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Beyond the Shadow of White Privilege?: The Socioeconomic Attainments of Second Generation South Asian Americans

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ABSTRACT

Despite numerous studies of second generation minorities in recent years, South Asian Americans have been largely ignored. Using the most recent data available from the US Census Bureau, we investigate the socioeconomic attainments of second generation South Asian Americans. We find that their average levels of education, wages, and occupational attainment exceed those of non-Hispanic whites. Contrary to the "model minority myth" view, second generation South Asian Americans remain slightly advantaged relative to non-Hispanic whites in terms of labor market success net of age, education, and region of residence. These results are also inconsistent with discussions of white privilege that emphasize the socioeconomic disadvantages of minorities with darker skin tones. Our results suggest that theories of race relations should also incorporate South Asian Americans.

KEYWORDS

South Asian Americans; White Privilege; Second Generation; Wages

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