



# HISPANIC SENTIMENT STUDY 2025:

## THE LATINA EDITION



In partnership with



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## Executive Summary: Beyond the "Strong Latina" Narrative: The Paradox of Resilience & The Rise of the Parallel Economy

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## Conclusion: Leadership Outgrowing Infrastructure



# RESEARCH CONTEXT & METHODOLOGY

*This report represents a specific intersectional analysis derived from the 2025 Hispanic Sentiment Study. While the broader study examines the multifaceted experience of the Hispanic/Latino community in the United States, this "Latina Edition" provides a deeper dive into the specific lived experiences and sentiments of Hispanic women.*

*This exclusive edition was developed with the strategic support and cultural expertise of:*

- **Poderistas:** *A digital community and non-partisan organization built by and for Latinas to harness their collective power and civic potential.*
- **EthniFacts:** *A leading consumer insights and data science firm specializing in the psychological and behavioral drivers of a multicultural America.*

*The insights within this document are grounded in a synthesis of primary and secondary data:*

- **Primary Data:**
  - *Results from the 2025 Hispanic Sentiment Study, an annual national study tracking the sentiment of over 2,000 Hispanic/Latino adults across the U.S. Data not otherwise footnoted throughout this report is derived from the 2025 Hispanic Sentiment Study.*
  - *Results from the 2025 Poderistas Community Survey, the fifth in an annual series tracking the sentiment, values, and civic engagement of 346 Poderistas community members across the United States. Conducted in October 2025, this survey reflects the post-election landscape and captures the perspectives of a highly engaged Latina membership community. Respondents represent an above-average educational and income profile relative to the U.S. Hispanic population, and findings should be understood as reflecting the experiences of an activated Latina leadership cohort.*
- **Market Growth Data:** *Updated projections from the U.S. Census Annual Business Survey (2023 vs. 2019), providing the hard metrics for the "Parallel Economy" and Latina entrepreneurship growth.*
- **Workforce Analysis:** *Wage and labor force data from the National Partnership for Women & Families (2025) and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.*

*The goal of this research piece is to move beyond the "Strong Latina" trope to provide stakeholders with a data-backed framework for deeply understanding the Latina cohort. By analyzing their unique values, economic trajectory, and systemic constraints they navigate, we reveal the massive development opportunity they represent for national economic and institutional growth.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## **Beyond the "Strong Latina" Narrative: The Paradox of Resilience & The Rise of the Parallel Economy.**

The 2025 Hispanic Sentiment Study reveals a community at a crossroads. While the "Strong Latina" trope persists in the media, the data uncovers a more complex reality: a Paradox of Resilience. **Latinas are exhibiting extraordinary levels of optimism and entrepreneurial drive, yet they are doing so while navigating a systemic vacuum of institutional support.**

This study moves beyond deficit narratives to show that **Latinas are not just "waiting for a seat at the table"—they are building a Parallel Economy.** We find that Latinas are redefining power on their own terms by exercising a tri-sector influence:

- **Institutional Authority:** Transforming existing corporate and civic structures from within.
- **Economic Agency:** Creating independent, high-growth engines that outpace the national market.
- **Ethical Stewardship:** Leading through a moral-first framework of justice, family stability, and community safety.

From a 47% explosion in business creation to a moral-driven consumer logic, Latinas are moving beyond traditional "boardroom-only" metrics to establish a new, broader standard of American leadership.



# 01

## The Resilience Paradox: Strength Under Constraint

Latinas exhibit a "cautious optimism" that is earned through perseverance, rather than naive hope. Their resilience is a strategic response to structural exclusion, characterized by a deep commitment to growth despite a shrinking safety net.

- **The Hard Numbers:**

- Latina women are typically paid only 54 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men. This wage gap translates to a \$30,700 annual difference in median wages (\$36,150 for Latinas vs. \$66,850 for white, non-Hispanic men)<sup>1</sup>.
- 52% of Latina women report experiencing racial discrimination and 54% report gender discrimination in the workplace<sup>2</sup>.
- The Worry Gap: 42% of Latinas report they would be “very worried” about losing pay if they had to take just one day off unexpectedly (vs. 31% of men). This is compounded by the fact that 45% of Latina mothers are the key breadwinners for their families, making their households hypersensitive to wage disparities<sup>3</sup>.
- Financial Regression: 42% of Latinas state their financial situation is actively getting worse (vs. 33% of men).
- The Lack of Basic Needs: 35% have struggled to afford food in the last year; 36% have had to borrow from family to survive. Nearly 3.8 million family households are headed by Latina women, and 27% of those households currently live below the poverty level.<sup>4</sup>
- The Stability Crisis: 66% of Latinas believe the country is on the “wrong track” (vs. 58% of men), driven by a higher sense of urgency regarding Gun Control, Healthcare and National Unity.
- The Safety Crisis: 27% skipped or left a real-world event in the past 6 months due to safety concerns. 31% felt unsafe attending a civic event or wearing Latina identity symbols in public. Among those who avoided an event due to safety concerns, the top drivers were political tensions (72%), harassment targeting Latinas (56%), and immigration concerns (41%).<sup>5</sup> This finding came from a cohort of educated, resourced, empowered Latinas representing an above-average educational and income profile relative to the U.S. Hispanic population.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Latina Women and the Wage Gap, National Partnership for Women & Families, November 2025

<sup>2</sup> Latina Women and the Wage Gap, National Partnership for Women & Families, November 2025

<sup>3</sup> Latina Women and the Wage Gap, National Partnership for Women & Families, November 2025

<sup>4</sup> Latina Women and the Wage Gap, National Partnership for Women & Families, November 2025

<sup>5</sup> Poderistas Community Survey, October 2025

<sup>6</sup> Poderistas Community Survey, October 2025

- **The Value Intensity:**

This resilience is fueled by a higher "Moral Urgency" than their male counterparts. Latinas rate core values significantly higher:

- Justice (92.5% vs. 67.5%),
- Learning (86.1% vs. 66.8%)
- Growth (84.3% vs. 63.6%).



**Latinas aren't just "hard workers"; they are the most ethically driven cohort in the workforce. Their leadership is rooted in moral accountability and constant growth.**

**Latina optimism exists despite systems, not because of them. Their resilience is a value-driven response to a systemic failure to provide basic stability in healthcare, safety, and pay equity.**



## 02

### Education: The Decisive Door & The Risk Calculation

For Latinas, education is not a journey of self-discovery; it is a lens of pragmatism and sacrifice. While the community values learning at a higher intensity than men (86.1% vs 66.8%), the data reveal that Latinas calculate the "cost of failure" much more acutely.

- **The Hard Numbers:**

- **The "Closed Door" Effect:** Latinas are 12% more likely than men to say they are "not at all likely" to return to college. This is not a lack of ambition, but a recognition of limited capacity.
- **The Caregiving Tax:** 95% of Latina parents identify affordable childcare as a "critical" policy need. For Latinas, the barrier to a degree is not the classroom—it is the cradle.
- **Funding Vulnerability:** Latinas rely disproportionately on Pell Grants and student loans, viewing college as a "fragile path." In contrast, Hispanic men report significantly higher confidence in merit-based aid, athletic scholarships, and family support.
- **Pathway Choice:** Latinas gravitate toward Community Colleges and Vocational training—not because they lack the ability for 4-year institutions, but because these programs offer the flexibility required to balance work and family roles.



**Latinas do not disengage from education; they calculate risk more accurately. Because they lack the "merit-based" safety nets or family subsidies reported by men, they choose shorter, more certain pathways.**

**The "Closed Door" is actually a "Smart Door"—a rational decision to avoid debt in a system that doesn't guarantee a return on investment for caregivers.**



## 03

### The Entrepreneurial Revolution: Building a Parallel Economy

When corporate systems fail to provide pathways for advancement, Latinas pivot to entrepreneurship. This is no longer a "side hustle"—it is a market-shifting movement that emerged explosively from the pandemic.

- **Business Creation Expansion:** From 2019 to 2023, Latinas led the nation with a 47% increase in the number of employer firms, compared to only 9% for non-Hispanic females and 3% for total businesses.<sup>7</sup>
- **Sales Growth:** Latina-owned firms saw a 46% increase in sales, significantly outperforming the 20% growth seen by total U.S. businesses.<sup>8</sup>
- **Job Creation:** Latina-owned employer firms saw a 28% increase in the number of paid employees between 2019 and 2023. This growth rate is nearly 10x the national average, as total U.S. businesses saw only a 3% increase in staffing during the same period.<sup>9</sup>
- **Payroll Contributions:** These businesses drove a 49% increase in Annual Payroll, more than doubling the 23% growth rate seen by both non-Hispanic females and the total U.S. business population.<sup>10</sup>



**Latinas are the most prolific job creators in the U.S. economy. If corporate America continues to ignore the "Latina Leadership Gap," they will lose their top talent to the parallel economy Latinas are building for themselves.**

<sup>7</sup> Annual Business Survey of the U.S. Census 2023 vs 2019

<sup>8</sup> Annual Business Survey of the U.S. Census 2023 vs 2019

<sup>9</sup> Annual Business Survey of the U.S. Census 2023 vs 2019

<sup>10</sup> Annual Business Survey of the U.S. Census 2023 vs 2019

## 04

### The Consumer Power Play: Loyalty as a Trust Choice

Latinas are not just consumers; they are "Community Investors." They direct their massive economic power toward brands that signal cultural proximity and trust.

- **The Trust Gap:** Only 18% of Latinas feel their values are reflected by mainstream brands.
- **The Media Collapse:** This invisibility has led to a breakdown in institutional trust. Alignment with English-language news media has plummeted from 54.1% in 2018 to just 30.7% in 2025.
- **The "Positive Role" Premium:** 55% of Latinas are more likely to become customers of a brand that plays a positive role in their family or community—a 25% increase since 2023.
- **The Linguistic Signal:** Spanish-language media remains a primary trust filter. Latinas trust Spanish-language news at a 30% vs. 8% margin over Hispanic men and are 20 points more likely than Hispanic men to favor brands that advertise in Spanish (43% vs. 23%).



**For Latinas, Spanish is a signal of safety and respect. Brands that fail to use cultural signals are failing a "trust test" that Latinas take very seriously.**



# 05

## Pride as a Mobilizer: Recognition Activates Power

Pride is conditional for Latinas and evidenced-based. Unlike men, whose pride often assumes institutional progress, Latinas require proof, particularly in elite spaces where they have historically been excluded.

### The Hard Numbers:

When presented with data-backed achievements, the "Pride Gap" between women and men is stark:

Achievement Facts	Latina "High Pride"	Latino Men "High Pride"	The "Pride Gap"
Latino Board Seats	68%	43%	+25%
Homeownership Gains	72%	58%	+14%
Economic Growth Facts	65%	52%	+13%

### Pride as a Mobilizer in action:

When asked why they joined Poderistas, members cited connection and inspiration as their primary motivations – 74% joined to connect with like-minded Latinas, while the second and third motivators were to be inspired by other Latinas, and to stay informed about issues affecting their community. Pride, for these women, is not passive – it is the engine of deliberate action.<sup>11</sup>



**Because Latinas feel the most "unseen," data-backed proof of success acts as a powerful psychological re-activator. It shifts their perception from "struggling" to "powerful." Pride fuels participation.**

<sup>11</sup> Poderistas Community Survey, October 2025

# 06

## Leadership: Aspirational but Under-Supported

Latinas are ready to lead, valuing justice, honesty, growth, and accountability. However, they are more likely than men to feel the community is undervalued and excluded from power structures. They aspire to leadership, recognize underrepresentation clearly, and respond strongly to signals of Latina advancement.

### The Hard Numbers:

- **Workplace Advancement:**
  - While both genders report enjoying their daily tasks, there is a sharp divergence when it comes to the "rewards" of that work (Pay and Promotion). Latinas are significantly more likely to select "Neutral" or "Disagree" regarding their career trajectory compared to the high "Strongly Agree" scores seen in Hispanic | men.
    - Fair Pay: Only 34% of Latinas strongly agree they are fairly paid, compared to 46% of Hispanic men (a 12-point confidence gap).
    - Path to Promotion: Only 31% of Latinas feel they have a clear path to advancement, while 48% of Hispanic men feel confident in their upward mobility (a 17-point gap).
    - The "Neutrality" Factor: 41% of Latinas remain "Neutral" on whether their company offers them growth—suggesting they feel "stuck" in roles they otherwise enjoy.
- **The Recognition Gap:**
  - 68% to 72% of Latinas react with "High Surprise" to news of their own community's contributions and advancements. This "Surprise Metric" is the smoking gun of invisibility; it proves that Latinas are making history without being told they are part of it. In contrast, Hispanic men are 22% less likely to be "surprised" by these facts, as they often assume progress is happening, whereas Latinas assume they are still being excluded until shown the hard data.





**The leadership pipeline exists, but it lacks sponsorship, access, and institutional investment. The missing piece is not ambition. It is infrastructure. When 7 out of 10 Latinas are surprised by their own success, the system is failing to reflect their value back to them. However, moving forward, Latina success should not be a surprise—and high-achieving Latinas must answer the call to mentor and sponsor those following in their footsteps to ensure that visibility becomes the new standard.**

**Poderistas members demonstrate what happens when that support exists: 67% say their pride in Latina identity increased as a result of being part of the Poderistas community. 62% say their confidence to make a difference increased. 83% have already voted, made a voting plan, or mobilized others to vote — attributing this action directly to their Poderistas membership.<sup>12</sup>**

# 07

## The Future of Tech: The AI Confidence Deficit

As we look toward 2026, a new barrier is emerging: the digital and algorithmic divide. While Latinas are building a “Parallel Economy” in the physical market, they face a secondary invisibility in algorithms that threatens to automate the exclusions of the past.

**The Context of Exclusion:** This deficit is rooted in a massive representational gap within the rooms where future systems are built. Despite their status as the nation's primary job creators, Latina women represent only 2% of computing-related roles<sup>13</sup>. This lack of "algorithmic authorship" creates a cycle where digital systems are developed without the cultural nuance or ethical stewardship that Latinas prioritize.

### The Hard Numbers:

- **The Bias Concern:** 51% of Latinas express deep concern regarding bias and stereotyping in AI-generated content.
- **The Confidence Gap:** Only 52% of Latinas feel confident recognizing AI-generated content, compared to 76% of Hispanic men.
- **The STEM Wage Penalty:** Mirroring the broader 54-cent wage gap, Hispanic women in STEM report the lowest median earnings of any demographic, further disincentivizing participation in the digital future<sup>14</sup>.



**Invisibility in media is being replaced by Invisibility in Algorithms. Latinas are acutely aware that if they aren't "in the room" where AI is trained, the systems of the future will scale the biases of the past. When digital systems fail to reflect real-world diversity, they create tangible business risks—from flawed consumer decisions to reputational harm for the brands that deploy them.**

<sup>13</sup> Percentage of employed women in computing-related occupations in the United States from 2007 to 2020, by ethnicity, Statista

<sup>14</sup> Pew Research Center, 2021

# 08

## Redefining Power: The Latina Leadership Model

The data suggests that we must move beyond narrow corporate definitions of leadership. Latinas are currently exercising a sophisticated, non-traditional form of authority that is reshaping the American economy. We define this through four distinct pillars:

### 1. Values-Based Leadership: Ethical Stewardship

Leadership for Latinas is not about individual status; it is about community accountability.

#### THE DATA

With Justice (92.5%) and Learning (86.1%) rated as their North Star values, Latinas are leading as Ethical Stewards. Even for the highly educated and accomplished Poderistas community, improving the educational system was rated as their top political issue in 2025. These women are not only opening doors that have been closed, but they are also leaving the door open for those that follow.<sup>15</sup>



#### THE SHIFT

*This frames leadership not as "climbing a ladder," but as a commitment to social cohesion and collective progress.*

### 2. Economic & Market Leadership: Systemic Influence

Latinas lead by building their own tables and directing the flow of capital.

#### THE DATA

The 47% surge in Latina employer firms (2019-2023) is an act of systemic leadership. Furthermore, Latinas act as Chief Market Officers, directing trillions in spending toward brands that pass their "trust test" of cultural proximity. A proof point: 76% of Poderistas reported having "a great deal of say" in the purchasing decisions within their household.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Poderistas Community Survey 2025

<sup>16</sup> Poderistas Community Survey 2025



#### **THE SHIFT**

*Latinas are not just participants in the market; they are the market's primary architects.*

### **3. Resilience as Management: Strategic Risk Calculation**

What has historically been dismissed as "juggling" is actually high-level logistical and strategic management.

#### **THE DATA**

Navigating the "Caregiving Tax" (95% childcare priority) while maintaining a career requires a level of risk calculation that mirrors executive-level resource allocation.



#### **THE SHIFT**

*We reframe the Latina "Risk Calculation" as a masterclass in Logistical Management. Balancing family survival with professional growth is the highest form of operational strategy.*

### **4. Civic & Digital Leadership: The Guardians of the Future**

Latinas are emerging as the "conscience" of the digital age.

#### **THE DATA**

Through their 51% concern over AI bias and their response to "Data-Backed Pride" in board seats, Latinas are leading the charge for algorithmic and institutional transparency.



#### **THE SHIFT**

*This is Civic Leadership in its most modern form—protecting the community from digital invisibility and ensuring that the systems of the future reflect the diverse reality of the present.*

## 09

### The Call to Action: From Inspiration to Infrastructure

These findings demand a shift from praising "strength" to providing the infrastructure that leadership requires:

- 1. Fund the Infrastructure:** Address the 42% vulnerability rate. Leadership cannot exist without a safety net of paid leave and childcare.
- 2. Invest in the Infrastructure That Works:** Poderistas members demonstrate what returns on that investment look like — engaged, aware, and mobilizing others. Civic leadership at scale is not aspirational. It is already happening where infrastructure exists.<sup>17</sup>
- 3. Sponsor the Parallel Economy:** Move beyond mentorship to Sponsorship. Provide capital and board access to the businesses growing at 15x the national average.
- 4. Bridge the Pay Gap:** Radical transparency is required to end the "Borrowing Cycle" (36%) and ensure Latinas are paid their full worth (the missing 46 cents).
- 5. Reflect the Values:** Brands and tech companies must align with the 92.5% Justice rating. If you don't reflect their values, you don't deserve their loyalty.



## CONCLUSION: LEADERSHIP OUTGROWING INFRASTRUCTURE

The data leads us to a singular conclusion: **Latina leadership is currently outgrowing the infrastructure designed to contain it.** When 47% more Latina-owned employer firms emerge in four years, and when 92.5% of a cohort identifies "Justice" as their North Star, we are witnessing a community that is no longer waiting for permission. The leadership we see in this study is not "aspirational"—it is operational.

It is found in the 45% of breadwinning mothers who manage the logistical complexity of the "Caregiving Tax" as high-level operations managers. It is found in the entrepreneurs who are expanding their workforces at nearly 10x the national average.

**The "Parallel Economy" is not a backup plan; it is a mandate. To invest in Latinas is an investment in the most resilient, ethically-aligned, and economically productive leadership pipeline in the global market. The future of American growth is not just Hispanic; it is Latina-led.**



WE  
ARE ALL  
HUMAN

