

# Racial/Ethnic Families: Stresses and Strengths

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- \* Explain why race and ethnicity are important in understanding marriages and families
- \* Describe the characteristics of and variations among African American families
- \* Describe the characteristics of and variations among American Indian families
- \* Describe the characteristics of and variations among Latino families
- \* Describe the characteristics of and variations among Asian American families

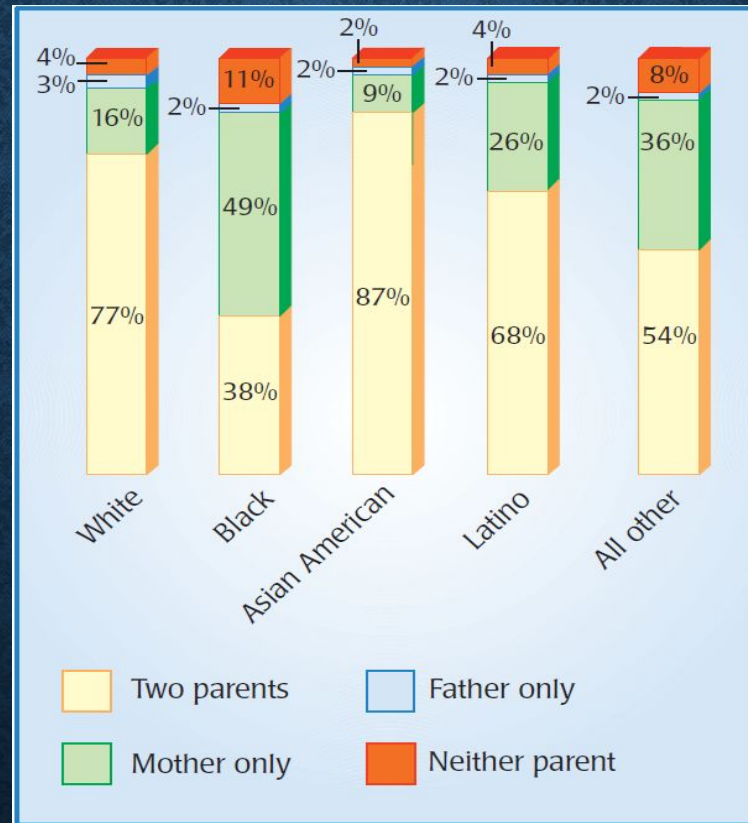
# AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

- As of 2014, the population was 45.7 million
- Estimates indicate by 2060 the population to exceed 74 million
- That projection would be about 17.9% of the nation's total population
- Location:
  - New York highest population (3.8m)
  - Texas had the largest increase
  - D.O.C. had the highest percentage, followed by Mississippi
  - Cook County (Chicago) had the largest population of any county in 2014
  - Schaefer p. 153

# FAMILY STRUCTURE

- Shift in the life of married-couple families reflected in various social and economic developments
  - Postponement of marriage
  - High divorce and separation rates
  - Low remarriage rates
  - Male unemployment
  - Out-of-wedlock births
  - Many single parents

# FIGURE 4.3 - WHERE U.S. CHILDREN LIVE, BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2012



Notes: The “all other” includes American Indian and Alaska Native children, but there are no current data on their percentage. For all groups, most of the children living with neither parent live with one or more grandparents. “Two parents” includes children living with parents who are and aren’t married to each other.

Sources: Based on U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2012. 2012, November, Table C3.

# CONT'D FAMILY OVERVIEW

- 27-28% live below the poverty line
- More single-parents
- Challenges (overloads)
- Extended families
- Egalitarian
- Conflict Perspective
- Racial Socialization
- Overloads:
  - Emotional – neglecting the parent's needs for the child's
  - Responsibility – income
  - Task – too much to do

# GENDER ROLES

- Egalitarian family pattern - Both men and women share equal authority
  - Division of domestic work is not equal
  - African American families are often stereotyped as matriarchal.
- Cause of instability in black marriages
  - Expectation from men to do more of the traditionally female domestic tasks

# STRENGTHS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY

- Strong kinship bonds
- Ability to adapt family roles to outside pressures
- Strong work ethic despite recessions and unemployment
- Determination to succeed in education
- Unwavering spirituality that helps them cope with adversity



# AMERICAN INDIAN FAMILIES

- In 2014, 5.4 million, 2% of U.S. population (39% is under 24).
- The number of states with 100,000 or more American Indian and Alaska Native residents, alone or in combination, in 2014. These states were California, Oklahoma, Arizona, Texas, New York, New Mexico, Washington, North Carolina, Florida, Michigan, Alaska, Oregon, Colorado, Pennsylvania and Minnesota.
- 566 -- The number of federally recognized Indian tribes in 2015.
- Speak 169 languages
- Navajo is the largest tribe

# FAMILY STRUCTURE

- Living arrangements
  - Large extended households
  - Nuclear families
  - Divorced parents
  - Single-parent families
- No distinction between blood relatives and relatives by marriage

# FAMILY STRUCTURE

- In 2011, there were almost 558,000 AIAN family households: 57 percent were married couples, 32 percent were mother-only, and 11 percent were father-only families.
- Living in an extended family provides many resources, such as assistance with child care, money, transportation, and emotional and moral support.
  - Can result in stress too

# GENDER ROLES

- Nonexistent in contemporary American Indian families
- Both husbands and wives feel equally competent in solving family problems and coping with everyday issues
- Research indicates, mothers spent significantly more time than did fathers in cleaning, food-related work, and child care responsibilities.
- Compared with fathers in other cultural groups, the Navajo fathers' involvement in household labor and child-related tasks was high.

# ELDERS AND GRANDPARENTS

- Important to a child's care, upbringing, and development
- Contribute to a family's cohesiveness and stability
- Elders serve as mentors and advisors and reinforce cultural norms, values, and roles
- Children are taught to respect their elders because old age is viewed as a badge of honor
  - Badge of honor - A sign that one has done the right things and has pleased the creator.
- Elders have traditionally played a central role in a family's decision making.
- Elders deal with an increasing number of issues ranging from poverty to poor health and minimal access to services in both urban and reservation areas.

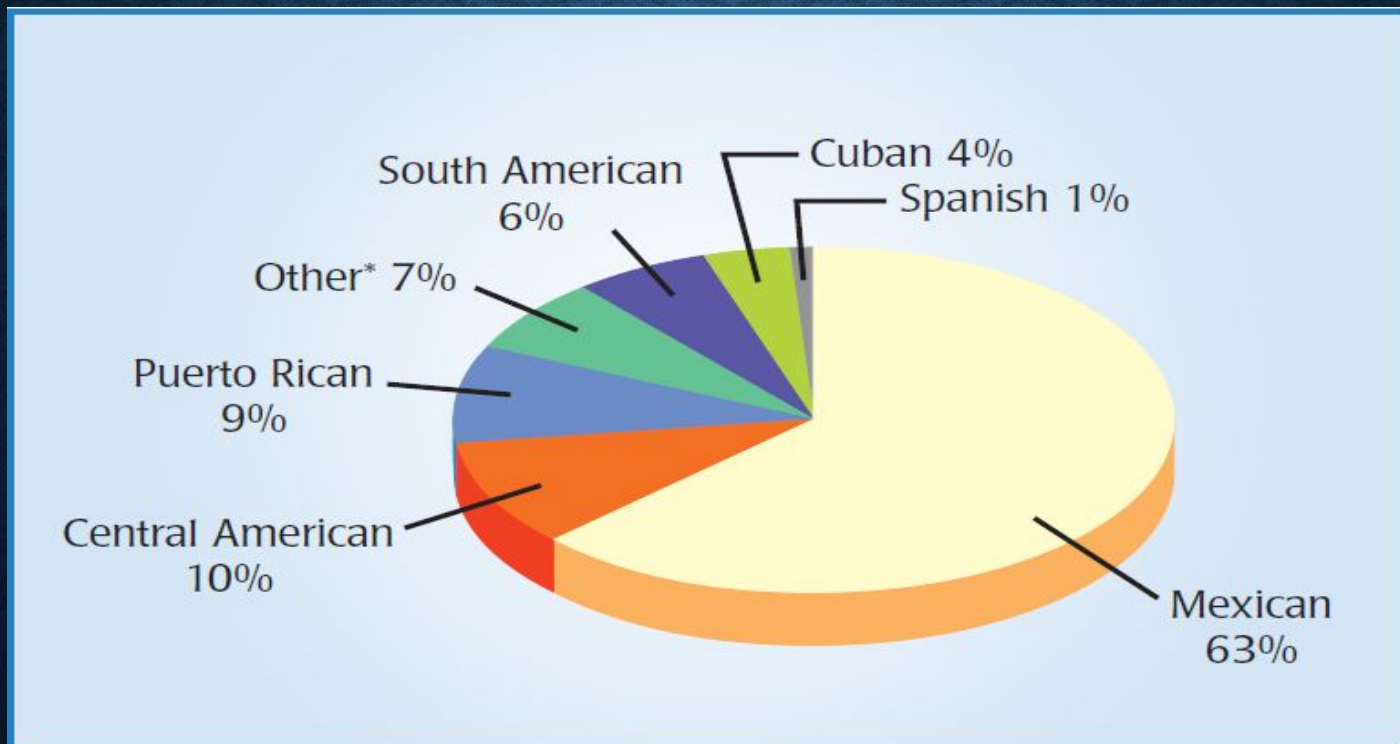
# STRENGTHS OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN FAMILY

- Relational bonding - Core behavior that is built on widely shared values
  - Respect
  - Generosity
  - Sharing across the tribe, band, clan, and kin group
- Spirituality sustains the family's identity and place in the world
- American Indians have made considerable economic progress by insisting on self-determination and the rights of tribes to run their own affairs.

# LATINO FAMILIES

- Latinos are the largest racial-ethnic group.
- Latinos trace their roots to the Spanish and Mexican settlers who founded cities in the Southwest before the arrival of the first English settlers on the East Coast.
- Others are recent immigrants or children of the immigrants who arrived in large numbers at the beginning of the twentieth century.

# FIGURE 4.5 - U.S. LATINOS BY ORIGIN, 2010



\* Includes people who didn't specify a country of origin in the 2010 Census.

*Note:* Central American includes countries such as El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala; South American includes countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, and Venezuela.

*Source:* Based on Ennis et al., 2011, Table 1.



# FAMILY STRUCTURE

- 68 percent of Latino children live in two-parent families
- Latino couples born in the United States are more likely to divorce
  - More out-of-wedlock births, particularly among adolescents
- Children may live with relatives than only with parents
- Acculturation, particularly in low-income neighborhoods, may result in Latino adolescents' higher rates of delinquency and crimes.

# GENDER ROLES

- Change in response to job opportunities and new family policies, and as people approach retirement
- Having and raising children is the core focus of life
- Fathers are more likely to supervise and restrict their children's TV viewing
- Mothers teach cultural values to their children

# FAMILISM AND EXTENDED FAMILIES

- Familism - Family relationships in which sharing and cooperation take precedence over one's personal needs and desires
- Extended family members
  - Constitute of relatives, godparents, and even close friends
  - Exchange a wide range of goods and services

# FAMILISM AND EXTENDED FAMILIES

- For Latinos, familism and the extended family have traditionally provided emotional and economic support.
  - They believe relatives are more important than friends.
- Familism depends on the family's origin.
  - Helps new immigrants to cope with the everyday stresses of discrimination, unemployment, and learning to survive in a different culture
  - Reduces parental conflict and increased nurturing parenting that, in turn, increased the likelihood of children doing well in school.
- Some Mexican Americans practice chain migration
  - Chain migration - Those already in the United States find employment and housing for other kin who are leaving Mexico.

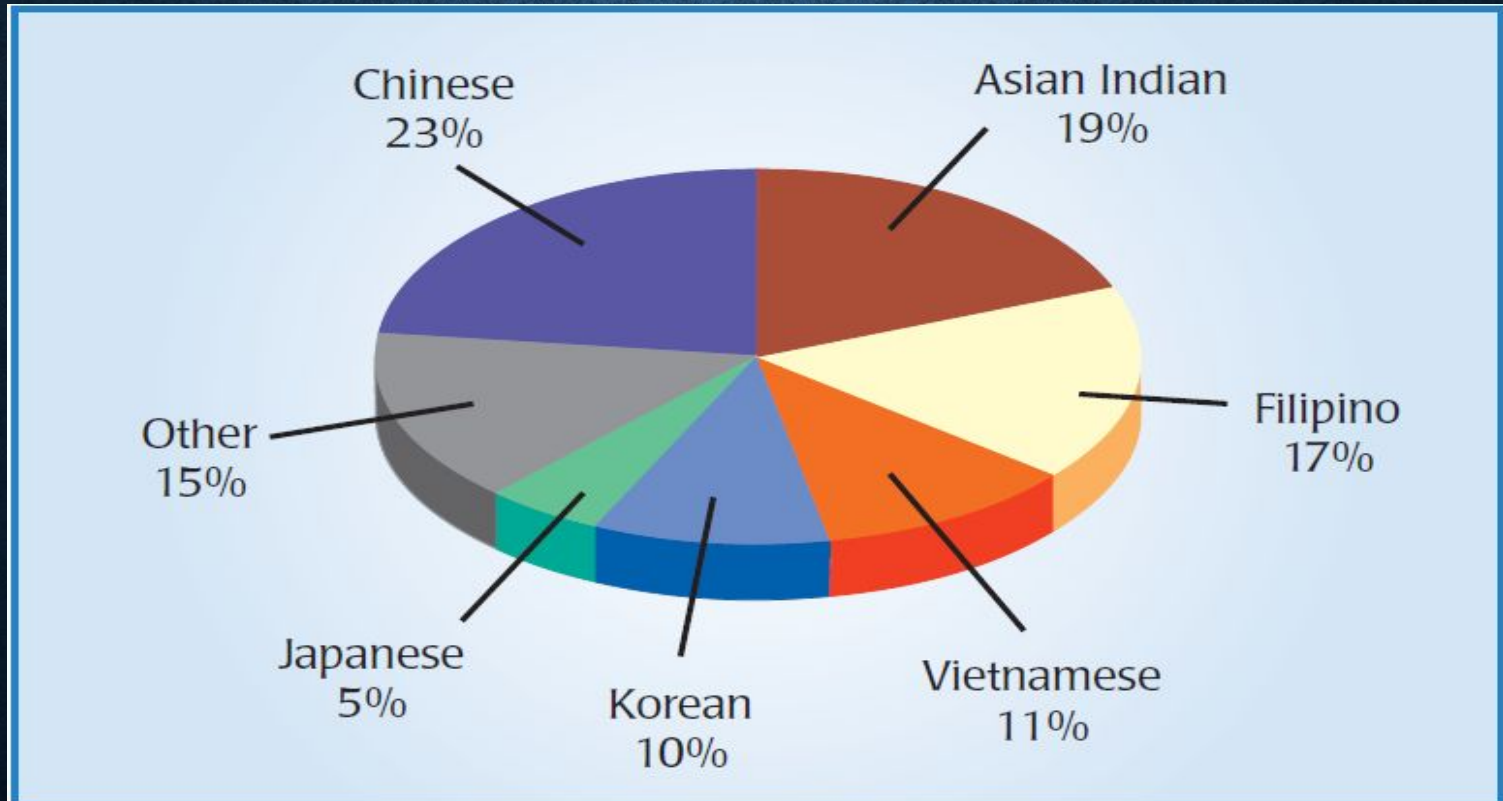
# STRENGTHS OF THE LATINO FAMILY

- Resilient and adaptive
- Hard working
- Give more importance to religion
- Are more likely to give than to receive financial support from their families

# ASIAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

- In 2015 20 million
- CB recognizes 47 groups
- California and NY have highest population
- The diverse origins mean that there are vast differences in languages and dialects, religions, cuisines, and customs.
- The largest groups of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are as follows:
  - Chinese Americans
  - Filipino Americans
  - Asian Indians
  - Vietnamese Americans
  - Korean Americans
  - Japanese Americans
  - Other Asian Americans

# FIGURE 4.8 - ASIAN AMERICANS BY ORIGIN, 2010



*Note:* “Other” includes people from at least 13 countries, including Laos, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

*Sources:* Based on Hoeffel et al., 2012, Figure 7.

# FAMILY STRUCTURE

- Vary widely depending on:
  - Country of origin
  - Time of arrival
  - Past and current immigration policies
  - Whether the families are immigrants or refugees
  - Parents' original socioeconomic status
- Most Asian American children grow up in two-parent homes



# MARRIAGE AND GENDER ROLES

- Highest marriage rates and the lowest divorce rates
- Gender roles - Traditional in most families and vary by:
  - Social class
  - Country of origin
  - Length of residence in the United States

# STRENGTHS OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN FAMILY

- Stable households in which parents:
  - Encourage their children to remain in school
  - Offer personal support that reduces the stress produced by discrimination and leads to better emotional health
- Dual Career Families
  - Dual income – both spouses work outside the home for wages.
  - Dual earner – at least one spouse views their work as a job with no mobility.
  - Dual career – both spouses have formal education and opportunities for growth.