

NATURALIZED MEXICANS FARE BETTER, CENSUS SAYS

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Body

Mexican immigrants who become **naturalized** U.S. citizens do **better**, scholastically and financially, than their fellow immigrants who do not pursue citizenship, according to figures released today by the U.S. **Census** Bureau.

The **naturalization** study was one of three **census** reports out today that illustrate, their authors **said**, the inaccuracies of broad generalizations about Hispanic or Asian immigrants.

Mexican-Americans who arrived before 1980 and became **naturalized** citizens are the wealthiest among that group. It was unclear if the people who did well did so because they became citizens or if citizenship gave them some extra benefit, according to Jorge del Pinal, chief of the bureau's Hispanic statistics section.

The widely held generalization that family income is extraordinarily high among people of Asian or Pacific Island background - \$41,251, compared with \$35,108 for the average American family - failed to hold up. That statistic fails to take into account that, on average, Asian-Pacific Islander families are larger, with more workers whose incomes contribute to the total, **said** Stan Rolark, a statistician with the **Census'** Racial and Statistics Branch.

"There is a great diversity within the API (Asian-Pacific Islander) population. Not everyone has that relatively high income," Rolark **said**. For example, populations with roots in Japan, China, India and the Philippines are **better**-established in the United States and have high average family incomes. Poverty among groups with an Asian background ranges from 3.4 percent of Japanese-Americans with incomes below the federal standard for poverty to 61.8 percent of Hmong.

For the first time, based on results from the 1990 **census**, the bureau has compiled a count of the numerous Hispanic nationalities, del Pinal **said**. There is also diversity among the many groups known as Hispanic, although the differences are less striking, **said** del Pinal.

The results show that Cuban-Americans are no longer the best-educated and well-off American Hispanic group. Uruguayans, Chileans, Argentines and Paraguayans have taken their place. These, however, are small populations of people who must be well-to-do in the first place to travel such distances, del Pinal **said**.

A third report, on the ancestry of 74 nationalities in the United States, contained no startling new conclusions, researchers **said**. Among the findings: Slovenes (from the former Yugoslavia) have the highest median age - 47 - of any group and the lowest proportion of its members - 55 percent - in the civilian workforce, compared with the nationwide median age of 33 and 65 percent nationally in the workforce.

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED

To obtain the reports, visit libraries at San Jose State, Santa Clara or Stanford universities or call the U.S. Government Printing Office at (202) 783-3238 and ask for: Ancestry of the Population in the United States: 1990,

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(CP-3-2), #003-024-08698-1, \$41; Persons of Hispanic Origin in the United States (C-3-3) #003-024-08705-7, \$23; or Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States: 1990 (C-3-5) #003-024-08699-9, \$21.

Graphic

Charts (2);

CHART: MERCURY NEWS

DISPARITY AMONG ASIANS

The following chart shows that high family incomes among Asian nationalities in the United States are achieved by having many workers in the same household.

Family Per capita

Nationality income income

All Americans, average \$35,108 \$14,444

Asian-Pacific Islander 41,251 13,638

Japanese 51,550 19,373

Asian Indian 49,309 17,777

Filipino 46,698 13,616

Chinese 41,316 14,877

Vietnamese 30,550 9,033

Laotian 23,101 5,597

Cambodian 18,126 5,121

Hmong 14,327 2,692

Source: U.S. **Census** Bureau

CHART: MERCURY NEWS

BENEFITS OF **NATURALIZATION**

Naturalization and length of residence in the United States go along with reduced poverty among Mexican-Americans.

Poverty rate

All Mexican-Americans 26.3%

U.S. native Mexican-Americans 24.5%

Foreign-born Mexican immigrants 29.8%

Those who entered the United States 1980-'90 36.3%

Those who arrived before 1980 23.2%

All U.S. residents 13.1%

All U.S. natives 12.7%

Naturalized Mexican immigrants who arrived before 1980 22.3%

Source: U.S. **Census** Bureau

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