Bureau defines as Latino or Hispanic.)

Why should you care about your Latino IQ? According to our past studies, the typical American does not understand Latinos very well, and is likely to make errors in judgment regarding the most appropriate ethnic labels to use, the best language to use when communicating with Latinos, understanding Latino cultural values, or knowing key demographic trends about the Latino population. This lack of knowledge stems in part from the increasingly racially segregated lifestyles of Americans who tend to live, study, worship, and socialize within their own racial-ethnic communities, as well as the indifference shown by college and universities in teaching students relevant information about multicultural populations in the U.S. Such errors in judgment can have important implications for decisions related to Latino programs and services. As Dr. Rincón explains it:

“A limited knowledge of Latinos can be problematic at a time when the presence of Latinos in the U.S. continues to grow and many decisions are being made about their quality of life. Should we simply assume that these decisions are being made on the basis of accurate and current information about U.S. Latinos? Does cultural origin or Spanish-language ability automatically qualify a person to make key decisions about other Latinos? These are shaky assumptions. For many situations, a person’s knowledge of Latinos could be just as important as other skills in assuring a positive outcome.”

To measure knowledge of U.S. Latinos, Dr. Rincon relied on his past research and teaching experience to develop the *Test of Latino Culture*[®] – which includes 20 multiple-choice questions that focus on selected dimensions of Latino culture, such as ethnic identity, language behavior, demographics, immigration issues, lifestyle, and research insights. In a recent exploratory study to obtain baseline information, the TLC was administered online during the Spring of 2012 to a non-scientific sample of college students in Texas and Florida, as well as advertising industry professionals via the Advertising Age web site. Table 1 on the following page presents the demographic attributes of the study respondents.

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics for Test of Latino Culture[®] Study

Characteristic	Total		Ethnicity			
	Number	Pct.	Hispanic		Non-Hispanic	
			Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.
	432	100.0	150	100.0	282	100.0
Gender						
Male	179	41.4	58	38.7	121	42.9
Female	253	58.6	92	61.3	161	57.1
Education						
Less than Bachelor's degree	145	33.6	49	32.7	96	34.0
Bachelor's degree or higher	287	66.4	101	67.3	186	66.0

Table 1 above shows that relatively more females than males, and more Hispanics than non-Hispanics completed the test, while a proportionate number of Hispanics and non-Hispanics were represented by educational level. The test's reliability coefficient, which measures the internal consistency of the 20 test items, was 0.61. Content validation, based on secondary research and the teaching experience of Dr. Rincón, was the only form of validation for the test.

How well did the respondents perform?

As shown by Figure 1, the results from the 432 respondents were quite interesting. On average, the total respondents correctly answered 10.7 items out of 20 items – 54 percent correct – pointing to a rather large gap in knowledge about U.S. Latinos. Surprisingly, Hispanic and non-Hispanic average scores were not substantially different, countering the intuitive expectation that cultural origin would provide Hispanics a decided advantage on such a test. Not surprisingly, a higher education was associated with improved test performance. Score differences between males and females, however, were minimal.

Figure 1: Average Total TLC Scores (N = 432)

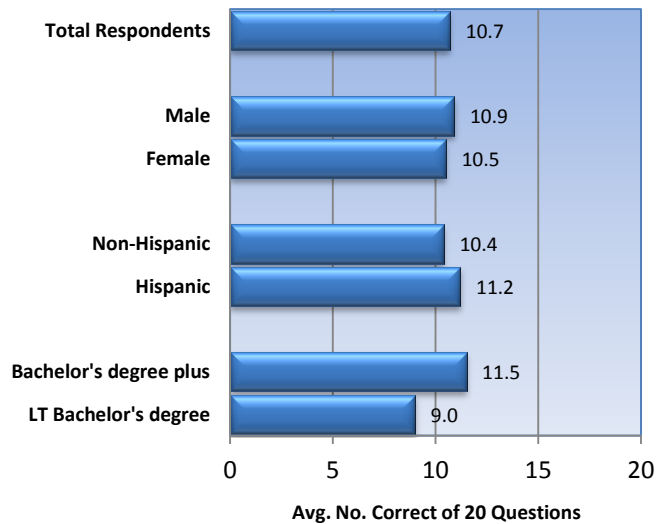
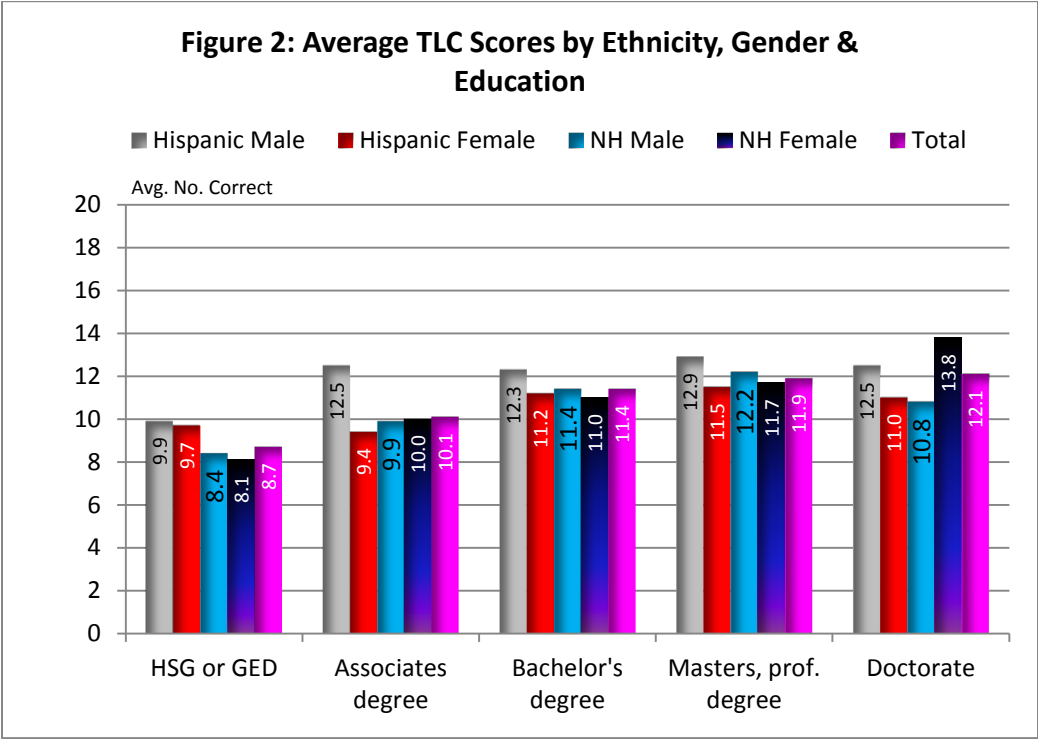


Figure 2 below presents a more detailed breakdown of the average scores by ethnicity, gender and education attainment. The average scores of Hispanic males were generally higher than the other groups across educational attainment, while the average scores for Hispanic females were similar to the other groups. Non-Hispanic females with a doctorate achieved the highest average score (13.8) on the TLC.



What were the relative strengths and weaknesses on the Test of Latino Culture®?

Figure 3: Average Percent Correct on Test of Latino Culture: Total Items and Sub-Topics

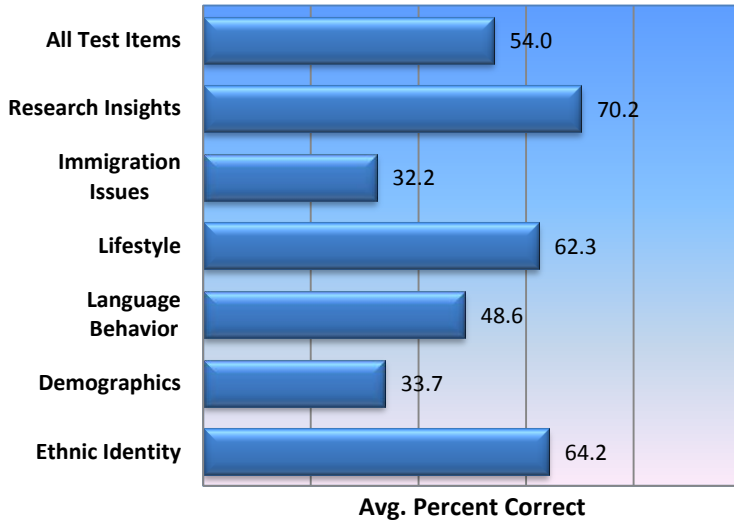


Figure 3 illustrates that knowledge of U.S. Hispanics varied considerably by sub-topic. Respondents were less familiar with topics related to demographics, immigration issues, and language behavior, but more familiar with topics related to research insights, lifestyle, and ethnic identity.

What specific areas were the most difficult to respondents?

Table 2 presents the questions that were answered incorrectly by 50 percent or more of the respondents.

Table 2: Topics Incorrectly Answered by Over Half of Test Takers

Topic	Percent Incorrect
U.S. population changes in the proportion of immigrants	85%
Estimate of Internet access among U.S. Latinos	77%
Best source of yearly community demographic information	77%
Level of concern about immigration among U.S. Latinos	88%
Intermarriage rate of U.S. Latinos	67%
Dominant language that U.S. Latinos are expected to use in next 30 years	66%
Census count of U.S. Latinos in 2010	64%
Average age difference between Latinos and non-Latinos	58%
The language for which the Census Bureau measures proficiency	51%

Clearly, one can argue that knowledge of these topics is not necessary in one's daily activities. However, if a person's responsibilities include advising others about the best services, products or programs for Latinos, is it not reasonable to expect that such individuals should also have some minimum level of knowledge about Latinos? For example, it would clearly be a misguided effort to launch an online survey of Latinos when past research confirms that access to the Internet would exclude a large proportion of immigrants without online access. It would also be problematic for a political campaign to focus on immigration issues when objective research has confirmed that immigration ranks among the least important issues among Latino voters. And it would make little sense to use outdated Census data to prepare a community funding grant proposal when Census data is available for most communities on an annual basis.

Implications for the future

Firm conclusions related to the pilot study results cannot be made due to the non-scientific sampling and administration of the test. Nonetheless, the study results do raise some interesting questions for practitioners who are involved in Latino-related jobs, programs or activities:

- If decisions about Latinos are not based on current and accurate information, what else is being used as a foundation for such decisions? Are bilingual skills and Hispanic origin sufficient indicators of job-related qualifications, or is it perhaps time to begin testing for knowledge of Latinos as well?
- Are colleges and universities doing enough about the lack of knowledge of U.S. Latinos? Academic departments like foreign languages, history, and sociology have historically offered courses on Latinos and other ethnic groups, but why are courses about U.S. Latinos missing in departments like advertising, public relations and marketing?

To become a more useful tool, the **Test of Latino Culture**® would clearly require several improvements, such as an expansion of test content to include additional aspects of Latino culture, validation with a national sample, and more documentation of the test's psychometric properties. Once these improvements are made, we envision several practical uses for the test: a tool that can be added to other screening tools for job applicants, a warm-up tool for workshops, a periodic check for professionals who work with Latinos, and as a diagnostic tool to define workforce training needs. We also envision the need to develop a similar test for African American and Asian cultures. You are invited to take the **Test of Latino Culture**® by clicking on the following link. The results may surprise you. <https://GetYourTLC.questionpro.com>

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