



An In-Depth Socioeconomic Profile of Asian Americans in Spokane County, Washington and Kootenai County, Idaho

By
Pui-Yan Lam, Ph.D.
Department of Sociology
314 Patterson Hall
Eastern Washington University
Cheney, WA 99004
Telephone: (509) 359 7933
Email: plam@mail.ewu.edu

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I. Executive Summary

This monograph presents the first research study that specifically investigates the current status of Asian Americans in the Inland Northwest. Using data from the 2000 Census, it provides an in-depth socioeconomic analysis of the seven largest Asian American populations in Spokane County, Washington, and Kootenai County, Idaho. The following are some of the key findings from the research:

Spokane County

- The Asian American population in Spokane County is heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity and socioeconomic characteristics.
- The Asian American population in Spokane County increased by 28% between 1990 and 2000.
- Japanese, Vietnamese, and Chinese, in that order, are the three largest Asian ethnic groups in Spokane County; Vietnamese form the fastest growing ethnic group, with its population doubling between 1990 and 2000.
- About two-thirds of the Asian American population is foreign-born, with nearly half of them having entered the U.S. between 1990 and March 2000.
- A substantial proportion of Asian Americans is new to Spokane County – close to a quarter of the Asian American population lived in a different county in 1995.
- Median incomes of Asian Americans are lower than that of the general population.
- Among the seven Asian ethnic groups, Asian Indians have the highest income level above that of the general population, whereas Hmong have the lowest income level.
- Median household and family incomes of Asian Americans are lower in Spokane County than Asian Americans in the state and in the U.S.
- Asian Americans, on the whole, have a higher individual and family poverty rate than the general population of Spokane County and Asian Americans in Washington and the U.S.
- Asian Americans, ages 16 or above, have a lower labor force participation rate and a higher unemployment rate compared to the general population of Spokane County.
- Among Asian American groups, Hmong and Japanese Americans (age 16 or above) have high unemployment rates, which can be partially explained by the age structure and school enrollment rates of the subpopulations.

- Compared to the general population, a higher percentage of Asian Americans has at least a bachelor's degree, yet a smaller proportion has a high school diploma.
- Chinese and Asian Indians, 25 years or older, have the highest percentage of college degrees, whereas Hmong and Vietnamese have the lowest percentage.
- The share of Asian Americans in managerial and professional occupations is similar to that of the general population, with Asian Indians, Chinese and Japanese Americans showing higher shares than the general population.
- Compared to the general population of Spokane, Asian Americans tend to be more concentrated in service and production-related than in sales and office occupations, especially for Hmong and Vietnamese Americans.
- Income and educational attainment of Asian Americans rose between 1990 and 2000 while unemployment and family poverty rate climbed considerably in the same decade.

Kootenai County

- Although the Asian American population in Kootenai County remains small, it has doubled between 1990 and 2000.
- Filipino, Japanese, and Chinese make up the three largest Asian American groups in Kootenai County.
- Compared to Spokane County, Asian Americans in Kootenai County are more likely to be native-born and speak English only.
- Compared to all of Kootenai County, a higher proportion of Asian Americans has a bachelor's degree, yet a smaller proportion of its adult population has completed a high school education.
- Asian Americans have a higher median family income than Kootenai County's general population, but lower median household and per capita income.
- The poverty rate of Asian American individuals and families is similar to that of Kootenai County's general population.
- Asian Americans have a slightly higher labor force participation rate and lower unemployment rate than Kootenai County's general population.
- Compared to the general population of Kootenai County, Asian Americans are much more concentrated in managerial and professional occupations.
- Between 1990 and 2000, income and educational attainment of Asian Americans rose, while both unemployment and poverty rates dropped.