

# Asian american model minority

Sociology



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Sociology Asian American model minority Model minority is a term in America that refers to a group of minorities (ethnic, racial or religious) that despite past discrimination and prejudice succeeds socially, economically and educationally without inclining to violence or political confrontations with the native white Americans (Park et al 170). The stereotype mostly relies on success of Asian Americans who despite being minorities have risen to success. The success of model minority groups is measured in factors of education, income and social aspects like family stability and crime (Lee 71). To the society, the myth of model minority bases from the perception of Asian cultural values like self-sufficiency, family cohesion, hard work, and drive for success as the propeller of the immigrants into and past the middle class in America within a short time. The stereotype labels the model minorities as smart, wealthy, docile, submissive, obedient, hardworking and self-reliant with spiritually enlighten. The model minority stereotype relies on success indicators hence it hides the problems of the recent first generation of Asians-American immigrants under high rate of success tag of the established Asian communities in America (Park et al 175). They are thus models of other minority groups in America. The Asian communities in America seem to be superseding the Native Americans in education, business and other social aspects. They are living the 'American dream'. It is true that in educational institutions they favor math and other sciences that their peers who are non-Asians. Reports also show that there is increased enrolment of Asian Americans in elite universities in the US (Lee 150). Reports from the FBI also show that the Asian Americans also have the lowest arrests for crime despite their increased young generation and family stability. In business, they lead large corporations and in family finances and

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income, the Asian Americans seem wealthy. It is due to these reasons that the media began scrutinizing their methods and later in 1960, labeled them model minorities due to their success stories (Park et al 190). People would ask why the term 'model minority' widely spread across board in America. Is it wrong for a community or a group of people to be termed as models in the society? Certainly to be called a model is a privilege, especially when your success supersedes the major group (Lee p 130). Model American Asians have the brand of success with smartness, hard work, respect for the law, achievement oriented and staunch believers of the American dream. The stereotype is thus a fine compliment to American Asians (Lee 56). Among the possible causes of the model minority is the self-selective immigration. They represent just a small self-selected Asian people who migrated to America embracing the idea of America as the land of opportunity. The selection favored those with high resources, highly motivated and with ability to adapt and persevere to achieve desired goals. Second to self-selection is the cultural difference (Park et al 200). Scholars say cultural factors are among the factors that have driven the Asian Americans' success. East Asian cultures prefer education and hard work in pursuit of knowledge that they then use to achieve their high ranks. Parents of both east and south East Asian Americans push their children to study and achieve high grades in school. Since most colleges realized increased population of Asian Americans, they resorted to an affirmative action that admission marks to colleges and universities be put lower to enable other minor communities (New York Times 20). This then saw most of the Asian Americans turn to two-year community colleges than preferring four-year government and private universities to enable them achieve their education

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success. The stereotype has side effects to both the model minorities and other populations in America. First, it homogenizes the diverse Asian American population and masks the diversity of the communities due to religion, class, ethnicity, language, residence and migratory status. It also places higher expectation of Asian American individuals from school academics to work place (Park et al 215). This comes with pressure to deliver and live up to the image of model minority hence results of stress, depression and even suicide attempts. To other minority groups, a feeling of preferential treatment to the model minorities is increasing (Lee 220). This has led to rifts between the Asian Americans and the other minority communities especially African Americans. To the model minorities at times it is a feeling of racial prejudice since each time when one is in a crowd people tend to enquire where their original background. Lastly, the whites may also use the stereotype to maintain their dominant power while suppressing the visibility of the minority groups (Lee 230). To conclude, as much as the term ‘ model minority’ is nice branding it instills much pressure to the communities affected. It also brings much rift between the Asian Americans and other minority groups since people would tend to begin saying if the Asians can, why other communities cannot (Park et al 175). The branding is prejudice in itself because it does not address aspects like social, cultural, creative, linguistically and emotional ideas. Works cited Park, Clara C, Russell Endo, and Xue L. Rong. *New Perspectives on Asian American Parents, Students, and Teacher Recruitment*. Charlotte, NC: IAP, Information Age Pub, 2009. Print. Lee, S. J. *Unraveling the model minority stereotype: Listening to Asian American youth*. Teachers College Press, 1996. Print. New

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