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FP-14-01 Single, Cohabiting, & Married Households: 1995-2012

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Single, Cohabiting, and Married Households, 1995-2012

Esther Lamidi

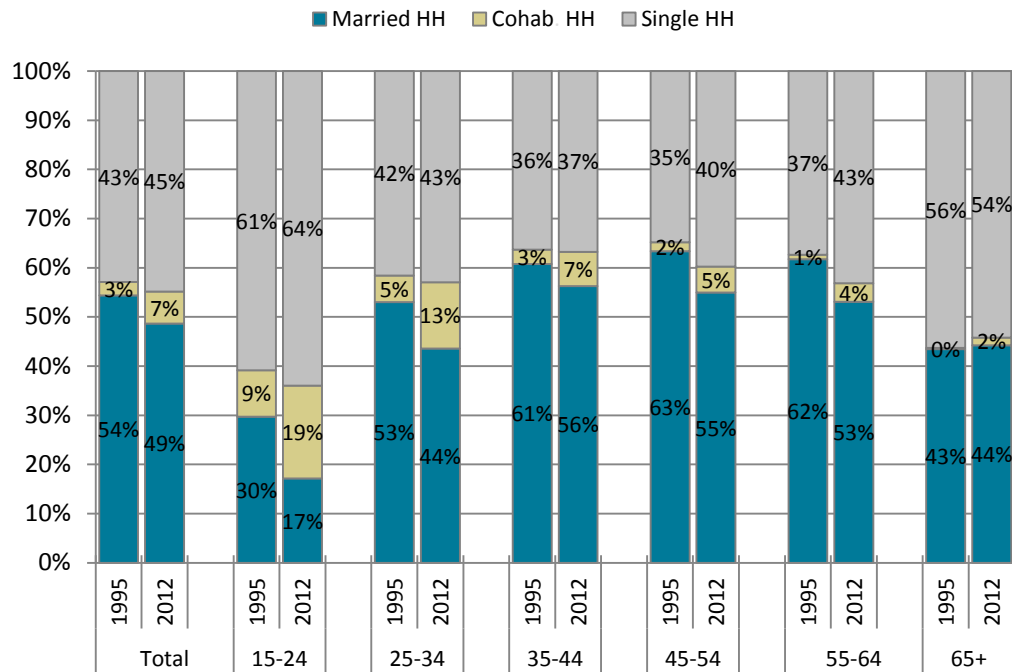


Demographic changes, such as increases in cohabitation, divorce, and single parenthood as well as the delay in marriage entry and decrease in remarriage, continue to shape American families and households (Cherlin, 2010). The effects of these changes over time, however, differ across race/ethnicity and educational levels (Kennedy & Bumpass, 2008; Manning, 2013; Teachman, et al. 2000). This profile presents changes in the proportion of U.S. single, cohabiting couple, and married couple households across race/ethnicity between 1995 and 2012.

Changes in the Shares of Single, Cohabiting, and Married Households

- The proportion of single person households, relative to couple households, changed very little between 1995 and 2012, shifting from 43% to 45% (Figure 1).
- Changes in the proportion of couple households differ by relationship status. Cohabiting households more than doubled (136% increase), whereas married households decreased by 10.5 % between 1995 and 2012. These changes persist across all age groups.
- The rise in cohabiting households and the decline in married households are more pronounced among younger Americans, particularly those aged 15-24 years. Nearly one-fifth of those aged 15 to 24 were cohabiting, whereas 2% of older Americans (65+) were cohabiting.

Figure 1. Shares of Single, Cohabiting, and Married Households in the U.S. (1995-2012)



Source: Current Population Survey, 1995 & 2012 (IPUMS)

References

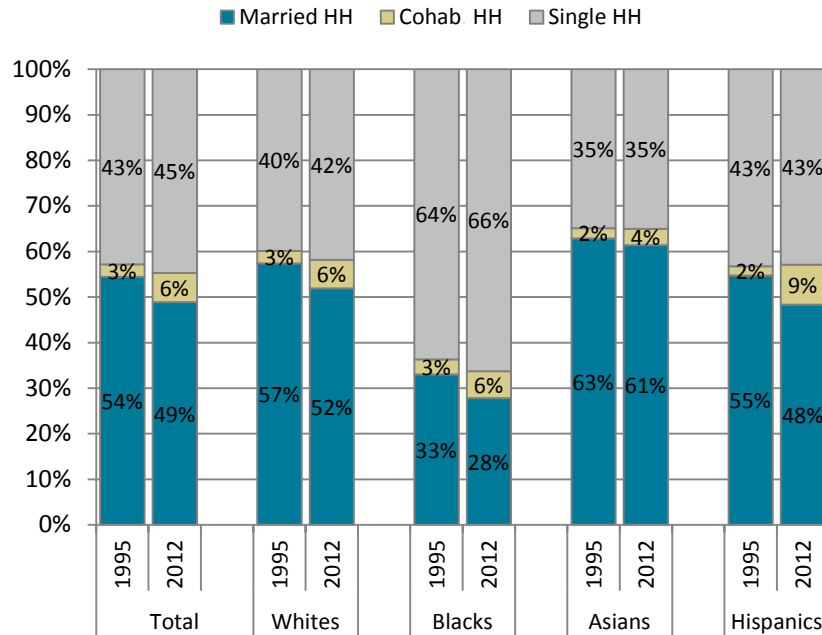
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Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

Changes in the Shares of Single, Cohabiting, and Married Households by Race/Ethnicity

- Across all racial/ethnic groups, cohabiting households increased, while married households decreased between 1995 and 2012 (Figure 2).
- In both 1995 and 2012, Asian Americans represented the greatest share of couple households (65%) followed by Whites (60% & 58%), respectively.
- Blacks had the largest percentage decrease in the proportion of married households (16%) followed by Hispanics (12%).
- In 2012, there were about twice as many cohabiting households among Whites, Blacks, and Asians as there were in 1995, but the proportion of cohabiting households more than quadrupled among Hispanics.

Figure 2. Shares of Single, Cohabiting, and Married Households by Race/Ethnicity (1995-2012)



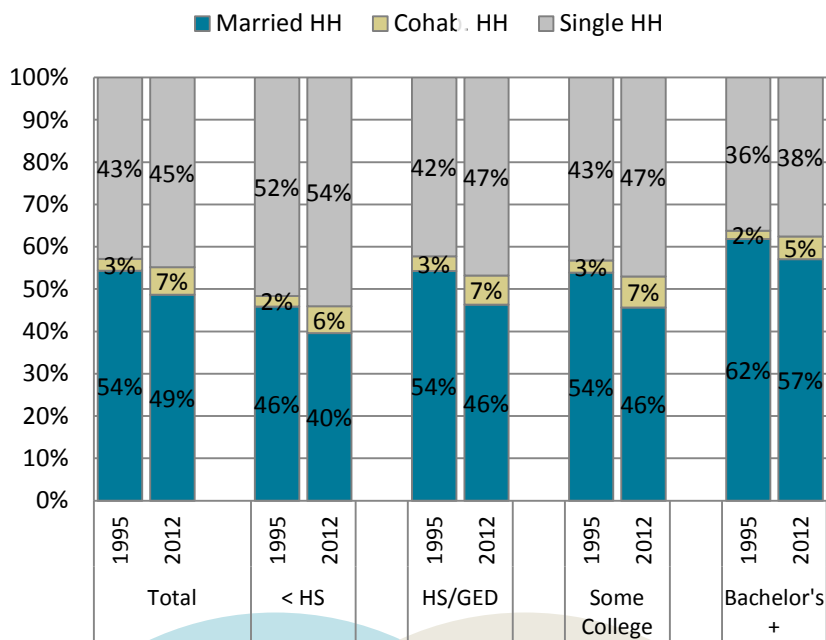
Source: Current Population Survey, 1995 & 2012 (IPUMS)

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Changes in the Shares of Single, Cohabiting, and Married Households by Educational Attainment

Figure 3. Shares of Single, Cohabiting, and Married Households by Educational Attainment (1995-2012)



Source: Current Population Survey, 1995 & 2012 (IPUMS)

- In both 1995 and 2012, individuals with less than a high school degree were more likely to be single compared to those with higher educational attainment (Figure 3).
- The higher the level of education, the greater the share of married couple households in both 1995 and 2012.
- Across all educational categories, the proportion of cohabiting households increased, while the proportion of married households decreased.
- College educated individuals experienced the greatest increase in cohabitation (175%) and the lowest decrease in marriage (8%).

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