

What Do Bicultural Hispanic Women Want... And More Importantly, Why Should You Care?

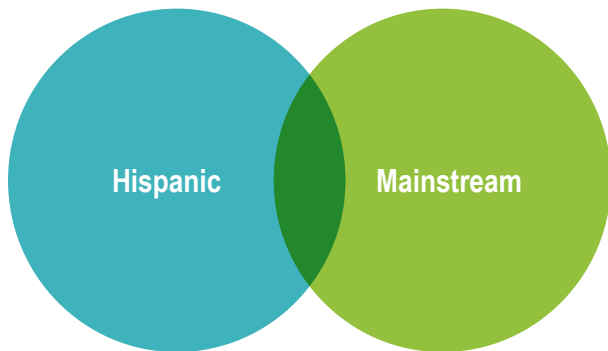


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In the United States, a stereotypical description of a Hispanic woman would probably read as follows: “Speaks Spanish, likes to be sexy and pretty, is family oriented, acts humble, has many kids at an early age, cooks at home and likes to clean.” However, this description represents less than 50% of the real story, as it fits better with the older generation of women. New generations of women are adapting to new world realities, right?

Well, so are Bicultural Hispanic women! This group accounts for 36.5%

Bicultural Hispanic Identity and Value System



of the total Hispanic women population (total 22.7 million), of which 54% are at least 18 years old (4.7 million out of 8.3 million). While most Bicultural Hispanic women (80%) born in the U.S. grew up with a mother that most likely fit the stereotype above, many have also adopted mainstream worldviews and values into their lifestyles.

In the article “Empowering the U.S. Hispanic Female: How Companies and Brands Can Become More Relevant to Their Newly Discovered Sense of Power,” Miguel Gomez Winebrenner explains a typical dilemma that this group faces: A constant need to balance mainstream values for defining oneself as a woman - focused on self-identity, individualism, and assertiveness - with Hispanic values - focused on the notion of where identity is defined within the construct of the collective.

Bicultural Hispanic women are fully capable of navigating between two cultures and thriving in them. These characteristics are what make this group so unique and interesting. They are fully bilingual in both languages - English and Spanish; they understand and celebrate traditions and roots; and they embrace modern ideals to achieve personal satisfaction and success.

In comparison to Hispanic Dominants, Bicultural women are more empowered with tools and information:

1. They have a greater focus on education and career

Education	Hispanic Dominant	Bicultural
Have at least a high school degree	47%	77%
Have education beyond high school	17%	48%
Have a college degree or more	9%	14%

Employment status	Hispanic Dominant	Bicultural
Employed or self employed	62%	76%

2. They have higher HH income and smaller household sizes

HH income	Hispanic Dominant	Bicultural
75,000 or more	21%	31%
100,000 or more	11%	18%

Average HH size	Hispanic Dominant	Bicultural
1-3	40%	48%
4- 5	39%	36%
6 +	21%	16%

Source: American Community Survey 2007-2009 (3 year estimate) AV-Cheskin acculturation proxy

How does this dualism look in practice?

“I am a traditional girl influenced by modern times, which is expressed through my personality, style and taste.”

- A bicultural Hispanic in Dallas, TX referring to fashion and style

While the term Hispanic refers to anyone with a Latin American background, there are some common values that permeate all these cultures. However, the degree to which each Bicultural Hispanic woman embraces culture and adapts them to her personal reality is what characterizes this group.

For example, consider three different types of Bicultural Hispanic women:

- The first Bicultural woman is tech savvy and connected to social networks (Facebook), because of the need for connection with friends and family from her country of origin.
- A second Bicultural woman considers being a good mother as part of her identity, so cooking for children at home is a must. However, her busy schedule and fast paced work life creates time constraints, preventing her from cooking traditional meals. Therefore, she adapts a more mainstream cooking style to her menu.
- A third Bicultural woman likes to dress fashionable and sexy, but still rather conservative.

Overall, this group of women has learned to balance two different world views and create a new identity that includes, to different degrees, values from both Hispanic and American cultures.

So what do they want?

The strategy to get to this level of connection goes beyond simple marketing tactics. Bicultural Hispanic women know they are unique; they want to feel understood and heard, as well as represented. They will respond to messages that reflect their values, identity and can create a real connection with them. Watch out though, this does not mean only translating the message, or just adding a face to a marketing campaign. It means learning what their underlying motivations are for doing what they do, when they do it and with whom. Some of their preferences might be more aligned to the mainstream values while others might have a more traditional standpoint. This is an interesting group since they are influenced by two worlds and are part of larger market segmentations.

More importantly, there is still great potential with the other 46% of women who are currently under 18 years old (3.6 million) but are eventually going to finish their education, enter the job market and become active consumers. Brands that timely recognize the potential value of Bicultural Hispanic women will be able to capture the flourishing realities of the U.S. population.