



*Vendedor de globos en el sol*

## Tanning Booths Won't Be a Big Business in Mexico

"*Correr a todos los morenos de la calle* – Chase all these dark people off the street," was the cab driver's response when asked how to make the tourist town of Taxco, Mexico, more attractive. His opinion, commonly held, is that darker people (those who have more Indian blood) are undesirable.

Sociologist Andres Villareal studied 200 participants to investigate the link between skin color and socio-economic status in Mexico.

He found that for every 100 white people with a college education, only 60 light-brown-skinned people and only 40 dark-skinned people had attended college.

Further, the study found that people's jobs were also correlated with their skin color. In short, people with lighter-skin have better jobs.

In addition, even darker-skinned people with the same education as lighter-skinned people did not achieve the same career level. He found this to be evidence of prejudice.

Although being dark or "*muy indio*" worked well for iconic singers such as Pedro Infante, Javier Solís and Jorge Negrete, the top positions in finance and politics are most often held by people with more European blood.

Also, the commercials and programs on popular Mexican television tend to show lighter-skinned people.

*¿Qué piensas?*

### Reflection on the Reading: Read the *¿Qué piensas?* selection and then answer the following questions.

What do you think about the fact that people with darker skin tones were less educated, had lower class jobs and were more likely to live in poverty in Mexico? Does this sound fair to you? Does it make sense that those with darker skin had a hard time obtaining higher education, a key ingredient to succeeding in any job market? Why do you think this is? How would you feel if you were one of these people, discriminated against for your skin tone? What kinds of things could be done now to help those who were discriminated against? Do you see any parallels to this in the United States? What are they? How can we make things better?