MEXICAN WOMEN IN CHICAGO

A REPORT TO THE

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**MEXICAN WOMEN IN CHICAGO**

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I. GENERAL POPULATION OVERVIEW

Chicago is the third-largest city in the United States and the second-largest Mexican-origin city after Los Angeles. Among the 8,273,000 people who live in metropolitan Chicago there are 1,077,000 persons of Mexican origin. Thus, people of Mexican origin compose 13% of the total population of metropolitan Chicago, the third largest racial or ethnic group in the area.

![Racial and Ethnic Origin of Metropolitan Chicago Residents, 2000](image)

*Source: Census 2000*

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1 Unless otherwise indicated all information presented here is from Census 2000 for the portion of the Chicago Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area that is located in nine counties of Illinois. They are: Cook, DuPage, DeKalb, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. The portions of the Chicago Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area that are located in Wisconsin and Indiana are not included.

In addition, this report relies on information gathered from the Chicago Area Survey (CAS), conducted in 2003 by The Institute for Latino Studies, The University of Notre Dame. The survey includes information from over 1,500 Latino households from throughout metropolitan Chicago. Among the 1,500 adult respondents were 559 who were born in Mexico. 301 (54%) were men and 258 (46%) were women.
A. Immigrants in Chicago

The foreign-born population of metropolitan Chicago is 1,426,000, or 17% of the total population. Mexico—along with seven other countries—accounts for more than two-thirds of all foreign-born residents.

- No other country apart from these eight has as many as 20,000 residents living in metropolitan Chicago.
- The number of Mexican-born residents is more than four times greater than that of the next largest sending country (Poland).
- The number of Mexican-born women is 3.5 times greater than that of the next largest group—Polish women.

Source: Census 2000
B. Mexican Immigrants

Mexico is the largest source of migrants to metropolitan Chicago.

- Forty percent of all foreign-born residents in metropolitan Chicago are from Mexico.
- Of the 1,077,000 persons of Mexican origin in Chicago, 567,000 (53%) were born in Mexico.
- This means that Mexico-born persons, alone, make up 7% of the area’s population.
- Slightly less than half (46%) of the area’s Mexican-born population are women.

*Source: Census 2000*
II. MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Mexican migration to Chicago has increased dramatically over the past decades. Women typically represent less than half the migrants. Migrants—both men and women—tend to be young, on average 20 years old at the time of migration. Four Mexican states provide almost half the migrants, and most of these arriving directly to the metropolitan Chicago area. As in the rest of the United States, the rates of naturalization lag far behind those of other immigrant populations.

A. Time of Migration

The rate of growth in the number of Mexican immigrants residing in the Chicago area has been increasing rapidly since the 1960s. However, since 1970, immigration from other countries—especially Poland, India, China, the Philippines and Korea—has kept pace with the rapid growth of Mexican immigrants to the area.

- Mexicans made up 43% of all immigrants in each of the three decade-specific cohorts of Chicago area residents that arrived in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.
- The number of Mexican-born residents is more than four times greater than that from the next largest sending country.
- Nearly half (49%) of Mexican-born residents came to the U.S. between 1990 and 2000.

Source: Census 2000
B. Migration and Gender

Women account for 46% of Chicago area residents who were born in Mexico.

- In each decade, the number of Mexican-born men currently residing in metropolitan Chicago who migrated to the United States exceeded the number of women.
- More than half of Mexican-born women arrived in the United States since 1990.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women as a Percentage of Mexican-Born Residents of Metropolitan Chicago, by Decade of Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 – 1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 – 2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Migration Age

The median age of migration to the United States for Mexican-born migrants is 20 years. There is no appreciable age difference between women and men.

- Two thirds (66%) of Mexican-born migrants came to the United States between the ages of 16 and 26.
- Three quarters (75%) were over the age of 18.
- Only 11% of Mexican-born migrants were 12 or younger when they immigrated.
D. Mexican Immigrants’ States of Origin

Nine states in Mexico account for the place of birth for 80% of the respondents in the Chicago Area Survey.

![State of Origin of Mexican-Born Population of Metropolitan Chicago](chart)

Source: Chicago Area Survey

E. Migration Pathways from Mexico to Chicago²

Chicago is an immigrant gateway city. The vast majority of immigrants come to Chicago directly from their country of origin. In this respect, Mexican-born immigrants are similar to other immigrant populations.

- More than 80% of Mexican-born migrants came directly to Chicago from Mexico.
- Only 5% of Mexican-born survey respondents indicated that they moved to Chicago after living in another part of the United States.
- The majority (59%) of Mexican-born migrants to Chicago came from small towns, villages, or rural areas.

² Source: Chicago Area Survey
**F. Reasons Cited for Migrating**

While the primary engine driving the latest wave of migration to Chicago is economic, there are a variety of reasons why people undertake the journey—reasons that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. There is, however, a considerable difference in the importance given by women and men.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To find a job</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be with relatives</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A job I heard about through family or friends</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be with friends</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Chicago Area Survey
G. Citizenship and Naturalization

Mexican-born residents of Metropolitan Chicago are less likely to become U.S. citizens than are non-Latino immigrants, even after controlling for the length of time in the United States. There are no significant differences in the percentage of Mexican-born women and men who become U.S. citizens.

Source: Census 2000
III. **AGE CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS**

The median age of all persons of Mexican-origin (U.S. and Mexican-born) in metropolitan Chicago is 23.2 years, but there is a bimodal distribution of ages.

**A. Mexican Origin Total**

There are two age groups where the population is most concentrated in the Mexican-origin communities in Metropolitan Chicago: ages 0 to 5 and 23 to 27.

- The largest age group consists of infants of under one year of age, of whom there are 28,500.
- The number of persons of Mexican origin steadily decreases from age 1 through 16, where the number of persons falls to 17,300.
- The population distribution begins to increase starting at age 17 through age 27, where it reaches its second modal peak of approximately 25,000 for the cohort between ages 23 and 27.
- From age 28, onward, the population gradually decreases through the end of the life span.

**Source:** Census 2000
B. Median Age of Foreign and U.S.-Born Mexicans

Persons of Mexican origin born in Mexico and in the U.S. largely represent different generations of the same families. This can be seen by comparing the median ages of the two groups, where 70% of U.S.-born residents of Mexican origin are 20 years of age or younger, while 90% of Mexican-born residents are between the ages of 20 and 40.

The median age of U.S.-born Mexicans is dramatically lower than that of most other U.S.-born racial and ethnic groups in metropolitan Chicago. Because of the large number of recent immigrants, the median age of U.S.-born Asian Americans also is very low.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Age of Chicago Area Residents of Mexican Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o 12.1 Years U.S.-born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o 30.5 Years Mexican-born</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Age of Other Chicago Area Residents who were born in the U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o 31.3 Years African-American (not Hispanic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o 36.6 Years White (not Hispanic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o 13.4 Years Asian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Source: Census 2000
C. Age and Gender

Women are underrepresented relative to men in the age cohort of Mexican-born residents between the ages of 12 and 54. Only among the very young (children under 12), and among adults in or near their retirement years, do women account for half or more of the Mexican-born population.
The Mexican population of Chicago is a truly transnational community. Mexican-born adults maintain strong ties to family members in Mexico and some remain interested in political events and issues.

A. Ties to Mexico\(^4\)

As can be expected in a population in which approximately half of its members have immigrated during the past decade, ties to Mexico are relatively strong among the Mexican-born in metropolitan Chicago.

- Consistent with the age distribution, 60% of Mexican-born residents report that at least one parent remains in Mexico.
- Current affairs are important to 27% of both Mexican-born men and women in the area who pay at least some attention to politics in Mexico.

B. Remittances\(^5\)

Remittances are an important component of the relation of immigrants to their families in Mexico. These remittances were overwhelmingly used to pay daily living expenses. The next largest category concerned the buying, building or reconditioning of housing in Mexico. Women were only slightly less likely than men to report sending regular remittance payments, but consistent with their reduced earning capabilities, on average report sending only 75% of the amount reported by men.

- 40% of Mexican-born women reported sending remittances to Mexico, compared to 46% of men.
- On average, women send $1,800 per year, compared to $2,500 sent by men.

\(^4\) Source: Chicago Area Survey
\(^5\) Ibid.
C. Hometown Associations

Participation in hometown associations among Mexican-born participants in the Chicago Area Survey was rare. Only four men and one woman reported belonging to a hometown association. Nevertheless, when one considers the sheer number of recent immigrants, this can still translate into a considerable constituency.

D. Matricula Consular

Among those who responded to this question, 41% of Mexican-born women reported that they had a Matricula card, compared to 37% of men respondents.

Source: Chicago Area Survey.

Ibid.
V. EDUCATION

The educational profile of the most recent immigrant cohort is essentially similar to those of previous decades and is dramatically different from that of other immigrant groups. This is especially true of Asian immigrants who migrated after 1980. The great majority of Mexican-born adults received all, or nearly all of their schooling prior to their arrival in the United States.

A. Migration and Schooling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mexican immigrants to metropolitan Chicago migrate at a median age of 20. Most received all (or the majority) of their education in Mexico.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Almost 85% of migrants received all of their primary education in Mexico.(^8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Only 23% received even part of their secondary schooling in the U.S.(^9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Some 5% did not attend secondary school in either country.(^10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^8\) Source: Chicago Area Survey

\(^9\) Ibid.

\(^10\) Ibid.
B. Educational Attainment

Two-thirds of Mexican-born residents of the area have not completed high school. The educational profile of Mexican immigrants who arrived during the 1990s is essentially the same as those who migrated in earlier decades, except that those arriving after 1980 are less likely to have fewer than nine years of schooling.

Source: Census 2000

Educational Attainment of Mexican-Born Residents
Aged Over 25 of Metropolitan Chicago, 2000

Source: Census 2000

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Educational attainment is for persons 25 years and older. Mexican-born persons comprise 35% of the 1990s cohort of immigrants 25 years and older living in metropolitan Chicago.
C. Comparison with Other Immigrants

Only 7% of Mexican-born residents of the area have a college degree, compared to nearly 70% of Indians and Filipinos, and nearly 60% of Chinese and Koreans.

Because many of the other foreign-born persons with relatively low levels of educational attainment are Europeans who immigrated in the 1950s and 1960s, the low level of educational attainment of the 1990s Mexican cohort stands out even more.

- Of all immigrants to Chicago during the 1990s, Mexicans comprise 70% of all those with less than a 9th grade education and 53% of those with more than 9 years of schooling but less than a high school diploma.
- Mexicans comprise 7% of the 1990s immigrant cohort with a college degree, and 23% of those with some college, but not a college degree.

Source: Census 2000
VI. FAMILY

Nearly two-thirds of Mexican-born adults in the Chicago area are married. Women are more likely to be married than men. Of those who are married, women are more likely to be living with their spouses. Children are present in more than two-thirds of Mexican immigrant households. Over a third (35%) of those households with children have three or more children present.

A. Marriage Rates

Only 21% of Mexican-born women have never married, compared to one-third of men. In addition, 67% of Mexican-born women are married compared to 61% of men. Married Mexican-born women are more likely to be living with their spouse than are men.

- Married with spouse present:
  - Women: 61%
  - Men: 49%

\[\text{Source: Census 2000}\]
B. Female-Headed Households

Mexican-born women are less likely than their U.S.-born Mexican counterparts to live in a female-headed household. Mexican-born residents of Metropolitan Chicago are less likely to report that theirs is a female-headed household than are persons from all but one of the largest Asian immigrant groups.

Source: Census 2000
C. Children Under 18

Over two thirds of Mexican immigrant households have children present, and nearly a quarter have three or more children. Still, as a reflection of the forces that have propelled an increasing number of women to migrate in the past decade, Mexican-born women in the metropolitan Chicago area are more likely than their male counterparts to have children under 18 living who are not living at home.

- Mexican-born adults with children living elsewhere:
  - Women: 21%
  - Men: 12%

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**Number of Children Under 18 Present in Chicago Area**

**Mexican Immigrant Households, 2000**

- None: 32%
- One: 20%
- Two: 24%
- Three or more: 24%
VII. HEALTH

The great majority of Mexican-born adults report that they are in good health, with women somewhat more likely to report being in good health than men. A majority of immigrant adults reported that their employer provided them with health insurance. Women and men were equally likely to be insured.

A. Health Status

Mexican-born women are more likely than men to say that their health is good or excellent. Conversely, women are less likely than Mexican-born men to report having a moderate or severe disability, probably due to the fact that men undertake more dangerous jobs.

Nevertheless, Mexican-born residents of metropolitan Chicago are almost half-again as likely to report having a sensory, physical or mental disability (24.6%), than are non-Latino immigrants (17.8%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent health:</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good health:</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair health:</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor health:</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate or severe disabilities:</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 Ibid.
B. Health Insurance\textsuperscript{13}

Mexican immigrants to the Metropolitan Chicago region face one of their greatest challenges in the access to health insurance to cover significant medical expenses. Around half of the households have adequate health insurance coverage, and 20\% have no access to insurance.

- 61\% of both male and female Mexican-born residents of the Chicago area report that their main place of employment provides health insurance.
- Slightly more than half of both male and female Mexican-born respondents to the Chicago Area Survey reported that all members of their family were covered by health insurance.
- Approximately a quarter of respondents reported that some, but not all, of the people in their family were covered by health insurance.
- One-fifth reported that no-one in their family was covered by health insurance.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
VIII. LANGUAGE

There is not a significant difference between the English-speaking abilities of Mexican-born women and men. However, immigrant women in the Chicago metropolitan area are more likely than non-Hispanic immigrant women not to speak English well or at all. Slightly over half (55%) of Mexican-born women speak English poorly, or not at all, compared to 23% of non-Hispanic immigrant women.

Source: Census 2000
The percentage of Mexican-born residents of the area living in poverty drops dramatically with the length of time in the United States, as is also true for Asian Immigrants. Still, both foreign-born and U.S.-born Mexicans, regardless of gender, are more likely than their Asian counterparts to live in poverty.

Source: Census 2000
Poverty Rates by Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity

Source: Census 2000
X. Employment

The percentage of Mexican-born women, 16 or older, who are working (39%) is lower than that for Asian women, and non-Hispanic immigrant women overall (46%). Slightly over half (51%) of Mexican-born women are not in the formal labor force, and an additional 10% of women are unemployed.

Source: Census 2000
XI. THE IMMIGRANT MEXICAN WOMAN LABOR FORCE IN CHICAGO

Chicago has the second largest Mexican community in the U.S.—and it is growing. The same can be said about its male and female labor force. Chicago’s Mexican labor force, like other immigrant groups, is not randomly or evenly distributed throughout the economy, however: rather, it is tightly clustered in a small number of industries and occupations. This characteristic is closely linked to the human capital-educational level, occupational skills and job training—immigrants bring to the U.S., an industrial country rapidly becoming a high-tech information, knowledge-based, and service economy. The skill-education mismatch for immigrant Mexican women, however, results, in their filling less desirable and lower paying jobs.

The decade of the 1990s was the immigrant Mexican women’s decade with respect to their growth and dominance in Chicago’s female immigrant labor force.

- The Mexican woman labor force in Chicago increased by 228% in the decade of the 1990s. 1990: 44,511; 2000: 146,158.
- The Mexican women labor force in Chicago increased by 29% in the decade of the 1980s. 1980: 34,421; 1990: 44,511.

- Mexican women are the largest female immigrant labor force in metropolitan Chicago.
- The immigrant female Mexican labor force in Chicago is over three times larger than the second largest immigrant female labor force, Poles.
- The immigrant Mexican women labor force in the Chicago metropolitan area is larger than the combined total of the five next largest immigrant groups.

Immigrant Women Labor Force: 2000
Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area

Source: Census 2000
XII. INTEGRATION INTO THE WORLD OF WORK

While Chicago’s economy is extensive and multi-layered, immigrant women, in general, and immigrant Mexican women, in particular, tend to be narrowly circumscribed in terms of occupational placement—both in terms of industry as well as occupation. Language facility and educational and occupational skill level help account for this situation.

**Mexican immigrant women are one of the least well-integrated immigrant groups into Chicago’s labor force.**

- The 2000 U.S. census lists 481 occupations in the metropolitan Chicago labor force, yet:
  - 50% of immigrant Mexican women in Chicago’s labor force are found in only 11 occupations.
  - 75% of immigrant Mexican women in Chicago’s labor force are found in only 28 occupations.

**Over half of all Mexican immigrant women work in only two industries.**

- 41.9% of immigrant Mexican women work in manufacturing.
- 11% of immigrant Mexican women work in food service.
XIII. OCCUPATIONAL PLACEMENT OF MEXICAN WOMEN

The extent of immigrant Mexican women’s narrow occupational niche in Chicago’s economy is most obvious when we examine the ten largest occupations in which they are employed, then three things stand out: (1) exceptionally large numbers of Mexican women are employed in Chicago’s light industry sector (2) in jobs that require little or no experience or skill and (3) they are low paying—probably non-union jobs. Other immigrant women, like Filipinas, also have narrow occupational niches (for other reasons) but their strong human capital results in occupational placement in exceptionally well-paying jobs in the health care sector.

Six of the ten largest Mexican immigrant women occupations are blue-collar, unskilled and semiskilled light industry jobs.

- Production workers: 12,112
- Assemblers and fabricators: 9,115
- Packagers and handlers: 8,590
- Machine operators/tenders: 7,862
- Metal and plastic workers: 6,536
- Laborers: 5,405

By comparison, six of the ten largest Filipino immigrant women occupations are professional or skilled jobs in a single industry—health care.

- Registered nurses: 7,292
- Nursing & health aides: 1,422
- Physicians & surgeons: 1,004
- Home care aides: 726
- Lab technologists & tech.: 615
- Med. assistants: 588
XIV. OCCUPATIONAL TRENDS IN IMMIGRANT LABOR FORCE

The dual occurrence of continued decline of jobs in Chicago’s industrial sector and the acquisition, over time, of more cultural capital appear to have resulted in Mexican women becoming engaged in more broad-based industrial sectors of employment. Two trends are evident: one, a declining—but still significant—concentration in Chicago’s manufacturing sector; two, modest but clear increases in several industrial sectors that call for familiarity, knowledge, and skills about the U.S. society, culture and economy. The measure of this change is probably conservative since these data do not differentiate length of time in the country. There appears to be little or no penetration, however, in sectors of the economy that call for strong language facility and frequent public contact.

Light manufacturing is the major—but declining—industrial sector in which immigrant Mexican women are employed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial sector</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small but significant cumulative growth/change has occurred in several broad-based industries in the economy that call for skills distinctive to the country’s industrial and postindustrial service economy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial sector</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food service</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Social service</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net change</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low concentration and little or no occupational change have occurred in some industries that require both language facility and frequent contact with the public.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial sector</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information/communications</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Admin</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation/Public Utilities</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Human capital—education, occupational skills, work experience, and the like—is the individual cache that typically accounts for job placement in an economy as well as the economic rewards for work done. Of the five largest immigrant groups in Chicago, including non-Hispanic white women and African American women, Filipina and Latina women are at opposite ends of the continuum on both counts. Filipina immigrant women possess strong human capital and have a high median income; immigrant Mexican women possess poor human capital and have low median income.

**Immigrant Mexican women have the lowest median income of any immigrant or minority group in Chicago’s labor force.**

- Native-born Mexican women ($8,700) and foreign-born Mexican women ($6,100) have the lowest median income of any immigrant or minority group in Chicago’s female labor force.
- Immigrant Filipino women earn nearly four-and-a-half times more than immigrant Mexican women ($27,000 vs. $6,100).

*Median Income by Race/Ethnicity: 2000*  
*Chicago 6-County Area*

*Source: Census 2000*
XVI. Marital Status and Income

Marital status makes a significant difference in the level of earnings for immigrant Mexican women. Four are considered here: (1) married women living with their spouse; (2) single women who have never been married; (3) married women with their spouse absent; and (4) women who are separated, divorced, or widowed.

(At this stage in our research we have not yet probed into the data in order to account for these differences. Further analysis should provide a partial or full explanation, however. For now we will settle for speculation, in the form of hypotheses.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Median Annual Income ($)</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married women living with a spouse</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Possibly due to husband being primary bread-winner and the wife working part-time to supplement household income. (Later analysis to include total household income should shed additional light on these data.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single women who have never married</td>
<td>$6,400</td>
<td>These women are probably young, likely to have their first job and have little or no work experience and possibly still living at home or sharing living arrangements with one or more roommates. (As above, later analysis that includes total household income will be helpful.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married women with a spouse absent</td>
<td>$8,300</td>
<td>This marital situation is least clear in terms of making an informed guess as to relative economic well-being and whether a spouse’s income, partial or, otherwise, can be figured into the household income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women who are separated, divorced or widowed</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>These women are most likely to be the sole bread winner in their household and, therefore, completely dependent on their income for their economic well-being. So, while they have the highest earnings, it is entirely possible they are in the worst economic condition of any of the other three groups since, in all likelihood, they have no other financial support aside from their own.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Median Income for Mexican Immigrant Women by Marital Status: 2000
Chicago 6-County Area

Source: Census 2000