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AS NARENDRA MODI VISITS THE U.S., A PROFILE OF INDIAN AMERICANS

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The stereotype of an Indian American is found on a U.S. college campus, sitting in the front row of biology class or acing the hardest engineering finals. When they're not in the library, they're at Bollywood dance or Hindi a cappella practice.

They go on to govern southern states like Louisiana and South Carolina, lead tech giants like Microsoft, hunt down white collar crime in New York, and star in hit comedies like "Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle."

This is borne out success of the group as a whole tells a similar story: Indian Americans are the richest and most successful immigrant group in the U.S. No wonder Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi plans to meet with members of the community during his five-day trip to the U.S.

Indian Americans have a median annual household income of \$88,000, almost double the median income of the entire U.S. population, which is \$49,800, according to a 2013 survey by Washington-based think tank Pew Research Center.

The survey, "The Rise of Asian Americans," says 70% of adults over 25 have at least a bachelor's degree, much higher than the national proportion of 28%.

Around 3 million Indian Americans live in the U.S. – 31% in the Northeast, 29% in the South, 24% in the West and 17% in the Midwest.

Indians first arrived in America in the early 1900s to work as farmhands. But in 1917, a new law prohibited further immigration from India. Those already in the country were deemed ineligible for U.S. citizenship under a 1923 Supreme Court decision.

These restrictions were lifted in 1965, allowing a large influx of educated Indian professionals seeking jobs in the U.S. But over the years, getting an H1-B visa for skilled workers to come to the U.S. – which paves one way to citizenship – has become increasingly difficult.

It's no surprise that Indians want to leave a country where poverty is widespread and debilitating – a third of India's population lives below \$1.25 a day, according to the World Bank.

In the U.S., only 9% of Indian Americans live in poverty, lower than 13% of the total population, according to the Pew survey. But despite the community's overall affluence, many Indian immigrants work in low-wage jobs. They drive taxis, work at gas stations, and – lest we forget Apu of the popular TV show Simpsons – work at convenience stores.

Politically, Indian Americans identify with the Democratic Party – 65% are Democrats or lean Democrat, while only 18% are Republican or lean Republican. By contrast, 49% of the general public identifies with the Democratic Party, and 39% with the Republican Party, according to the Pew survey.

Indian Americans have adapted to several aspects of American culture, but haven't let go of some of their traditional values. Being a good parent is one of the most important things in the lives of 78% of Indian Americans, up from 50% of the population, while 64% say that having a successful marriage is important, compared with 34%.