

# South Asian Demographic Analysis

**NAPACDDC**

May 17, 2005

National Asian Pacific American Community Development Data Center (NAPACDDC)

## Tables include:

- Population Numbers and Percentages
- Youth and Elderly populations
- Citizenship and Poverty Rates
- Educational Attainment
- Housing and Household Size
- Household and Family Income
- South Asian organizations by state

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

South Asians are those who trace their origins to Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Although the Census does not capture all members of the South Asian population including undocumented peoples, the Census 2000 data can help us identify key elements and emerging trends in the South Asian population based in the United States.

## Key Findings

- The greatest concentration of South Asian youth are located in California (27%), New York (27.5%), and New Jersey (26.6%). South Asian youth outnumber the South Asian elderly population in every state in the United States.
- Bangladeshis and Pakistanis have the highest national average for South Asians living in poverty - Bangladeshis (23%), Indians (10%), and Pakistanis (18%).
- A greater percent of South Asians rent rather than own their homes.
- Rental rates: 53% Indians, 74% Bangladeshis, and 60% Pakistanis renting.

## United States South Asian Population

**Table 1: United States South Asian Population**

Race	Number	% of Total Population
<b>Total Population</b>	281,421,906	100%
<b>Asian</b>	11,898,828	4%
<b>Non-Hispanic (NH) White</b>	198,177,900	70%
<b>% of Total South Asian Population</b>		
<b>Total South Asian Population</b>	2,185,907	100%
<b>Asian Indian</b>	1,899,599	87%
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	57,412	3%
<b>Pakistani</b>	204,309	9%
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	24,587	1%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 2 (SF 2) - PCT 2

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

- Although Asian Indians make up the highest population of South Asians in the United States, it is important to pay close attention to the needs of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities.
- Both communities face higher instances of poverty (23% and 18%), and overcrowded housing (74% and 60%).
- Bangladeshis and Pakistanis began migrating later than Indians in the post 1965 wave. Both groups have attained educational degrees that go unrecognized in the United States and are forced into lower paying jobs and results in higher poverty rates.

**South Asian Taskforce**



**national CAPACD**

**U.S. Census Bureau**

# Population by Age

**Table 2: Population by Age**

	11 and under		12-17		18-25		55-64		65+		Total
<b>Total</b>	48,114,452	17%	24,179,360	17%	30,887,993	11%	24,274,684	9%	34,991,753	12%	281,421,906
<b>Asian</b>	2,173,700	18%	1,048,210	18%	1,561,490	13%	838,474	7%	861,725	7%	11,898,828
<b>Asian Indian</b>	347,806	18%	146,662	18%	274,058	14%	123,721	7%	78,337	4%	1,899,599
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	12,404	22%	4,433	22%	7,406	13%	1,809	3%	1,122	2%	57,412
<b>Pakistani</b>	47,155	23%	20,150	23%	26,697	13%	9,671	5%	6,247	3%	204,309
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	3,939	16%	1,775	16%	2,886	12%	1,980	8%	1,207	5%	24,587
<b>NH White</b>	29,854,632	15%	15,761,971	15%	19,430,250	10%	19,217,173	10%	29,458,427	15%	198,177,900

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 2 (SF 2)-PCT 3

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

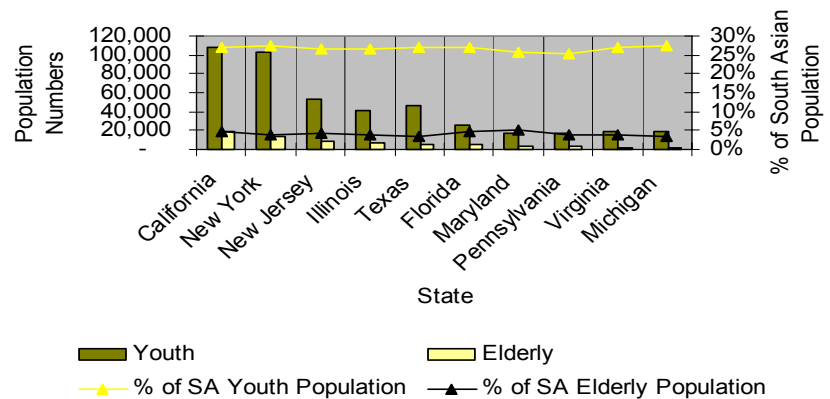
The large South Asian youth population - Bangladeshis (44%) and Pakistani (46%) - provides an opportunity for organizing youth around issues that impact the entire South Asian community. For example, by working with this large South Asian youth population, which is more likely to speak English as well as a 'South Asian language', we can engage them as translators to gain access to their non-English speaking families and increase the scope of organizing efforts.

## Youth and Elderly Population

California, New York, and New Jersey have the highest numbers of South Asian youth and elderly.

Most of the other states revealed a similar ratio - the youth making up a quarter of the total South Asian population in a state and the elderly, less than a twentieth of the South Asian population.

**Figure 1: South Asian Youth and Elderly Population**



**Table 3: South Asian Youth and Elderly Population**

	Youth	% of SA Population	Elderly	% of SA Population
<b>California</b>	107,876	27.0%	19,050	4.8%
<b>New York</b>	103,174	27.5%	14,242	3.8%
<b>New Jersey</b>	53,455	26.6%	8,352	4.2%
<b>Illinois</b>	40,773	26.4%	6,005	3.9%
<b>Texas</b>	46,758	27.1%	5,811	3.4%
<b>Florida</b>	25,544	27.0%	4,367	4.6%
<b>Maryland</b>	16,641	25.9%	3,296	5.1%
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	17,237	25.3%	2,590	3.8%
<b>Virginia</b>	18,780	26.9%	2,571	3.7%
<b>Michigan</b>	18,737	27.2%	2,227	3.2%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 2 (SF 2)-PCT 3

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

"Most states have similar ratios of youth – a quarter of the entire population. When thinking about services and access, think of the young people."



## Citizenship Status

**Table 4: South Asian Population by**

	Total	Native Born	%	Foreign Born	%	Naturalized	%	Not a Citizen	%
<b>Total Population</b>	281,421,906	250,314,017	89	31,107,889	11	12,542,626	40	18,565,263	60
<b>Asian</b>	11,859,446	4,425,895	37	7,433,551	63	3,706,819	50	3,726,732	50
<b>Asian Indian</b>	1,855,590	502,348	27	1,353,242	73	538,881	40	814,361	60
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	57,262	9,522	17	47,740	83	14,848	31	32,892	69
<b>Pakistani</b>	209,273	54,973	26	154,300	74	62,239	40	92,061	60
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	23,840	5,000	21	18,840	79	7,068	38	11,772	62
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	198,456,538	191,057,760	96	7,398,778	4	3,982,127	54	3,416,651	46

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF 4) - PCT44

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

The Citizenship Status table above shows that there are similar rates of naturalized and non-naturalized people in Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan populations living in the U.S. The majority (60% or more) of these groups are comprised of non-citizens. This high rate of South Asians who are classified as 'non-citizens' means that

many of our community members are vulnerable to anti-immigrant policies developed by the government.

It is important to note that these numbers do not capture data on undocumented populations. It is imperative to create programs that assess these specific needs. For example, issues around amnesty, immigration policy, worker abuse must be addressed, immigration fraud, access to benefits and services and naturalization.

"The percentage of persons living in poverty is 10%

for Asian Indians, 23% for Bangladeshis, 18% for

Pakistanis, and 10% for Sri Lankans. "

The numbers of South Asians living in poverty is related to the high rate of South Asians that occupy lower income jobs. This high poverty can have a serious impact on people's access to appropriate healthcare, goods, and their ability and time to organize. Combating poverty entails supporting wage/labor rights, a livable wage, and other labor related organizing.

## Poverty <sup>2</sup>

**Table 5: Persons Living in Poverty**

	Number of Persons Living in Poverty	%
<b>Total Pop</b>	33,899,812	12
<b>Asian</b>	1,467,413	13
<b>Asian Indian</b>	188,755	10
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	12,953	23
<b>Pakistani</b>	36,598	18
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	2,419	10
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	16,026,542	8

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF 4) - PCT142

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

## Educational Attainment <sup>3</sup>

**Table 6: Educational Attainment**

	Total	Asian	Asian Indian	Bangladeshi	Pakistani	Sri Lankan	White
<b>Less than high school</b>	42,550,252	1,626,956	196,159	9,554	26,489	2,534	23,047,010
<b>High school graduate</b>	59,906,752	1,501,263	166,198	7,363	21,757	2,894	45,500,915
<b>Some college*</b>	60,245,019	2,181,781	238,625	7,507	27,701	4,609	46,140,971
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	30,281,901	2,104,765	387,008	9,045	36,770	4,008	24,757,379
<b>Graduate degree</b>	16,295,225	1,256,240	389,493	7,307	27,139	4,493	13,336,496

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4 (SF 4)-PCT 65

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

\*Includes Associate's Degree

**Table 7: Educational Attainment (Percentages)**

	Total	Asian	Asian Indian	Bangladeshi	Pakistani	Sri Lankan	White
<b>Less than high school</b>	20%	19%	14%	23%	19%	14%	15%
<b>High school graduate</b>	29%	17%	12%	18%	16%	16%	30%
<b>Some college*</b>	29%	25%	17%	18%	20%	25%	30%
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	14%	24%	28%	22%	26%	22%	16%
<b>Graduate degree</b>	8%	14%	28%	18%	19%	24%	9%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4 (SF 4)-PCT 65

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

\*Includes Associate's Degree

South Asians have similar educational backgrounds. However, degrees achieved in Bangladesh and Pakistan are often not accepted in the United States. For this reason we see higher instances of people forced into lower paying that are vulnerable to exploitation including but not limited to taxi driving, restaurant, hotel, and gas station work. The nature of these positions also makes it challenging for people to complete degrees from universities or technical schools resulting in the perpetuation of their current economic condition.



Source: South Asian Taskforce

For more information on the  
National South Asian Taskforce...

Email: [info@southasianforum.org](mailto:info@southasianforum.org)

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[www.southasianforum.org](http://www.southasianforum.org)

For more information on the  
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**National Coalition for  
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## Housing

**Table 8: Housing Tenure**

	Owner Occupied	%	Renter Occupied	%
<b>Total Pop</b>	69,816,513	66%	35,663,588	34%
<b>Asian</b>	1,840,896	53%	1,659,265	47%
<b>Asian Indian</b>	277,342	47%	313,649	53%
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	4,109	26%	11,789	74%
<b>Pakistani</b>	22,630	40%	34,126	60%
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	4,199	51%	4,102	49%
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	57,860,680	72%	22,323,097	28%

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF 4) - HCT2

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

South Asian groups have lower home-ownership rates than the national average.

With more South Asians renting homes and apartments, organizations must focus on current and relevant issues such as the lack of affordable housing, livable wages, and abusive landlords/slumlords.

**Table 9: Overcrowded Households**

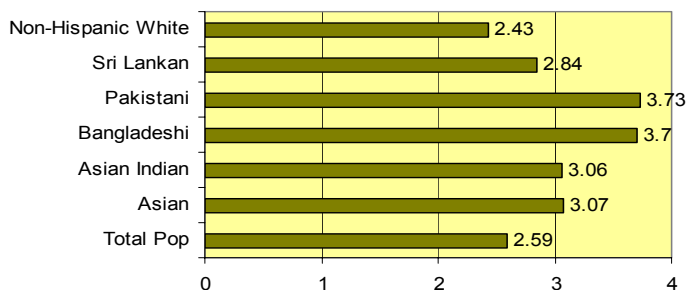
	Owner Occupied	%	Renter Occupied	%
<b>Total Pop</b>	2,143,735	3%	3,914,155	11%
<b>Asian</b>	247,742	13%	449,877	27%
<b>Asian Indian</b>	28,525	10%	77,906	25%
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	903	22%	5,956	51%
<b>Pakistani</b>	3,871	17%	13,556	40%
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	410	10%	1,300	32%
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	693,547	1%	879,287	4%

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF 4) - HCT11

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination. <sup>4</sup>

The higher rates of overcrowding in South Asian households, compared to the Non-Hispanic White rates (1% in owner-occupied homes and 4% in rental units) speak to the rising prices of property values and the lack of opportunity in accessing affordable housing. This speaks to the negative impact of gentrification upon lower income communities as it results in the displacement of low-income residents. This displacement can manifest itself as overcrowded households that allow families who live together to be able to afford more their places of residence.

**Figure 2: Average Household Size**



The Census 2000 defines a household as a group that includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. As indicated in the percentage of overcrowded households, South Asians also have higher average household sizes than the national average of 2.59 members per household. These figures varied with Asian Indians at 3.06, Bangladeshis at 3.7, and Pakistanis at 3.73, and Sri Lankans at 2.84. When organizing in the community, we must outreach and take into account entire households.



## Income

**Table 10: Per Capita Income**

<b>Total Population</b>	<b>21,587</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>20,719</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	<b>26,415</b>
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	<b>13,532</b>
<b>Pakistani</b>	<b>17,685</b>
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	<b>26,530</b>
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	<b>24,610</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4 (SF 4)-PCT 130

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

**Table 11: Median Household Income**

<b>Total Population</b>	<b>41,994</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>51,045</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	<b>61,322</b>
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	<b>37,074</b>
<b>Pakistani</b>	<b>45,576</b>
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	<b>52,392</b>
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	<b>45,245</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4 (SF 4)-PCT 89

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.



Source: South Asian Taskforce

**Table 12: Median family income**

<b>Total Population</b>	<b>50,046</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>57,874</b>
<b>Asian Indian</b>	<b>67,877</b>
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	<b>36,387</b>
<b>Pakistani</b>	<b>48,225</b>
<b>Sri Lankan</b>	<b>61,612</b>
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	<b>54,532</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4 (SF 4)-PCT 113

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

As is indicated in the Income Tables, the median household income for Indians and Sri Lankans are much higher than the national average.

Yet, the per capita income for these and other South Asian groups are much closer and sometimes lower than the national per capita income average.

Although the household income for some South Asians is higher, the per capita income reveals that this is not due to individual South Asians earning a higher income, but rather that the larger household size (as indicated in Figure 2) accounts for the higher median household income.

The per capita figure shows significant socio-economic disparities for South Asians and challenges the 'model minority myth'

For the Bangladeshi community living in the U.S., their household income is higher than its family income. This often means that there are non-family members living in the same household.

Generally, median family incomes are higher than median household incomes because not all members of the same family live in the same household.

South Asian median family incomes consist of: Asian Indians at \$67,877, Bangladeshis at \$36,387, Pakistanis at \$48,225, and Sri Lankans at \$61,612.

"South Asians share similar numbers for median family income figures with the median household income figures."

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[www.sscnet.ucla.edu/aasc/c/census](http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/aasc/c/census).



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National CAPACD, please visit  
[www.nationalcapacd.org](http://www.nationalcapacd.org).**

## South Asian Organizations

**Table 13: South Asian Organizations by State**

State	# of SA Organizations	# of South Asians	% of State Population	% of Asian State Population
New York	47	374,803	2.0%	32.1%
California	44	399,524	1.2%	9.6%
Illinois	13	154,330	1.2%	32.6%
District of Columbia	10	4,091	0.7%	22.8%
Texas	10	172,417	0.8%	26.8%
Massachusetts	9	53,007	0.8%	20.0%
Washington	6	30,959	0.5%	7.8%
Connecticut	4	30,704	0.9%	32.2%
Maryland	4	64,270	1.2%	27.0%
Michigan	4	68,769	0.7%	33.0%
New Jersey	4	200,616	2.4%	38.3%
Georgia	2	56,838	0.7%	28.4%
Minnesota	2	21,925	0.4%	13.5%
Oregon	2	12,610	0.4%	9.9%
Pennsylvania	2	68,080	0.6%	27.4%
Utah	2	4,346	0.2%	8.9%
North Carolina	1	32,451	0.4%	23.8%
Nebraska	1	3,980	0.2%	14.8%
Virginia	1	69,882	1.0%	22.9%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 2 (SF 2)-PCT 1

Note: Population numbers include alone or in combination.

The numbers of South Asian organizations are shown by state. New York, California, and Illinois had the highest number of South Asian organizations and were amongst the top five states with the highest number of South Asians living in the state. While New Jersey had the highest percentage of South Asians out of the total state population, with it only has four organizations to meet the needs of this population. Additionally Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Georgia also had high populations of South Asians with only one to two organizations to work with the community.

### Data Analysis

Julie Chang and Melany Dela Cruz

### Data Interpretation

National South Asian Task Force

### Disclaimer

The National South Asian Task Force is solely responsible for all interpretations and errors.

**Conclusion** The 2000 census data reveals significant data on South Asian groups. Data on housing, education, income, and poverty show the diversity of need for each community within the census categories listed.

Census education for South Asian communities needs to be a priority in order to avoid undercounting of this population which results in reduced government resources for these communities, which are often perceived as not needing services.

Particular areas we should consider is seizing the opportunity to work with youth in an 'intergenerational context'.

We must work with the community to combat current anti-immigrant state policies, ensure access to affordable housing, fair wages and work and health conditions that support our families.

And to ensure that are services incorporate a range of issues from labor and immigrant right to housing, youth, and education access.

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<sup>1</sup> Persons are classified as below poverty level if their total family income or unrelated individual income was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of householder, and number of related children under 18 living at home in 1999. For these thresholds, please see <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thrsh99.html>

<sup>2</sup> Persons are classified as below poverty level if their total family income or unrelated individual income was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of householder, and number of related children under 18 living at home in 1999. For these thresholds, please see <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thrsh99.html>

<sup>3</sup> For education tabulation, educational attainment rates are for persons that are age 18 and older.

<sup>4</sup> Although the Census Bureau has no official definition of crowded units, many users consider units with more than one occupant per room to be crowded.