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Title: “Foreigner in their own home”

Immigration is defined as the international movement of people into any other country without having citizenship of that country to reside in that country. Some people immigrate due to their employment, some are on a scholarship program to study or do an internship, some are refugees while others are sponsored by their family or are direct relatives of the citizens of that particular country. There are number of people who migrate to the US to get higher and professional education.

The US is considered a “melting pot” because people living in this country are diverse with different cultures, race, and identity. Immigrants are the main reason for this cultural diversity. According to the survey conducted in 2015 US is ranked as the country that has a larger immigrant population than any other country in the world. The “yearbook of immigration statistics” shows that one million legal immigrants were residing in the US out of which 20% were sponsored by their family and 47% were direct relatives of the US citizens and 13% were refugees as well. It is still a matter of discussion that whether immigrants are helping the economy or causing adverse effects. Most of the researches show that immigrants benefit the country's economy and are involved less in crimes as compared to US citizens.

This essay will discuss the arrival of different immigrants in the US specifically Asian Americans, their cultural differences and their impact on the US education system, economy and political mobility. Also, immigration laws affecting the immigrants and the contribution of immigrants to the US development.

**History**

The US has been considered as a nation of immigrants. Firstly, Native Americans ancestors arrived in North America and scattered over the land which is now considered a part of the US before the arrival of Europeans immigrants. Many of the immigrants arrived because of religious freedom and some for job opportunities. However, many enslaved Africans were migrated against their will due to which in 1803 the US congress passed a bill to prohibit the migration of slaves to their country. From 1820 to 1870 the US experienced a second migration wave that includes people from western Germany and Irish background. The reason for Irish people's migration was the failure of potato crops. During this time in 1848, the war between Mexico and America ended making people living in Mexico a part of the US. Also, with the discovery of gold many Chinese and Latin Americans migrated to the west coast. The third migration wave started in 1881 with the arrival of almost 23.5 million people from Russia, Poland, and Italy. The reason for their migration was the religious and economic conditions of their country. In 1898 the Spanish-American war ended leaving Puerto Rico and Guam a part of American jurisdiction and their people American citizens although they are still struggling for their rights. Moving on, in 1924, the Immigration Act was passed in which fixed quotas of national origin only while in 1929 Congress establishes the annual immigration quotas permanent. (Soennichsen, 8).

**Asian migration**

Immigration of people from the continent of Asia to the US is referred to as Asian immigration. In 19 century the US experienced first wave of Asian immigration in the region of Hawaii and the west coast. Although, they faced exclusion due to the immigration laws of the US and were prohibited to migrate until 1940. Due to the elimination of the law in which Asians were prohibited to migrate there has been a tremendous increase in the number of immigrants belonging from continent Asia. The people mostly worked as cheap labor for different American companies. Gradually the immigrants started to settle down and as they came to know about their rights they started to protest against minimum wage and increase work hours. Due to which many companies’ owners had to reconsider their policies. In 1185 mostly Japanese people seek refuge in the US to support their families due to an increasing poverty rate in their own country.

After the discovery of gold in California many Asian people migrated to the US to get away from the war and poor social status of their country. Additionally, many merchants from china also migrated to the US to invest their savings, forming the beginning of china town. In 1882 an act known as The Chinese Exclusion Act was passed by the government which prohibited all immigration from China except merchants, diplomats, and students.

Discussing South Asia some Sikh farmers were the first ones to migrate to the US. Although, most of the immigrants were men.

**Cultural differences**

Every person has a unique identity and set of beliefs on which his or her whole life depends. As it is human nature to adjust according to their surroundings they often tend to follow other cultures as well or at least them. While comparing the culture between Anglo American and Asian immigrants there are lots of differences that can be taken into account. Specifically talking about Chinese and American culture, the people of Chinese society is all about the group while Americans prefer individuality. For Chinese people, teamwork is very important and they think that it is their moral duty to consider how their actions affect other people. Also, Hierarchy is very important for Chinese people. Americans, on the other hand, prefer equality and have a much flatter structure in their working environment. Most Americans speak directly without hesitation while Chinese people consider it mandatory to speak in a polite tone with their elders and to their seniors.

Another factor that differentiates the two is food. Chinese people chopsticks while Americans use forks and knives. For Chinese people family is important so the always prefer round food table. In contrast, Americans typically believe in individuality and person space so they prefer a square table. Their cuisine is also very different. If we talk about south Asian people they love spices but for Americans, too many spices are hard to bear. Likewise, mostly Japanese and Korean food is different from American food as people in America are more inclined towards fast foods rather than home-cooked meals and vegetables.

The other major cultural difference is celebrations. In America people celebrate Christmas, Halloween, Easter while in Asian countries they have different celebrations like in South Asia people celebrate Diwali, ‘Eid and Holi. Additionally, in china people celebrate like spring festival, Qingming Festival and many more.

**Impact of cultural differences on Americans and immigrants**

When guests arrive at our home to live we make certain adjustments to cater to them or if we are guests we also need to make adjustments. Likewise, when people migrate to any other country they have to get along with the culture of the people living there. Also, the citizens of the country had to make adjustments to accept the differences in their culture.

Previously people used to accept each other cultures as a way of unifying different groups. They used to celebrate every event with joy. Nowadays people are getting more protective of their own culture and beliefs to an extent that they defy celebrating different events. This is also because most immigrants entering the US have no intention of becoming a part of America or its culture rather than they focus more on their community. Immigrants have created their separate communities where they practice and celebrate their own beliefs and events.

Another barrier that people face in unifying different culture is religion. Although every religion teaches peace yet their basic ideology, beliefs and practices are different. This cause a huge impact on people as now they are less tolerant of the diverse background of people. The fear of losing their culture that has been passed on to them from ages makes people more vulnerable (Kruzykowski, 16).

Cultural differences cause a major impact on children. As living in a place where people are of a different color, race, ethnicity and, looks children often feel socially alone. They often get bullied by others because of their looks and color due to which they develop certain mental issues as well. This bullying culture is not limited to school. Immigrants of all ages face this discrimination on daily basis. Although, many people including Americans are speaking up for the rights of immigrants so that everyone can lead a happy life.

On the contrary cultural differences often do have a good impact as well. Accepting diversity and getting knowledge of every culture can have lots of positive effects on people.

**Public attitude towards immigrants**

According to most of the researchers, immigration causes a very great impact on the economic condition of the country. Many US citizens consider the US a place where every person deserves equality and free will to practice their religion and follow their culture. According to these people, diversity has a positive impact as people can learn new things from others. In contrast, many people are against immigrants. They think that immigrants are polluting their culture and religious beliefs. They also think that immigrants are taking all the benefits from the government as they have a specific quota in every field of life. Most of the immigrants that came to the US on employment visa works on very low wages which is very beneficial for the companies causes a major problem for the US citizens who are not very skilled. Also, many new immigrants especially Chinese are highly educated due to which they are more likely to get a better job than average Americans which is again a big problem for the Americans who dislike immigrants (Wong, Hirschman 387).

**Impact of immigration laws on immigrants**

In the US the immigration laws have changed a lot. In recent years’ immigrants are also given certain benefits in every field of life but things were not the same back then. While talking about the Asian community, they suffered a lot because of the immigration laws. During the exclusion era the “Chinese Exclusion Act” was passed in which Chinese and Japanese immigrants were prohibited to migrate to the US. This act was further expanded prohibiting immigrants from some parts of the Middle East, Central, and South Asia to migrate to the US. This was a major concern as even the existing immigrants were forced to leave the country and were excluded from labor, jobs and, etc (Juniu 358).

When the era of exclusion was over and the government allowed some of the Asian people to migrate to the US, Asian people faced lots of racial discrimination and some of them were even considered ineligible for citizenship despite fulfilling all the requirements. They also faced employment discrimination and prohibition on buying any property. They were not allowed to vote. Even the children were not spared they also faced segregation in schools.

Recently, many immigration laws are changed and immigrant has a separate quota in every field of life. Children are allowed to take admissions in any school even student visas are issued for several Asians to get higher education in American universities. However, while talking about Muslim Asian immigrants, policies, and laws are still the same. People from many Muslim Asian countries are still banned from entering the US except few and even those few face the same discrimination as other migrants use to face many years ago (Menjívar and Lakhani)

**Conclusion**

Migration is not easy as it requires lots of strength and patience. It is never easy to adjust in any other country whose culture and language are different from that of immigrants' own culture. Immigrants play a very important role in the country's economy. Talking about Asian immigrants, they are typically hard-working and will work on even lower wages as well despite being highly skilled. Most Asian immigrants are highly educated and have higher educational attainment than all foreign and US-born adults due to this reason they have achieved a significant advance in their income.

Although Chinese Americans have struggled a lot their yet their hard work lead them to achieve success and moving to urban areas. They also found employment in various industries, forming their neighborhoods due to which Chinatowns came into being. They also began introducing their cuisine and due to its variety and taste it is famous not only in USA but around the world. Traditionally Chinese gave immense importance to the education of their children. They have always set a bar so high. This cultural diversity attracts lots of tourists to visit the USA, also as Chinese American merchants are spreading their business in every country and even this will, in turn, benefit the economy of the US. Thus the success of Chinese Americans may also be considered as American immigrant success.

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