The State of African-Americans & Hispanics/ Latinos in the Charlotte Region

UNC Charlotte
URBAN INSTITUTE

THE STATE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS AND HISPANIC/LATINOS IN THE CHARLOTTE REGION

The Urban League is the nation's oldest and largest community-based movement devoted to empowering African Americans to enter the economic and social mainstream.

Our Movement

The Urban League movement was founded in 1910. The National Urban League is headquartered in New York City, with affiliates in 114 cities in 34 states and the District of Columbia. The Urban League of Central Carolinas was founded in 1978.

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Our three-pronged strategy for pursuing the mission is:

- Ensuring that our children are well-educated and equipped for economic self-reliance in the 21st century;
- Helping adults attain economic self-sufficiency through good jobs, homeownership, and wealth accumulation; and
- Ensuring our civil rights by eradicating all barriers to equal participation in the economic and social mainstream of America.

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Following in the tradition established by the National Urban League, the Urban League of Central Carolinas has organized a collaboration of faculty researchers from local colleges and universities to focus their expertise on the issues that are of major importance their mission. The research is organized around the topics of:

- Housing and Demographics;
- Education;
- Employment, Income and Wealth.

The geographic focus for these studies is the seven counties that have comprised the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC, Metropolitan Statistical area. Some of the research has

considered the region and its component counties. Other researchers have shown a bright light on one of the counties.

All of the researchers have provided data that will serve to foster discussion around the salient issues and the affect of these issues on the African American and Hispanic/Latino populations of the region.

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For information about this project, contact the Urban League of Central Carolinas, Inc., 704.373.2256. A Technical Document containing the full text of the articles is available.

The Findings

Bobbie Fields from CPCC provides an overview of demographics, educational attainment, employment status, and income for African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, and Non-Hispanic Whites in the Charlotte Region. Her data show that there was a tremendous growth in the Hispanic/Latino population between 1990 and 2000. She has also done an analysis of proportional data in the region that indicates the Hispanic population increased proportionally in many of the regional counties to a greater extent than it did in Mecklenburg.

Percent Change in Population by Race, 1990–2000

Race	Cabarrus	Gaston	Lincoln	Mecklenburg	Rowan	Union	York
White	24.8	3.08	21.9	17.9	11.3	41.6	22.7
African American	23.2	14.3	-.071	43.7	15.7	14.6	19.6
Hispanic/ Latino	1270.6	561.9	541.4	570.4	724.7	1031.4	202.0

Fields concludes that the economic boom of the 1990s has led to increases in income and educational attainment that would result in a higher standard of living. These increases, however, have been offset by the growth in the Hispanic/Latino population that led to increases in the lower-skilled population. In addition, despite their movement into the Black middle class, African Americans experienced lower overall changes in mean income trailing that of Hispanics. Economic globalization will also continue to play a role in the erosion of manufacturing jobs, the competitive position of the American economy and the assimilation of immigrants and their families.

Those interested in inequality need to rely on public policy solutions such as guaranteed wages, progressive taxes, and income redistribution. Other changes need to include increases in the earned income tax credit which raises the income of the working poor, socialization of medical costs to protect citizens against unforeseen tragedies, and the creation of good paying jobs. The economic prosperity of Hispanics will require investments in their human and social capital needs as well as provisions for their children. Only through these efforts will equal opportunities occur that will raise the levels of human and social capital.

Heather Smith and Owen Furuseth of UNC Charlotte focused their research on Mecklenburg County and the housing choices made by the tremendous number of Hispanics that have moved into the county. Their research indicates that Charlotte has been designated as one of the four Hispanic "hypergrowth" cities in the Southeastern United States. These are areas that have that have not traditionally housed large numbers of Hispanics but experienced significant growth in the Latino population during the 1990s.

Hispanics in Mecklenburg County are dispersed throughout the county. They have, however, concentrated in older suburban areas, rather than in the center city or newer suburbs, and in Census Tracts with the highest concentration of apartments.

Smith and Furuseth have concluded that the "rapid growth of the Latino Population in Charlotte has marked a fresh chapter in the ethnic geography of a city that is prototypic of the new urban South." The arrival of Hispanics has begun to restructure the labor and housing markets as mostly male Hispanics move into the area and the labor market.

Thomas Priest, Deborah Brown, and Catherine Montsinger from JCSU conducted a survey of residents in neighborhoods that were at least 60% African American. The survey was designed to measure victimization and fear of crime. Their research shows that Hispanics were more likely than African Americans to report that they had been victims of crime in the past year.

Their survey also indicated that many African American and Hispanic/Latino parents feared for their children's safety in school.

Based on their findings, the JCSU researchers recommended that Charlotte-Mecklenburg police be more attentive to Latino neighborhoods. They also suggested the continuing need for resource officers in the public schools. They found, however, that the majority of respondents agreed that Charlotte-Mecklenburg police are doing a "good job."

Victimization by Race/Ethnicity

Victim	African American	Hispanic/ Latino
Respondent	8.2%	13.9%
Anyone in Household	4.6%	13.9%

The three researchers from Winthrop University prepared data on education at the pre-school, K–12, and post-secondary levels. Christine Maxwell showed that the number of Hispanic children below the age of four increased dramatically over the past decade in all counties across the central Carolinas. She also found that many children below the age of five were living in poverty, as shown in the following table.

Percentage of Children Under 5 Living Below Poverty

County	Non-Hispanic African American	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White
Cabarrus, NC	23%	39%	7%
Gaston, NC	46%	26%	10%
Lincoln, NC	43%	15%	8%
Mecklenburg, NC	24%	26%	4%
Rowan, NC	34%	33%	7%
Union, NC	32%	44%	5%
York, SC	31%	39%	7%

Because "poverty is a central threat to the learning and development of African American and Hispanic/Latino young children in the central Carolinas," Maxwell recommends that more visible and explicit attention be given to factors that can be impacted by the family, such as "*school readiness,* coupling new pre-kindergarten initiatives with comprehensive support for parents in preparing for and maintaining employment that pays a living wage." She also recommends that childcare data be compiled by race and ethnicity and that "early childhood staff develop the cultural and linguistic understandings required to provide effective early education for African American and Hispanic/Latino children."

Gloria Kelley looked at data on the school systems in the Charlotte Region. Her data shows that Charlotte-Mecklenburg is, by far, the largest school system in the region, with well over 100,000 students, more than 50% of whom are African American or Hispanic. It is the only school system in the region with a majority minority student body.

Kelley points out that school systems have been emphasizing

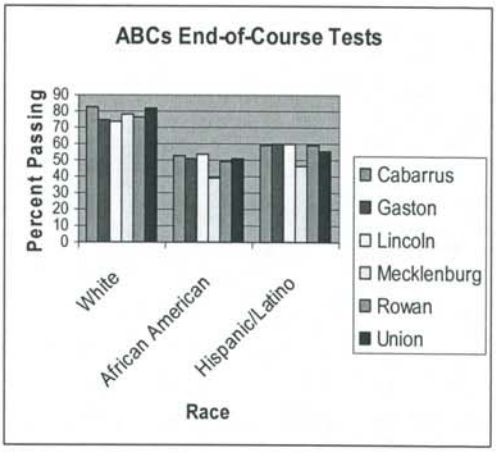
academic achievement and administering several different types of tests. The following table shows the number of students passing ABC End-of-Grade Tests in the North Carolina counties. Kelley found that Non-Hispanic White students were more likely to pass the ABC End-of-Course Tests.

Table 1. End-of-Grade Tests (2001–2002 school year)

Percent who passed both reading and math tests

Race	Cabarrus	Gaston	Lincoln	Mecklenburg	Rowan	Union
White	85.4	78.2	77.9	89.3	80.4	87.5
African American	56.8	54.0	50.1	54.9	52.6	52.0
Hispanic/ Latino	58.5	65.5	66.9	59.7	55.7	53.2

Kelley's recommendations included having all school systems re-examine why gaps exist in test scores by race, changing the schools' cultures to incorporate non-traditional approaches to teaching, and providing and distributing educational data in an appropriate and timely manner. This ties in with Maxwell's request for data by race.



Bob Gorman looked at enrollment in higher education institutions around the region. His data showed that, while racial and ethnic diversity of student populations vary widely by type and level of institution, all colleges and universities in the Charlotte MSA need to make greater effort to increase minority enrollments and improve retention of minority students.

He also found that college enrollment among African American females is nearly twice that of African American males. This is a significant disparity not found among other racial and ethnic groups. Further study is needed to determine why this gap exists and to develop ways to better recruit and retain African American male students.

Table 4. Degrees Granted, Bachelor's (2001) by Race/Ethnicity

Institution	Level	Total Granted	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	White, Non-Hispanic
Barber-Scotia College	Bachelor's	57	94.7 %	1.8 %	3.5 %
Belmont Abbey College	Bachelor's	132	6.1 %	0.0 %	91.7 %
Cabarrus College of Health Sciences	Bachelor's Associate's	2	0.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %
Catawba College	Master's Bachelor's	245	9.8 %	0.8 %	86.9 %
Davidson College	Bachelor's	444	6.5 %	2.7 %	86.3 %
Johnson C Smith University	Bachelor's	183	100 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Livingstone College	Bachelor's	97	93.8 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Queens University	Master's Bachelor's	220	8.6 %	3.2 %	81.8 %
UNC Charlotte	Doctor's Master's Bachelor's	2,367	12.9 %	1.2 %	78.7 %
Wingate University	Master'=s Bachelor's	209	9.6 %	2.4 %	85.6 %
Winthrop University	Master's Bachelor's	734	21.0 %	1.2 %	74.6 %
TOTALS, ALL INSTITUTIONS		**4,690**	**18.9 %**	**1.4 %**	**74.4 %**

Source: IPEDS College Data.

The number of Latinos attending institutions of higher education is far less than the number residing in the Charlotte MSA. At present, this rapidly growing population is being served primarily through English-language programs like those offered at Central Piedmont Community College. As this population becomes more settled and less transient, colleges and universities will need to prepare for a significant increase in Latino enrollment. At the same time, area schools need to develop more outreach programs to better serve the higher education needs of this community.

Fred Smith and four of his Davidson College students conducted research to assess the well being of Black and Hispanic/Latino Americans residing in Mecklenburg County. According to the researchers "An individual's economic well-being is determined by a myriad of factors: their job and income, the quality of their housing, whether or not they own their own vehicle, how much education they have had the opportunity to acquire, and even how well they are doing relative to their neighbors. While assessing economic well being is not an easy task, it is an important one. In the United

States of the 21st century, an individual's sense of self worth is often determined by his or her economic success."

The Davidson researchers focus on three different theme—labor market outcomes, income inequality, and housing markets. For the labor market theme, the researchers find that Latinos have, in many instances, assumed less desirable positions that African Americans and Whites had abandoned. Since the recession and the slow economic recovery, there has been a declining demand for labor and increasing unemployment. This has resulted in Latino and African Americans competing for the same jobs. They also found that Hispanics needed help to access employment in higher skilled jobs due to factors such as language barriers.

The second factor they looked at was income inequality and poverty. The research showed that Blacks and Hispanics often get less education and earn less than Whites. And that even when Blacks and Hispanics achieve the same level of education as Whites, they may not receive the same wage. As for poverty, though Mecklenburg County's poverty rate decreased during the 1990s, the rate for African Americans in 2002 was still 25%, more than twice that of Whites.

In the housing market, the researchers found areas more heavily populated by African Americans have relatively lower housing values. Blacks also do not have the same opportunities for mobility that Whites have, and tend to reside in housing units for relatively longer periods of time. African Americans are also more likely to reside in tracts with problems such as overcrowding and inadequate plumbing and kitchen facilities.

The Davidson researchers conclude that improvement in employment, income and housing is more likely to occur when Latinos and African Americans have access to high quality public education. The researchers point out that "Education is the key to a better future. We have a moral responsibility to do a better job of providing high quality schools to all of our children, not just the ones who are fortunate enough to be born into the right school district or family. Hopefully, with the help of institutions like the Urban League, we can improve the quality of all of our schools and provide a bright future for every child in Charlotte-Mecklenburg."

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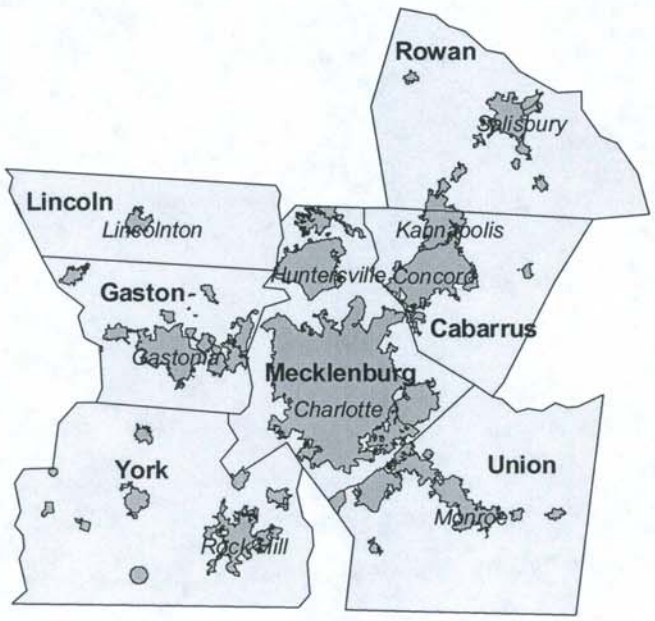
The Charlotte MSA



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Demographics of African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos in the Charlotte Region

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Central Piedmont Community College

Introduction

Throughout the decades, social scientists have pointed out that some people have benefited from the economic prosperity and affluence of the United States, while others are being left behind (Berube, 2000). That is to say, the last few decades have increased the disparity between highly educated, skilled workers and those who are not. Also, the immigrant population is posing several challenges for the economy through basic healthcare needs and needs of the children of immigrants such as educational, social, and political needs. Demographic changes such as an increase in single parent households and the feminization of poverty have also exacerbated some of the problems with low-income households (Danzinger et al.; 2001, Risman, 2003).

Of particular concern to demographers is the increase in the Hispanic/Latino population in the United States. Hispanic migration to the South surged in the 1990s and not just in Texas and Florida. During the 1990s, the Hispanic/Latino population surged nationally by a hefty 61.2%, rising from 22.4 million in 1990 to 35.3 million in 2000. The most startling example is North Carolina where the Census recorded a 394% growth rate for Hispanics in the 1990s (Mohl, 2002).

On average, Hispanics are more geographically concentrated than Non-Hispanic Whites, although this trend is changing somewhat (Frey, 2000, 2001; Green 1997; Berube et al., 2001). In addition, more than two in five Hispanics have not graduated from high school, Hispanics are much more likely than Non-Hispanic Whites to be unemployed, Hispanic workers earn less than Non-Hispanic White workers, and Hispanics are more likely than Non-Hispanic Whites to live in poverty (Therrien & Ramirez, 2000).

African Americans have declared a continued expansion of opportunity in American society coupled with the pursuit and full access of the American mainstream and have made some inroads. During the 1990s, Black unemployment fell from above 11% to below 8%—the lowest level in 30 years. Median family income rose to more than $29,000 and the rate of poverty declined to 26% of African American families. In a post-industrialized society, African Americans who are college graduates earn more and the economic expansion of the 1990s has heightened the earnings disparity for the highly skilled and educated and those who are not (National Urban League, 2002).

However, despite their progress, Blacks are still significantly underrepresented in suburbia compared with their representation in the population. For example, in 1990 Blacks constituted 12% of the nation's population but only 8% of the suburban population. The establishment of Black middle-class suburban communities and the rapid expansion in the size of the black middle-class in the U.S. can be taken as evidence that

the continuing suburbanization of Blacks and their increasing income levels will lead to reduction in the differences between Blacks and Whites and the kinds of suburbs in which they live. But inequality in suburbia is still the norm: Blacks tend to live in a small number of residential communities, with lower wealth, worse public finances, and poorer prospects for economic growth. Suburbs with smaller Black populations tend to fare better but Black suburbanites have yet to break through some of the barriers of racism and prejudice that are endemic to the American social fabric (Phelan et al., 1996).

This paper will review population changes, educational attainment, employment status, and household income for the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC, Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), looking at 1990–2000 percent changes in Census data by race, gender, and ethnicity. It is expected that the economic boom of the 1990s has probably led to increases in those factors that would result is a higher standard of living overall such as increases in income and educational attainment. However, the growth in the Hispanic population has led to growth in the lower-skilled population and the economic prosperity of Hispanics is less apparent (Theerian and Ramirez, 2000, Stevenson et al., 2002, Lowell 2002). In addition, despite their influx into the Black middle class, African Americans are not experiencing phenomenal economic growth. There is also some variation among counties in the MSA. In some counties, economic globalization will continue to play a role in the erosion of manufacturing jobs and it is difficult for people who lose their jobs in manufacturing to replace them with comparable paying jobs (Danzinger et al., 2001).

Much has been written about the increasing inequality between those people at the top of income ladder and those people at the bottom of the income ladder (Campbell, 2003, Danzinger et al., 2001). Economic challenges are ahead for the United States as we grapple with increasing wage disparity, demographic changes, and a polarization of the political system. The challenge for public policy makers will be how to reverse some of the economic trends of the past and move everyone along in the process of economic prosperity and fortune. Chances are that with increasing demands for educational and health care services, allocation of resources will be a topic of concern in the next few decades. This trend will be coupled with family and cultural changes that will impact the effectiveness of social programs in general (Danzinger et al., 2001).

Methodology

Using the 1990 and 2000 Census data, tables were compiled by the categories available for population, educational attainment, employment status, and income for Non-Hispanic Whites, African Americans, and Hispanics. In some cases, the data was merged by the researcher to keep the data consistent from 1990–2000.

After all tables were compiled by county and region for the MSA, the percent changes as a proportion of regional population from 1990–2000 were computed to measure the changes in the 10-year period. The net change in the period is used to quantify a summary of the changes for each category.

Tables are constructed by county and region to illustrate the overall changes and highlight the important developments in population, educational attainment, employment status, and income in the Charlotte MSA.

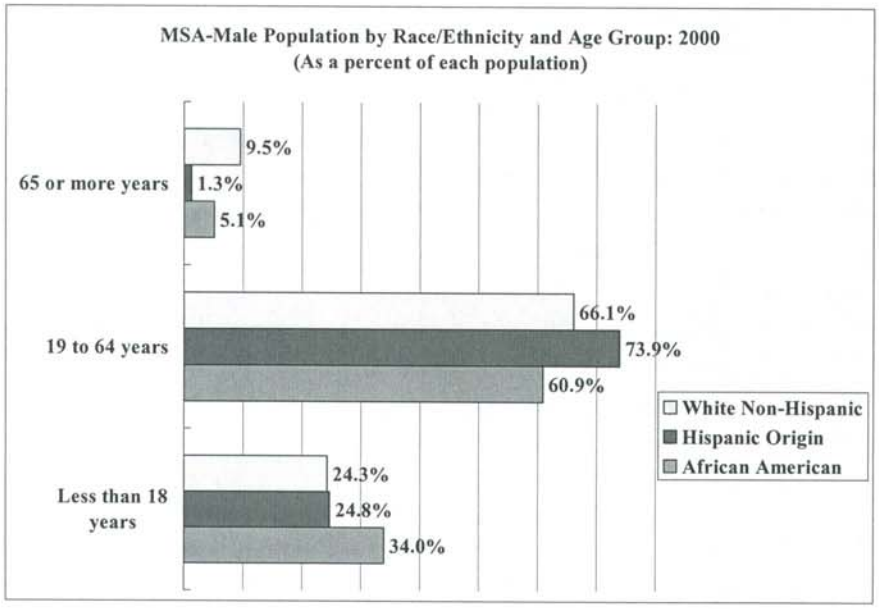
There is some concern that the 1990 and 2000 Census data are not comparable because respondents were able to choose more than one racial category or other race in 2000 and those choices were not available in 1990. However, an analysis of the Census data in 2000 show that the overwhelming majority of people in 2000 chose only one race (97.6%). Of those that chose only one race, 75% were White, 12.3% were Black, and 3.6% were Asian, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders, totaling less than 1% of the population. Those who gave their response as Other race were about 5.5% of the population. Hispanics comprise about 12.5% of the population (Singer, 2000).

Results

Population Characteristics

In 2000, the Hispanic male population ages 19–64 comprised 73.9% of that population. Hispanic children less than 18 years of age were 24.8% of the male population and a very small proportion of Hispanics (1.3%) were 65 years or more of age (Figure 1). The Hispanic population contrasts with that of the African American population where only 60.9% of the population is of working age. In addition, African Americans have a much higher proportion of those less than 18 years of age (34%) than Non-Hispanic Whites and Hispanics. Among the Non-Hispanic White male population, almost 10% of that population is 65 or more years of age.

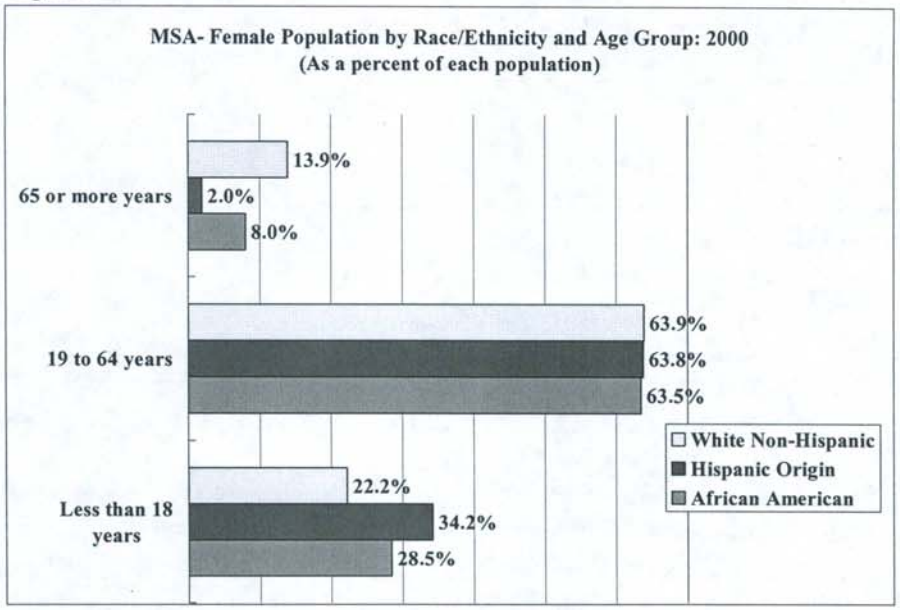
Figure 1



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Figure 2 shows that in 2000, the Hispanic female population less than 18 years of age is 34.2% of that population. This is not surprising considering the higher fertility rates of Hispanic women in the United States. Once again, the female Hispanic population comprises a very small proportion of those 65 or more years of age (2%). African American females less than 18 years do not make up as high a proportion of the Black population as females in the Hispanic population (28.5% versus 34.2%). However, almost a third of the African American population is less than 18 years of age. Interestingly, the Non-Hispanic White females 65 or more years of age are almost 14% of that population.

Figure 2



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Table 1 shows the population change in the region by race and Hispanic origin for African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, and Non-Hispanic Whites in each county in the region. As these data indicate, many counties in the Charlotte MSA experienced tremendous growth in the Hispanic population between 1990 and 2000. African-American population also increased in most counties, with the exception of Lincoln where it declined by .071%. The largest increase in Africa-American population was in Mecklenburg County, where the increase was 43.7%.

Table 1. Percent Change in Population by Race, 1990–2000

Race	Cabarrus	Gaston	Lincoln	Mecklenburg	Rowan	Union	York
White	24.8	3.1	219	17.9	11.3	41.6	22.7
African American	23.2	14.3	-.071	43.7	15.4	14.6	19.6
Hispanic/ Latino	1270.6	561.9	541.4	570.4	724.7	1031.4	202.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

In Table 2, county data shows that the White Non-Hispanic population decreased somewhat as a proportion of regional population in Gaston, Mecklenburg, and Rowan counties from 1990–2000. The African American proportion of the population decreased in Cabarrus, Gaston, Lincoln, Rowan, Union, and York counties. However, the African American proportion of the regional population increased for Mecklenburg County by 5.0%. As a proportion of regional population, Hispanics declined in Mecklenburg and York counties but increased in Cabarrus and Union counties. Other counties experienced small net gains in the proportion of the Hispanic population from 1990–2000.

Table 2. Percent Change in the Proportion of the Population by Race, 1990–2000

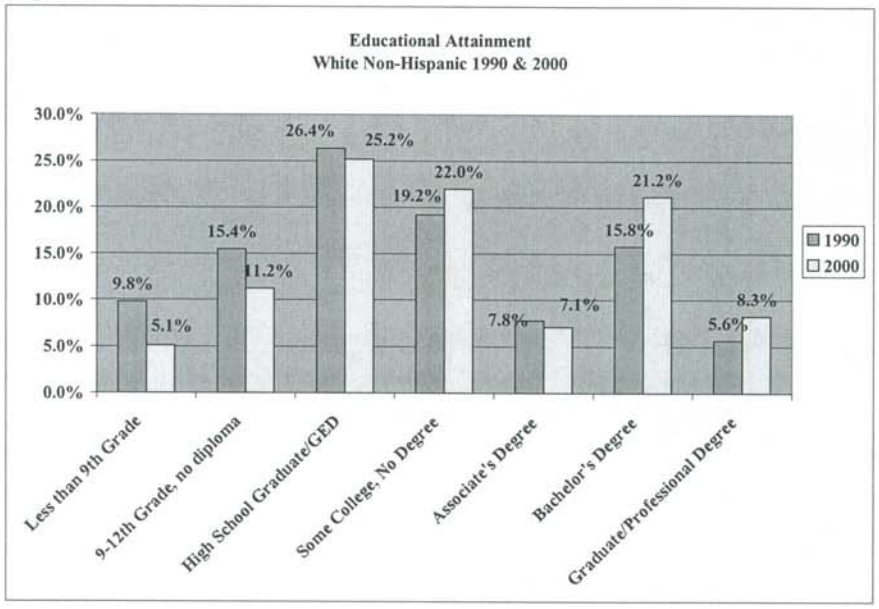
Race	Cabarrus	Gaston	Lincoln	Mecklenburg	Rowan	Union	York
White	.54	-2.1	0.17	-.03	-0.6	1.5	0.4
African American	-0.4	-1.3	-0.4	5.0	-1.0	-0.8	-1.1
Hispanic/ Latino	4.2	-0.5	-0.5	-3.8	0.9	4.0	-4.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Educational Attainment

Looking at the population 25 and over, educational attainment for less than 9th grade, 9th–12th grade, and high school graduates/GED moved in the expected direction for Non-Hispanic Whites: 9.8% in 1990 and 5.1% in 2000, 15.5% in 1990 and 11.2% in 2000, and 26.4% in 1990 and 25.2% in 2000, respectively. In addition, Non-Hispanic Whites gained in all other categories except an associate's degree, 7.9% to 7.1%, a small difference in the two periods. Non-Hispanic Whites with some college and no degree increased from 19.2% to 22.0%, with bachelor's degrees, from 15.8% to 21.2%, and with graduate and professional degrees from 5.6% to 6.3% of the population (Figure 3).

Figure 3

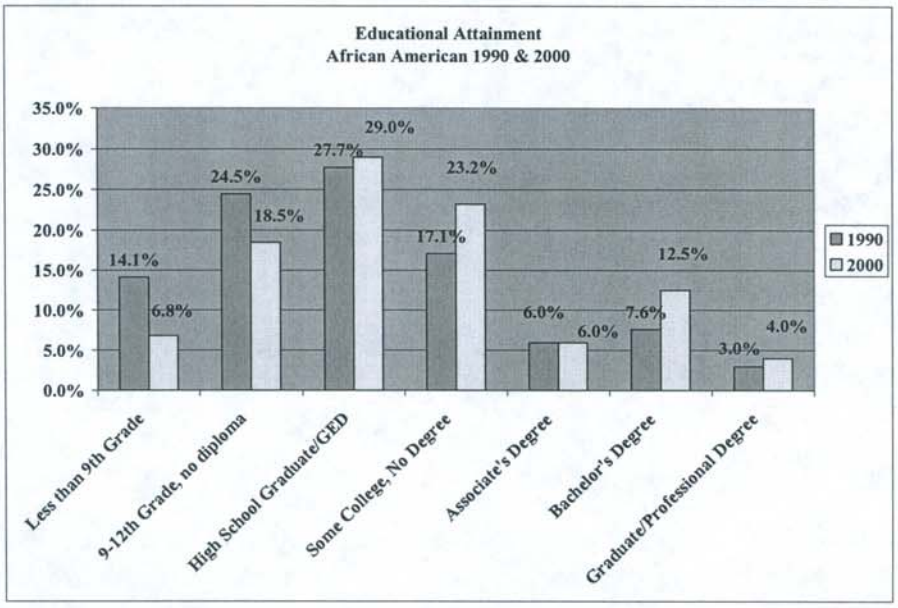


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Similar to Non-Hispanic whites, fewer African Americans aged 25 and over have less than a 9th grade education—14.2% in 1990 to 6.8% in 2000. Those with a 9th–12th grade education or no diploma also decreased during that period from 24.5% to 18.5%. High school graduates increased a small amount from 27.7% to 29.0% and African Americans with some college/no degree increased from 17.1% to 23.2%. During the period, there was very little change in the number of African Americans earning associate's degrees

(5.97% to 5.98%), but those earning bachelor's degrees increased from 7.6% to 12.5%. Those earning graduate and professional degrees increased from 3.0% to 4.0% during the period (Figure 4).

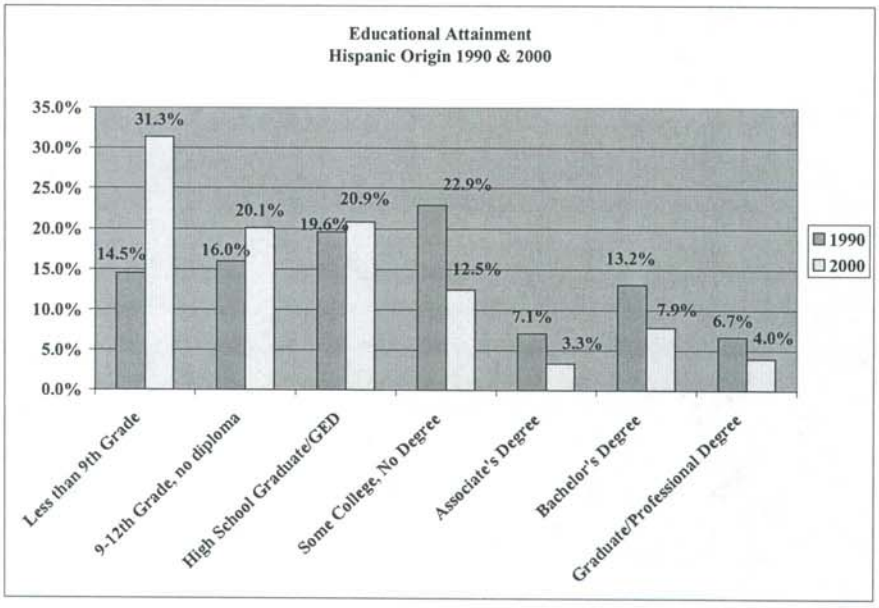
Figure 4



Source U. S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

The proportion of the Hispanic population with less than a 9th grade education actually increased from 1990–2000—from 14.5% to 31.3%. In addition, Hispanics earning a 9th –12th grade education increased from 16% to 20.1%. High school graduates or a GED equivalent increased modestly from 19.6% to 20.9%. All other categories of higher education decreased, associate's degrees from 7.1% to 3.3%, bachelor's degrees from 13.2% to 7.9%, and graduate and professional degrees from 6.7% to 4.0% (Figure 5).

Figure 5



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Table 3 shows county data for proportional change in educational attainment by race and Hispanic origin is consistent with the aggregate data showing decreases among the lowest levels of educational attainment and increases among most higher levels for Non-Hispanic whites and African Americans during 1990–2000. Hispanics on the other hand, show changes in the opposite directions.

Table 3. Percent Change in Proportional Educational Attainment by Race, 1990–2000

Cabarrus County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 9th grade	6.4	-6.9	3.3
9th–12th grade/no diploma	6.3	-4.9	6.0
High School Grad or GED	-2.4	-0.5	7.3
Some College No Degree	-6.5	5.1	-7.3
Associate's Degree	1.0	-0.3	1.4
Bachelor's Degree	-5.1	6.0	-6.7
Graduate & Professional	0.2	1.6	-4.1

Gaston County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 9th grade	6.3	-7.6	9.3
9th–12th grade/no diploma	7.1	-3.3	4.9
High School Grad or GED	-3.2	2.7	4.2
Some College No Degree	-8.4	5.0	-5.8
Associate's Degree	1.1	-0.3	-12.2
Bachelor's Degree	-2.5	2.5	0.9
Graduate & Professional	-0.4	1.0	-1.3

Table 3. Percent Change in Proportional Educational Attainment by Race, 1990–2000 (Continued)

Lincoln County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 9th grade	-13.5	-6.9	0.0
9th–12th grade/no diploma	0.8	-3.2	-4.2
High School Grad or GED	5.2	2.1	19.4
Some College No Degree	8.6	6.2	1.7
Associate's Degree	-2.4	-0.8	-11.2
Bachelor's Degree	1.5	-2.0	-4.0
Graduate & Professional	-0.2	0.5	-1.8

Mecklenburg County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 9th grade	-6.0	-2.0	17.4
9th–12th grade/no diploma	-6.0	-3.9	5.9
High School Grad or GED	-0.8	-4.5	1.1
Some College No Degree	5.5	-0.4	-12.7
Associate's Degree	0.1	-1.5	-2.8
Bachelor's Degree	5.9	7.7	-6.2
Graduate & Professional	1.3	4.6	-2.8

Rowan County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 9th grade	-7.3	-5.3	22.4
9th–12th grade/no diploma	-5.5	-3.5	-2.1
High School Grad or GED	-4.8	1.8	-10.2
Some College No Degree	8.4	5.4	-4.3
Associate's Degree	-0.4	-1.0	-2.0
Bachelor's Degree	4.8	1.8	-5.2
Graduate & Professional	0.4	0.7	1.3

Union County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 9th grade	-9.0	-5.2	17.9
9th–12th grade/no diploma	-5.0	-7.6	5.0
High School Grad or GED	3.5	-1.8	-2.8
Some College No Degree	5.5	4.2	-16.2
Associate's Degree	1.8	1.0	3.5
Bachelor's Degree	3.3	7.4	-1.6
Graduate & Professional	-0.1	2.0	-5.8

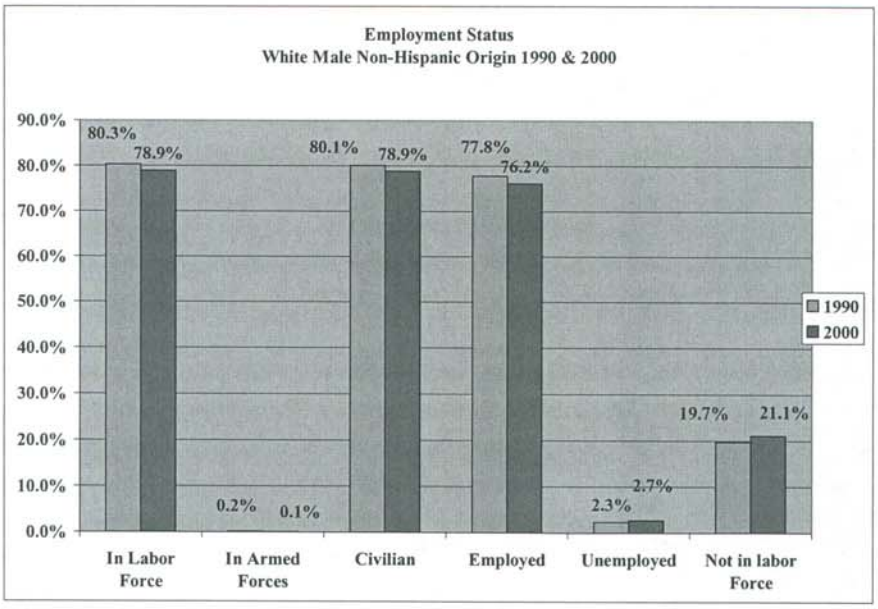
York County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 9th grade	-12.7	-5.4	12.0
9th–12th grade/no diploma	-3.5	-4.2	-2.4
High School Grad or GED	10.2	-0.9	-2.0
Some College No Degree	4.5	4.1	-1.5
Associate's Degree	0.3	0.1	-6.5
Bachelor's Degree	0.3	3.1	2.3
Graduate & Professional	0.9	1.4	-2.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Employment Status

The employment status of Non-Hispanic White males changed very little from 1990–2000, from 80.3% to 79.0% (Figure 6).

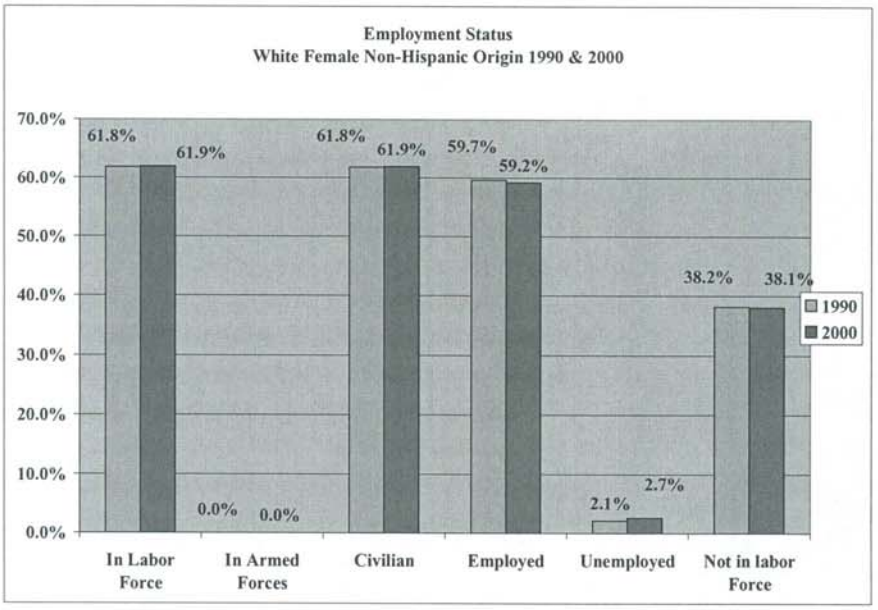
Figure 6



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Non-Hispanic White females changed from 61.8% to 61.9% (Figure 7).

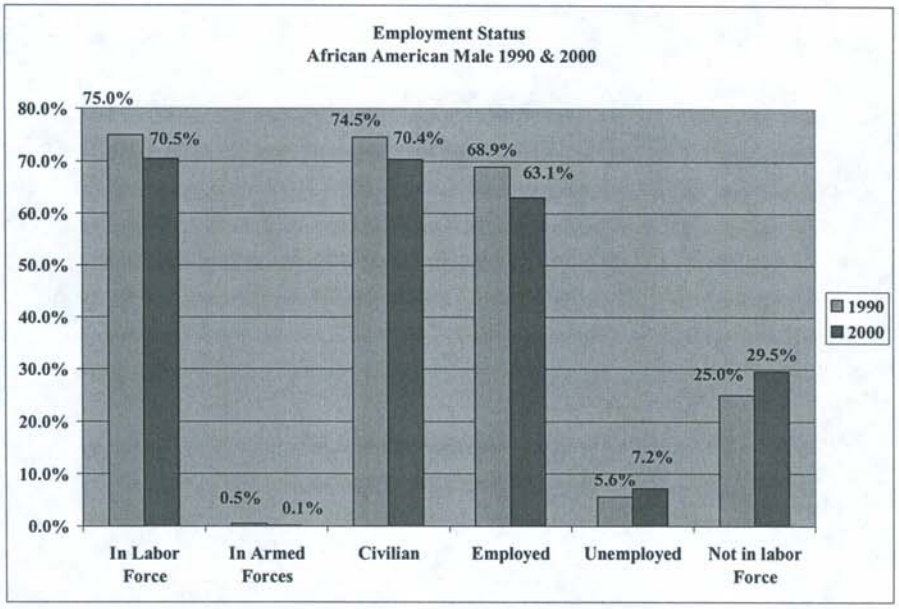
Figure 7



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

African American males' percentage in the labor force declined from 75.0% to 70.5%. (Figure 8).

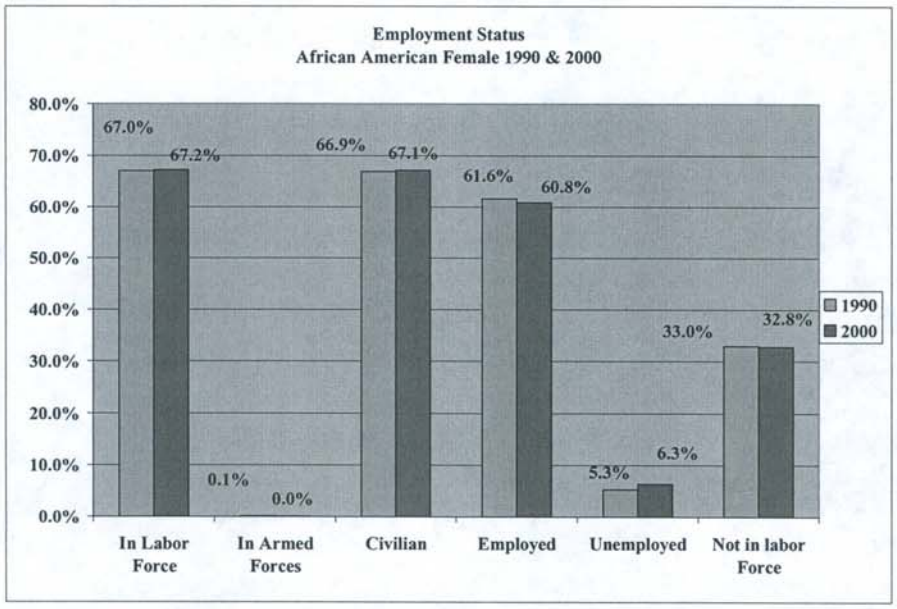
Figure 8



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

And changed very little for African American females, 67.1% to 67.2% (Figure 9).

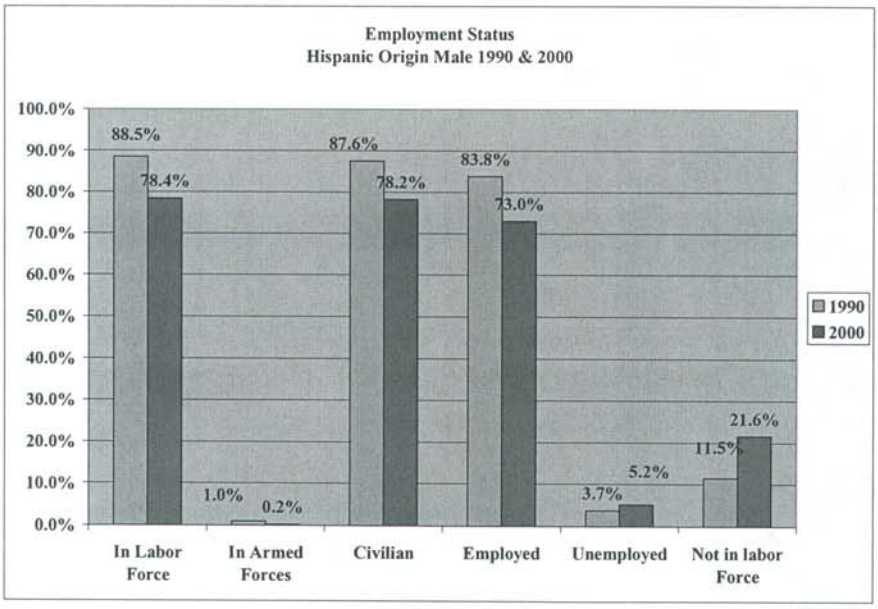
Figure 9



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Fewer males of Hispanic origin are in the labor force today, from 88.5% in 1990 to 78.4% in 2000 (Figure 10).

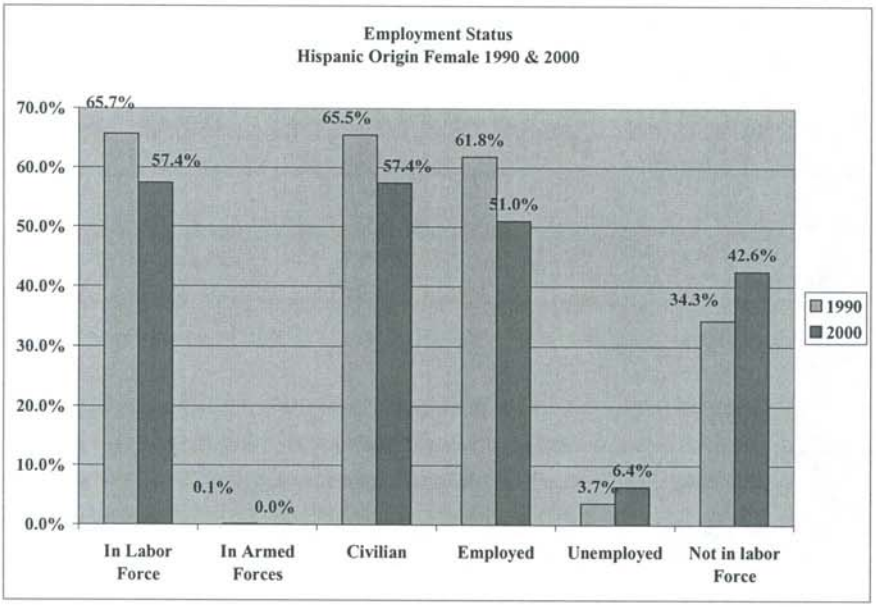
Figure 10



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Hispanic females also declined in the labor force from 65.7% to 57.4% (Figure 11).

Figure 11



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

County data for employment status by sex, race, and Hispanic origin shows that Non-Hispanic Whites changed very little in most counties. Among African Americans, fewer males were in the labor force in Cabarrus (1.9%), Gaston (10.7%), Mecklenburg (3.9%), Rowan (4.3%), Union (8.1%), and York Counties (6.0%). Among African American females, those in the labor force decreased in Cabarrus (10.5%), Gaston (6.5%) Lincoln (2.1%), Rowan (4.3%), Union (9.0%), and York counties (0.63%). Hispanic males experienced declines in the labor force for Cabarrus (14.9%), Gaston (15.4%), Mecklenburg (8.7%), Rowan (14.6%), Union (16.6%), and York counties (10.5%). Hispanic females experienced declines in the labor force for Cabarrus (13.9%), Gaston (8.9%), Mecklenburg (12.5%), and Union counties (7.9%) but gained in employment status from 1990–2000 in Lincoln (13.9%), Rowan (5.7%), and York counties (4.7%) (Table 4).

Table 4. Percent Change in Proportional Employment Status by Race, 1990–2000

County	African American Male	African American Female	White Male	White Female	Hispanic Male	Hispanic Female
Cabarrus	-1.9	10.5	-0.9	1.9	-1.4	-13.9
Gaston	-10.7	-6.5	-3.3	-2.59	-15.4	-8.9
Lincoln	0.7	-2.1	-3.8	0.36	6.2	13.9
Mecklenburg	-3.9	2.5	-.09	-.14	-8.7	-12.5
Rowan	-4.3	.07	0.9	0.02	-14.6	5.7
Union	-8.1	-9.0	0.6	1.62	-16.6	-7.9
York	-6.0	-0.6	-1.9	1.41	-10.5	4.7
Total	-4.5	0.1	-1.3	0.09	-10.0	-8.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

Household Income

Household income by race and Hispanic origin shows that among Whites there was an overall trend of increasing from lower to higher income levels. Specifically, for the entire MSA, the number of Whites earning less than $10,000 declined by 4.9%, $10,000–$14,999 by 3.1%, $15,000–$24,999 by 7.6%, $25,000–$34,999 by 5.3%, and $35,000–$49,999 by 3.5%, but increased by 4.6% for the $50,000–$74,999 range, 6.5% in the $75,000–$99,999 range, and by almost 10% (9.97%) for those in the $100,000 or more income category (Table 4).

Among African Americans a similar pattern of income mobility is observed. Overall, the number of African Americans earning less than $10,000 declined by 9.2%, $10,000–$14,999 by 3.9%, $15,000–$24,999 by 5.4%, $25,000–$34,999 by 0.89% with increases in the higher income categories for $35,000–$49,999 of 2.2%, $50,000–74,999 of 4.1%, and $100,000 or more of 2.4% (Table 4).

Hispanics increased proportions in all categories but the largest gains are observed in the higher income categories, with less than $10,000 up 1.8%, $10,000–$14,999 up 1.3%, $15,000–$24,999 up 2.5%, $25,000–$34,999 up 2.6%, $35,000–$49,999 up 4.3%,

$50,000–$74,999 up 4.3%, $75,000–$99,999 up 1.9% and for $100,000 or more an increase of 4.0% (Table 5).

Table 5. Percent Change in Proportional Household Income 1990–2000

Household Income	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Less than 10,000	-9.2	-4.9	1.8
10,000–14,999	-3.9	-3.1	1.3
15,000–24,999	-5.4	-7.6	2.5
25,000–4,999	-0.9	-5.3	2.6
35,000–49,999	2.2	-3.5	4.3
50,000–74,999	7.1	4.6	4.3
75,000–99,999	4.1	6.5	1.9
100,000 or more	2.4	9.9	4.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

The mean income increased for Non-Hispanic Whites from $31,289 to $49,184, for African Americans from $20,156 to $31,821, and Hispanics from $25,888 to $37,599 (Table 6). (The data excludes York County mean income because this data was not available.)

Table 6. Mean Income by Race, 1990–2000

County	African American 1990	African American 2000	White 1990	White 2000	Hispanic 1990	Hispanic 2000
Cabarrus	23,276	38,258	36,925	58,196	25,428	42,853
Gaston	24,038	37,553	34,304	51,045	32,623	36,538
Lincoln	22,836	35,023	33,899	50,797	24,278	35,316
Mecklenburg	26,838	43,606	48,009	80,087	42,264	49,595
Rowan	22,425	34,950	32,226	48,142	25,303	40,389
Union	24,798	39,794	39,293	65,032	30,860	63,754
York	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	20,156	31,821	31,289	49,184	25,888	37,599

Source U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.
*York County data not available.

Discussion

Overall, the data do confirm the trends observed in the general population. For example, demographers argue that the dependency ratio, the ratio of the working age population 19–64 to those people not working–children less than 18 years old and 65 or more–helps determine the economic prosperity of that population and can provide insight into population characteristics that interact with cultural changes. Among the Non-Hispanic White male population, almost 10% of that population is 65 or more years of age, reflecting an aging of the Non-Hispanic White population. Interestingly, Non-Hispanic White females 65 or more years of age are almost 14% of that population indicative of the increase in the aging population and higher life expectancy rates for females.

County data for educational attainment by race and Hispanic origin is consistent with the aggregate data showing decreases among the lowest levels of educational attainment and increases among most of the higher levels for Non-Hispanic Whites and African Americans during 1990–2000. Hispanics, on the other hand, show changes in the opposite directions.

During the 1990s, the Hispanic population did experience growth in the MSA and some of that growth will not be captured until the 2010 Census is taken so the reader is advised to interpret the educational attainment of Hispanics with some caution. However, the proportion of the Hispanic population aged 25 and over with less than a 9^{th} grade education actually increased from 1990–2000, from 14.5% to 31.3%. In addition, Hispanics earning a 9^{th}–12^{th} grade education increased from 16.0% to 20.1%.

These patterns are consistent with the literature in terms of a growing number of Hispanics who lack the educational background needed to obtain a good-paying salary in the United States. The employment status of Non-Hispanic White males and females changed very little from 1990–2000. African American males' percentage in the labor force declined from 75% to 70.5% and changed very little for African American females. Fewer males of Hispanic origin were in the labor force in 2000. Hispanic females also declined in the labor force from 65.7% to 57.4%.

Household income by race and Hispanic origin shows that among Whites and African Americans, there was an overall trend of increasing from lower income levels to the higher income levels. Hispanics increased proportions in all categories but the largest gains are observed in the higher income categories. In addition, the mean income increased for Non-Hispanic Whites by $17,895, for African Americans by $11,665 and for Hispanics by $11,711.

Conclusions

This paper reviewed population changes, educational attainment, employment status, and household income for the Metropolitan Statistical Area looking at 1990–2000 percent changes in Census data by race, gender, and ethnicity. As expected, the economic boom of the 1990s has probably led to increases in factors such as increases in income and educational attainment that would result in a higher standard of living. However, the growth in the Hispanic/Latino population has led to increases in the lower-skilled population, and the economic prosperity of Hispanics will require investments in their human and social capital needs as well as provisions for their children. (Theerian and Ramirez, 2000; Risman, 2003). In addition, despite their movement into the Black middle class, African Americans experienced lower overall changes in mean income trailing that of Hispanics. Economic globalization will also continue to play a role in the erosion of manufacturing jobs, the competitive position of the American economy and the assimilation of immigrants and their families (Danzinger et al., 2001).

Those interested in inequality need to rely on public policy solutions such as guaranteed wages, progressive taxes, and income redistribution. Other changes need to include increases in the earned income tax credit which raises the income of the working poor, socialization of medical costs to protect citizens against unforeseen tragedies, and the creation of good paying jobs. Only through these efforts will equal opportunities occur that will raise the levels of human and social capital (Danzinger et al., 2001; Risman, 2003).

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Housing and the Transformation of Charlotte's Ethnic Geographies

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> "When immigrants settle in a city their capacity to obtain suitable housing, in appropriate locations, at affordable prices is, along with success in the job market, a key factor in their material welfare and in their capacity to achieve social integration"
>
> (Ley, et al. 2001)

Background

The United States 2000 Census of population presented evidence of a dramatic demographic shift at the end of the twentieth century. Between 1990 and 2000, Hispanic/Latinos had emerged as the largest ethnic/race group in the country. Indeed, during this time, Latinos were the fastest growing U.S. minority group, increasing from 22.4 million to 35.3 million persons.[1] As a result, Latinos eclipsed African Americans as the largest minority group in the country, 12.5% to 12.3%, respectively.

Among U.S. regions caught up in the Latino settlement transformation, the South is experiencing the most significant impacts. For most of the past 100 years, the region was passed over by non-Anglo immigrants. While there was limited international migration, the process was incremental and the low numbers of immigrants were assimilated with relative ease. Within this framework, societal and cultural stresses are rooted in race. Traditionally, social and economic relations in the American South have been constructed along racial divides: Black and White. But beginning in the late 1980s, the collective consciousness of Southerners was blurred by unprecedented growth in domestic and foreign-born immigration into the region. Southeast and South Asians arrived in large numbers, but the largest growth in new Southerners was Latino, with the largest single group being Mexicans (Murphy, Blanchard, and Hill 2001). The 2000 Census provided powerful evidence that a fundamental demographic change is underway. The Southeast region has emerged as the second largest home of Latinos in the United States, with 69 million Hispanics living in 13 states and the District of Columbia. Across the Southeastern states, the rate of Latino population increase was over 100% in every case, except Florida, the state with the largest Latino population in 1990. Among these states, North Carolina experienced the highest rate of Latino population increase, a 386% jump between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, there were only 76,726 Latinos in the state, but by 2000 North Carolina was home to 372,964 Latinos.

Beyond the dramatic absolute growth, there is a growing awareness among urban researchers that traditional geographies of Hispanic settlement in the United States are

[1] Note: While the U.S. Census of Population and other governmental sources use the identifier Hispanic for persons of Latin American ancestry, the term Hispanic/Latino is the preferred descriptor among persons in this community. In this paper we use these terms interchangeably.

changing. While urban centers with established Hispanic populations continued to experience absolute Hispanic population growth over the last decade, a number of cities, most notably several in the Southeastern United States, have experienced a sudden and substantial influx of Hispanic residents. Among 18 cities classified by Suro and Singer (2002) as Hispanic "hypergrowth," three of the top four are located within North Carolina. Raleigh, Greensboro, and Charlotte's Hispanic populations grew by 1,180%, 995% and 932% respectively over the 1980–2000 period. Such remarkable growth rates are thought to be linked to the evolution of these cities as finance, high-tech, and business service economies and the employment opportunities with which they are associated.

In addition to the development of a new interurban pattern of settlement, there have also been changes in the intra-urban pattern of Hispanic settlement. Studies focusing on immigrants generally (Green, 1995) and Hispanics specifically (Lobo et al., 2002; Suro and Singer, 2002) have noted an increasing tendency toward suburban rather than central city settlement. While these studies shed very important light on the generalities of the changing pattern of Hispanic settlement at the inter-urban and suburban versus urban levels, they tell us very little about the intra-urban geography of Hispanic settlement within specific cities.

Currently, our understanding of the urban immigrant experience is drawn largely from the experience of major gateway cities, urban areas with a tradition of attracting different immigrants over many years. While there are and will be parallels among immigrant experiences across distinctive urban areas, it is important to recognize points of difference particularly among cities of different size and ranking within the urban hierarchy, and for cities with little history or experience at assimilating culturally or racially foreign immigrants.

Immigrant settlement and housing

This paper reports on some of the early findings from a broader project by geographers at UNC Charlotte that is exploring the changing geography of Latino settlement in Charlotte, N.C., and the surrounding Southern Piedmont region of North Carolina. Our focus here is on the role affordable housing plays as a predictor of Hispanic/Latino residential concentration. We hypothesize that housing opportunities, especially the quantity and pricing of market rental apartment housing, will play an important role in informing a better understanding of Hispanic settlement in Charlotte.

There is longstanding recognition of the important role housing plays in the immigrant settlement experience (Rosenbaum et al. 1999; Ley et al., 2001). Aside from entering the labor force and securing some form of economic self-sufficiency, housing is a critical step towards stabilization and integration for immigrant groups. Housing not only provides shelter and a fixed address (necessary to access rights of residence such as driver's licenses and public school assignment), its location dictates the broader neighborhood context in which immigrants must navigate their daily lives. Its relative affordability and potential for financial appreciation also has direct consequences for wealth management. Given the growing concern that immigrants are disproportionately

renters and residents in disadvantaged neighborhoods, it is important to discern the role housing plays in both the locational and economic trajectories of immigrant settlement.

The role of affordable housing as a locational decision tool for Latino immigrants in Charlotte, is magnified because of the city's distinctive urban and immigrant geographies. Charlotte has a sunbelt urban morphology. There is a lack of older neighborhoods that might be expected to contain significant affordable housing resources. Having experienced its most significant growth in the post-World War II era, Charlotte's urban landscape is dominated by suburban urban forms. In the housing market this translates into a large swath of 'pod and collector' single-family residential subdivisions and low-rise apartment complexes.

Equally important in our research framework, is Charlotte's lack of immigrant experience. Charlotte has simply not been an immigrant destination. While there was some resettlement of Southeast Asians in the city in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, international immigration has been incremental and easily accommodated by both the private and public housing sectors. Until recently, immigrants to Charlotte have tended to disperse throughout the city as opposed to concentrating in distinguished enclaves or otherwise ethnically identified neighborhoods.

Given Charlotte's history as a non-immigrant, non-Latino city, the reception and settlement experience for the city's newly arrived Hispanic immigrants is likely to be very different than that experienced in cities with social, institutional, cultural and economic infrastructures developed by waves of previous immigrant groups. In Charlotte, Hispanic immigrants' choice of the city itself, and of their residential location within it, has not been dictated by previous concentrations of Latinos or other large immigrant groups. Other factors are at play. Understanding the spatial choices and constraints of this group, and how they affect and are affected by the Charlotte urban landscape, will bring a greater depth of understanding to immigration research and will have clear policy, planning and theoretical implications at the local and national levels.

Hispanic/Latino immigrant settlement in Charlotte

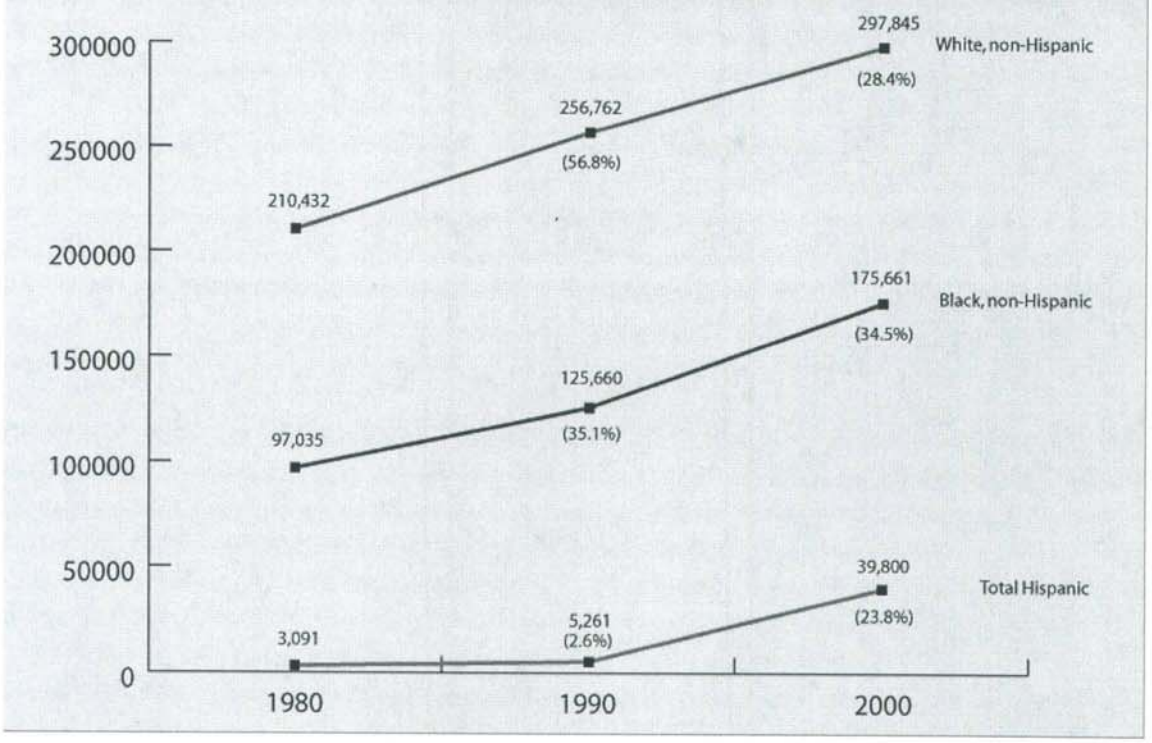
For most of its history Charlotte's racial and ethnic geography was framed by traditional Southern bi-racial constructs: African Americans and Anglo-Americans. But during the 1990s, especially the latter portion of the decade, the Charlotte region experienced a dramatic increase in Hispanic immigrants, both native and foreign-born. Drawn by robust economic growth and perceived high quality of life, the Latino population in the City of Charlotte grew from 5,261 in 1990 to 39,800 residents as reported in the 2000 Census. A review of Table 1 reveals that the increase in Latino population was not accompanied by decline in White or African-American populations in the city. Charlotte has continued to attract large numbers of new residents from its traditional racial groups. However, as Charlotte has emerged as a new Latino destination, the portion of total population growth derived from Hispanic/Latinos rose significantly as the contribution from Whites dropped below 30%. While only comprising 5.1% of the city's population, the recent influx of

Hispanic immigrants has resulted in a fairly rapid community-wide restructuring of traditional social and political relations.

Table 1

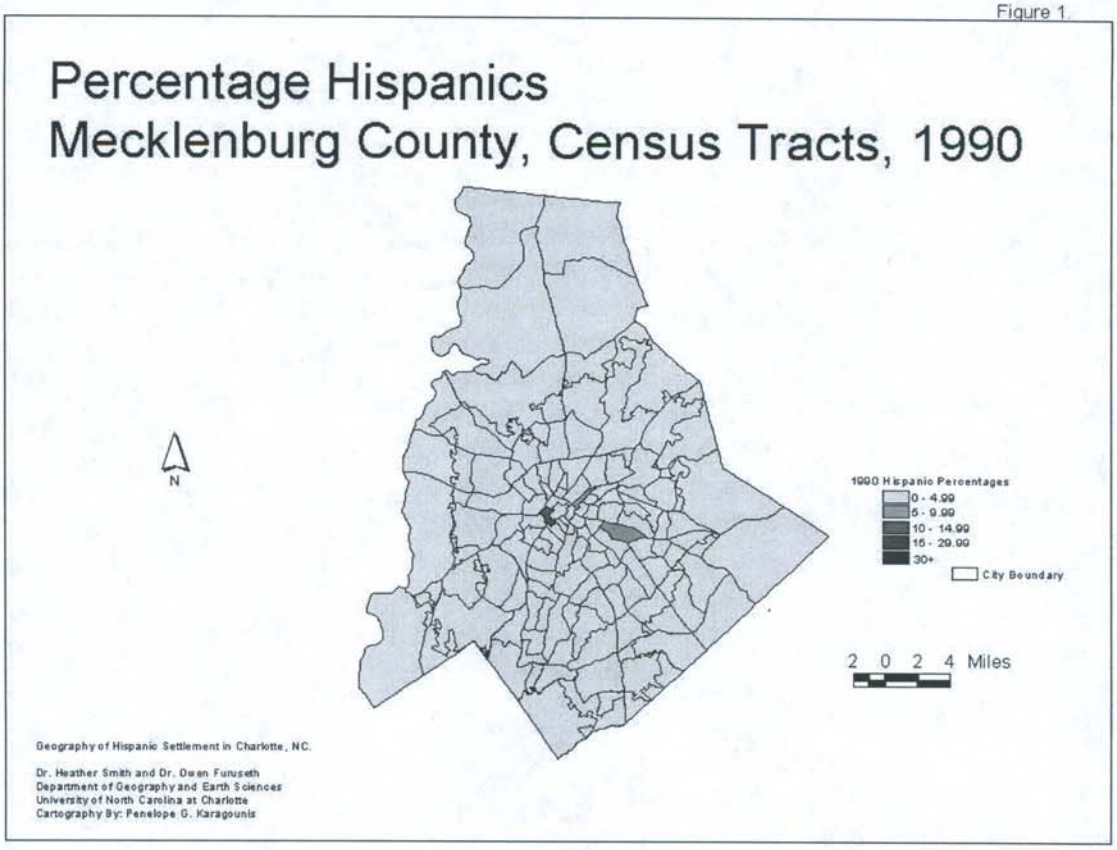
Population, Race and Ethnicity in Charlotte, 1980 - 2000

(Proportion of Total Population Increase)



Using Charlotte and the surrounding Mecklenburg County Census tract geography as a spatial framework, it becomes clear that the pattern of Latino settlement over the past decade has evolved from an unfocused geography to maturing Hispanic neighborhood clusters. As seen in Figure 1, the small number of Hispanic Charlotteans in 1990 were concentrated in three neighborhoods. In these communities, Hispanics represented 5.8% of the neighborhood residents, a significantly greater concentration than the citywide proportion of 1.3%. Despite the relative concentration of Latinos in these isolated Census tracts, from a citywide perspective, Latinos were widely dispersed throughout the city. Indeed only 10.8% of Charlotte's Hispanics lived in the three "high concentration" Census tracts.

Figure 1.



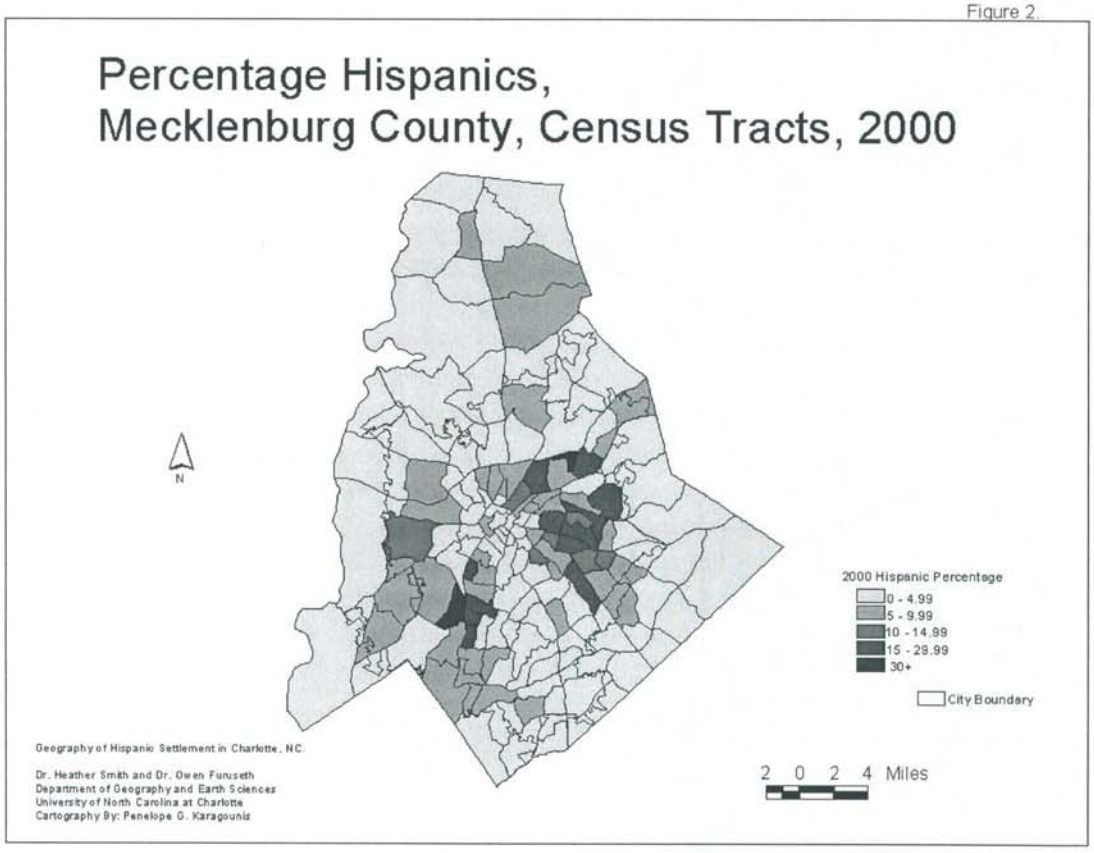
Our analysis shows that the three 1990 Hispanic enclaves were dissimilar residential communities. Two are characterized as older urban core communities. Both were initially developed between 1918 and 1928. The housing stock in each was primarily single-family structures. Positioned on the South and Southwest edge of central Charlotte, Census Tract 4—the Wilmore and Wesley Heights communities—was racially mixed with 46% white and 43% African American residents. Home to 10.7% Hispanic residents, this Census tract had the highest percentage of Latinos. Census tract 7, Optimist Park, is located north of the central city. In 1990, this was a predominately African American community (74%) with 6.8% Hispanic/Latino and 3% White residents. Currently, both tracts are house predominately low-income communities.

Census Tract 17.98, subsequently subdivided in 2000 into tracts 17.01 and 17.02, had the third largest concentration of Hispanic/Latino residents—6.8%. This racially mixed, middle-income community is primarily made up of post-World War II suburban tract housing and 1970s-era apartment complexes. While the former Census tracts would represent the expected residential destinations of early 20th century urban immigrants, Census tract 17.98 was prototypic of the new settlement landscape that would undergo extensive Hispanic settlement in the late 1990s.

Within the urban milieu of Charlotte, suburbs developed in the 1970s can be labeled the 'middle-suburbs'. Decades older than the streetcar era suburbs of inner city Charlotte but predating the newest wave of suburbanization that swept across the city's edge during the

last 15 years of the 20th century, these suburbs are both chronologically and spatially positioned in the middle of the city's suburbanization process. Figure 2 presents the spatial expression of contemporary Hispanic settlement more recently in 2000. Beyond the magnitude of increase in Latinos presented on this map, several other important settlement patterns are evidenced. Clearly, the residential choice of Hispanics has been shaped in such a way that large portions of the city and surrounding county have not been prime neighborhood choices. A wedge of Census tracts running diagonally across the city from the Northwest to the Southeast, through the downtown, has relatively few Hispanic residents. Indeed, all of the six Charlotte Census tracts reporting no Latino residents in 2000 are located within this wedge.

Figure 2.



Interestingly, the neighborhoods encompassed by this diagonal band are economically and racially quite different. The Census tracts Northwest of downtown are among the most economically disadvantaged and racially segregated in the city. Overwhelmingly African American, these neighborhoods include large stocks of lower-priced rental housing units. When neighborhoods are ranked along quality of life dimensions, this sub-area of Charlotte consistently scores among the city at the bottom of the analyses (City of Charlotte, 2002).

Southeast of downtown are the most elite and residentially desirable neighborhoods in Charlotte. Characterized by a mix of well-maintained vintage streetcar era subdivisions, amenity oriented residential complexes, and high-end rental apartment complexes,

Southeast Charlotte is home to the city's rich and powerful classes. Not unexpectedly, given traditional social-economic relations there are also relatively few African Americans residing in this area.

A second geographical trend evidenced in these data is the suburban orientation of Hispanic/Latino settlement. With the exception of Census Tract 4, all of the closest neighborhoods abutting downtown attracted few Hispanic residents. In a reversal of the incipient Latino settlement recorded in 1990, Census Tracts 4 and 7—both small urban tracts—experienced drops in Hispanic residents in 2000. In particular, in Tract 4, made up of neighborhoods experiencing the early stages of gentrification in the 1990s, the number of Latino residents was reduced by 65.7%. Variations in housing cost and the availability of rental housing do not appear to explain the absence of Latino settlement in the inner city. Thus, gentrified, as well as mixed-income and low-income neighborhoods in urban core were all largely passed over by the new Hispanic Charlotteans.

In the context of the suburban preferences shown by Hispanic immigrants, two residential neighborhood clusters—one in East and Northeast Charlotte and a second in Southwest Charlotte have clearly developed. At the core of both clusters are 14 Census tracts where Hispanics represent more than 15% of the tract's population. Phelan and Schneider (1996) establish the 15% threshold as defining a community with significant minority group representation. In their work looking at race, ethnicity and class in American suburbs, a Hispanic/multi-ethnic suburb is a community with more than 15% Hispanic residents. Only one Census tract, Census Tract 53.04 with a Latino population of 44.7%, comes close to meeting the higher benchmark set by Lobo, Flores, and Salvo (2002), wherein a Census tract must have at least 50% Hispanic residents to be classified as a Hispanic neighborhood.

The largest concentrations of Hispanics have settled in a bifurcated area east of downtown. The 31 Census tracts in this cluster form an arc, running Northeast to East. This area encompasses 20,777 Latinos or 52% of the citywide total. Within this portion of the city, Hispanics represent 13.8% of the total population, approaching the 15% standard. The second largest grouping of Hispanics lives in Southwest Charlotte. Much more tightly bounded, the 12 Census tracts making up this linear cluster are centered around South Boulevard, an older urban-arterial roadway. The Southwest cluster is home to 9,232 Hispanics or 23% of the citywide Latino population. Within this Census geography, Hispanics are 14.3% of the total population.

Our analysis of neighborhood scale data, from both the Census Bureau and local planning and community development agencies, reveals a number of characteristics common to both Latino settlement clusters:

1. These are mature suburban districts that have a variety of housing opportunities and a wide range of housing prices. Between 1990–2000, the change in mean housing values in Hispanic/Latino clusters was lower than the citywide and countywide averages. Rental housing, including apartments and detached housing, are readily available throughout both clusters.

2. Both clusters are racially integrated. The Northeast and East cluster is 63% White, Non-Hispanics and 23% African American. The South cluster is 45% White, Non-Hispanic and 40% African American.

The suburban housing choices of Charlotte's Hispanic/Latino community

Many older models of immigrant settlement geography are structured around the experience of traditional gateway cities. In this context, it is assumed that new arrivals settle in older inner city neighborhoods, with the poorest quality housing, and in particular are drawn to neighborhoods with concentrations of co-ethnics. Over time, these models posit that as immigrants acquire higher levels of education and higher income they move out of less desirable neighborhoods and increasingly assimilate increasingly into non-immigrant residential areas. But the dominant force of suburbanization has in many ways reshaped the traditional settlement models, even in gateway cities.

The suburbanization of jobs, availability of housing, and decline in discrimination, have led to decentralizing and desegregating effects on immigrant settlement decision-making. Indeed, the Suro and Singer (2002) study found that suburbanization was the dominant intra-urban residential choice for Hispanic/Latinos during the 1990s, especially in the new rapidly growing Hispanic/Latino urban destinations.

Charlotte's new ethnic geography, with growing Hispanic/Latino residential clusters, is a product of this suburbanization of locational choice. But having passed over inner city residential options for suburban sections of the city, what factors were responsible for Hispanic immigrants settlement patterns? Our discussions with local Hispanic community leadership and public community development staff (Pinzon, 2002) suggest that residential decision-making is a response to the pattern of spatial economics in the housing market rather than structural constraints or former immigrant settlement preferences.

As a new Latino settlement destination, Charlotte's Hispanic households are predominantly male and more non-family. As in other parts of the U.S., the dynamics of Hispanic migration in Charlotte exhibit a particular gender-household structure. Early on, male immigrants without family move into a community to take advantage economic opportunity; subsequently family and kin follow the immigrants as economic stability and settlement stability is achieved (Durand and Massey 1992). The 2000 data for the City of Charlotte show that among Hispanics, 62.5% are male and 37.5% are female. This ratio is significantly higher than the national gender split for Hispanics—55.9% male, 44.1% female. This is a reflection of the pioneering character of Hispanic migration into the area.

Given the newness of Hispanics in Charlotte, and the gender dynamics noted above, we expected to find that residential choices were strongly affected by availability of affordable, rental housing. In particular, apartment-type housing would provide the largest pool of housing stock in this broad category. Beyond the economic considerations

our Hispanic informants explained that new Hispanic migrants, especially those with limited English language skills, viewed apartment rental as easier, and less discriminatory, than renting single family housing. Moreover, the perception in the Hispanic community is that apartment complexes provided a less intrusive and socially restrictive environment. The latter concerns are especially salient if illegal immigrants are residents or visitors to a home.

A review of the Census data confirmed that tenure status operated as expected. As seen on Table 2, citywide homeowner occupied housing is 57.5% with significant variation across race and ethnic groups. Among Hispanics, the overwhelming majority—nearly 80%—are renting their residences. This, in turn, translates into strong Hispanic/Latino presence in the apartment rental market.

Table 2

Housing Tenure by Race and Ethnicity in Charlotte, 2000

	Citywide	White	African-American	Hispanic
Home Owner Occupied Housing	57.5%	67%	42.3%	21.9%
Renter Occupied Housing	42.5%	33%	57.8%	78.2%

In keeping with these housing-related dimensions, we posited that Hispanics settlement in Charlotte would be shaped by the availability and pricing of rental apartment housing units. So that neighborhoods (in the framework of this research, Census tracts) with large numbers of apartment units, renting at the lowest prices would be the most attractive choices for new Hispanic immigrants. In line with these assumptions, we expected that the average age of an apartment complex would affect the market status of an apartment community. Older communities were expected to have greater maintenance and repair problems, fewer amenities, and, as a result, less desirability as a component of the overall rental market. Assuming that these conditions translated into less expensive rents, we hypothesized that older apartment complexes would be marginally more acceptable to Hispanic renters.

The data used to carry out our analysis were obtained from the Mecklenburg County Engineering and Building Standards Department. This database, developed in cooperation with the Charlotte Apartment Association and Carolinas Real Data, is a GIS-

coded compilation of apartment complexes in the City of Charlotte. For each complex, a data file contains the complex size and location, the complex attribute characteristics, age, and mean rental prices for units. These data were custom aggregated at the Census tract level.

In order to examine our research questions, linear regression analysis was carried out (Table 3). Our dependent variable was the absolute change in Hispanic residents, 1990–2000. Four individual regression analyses, using apartment complex age; pricing; and number of apartments, were completed. The findings of the regression provided mixed support for our research expectations. The strongest housing related predictor for Hispanic settlement choice was the scope of apartment options (number of apartment units). The strength of the relationship was .347, indicating that almost 35% of the pattern in the expansion of Hispanic settlement was explained by the size of apartment stock in a Census tract. The direction of the relationship (positive) confirmed our expectation that large numbers of apartments was linked to higher numbers of Latino residents.

Table 3

Hispanic Settlement Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable: Change in Hispanic Residents 1990-2000

	R^2	Beta	Significance
Number of Apartment Units	.347	.589	.000
Mean Age of Apartment Units	.070	.264	.009
Mean Rent for 1 Bedroom Unit	.008	-.092	N.S.
Mean Rent for 2 Bedroom Unit	.009	-.093	N.S.
Mean Rent for 3 Bedroom Unit	.035	-.188	N.S.

While statistically significant, the linkage between the average age of apartment complexes in a Census tract and Hispanic settlement was less robust. The explanatory power of this temporal variable was only 7%. More importantly, apartment complex age did not operate as we had expected. The direction of the beta coefficient indicates a positive relationship. Thus, Census tracts with newer apartment complexes are home to larger numbers of Latinos. A closer examination of this variable in the two Hispanic residential clusters provides some possible explanation for this finding. In both Hispanic areas, the mean age of the apartment communities was in the 1970s. In South Charlotte, the mean age was 1976 and in East and Northeast Charlotte it was 1971. In these Latino areas, only four of the Census tracts have apartment complexes with mean ages post-

1990, and even fewer, two Census tracts, have mean ages prior to World War II. Thus, it would seem Hispanic apartment renters are concentrated in the middle, suburban-vintage complexes. Citywide, the oldest apartments are located in the inner core neighborhoods, while the newest complexes are situated beyond the middle suburban ring selected by Latinos.

The final three regression analyses were directed toward examining the impact of apartment rental costs of residential choice. The selection of three rental options was based upon our concern that given the non-household character of Hispanic immigration that apartment size could mask the operation of this economically driven factor. The results of the analysis were unambiguously clear, mean rents were not accurate predictors of Hispanic settlement patterns. Although it can not be neatly explained, a further review of the individual Census tract rental data does suggest that across the city, with the exception of greenfield locations and inner city gentrified neighborhoods, apartment rental rates are somewhat inelastic. So that the rental cost of a one-bedroom apartment does not exhibit the degree of geographic variation that would shape a residential search process.

A second potential explanation cited by our discussions with Hispanic leaders is apartment tenancy practices. Apartment sharing and the over-renting of units (i.e., more renters occupying a unit than permitted by leasing contracts) provide social as well as economic advantages to male Hispanic/Latinos without partners. Language and transportation barriers can be overcome, social networks strengthened and/or established as well as rental expenses reduced. The widespread use of shared housing costs may help account for the insignificance of the housing costs variables.

Conclusions

The rapid growth of the Latino population in Charlotte, North Carolina, has marked a fresh chapter in the ethnic geography of a city that is prototypic of the new urban South. On one level, the new Hispanic migration signals a profound rethinking of traditional race-based political and social precepts. At the intra-urban scale, the arrival has begun to restructure labor and housing markets. Over the past decade, Hispanic migrants have chosen to reside in suburban neighborhoods. In opting for suburban locations, Hispanics were clustered in two areas of the city. Both are characterized as maturing transitional suburbs, circa 1970s. These "middle suburbs" represent a transition zone between older suburban communities that have an aesthetic cachet and associated gentrification pressures and the newest suburbs where greenfield values and market pressures create a high-end real estate market.

Between these inner and outer suburbs, Hispanic immigrants, more often single men, have emerged as a significant cohort in the rental apartment market. Indeed, those Census tracts with the largest number of apartment units have become homes to Charlotte's Latino population. As the Latino migration to Charlotte matures and the number of spouses and nuclear family members grows, the question will become how Hispanic settlement geography will change.

Recommendations Flowing From Our Paper

1. Given unexpected finding that affordability of rental units is not a strong statistical predictor of the location of Latino settlement, future research should focus on identifying those factors that most strongly guide the residential choices of the Latino community. This research will necessarily involve asking community members themselves about their locational choices and coping strategies.

2. While this research has shed light onto the evolving residential patterning of the Charlotte's Latino population 1990 and 2000, it is important to give consideration to how this pattern is likely to change in the future. All signs point to Charlotte becoming an increasingly common destination for Latino and other immigrants. Understanding how their settlement choices are likely to change service, business, retail and housing needs in communities is a critical part of ensuring adequate and appropriate planning and policy response but also ensuring successful integration for immigrants themselves.

3. Charlotte has long been considered, and considered itself, a "back and white" city. The large scale and continued settlement of immigrant groups from other ethnic and racial background will undoubtedly affect traditional race relations in the city and raises important questions about Charlotte's identity as an emerging multi-cultural rather than bi-racial city.

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Crime, Safety, and Police

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Method and Sample

We sought to partially replicate a study conducted for the Urban League of Central Carolinas in 1996 (Priest and Carter, 1996). In that study, interviews were conducted with residents of voting precincts in Charlotte that were at least 60% African American. Many of the questions asked in that survey concerned crime, safety, and police. We asked many of the same questions in this survey conducted in April, 2003. We wished to compare responses to those questions in 1996 and today.

The Board of Elections provided a list of 26 precincts that were at least 60% African American in 2002, and included the streets in each precinct. A cross-reference directory indicated the residences on each street and the telephone number(s) at each residence. Residences and telephone numbers were systematically sampled, after a random start. We obtained fairly complete interviews from 328 respondents—292 African Americans and 36 Hispanics/Latinos. Thirteen of 36 interviews with Hispanics were conducted in Spanish. Johnson C. Smith University students conducted the interviews.

Among 326 respondents, 109 were male and 217 were female. Among 310 respondents who indicated their age, 16.8% were aged 18–25 years, 65.5% were aged 26–64, and 17.7% were aged 65 and over. By education, 23.5% had some high school or less, 23.8% were high school graduates, 26.6% had some college education and 21.4% were graduates, and 4.6% were post-graduates. Slightly more than 26% of respondents indicated they had lived in Charlotte 10 years or less. The average age was 45.5 years. Just over 33% of respondents indicated they had children under 18 living in the household with them.

Victimization and Fear of Crime

Our questionnaire included questions about victimization. We asked "Have you been the victim of crime in the last year?" We also asked this question in 1996. Briefly, 29 respondents or 8.8% of the sample responded "yes." This compares to 7% in the 1996 survey. We note that 24 of those indicated they had been victims of property crimes. We also asked "Has anyone in your household been the victim of crime in the last year?" Eighteen respondents or 5.5% of the sample responded "yes." Most of these were property crimes. Table 1 compares African American and Hispanic/Latino responses on victimization. As indicated, Latino respondents were more likely to report that they had been victims and that someone in their household had been a victim in the last year.

We examined respondent victimization by age and Table 2 presents the results. As indicated, younger respondents were much more likely to say they had been victims in the last year. This is consistent with much previous research (Flanagan & Longmire, 1996).

We also asked a series of opinion questions. These were in Likert-format. A statement was given, and the respondent was asked whether he/she strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement. The first statement was "Violent crime is a big problem in my neighborhood." Over 38% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this question. There was little difference by race/ethnicity. Nearly 38% of African Americans and 45% of Hispanics agreed or strongly agreed. There were a few differences by age. Slightly more than 44% of those 18–25, 33.6% of those 26–45 years, 38.3% of those 46–65 years, and 44.6% of those 65 or more years agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 1. Victimization by Race/Ethnicity

Victim	African American	Hispanic/Latino
Respondent	8.2%	13.9%
Anyone in Household	4.6%	13.9%

Another similar statement was "I fear for my safety in my neighborhood." This statement also was presented to respondents in the 1996 survey. Over 25% of respondents in the present survey agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This compares with 36% who agreed or strongly agreed in 1996. These results strongly suggest that the level of fear has declined in minority neighborhoods in Charlotte in the last seven years. This may be one effect related to the increase in community policing in Charlotte.

Some differences occurred between African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos in the proportion that agreed with the statement. More than 23% of African Americans, compared to 41.2% of Hispanics agreed or strongly agreed. This difference approaches statistical significance (p=.06). Hispanics/Latinos appear much more fearful. There were also differences by age. These are presented in Table 3. Note that younger people are least fearful in their neighborhood, but most likely to indicate they had been victimized in the last year (Table 2). Conversely, the elderly are most fearful, consistent with many previous studies, but were least likely to be victimized (Table 2).

Table 2. Victimization by Age

Age	Victim Respondent
18-25	17.3%
26-45	9.6%
46-64	6.3%
65 or more	4.2%

Table 3. Fear for Safety in Neighborhood by Age

Age	Agree/Strongly Agree
18-25	19.3%
26-45	20.6%
45-64	30.9%
65 or more	39.6%

A similar statement was "I fear for my child's safety at school." This statement also was presented to respondents in 1996. Slightly more than 31% of respondents in the present survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This is less than the 48.9% who agreed or strongly agreed in 1996. Again, fewer respondents appear fearful today than in 1996. Yet not every respondent has children in the household. In the present survey, 39.8% of those with children under 18 in their household agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This is a substantial proportion. Further, there were few differences between African Americans and Hispanics. Some 39.7% of African Americans with children in the household, compared to 40.0% of Hispanics, agreed or strongly agreed.

We also asked whether respondents agreed with the statement, "I fear for my child's safety in my neighborhood." When only those with children under 18 in the household are considered, 31.3% agreed or strongly agreed, including 28.7% of African Americans and a much larger 55.5% of Latinos. Again, this seems to be a substantial proportion who are fearful.

Police

We asked interviewees to respond to the statement "Charlotte-Mecklenburg police are doing a good job". In 1996, nearly 67% of respondents strongly agreed that police were doing a good job. That percentage increased only slightly to 70.8%. There appears to be little change over time in the percentages of minorities who agree with this statement, although this sample contains more Latino respondents than the 1996 sample. We examined responses to this question by race/ethnicity. There was no statistically significant difference in the response to the question between African Americans and Latinos.

We also cross-tabulated responses to the statement by age. As in 1996, older respondents generally had more positive views of the police than younger respondents, and the difference was statistically significant.

We asked several other questions having to do with police performance. The percentages that strongly agreed and agreed with statements are displayed in Table 4. The percentages agreeing that police response time is good in their neighborhoods dropped somewhat from nearly 68% in 1996 to close to 61% in 2003. Although not a large percentage decrease, this change may be cause for concern. There also appear to be statistically significant differences in the response based on ethnicity. For example, 24% of Latinos strongly agreed that response time is good, while only 7.6% of African Americans strongly agreed. Again, age is strongly correlated with responses. Older people were more likely than younger people to agree that police response time is good.

Table 4. Percent Strongly Agreeing and Agreeing with Statements 1996 and 2003

Statement	1996	2003
Charlotte-Mecklenburg police are doing a good job.	67.0	70.8
Police response time is good in my neighborhood	67.9	60.6
The police are very visible in my neighborhood	*	68.6
The police have made a difference in the last five years	*	61.9
I am pleased with the efforts of police in my neighborhood	*	70.5

*No comparable question in the 1996 survey

Responses to perceptions about police visibility and how satisfied people were with police efforts in the neighborhoods showed that most people were satisfied with police. The number of respondents who agreed that police have made a difference in the neighborhood over the last five years was slightly lower (61.9%). There were no differences in the responses to these questions by ethnicity. As in the other police perception statements, age was correlated with responses. Older people were more likely than younger people to strongly agree or agree that the police had made a difference over the last five years and that they were pleased with the efforts of the police.

We inquired if neighborhood residents knew their community police officer. Only 21% responded affirmatively. Related to this, we asked about contact with police. A question asked, "Think about the last year. About how many times in the last year did you have contact with the police?" Among 320 respondents, 57.3% said "None," 24.4% said "1–2 times," 8.8% said "3–4 times," and 7% said "5 or more times." There were differences by race/ethnicity. Hispanic/Latino respondents were more likely to say they had contact with the police. Table 5 presents these results.

Table 5. Contact with the Police by Race/Ethnicity

Contact	African American	Hispanic/Latino
None	61.1%	40.0%
1-2 times	23.5%	37.1%
3-4 times	8.4%	14.3%
5 or more times	7.0%	8.6%

Table 6 examines contact with police by age. As indicated, younger people were most likely to say and seniors were least likely to say they had one or more contacts with police in the last year.

We asked the question, "Were your contacts with police generally friendly?" Among 126 respondents who said they had contacts with police in the previous year, 77.8% responded, "yes, contacts were generally friendly". Over 76% of African Americans and 69.6% of Hispanics/Latinos said "yes." Further, there were few differences by age. Apparently, contacts with police have been friendly for those in this sample.

Table 6. Contact with Police by Age

	Contact
Age	**One or more times**
18-25	53.1%
26-45	46.9%
46-64	36.5%
65 or more	25.6%

Trends

We asked about possible crime trends. Respondents were presented with the statement "Crime has gone down in my neighborhood in the last five years." Of 298 respondents, 52% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. Most felt crime was going down. There were differences by race/ethnicity, however. More than 53% of African American respondents, as opposed to just 37% of Hispanic/Latino respondents felt crime was going down in their neighborhood. There were also differences by age. Slightly more than 51% of respondents 18–25, 49.5% of respondents 26–45, 49.4% of respondents 46–65, and a much larger 70.3% of respondents 65 or more years of age felt crime had gone down in their neighborhood.

Another similar statement given to respondents was "Drug sales have decreased in my neighborhood in the last five years." Most respondents (113 out of 292) said they did not know. Among those who did respond, 108 respondents, or 44.2% either agreed or strongly agreed that drug sales had gone down.

These latter results seem to fit with our results on fear. Respondents seem less fearful than in 1996 and many seem to feel crime has decreased in the last few years. This may be a result of increased community policing of neighborhoods.

Policy Recommendations

1. The rates of victimization reported by the respondents in our survey were not especially high. Nevertheless, the rates of victimization reported by Hispanic/Latino households were somewhat higher than those reported by African American households. Similarly, Hispanic respondents were more likely to say that violent crime was a big problem in their neighborhood and that they feared for their safety. They also were less likely than African Americans to say crime had gone down in their neighborhood in the last five years. One policy recommendation is that Charlotte-Mecklenburg police be more attentive to Latino neighborhoods, increasing their community policing efforts and levels of patrol.

2. Two-fifths of both African American and Hispanic/Latino respondents with children in the household said that they feared for their child's safety at school. These data suggest the continuing need for police/school resource officers in the schools.

3. The majority of respondents agreed that Charlotte-Mecklenburg police are doing a "good job." Most agreed that police have made a difference in their community and said that they are pleased with police efforts in their neighborhood. We recommend that local law enforcement continue to implement community policing techniques. These appear to foster positive relations between officers and the communities they serve.

4. Additionally, we recommend that local law enforcement aggressively recruit minority officers. Minority officers would presumably be more responsive and sensitive to the needs of minority populations. All officers should receive cultural awareness training no matter their race or ethnicity. This training should be conducted frequently and reinforced by policy designed to monitor the behavior of officers who do not represent the department favorably when interacting with minority populations.

5. The police department should create an **easily accessible** means by which citizens can voice their concerns about officers who are not serving the community in a positive fashion. Citizen concerns should be promptly investigated and the results of the investigation should be reported back to the citizen.

6. Younger people were more likely to say they have been victimized, more likely to say they had had contact with police, and least likely to say the police were doing a "good job." To address younger peoples' dissatisfaction with law enforcement, we recommend that officers be encouraged to actively communicate with the young people they see while on patrol. This is simply good community policing technique. On a departmental level, we should seek to institute programs beyond the school-based programs, where officers and youth can interact in non-confrontational settings. This may be, for example, a reactivation of Police Athletic Leagues.

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The State of Children, Education, and Care in the Preschool Years: A Forecast of Our Future

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Introduction

An oft-quoted African proverb recounts a story about a wise elder who, when asked, "how are you?", always responded, "how are the children?" This proverb alludes to what we also know based upon demographic and educational research: The current conditions of our youngest children foretell our community's overall well-being and forecast the state of our future.

The following tables summarize selected data relevant to the education and care of young African American and Hispanic/Latino children in the central Carolinas. The focus is on children from birth through five years of age, a critical period of enormous growth and learning (NRC, 2001).

Who Are the Young Children in the Central Carolinas?

Table 1 compares changes in the number of young African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Non-Hispanic White children in the central Carolinas over the past decade.

Table 1. Population of Young Children, 0–4 Years, by Race/ Ethnicity

	Non-Hispanic African American		Hispanic/Latino		Non-Hispanic White	
County	**1990**	**2000**	**1990**	**2000**	**1990**	**2000**
Cabarrus, NC	1,163	1,298	52	893	5,565	6,752
Gaston, NC	2,214	2,351	79	644	10,031	9,292
Lincoln, NC	413	306	68	391	3,040	3,270
Mecklenburg, NC	12,626	15,713	449	4,628	24,580	27,267
Rowan, NC	1,570	1,601	79	700	5,790	5,934
Union, NC	1,348	1,359	60	1,057	5,073	7,353
York, SC	2,365	2,395	85	334	7,102	7,928

Source: U.S. Census 2000, Summary File 3.

- As these data reveal, the number of African American and Non-Hispanic White young children ages birth through four years has remained relatively constant or reflected general population changes over the past decade.

- By contrast, the number of Hispanic young children has increased dramatically over the past decade in all counties across the central Carolinas. The magnitude of these increases ranges from a *4-fold increase* in York County, South Carolina to nearly an *18-fold increase* in Union County, North Carolina.

- These preschool population patterns provide powerful forecasts for the future demographics of older age groups in the central Carolinas, and mirror national trends. National predictions call for the population of young minority children ages five and under, including African American and Hispanic/Latino children, to exceed the number of Non-Hispanic White children by 2030. Over time, this pattern will hold for increasingly older ages (USDC, 1999).

What Are the Family Circumstances of Young Children?

The state of young children is inseparable from the state of their families. Tables 2 and 3 present data on the economic circumstances and parental labor force participation of young children in the central Carolinas. These two factors exert pivotal influences on young children's development and learning, and thus provide key answers to the question, "how are the children?" (NRC, 2001).

Table 2. Percentage of Young Children Under 5 Years Below Poverty, by Race/Ethnicity (1999)

County	Non-Hispanic African American	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White
Cabarrus, NC	23%	39%	7%
Gaston, NC	46%	26%	10%
Lincoln, NC	43%	15%	8%
Mecklenburg, NC	24%	26%	4%
Rowan, NC	34%	33%	7%
Union, NC	32%	44%	5%
York, SC	31%	39%	7%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, Summary File 3.

Table 3. Young Children (0–6 Years) With All In-Home Parents in the Labor Force (2000)

	Non-Hispanic African American		Hispanic		Non-Hispanic White	
County	% of Two Parents in Labor Force	% of Single Parents in Labor Force	% of Two Parents in Labor Force	% of Single Parents in Labor Force	% of Two Parents in Labor Force	% of Single Parents in Labor Force
Cabarrus, NC	80%	77%	39%	60%	55%	80%
Gaston, NC	60%	72%	32%	47%	59%	74%
Lincoln, NC	29%	53%	39%	85%	60%	80%
Mecklenburg, NC	69%	77%	29%	75%	49%	85%
Rowan, NC	77%	74%	41%	64%	58%	82%
Union, NC	53%	70%	23%	85%	54%	81%
York, NC	80%	66%	37%	75%	60%	78%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, Summary File 3.

- As the data in Table 2 document, unsettling proportions of young children in the central Carolinas live in economic poverty. Statewide childhood poverty averages

of 16.1% for North Carolina and 18.8% for South Carolina are as high or higher than a national average of 16.2% of children living below the poverty level (CDF, 2003). Yet these overall percentages pale in comparison to regional childhood poverty data for African American and Hispanic children.

- The proportions of young African American and Hispanic children living in economic poverty dramatically exceed both the state averages and comparable local proportions for Non-Hispanic White children. Indeed, in almost all counties in the central Carolinas, from *one out of four to nearly one out of two African American and Hispanic young children under five years of age are growing up under conditions of economic poverty.*

- These childhood poverty profiles may be surprising given the data presented in Table 3 on the parental labor force participation of young children ages birth to six years. Across the central Carolinas, the majority of in-home parents of young children work outside of the home. The notable exception to this pattern is evident among two-parent Hispanic families. Still, an important overall conclusion that can be drawn from Tables 2 and 3 reveals for the central Carolinas what we know to be true at the national level. *For the majority of poor young children, having parents who are employed does not prevent them from living in economic poverty. The majority of poor young children live in working families. This pattern is most pronounced among African American and Latino families* (NCCP, 2002).

High Quality Early Education and Care: What Access Do Young Children Have?

Given the patterns of family economic and work circumstances described above, access to high-quality early care and education becomes key to the well-being and future educational success of all young children in the central Carolinas. Such access appears to be *essential* for most African American and Latino young children. This conclusion is based on three well-substantiated facts:

- Young children are the most vulnerable to the negative effects of poverty. The first years of life are more important than had even been thought for children's emotional and intellectual development. Risk factors associated with poverty have a particularly negative impact on brain development during early childhood, often leaving children less ready for school and more likely to drop out over time (NCCP, 2002).

- Although not a substitute for healthier economic circumstances, high-quality early education programs can dramatically alter the life outcomes for young children of poverty. Poor children who attend high-quality early education programs are not only more likely to succeed in school, but are likely to experience improved long-term outcomes such as increased higher educational and employment status (Ramey & Ramey, 1998; Schweinhart, 2003).

- Child *care* and early *education* cannot be thought of as separate entities. Out-of-home care promotes the well-being and learning of young children if it is well-planned and well-implemented (NRC, 2001).

Data are not readily available for the central Carolinas to describe the participation of young children and families in early care and education *by ethnicity or race*. Table 4, however, presents nationally representative data describing the participation of young children in public or private preschool for each county in the central Carolinas.

Table 4. Young Children (3–4 Years) Enrolled in Public or Private Nursery/Preschool

County	African-American, Non-Hispanic			Hispanic			White, Non-Hispanic		
	#	% Public	% Private	#	% Public	% Private	#	% Public	% Private
Cabarrus, NC	356	75%	25%	110	50%	50%	1716	38%	62%
Gaston, NC	498	70%	30%	33	88%	12%	2157	44%	56%
Lincoln, NC	122	96%	4%	45	91%	9%	760	46%	54%
Mecklenburg, NC	5066	76%	24%	730	63%	37%	9438	25%	75%
Rowan, NC	489	93%	7%	50	82%	18%	1540	36%	64%
Union, NC	351	64%	36%	159	52%	48%	2378	33%	67%
York, SC	501	74%	26%	59	46%	54%	2315	43%	57%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, Summary File 3.
Note: Enrollment in Nursery/Preschool is defined as a family report that their child attended a "regular" public or private school during the data collection period.

- These data gain significance in documenting the relative reliance of African American and Hispanic families on *public* programs for access to early care and education. Communities in the central Carolinas have made strides in advancing the availability of public early education programs (e.g., More at Four; Bright Beginnings) as well as in educating the public about quality concerns in early care (e.g., North Carolina's Star Rating System).

- The challenge now will be to ensure that these programs are accessible for *all* families who choose to participate, that quality is *uniformly high*, and that the staff and curricula are *well-matched to the cultural and linguistic needs* of the children and families served.

Recommendations

1. Poverty is a central threat to the learning and development of African American and Hispanic/Latino young children in the central Carolinas, despite the fact that the vast majority of their parents work. Risk factors for young children living in poverty include limited access to higher education for parents and low wage jobs for parents (Lombardi, 2003). **More visible and explicit attention should be given to these family factors as *school readiness issues,* coupling new pre-kindergarten initiatives with comprehensive support for parents in preparing for and maintaining employment that pays a living wage.**

2. Child care is an essential support for families if they are to maintain productive employment. Community-based child care provides this support for families, and is as educational as school-based preschool if it is of high quality (e.g., Ramey & Ramey, 1998). Childcare that is not of high quality harms children's school readiness and chances of long-term educational success. **Data that are currently collected to document child care participation and quality in the central Carolinas should be disaggregated by race/ ethnicity. This refinement in available data is needed to monitor and guide efforts to advance the quality of child care available to African American and Hispanic/Latino young children and families.**

3. The most significant factor in producing quality care and education for young children is the quality of the staff. Yet, early educators receive little professional respect and even lower wages in relationship to the magnitude of their responsibilities (NRC, 2001). Based on the data presented here, the stakes are particularly high for young African American and Hispanic/Latino participating in early care and education. **Schools and businesses in the central Carolinas benefit from healthy, well-prepared children and families. They must join forces with child advocates to acknowledge the contribution of early educators to their own ability to function, and take active measures to advance early educators' employment conditions. Organizations and institutions that provide professional preparation for early educators must take active measures to ensure that staff develop the cultural and linguistic understandings required to provide effective early education for African American and Hispanic/Latino children.** Without both of these measures, other efforts to promote the school readiness of children and to sustain their families' productivity will never reach fruition.

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School Districts Profile for the Charlotte Region

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Introduction

The school systems in the Charlotte Region include districts in North and South Carolina counties that are diverse in demographics, test scores and pupil assignment plans. The following paper presents a comparison of these school systems that includes demographics, test scores, school completions rates, and other data.

Cabarrus County School System

Cabarrus County Schools have an enrollment of 19,882 students in 29 schools. The student/teacher ratio for grades K–5 is 22 students to one teacher, and for grades 6–12, the student/teacher ratio is 25 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $5,658. The ethnic distribution of students is: African American (14.5%), White (76.1%), Hispanic/Latino (6.2%), American Indian (0.3%), Multi-Racial (1.9%), and Asian (1.0%).

Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) have an enrollment of 108,108 students in 145 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 15.3 students to one teacher. The district total revenur per student is $7,109. The ethnic distribution of students is: African American (43%), White (43%), Hispanic/Latino (8%), American Indian/Multi Racial (2%), and Asian (4.0%).

Gaston County School System

Gaston County Schools have an enrollment of 30,600 students in 52 schools. Gaston is North Carolina's sixth largest school system. The student/teacher ratio for grades K–2 is 23 students to one teacher, and for grades 3–12, the student/teacher ratio is 26 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $6,404. The ethnic distribution of students is: African American (19.7%), White (76.3%), and Asian/Hispanic/Latino/Other (4.0%).

Lincoln County School System

Lincoln County Schools have an enrollment of 10,927 students in 19 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 14.2 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $6,691. The ethnic distribution of students is: African American (8%), White (82%), and Hispanic/Latino (7%).

Rowan-Salisbury School System

Rowan-Salisbury Schools have an enrollment of 20,218 students in 30 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 15.3 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $6,657. The ethnic distribution of students is: African American (21%), White (70%), and Hispanic/Latino (5.5%).

Union County Public School System

Union County Public Schools have an enrollment of 25,680 students in 34 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 16.6 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $6,672. The ethnic distribution of students is: African American (16%), White (74%), and Hispanic/Latino (7%).

York County School System

York County School System is comprised of four school districts:

1. York 1 School District has an enrollment of 4,978 students in 8 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 19.5 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $6,538.

2. Clover School District (York 2) has an enrollment of 4,612 students in 8 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 18.3 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $9,200.

3. York 3 School District has an enrollment of 14,961 students in 21 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 22.2 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $6,656

4. Fort Mill School District (York 4) has an enrollment of 5,518 students in 8 schools. The student/teacher ratio is 18.8 students to one teacher. The district total revenue per student is $6,612.

Academic Achievement

A top priority for school systems within the seven counties has been to close the academic achievement gap that exists between White and minority students. The North Carolina State Board of Education is requiring local school systems to develop plans to achieve this goal. North Carolina students in grades 3–8 complete annual ABCs End-of grade tests in reading and mathematics. Students enrolled in any of ten courses—English I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physical Science, Physics, ELPS or U.S. History—are required to complete ABCs End-of-Course tests

South Carolina Department of Education has also developed new academic standards and has a statewide accountability system. South Carolina students must pass the reading, writing, and math sections of the Exit Exam to qualify for a South Carolina diploma. The Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests (PACT) are administered in mathematics and English/Language Arts to students in grades three through eight in the York County School Districts. In April 2002, students in the York County School Districts were given the PACT. The state established four levels of performance—below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. These tests are based on the South Carolina Curriculum.

Both North Carolina and South Carolina use some form of standardized testing to measure and determine student success.

ABC End-of-Grade Tests

- Test results show that the percentage of African American students passing both reading and math end-of-grade tests are behind Whites and Hispanics/Latinos in all counties. The gap is greater between African Americans and Whites than Hispanic and Whites.

- Percentage difference between African American and White students passing the end-of-grade tests: Union (35.5%), Mecklenburg (34.4%), Cabarrus (28.6%), Lincoln and Rowan (27.8%), and Gaston (24.2%).

- Percentage difference between African American and Hispanic students passing the end-of-grade tests: Lincoln (16.8%), Gaston (11.5%), Charlotte-Mecklenburg (4.8%), Rowan (3.1%), Cabarrus (1.7%), and Union (1.2%).

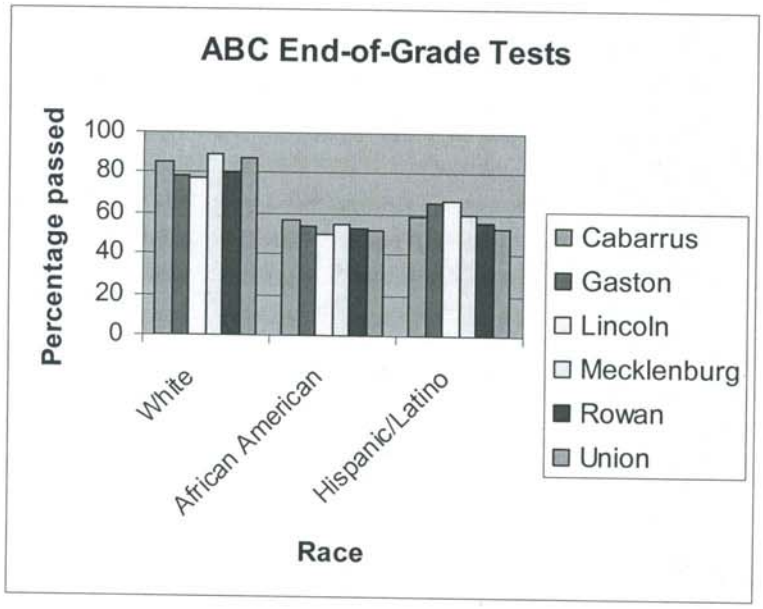
- Percentage difference between Hispanic and White students passing the end-of-grade tests: Union (34.3%), Charlotte-Mecklenburg (29.6%), Cabarrus (26.9%), Rowan (24.7%), Gaston (12.7%), and Lincoln (11%).

End-of-Grade Tests (2001–2002 school year)

Percent who passed both reading and math tests

Race	Cabarrus	Gaston	Lincoln	Charlotte-Mecklenburg	Rowan	Union
White	85.4	78.2	77.9	89.3	80.4	87.5
African American	56.8	54.0	50.1	54.9	52.6	52.0
Hispanic/Latino	58.5	65.5	66.9	59.7	55.7	53.2

Source: North Carolina School Report Cards, 2001–2002 School Year.



ABCs End-of-Course Test

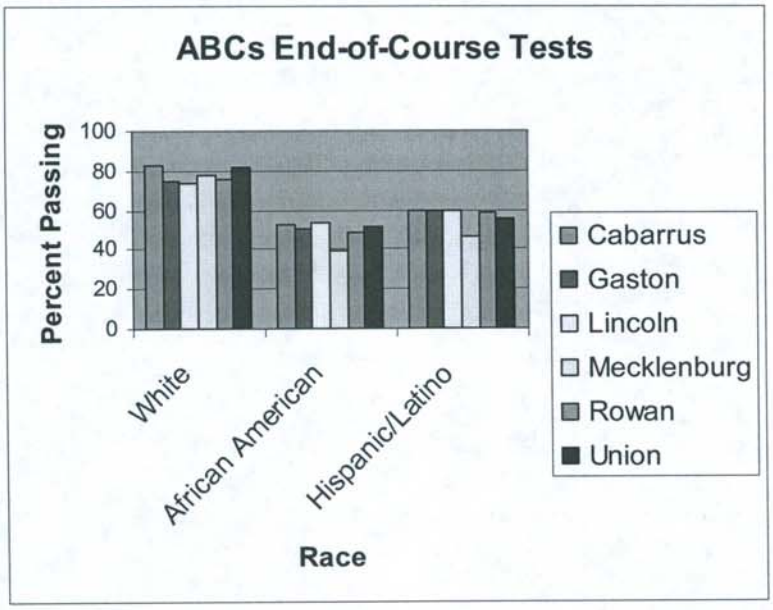
- The percentage of African American students passing the state's End-of-Course test is lower than any other race.
- Percentage difference between African American and Whites passing the End-of-Course test: Charlotte-Mecklenburg (38.9%), Union (30.2%) Cabarrus (29.8%), Rowan (27.3%), Gaston (23.9%), and Lincoln (19.9%).
- Percentage difference between Hispanics and Whites passing the End-of-Course test: Charlotte-Mecklenburg (31.2%), Union (26%), Cabarrus (23%), Rowan (17.2%), Gaston (14.3%), and Lincoln (13.6%).
- Percentage difference between African Americans and Hispanics passing the end-of-course test: Rowan (10.1%), Gaston (9.6%), Charlotte-Mecklenburg (7.7%), Cabarrus (6.8%), Lincoln (6.3%), and Union (4.2%).

ABCs End-of-Course Test (2001–2002 school year)

Percent of students with passing scores on the NC End-of-Course tests

Race	Cabarrus	Gaston	Lincoln	Charlotte-Mecklenburg	Rowan	Union
White	82.4	74.4	73.7	77.8	76.2	81.4
African American	52.6	50.5	53.8	38.9	48.9	51.2
Hispanic/Latino	59.4	60.1	60.1	46.6	59.0	55.4

Source: North Carolina School Report Cards, 2001–2002 School Year.



York County School Districts

PACT English/Language Arts (ELA):

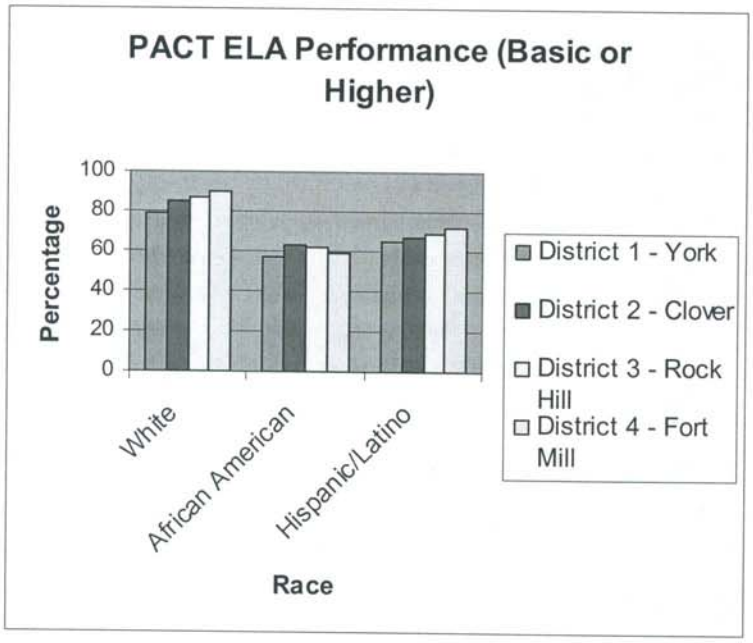
- Statistics show that African Americans are scoring significantly lower on the PACT ELA than Hispanic and Whites.
- The largest percentage difference between African Americans, Hispanic, and Whites occurs in York district 4.
- Percentage difference between African Americans and Whites by district: York district 1 (22%), York district 2 (22%), York district 3 (24.8%), and York district 4 (31.8%)
- Percentage difference between Hispanics and Whites by district: York district 1 (14%), York district 2 (18.3%), York district 3 (17.5%), and York district 4 (18.3%)
- Percentage difference between African Americans and Hispanics by district: York district 1 (8%), York district 2 (3.7%), York district 3 (7.3%), and York district 4 (13.5%)

English/Language Arts (York County)

Percentage of students scoring basic or above on the PACT ELA.

Race	District 1 - York	District 2 - Clover	District 3 - Rock Hill	District 4 - Fort Mill
White	79.0%	85.0%	86.8%	90.5%
African American	57.0%	63.0%	62.0%	58.7%
Hispanic/Latino	65.0%	66.7%	69.3%	72.2%

Source: State of South Carolina Annual District Report Card, 2002.



PACT Mathematics

- Statistics show that African Americans continue to score lower than Hispanics and Whites on the PACT Mathematics.

- Percentage difference between African Americans and Whites by district: York district 1 (24.4%), York district 2 (22.6%), York district 3 (29.2%), and York district 4 (31.2%).

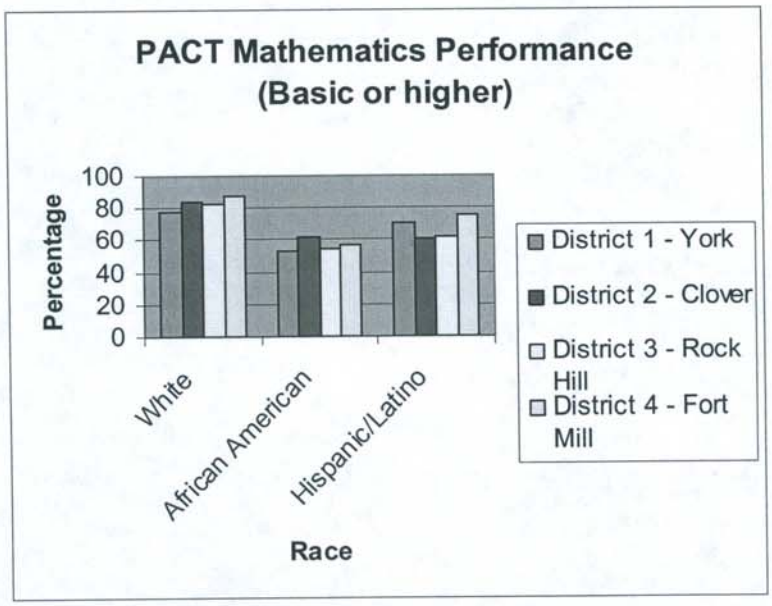
- Percentage difference between Hispanics/Latinos and Whites by district: York district 1 (7.6%), York district 2 (23.4%), York district 3 (20.8%), and York district 4 (13.2%).

- Percentage difference between African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos by district: York district 1 (16.8%), York district 2 (0.8%), York district 3 (8.4%), and York district 4 (18%).

Mathematics (York County)

Race	District 1 - York	District 2 - Clover	District 3 - Rock Hill	District 4 - Fort Mill
White	77.6%	84.1%	83.0%	88.2%
African American	53.2%	61.5%	53.8%	57.0%
Hispanic/Latino	70.0%	60.7%	62.2%	75.0%

Source: State of South Carolina Annual District Report Card, 2002.



High School Completion Rate

Technological advances in the workplace have increased the demand for a skilled labor force to the point where a high school education serves more as a minimum requirement for entry into the labor force. Completing a high school education is now even more essential in order to access additional education and training for the labor force. The high school completion rate represents students who have left high school and earned a high school diploma or certificate.

North Carolina High School Completers (frequencies)

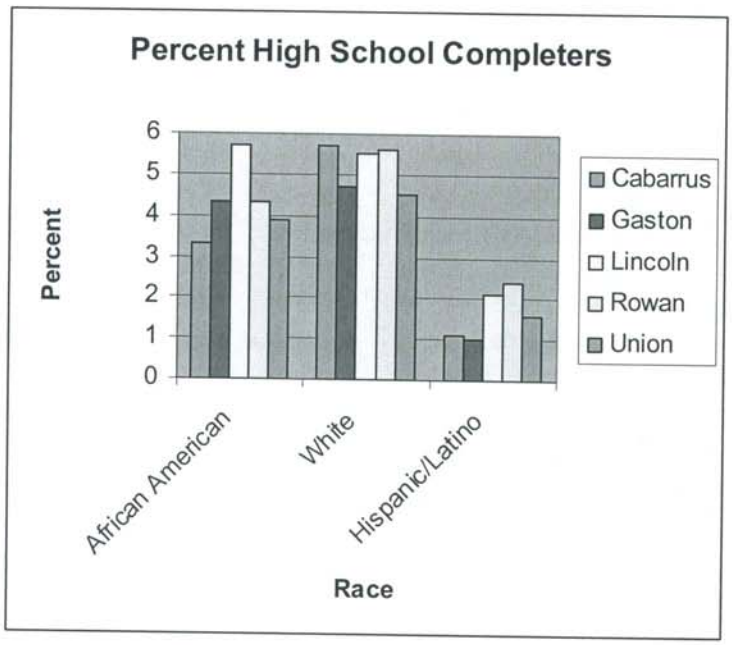
County	African American Male	African American Female	White Male	White Female	Hispanic Male	Hispanic Female
Cabarrus	38	58	465	399	8	5
Gaston	117	142	541	559	5	7
Lincoln	33	17	250	241	10	6
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	738	901	1381	1312	55	58
Rowan	78	103	388	397	14	13
Union	73	91	458	398	16	13

Source: National Center for Education Statistics. High school completers data from 2000–2001.

North Carolina High School Completers by Race, 2000–2001

County	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino
Cabarrus	3.3%	5.7%	1.1%
Gaston	4.3%	4.7%	0.99%
Lincoln	5.7%	5.5%	2.1%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	3.5%	5.8%	1.3%
Rowan	4.3%	5.6%	2.4%
Union	3.9%	4.5%	1.6%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics.



Drop-Out Rate

Counties	Avg. Rate
Gaston County Schools	5.91%
Lincoln County Schools	1.70%
Rowan County Schools	N/A
Union County Schools	2.93%
York 1 School District	5.7%
York 2 School District	5.6%
York 3 School District	1.6%
York 4 School District	2.0%

Source: Websites and school districts.

Number of Non Public Schools by County (Religious or Independent)

Counties	No. of Schools	No. of Males	No. of Females	Total
Cabarrus	4	923	939	1,862
Gaston	15	1,474	1,532	3,006
Lincoln	3	90	86	176
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	77	8926	8,934	17,860
Rowan	10	584	505	1,089
Union	12	682	640	1,322
York	7			1694

Source: myscschools.com and North Carolina Department of Education.

The Charter School Initiative was begun in 1996 as an alternative to the traditional public school education. Charter schools are publicly funded and reports to the State Board of Education.

Charter School Enrollment, 2002/2003

		Black		Hispanic		White		Totals
County	School	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Gaston	Highland Charter	60	54	0	0	0	1	115
Gaston	Piedmont Community Charter	41	26	1	2	92	89	251
Lincoln	Lincoln Charter	7	10	8	6	167	199	397
Meck	Community Charter	38	27	2	0	13	10	90
Meck	Crossroads Charter High	155	90	3	3	4	2	257
Meck	Kennedy Charter	16	10	0	1	8	1	36
Meck	Lake Norman Charter	7	7	1	4	242	269	530
Meck	Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy	10	10	5	3	55	34	117
Meck	Sugar Creek Charter	261	252	0	1	0	1	515
Meck	Queen's Grant Community	12	11	3	4	203	224	457
Rowan	Rowan Academy	47	32	0	0	3	0	82
Union	Union Academy	40	34	5	3	188	178	448
York	The Children's School at Sylvia Circle							256

Source: North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile, 2003.

Recommendations

1. A top priority for all counties has been to close the academic achievement gap that exists between White and minority students. This gap is closing, but still remains wider between African Americans and Whites than Hispanics and Whites. Federal and state mandated testing has not resolved the academic gap. Districts have established goals for meeting the "No Child Left Behind Legislation," but attitudes and beliefs cannot be legislated. Districts must work to change their schools' culture to incorporate nontraditional approaches to teaching, learning, and testing. Districts must also re-examine why this gap continues and what additional steps must be taken to eradicate this disparity.

2. Gathering statistical information about the various school districts is a daunting task. The State Board of Education publishes school district information, but this information is frequently incomplete. For example, various districts do not provide school population information based on ethnic and gender distribution. School districts should collect and distribute appropriate information in a timely manner to the various agencies that compile educational data.

Summary Findings on Higher Education in the Charlotte Region

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Winthrop University

Introduction

There are 16 institutions of higher learning in the seven-county Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC, Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)—Cabarrus, Gaston, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan and Union counties in North Carolina, and York County in South Carolina. There are five public 2-year institutions, two public 2-year or higher institutions, and nine private 4-year or higher institutions in this MSA.

Data on Enrollment

Data on enrollment is provided in the following tables and narrative.

- The total undergraduate enrollment (2001) in these 16 institutions is 57,647. There are 28,493 students enrolled in the public 2-year institutions, 19,973 undergraduate students enrolled in the public 2-year or higher institutions, and 9,181 undergraduate students enrolled in the private 2-year or higher institutions (Table 1).

- Of these 57,647 undergraduate students, 13,283 (23%) are African American, 1,024 (1.8%) are Hispanic, and 39,258 (68.1%) are Non-Hispanic White (Table 1).

- Of the 28,493 students enrolled in the public 2-year institutions, 6,328 (22.2%) are African American, 531 (1.9%) are Hispanic, and 19,359 (67.9%) are Non-Hispanic White (Table 1).

- Of the 19,973 undergraduate students enrolled in the public 4-year or higher institutions, 3,778 (18.9%) are African American, 346 (1.7%) are Hispanic, and 14,455 (72.4%) are Non-Hispanic White (Table 1).

- Of the 9,181 undergraduate students enrolled in the private 4-year or higher institutions, 3,177 (34.6%) are African American, 147 (1.6%) are Hispanic, and 5,444 (59.3%) are Non-Hispanic White (Table 1).

- There are three historically Black institutions (Barber-Scotia College, Johnson C. Smith University, and Livingstone College) in this MSA with a combined enrollment of 2,471 undergraduate students. Of these students, 2,413 (97.6%) are African American, 11 (0.4%) are Hispanic, and 16 (0.6%) are Non-Hispanic White (Table 1).[2]

[2] Note: Figures for Clinton Junior College in Rock Hill, SC, could not be obtained.

- Of the 6,710 undergraduate students in the six other private 4-year or higher institutions, 764 (11.4%) are African American, 136 (2.0%) are Hispanic, and 5,428 (80.9%) are Non-Hispanic White (Table 1).

Table 1. Undergraduate Enrollment (Fall 2001), Percent by Race/Ethnicity

Institution	Description	Total Enrollment	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	White, Non-Hispanic
Barber-Scotia College	Private, 4-year	571	96.5 %	1.8 %	1.6 %
Belmont Abbey College	Private, 4-year	870	9.0 %	2.6 %	82.1 %
Cabarrus College of Health Sciences	Private, 4-year	280	11.4 %	1.7 %	86.1 %
Carolinas College of Health Sciences	Public, 2-year	266	20.7 %	2.6 %	75.2 %
Catawba College	Private, 4-year	1,435	16.4 %	1.5 %	79.2 %
Central Piedmont Comm. College	Public, 2-year	15,648	25.2 %	2.2 %	60.4 %
Davidson College	Private, 4-year	1,673	5.3 %	2.8 %	84.4 %
Gaston College	Public, 2-year	4,174	15.5 %	1.7 %	80.4 %
Johnson C Smith University	Private, 4-year	1,595	99.9 %	0.0 %	0.1 %
Livingstone College	Private, 4-year	305	88.2 %	0.3 %	1.6 %
Queens University	Private, 4-year	1,197	16.4 %	1.7 %	75.9 %
Rowan-Cabarrus Comm. College	Public, 2-year	4,705	14.8 %	1.3 %	82.0 %
Univ. of North Carolina-Charlotte	Public, 4-year	15,135	16.7 %	1.9 %	73.3 %
Wingate University	Private, 4-year	1,255	10.7 %	1.5 %	81.0 %
Winthrop University	Public, 4-year	4,838	25.8 %	1.1 %	69.4 %
York Technical College	Public, 2-year	3,700	26.8 %	1.3 %	67.5 %
TOTALS - ALL INSTITUTIONS	------	**57,647**	**23.0 %**	**1.8 %**	**68.1 %**

Source: IPEDS College Data.

- There are 57,647 undergraduate students enrolled in these 16 institutions, 40.9% male and 59.1% female. Of this total, 4,501 (7.8%) are African American males and 8,782 (15.2%) are African American females; 461 (0.8%) are Hispanic males and 563 (1.0%) are Hispanic females; and 16,638 (28.9%) are Non-Hispanic White males and 22,620 (39.2%) are Non-Hispanic White females (Table 2).

Table 2. Undergraduate Enrollment (Fall 2001), Percent by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Institution	All Students		Black, Non-Hispanic		Hispanic		White, Non-Hispanic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Barber-Scotia College	51.5 %	48.5 %	48.7 %	47.8 %	1.8 %	0.0 %	0.9 %	0.7%
Belmont Abbey College	43.8 %	56.2 %	3.3 %	5.6 %	1.5 %	1.1 %	35.5 %	46.6 %
Cabarrus College of Health Sciences	6.1 %	93.9 %	1.1 %	10.4 %	0.0 %	1.8 %	5.0 %	81.1 %
Carolinas College of Health Sciences	5.6 %	94.4 %	1.9 %	18.8 %	0.0 %	2.6 %	3.8 %	71.4 %
Catawba College	48.6 %	51.4 %	8.7 %	7.7 %	0.6 %	0.9 %	38.0 %	41.2 %
Central Piedmont Comm. College	42.7 %	57.3 %	8.4 %	16.8 %	1.1 %	1.1 %	27.5 %	32.8 %
Davidson College	49.2 %	50.8 %	2.6 %	2.7 %	1.3 %	1.6 %	41.5 %	42.9 %
Gaston College	33.8 %	66.2%	3.5 %	12.0 %	0.6 %	1.2 %	28.6 %	51.7 %
Johnson C Smith University	42.0 %	58.0 %	42.0 %	57.9 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.1 %
Livingstone College	54.4 %	45.6 %	47.5 %	40.7 %	0.0 %	0.3 %	1.0 %	0.6 %
Queens University	22.5 %	77.5 %	3.3 %	13.0 %	0.8 %	.9 %	16.4 %	59.5 %
Rowan-Cabarrus Comm. College	37.4 %	62.6 %	4.0 %	10.8 %	0.7 %	0.7 %	32.0 %	50.0 %
Univ. of North Carolina- Charlotte	45.7 %	54.3 %	5.5 %	11.2 %	0.9 %	1.1 %	35.0 %	38.4 %
Wingate University	46.7 %	53.3 %	6.6 %	4.1 %	0.7 %	0.8 %	36.5 %	44.5 %
Winthrop University	30.7 %	69.3 %	6.7 %	19.1 %	0.3 %	0.8 %	22.0 %	47.4 %
York Technical College	38.0 %	62.0 %	7.8 %	19.0 %	0.6 %	0.7 %	28.1 %	39.5 %
TOTALS - ALL INSTITUTIONS	**40.9 %**	**59.1 %**	**7.8 %**	**15.2 %**	**0.8 %**	**1.0 %**	**28.9 %**	**39.2 %**

Source: IPEDS College Data.

- There were 7,220 undergraduate degrees or certificates granted in 2001 (Tables 3 and 4).

- Of these 7,220 undergraduate degrees, African American students received 1,322 (18.3%), Hispanic students received 115 (1.6%), and Non-Hispanic White students received 5,402 (74.8%) (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3. Degrees/Certificates Granted, Associate=s or Less (2001), Percent by Race/Ethnicity

Institution	Level	Total Granted	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	White, Non-Hispanic
Cabarrus College of Health Sciences	Bachelor's Associate=s Certificates	122	12.3 %	0.8 %	72.9 %
Carolinas College of Health Sciences	Associate's Certificates	102	17.6 %	2.9 %	75.5 %
Central Piedmont Comm. College	Associate's Certificates	792	22.7 %	2.5 %	64.8 %
Gaston College	Associate's Certificates	580	11.9 %	3.3 %	83.6 %
Rowan-Cabarrus Comm. College	Associate's Certificates	434	7.8 %	0.9 %	89.4 %
York Technical College	Associate's Certificates	500	23.8 %	0.4 %	72.2 %
TOTALS - ALL INSTITUTIONS	------	**2,530**	**17.2 %**	**1.9 %**	**75.6 %**

Source: IPEDS College Data.

Table 4. Degrees Granted, Bachelor=s (2001), Percent by Race/Ethnicity

Institution	Level	Total Granted	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	White, Non-Hispanic
Barber-Scotia College	Bachelor=s	57	94.7 %	1.8 %	3.5 %
Belmont Abbey College	Bachelor=s	132	6.1 %	0.0 %	91.7 %
Cabarrus College of Health Sciences	Bachelor=s Associate=s	2	0.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %
Catawba College	Master=s Bachelor=s	245	9.8 %	0.8 %	86.9 %
Davidson College	Bachelor=s	444	6.5 %	2.7 %	86.3 %
Johnson C Smith University	Bachelor=s	183	100 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Livingstone College	Bachelor=s	97	93.8 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Queens University	Master=s Bachelor=s	220	8.6 %	3.2 %	81.8 %
UNC Charlotte	Doctor=s Master=s Bachelor=s	2,367	12.9 %	1.2 %	78.7 %
Wingate University	Master=s Bachelor=s	209	9.6 %	2.4 %	85.6 %
Winthrop University	Master=s Bachelor=s	734	21.0 %	1.2 %	74.6 %
TOTALS - ALL INSTITUTIONS	------	**4,690**	**18.9 %**	**1.4 %**	**74.4 %**

Source: IPEDS College Data.

- Many of the 2-year institutions provide literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for area residents. As examples, Tables 5 and 6 provide data by race and ethnicity for these programs at Central Piedmont Community College.

Table 5. Enrollment in Literacy Classes, U.S. Citizens (2001)

Type of Class	All Students	Black, Non-Hispanic		Hispanic		White, Non-Hispanic	
	Total	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Adult High School/GED	3,344	1,724	51.6 %	148	4.4 %	1,362	40.7 %
Adult Basic Literacy and ESL	3,743	2,665	71.2 %	356	9.5 %	515	13.8 %
All Other Categories	544	247	45.4 %	29	5.33 %	231	42.46 %

Source: Institutional Research, CPCC.

Table 6. Enrollment in Literacy Classes, International Students (2001)

Type of Class	All Students	Black, Non-Hispanic		Hispanic		White, Non-Hispanic	
	Total	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Adult High School/GED	197	31	15.7 %	128	65.0 %	12	6.1 %
Adult Basic Literacy and ESL	4,683	381	8.1 %	3,414	72.9 %	284	6.1 %
All Other Categories	371	15	4.0 %	229	61.7 %	9	2.4 %

Source: Institutional Research, CPCC.

Recommendations

1. While racial and ethnic diversity of student populations vary widely by type and level of institution, all colleges and universities in the Charlotte MSA need to make greater effort to increase minority enrollments and improve retention of minority students.

2. College enrollment among African American females is nearly twice that of African American males. This is a significant disparity not found among other racial and ethnic groups. Further study is needed to determine why this gap exists and to develop ways to better recruit and retain African American male students.

3. The number of Latinos attending institutions of higher education is far less than the number residing in the Charlotte MSA. At present, this rapidly growing population is being served primarily through English-language programs like those offered at Central Piedmont Community College. As this population becomes more settled and less transient, colleges and universities will need to prepare for a significant increase in Latino enrollment. At the same time, area schools need to develop more outreach programs to better serve the higher education needs of this community.

Employment, Income Inequality, and Housing: The Economic Well Being of Black and Hispanic/Latino Americans in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

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Introduction

Assessing the economic well-being of Latino and African Americans residing in Mecklenburg County is a complicated task. An individual's economic well-being is determined by a myriad of factors: their job and income, the quality of their housing, whether or not they own their own vehicle, how much education they have had the opportunity to acquire, and even how well they are doing relative to their neighbors. While assessing economic well being is not an easy task, it is an important one. In the United States of the 21st century, an individual's sense of self worth is often determined by his or her economic success.

In this section of the report, we address three different themes that impact the economic well being of African Americans and Latino Americans in Mecklenburg County. First, we examine the labor market outcomes for African Americans and Latino Americans in Mecklenburg County. Then, in the second section, we turn our attention to the topic of income inequality in the county. By examining measures of income inequality, we are able to provide some insight on the relative economic success of African Americans and Latinos. Finally, in the third section of the report, we turn our attention to the county's housing market. We document the types, as well as the condition, of the housing units occupied by minorities in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. By carefully examining these three topics, we are able to provide a partial snapshot of the economic outcomes achieved by African Americans and Latino Americans in Mecklenburg County. And, while we find that minorities in Charlotte are doing better than they had been ten years ago, we also find that a great deal of work remains to be done.

Employment

Introduction

In this section of the report we examine how African Americans and Hispanic/Latino Americans are faring in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg labor market. To this end, we will discuss the current distribution of jobs held by these minority groups. We find that the influx of Latino immigrants over the past decade has affected the types of jobs commonly held by *both* minority groups. Furthermore, we also discuss the job mobility that exists for minorities. This section of the report concludes with a discussion of employers' opinions about race in the workplace and the issues that now exist due to the increasing diversity amongst workers.

Population

Before examining the status of employment and wages for African Americans and Latinos, it is important to look at how these populations have grown over the past two decades. Table 1 presents Census data broken down by race. It clearly illustrates the growth in the Latino population, which increased by 642.9% from 6,051 to 44,954 between 1990 and 2000. During the 1990s the total population of Mecklenburg County grew by 36.0% from 511,433 to 695,454. The White population increased by 22.2%, and the African American population climbed by 43.1%. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the drastic expansion of the Hispanic population between the Census years 1990 and 2000. When considering these figures, it is necessary to note that the values not only reflect the number of those eligible to be considered part of the workforce, but rather the entire population. Children and elderly people obviously make up a portion of the population, yet they do not vie for positions in the job market. Nonetheless, due to the fact that more than half of the population is in the work force, an analysis of population growth helps to indicate general trends in the labor market.

Table 1: Population by Race

	1980	1990	2000
Total	404,270	511,433	695,454
White	289,500	364,484	445,356
African American	106,237	134,616	192,666
Latino	3,767	6,051	44,954

Figure 1

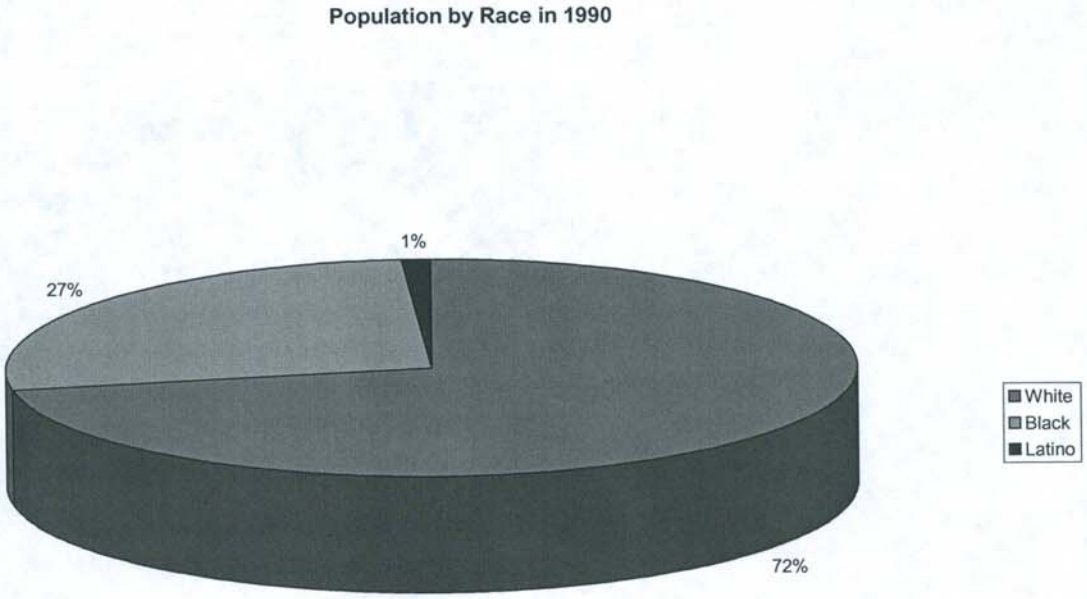
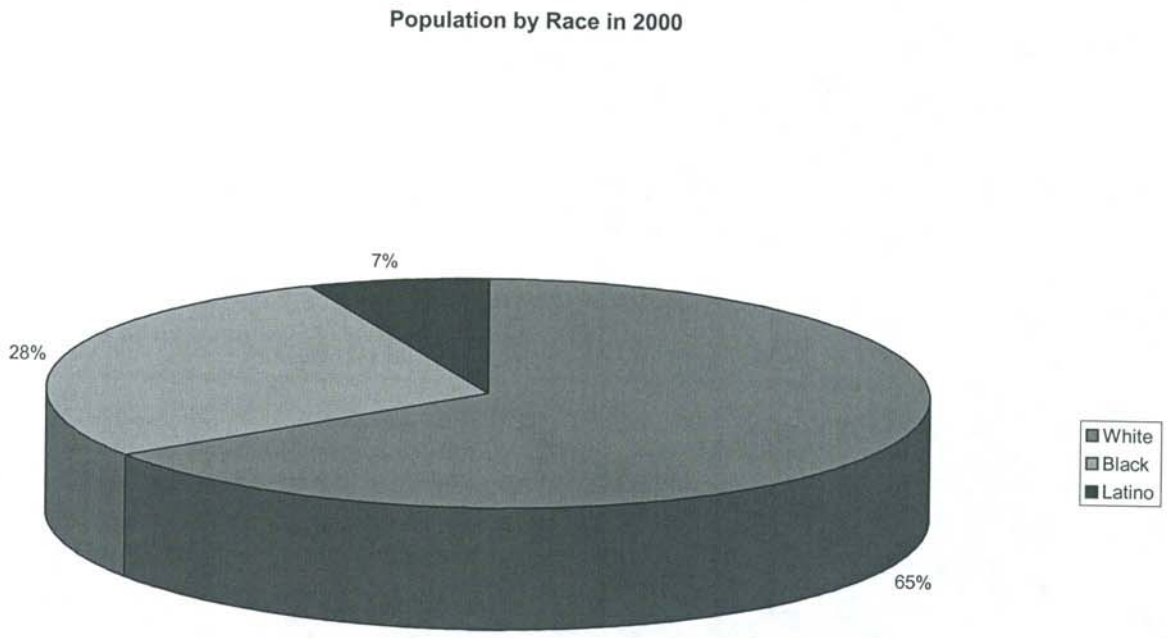


Figure 2



The population growth rate of Mecklenburg County, in comparison to that for the entire state of North Carolina, is exceptionally high. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that statewide Latino population growth over the same decade was 129%, which is dwarfed by the 642.9% increase in Mecklenburg County. This reflects the significant number of Latinos that have to chosen to reside in Mecklenburg County. In their report entitled "Latino Employment Growth in North Carolina: Ethnic Displacement or Replacement?", Dr. Jeffery Leiter and Dr. Donald Tomaskovic-Devey suggest that the disproportionate growth in the Latino population reflects a new wave of immigrants who have the intention of establishing permanent residence.[1] They have done so in order to obtain stable jobs instead of seeking migrant jobs and moving from one area to another as the seasons change.[2] Perhaps these immigrants are concentrated in urban areas like Mecklenburg County because these locations offer more job opportunities. In light of this trend, we must examine how the rapid growth of the Latino American population has affected the availability of jobs for minorities. We will pursue this topic in the following sections.

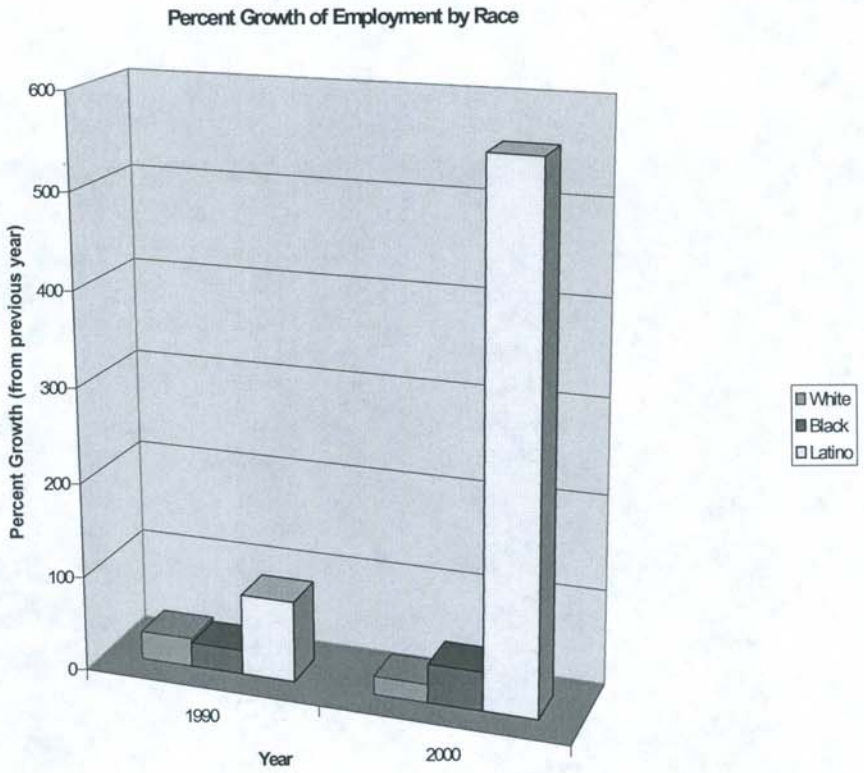
Employment

As the population has grown at different rates among Caucasians and minorities, employment rates have followed a similar trend that can be seen in Table 2. During the 1990s, the total civilian labor force employed in Mecklenburg County grew by 31.3%. Breaking these numbers down by race yields statistics that are very similar to those for population growth. Caucasian employment grew by 19.2% while African American employment increased by 40.5%, nearly twice that of Whites. Once again, the growth in the Latino workforce far out shadowed all of the other categories. The Latino work force grew by nearly 556.1%. This is illustrated in Figure 3.

Table 2: Employed Workers by Race

	1980	**1990**	**2000**
Total	215,309	281,201	369,275
White	161,423	209,995	250,338
African American	51,427	64,527	90,660
Latino	1,896	3,509	23, 024

Figure 3



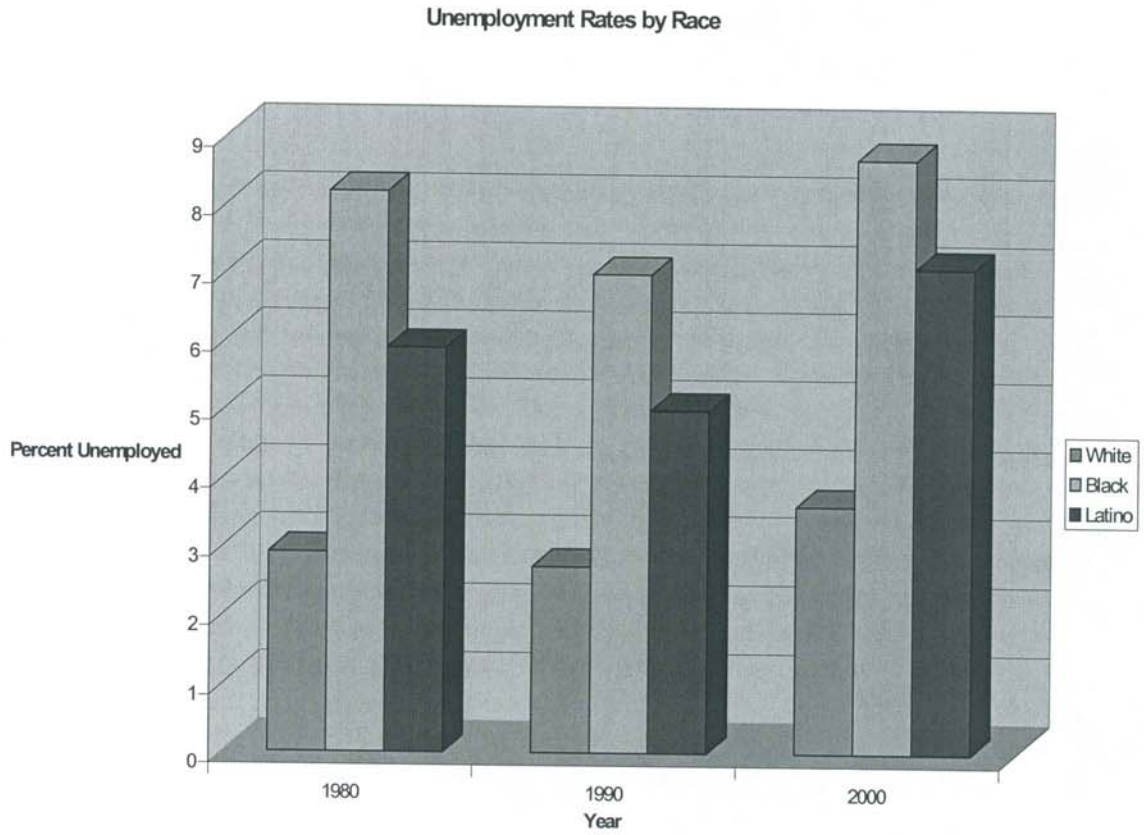
Unemployment

Table 3 and Figure 4 show that disproportionate numbers of African Americans and Latinos are unemployed in Mecklenburg County. Although intra-decade fluctuations have occurred due to the business cycle, the long run trend for unemployment rates shows remarkable stability. For the past 30 years, the Latino population's unemployment rate has been roughly twice that of Whites whereas the African American population's unemployment rate has been roughly 2 ½ times that of Whites. While it would be difficult to pinpoint the reasons for the persistently high unemployment rates among African Americans and Latino Americans, the presence of such a large employment gap suggests that minorities are not getting access to the training and education that they need in order to succeed in the job market. Thus, this is a topic that warrants additional study.

Table 3: Unemployment Rate in Mecklenburg County by Race

	1980	1990	2000
Total	4.2	3.8	5.2
White	2.9	2.7	3.6
African American	8.2	7.0	8.7
Latino	5.9	5.0	7.1

Figure 4



Ethnic Displacement vs. Ethnic Succession

The rapid growth of the Latino American population in Mecklenburg County has changed the structure of the region's labor market. Specifically, there are now more workers available to fill positions that become available. Because there are more workers competing for available jobs, it is important to gain an understanding of how the new workers interact with the workers who have already established themselves in the labor market. There are several different hypotheses concerning the interaction among races in the job market, but two theories concentrate on the impact that the enormous growth in the Latino population might have on the labor market. The two hypotheses are known as ethnic displacement and ethnic succession. Ethnic displacement theorizes that Latino immigrants compete with primarily African American workers for low-skilled jobs.[3] Under this scenario, wages are depressed and working conditions suffer.[4] These results arise due to the presence of Latinos who are accustomed to the less desirable working conditions of the developing countries from which they came. Their tolerance for unpleasant work is higher than that of Whites and African Americans, most of whom have only worked in America, and who therefore demand higher standards from employers. This competition for jobs creates tension in the work place and fosters an atmosphere conducive to racism and prejudice.[5]

Ethnic displacement is the theory on which many activists base their arguments for more restrictive immigration control. According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, "The crucial potential negative impacts of immigrants are displacement of incumbent worker groups from their jobs and wage depression for those who remain in the affected sectors."[6] The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) notes in a recent issue brief from October 2002 that ethnic displacement can be seen in many industries nationwide.[7] Noted specifically are the agriculture, furniture manufacturing, meatpacking, and hotel industries in which there has been a substantial increase in the employment of immigrants.[8] The willingness of these minorities to work for relatively low wages poses a threat to the effectiveness of labor unions.

Displacement does not occur exclusively between races. There is reason to believe that competition exists within races as well. As FAIR explains, "Sometimes, recent immigrants themselves are the victims of displacement."[9] This situation arises due to the arrival of additional waves of immigrants, whose eagerness to find work and earn money makes them willing to accept lower wages than immigrants who have already settled in the United States.

Eric Schlosser discusses the immigrant labor market in the meatpacking industry in his book *Fast Food Nation*. He notes, "Responding to the demands of the fast food and supermarket chains, the meatpacking giants have cut costs by cutting wages. They have turned one of the nation's best paying manufacturing jobs into one of the lowest-paying, creating a migrant industrial workforce of poor immigrants."[10] Schlosser adds, "If the meatpacking industry is allowed to continue its recruitment of poor, illiterate, often illegal immigrants, many other industries will soon follow its example."[11]

A second hypothesis that attempts to explain the relationship between Latino Americans and African Americans in the labor market is ethnic succession. Ethnic succession claims that the presence of Latinos in the workforce helps African Americans' ability to move up the job ladder. In their report "Employment Growth in North Carolina: Ethnic Displacement or Replacement?", which covers the time period between 1993–1997, Dr. Leiter and Dr. Tomaskovic-Devey support this theory. Ethnic succession is characterized by Latinos entering the work force in the most undesirable positions, thereby allowing African Americans and Caucasians who previously held those jobs to be promoted to higher paying positions.[12] According to the ethnic succession hypothesis, less conflict exists among races for everyone benefits from the entrance of Latinos into the job market.[13]

If we consider the employment trends of minorities in Mecklenburg County under the ethnic succession hypothesis, we would assume that Latinos are taking jobs that African Americans and Caucasians find undesirable. In an article in the Raleigh News and Observer from 2000, Ned Glascock summarized Leiter and Tomaskovic-Devey's beliefs by explaining, "Hispanic newcomers are filling some of the hardest, lowest-paying jobs around as an expanding economy offers African Americans, Whites and others better opportunities."[14]

During 1993–1997, the time period analyzed by Leiter and Tomaskovic-Devey, the economy was thriving. Unemployment was very low, and many African Americans and whites had the opportunity to enter higher-paying jobs. Latinos were able to assume the less desirable positions that African Americans and Whites had abandoned, thereby filling the developing need for unskilled workers in the labor market.[15] Since the year 2000, there has been a recession and a very slow recovery in the U.S. economy. This has resulted in declining demand for labor and increasing unemployment. Under the current conditions, there is reason to believe that Latinos and African Americans are competing for many of the same jobs, for jobs have become much more difficult to find.[16]

Stereotypes

Workplaces are stratified by color. Summarizing Leiter and Tomaskovic-Devey's work, Glascock explains, "Whites dominated the managerial and professional ranks, with African Americans concentrated 'far below' whites in blue-collar and service sector jobs. Latino Americans fell a notch or two below Blacks, working disproportionately as laborers".[17] This preconceived hierarchy creates problems for minority groups as they are expected to be satisfied working in jobs that offer lower wages.

In order to overcome these stereotypes, it is essential that African Americans and Latinos work together to improve their employment opportunities. As Katie Hyde and Jeffrey Leiter note, "Members of the various inter-ethnic groups tend to make stereotyped generalizations about the other groups; low-wage African Americans and Whites worry about being displaced from their jobs or homes by new Latino immigrants; and the capacity of these groups for unified working class action is compromised by their

perceptions and emotions."[18] These divisions allow employers to take advantage of stereotypes in order to keep labor costs low.

Latinos, in particular, need help in the workplace. Many are native Spanish-speakers with little or no understanding of English. The language barrier that these Latinos encounter contributes to their tendency to remain in occupations where they are paid low wages. As Leiter and Tomaskovic-Devey point out, "the availability of Spanish-speakers among longer-term workers may limit Latinos' opportunities to get training."[19] Latino Americans' inability to communicate with the people who could let them know about higher-paying jobs hinders their potential for upward mobility in the job market.

Latino immigrants must utilize their skill and reliability as a primary way of gaining their employers' trust. Many have had insufficient time to adapt to the nuances of the American culture, thus they feel that they must work harder to make up for their inability to perfectly assimilate with their employers' styles and mannerisms. As a result, the Latino population in North Carolina is often praised for its admirable work ethic. Leiter and Tomaskovic-Devey write that "managers and workers alike subscribe to the belief that Latinos are very good workers, typically working harder, more dependably, and more cheaply than non- Latinos."[20]

Latinos are also motivated to work hard because their outstanding performance helps to employ their family and friends. Managers often look to their current employees when they wish to hire additional workers.[21] This method is more successful than using job placement services or newspaper want ads for two reasons. First, Latino workers will only recommend hard-working candidates because they do not want to jeopardize their own credibility. Secondly, employed Latinos who would like the opportunity to recommend friends and relatives will work hard to gain the trust of a manager who is responsible for hiring workers.

The method in which managers rely on workers' recommendations when hiring new employees creates a system in which networking is crucial. Latinos must rely on social connections in order to secure jobs. Therefore, new immigrants are initially at a disadvantage. New immigrants have more trouble finding jobs than longer-term residents because they have not had the time to make as many friends who are willing to recommend them for various jobs.[22]

Types of Jobs

We have examined employment trends for minority workers, but to get a complete picture of the labor market for minority workers it is necessary to examine the types of jobs that these workers are getting. Latinos entering the workforce generally find work in manufacturing industries.[23] These industries are most commonly characterized by "entry-level jobs that required no skill or prior experience" and many of these employers do not require any reading or writing proficiency in either English or Spanish.[24] During the time of Leiter and Tomaskovic-Devey's study, a high turnover rate existed within the manufacturing sector causing job availability to be high.[25]

Within the manufacturing sector, most Latinos are found in positions that are labor intensive. They are not typically employed in managerial or professional positions.[26] Based on national data collected in Current Population Reports (CPR) of 1999 and 2000, Whites are much more likely to hold "managerial and professional positions" than minorities. Furthermore, the CPR suggests that in the year 2000, African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos were employed in service occupations or as "operators, fabricators, and laborers."[27]

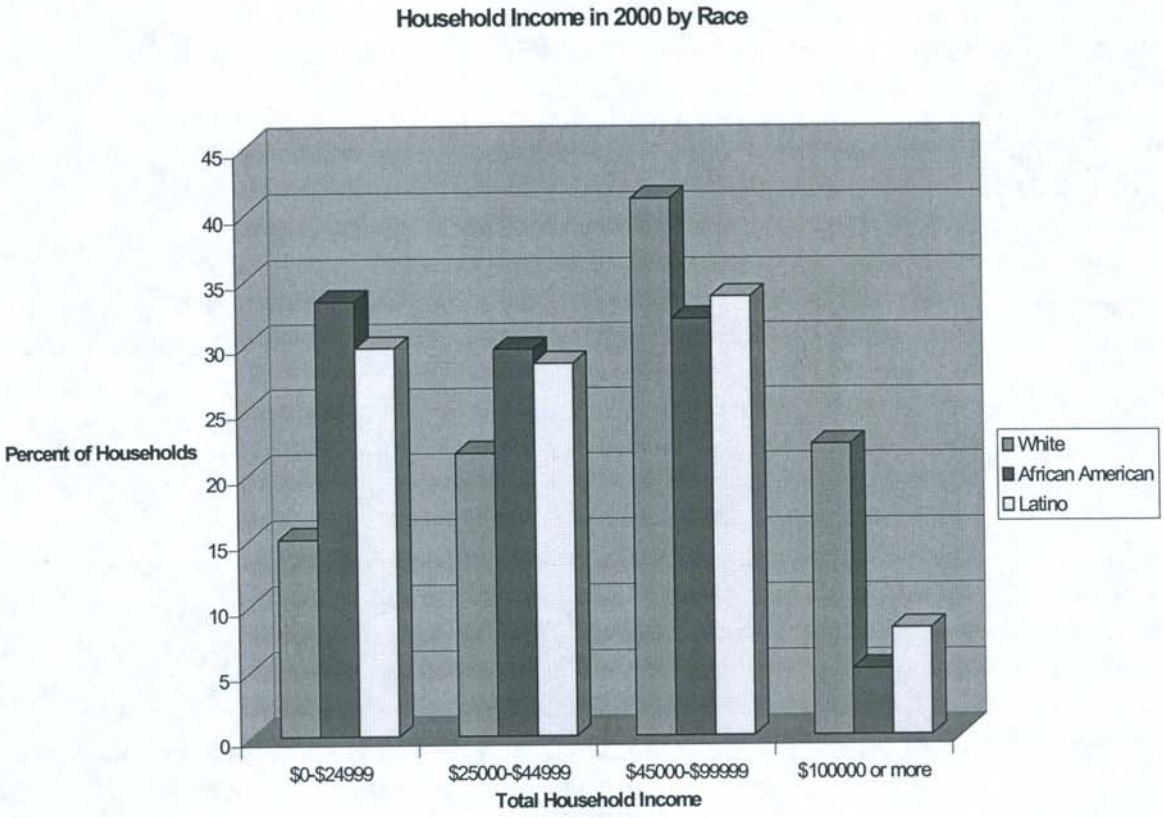
Income

Figure 5 provides some insight on how well Whites and minorities are being paid. (The figure summarizes data for Mecklenburg County for the year 2000.) In addition, Table 4 reinforces the story told by Figure 5: On average, Whites have higher incomes than Latinos and African Americans. The mean household income for Whites in 2000 was $70,339 whereas the mean household incomes for African Americans and Latinos were $43,606 and $49,595, respectively. It is important to remember that these numbers may be a bit skewed due to the fact that a household may consist of any number of working adults; however, the data demonstrate that income inequality is a serious issue in Mecklenburg County. This topic will be explored in greater depth in the next section of the report.

Table 4: Mean Household Income in Mecklenburg County by Race in 2000 dollars

	1980	1990	2000
Total	44,737	56,473	68,732
White	52,173	63,253	79,339
African American	30,823	35,360	43,606
Latino	43,074	55,684	49,595

Figure 5



Job Mobility

Minority workers face continuing challenges with regards to job mobility. Some companies in Mecklenburg County have recognized this trend, and they have taken strides to promote vertical mobility for minority workers. Bank of America and Wachovia, for example, have both been extremely proactive in hiring minorities. This trend not only provides an opportunity for both African Americans and Latinos to enter into white-collar industries, but it also allows the bank to more effectively reach out to minority customers.[28] While some fear that minorities will remain in positions commonly considered "low rung," the banks claim that mobility does exist. Bank of America has instituted a minority-mentoring program to help promote minority advancement within the company. It encourages these employees to pursue further education and acquire the skills necessary for higher-level positions.[29]

Income Inequality and Poverty

Introduction

Measuring the economic well being of minorities in Mecklenburg County is a difficult task, but two of the most common measuring sticks are household income and the poverty rate. Yet another way of evaluating the economic well being of minorities is through the consideration of income inequality statistics. Income inequality measures are especially significant for minorities; African Americans and Latinos are disproportionately represented in lower income brackets. While income inequality provides some insight into relative well being, measurements of poverty are used to compare income levels to an absolute yardstick. Minority communities also contain a disproportionate share of the households living below the poverty threshold, so this concept is an important part of our depiction of minorities' economic well-being.

In order to gain an understanding of the relative and absolute economic well-being of minorities in Mecklenburg County, we must begin by defining the concepts we will use in our analysis. Income inequality reflects the relative concentration of income. With perfect inequality, one member of the population would receive all of the income earned. Conversely, perfect equality would result in each person receiving the same income, which would be equal to the average income. In contrast to this relative concept of economic well being, a household is impoverished when it is unable to reach a minimum threshold of income.

In the sections that follow, we provide statistics on both poverty and income inequality. Specifically, we are interested in the magnitude of income inequality that exists in the county. We are also interested in how income inequality has changed over the last decade. We discuss some factors underlying the presence of income inequality, including overall economic trends and minority employment. Finally, we analyze the consequences of the income distribution for household well being by examining the poverty statistics for Mecklenburg County.

Data

In order to examine economic outcomes for the residents of Mecklenburg county we needed to find (or construct) measures of absolute and relative economic well-being. We used data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) to create measures of income inequality, which serve as our measure of relative well-being. We use household poverty status from the CPS to measure absolute well-being. The CPS is a monthly survey of about 50,000 households. The government has conducted the survey for the past 50 years, and its primary purpose is to provide employment and labor force data to the government. The March supplemental file to this survey contains information on income in addition to the monthly demographic profiles. For this reason, we will draw annual data from the March supplemental file for the time period 1992–2002.

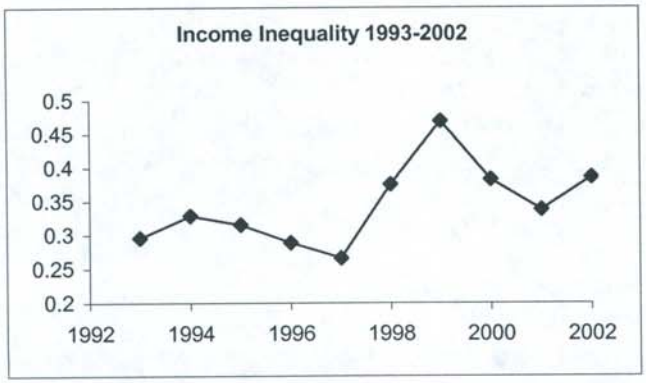
We have performed our analysis on households in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg metropolitan area. The CPS only defines Mecklenburg County observations after 1995 because at that point the metropolitan population is large enough to prevent identification of individual households. Between 200 and 500 households are surveyed in Charlotte each year, a number sufficient for our needs. Even when we divide the sample into ethnic groups, we have at least 45 households in each group every year of the survey. A problem, however, arises with analysis on ethnic lines. The CPS did not include a category for Latino Americans until 1997, and after 1997 all information for Latino Americans is collected in a separate survey. For this reason, our analysis focuses on black/white poverty and income inequality differentials. The CPS sample data is at the household level, rather than at the Census tract level, therefore we are able to use it to calculate a measure of income inequality. (Please see Appendix A.) Furthermore, we are also able to use the data to determine the number of households that are living below the poverty line.

Income Inequality

Income distributions are one indicator used by analysts to look at economic welfare. This indicator can be used to demonstrate the extent to which incomes differ from one another. Increases in income disparity, or inequality, mean that income has become less equitably distributed. In this section we examine statistics on income inequality in Mecklenburg County, and we discuss what these numbers really mean for minorities.

The maximum logarithmic deviation (MLD) statistic is one way to measure income inequality. Higher MLD statistics indicate greater disparity in the income distribution. We found an MLD statistic of .327 for the Charlotte metropolitan area in 1992, which compares to a .508 for the United States as a whole. The higher number for the United States indicates that income inequality is greater nationwide than in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area. We also found an MLD statistic of .386 for the Charlotte metropolitan area in 2002, compared to .515 for the United States. These two values indicate that although national income inequality is still greater than in Charlotte, income inequality has increased for both areas. No consensus has been reached on what has caused the recent increase in income inequality (Figure 1).

Figure 1



What are some of the possible causes for the trends in income inequality? Macroeconomic variables like the national unemployment rate, inflation, and growth in national output were once thought to have contributed to income inequality. One study examining the relationship between these indicators and income inequality found that the relationship started to break down after 1983.[30] Economic growth can explain a great deal of the reduction in income inequality up until that point, but predictions for future inequality were much lower than observed inequality from 1983 onward.

If national economic trends are now less able to explain income inequality, we must look for other possible causes. Factors that have been suggested are changing family structure, an aging population, and different government transfer policies. While these appear to be reasonable candidates, empirical support for any of these factors is lacking. Instead, it appears that the primary factor causing income inequality today is a decrease in wages for unskilled labor relative to the wages earned by skilled labor.[31] Declining wages for an already low-income population combined with increasing wages for a high-income population will result in greater disparity in incomes. A widening gap between wages for unskilled and skilled labor has several implications for minority groups. The American economy is providing ever-greater rewards for highly skilled workers, but the acquisition of skills for the job market requires training programs and quality schools. African Americans and Latino Americans on average do not complete as much schooling as Whites, and the schools that they do attend often fail to offer the same quality of education. In 1992, the level of educational attainment for the head of the average African American household was a high school diploma, while the typical White household head had some college but no degree. In 2002, African American household heads had narrowed the education gap, but on average they still received less schooling than White household heads.

Even when minorities do attain the same level of education as Whites, they may not receive the same wage. Economists have found that Blacks tend to accept wages similar to Whites one level of schooling below them (i.e., Black high school graduates and White high school dropouts).[32] Many studies confirm the presence of wage differentials between Blacks and Whites, but the reasons for the wage gap are not completely understood.

Despite a lack of agreement on what factors lead to income inequality and how they affect minorities, we can analyze the consequences of income inequality by examining absolute levels of income for different ethnic groups. Table 1 shows median household incomes for African Americans and Whites for the years 1992–2002. We can see that the median income for African Americans is lower than that of Whites in each of the years shown. Although we are unsure of the cause, this finding demonstrates that African Americans are disproportionately represented in lower income brackets in the Charlotte metropolitan area.

Table 1: Median Household Income

	African American	White	Total
1992	22,214.5	36,317	33,267
1993	22,014.5	38,820	35,000
1994	22,120	35,010	32,107
1995	22,388	38,984	33,956
1996	29,000	40,100	37,300
1997	33,582.5	50,000	45,050
1998	32,600	46,723	41,956
1999	33,000	43,295.5	40,075
2000	35,600	42,717	39,041.5
2001	29,680	40,800	39,270
2002	36,199	47,000	45,050

Although we can say something about the placement of minorities within the distribution of income, this discussion is really only a relative measure of well-being. Understanding how incomes are related to one another gives us some insight into how feelings of relative deprivation might arise. However, another aspect of welfare is the ability of households to provide a minimum standard of living. A discussion of absolute standards of well-being, however, is really a discussion of poverty.

Poverty

The term poverty refers to a state of material deprivation, in which a person is unable to meet their subsistence needs. For our purposes, poverty is defined using income data. Poor households have an income below 150% of the level specified by the United States Bureau of the Census, where this level varies by size of household.[33] We use 1 ½ times the official level because of differences in the composition of current household expenditures from the projected composition used to derive the Census Bureau's threshold. Specifically, housing costs do not receive an appropriate weight in the definition of a poverty threshold.

We find that Mecklenburg County's poverty rate decreased in the 1990s (see Table 2). The decline in the poverty rate was probably caused by the economic prosperity enjoyed during this period. The poverty rate for African Americans in 2002, 25%, is still quite high. In fact, it is more than twice the 11.3% poverty rate for Whites in Charlotte in 2002. This figure indicates that efforts to help the least well-off members of the African American population are necessary.

Table 2: Poverty Rates

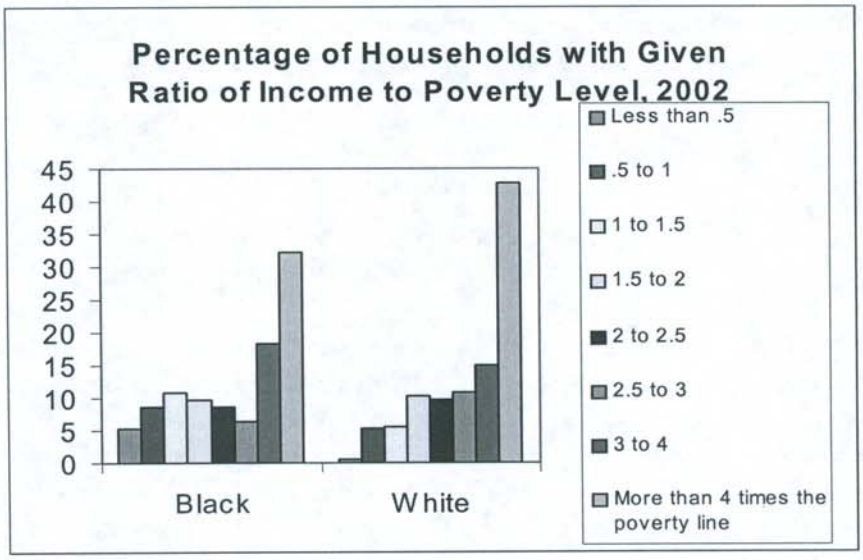
	African American	White	Total
1992	0.375	0.173134	0.210145
1993	0.343284	0.152047	0.185714
1994	0.372881	0.169935	0.204787
1995	0.450704	0.144262	0.21039
1996	0.263158	0.162791	0.185654
1997	0.185185	0.139896	0.14741
1998	0.266667	0.129412	0.155963
1999	0.355932	0.157303	0.215447
2000	0.245902	0.145349	0.169492
2001	0.264151	0.178344	0.197183
2002	0.247312	0.112676	0.154341

The poverty rate illustrates what percentage of the population cannot meet their subsistence needs. However, some members of the population are above the "cutoff" level but still encounter difficulties with necessary living expenses. We are also interested in those households whose income levels are just above the threshold level for poverty. For instance, another 18% of African American households have incomes between 1.5 and 2.5 times the poverty threshold in 2002. Whites have another 20.2%. Ultimately, 43% of African American and 32% of White households earn income that is less than 2.5 times the poverty threshold. Although fewer White households are classified as poor, many White households do fall in the low-income brackets near the poverty threshold. Table 3 summarizes the percentages of households falling in categories with a given ratio of income to the poverty level. Figure 2 shows the distribution for the year 2002.

Table 3: Income Poverty Ratios

Ratio of Income to Poverty Level, Percentage of Households				
	1992		2002	
	African American	White	African American	White
Less than .5 poverty line	.069	.024	.054	.005
.5 to 1	.153	.075	.086	.052
1 to 1.5	.153	.075	.108	.056
1.5 to 2	.097	.090	.097	.103
2 to 2.5	.083	.096	.086	.099
2.5 to 3	.111	.093	.065	.108
3 to 4	.153	.161	.183	.150
More than 4 times the poverty line	.181	.388	.323	.427

Figure 2



Conclusion

Generally, African Americans in Charlotte have enjoyed a period of relative economic prosperity over the last 10 years. Poverty rates for the African Americans have decreased. Median household incomes have risen. The number of households living just above the poverty line has decreased. Unfortunately, there is also an unhappier side of this story. One quarter of African American households remain in poverty, more than twice the percentage of White households. The improvement in average incomes has been accompanied by an increase in income inequality. If we as a society value equity, then it is our responsibility to take the necessary steps to redress the increasingly inequitable distribution of incomes. Government programs to ensure that schools in poor neighborhoods are of the same quality as in wealthier neighborhoods would help, especially because of the rising returns to education. Lowering the dropout rate and instituting programs to encourage higher education are also necessary.

Appendix A

Economists have developed several ways to measure income inequality, but we will use the maximum logarithmic deviation (MLD) statistic to measure it. The MLD statistic is defined as:

$$MLD = \frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{N} \ln\left(\frac{Y}{y_i N}\right)$$

Where Y is total income of the population, y_i is per capita income, and N is total population. As income inequality increases, the MLD statistic increases.

This measure has three advantages over other measures. First, we can calculate an MLD statistic for each minority group and for each Census tract. This means we can further investigate the driving forces behind overall income inequality. Then, because the MLD statistic is a weighted average, the value for the total population of Mecklenburg County is simply the sum of the component values. The second advantage is that it gives more weight to those at the bottom of the income distribution. In this study, we are most concerned with this group because their welfare is most at risk. The third advantage of the MLD statistic is that all of the data for it are easily accessible from United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. We will therefore be able to track income inequality over many years.

We made one adjustment to the data to permit the calculation of the MLD statistic. For each household with an income of zero, we substituted an income of $1. Computation would have been mathematically impossible for these observations without the change, but we did not want to drop them. A measurement of income inequality that ignores households with no income is inaccurate. This slight change allows us to keep the observations.

Housing

Introduction

In the final section of this report, we examine the state of housing for African Americans in Mecklenburg County. Although much progress has been made since the Urban League was founded in 1910, social and economic equality still needs to be improved. In order to maximize progress, it is important to understand the current situations of social and economic equality. Only with this information can wise and knowledgeable policies and strategies be implemented. We focus our research on the current situation of one aspect of social and economic equality in Mecklenburg County: the state of housing. In this section, we begin by explaining the methodology behind the research. We then present our findings. Specifically, we focus on data that give insight into the housing conditions of African Americans relative to the rest of the county.

Methodology

We began our study by obtaining housing data at the Census tract level for Mecklenburg County. (The data were obtained from the United States Census Bureau.) We chose variables that would provide help to evaluate residential segregation, occupancy status, housing quality, tenure, and housing value. After obtaining data for the desired variables for every Census tract in Mecklenburg County, we organized the observations into broader categories for analysis. We categorized the tracts in order to simplify the analysis and to easily identify trends in the data.

The first major group, which we named BT, consists of the 34 Census tracts that have a population that is at least 50% African American. In addition, we made a subset of this data, named BTT, which contains the 21 Census tracts with a population that is at least 75% African American. Census tracts in BT are areas that are predominantly Black, while Census tracts in BTT are areas that contain extremely high levels of Black residential segregation. The second major group, named AOT, consists of all the other Census tracts in Mecklenburg County that have a population that is less than 50% African American. Throughout this paper, the following categorizations will be used to represent the Census tract categorizations:

MC = All Census tracts in Mecklenburg County
AOT = All of the Census tracts in Mecklenburg County where African Americans comprise less than 50% of the population
BT = All of the Census tracts in Mecklenburg County where African Americans comprise at least 50% of the population
BTT = All of the Census tracts in Mecklenburg County where African Americans comprise at least 75% of the population

To evaluate the extent of housing inequality in the county, we compare the variables for the different Census tract groups. We use the average values from each tract categorization as a foundation for examining inequality in the housing conditions of

African Americans. For example, to analyze housing values, we compare the average median house value from the BT Census tracts to the average median house value from the AOT Census tracts. If there is perfect equality in the housing conditions of African Americans and all other groups, then the average median values should be relatively similar. The majority of our analysis is based on these types of comparisons. The focus of this section will be on presenting how housing conditions varied between these groups of tracts.

Housing Values

Housing value is one of the most intuitive ways of measuring how the state of housing differs for African Americans. Specifically, housing values indicate the relative levels of demand and supply for housing in the Census tracts. High property values signal high demands and possibly shortages for housing in a given area. In addition, housing values tell us the quality of housing units that a Census tract contains. Comparing these values across Census tracts that have different concentrations of African Americans helps us determine the quality of housing for African Americans relative to the rest of the county.

To analyze housing values, we find the lower level quartiles, median values, and upper level quartiles for owner occupied housing units for each of the Census tracts. In addition, we observe the median gross rents. To compare equality we analyze the differences in the values of these variables for each of the Census tract groups. All of the comparisons reveal that there are significant differences in the values of housing units in areas that are predominantly black relative to other areas in the county.

The first measurement for residential value is the values for owner occupied housing units. The U.S. Census Bureau defines owner occupied housing as "only one-family houses on less than 10 acres without a business or medical office on the property."[34] Figures 1–3 present the summary results for these variables.

Figure 1

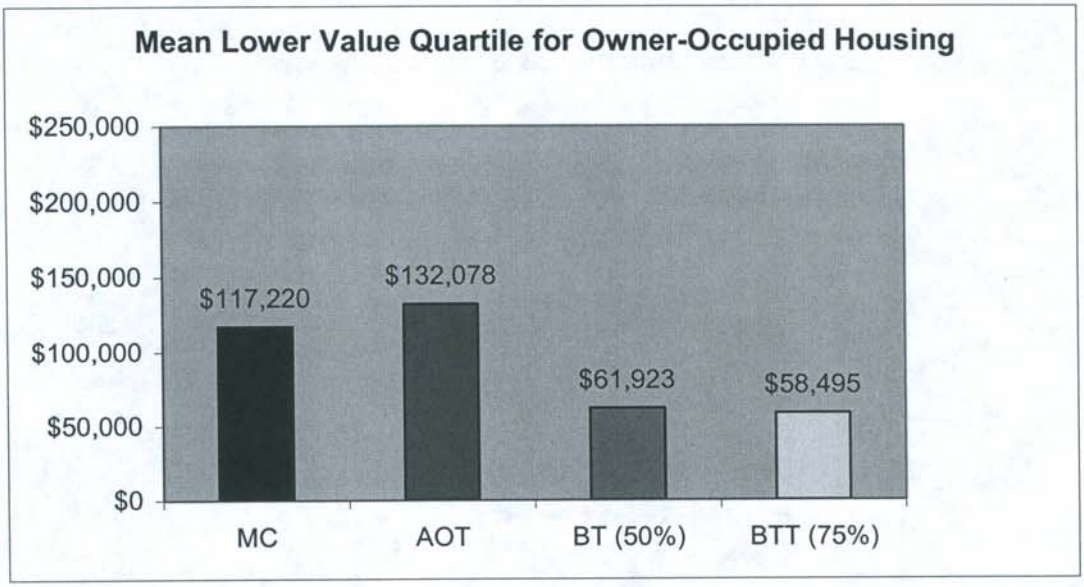


Figure 2

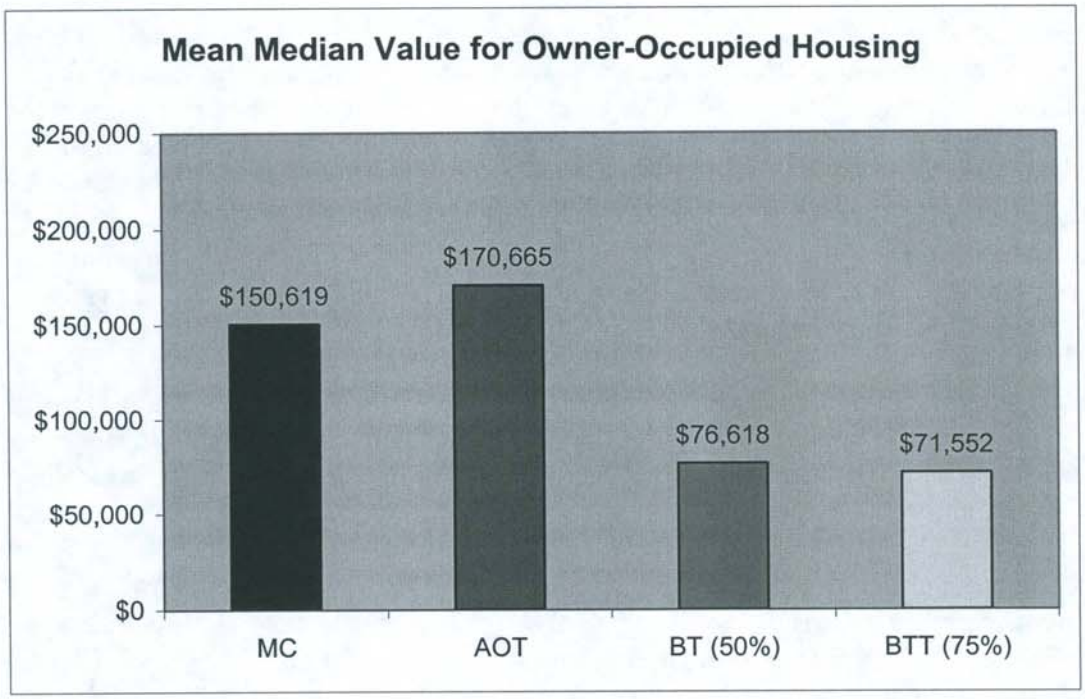
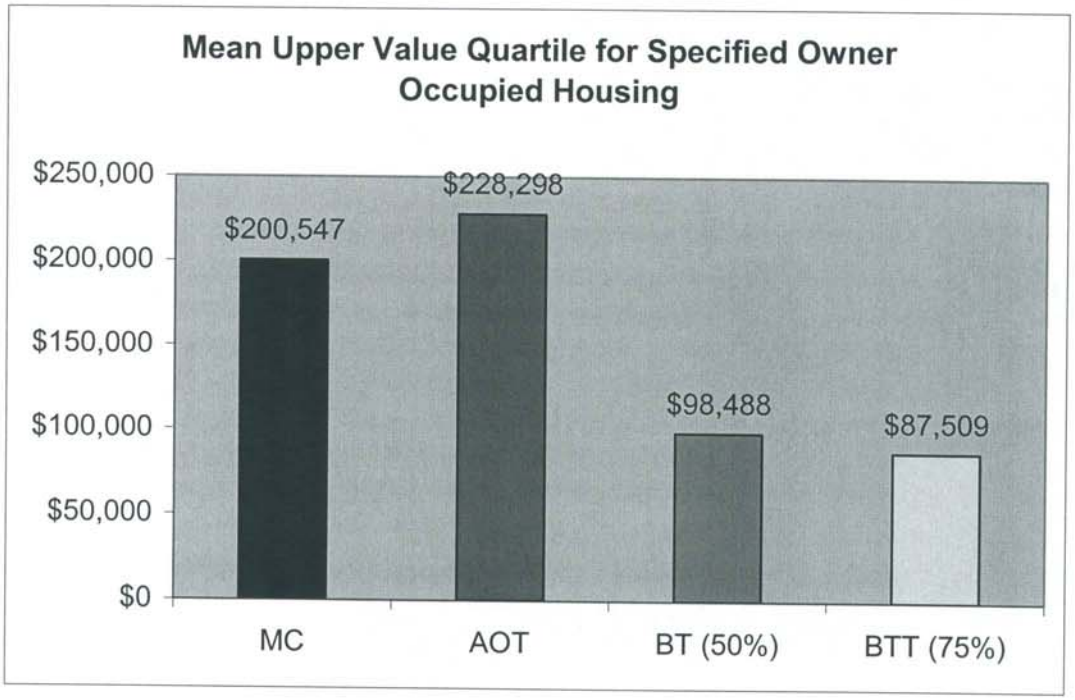


Figure 3



The median values and quartile values for owner occupied housing units reveal that housing values are significantly lower in areas that are populated primarily by African Americans. The mean and quartile occupied housing unit values for tracts where African Americans make up less than 50% of the population (AOT) is relatively higher than the corresponding values for Mecklenburg County (MC) as a whole. Moreover, the values for AOT are significantly higher than the values for BT and BTT. In fact, the values for AOT are more than twice as high than the figures for BT. At the extreme, the upper value quartile for AOT is nearly triple the corresponding value for BTT.

It is also interesting to note that the lower quartile value for AOT is over $30,000 greater than the upper quartile value for BT. While only 25% of the housing units in AOT have a value below $170,655, significantly more than 75% of the housing units in BT are valued under this amount.

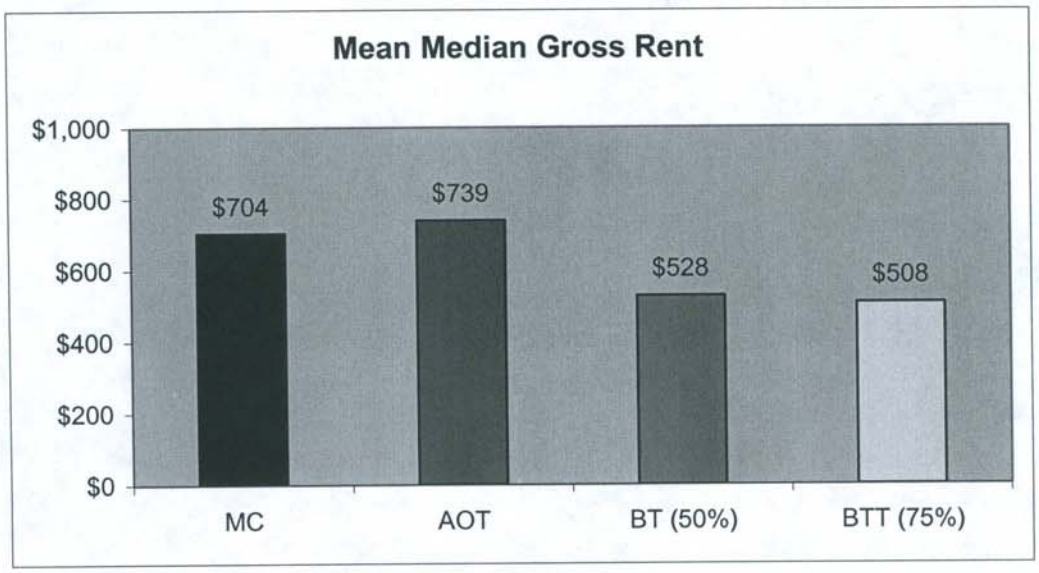
The second measurement of residential value, mean gross rent, is the average of the median rents from each Census tract category. The median rents paint the same picture of unequal housing values that the previous housing value variable did. The U.S. Census Bureau defines median gross rent as:[35]

> *Gross rent is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid by the renter (or paid for the renter by someone else). Gross rent is*

intended to eliminate differentials that result from varying practices with respect to the inclusion of utilities and fuels as part of the rental payment.

Figure 4 shows the average gross rent for each category of tracts.

Figure 4



Like owner-occupied units, renter-occupied units in heavily segregated Black areas have relatively lower values. Once again, the tracts in AOT have higher values relative to BT, BTT, and to MC. Unlike the results from the owner-occupied units, however, the renter-occupied units have rents that are quite similar between BT and BTT.

The trends that are evident in the owner and renter-occupied units indicate that housing values are generally lower in those tracts where the population is mostly African American. Furthermore, there is evidence that housing values may be even lower in tracts where the population that is African American is greater than 75%. This inequality may be due to many factors, such as low income or discrimination. The existence of housing value inequality is clear; the causes of the differences in housing values, however, are more difficult to determine.

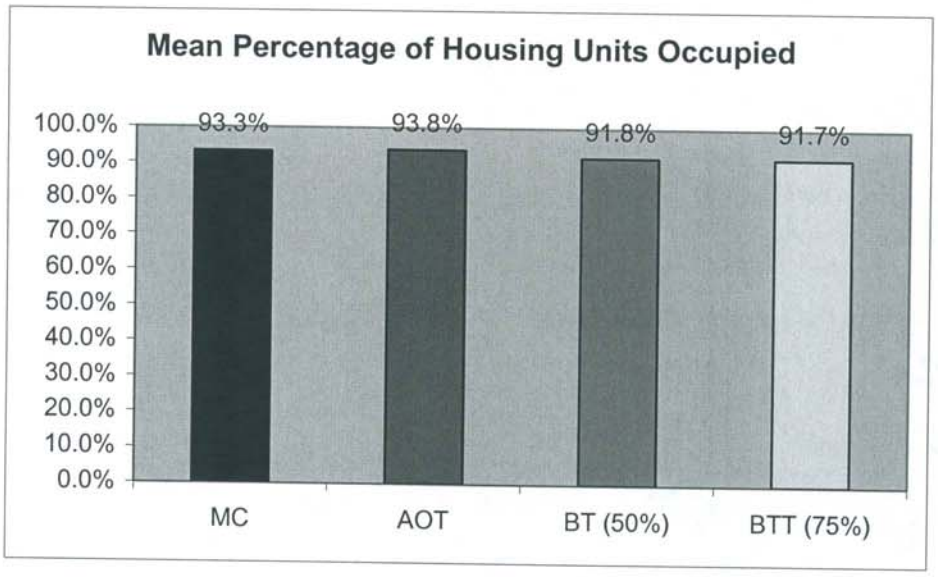
Occupancy Status

The occupancy status of housing units reveals the percentage of housing units in a tract that is presently occupied by individuals. A high percentage of occupancy is indicative of a relatively high level of demand for housing in the area. That is, the tract is a desirable place to reside. A relatively low percentage of occupancy for a tract implies that the area is one of the relatively more undesirable places to reside in the county.

We find the average percentage of housing units in a tract category that are presently occupied. The data, which is summarized in Figure 5, show that these figures are

relatively equal, indicating that the demand for housing may not be different across the tract categories. In addition, the results imply that the proportion of African Americans living in the area may not influence the desirability of residence in a given tract.

Figure 5



Tenure

Tenure is a measure of how long, on average, people are residing in a given area. Tenure data gives us insight into the degree of migration that occurs in different areas of the county. Specifically, if a tract has a high outflow of migration, then that tract is an area where people do not desire to stay in the long run. It is likely that people in these areas are staying here because they cannot afford to live somewhere else. On the other hand, tracts may have a low level of migration outflow because people in the area simply cannot afford to move elsewhere. This may be the case in poorer, inner-city neighborhoods.

The tenure data from the U.S. Census Bureau tells what year households moved into their present homes. We determined the mean percentages of households in the tract categorizations that have lived in their current housing units for less than a year, for between 1 and 5 years, and for more than 5 years. Figures 6–8 illustrate the differences in tenure between the various tract groups.

Figure 6

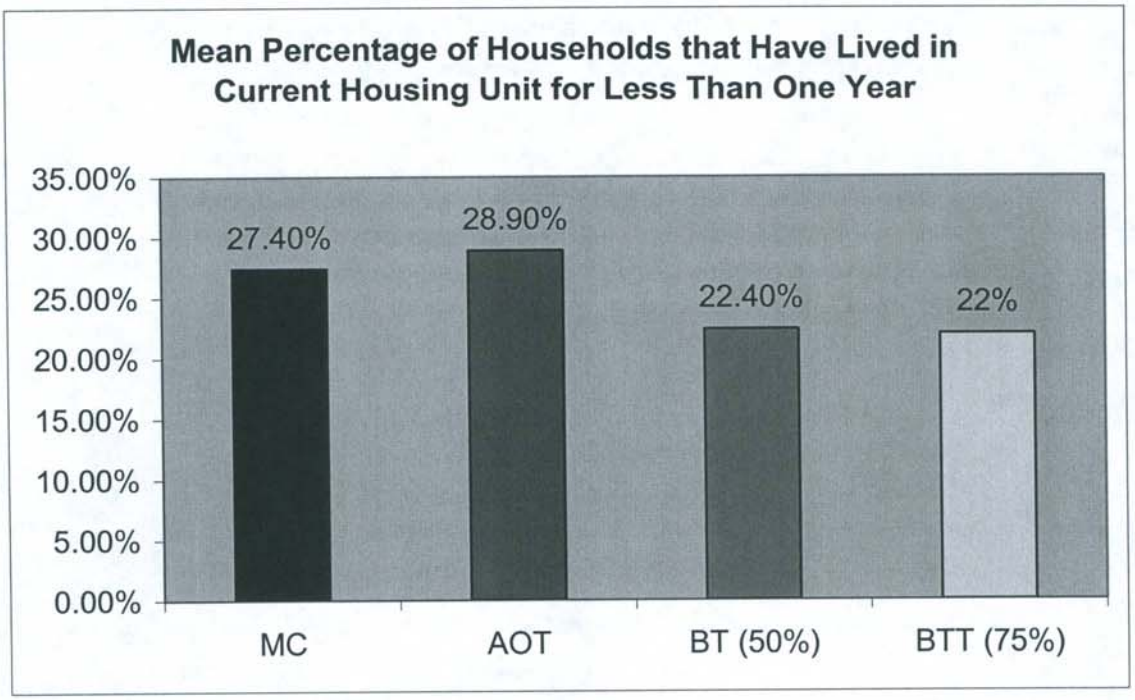


Figure 7

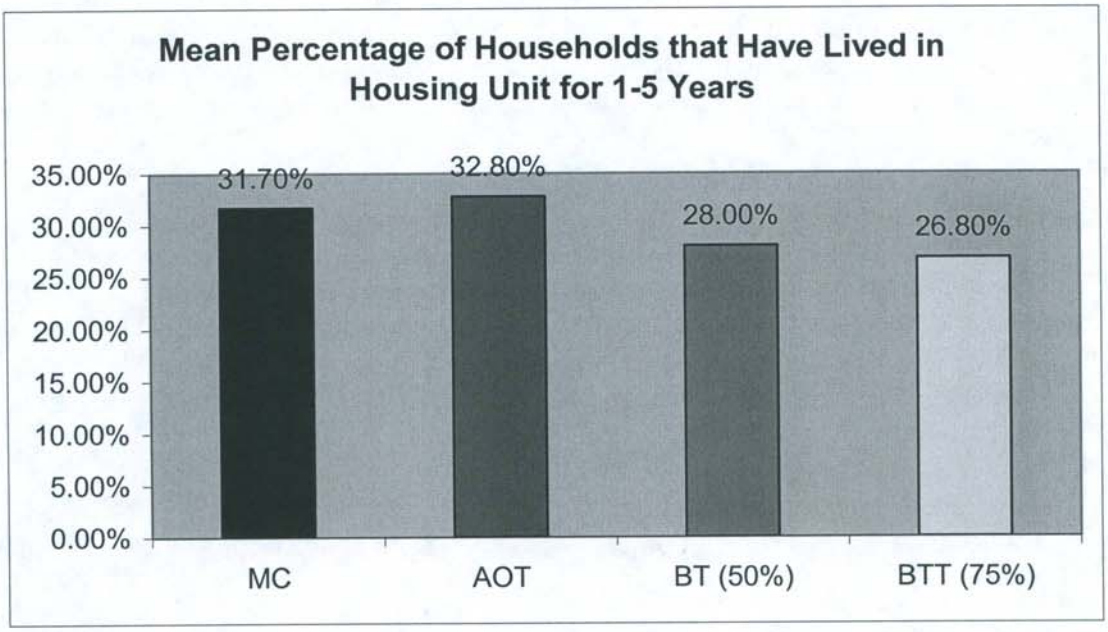
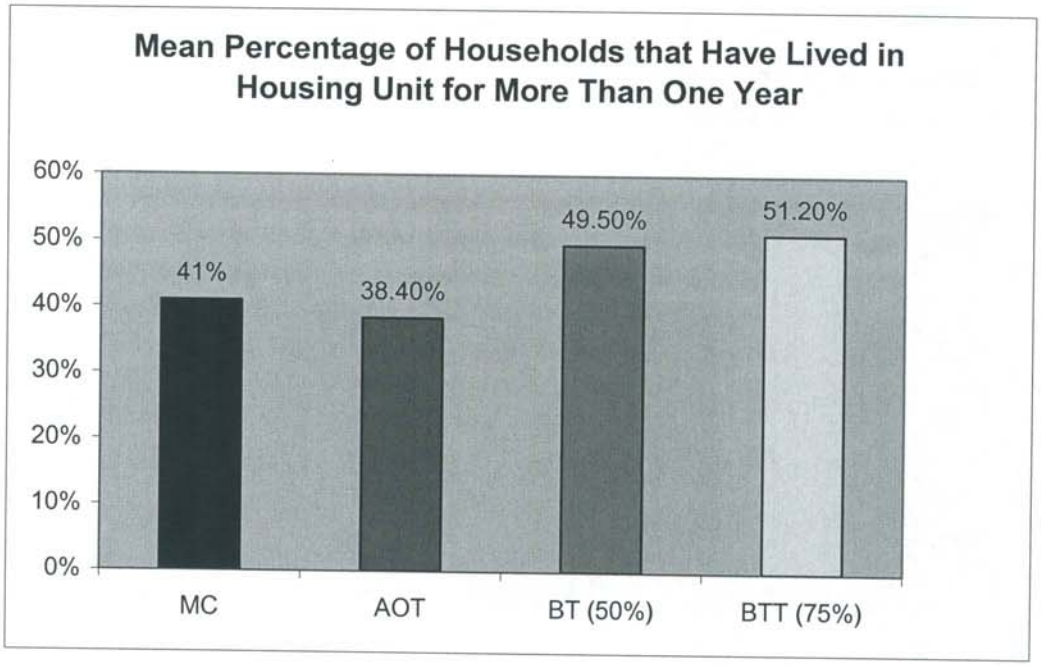


Figure 8



The tracts from AOT have a relatively higher percentage of households that have lived in their current housing unit for less than a year. Furthermore, both BT and BTT have a relatively higher percentage of households that have resided at their current housing units for more than five years. This indicates that African Americans are migrating less, relative to the rest of the population. The trends give support to the idea that individuals from tracts that are populated mainly by African Americans tend to have lower mobility. This lower mobility or ability to migrate can be viewed as a form of social and economic inequality.

Living Conditions/Quality

To access the quality of residential life, we use three variables that measure how crowded housing units are and how adequate plumbing and kitchen facilities are. The Census Bureau had data concerning the number of occupants per room for housing units in each tract. We calculate the average percentage of housing units, within each Census tract category, that has more than one occupant per room. Ideally, a housing unit should have a room for each individual occupant; that is why we choose one occupant per room as my crucial point in the evaluation. In addition, we find these average percentages for owner-occupied homes and renter-occupied homes. Figures 9–11 show our findings.

Figure 9

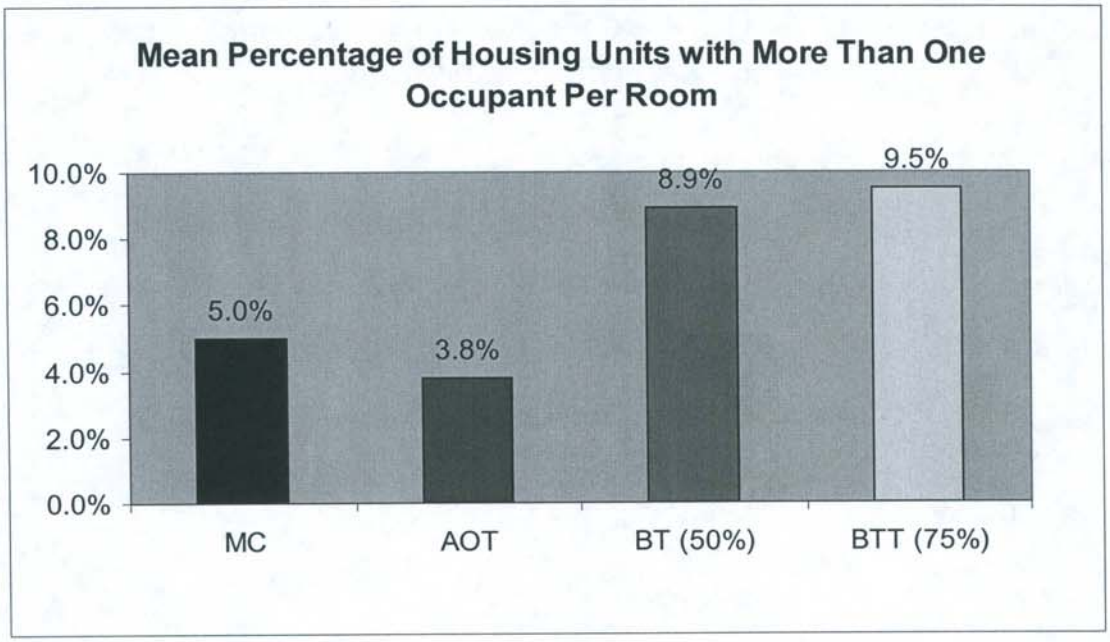


Figure 10

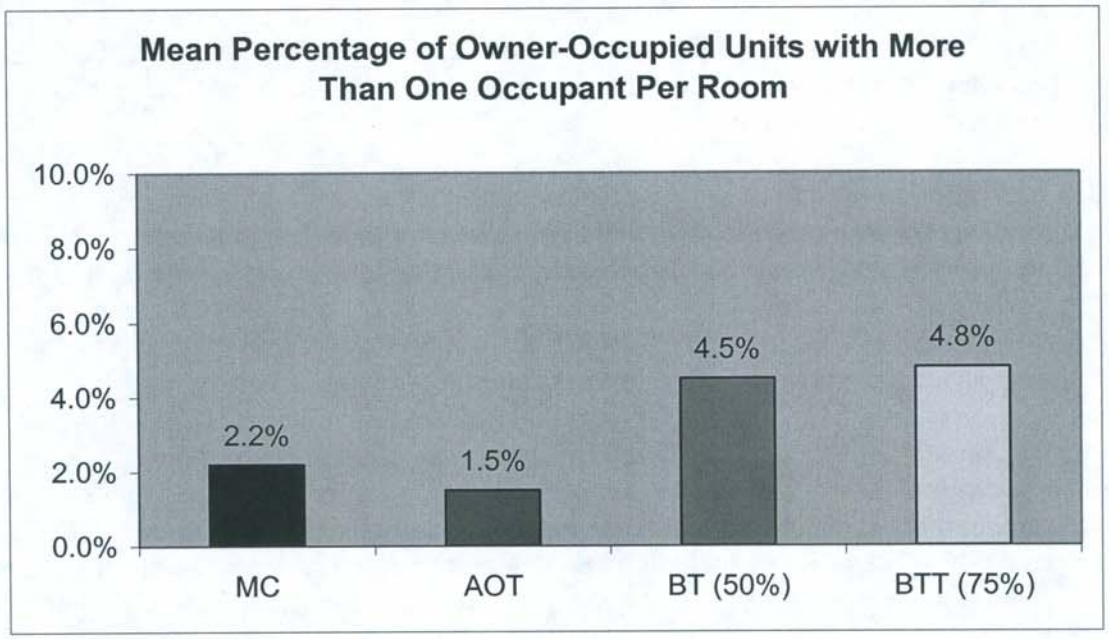
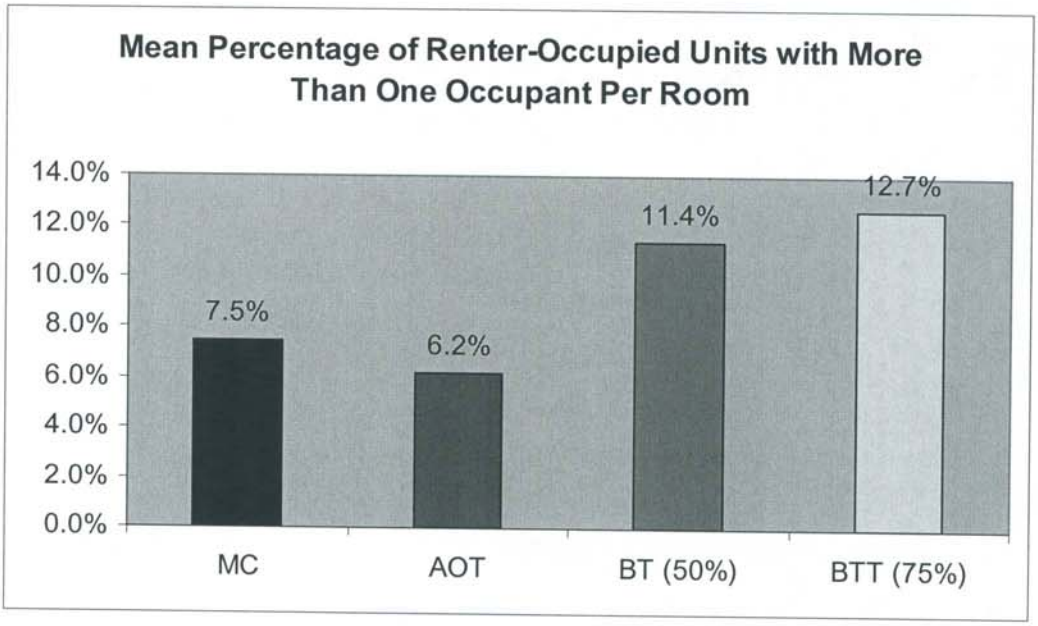


Figure 11



In all three graphs, AOT has a lower percentage of housing units that seem to be overcrowded relative to both BT and BTT. Also, BTT consistently had a high percentage of units with more than one occupant relative to BT. This suggests that tracts that are more heavily populated by African Americans have more problems with overcrowded housing units. The source of this inequality may be due to inequality in incomes. In other words, we believe that the higher percentages are a result of people not being able to afford more spacious housing units.

It is also interesting to note from the data that renter-occupied units had relatively higher percentages than owner-occupied units. People who own housing units are probably richer in comparison to people who rent; therefore, housing unit-owners can afford more spacious housing.

In addition to evaluating how crowded housing units are, we observed the adequacy or completeness of plumbing and kitchen facilities. These are two aspects of housing units that are necessary to households. The U.S. Census Bureau had data stating the number of housing units within each Census tract that contained complete and incomplete plumbing and kitchen facilities. In their data, complete plumbing and kitchen facilities are defined as: Complete plumbing facilities include: (1) hot and cold piped water, (2) a flush toilet, and (3) a bathtub or shower. All three facilities must be located inside the house, apartment, or mobile home, but not necessarily in the same room. Housing units are classified as lacking complete plumbing facilities when any of the three facilities is not present. A unit has complete kitchen facilities when it has all of the following: (1) a sink with piped water; (2) a range, or cook top and oven; and (3) a refrigerator. All kitchen facilities must be located in the house, apartment, or mobile home, but they need not be in the same room.[36] We used their data to find the mean percentages of households for

each Census tract category that lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities. Our findings are presented in Figures 12 and 13.

Figure 12

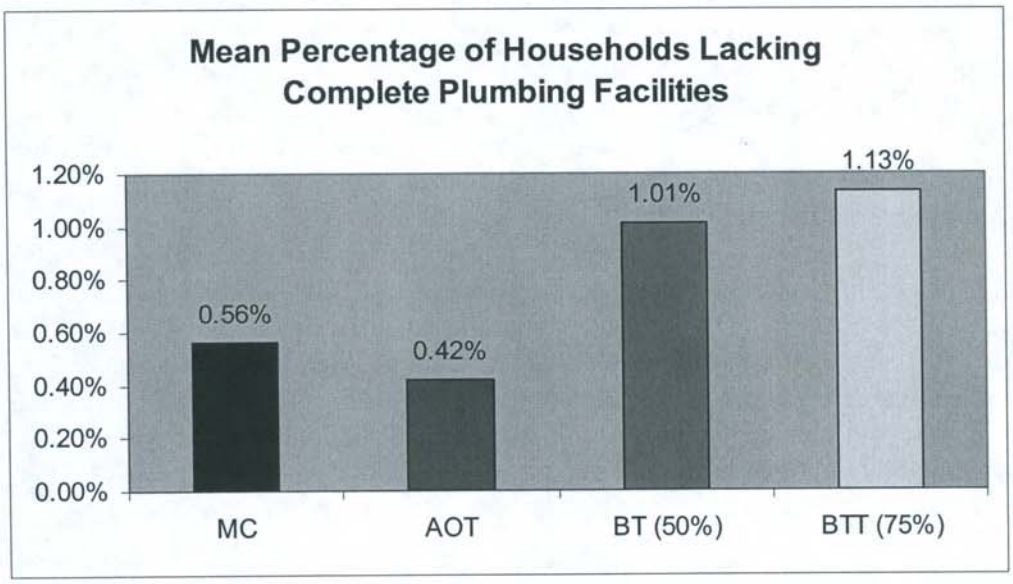
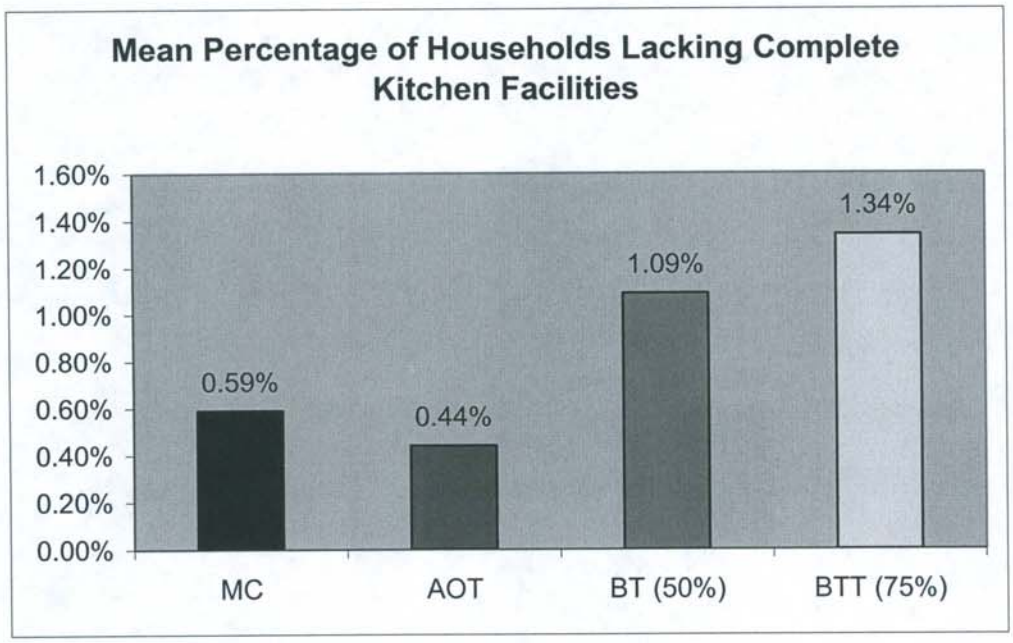


Figure 13



Although all the tract categories have small mean percentages, the data is evidence of inequality in housing conditions. There are higher percentages of housing units in primarily African American neighborhoods that lack complete facilities in comparison to the rest of the county.

Conclusion

The data we have presented seem to indicate that there is still significant housing inequality for African Americans in Mecklenburg County. The data suggest that more heavily African American populated areas have relatively lower housing values, both for owner-occupied and renter-occupied units. In addition, there is evidence that African Americans do not have the same potential for migration. African Americans tend to be residing in housing units for relatively longer periods of time. The notion that they are less mobile is especially important to consider in today's urban society, where sub urbanization is becoming a major issue. Lastly, the data indicate that tracts with greater proportions of African Americans have more problems with overcrowding and with inadequate plumbing and kitchen facilities.

Unfortunately, the findings of our research do not indicate the causes of residential inequality for African Americans. In order to access the factors responsible for the inequality, one must also examine numerous other influences, such as income, education, and job opportunities. The findings we have presented simply show that despite the significant progress that has been made to improve social and economic equality for African Americans, housing inequality still exists in Mecklenburg County.

Where Do We Go From Here?

African Americans and Latinos have made progress in both the labor market and housing market between 1990 and 2000. However, given our current path, it may be difficult to make additional gains in the future. The key to providing better opportunities in the labor market, which in turn will promote better opportunities in the housing market, is education. African Americans and Latinos must have access to high quality grade schools, middle schools, and high schools. The children of these minority groups deserve to attend schools that afford them the opportunity to pursue a college degree. Unfortunately, the actions taken in this county, and in this country, over the last several years may make this difficult.

School choice is a reality—of sorts—in Charlotte and in a handful of other cities across the nation. We must consider the impact of school choice programs very carefully. Free markets work well in many instances, and advocates of school choice point to the incentive effects that a school choice program will provide to the "market" for schools. Yet, it is important to consider the nature of the "market" we are dealing with—the "product" in this market affects children, and their entire lives are at stake. What do we do when a student who fails to get the school of her choice is placed in a school of much lower quality? What do we do when the family situation of a student dictates that the student cannot travel a long distance to a high quality school? When we leave these children behind we leave them behind for life.

Education is the key to a better future. We have a moral responsibility to do a better job of providing high quality schools to all of our children, not just the ones who are fortunate enough to be born into the right school district or family. Hopefully, with the help of institutions like the Urban League, we can improve the quality of all of our schools and provide a bright future for every child in Charlotte- Mecklenburg.

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