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**ETHNIC MINORITIES IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION IN THE USA**

Bakalářská práce

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**ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:**

The aim of my bachelor work is to analyze the access of high school education to various ethnic minorities in the USA, with the emphasis on Afro-Americans.

1. Introduction: Ethnicity and education - relation
2. Races' educational problems and its barriers
3. Education of several ethnic minorities
4. Afro-American Education
  - Social status and the struggle for independence in wider context
  - Important people, student activism, campaigns
  - Change in education throughout the historical context
5. Educational results based on research works, reports, tables (internet sources)
6. Comparison of minority student achievements with the majority
7. Conclusion: Improvements in access to higher education and today's situation

**SEZNAM DOPORUČENÉ LITERATURY:**

- American education: a sociological view. Ed. David W. Shift. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976.
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- Nash, Garry B, et al. The American people: creating a nation and a society. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.

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# INTRODUCTION

The United States of America has experienced a great influx of immigrants throughout its history and it is here where individuals of all races come together to create a new multiethnic nation called Americans. People have always come to this country in search of a better life and the first step towards better social status and employment opportunities is definitely by receiving a high-quality education. The general truth is that graduates have better opportunities in their future careers than people without a degree.

Dealing with the problems of ethnic minorities in various spheres is very difficult. Although the issue of ethnic minorities in the process of education itself is very interesting, it is even more complicated because of many varying opinions and unanswered questions, also there are not many up-to-date books covering this issue explicitly. Fortunately, the number of publications in the United States is increasing but research is still being made and a lot of work is to be covered in the future. For this reason, I have also relied on the internet sources, research works, survey data, reports and various articles available online.

In my thesis, I have attempted to describe only the two most significant ethnic minorities in the process of higher education, African Americans and Hispanics. I have put an emphasis on African Americans and their role in the development of colleges and universities in history because their struggle for equal opportunities played a crucial role in the vindication of their place in the society and their actions opened the door to higher education opportunities for all minorities. The period of the Civil Rights Movement changed the whole history and views of society on ethnic minorities so there is a chapter dedicated to this issue which is crucial for this thesis. I have also focussed on the present Hispanic situation because today, it is the fastest-growing ethnic minority which is slowly becoming the majority, therefore being an important constituent of today's American society. Opening education and job opportunities for underprepared young Hispanics could cause serious problems and hinder the development of American society as a whole.

The aim of this thesis is to provide a complex survey of ethnic minorities in the process of higher education, point out their main problems, analyze them and demonstrate the importance of diversity in American society.

# 1 ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE USA

## 1.1 Multiethnic America

We must not forget that the ethnic composition of the American population has been always very diverse. Nowadays, the composition of American society is changing more rapidly and it is harder to classify and distinguish between newly emerging ethnic groups which are created as a result of mixing different nationalities from all over the world.

In response to this fact, The Association of Multiethnic Americans, which is a non-profit organisation dealing with a great range of multiethnic issues, has raised the question of the possibility that American citizens could choose from more options regarding their race and ethnicity in Census 2000. In the past, only four basic categories of race were distinguished. Those categories were: Black, White, Asian and American Indian. One more special category of so called *the other race* was possible and there was also an ethnic distinction between Hispanic or non Hispanic origin. With the introduction of more options possible for the respondents in Census 2000, it basically meant that people could express themselves about the heritage of their past more accurately and with pride, leaving their embarrassment far behind them. Under the new Census format, there are sixty-three possible categories of race altogether. This number consists of six basic categories of one race alone, which have been already mentioned above, and in case that people report two or more races at once, there are fifty-seven combinations possible in this multiple race option (Douglass).

The Association of Multiethnic Americans itself describes this important step forward on its web pages as following: “The American people will finally be able to display a full range of single and multiple race responses reflecting the truly diverse fabric of our current and historical roots...Allowing multiple race responses on the 2000 Census has opened the door to more accurate and complete statistical information...” (Douglass).

## 1.2 Census 2000 - Largest Minorities

According to data from Census 2000, the largest minorities are Hispanics or Latinos, African Americans and Asians, respectively. The ethnic concentration in specific regions varies. Today, Hispanics are the fastest-growing population in the United States. As reported by Census 2000 they are also the number one in minority percentage, reaching to 12.5 percent of the total population. They live dispersed throughout the United States but the population density is highest in the central and western part of the country. African Americans are the second largest minority representing 12.2 percent of the total population and they are said to reside mostly in the south-east of the United States. African Americans are followed by Asians who represent 3.6 percent of the total population (US Census Bureau).<sup>1</sup>

I have used data from Census 2000 because the results from Census 2010 are no available yet. Moreover, present statistic estimates say that ethnic minorities are growing faster then ever and soon they will become the majority. The situation has changed since the new millennium a lot. In Census 2000, whites accounted for 77.1 percent of the total population and seven years later this number descended to 66 percent which means that minorities represented 34 percent of the total population in 2007. Hispanics and Asians are still the leading two fastest-growing minorities and African Americans keep their second largest minority position. Census Bureau estimates that by 2042, minorities will represent half of the total population in the United States. By 2050, minorities will rise up to 54 percent, Hispanic population will double its number, reaching up to 30 percent, and Asians will represent 9 percent of the total population. Logically, the statistic estimates mapping only the child population give even higher numbers (“U.S. Minorities Will Be the Majority by 2042, Census Bureau Says“; Minckler).

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<sup>1</sup> The minority prevalence and percentage data are illustrated in detail in appendices.

## **2 CLASSIFICATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE USA**

Various sources divide U.S. higher education, commonly referred to as tertiary education, in different ways. Basically, it can be divided into two main branches, into undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Veselovský (217) calls them junior colleges referring to undergraduate form of education and universities and colleges corresponding to postgraduate studies which include professional and graduate schools.

Junior colleges, today more often called community colleges, refer to comprehensive two-year institutions. They are usually publicly supported but not all of them. They enrol the highest numbers of students because they are open to everyone. Community colleges are usually the cheapest solution for many applicants because of their open-admission policies, low tuition and wide distribution. For these reasons, they are the most accessible to students with a low social status who cannot afford to study at four-year institutions, especially to ethnic minority students. These colleges are usually orientated on vocational fields and semi-professional preparation. They can also be regarded as a preparation for further studies at four-year institutions for those who have not decided upon their specialization. They are also very popular among fully employed people who want to improve their skills (Veselovský 217; Nolan and Swift 99).

Universities and colleges can be financed publicly or privately so they are often divided according to their form of funding. Veselovský (217-18) divides them into five categories:

### **1. State universities**

They provide education to residents of a particular state and the service is usually free of charge or at very low fees.

### **2. Municipal colleges and universities**

These are controlled by the municipalities in which they are located.



### **3. Land-grant colleges and universities**

These are colleges or universities receiving federal aid under the Land Grant Act of 1862 and 1890.<sup>2</sup>

### **4. Endowed universities**

These are famous and well-known universities endowed by people who decide to help them.

### **5. Privately controlled universities and colleges**

These are universities with the best reputation and very long traditions, commonly known as Ivy League. The four best known are Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Columbia. These schools are often funded from their former students who have become successful and occupy the highest posts.

To conclude, students can choose from a wide range of institutions today. One third of American colleges and universities are privately controlled and they charge higher tuition costs than state-run institutions. Students can decide to attend specialized training institutes in the form of two-year community colleges or four-year institutions ranging from small liberal arts colleges to large state universities (U.S. Department of State 41). Their choice depends just on their possibilities, preferences and demands.

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<sup>2</sup> see chapter: The Civil war and the Morrill Acts on page 12

## 3 ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE PROCESS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

### 3.1 Education – the Fifth Freedom

On January 6, 1941, American President Franklin D. Roosevelt made a speech where he highlighted the importance of so-called *four essential human freedoms* for the American nation. These four freedoms were identified as freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. On February 5, 1968, American president Lyndon Johnson broadened the idea of four freedoms into five ones. He wrote a special message to the Congress regarding the matter of education and he proclaimed *the fifth freedom* which basically meant freedom from ignorance and therefore the opportunity for everyone to develop according to his or her needs. Johnson described the *fifth freedom* in his own words as follows: “It means that every man, everywhere, should be free to develop his talents to their full potential--unhampered by arbitrary barriers of race or birth or income” (Woolley and Peters).

Obviously, higher education is more accessible today but various barriers such as factors of race, birth and income which were already mentioned by Lyndon Johnson are still present in the society and possibly always will be. Nevertheless, boundaries regarding the race might be reduced as much as possible, but this process takes place mainly in people’s minds and no government support or financial aid is able to solve the problem of racial discrimination.

Lyndon Johnson also declared in his message to Congress that equal opportunity in education to the African American family in the city and to the poor in general was not a reality, only just a promise (Woolley and Peters). Even though he stated it more than thirty years ago, it is still an existing problem because we cannot omit the factor of the social status the family is situated in. The gap between the poor and the rich is broadening in today’s society and the differences of family incomes are evident all over the world.

## **3.2 Barriers to Participation in Higher Education**

The most significant obstacle for every college student in general, disregarding the race, is a low socioeconomic status which affects the student's persistence at university a lot. Class difference plays a very important role and according to William Nolan and David W. Swift (113-15) there are four obstacles to college attendance for lower-class people. These are: financial problems, family and friends, speech, and finally, attitude of the student towards studying and school itself. These four obstacles are further described below.

### ***3.2.1 Financial Problems***

If students are not provided with enough money, they usually have to work for a living in order to afford college. Coping with two responsibilities at once, work and school, could be very demanding, which might influence student's performance at college. Work-study programs, grants or other financial aids might help in these days but more on this subject later.

### ***3.2.2 Family and Friends***

Close relatives and friends are mentioned as obstacles mainly in relation to first generation college students. According to this source, low-income students have problems because their parents have never attended college and therefore they have different values than their children. Furthermore, parents are afraid that their children will change their values at university and their way of thinking about social mobility. These parents often do not understand the importance of further education and they usually want their children to work after finishing high school. Social mobility of students might be also hindered by other close relatives, neighbours or friends who oppose the student's efforts to get on a higher social level.

### ***3.2.3 Speech***

The third obstacle of low-income students to higher education, which is very closely linked to their family background, is speech, because these underprivileged students usually use non-standard English. "When these students enter college, they often fail to speak in class for fear of appearing foolish or being corrected. They are discouraged by the conflict between the way they must speak at college, if they speak

at all, and the way they are expected to speak to parents and noncollege friends” (Nolan and Swift 115). Of course, in the case of minority student problem with speech we should consider the language barrier as a whole.

### ***3.2.4 Attitude***

The fourth and the most important factor is the attitude of the students towards their studies and involvement in college life itself. “Poor or minority students frequently lack involvement in college life, arising from the fact that they are suspicious of those in power” (Nolan and Swift 115). So if they are not involved in college life at all, they definitely do not feel well in the college community resulting in feeling misunderstood or even alienated among majority students.

## **3.3 Barriers to Higher Education Still Persist**

Barriers to college students described in the previous chapter were listed in Swift’s book in 1976 so it is important to bear in mind that the situation has changed a lot since the 1970s. Even though the number of African Americans and other minorities in institutions of higher education increased at that time, the knowledge of factors influencing the differences between minority and majority enrolment or performance itself was very limited. The researches were not systematic and analytical enough. Nowadays, some barriers can be eliminated by virtue of increasing knowledge and understanding or by effective strategies developed by competent educators.

Today, there are many possibilities where to obtain information about the issue of minorities in higher education. There are various institutions, magazines, journals and there are also many statistics showing recent trends in minority education. But it was not like this until the 1980s. It is true that some statistics existed but not many. Books and magazines were devoted to one ethnic group separately or they were describing only one issue.

To add more up-to-date information in my thesis I have made a research on the internet sources available to the public on web pages. The most important institutions responsible for collecting information about education as a whole are for example **U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics and American Council on Education**. These institutions also try to improve

participation of ethnic minorities in education in general and they are briefly described as follows.

**U.S. Department of Education** started its function in 1980. It focuses its attention on the main educational issues. It establishes policies on federal financial aid for education and it is responsible for distribution and monitoring of these funds. It collects various data on America's schools and researches and tries to ensure equal access to education without any discrimination (US Department of Education).

**The National Center for Education Statistics** is an institution which collects and analyzes information on the condition of American education and publishes valuable reports and reviews with complete statistics on this issue. It reports data to US Department of Education, the Congress and other education policy makers (National Center for Education Statistics).

**The American Council on Education** has worked on the issue of education since 1918 but the first *Minorities in Higher Education Annual Status Report* was not written until 1982. Sara Melendez, whose assignment was to produce the second annual report on this issue, comments on it in the following words:

"I had been a teacher and professor of education and, therefore, was somewhat familiar with the disparities in educational attainment for minorities, as well as their participation in the faculty and administrative ranks. But my knowledge was largely anecdotal, from newspaper accounts and my own experience in higher education" (Melendez 5).

It is evident that the beginnings of trying to capture the statistics on education and somehow describe the problem of minority underrepresentation in educational institutions were quite harsh. Nowadays, this area of study is very topical and still a lot of research needs to be done in order to move forward. It should be stressed that dialogue and terminology about equal opportunities for minorities in general has changed. The terms like *equal opportunity* or *equity* were removed and the word *diversity* is used instead. This term might make the incorrect impression that minority students do not have to face any problems at all and that they are not even discriminated against (Melendez 8).

Even though the participation of various ethnic minorities is increasing, there are some barriers which have lately even worsened. Students who want to attend universities or colleges should be already well prepared and informed from their high

schools. This is the principal factor. Advising services at their schools should help them to succeed but very often these services do not exist and if they do, they do not have enough staff or they are have a shortage of money. Another problem is lacking financial aid for students, and if there is any financial aid available, it is not used justly for those who really need it. The reason for this unjust treatment is that there are too many applicants and therefore those who really need some financial help do not receive any at all. The situation is also worsened by the fact that some institutions have raised tuition and fees. Some states have declared that only community colleges should make use of education support programmes and some public schools do not allow the admission of undocumented residents which is often the case of Hispanics. Hispanics, as the largest and the poorest minority, is the group most affected by this financial aid restriction. They usually cannot afford to study at private institutions and not receiving any full scholarship even deepens their struggle for access to higher education (Atwell 1, Melendez 5-9).

Today, the media are trying to convince the society that the problems of minority student underrepresentation at schools originate only from class and economics, not from the racial disparities. In my opinion, it is a very problematic and disputable topic because we cannot really measure what people actually think about other races and asylum seekers because they do not have to answer truthfully, especially if they know that they are judged by other people. For this reason, it is hard to estimate whether people are becoming more tolerant of today's enlarging diverse society and getting used to it or not.

## **4 AFRICAN AMERICANS THROUGHOUT HISTORY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

To understand the importance of equal opportunities in higher education for ethnic minorities we should go back more than a century and a half. The story begins with African Americans freed from slavery who were no longer able to bear the treatment of the white society. When universities and colleges were first established, only a small group of African Americans received higher education at predominantly white institutions<sup>3</sup>. These universities did not have a special need or reason to ensure education to former slaves so not many African Americans received proper education until the establishment of historically Black colleges and universities<sup>4</sup>. Unfortunately, the African American struggle for equal opportunities at predominantly white institutions was very slow and the serious changes for ethnic minorities as a whole did not occur until the 1960s which was the peak of the Civil Rights Movement.

### **4.2 The Beginnings of Colleges**

African Americans had their place in the society strictly given. They had been slaves for centuries in America and therefore we can say that they were perceived by the society as something inferior for a very long time. The situation did not radically change until the Civil Rights Movement which notably improved their social status.

In the 1820s, a few African Americans had already studied at universities but they were allowed to participate in higher education only exceptionally. The first institution to enrol African Americans is said to be Oberlin College which was founded in 1833. Even though one or two African Americans had graduated occasionally at some institutions before the foundation of Oberlin College, they were not admitted in large numbers (Harper, Patton and Wooden 393).

White Southerners were afraid that education for African Americans, who were already freed from slavery, would cause dissatisfaction with the serfdom they imposed upon them. Northern missionaries were interested in spreading religion and recruitment but the issue of education was not a priority for them because they were

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<sup>3</sup> Also, the abbreviation PWI is used further in this thesis, PWIs in plural.

<sup>4</sup> Also, the abbreviation HBCU is used further in this thesis., HBCUs in plural.

much more concerned about westward Indian territory and raw materials they could benefit from. Both Southerners and Northerners were certain "...that an educated Black would be a dissatisfied Black" (Ballard 12).

Later, Southerners realized that they needed an educated labour force which could count and read, at least. Furthermore, Northern missionaries were interested in educating new clerics to spread the word of God. These two needs put together resulted in the establishment of colleges for African Americans in the South. These colleges, today known as historically Black colleges, seemed to be the best solution but in most cases they were comparable to the level of high school education or lower. Also, white people were usually in charge of these colleges. They were responsible for funding and administration itself but the fear of educated African Americans still prevailed. White people widely believed in stereotyping and categorized African Americans as *lazy and savage Blacks*. In spite of this stereotyping, there was always a possible threat that if African Americans received proper education, they could rebel and demand more rights. It was also believed that minimal education on a vocational basis for African Americans should do no harm to the society because they would still remain subordinate to the white majority. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, African Americans were still not perceived as people who could somehow contribute to the society (Ballard 12-14). "At the most optimistic level, white society felt that Blacks might possibly serve as the teachers, clergy, and doctors for their own people" (Ballard 14).

### **4.3 The Civil War and the Morrill Acts**

The American Civil War which took place during years 1861-1865 was a very important turning point in the development of public higher education. In 1862, the Morrill Land Grant Act was introduced which meant that public lands were sold for establishment of land-grant colleges which were devoted to agriculture and industry. Up to now, there are more than one hundred of these institutions. They are among the largest ones and they offer a very wide range of studies (U.S. Department of State 13, 47). The Morrill Act of 1890 allowed the segregation of Black and white public institutions. The curriculum for African Americans was focussed on industry, agriculture and mechanics because it was widely believed that African Americans



deserved less intellectual education than the white society (Harper, Patton and Wooden 395).

Most of today's prestigious historically Black colleges and universities were founded immediately after the Civil War and by 1920 there were more than one hundred colleges and universities for African American students. Among some famous historically Black institutions of higher education which produced such intellectuals as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois are for example Spelman College or Howard University (Harper 110).

#### **4.4 Early African American Educators – Booker. T. Washington v. DuBois**

There were many important early educators but Booker T. Washington and DuBois were both probably the most significant Black leaders involved also in higher education. Even though they were rivals, they sometimes accepted the opinion of the other. B.T. Washington was well known for his program of accommodationism, which is an idea against racial segregation, and DuBois reacted to the problems of Black society with protests and with his own individual approach. B.T. Washington was deeply interested in education practices and he also wrote books reflecting his ideas. He was in favour of vocational education and that is why he founded Tuskegee Institute<sup>5</sup>. He also knew that liberally educated agitators for racial equality were not welcomed in the South and he scorned them. DuBois often disagreed with B. T. Washington's ideas, he was mainly against Washington's accommodationism and he criticized his limited approach to education. DuBois also opposed the idea that every African American could benefit from higher education and according to him, the possibility to study for everyone was one of the main reasons for low quality of Black colleges in the South. His theory of the so-called

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<sup>5</sup> B.T. Washington comments on his project of Tuskegee in the following words: "From the beginning, at Tuskegee, I was determined to have the students not only the agricultural and domestic work, but to have them, while performing this service, taught the latest and best methods of labour...students themselves would be taught to see not only the utility in labour, but beauty and dignity...and would learn to love work for its own sake" (Franklin and Isidore 263-4).

*talented tenth*<sup>6</sup> says that there is only one person out of ten who represents the talented elite and who really deserves the best education available. This theory does not apply only for African Americans but for all races of course. DuBois dedicated his life to analyses of the African American condition and he made his own educational philosophy about African Americans. His effort was also to create a curriculum that would fit to their needs. According to him, white traditional classical education and vocational studies were inappropriate and dead-end solutions (Ballard 15-26).

“Black colleges in the South evolved neither into the vocational institutes desired by Washington nor into the Black catalysts of the change proposed by Du Bois...” (Ballard 21). According to DuBois, these higher institutions were built too quickly without an adequate consideration and they were named wrongly as universities. Because of DuBois’ radical participation and his popularity, students started to bring books with them instead of agricultural tools. Institutions, even though of a low quality and often comparable to elementary or secondary curriculum, provided education to Black bourgeoisie leading to the formation of a middle class which was very important for later struggles for equal rights in general. At this time, segregation and the Ku Klux Klan dominated the South. African American education was neither supported from the states nor from the Federal Government and the South was afraid of what was going to happen next. Some Black colleges followed white curricula and some of them continued in educating vocational and agricultural specialists who could not get a job after finishing their studies. Even though there were many problems to solve, these two types of institutions represented a base for African American education. DuBois and Booker T. Washington definitely made the first and the most important step in the struggle for equal opportunities in higher education for their people (Ballard 15-26).

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<sup>6</sup> DuBois comments on his theory of the “*talented tenth*” in the following words: “The Negro race, like all races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men. The problem of education, then, among Negroes must first of all deal with the Talented Tenth; it is the problem of developing the Best of its race that they must guide the Mass away from the contamination and death of the Worst, in their own and other races” (Franklin and Isidore 265).

## **4.5 World Wars, the Great Depression and Slow Process of Desegregation**

Educational opportunities for African Americans increased during and after the World Wars because of their mass migration to the North and West. Finally, during World War II the question of racial matters brought its attention (Hare and Swift 306). Also, African Americans who graduated at white Northern schools and returned to the South were very beneficial for the African American society, mainly young African American teachers who brought new ideas with them which also promised that possibilities of higher education could be extended (Ballard 57-8).

At the time of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the *separate but equal* doctrine established under the rule of Plessy v Ferguson court case in 1869 came under scrutiny in the courts and some states had to admit African Americans at predominantly white institutions or provide them with equal school facilities. This was, for example, the case of University of Missouri Law School and the state also decided to establish an all-black law school at Lincoln University. More legal cases were opened and the battle for school desegregation started. The year of 1954 was a great landmark in the history of education as a whole. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by the Supreme Court decreed that segregation was illegal and unconstitutional. Even though segregation at schools was officially banned, the public ignored this decision and many schools remained segregated (Hare and Swift 306-7; Harper, Patton and Wooden 395-96).

## **4.6 The Civil Rights Movement**

During the Civil Rights Movement colleges and universities were expanding and the enrolment of African American students in predominantly white colleges and universities dramatically increased. Even though these students did not fulfil the requirements and were not well prepared for their further studies, they were admitted. The white society did not care about the fate of African Americans for a long time so white colleges were not prepared for this change and had little notion of the problems which could emerge later. The period of the 1960s was very turbulent, full of social and political tensions because African Americans plucked up their courage and wanted to vindicate their place in the society. The whole process of their liberation started with African American migration from the rural agricultural South

to the urban areas where they had to struggle with the white society for their economic and social survival. They had to face high unemployment, appalling accommodation, poor education, the superiority and the scorn of the white society. The courage of urban African Americans together with the unifying ideas of Martin Luther King evolved into the concept of *Black Power*. Some African Americans were not in favour of King's philosophy of non-violence, they believed in Black self-determination and they appreciated the idea of Black separatism. The radical concept of Black power led by Malcolm X and other extreme groups like the Black Panthers or Black Muslims gained popularity mainly among large numbers of young African Americans (Ballard 60-3).

All these events meant that colleges also became in a scene of great instability and they had to cope with urban Black youth who were absolute opposites of their ordinary clientele so far. At this uncertain period, colleges began admitting students who did not meet traditional entry requirements but proved well in their environments. In 1960, 65 percent of African American students were enrolled in Black colleges. The assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968 was a big tragedy which led to more radical demands from African Americans on admission quotas and by 1970s, the situation changed radically. The number of African American students at predominantly white institutions doubled but the percentage of students enrolled into Black institutions dropped from 65 percent to 34 percent. African American students began to attend white institutions in large numbers but it is important to stress that half of them actually studied only at two-year community colleges (Ballard 63-8).

#### **4.7 Admission Riots, Student Uprisings and the Question of Racism at PWIs**

Those who were in charge of colleges and universities in general were in most cases white people. Administrators at predominantly white institutions were not ashamed to openly claim that they were doing a great favour to African Americans by permitting them to attend their institutions. Although, African Americans were given a chance and they were allowed to enter the institutions of the white mainstream American society, administrators did not really understand persisting African American discontent and besides they were offended that African Americans

were demanding more rights. Many of these administrators could not identify with the fact that African Americans were not an inferior race, in other words they shared quite a racist attitude towards them. They did not want to understand that African American students had also certain needs and rights and on top of that no special arrangements were made at schools for these newcomers of absolutely different ethnic origin (Ballard 68). This tension led to violence and several riots about the admission of African Americans. Just for illustration, I will mention two significant events which definitely have their place in the history of higher education.

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1962, President Kennedy's speech broadcast on television urged the public to a peaceful settlement to the dispute over racial segregation. It resulted in a riot in which two people were killed and many injured. This bloody riot took place at the University of Mississippi campus in Oxford. Protesters were against the admission of James Meredith who was to become the first African American at this university. The opposition comprised of the community of Oxford Mississippi, students, state officials and the Governor of the State, Ross Barnett. Although Mississippi State Police promised to carry out their duties, the Federal Government had been expecting their resistance. Because the expectations were right and Mississippi State Police did not provide enough security, President Kennedy had to send additional troops and marshals to secure the protection of James Meredith who remained inside the campus during the fighting that night. After his enrolment next morning, he was escorted to his first class while rioting and arresting still continued. Even though it was a very stressful occasion, he remained fairly calm ("1962: Mississippi race riots over first black student"; Simon).

One year later, on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1963, a similar case took place on the campus at the University of Alabama. Two African American applicants, Viviane Malone and James Hood, were ordered by federal court to be admitted at the University of Alabama but the governor of Alabama, George Wallace, opposed this order and followed his own slogan of *segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever*. He wanted to prevent these two students from registering and he blocked the doorway of the administration building with his own body. The building was surrounded by state troopers and also President Kennedy had to federalize the Alabama National Guard. Finally, George Wallace was forced to step aside and the two students could be registered (Elliott; Simon).

It is important to mention that the student political protest movements in the 1960s and in the early 1970s were of a national character. The main issues of protests were of course civil rights and Vietnam War but students also protested on freedom of speech and other issues which were of direct concern to them as university students, for example, protests held on classified research on campus or student participation in faculty hiring (Wood 401). African American demands for better treatment lead to several African American student uprisings which occurred during 1967-70. One of the most famous protests took place in 1968 at Columbia where African Americans occupied a building because they protested against the construction of a gymnasium in Harlem (Ballard 69). At that time, there were three main student radical groups: Student Afro-American Society, Students for a Democratic Society and finally, Columbia Citizenship Council (McCaughey).

Even though there were many white students supporting the African American fight for justice and students held together in protests, still the relations between African Americans and white students were not very friendly. SDS<sup>7</sup> mostly tried to support African American demands but they were often refused because SAS<sup>8</sup> kept to their ideology of *Black separatism*. SAS demands were focussed on admission procedures, financial aid and Black studies. White radical students had quite different goals and did not really understand mentality of African American people. The problems between African Americans and white students usually occurred on campuses where white students were not radicals but ordinary students. There are also some reports saying that very often African Americans had to bear physical and verbal assaults from white students who repeatedly beat them and made fun of Martin Luther King's death, for example (Ballard 70).

Some administrators and professors had a better attitude towards African American students than their schoolmates but not all of them. With the arrival of disadvantaged Black students at universities, who were admitted even though they did not fulfil admission requirements, the prejudice about their low potential and intelligence even intensified. The demonstrations led by African Americans wearing dark glasses brought to the surface another stereotype of their savageness, originating in Africa (Ballard 70-71).

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<sup>7</sup> Students for a Democratic Society, already mentioned above.

<sup>8</sup> Student Afro-American Society, already mentioned above.

To conclude, the period of the 1960s ended racial segregation in American higher education and it promised open enrolment for minority students. The period of the 1970s was a breakthrough on the field of educational opportunities but it also resulted in many racial prejudices and attacks on African Americans.

#### **4.8 African American Students' Demands and the Curriculum Problem**

In the 1970s, predominantly white institutions experienced a dramatic increase in the number of African American students. The white people in charge of these institutions believed that showing their goodwill by moderate admission requirements for African Americans would silence the strike waves or callings for a change in the system of higher education. The fact is that white colleges did not have any previous experience with African Americans and they did not consider any curriculum changes for students of absolutely different ethnic origin. These institutions were not prepared for this radical change and therefore this period can be described as chaotic success for African Americans in higher education (Ballard 80).

African American students felt that if they were admitted to study at white universities, they should be provided with a suitable environment. They had the feeling of alienation because they were not treated well. They wanted to be taken seriously and treated as human beings. It is important to emphasize that they strictly did not call for equality itself at schools but for more human approach towards them. Demands from African American students were delivered to administrators of universities and colleges throughout the country. First, African American students wanted to continue in traditional idea of DuBois that Black studies should be in charge of African Americans. Second, they demanded special dormitory facilities and cultural space where they could be together. They were actually grouping before but privately and under the names of societies or clubs. Also, separate dormitories were required because they often objected that white students did not understand them and therefore they felt alienated in such a surrounding. The third demand was speaking about additional admission quotas for African Americans. And finally, they asked for financial and tutorial aid because many African Americans were not able to complete a four year institution because of their poor financial situation and the lack

of information which should be provided at high schools at the very first stage (Ballard 70-75).

The question of Black studies was raised many times and the problem of its implementation into the curriculum concerned mainly predominantly white universities because they were teaching exclusively white history, ignoring African American culture. DuBois was a very important figure responsible for opening the question of adjusting the curriculum to the needs of African Americans. The original purpose of Black studies concept was to become a part of the curriculum, not to have segregated studies or courses only for African Americans. However, some African Americans were overwhelmed by their emotions and they wanted to exclude white students from Black studies but with this attitude they were reversing the original idea of being part of the curriculum available to everyone. Here came into question how to solve this problem, whether or not to allow white students to attend these courses. White students should also have an opportunity to be informed about African American history in order to help them better understand African American culture and mentality. Attendance of Black studies is one question but also allocation of qualified African American teachers who would give lectures on Black studies became quite problematic. The demand for them was very high and when they were offered a job at a predominantly white institution, they logically accepted which caused a downturn of qualified teachers at historically Black universities. To make matters worse, students did not take these courses seriously because the lecture was based on open discussions and there were not so many duties to be done in the lessons (Haskins 116-127). Black studies or African American studies should definitely be given an equal importance as other subjects taught at universities and its contents should be also more difficult for students in order to gain high standard of the subject matter.

The open admission of underprepared African American students and their demands for Black studies were put under criticism by various educational experts. Special admission programs were attacked by the statement that these underprepared students prevented those African Americans who were more qualified from entering the university. Secondly, it was claimed by the white society that the reason for the demand of Black studies was only because African American students could not compete with their white schoolmates in regular courses. Although predominantly



white universities were open to moderate admission requirements for African Americans, it is important to mention that these institutions were afraid of lowering their status. Some universities tried to find the solution in the institution of compensatory summer curricula which should serve as a preparatory course for African Americans. In return, they wanted these students to take a full load of college courses during their regular studies. Other institutions did not bother with any preparatory courses at all and students had to attend regular courses with tutorial assistance even though they had major gaps in their high school knowledge (Ballard 83, 85-87, 90-93). Ballard critically expressed his annoyance with such a treatment in his book in the following words: “Maybe some administrators thought, the best solution was to plunge the students directly into regular college work and provide intensive tutoring on the side, thus obviating the need for marking Black students as ‘second-class’ citizens on campus” (91).

#### **4.9 Affirmative Action Policies and Reverse Discrimination**

All these admission problems and clashes at predominantly white institutions mentioned in previous chapters gave rise to a dilemma within African American community whether to fight for integration or remain in separation at historically Black colleges and universities.

The answer for many African American students was obvious. By the late 1960s and the early 1970s predominantly white universities opened their doors to ethnic minorities. Every university tried to attract the attention of young talented African Americans so the demand for historically Black colleges rapidly decreased (Harper 111). The fight for integration into predominantly white institutions was also heavily supported by various affirmative action<sup>9</sup> policies. These were supposed to increase access for African Americans and other minority students. It is true that educational opportunities dramatically increased but these special admission policies and programs were also in the centre of great criticism. Many white students had the feeling that they were disadvantaged during admission processes which led to several legal battles of white candidates claiming that they were discriminated against. They believed they were rejected at universities or colleges because of racial quotas and

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<sup>9</sup> “Affirmative action generally means giving preferential treatment to minorities in admission to universities or employment in government & businesses” (Messerli).

affirmative action policies in general. The famous case of Allan Bakke<sup>10</sup> in 1974 resulted in prohibition of racial quotas by Supreme Court decision in 1978 but universities were still permitted to consider race as one of the factors during admission. The situation remained more or less the same and legal cases continued (Harper, Patton and Wooden 400-5).

The question of taking race into consideration and increasing problems of reverse discrimination at colleges and universities caused some institutions to ban the use of affirmative action during their admissions. Several states also prohibited affirmative action as a whole. For example, in 1996 California passed *Proposition 209* which banned affirmative action programs in employment, educational admissions and contracting. Similarly, these measures were followed by Washington where *Initiative 200* was passed two years later. In 2003, two significant legal cases appeared at University of Michigan, *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger*. It was decided that affirmative action was constitutional and that the factor of race could be taken into consideration among with other factors because it helps to keep true diversity which is very important and beneficial (Messerli; Americans for a Fair Chance).

Affirmative action was originally meant to help disadvantaged minorities and its policies definitely proved to be successful but the question today whether it is needed to continue with affirmative action or not remains unanswered. Those who oppose the use of affirmative action claim that it only leads to problems and that it should be eliminated. Its negative impact is evident when discussions are opened about problems like reverse discrimination, lowering standards for admission and its effect upon the performance of the whole educational body. Also, the idea of truly colour-blind society does not correspond with affirmative action because it gives minorities an advantage over the majority. On the other hand, some people believe that only affirmative action can break the stereotypes and if it were not for its policies, minorities would never achieve equal opportunities in the society. Affirmative action also helps to promote diversity. It is said that many students live quite segregated lives until they enter college or university so the interaction between

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<sup>10</sup> “Allan Bakke, a white male applicant who was denied admission to the University of California-Davis, believed he would have been admitted were it not for affirmative action” (Harper, Patton and Wooden 400).

different nations and races is very important for them, especially at this age (Messerli). In my opinion, there are always pros and cons to every policy and there is still a lot to be discussed about affirmative action because it is a very contentious issue.

#### **4.10 The Fate of HBCUs**

Historically Black colleges and universities were originally established to educate African Americans in the South where they were excluded from ordinary schools. Until the 1960s, two-thirds of African Americans relied on these institutions which provided them with more welcoming environment without racial tension. These institutions had to undergo several changes and their role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is very uncertain as well as their survival (Harper 115-119; Thernstrom).

HBCUs have not been financially supported as their predominantly white counterparts. Together with declining enrolment and increasing costs they have been forced to take some measures or close down completely. Institutions that wanted to continue with their business and keep their reputation positive had only two possibilities, to become more multiracial or reduce their expenses on educational programs and faculty. HBCUs are no longer for African Americans exclusively but they are still racially identifiable because more than 80 percent of students attending these institutions are African Americans. The fate of HBCUs is endangered because they are not as attractive as PWIs which have more financial resources and therefore are able to finance better services. Some critics claim that inadequate financial resources and poor facilities of HBCUs prevent young people from preparing for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Very often, students attracted to HBCUs are less likely to come from affluent and educated families. Today, African Americans do not have problems with getting into college but with staying and finishing their studies. The dropout rate at HBCUs is still very high but not as high as at PWIs. Another advantage over PWIs is that students are not admitted preferentially. Also HBCUs proved more effective in promoting confidence, positive self-image and high aspirations of students (Harper 115-119; Thernstrom).

To conclude, HBCUs definitely play a crucial role in African American access to higher education. Some people claim that they are the best institutions for African Americans and therefore they deserve better financial support. Endowments

are extremely rare so HBCUs have to rely on financial aid from the Federal Government which should be also much more increased. Fortunately, there are organisations helping with these financial problems. The largest and the oldest organisation is the United Negro College Fund which provides help to African American students with gaining scholarships and improving facilities at HBCUs. On the other hand, there are also many critics who would rather close these institutions down because of the segregated system of education which is no longer needed (Harper 115-120; Thernstrom). One way or another, HBCUs have served well and in my opinion, more researches and analyzes need to be done in order to judge their performance fairly.

## 5 PRESENT TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

### 5.1 Hispanic Problem

Today, Hispanics are the largest and the fastest growing ethnic minority so it is very important to ensure them a high-quality education because they are significant representatives of American society and their number will constantly rise up to 30 percent of the total population by 2050, as already mentioned at the beginning of my thesis.

Most Latinos<sup>11</sup> claim that college education is very important to them but only half of them actually plan to attend an institution of higher education. The major reason for the gap between high value on a college education and actual attendance is the fact that young Hispanics are usually committed to their family and after finishing high school they have to provide their close relatives with a financial support. Sometimes they just have the feeling that they do not need further education for their careers. There is also a big difference in education attainment between Latinos who are immigrants and those who were already born in the United States. When we compare their aspirations to get a degree, native-born Latinos who would like to continue with higher education outnumber immigrants almost by two to one and generally the conditions for them are much more favourable. Immigrants are more likely to be limited by family commitments and they often struggle with language abilities. Poor English skills usually result in earlier termination of college studies. Latino youths also reported other reasons to justify not wanting to continue their education. They admitted that their grades were not high enough or they simply did not like school. Latino adults also think that one of the major reasons for underrepresentation and underperformance of Latino students at colleges is the lack of parental involvement. Some Latino adults also believe that different cultural background plays a certain role, or they simply think that Hispanic students do not work as hard as other students. To conclude, the most reported and probably the most severe problem is linked with financial difficulties that students have to cope with which goes hand in hand with apparent family expectations to be supported financially (Lopez 1-7).

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<sup>11</sup> The terms *Latinos* and *Hispanics* are used interchangeably in this chapter.

Commitments to family together with financial problems contribute to the fact that Latinos often enrol in two-year colleges. These offer many advantages ranging from lower tuition to accommodation for part-time students and evening lessons for those who work full-time. Almost half of Mexicans and foreign-born students attend community colleges in large numbers. It is nothing unusual to study while working because two-year institutions are usually focussed on improving job skills. More than 55 percent of Latinos older than thirty-five attend two-year institutions, usually part-time. Although Latino students can benefit from advantages mentioned above, they are less likely to complete their studies at two-year institutions and completion rates are much higher at four-year colleges. Only 75 percent of Latino students enrol full-time which is a relatively low number in contrast to 85 percent of white and similarly Black students who enrol full-time. Part-time enrolment is in demand mainly for those who already have a work or a family, or both. It is generally believed that younger students are more focussed on their education and they are not as distracted as adults who already earn money and have a family. To sum it up, the trend of older Latino students attending two-year colleges just part-time and their lower rate of persistence influences the total result of the statistics reporting that completion rate of Latino students at four-year institutions is much higher (Fry 4-9).

Obviously, socioeconomic status influences the educational achievement a lot. Generally, obtaining a college education is easier for students from families with a higher income. Cubans are said to be in a better financial situation than for example Mexicans or Puerto Ricans. The rate of college enrolment of Cuban high school graduates who enrolled in undergraduate, graduate or professional schools is the highest among Hispanic population, reaching up to 45 percent which is very close to the rate of white students. Mexicans reached to 33 percent and Puerto Ricans only to 30 percent. Also, immigrants tend to have more financial problems than native-born Latino students (Fry 9-11).

To make matters worse, a national survey of Latino parents in Chicago, New York and Los Angeles made by TRPI<sup>12</sup> revealed that the Latino community is not familiar with college admission processes and access to financial aid. Parents usually

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas Rivera Policy Institute  
see <<http://www.trpi.org/index.html>>

influence the choice and academic performance of their children and if they are not informed, students do not continue with higher education at all. Lack of knowledge was evident among first-generation immigrants, parents with low income and worse educational backgrounds. The major obstacle preventing from acquiring information is definitely the language barrier. Several recommendations were proposed in order to increase the awareness of the Latino community about college preparation, requirements for admission, financial aid for students etc. It was concluded that Spanish should be used equally with English in order to inform Spanish-speaking people in their native language (Tornatzky). Just for illustration, I will mention only two recommendations which are, in my opinion, the most promising for a start. First of all, a public service announcement should cover both English and Spanish media, which means that information is provided bilingual, and more importantly, the number of bilingual high school teachers and counsellors should be increased which influences further education.

Similar to HBCUs attended by African Americans, Latinos can study at Hispanic-serving institutions<sup>13</sup> and benefit from Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, ensuring support in the form of scholarships, pre-collegiate support, advancement programs etc. It is the only association which represents Hispanic-serving institutions of higher education, not only in the United States but also in other Spanish-speaking countries. This association was established by eighteen institutions in 1986 and because of rapid Hispanic population growth, nowadays their number has reached nearly 450. Even though Hispanic member institutions in the United States represent less than 10 percent of all higher education institutions, they are preferred by more than two-thirds of Hispanic college students (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, “Hacu 101”).

## **5.2 Educational Results of Ethnic Minorities**

Although it is said that African Americans do not have problems with adjustment and feel more at ease at historically Black universities, they usually have lower grade-point averages than those African Americans who attend predominantly white universities. The reason for worse attainment is probably of a socioeconomic character because successful African Americans at predominantly white institutions

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<sup>13</sup> The abbreviation HIS is also widely used.

usually come from families with better education and higher income. African Americans mainly have to cope with the problem of assimilation and it was found that a non-traditional teaching style contributed the most to the rapid African American progress in education (Haniff 247-49).

“There have been many explanations for educational problems of African Americans, racism, slavery, cultural disruption, persistent poverty and so on....African Americans enter the schools system with a sense of difference based on color not on culture or nationality” (Haniff 250). Asian-Americans and other foreign-born students do not have these problems and perform very well. Their success is supported by the argument that they are conscious not only about colour difference, but also about disparities in their culture and nationality realizing the enormous differences and therefore they orientate towards learning. They accept new culture but value their own at the same time. While African Americans traumatized by oppression throughout the history still have the feeling of inferiority and separateness and many of them are ambivalent about perception of differences in culture (Haniff 249-251).

When we compare college enrolment of white, African American and Hispanic high school graduates aged 18-24 between 1972 and 1994, it is evident that white applicants were enrolled in larger numbers in spite of the fact that minorities had already open doors to university education at that time. Between 1981 and 1994, the white enrolment rate grew substantially, while the African American and Hispanic rate grew moderately at this period. It is also popular among older Hispanics to attend universities just part-time and they usually do not reach a bachelor's degree in this form of study. In spring 1994, whites and Asians gained more bachelor's degrees than their African American and Hispanic counterparts which confirmed that these two minorities did not perform as well as their white and Asian peers (“Minorities in Higher Education”. National Center for Education Statistics 13-16).

According to data from the American Council on Education, the percentage change in total degrees awarded to ethnic minorities over the past decade rapidly increased. Between 1995 and 2005, the percentage change over this period was 65 percent and 335, 000 bachelor's degrees were awarded. African Americans were very successful over this period and more than doubled the number of master's



degrees awarded. Doctoral degrees also increased, the percentage change was 84 percent. Hispanics nearly doubled the number of bachelor's degrees, and doctoral degrees increased 83 percent. Also, ethnic minorities are employed in higher education institutions more than it used to be. Although they are successful as college administrators and presidents, whites still occupy the majority of these positions (The American Council on Education).

These findings definitely prove that ethnic minorities are becoming more successful in the college and university attainment but still, they need some help either in some form of financial aid or better access to open information regarding their studies and future plans concerning higher education in general. The problem of financial support is further discussed in the following chapter which deals with organisations and other forms of financing.

### **5.3 Minority Serving Institutions, Organisations and Financing**

The progress in making colleges more accessible to ethnic minorities is evident but there are still some issues and problems which need to be solved. For this reason, there are various organisations and minority serving institutions helping to improve the condition of education. Some minority serving institutions have proved to work well creating reasonable conditions for minority students inhibiting feelings of inferiority and alienation. Historically Black universities and Hispanic-serving institutions described in previous chapters can be a good choice for some minority students but others might perceive them as a separatist form of education preventing diversity from spreading in the American society.

Today, there are various non-profit organisations helping ethnic minorities with their attainment. The nation's largest and oldest civil rights organisation is **The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People**<sup>14</sup> which was established in 1908 in response to lynching and unfair treatment towards African Americans. They were guaranteed equal rights in the Constitution of the United States at that time but this promise was not kept. During the Great Depression, the activities of the NAACP focussed on economic justice and at the time of the Civil Rights Movement it was very successful with passage of many important laws and acts. This organisation is still very active and needed in today's society. "The

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<sup>14</sup> The abbreviation NAACP is used further in this chapter.

NAACP's principal objective is to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of minority group citizens of United States and eliminate race prejudice. The NAACP seeks to remove all barriers of racial discrimination through the democratic processes” (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People).

Another organisation dealing particularly with African American higher education is **The United Negro College Fund**<sup>15</sup> which was already mentioned in the chapter about historically Black colleges because it offers help to these institutions in the form of funds and technology support. The UNCF is the nation’s largest and oldest minority serving organisation which deals with higher education and tries to close the educational attainment gap between African Americans and the majority students (United Negro College Fund).

There are many specialized organisations and federations concerned with equal education opportunities and education as a whole. These institutions offer services that minority students can take advantage from. Most importantly, they can receive financial assistance which is crucial for the successful enrolment and persistence of low-income students. Students’ decisions on whether to attend college and their final choice of school are greatly influenced by the availability of funds. Unfortunately, federal grants have been reduced substantially and they were replaced by federal loans, tax exemptions, and prepaid college plans. Prepaid college plan is a new mechanism of financing based on a principle that parents place a certain amount of money in a contract, or they can pay monthly, ensuring sufficient resources for tuition and fees in a set period of time in the future. Nowadays, low-income students and minorities are attracted to credit card usage. They are in debt to private credit card companies and after finishing their studies they have to repay a huge amount of money (Amaury).

In my opinion, placing the burden of financing on individuals itself is not a good solution. It leads to an enormous increase of student indebtedness which deepens their socioeconomic problems resulting in wider educational attainment gap. To conclude, better conditions for minority students are ensured by various forms of financing but just temporarily which is not desirable.

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<sup>15</sup> The abbreviation UNCF is used further in this chapter.

## **5.4 The Benefits of Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Higher Education**

Americans are used to the fact that their society is very diverse and they realize the importance of interaction with different ethnic minorities from early childhood in order to perceive the pluralistic society as a norm.

In 2000, American Council on Education made a research on benefits of racial and ethnic diversity in higher education. It was concluded that diversity is very beneficial in college life because young people are influenced a lot in this stage of life. The college experience and interaction with people of different racial and ethnic origins are the key elements for the formulation of behaviour and opinions. According to this report, racial and ethnic diversity in higher education benefits individual students, higher education institutions but also the economy and society as a whole (Milem and Hakuta 49).

Diversity benefits individuals in many important ways. Exposure of students to racial and ethnic diversity has a positive impact on their educational experiences. Students who interact with diversity are said to be more academically motivated and better at critical thinking. Most importantly, they learn how to interact with people from different backgrounds. They are more likely to have greater sense of community and tolerance towards different minorities which decreases the gap between minority students and the majority. Generally, diverse surrounding enriches educational environment on campus and contributes to exchange of different experiences. Diversity also affects higher education institutions and their teaching practices. Moreover, colleges supporting higher diversity often engage in researches which expand the knowledge of issues related to ethnicity. It is also believed that diverse work teams support creativity and innovation on the workplace which contributes to the positive progress in economic sector as well (Milem and Hakuta 49-59). Societal benefits can be described by the following citation: “Students who have been exposed to greater diversity are more likely to demonstrate increases in racial understanding, cultural awareness and appreciation, engagement with social and political issues, and openness to diversity and challenge” (Milem and Hakuta 68).

## CONCLUSION

The aim of my bachelor thesis is to make a complex analysis of ethnic minorities in the process of higher education with the emphasis on African American problem throughout history because they actually opened the question of equal opportunities in higher education for ethnic minorities.

African Americans had been slaves for centuries and even though they were guaranteed equal rights in the Constitution of the United States, they still had to bear the oppression which was very humiliating for them. Their struggle for equal opportunities in higher education began more than a century and a half ago when some of them were allowed to study at universities or colleges together with the rest of the society, in other words with the white majority. There were several milestones in the history of higher education for ethnic minorities which pushed opportunities for them forward very fast. The most important turning points were definitely the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil war can be described as the period of establishing institutions of higher education. During the Civil Rights Movement African Americans seriously demanded equal opportunities in various sectors and finally they received some response from the public. The period of the 1960s and the 1970s is characterised by student uprising, admission riots, affirmative action policies and the phenomenon of reverse discrimination which even deepened the problem of admission opportunities. This period was very turbulent and beneficial but a lot of racial prejudices and attacks on African Americans also occurred.

Access for ethnic minorities in higher education today is taken for granted but were it not for African Americans and the Civil Rights Movement, ethnic minorities could not benefit from so many opportunities they have today. I have found that various barriers and social factors still matter in today's society. The prevailing problems of ethnic minorities concern the racial discrimination and financial problems. Although the American society has started to label racial issues as class issues often related to economics, and the terminology of words like *equal opportunity* or *equity* are substituted by the term *diversity*, it is important to stress that the problems are still present and more or less the same and this issue is given only a different name.

Hispanics are also covered in my bachelor thesis because they play a very important role in today's American society constituting the largest ethnic minority which is rapidly growing. According to latest estimates, they are slowly becoming the majority. Hispanics are deterred from higher education because of various barriers they have to face. These barriers are mainly financial problems, family expectations to work after finishing high school, and finally unfamiliarity of both students and their parents with financial aid and possible options to study for students from lower income families.

Fortunately, there are many non-profit organisations and associations working hard on this issue and their activities are extending. Moreover, the pace of life which is typical for the 21<sup>st</sup> century contributes to faster processing and exchange of information. Hopefully, ethnic minority students have the access to the internet, at schools at least, and they can find there the information which is relevant for them. This condition contributes to their better awareness of higher education and improves their preparedness at the same time. It is very likely that the situation will improve quickly because of today's information and technology age which evolves in a very high speed.

A contribution of my thesis is to realize that there are a huge number of issues to be examined in this area of study and many problems are waiting to be solved in the future. Undoubtedly, this topic deserves deeper analysis in order to give us more profound understanding of all the problems related to equal opportunities in the American society. I assume that it is very important to make a systematic and unbiased research but I am aware of the fact that it is not an easy task to do.

## RESUMÉ V ČESKÉM JAZYCE

Spojené státy americké jsou multikulturní společností, ve které se střetávají lidé nejrůznějšího původu z různých částí světa. Historie příchodu imigrantů, jejich vzájemných střetů a asimilačních procesů je velmi obsáhlá a zajímavá. Má práce je však zaměřena na oblast vzdělávání etnických menšin na amerických vysokých školách. Konkrétně se zabývá jejich sociálním postavením, problémy, východisky pro jejich řešení, a v neposlední řadě také přínosem etnických menšin pro společnost jako takovou.

V úvodní části práce jsou představeny nejpočetnější etnické menšiny. Jejich procentuální zastoupení je doloženo informacemi z roku 2000, kdy proběhlo sčítání lidu. Aktuální sčítání lidu probíhá i tento rok, ale informace nejsou ještě zpracovány, a proto nebyly použity. Z tohoto důvodu se musíme spokojit se staršími údaji. Kapitola pojednávající o menšinách je doplněna přílohami, které dokreslují význam těchto informací a jsou zde umístěny proto, abychom si uvědomili důležitost postavení menšin v dnešní společnosti. Dle sčítání lidu provedeného roku 2000 jsou nejpočetnějšími menšinami Latinoameričané, Afroameričané a obyvatelé asijského původu. V budoucnu je předpokládána narůstající tendence těchto menšin. Vzhledem k různorodosti menšin a rozsáhlosti problematiky tématu jsem se zaměřila pouze na dvě menšiny, především na Afroameričany v průběhu historie a na současný problém Latinoameričanů. Uvedla jsem také zběžné rozdělení jednotlivých typů vysokých škol, což je důležité pro další orientaci v mé práci.

V kapitole, která se zabývá menšinami obecně, jsou rozebrány překážky v procesu vzdělávání. Ty se však netýkají pouze etnických menšin, ale dají se aplikovat na jakéhokoliv vysokoškolského studenta, a to především ze slabšího sociálního zázemí. V této kapitole je zdůrazněno, že bariéry v procesu vzdělávání, kterým musí etnické menšiny čelit, stále přetrvávají, a to i přesto, že se situace v otázce rovnoprávnosti může jevit jako vyřešená. Skutečnost je však taková, že toto téma je neustále aktuální a zasluhuje si velkou pozornost. V dnešní době se totiž změnila pouze terminologie, zatímco problémy zůstávají stále nevyřešeny. Pojmy jako je rovnost či rovnost příležitostí byly nahrazeny termínem diverzita neboli různorodost. Rasové problémy jsou často zaměňovány za sociální a ekonomické nerovnosti ve společnosti. Za deformování reality a navození zdánlivě

bezproblémového prostředí v této oblasti mohou sdělovací prostředky a samozřejmě celá americká společnost jako taková. Přestože příležitosti v oblasti vzdělávání na vysokých školách neustále narůstají, a to nejen pro etnické menšiny, objevují se i další překážky a problémy, které jim situaci ve vzdělávání ztěžují. Mezi přetrvávající potíže patří především podceňování dostatečného množství informací ze strany středních škol a nedostatek finanční výpomoci ve formě grantů. Se současnou ekonomickou situací a potřebou vysokých škol zvyšovat školné, a s ním spojené i různé poplatky, se problém financování ještě prohlubuje.

Téma Afroameričanů je pro tuto práci stěžejní, a to z důvodů jejich zásluh v oblasti vzdělávání a prosazování zájmů etnických menšin. Afroameričané byli po několik staletí otroky. Po zrušení otroctví jejich ponižující status ve společnosti přetrvával a situace se radikálně změnila až v průběhu padesátých až sedmdesátých let dvacátého století, kdy se Afroameričané pro neúnosnost situace veřejně postavili za svá práva.

Již na počátku devatenáctého století někteří Afroameričané absolvovali vysokoškolské studium, ale jednalo se pouze o výjimky. Postupně si běloši na jihu Spojených států začali uvědomovat potřebnou pracovní sílu, kterou by mohli využít ve svůj prospěch. Velmi vypočítaví byli především misionáři, kteří měli zájem o nábor nových lidí do svých řad, aby jim pomohli v šíření víry. Z těchto důvodů začali zakládat vysoké školy výhradně pro Afroameričany, a to i přesto, že se obávali nárůstu afroamerické inteligence, která by se mohla začít dožadovat rovnoprávnosti. Nutno podotknout, že úroveň těchto vysokých škol byla velmi omezená. Uvádí se, že obsah učiva byl svou náročností srovnatelný s učivem na školách základních, čemuž začali klást odpor afroameričtí pedagogové, profesori a odborníci v oblasti vzdělávání. Tito lidé se zajímali o procesy ve vzdělávání a angažovali se v boji o lepší dostupnost k informacím. V mé práci podrobně rozebírám názory a myšlenky dvou velmi významných pedagogů, jimiž byli Booker T. Washington a Dubois. Jejich představy se často lišily a panovala mezi nimi značná rivalita. Přesto oba svými myšlenkami výrazně přispěli k rozvoji vzdělávání pro menšiny.

V době světových válek se Afroameričané hromadně stěhovali na sever a západ Spojených států, kde měli více příležitostí ke studiu. Vzdělaní Afroameričané, kteří se postupně vraceli do svých rodných domovů, především na jih, napomohli k šíření nových myšlenek a rozvoji inteligence mezi afroamerickou společností.

Velká ekonomická deprese třicátých let s sebou přinesla vlnu soudních sporů, které se stavěly proti doktríně z roku 1869 stanovující rovnost v rámci segregace. Při jednom z těchto soudních sporů, který proběhl roku 1954, soudce dospěl k rozhodnutí, že segregace je nelegální a protikonstituční. Toto rozhodnutí, tzv. *Brown v. Board of Education*, se tak stalo nejdůležitějším momentem v historii vzdělávání. Přestože většina škol rozhodnutí ignorovala, můžeme toto období označit za počátek desegregačního procesu.

Největší změny ve společnosti přinesl až samotný boj za občanské svobody, který probíhal ve Spojených státech v průběhu padesátých a šedesátých let dvacátého století. Problémy, které vyústily v tento boj, se začaly projevovat již v době, kdy se Afroameričané hromadně stěhovali z jižní zemědělsky orientované oblasti do severních měst. Zde museli obstat v těžkých životních situacích a doslova bojovat o přežití. Těžké životní podmínky, vysoká nezaměstnanost, nemožnost studovat, svobodně se projevit, a jejich pocit vyhoštění ze společnosti, vyústily ve velké nepokoje vedené významnými vůdci jako byli např. Martin Luther King nebo Malcolm X. Tyto společenské změny způsobily, že vysoké školy začali přijímat Afroameričany, aniž by splňovali podmínky přijetí. Mnohdy stačilo, aby jejich chování bylo pouze bezproblémové. Taková politika vysokých škol zapříčinila, že Afroameričané přestali mít zájem o vysoké školy, které byly založeny výhradně pro ně. Řada těchto institucí poté musela čelit existenčním problémům či dokonce skončit svou činnost.

Přestože některé vysoké školy již neměli s přijímáním Afroameričanů a ostatních menšin příliš výrazné problémy a nějakým způsobem se vždy musely podřídit, našly se i takové instituce, které ostře protestovaly a probíhaly zde bouřlivé nepokoje. Spousta Afroameričanů musela podstoupit boj s institucemi, které se stavěly na odpor a nechtěly jim umožnit studovat na jejich akademické půdě. V mé práci jsem zmínila pouze nejvýznamnější osobnosti, které se těmito událostmi proslavili, a stali se tak prvními afroamerickými studenty na svých vysněných školách. Mezi tyto osobnosti patřili James Meredith, Viviane Malone and James Hood. I přes protesty a policejní zásahy byl zápis těchto studentů na jimi zvolenou vysokou školu úspěšný.

Tento dynamický průběh událostí ve společnosti byl navíc umocněn tím, že v sedmdesátých letech probíhaly stávkové nepokoje, které organizovali především



studenti. Projevy nespokojenosti se týkaly nejružnějších společenských problémů, jako byly například válka ve Vietnamu, svoboda projevu a přetrvávající rasové problémy.

Přestože bylo Afroameričanům v tomto období umožněno studovat na běžných vysokých školách, proces vzdělávání či osnovy nebyly nijak upraveny pro potřeby jejich etnické rozdílnosti. Přístup ke studentům a studijní podmínky samotné měly být tedy pro všechny studenty stejné. Vůči Afroameričanům se však často projevovalo diskriminační chování, jak ze strany spolužáků, tak ze strany vyučujících. Proto začali sepisovat své požadavky na zlepšení situace, které zasílali přímo vedení školy. Otázku rozdílné osnovy a zařazení předmětu afroamerických studií řešil již zmíněný pedagog Dubois, který věnoval své úsilí vylepšování podmínek v oblasti vzdělávání pro Afroameričany. Studenti mezi svými požadavky dále zahrnovali například oddělené ložnice z důvodu lepšího začlenění bez možnosti rasového napadení nebo finanční pomoc a poradenskou činnost ve vzdělávání. Dle názoru některých studentů by měla být afroamerická studia pod vedením Afroameričanů, pravděpodobně kvůli nezaujatému způsobu podání výuky. Bohužel studenti zůstali často nevyslyšeni a v obtížných situacích při studiu si museli poradit sami.

Velmi aktuálním problémem je i nadále tzv. afirmativní akce, lépe řečeno pozitivní diskriminace. Ve Spojených státech se konkrétně jedná o výhodná opatření, která napomáhají menšinám k prosazování svých práv. V praxi to znamená, že v případě přijímání etnických menšin na vysoké školy je brán ohled i na jejich původ. Některé instituce se totiž domnívají, že tímto chováním podporují různorodost, což napomáhá ještě k většímu obohacení dnešní pluralitní americké společnosti. Tyto výhody pro menšiny s sebou však přinášejí i jedno velké negativum. Tím je samotný fakt, že většinová společnost se cítí diskriminována na úkor menšin. Proto některé vysoké školy upustili od těchto zvýhodňujících opatření a v některých státech byla pozitivní diskriminace úplně zakázána. Diskuze nad tímto problémem probíhá dodnes a je jen otázkou názoru, zda je toto počínání pro společnost prospěšné či ne.

Další diskutabilní záležitostí je současný vývoj vysokých škol, které byly původně založeny pro Afroameričany. Zájem o studium na těchto školách výrazně klesl již v době, kdy bylo Afroameričanům umožněno studovat na běžných školách,

a tato tendence neustále narůstá. Některé školy pro Afroameričany tak ukončily svou činnost úplně, a ty co setrvaly, se snaží získat přízeň studentů všech národností. Přestože Afroameričané tvoří většinu zájemců o studium na těchto školách, dnes již neplatí, že by byly výhradně pro ně. Zastánci existence těchto institucí tvrdí, že díky nim jsou afroameričtí studenti podporováni ke zdravému sebevědomí a cítí se v tomto prostředí mnohem lépe. Jiní zastávají názor, že tyto školy již svůj účel splnily v době segregace a jejich existence je v dnešní době bezpředmětná. Podle nich by separatistické tendence ve výuce a ve společnosti jako takové neměly dále přetrvávat.

Poslední kapitola se věnuje současným trendům a problémům na vysokých školách. Jsou zde popsány nejvýznamnější problémy Latinoameričanů v procesu vzdělávání. Tuto skupinu obyvatelstva jsem zahrnula do své práce proto, že je v současnosti nejpočetnější a nejrychleji rostoucí menšinou, která spoluutváří podstatnou část amerického obyvatelstva. Proto je nadmíru důležité jim zajistit kvalitní vzdělání, jelikož navenek prezentují celou americkou společnost. Velké procento Latinoameričanů tvrdí, že je pro ně vysokoškolské vzdělání velmi důležité, a přesto tyto instituce příliš nevyužívají. Důvody jsou různé. Může za to obtížná finanční situace, především nově příchozích imigrantů. Dále očekávání rodiny, že po skončení střední školy začnou mladí lidé ihned pracovat a pomáhat s užitím často velmi početné rodiny. Velmi frekventovaný je také úplný nezájem nebo neschopnost ze strany rodičů o získání jakýchkoliv informací o dalších možnostech studia či dostupných grantech. Uvedené problémy jsou mnohdy příčinou, proč si tito studenti vybírají dvouleté programy, které jsou pro ně velmi atraktivní. Často také volí dálkovou formu studia a je běžné, že se studenty stávají lidé ve středním věku, kteří si chtějí pouze prohloubit svou specializaci.

Problémy Latinoameričanů ve školství a důvod jejich neúspěchu tkví především v jazykové bariéře. Pro zlepšení podmínek v přístupu k informacím o možnostech vzdělávání a v procesu vzdělávání samotném, je pro ně důležité používat kromě angličtiny jejich rodný jazyk, kterým je španělština, což je mimo jiné druhý nejčetněji užívaný jazyk na světě. Pokud se Latinoameričané necítí dobře na běžných vzdělávacích institucích, mají možnost studovat na školách určených přímo pro ně, stejně jako Afroameričané.

Z použitých zdrojů jsou patrné pozitivní výsledky ve vzdělávání etnických menšin. V posledních letech narůstá počet přihlášených studentů i množství získaných titulů. Přesto lze obecně konstatovat, že Afroameričané a Latinoameričané nevykazují tak dobré studijní výsledky jako běloši a Asiaté. I přes zjevný pozitivní průběh v oblasti vzdělávání, musí etnické menšiny často vyhledávat pomoc u různých organizací a jako každý vysokoškolský student zvažují i způsob financování svých studií. Z důvodu nedostatku financí a neochoty států poskytovat granty, se dnešní studenti stávají dlužníky a není to pro ně nic neobvyklého. V závěru práce se zabývám přínosem etnických menšin pro společnost. Ta je díky různým etnickým odlišnostem obohacena o rozdílné názory, nové zkušenosti a celkově je utvářena společnost, která je více tolerantní a otevřená novým nápadům.

Domnívám se, že je v procesu vzdělávání menšin potřeba provést hlubší a objektivnější analýzu. Svou práci považuji za pouhý nástin této zajímavé problematiky a její přínos spatřuji v uvědomění si, že toto téma skrývá další úskalí a problémy, které čekají na odhalení a vyřešení. Hlavní podstatou mé bakalářské práce je proniknout do tematiky etnických menšin a uvědomit si, že sehrávají důležitou roli v každé společnosti.

## **ANNOTATION**

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Title of the thesis: Ethnic Minorities in Higher Education in USA

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The aim of this thesis is to provide basic information about ethnic minorities in higher education, particularly about African Americans and Hispanics, and cover their present situation. On the basis of available information I describe African Americans in the process of higher education and their gradual fight for equity in this sector. Thanks to inflamed riots and African American efforts in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s the society became more interested in ethnic minorities and their rights. It is this time when higher education experiences a great move forward. The next theme is devoted to Hispanic problem because nowadays, it is the largest ethnic minority, which faces a lot of problems in this sector. Generally, the problem of ethnic minorities is a very broad topic. For this reason I have focused on social sphere and human relations point of view.

Key words: higher education, ethnic minorities in higher education, African Americans, Hispanics, barriers to participation in higher education, racial discrimination, fight for equal rights

## **ANOTACE**

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Cílem práce je podat základní informace o vzdělávání etnických menšin na amerických vysokých školách, konkrétně Afroameričanů a Latinoameričanů, a zmapovat jejich současnou situaci. Na základě dostupných informací popisují Afroameričany v průběhu historie vysokého školství a jejich postupný boj za rovnoprávnost v této oblasti. Díky vyvolaným nepokojům a období boje za občanské svobody v padesátých a šedesátých letech dvacátého století se společnost začala více zajímat o menšiny a jejich práva. Právě v tomto období zaznamenalo vysoké školství největší posun kupředu. Dalším tématem je také problém Latinoameričanů, což je v současnosti nejpočetnější menšina, která v této oblasti čelí řadě problémů. Problematika menšin obecně je velmi obsáhlá. Proto jsem se zaměřila především na oblast sociální a sféru mezilidských vztahů.

Klíčová slova: vysoké školství, etnické menšiny na amerických vysokých školách, Afroameričané, Latinoameričané, bariéry ve vzdělávání, rasová diskriminace, boj za rovnoprávnost

## **APPENDIX**

### **Appendix register**

Appendix no. 1: Picture no. 1: Minority Prevalence According to Census 2000

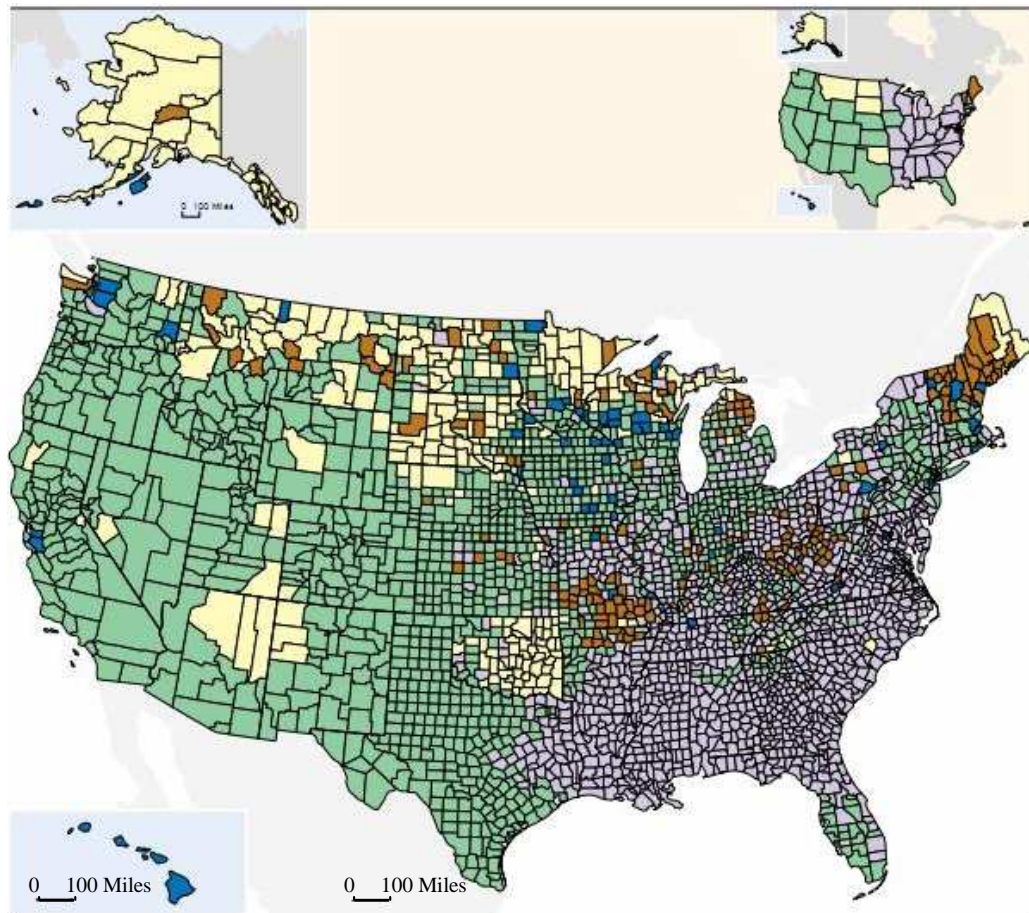
Appendix no. 2: Chart no 1: African American Population in 2000

Appendix no. 3: Chart no.2: Hispanic Population in 2000

Appendix no. 4: Chart no 3: Asian Population in 2000

Appendix no. 5: Categories of Race According to New Census Format

Appendix no. 1: Picture no.1: Minority Prevalence According to Census 2000



- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Asian
- American Indian
- Two or more races, not Hispanic or Latino

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. “Mapping Census 2000: The geography of U.S. Diversity”.

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/atlas/pdf/censr01-104.pdf><sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> The source is graphically adapted by the author of the thesis because of inappropriate technical parameters.

## Appendix no. 2: Chart no 1: African American Population in 2000

### Black Population by Sex: 2000

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf))

Sex	Black alone		Black alone or in combination with one or more other races	
	Number	Percent of U.S. population	Number	Percent of U.S. population
<b>Both sexes</b> .....	<b>34,361,740</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>36,213,467</b>	<b>12.9</b>
Male .....	16,284,366	5.8	17,183,425	6.1
Female .....	18,077,374	6.4	19,030,042	6.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Special Reports. “We the people: Black in the United States”. Issued August 2005 by Jasse D. McKinnon and Claudette E. Bennett

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-25.pdf>>

## Appendix no. 3: Chart no.2: Hispanic Population in 2000

### Hispanic Population by Origin: 2000

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf))

Type of origin	Number	Percent of U.S. population
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>35,238,481</b>	<b>12.5</b>
Mexican .....	20,900,102	7.4
Puerto Rican .....	3,403,510	1.2
Cuban .....	1,249,820	0.4
Central American <sup>1</sup> .....	1,811,676	0.6
South American <sup>2</sup> .....	1,419,979	0.5
Dominican .....	799,768	0.3
Spaniard .....	112,999	-
Other Hispanic <sup>3</sup> .....	5,540,627	2.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Special Reports. “We the people: Hispanics in the United States”. Issued December 2004 by Roberto R. Ramirez

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/censr-18.pdf>>



Appendix no. 4: Chart no 3: Asian Population in 2000

**Asian Population by Detailed Group: 2000**

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, non-sampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf))

Detailed group	Detailed Asian group alone		Detailed Asian group alone or in combination	
	Number	Percent of U.S. population	Number	Percent of U.S. population
<b>Total .....</b>	<b><sup>1</sup>10,171,820</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b><sup>2</sup>11,859,446</b>	<b>4.21</b>
Asian Indian .....	1,645,510	0.58	1,855,590	0.66
Cambodian .....	178,043	0.06	212,633	0.08
Chinese .....	2,422,970	0.86	2,858,291	1.02
Filipino .....	1,864,120	0.66	2,385,216	0.85
Hmong .....	170,049	0.06	184,842	0.07
Japanese .....	795,051	0.28	1,152,324	0.41
Korean .....	1,072,682	0.38	1,226,825	0.44
Laotian .....	167,792	0.06	196,893	0.07
Pakistani .....	155,909	0.06	209,273	0.07
Thai .....	110,851	0.04	150,093	0.05
Vietnamese .....	1,110,207	0.39	1,212,465	0.43
Other Asian .....	<sup>3</sup> 478,636	0.17	<sup>4</sup> 561,485	0.20

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Special Reports. “We the people: Asians in the United States”. Issued December 2004 by Terrance J. Reeves and Claudette E. Bennett

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/censr-17.pdf>>

Appendix no. 5: Categories of Race According to New Census Format

**63 Race Categories**

- 6 Race alone categories
- +15 Categories of 2 races
- +20 Categories of 3 races
- +15 Categories of 4 races
- + 6 Categories of 5 races
- + 1 Category of 6 races

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**63 Possible combinations**

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Source: <<http://www.census.gov/mso/www/rsf/racedata/sld015.htm>>

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