**Assignment 3 – Race and Gender Module**

**Florida's earnings distribution across different racial and ethnic categories - 2016**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NHWhite** | **Black** | **AmIndian** | **Asian** | **NHMulti** | **NHOther** | **Hispanic** | **Total** |
| **<25K** | 21.1% | 34.8% | 28.5% | 27.8% | 28.8% | 31.5% | 38.4% | 27.8% |
| **25-34K** | 16.6% | 23.8% | 20.5% | 14.6% | 19% | 17.5% | 20.1% | 18.5% |
| **35-49K** | 21.3% | 20.4% | 20.6% | 15.8% | 20.8% | 20.4% | 18.4% | 20.3% |
| **50-69K** | 17.4% | 12.2% | 15.8% | 14.8% | 15% | 14.5% | 11.4% | 15% |
| **70-99K** | 11.7% | 5.8% | 10.4% | 13.5% | 8.8% | 9.7% | 6.4% | 9.5% |
| **100K+** | 11.9% | 3.1% | 4.2% | 13.5% | 7.6% | 6.4% | 5.2% | 8.9% |
| **Total** | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

**Florida's earnings distribution across different racial and ethnic categories - 2008**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NHWhite** | **Black** | **Asian** | **Hispanic** | **AmIndian** | **NHOther** | **NHMulti** | **Total** |
| **<25K** | 20.1% | 38.1% | 28.6% | 40.6% | 34.6% | 38.8% | 29% | 27.5% |
| **25-34K** | 19.3% | 24.5% | 18.1% | 21.4% | 21.3% | 23.4% | 23.4% | 20.6% |
| **35-49K** | 22.8% | 20.5% | 17.5% | 17.8% | 22.9% | 18.9% | 22.4% | 21.2% |
| **50-69K** | 17.2% | 10.4% | 15% | 10.3% | 11.8% | 10.5% | 12.1% | 14.6% |
| **70-99K** | 10.6% | 4.5% | 11.4% | 5.3% | 6.5% | 5.6% | 8% | 8.6% |
| **100K+** | 9.9% | 2% | 9.4% | 4.6% | 2.8% | 2.7% | 5.1% | 7.6% |
| **Total** | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Significant racial and ethnic differences can be observed in Florida's earnings distribution in 2008, especially in the lowest income categories. The largest concentration of people making less than $25K was found among Black (38.1%) and Hispanic (40.6%) populations, then American Indians (34.6%). Given that a substantial share of these groups' members live in low-income households, these numbers show that these groups experienced serious financial difficulties. Comparatively, there were fewer Non-Hispanic White people (20.1%) and Asian people (28.6%) in this group, indicating somewhat higher economic stability. Asians (17.5%) and non-Hispanic whites (22.8%) made up the largest proportion of middle-class earners, especially those in the $35–49K range. Black and Hispanic groups, on the other hand, had lower proportions in this category, indicating lower rates of upward mobility.

Even among those with higher incomes, there were significant differences. The largest percentages of people earning $100K or more were Asians (9.4%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (9.9%), with very little representation in this category of the Black (2%), Hispanic (4.6%), and American Indian (2.8%) communities. Minority groups are disproportionately concentrated in lower income brackets and underrepresented in higher income brackets, highlighting a notable wealth disparity. This disparity in income is a reflection of larger social and economic hurdles that keep members of some racial groups from obtaining well-paying employment and opportunities to accumulate wealth.

Although there were minor changes in Florida's earnings distribution among racial and ethnic groups between 2008 and 2016, the general patterns of income inequality remained. In all categories, the percentage of those making less than $25K fell somewhat by 2016, indicating a little improvement in the economy. Nonetheless, a large proportion of Black (34.8%), Hispanic (38.4%), and American Indian (28.5%) people were concentrated in the lowest income band, suggesting that these groups were still facing formidable economic obstacles. Although their percentages in this category decreased, non-Hispanic Whites (21.1%) and Asians (27.8%) were still less affected by low-income status than other minority groups. With Non-Hispanic Whites (17.4%) and Asians (14.8%) continuing to lead over Black (12.2%) and Hispanic (11.4%) populations, who remained underrepresented in this income group, middle-class earners, particularly those in the $50–69K range, showed little change.

In 2016, the differences were still apparent at the higher end of the income spectrum. The percentage of Asians (13.5%) who make $100K or more has significantly increased, indicating upward mobility for this group. Although there was a minor increase in the percentage of non-Hispanic Whites (11.9%) in this group, the populations of Blacks (3.1%), Hispanics (5.2%), and American Indians (4.2%) were still mainly excluded from high-income brackets. Although overall income levels did somewhat improve, especially for Asians and non-Hispanic Whites, the trends from 2008 remained generally the same, especially when it comes to the economic exclusion of Black, Hispanic, and American Indian groups. This shows that the structural obstacles restricting minority groups' upward mobility continued even in after low economic growth or recovery.

Despite recent changes in the state's population and economic expansion, Florida's past racial makeup and economic systems still influence the state's current disparities. Despite the fact that the Hispanic population in the state has increased to nearly 30%, both the Black and Hispanic groups continue to experience severe economic disparities. These populations are frequently concentrated in low-wage sectors that have not benefited from Florida's rising real estate and tech economies, such as tourism, agriculture, and service industries. Contrarily, non-Hispanic Whites and Asians have a longer record of inequality and enjoy higher median incomes and more access to opportunities for developing wealth. Increased housing costs worsen these differences, especially in areas like Miami. This reinforces economic segregation caused by previous discrimination and unequal access to education.

One instance of racial and economic inequality that I have witnessed from living my whole life in Miami is in the hospitality industry, where a large number of Black and Hispanic workers work in low-paying, physically taxing positions like maintenance, food service, and housekeeping. Even with their long hours, these workers frequently find it difficult to pay for necessities in places like Miami, where the cost of living has increased recently. This is consistent with data indicating a disproportionate representation of Black and Hispanic people in lower-income groups, especially those making less than $25K annually. I have seen family friends who have immigrated from countries like Venezuela and Mexico fall into this group of people working in hospitality for little pay.

On the other hand, non-Hispanic White people and, to a lesser extent, Asian people occupy the majority of managerial and better-paying roles in the same industry, which is consistent with data indicating that these groups are more represented in higher income categories. This observation emphasizes how persistent racial disparities in income continue to exist, with minorities frequently restricted to lower-paying positions with little opportunity for advancement, even in fields where they make up the majority of the workforce.