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Contact: Jodi Davis [jdavis@coqual.org](mailto:jdavis@coqual.org);

Jeyandini Fernando [jfernando@coqual.org](mailto:jfernando@coqual.org)

## **New Nationwide Study Finds Majority of Hispanic & Latino/a Employees in the U.S. Experience Pressure to Assimilate and Downplay Aspects of their Personality in Order to Succeed at Work**

**Coqual's Study, "*More than a Monolith: The Advancement of Hispanic and Latino/a Talent*," Finds the Fastest-Growing Group in the U.S. Labor Force Continues to Grapple with Complex & Contradictory Stereotypes**

**NEW YORK, April 10, 2024** — The Hispanic and Latino/a (H/L) population is a rapidly growing demographic and an economic powerhouse predicted to shape the future of the United States, yet they remain overlooked, stereotyped, and underrepresented in the U.S. workplace. Today **Coqual**, a leading global think tank, released its new research report, *More than a Monolith: The Advancement of Hispanic and Latino/a Talent*, bringing light to the multiple layers of racial and ethnic identity and the many barriers to advancement within this cohort.

Through an intersectional, data-driven lens, the new report delves into the many challenges that H/L professionals face. The study reveals how H/L professionals must contend with complex and contradictory stereotypes in the workplace from colleagues, while also navigating shifting senses of their identities within their own communities. The study utilized Coqual's rigorous mixed methodology with survey results from more than 2,300 full-time employed professionals in the US and focus groups, and expert interviews.

Among the many findings, 68% of Hispanic and Latino/a professionals who have a sponsor say their sponsor encourages them to assimilate to office norms compared to 58% of White and Black professionals, and 49% of A/AA/PI professionals with sponsors. Additionally, perceptions about race, such as "white-passing-ness," may play a role in whether employees feel represented in leadership or feel accepted by others in the H/L workplace community.

"Our findings illuminate hurdles Hispanic and Latino professionals face, including the undue pressure to mask their authentic selves and heritage in pursuit of success," said Lanaya Irvin, CEO of Coqual. "The study uncovers not only the pervasive influence of colorism but also its tangible impact on talent experiences within the workplace. Coqual is dedicated to inspiring companies to drive change that allows every professional to thrive and achieve equitable outcomes."

"We are honored to be the lead sponsor of Coqual's important new research about Hispanic and Latino professionals as we strive to advance a workplace where our colleagues feel they belong, and their unique perspectives are valued and rewarded, while building a workforce which reflects the diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences of our patients and communities globally," said Pamela Fisher, Chief Inclusion and Diversity Officer, Bristol Myers Squibb.

Coqual finds the following:

- Pay inequities for H/L professionals, particularly Latinas, are alarming -- 45% of H/L women say their company doesn't pay them an appropriate wage compared to 25% of H/L men who say the same. Additionally, 40% of Latinas say their salary doesn't allow them to support their dependents, compared to 19% of H/L men who say the same.
- 21% of H/L professionals say colleagues make negative comments to them about immigration or immigrants on a regular basis.
- 42% of H/L professionals feel that they are not seen truly as H/L by members of the H/L community at their company. This experience is complicated by immigrant generation status, Spanish language ability, and how a respondent's racial/ethnic identity is perceived by others.

- 40% of H/L professionals say it is necessary to change aspects of themselves to succeed at their company. H/L professionals are also more frequently told they are too emotional or expressive, too loud, and to be more agreeable.
- Skin color also plays a factor, as 64% of H/L professionals who are perceived as White feel well represented in their company's leadership compared to less than half (46%) of those who are perceived as Black. 53% of H/L professionals with darker skin feel well represented compared to 64% of those with lighter skin.
- 23% of H/L professionals say colleagues express stereotypes about Hispanic or Latino people at least monthly compared to 8% of White, 11% of Black, and 12% of A/AA/PI respondents who experience this.
- A quarter (25%) of Black H/L professionals say that colleagues frequently tell them that racism is over, compared to 8% of other H/L professionals.
- 42% of H/L professionals indicate that their work is micromanaged compared to 25% of their White, non-H/L counterparts.

Coqual offers fresh solutions for how organizations can address the concerns of H/L talent, broken down into two major categories:

- **Instill Culturally Inclusive Leadership Practices:** (1) redefine professionalism, (2) validate and reward linguistic diversity, and (3) welcome conversations about race and ethnicity.
- **Strengthen Organizational & Structural Policies:** (1) improve company-wide terminology and self-ID campaigns, (2) focus on structural diversity, (3) provide support for work visa and DACA recipients, (4) strengthen sponsorship offerings, (5) endorse and fund affinity groups and powerful networks, and (6) partner with experts.

**Methodology:** The primary sources of data for this report consisted of a survey, virtual focus groups, and one-on-one key informant interviews. Findings presented in this study combine results across each of these sources, incorporating a mixed-methods approach of quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry. Through our qualitative research, we draw on testimonials from over 100 professionals, experts, and practitioners across the US. For our quantitative data, Coqual partnered with NORC at the University of Chicago to deploy a web-based survey instrument to capture data from completed interviews across 2,385 respondents. To be included, respondents had to be at least 21 years old and currently employed full-time in professional occupations in the US with at least some postsecondary education and/or degree. See the Annex at the end of the report for the analysis plan.

**Lead Sponsor:** Bristol Myers Squibb; **Research Sponsors:** Amazon, American Express, Bloomberg, Freddie Mac, Google, Johnson & Johnson, KPMG LLP, L'Oréal USA, Morgan Stanley, Pfizer.

**Research Advisors:** Nichole M. Garcia, PhD, Assistant Professor, Rutgers University; Joelle L. Martinez, President and CEO – Latino Leadership Institute.

**About Coqual:** Coqual is a leading global, nonprofit think tank dedicated to helping leaders design diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces where every person belongs. Founded in 2004, Coqual provides in-depth research, thought leadership, and data-driven, actionable solutions for companies to address bias and barriers to inclusion for underrepresented populations in the workplace. Coqual's cutting-edge research and advisory services focus on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, veteran status and LGBTQ identities, and others—as well as the intersections among these groups. For more information, visit [www.coqual.org](http://www.coqual.org).

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