

Internet Research Projects

Chapter 10: New Americans, Assimilation, and Old Challenges

Assessing the Status of New American Groups Using Census Data

In this exercise, you will use information gathered by the U.S. Bureau of the Census to learn more about two of the “New American” groups covered in this chapter. This project adds to the information you gathered in Chapters 6 through 9. You can add the information for African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans from previous exercises. You will then use course concepts to assess and analyze this information and place it in the context of this text.

1. Choose two “New American” groups, one from each of the general categories (e.g., Hispanic, Non-Hispanic Caribbean, Asian, Middle Eastern, or African) covered in this chapter
2. Go to the official U.S. Census Bureau website at www.census.gov
3. Click “Data” from the list of options at the top of the home page and then click “Data Tools and Apps”
4. Click “The American Fact Finder” – the top selection in the list on the page that opens
5. On the next page,
 - a. Click “Advanced Search”
 - b. Click “Show Me All”
6. On the next page, in the box in the middle of the page,
 - a. Click the button next to “Race/Ethnicity”
 - b. Type the name of your first group in the box under “race, ancestry, or tribe.” As you type, some suggested group names will appear. If you are given a choice, select “alone or in combination ...” Note, if you choose people from El Salvador as one of your groups, type “Salvadoran” in the box.
 - c. Click “Go”
7. The next screen will list a number of datasets. Look in the right-hand column and find the data set called 2012 ACS 3-year estimates. Click on “Selected Population Profile in the United States” for this data set
8. The Population Profile for your group will appear. Scroll down the table until you get to “Educational Attainment,” “Employment Status,” “Income in the Past 12 Months,” “Poverty Rates for Families and People ...,” and “Housing Tenure.” Add the information to the table. Data for the “Total Population” have already been entered.
 - a. NEW VARIABLE: Note that a new variable (Median age) has been added. This information is under “Sex and age,” one of the first categories in the table. For your convenience, scores for the total population, African Americans,

Native Americans, and Hispanic Americans have been added. These scores are from the 2012 3-year estimates Population Profile.

- b. **ADDING YOUR OWN VARIABLE:** As you review the Population Profile, look for an additional variable that might add to your understanding of Asian Americans and other minority groups. Avoid variables that have been used in Chapter 10. Note the score for your group and, if you wish, find scores for the other groups listed in the table.
9. When you have entered all data, use your browser’s “Back” button to return to the previous screen.
10. Find the “Your Selections” box in the upper left of the screen and click the “x” next to “Asian ...” You will be returned to selection screen
11. The button next to “race/ancestry” should still be checked. If not, click on it to re-select it.
12. Type the name of your second group in the box and in the table below. Review Chapter 10 for group names. As you type the group name, some suggested group names may appear. If you are given a choice, select “Alone or in combination ... “ (if you choose Indian Americans, be sure to type “Asian Indians” as the group name)
13. Click “Go” and repeat steps 7 and 8 for this group¹

NOTE: THESE VARIABLES ARE SIMILAR BUT NOT IDENTICAL TO THOSE USED IN THE CHAPTER

Category	Variable	Total Population	African Americans	Native Americans	Hispanic Americans	Asian Americans	“New Americans”	
SEX AND AGE	Median Age	37.4	31.0	30.5	27.5	33.4		
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE	Average household size	2.63	2.69	2.88	3.54			
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	High School Graduate or Higher	85.9%						
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH	Percent that speak English less than “very well”	8.7%	3.1%					
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Percent Unemployed	6.5%						
INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	Individuals – Per Capita Income	\$27,385						
	Median earnings (dollars) full-time, year-round workers:							
	Males	\$48,117	\$38,389	\$36,425				
Females	\$37,719	\$33,915	\$31,137					
POVERTY RATES	All people	15.7%						
HOUSING TENURE	Percent in Owner-occupied housing Unit	64.7%						
YOUR VARIABLE								

¹ If you cannot find your group, see the “Alternative Instructions for Locating the American Community Survey 2012, Three-Year Estimates”

Questions for Research and Discussion

1. What stage of Gordon's model of assimilation (see Exhibit 2.1) do the variables in the table measure?
2. Describe your groups using the Blauner hypothesis (see Chapter 4). Are they closer to the "colonized" or the "immigrant" types? How much human capital do they bring? Are they targeted by racial prejudice? Hate crimes? What stereotypes or perceptions dominate how they are perceived? Given this information, what would you predict about their relative status in American society?
3. Use the debate between the segmented assimilation thesis and the traditional (Gordon) assimilation model to compare and contrast your two groups of "New Americans." Are they adjusting successfully to U.S. society? Is there a strong ethnic community to assist new arrivals? Are a large percentage of your groups in danger of falling into the underclass? What are the crucial differences between groups that lead them to different fates?
4. Describe the differences between your "New American" groups and the other groups in terms of median age. Why is this an important variable? What are the implications of the differences you observe for the future of the United States?

Optional Group Discussion: Bring the information on your groups to class and compare with the information collected by others. Consider the issues raised in the questions above and in the chapter, and develop some ideas about why the groups are where they are relative to one another and to the total population.