

# “THE MODEL MINORITY”

*The Social Economic Status of Asian-  
Americans today*

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Fall 2018



# ASIAN-AMERICANS BREAKDOWN BY ETHNICITY, 2012 – 17.3 MILLION

## The Largest U.S. Asian Groups

The six largest country of origin groups each number more than a million people

U.S. Asians	17,320,856	
<b>U.S. Asian groups</b>		<b>% of Asians</b>
Chinese	4,010,114	23.2
Filipino	3,416,840	19.7
Indian	3,183,063	18.4
Vietnamese	1,737,433	10.0
Korean	1,706,822	9.9
Japanese	1,304,286	7.5

Note: Based on the total Asian-race population, including adults and children. There is some overlap in the numbers for the six largest Asian groups because people with origins in more than one group—for example, “Chinese and Filipino”—are counted in each group to which they belong.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis based on Elizabeth M. Hoeffel et al., *The Asian Population: 2010*, U.S. Census Bureau, March 2012.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

According to the 2010 US Census data, the **6** largest Asian groups in the US are the **Chinese** (23.2%), **Filipino** (19.7%), **Indian** (18.4%), **Vietnamese** (10%), **Korean** (9.9%), and **Japanese** (7.5%). The US population was **308 million**.

# A HISTORY OF US DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ASIAN-AMERICANS

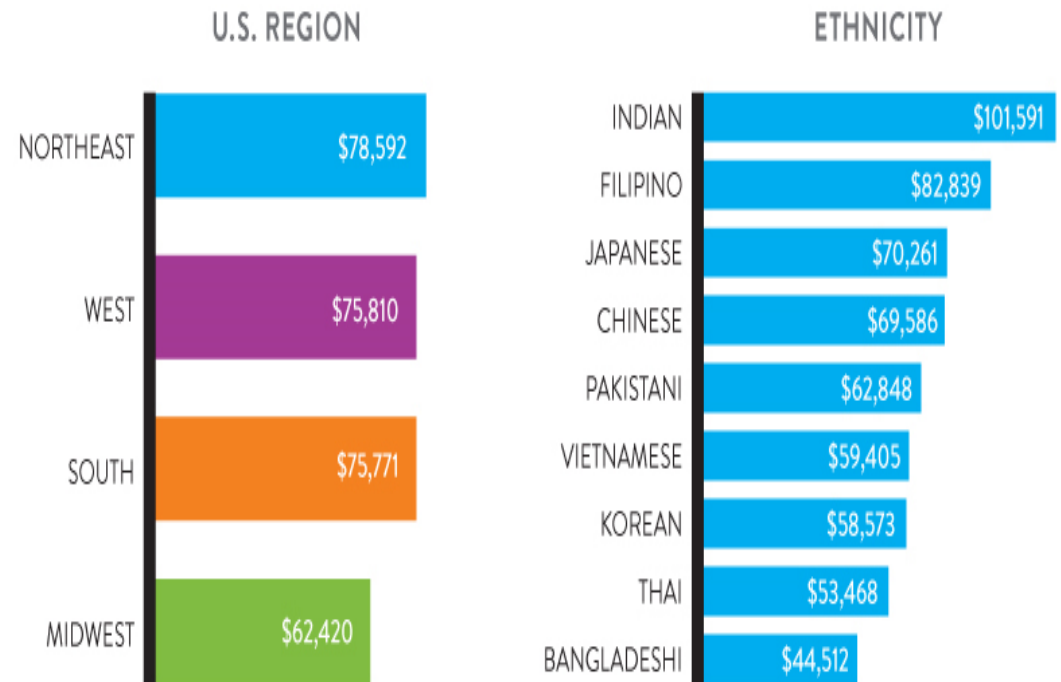


- Chinese Exclusion Act – 1882
- Japanese Gentlemen' Agreement – 1907
- Immigration Acts – 1917 and 1924
- Immigration & Naturalizaion Act - 1952

# BREAKDOWN OF MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES BY REGION & ETHNICITY (2014-15)

- Northeast region – highest household income - \$78,592
- Large income disparity amongst various Asian ethnicities
- Indians are the highest income earners (\$101,591)
- Bangladeshi are the lowest income earners (\$44,512)

## MEDIAN ASIAN-AMERICAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2014 and 2015 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

# INCOME DISPARITIES FOR ASIAN-AMERICANS

- Like Americans in general, a great economical divide exists for Asian-Americans
- Different Asian groups immigrated to the US for various reasons – work, religious freedom, refugees, relocate for family
- Different Asian groups immigrated to the US with different education/skill levels – Indians – Masters' degrees, Burmese – no college education



# FACTORS FOR ASIAN- AMERICANS SUCCESS

- Parents immigrated to the US with higher education/job skills – expect the same for their kids

Confucian values – hard work ethic

High parental involvement with children's education

Refugee mentality – distrust of state, are hard working & show enterprise, risk-taking opportunists



# THE “BAMBOO CEILING”



- Term introduced in 2005 – Jane Hyun in her novel, *Breaking the Bamboo Ceiling: Career Strategies for Asians*
- Like the “Glass Ceiling,” barriers Asians face in workplace from developing in professional careers
- Despite high representation of Asian-Americans in various industries and low level positions, they are underrepresented in managerial positions

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# POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR BAMBOO CEILING....



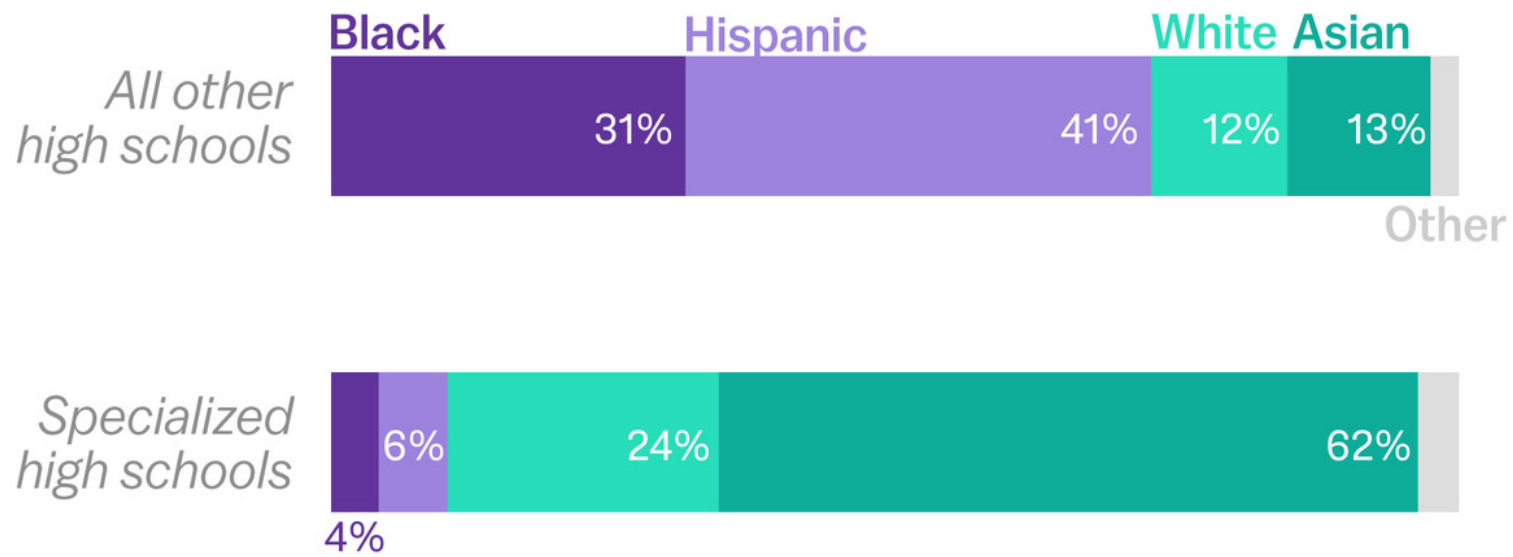
- Many hiring managers stereotype Asian-Americans as lacking in leadership & communication skills – essential skills for high level managerial positions
- Government statistics – Asians-Americans have lowest chances of attaining management positions – lower than Africans, Hispanics, & women



## Local recent news: Reform of NYC Specialized HS Admissions Process ?

### Racial demographics of New York City's specialized high schools vs. all other high schools

For the 2017-18 school year



Data from the New York City Department of Education

Due to the overrepresentation of Asians (62% of offers of total enrollment offers) in the NYC Specialized High Schools, Mayor DeBlasio has proposed reform to the admissions process. Claims the schools are not reflective of NYC's demographics. Asians represent just 13.5% of NYC's

# RECENT NEWS – FEDERAL SUIT VS. HARVARD

- Pending lawsuit : “Students for Fair Admissions” (SFA) sued against Harvard University for discriminatory admissions practices
- SFA alleges Harvard hold a higher standard for Asian-Americans than Whites, African-Americans, Hispanics, etc. Higher SAT/GPA for Asians to be admitted
- Harvard denies allegations, state they follow a “holistic approach” for their admissions process, consider more than just academics.



# REFERENCES USED:

Slide 2: <http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2012/06/2012-sdt-asian-americans-0071.png>

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade.2010.html>

Slide 4: <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2016/asian-americans-are-expanding-their-footprint-and-making-an-impact.html>

Slide 7 and 8: <https://www.harpercollins.com/9780060731199/breaking-the-bamboo-ceiling/>

Slide 9: <https://www.vox.com/2018/6/14/17458710/new-york-shsat-test-asian-protest> and <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/new-york-s-asian-american-population-grows-government-grants-lag-n720861>

Slide 10: <https://www.huntnewsnu.com/2018/10/trial-continues-over-harvards-affirmative-action-policies/>

# SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

Asians first emigrated into the US during the emergence of the railroads and gold rush in California in the 1800s. Since that time, they have faced their fair share of discrimination and social inequalities like other minority groups. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibited Chinese immigration into the US. The Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps during World War II as animosity towards them were high.

While Asian-Americans represented only about 5.6% of the US population in 2010, they have a significant footprint in the nation's colleges and in the eight specialized high schools here in New York City. In addition, Asian-Americans have also faced discrimination for high school and college admissions. Since they are "overrepresented" in the Ivy league colleges and NYC specialized high schools, the powers that be have set higher standards for Asian-Americans and NYC Mayor DeBlasio is attempting to reform and rid of the long standing entrance exam for NYS specialized high schools to try to keep the student body diverse.

Some of the reasons Asian-Americans have accomplished more in terms of education and incomes are likely due to their cultural values and support from their parents and immediate family. Asian-Americans are pushed hard to do excellent in school in order to put themselves in a good career afterwards. In addition, their parents (especially those already with a high level education) reinforce and support their academic endeavors with mentoring and placement of their kids in tutoring and exam prep courses outside of school.

# SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

Asian-Americans have a stereotype of being quiet and docile workers with respect to authority figures. At the same time, they are viewed as lacking in communication and leadership skills, which is evident in how few managers and executives there are in the workplace. Harvard officials cited these qualities as a reason why they have made fewer admission offers for Asians at their university. While they met the academia qualifications, they were lacking in personality and soft skills.

The US is the world's richest country, that doesn't reflect on the US general population as a whole as there is large gaps of socioeconomic disparities amongst Americans. Similarly, Asian-Americans have high college enrollments and incomes earned relative to other races according to many studies and statistics that have been conducted. However, there is a great divide amongst Asian-Americans. Different Asian ethnicities emigrated into the US at various times with different educational levels and skillsets and for different reasons. Indians as a whole emigrate into the US with high levels of education and skills and are at the top for Asian-Americans in those categories. On the other hand, many Burmese who emigrated into the US as political refugees have the lowest levels of education and income.