

Article

Navigating Stereotypes: Indian Immigrant Technocrats in the United States

Roli Varma 

School of Public Administration, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87106, USA; varma@unm.edu

Abstract

While the “model minority” stereotype has been extensively studied in relation to Asian Americans, there is limited research that distinguishes these experiences by specific national origins. This paper explores the stereotypes faced by India-born scientists and engineers in the United States. They represent a significant segment of the foreign-born workforce in the U.S., accounting for one-third of this population and comprising the largest group of H-1B visa holders. Through qualitative data gathered from 40 India-born scientists and engineers employed in U.S. high-tech firms, this study examines how these individuals perceive and navigate the cultural stereotypes that shape their professional and personal lives. The paper delves into the intersections of ethnicity, nationality, and gender in shaping their experiences, challenging the characterization of Indians as “model immigrants”.

Keywords: Indian immigrant; model immigrant; model minority; stereotypes; workplace culture

1. Introduction

Stereotypes and the racialization of Asian Americans are well documented. Since the 1960s, social science research has critiqued the stereotype of Asian Americans as a model minority [1,2]. Scholars have demonstrated how it serves as an instrument to maintain White dominance [3–5]. One study explored what it means for Asian American college students to pursue careers as scientists or engineers while being stereotyped as a model minority [6]. Another study examined how Asian Americans are portrayed in K-12 education research [7]. Scholars have shown that stereotypes of Asian Americans arise from both prejudice and realistic assessments of group characteristics [8]. Some scholars have proposed critical race theory (CRT) to understand Asian Americans in higher education policy and practice [9]. However, most studies have grouped Asian immigrants (i.e., those born outside the U.S.) and U.S.-born Asian Americans together, despite significant differences in educational backgrounds, occupational status, duration of residence in the U.S., and cultural values. When scholars have separated these two groups, they have rarely analyzed Asian immigrants by specific nationalities.

This paper examines the stereotypes surrounding foreign-born scientists and engineers of Indian origin, a group that constitutes a significant portion of the U.S. science and engineering (S&E) workforce. Currently, individuals from India make up 29% of foreign-born S&E workers in the U.S., followed by those from China at 13% [10]. India also leads in the number of H-1B visa holders—a temporary visa category that allows U.S. employers to sponsor highly educated foreign professionals for “specialty occupations” requiring at least a bachelor’s degree or its equivalent. More than half of all H-1B petitions originate from India, with the next largest share (11%) coming from China.



Academic Editor: Manfred Max Bergman

Received: 20 February 2026

Revised: 13 May 2026

Accepted: 20 May 2026

Published: 26 May 2026

Copyright: © 2026 by the author.

Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland.

This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC BY\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license.

In particular, the paper explores how India-born scientists and engineers perceive the ways in which American culture defines and labels them. The paper's guiding research questions are: (1) how India-born scientists and engineers in U.S. high-technology sectors experience and interpret workplace stereotypes; (2) how these experiences reflect broader organizational and sociocultural dynamics. By examining how they navigate popular stereotypes in the U.S., one gains insight into broader socio-cultural categorization and the differential treatment of individuals based on ethnicity, nationality, and gender. Even when these stereotypes are inaccurate, they continue to shape public perceptions of India-born scientists and engineers, often with tangible consequences. Although these stereotypes are largely shaped by American society, India-born scientists and engineers may internalize them—either deliberately or subconsciously, as they adapt to American cultural norms. Technology entrepreneur and academic Vivek Wadhwa has characterized them as the quintessential “model immigrant” [11]. This perception is echoed in a CBS 60 Minutes' segment titled “Imported from India,” which stated: “The U.S. imports oil from Saudi Arabia, cars from Japan, TVs from Korea, and whiskey from Scotland. So, what do we import from India? We import people—really smart people” [12].

Data for this paper comes from a study on the migration of scientists and engineers between India and the United States. We conducted in-depth interviews with 40 India-born scientists and engineers who were working in technology companies in the U.S. Details regarding the study are provided in the methodology section. In addition, we analyzed stereotypes of Indians in relation to education, income, occupation, marital status, identity, and hate crimes, offering independent indicators of the validity of these stereotypes. We focused on India-born scientists and engineers due to their significant presence in U.S. high-technology sectors, their positioning within the model immigrant notion, and the relative lack of qualitative research examining their lived experiences of stereotyping in professional contexts.

2. View from Literature

The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines a stereotype as “a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment.” While the term originally referred to a method of printing, it gradually evolved to describe rigid and fixed representations of people or groups in society. This evolution reflects the shift from a technical to a sociological understanding of the word. Walter Lippmann is often credited with pioneering this conceptual transition, emphasizing that in modern societies, stereotypes function as mental shortcuts through which people “stamp” individuals or entire groups with a set of predetermined and often reductive traits [13]. In social sciences, stereotypes are generally understood as beliefs about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviors of members of certain groups [14]. These beliefs, whether consciously or unconsciously held, can shape perceptions and interactions in powerful and lasting ways.

Stereotypes are often viewed negatively because they reinforce and legitimize social inequalities by portraying groups in fixed, oversimplified ways that undermine their status and constrain their potential. Stereotyping has functioned as a distancing mechanism, separating those who are stereotyped from those who construct such portrayals [15]. By reducing individuals to assumed group traits, stereotypes have hindered nuanced understanding and deepened social divides. Those who have perpetuated stereotypes often possessed greater power, using them to justify privilege and uphold cultural hierarchies [16]. While categorization has helped to simplify a complex world, it has simultaneously fostered bias, prejudice, and discrimination. Stereotypes not only have contributed to social exclusion but also shaped identity, influencing how individuals view themselves and others.

Even so-called positive stereotypes have been restrictive, confining people to prescribed roles [17]. Ultimately, stereotypes have served to justify inequality and preserve existing social structures.

In a society like the United States, where freedom of speech is protected, various forms of media—including books, cartoons, magazines, movies, newspapers, radio, and television—have played a significant role in constructing and reinforcing popular stereotypes. Meanwhile, the expansive reach of social media platforms such as Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok has further entrenched these stereotypes, often presenting them as natural and immutable. In addition, stereotypes are frequently framed as humor, particularly in stand-up comedy, which makes them appear harmless. Criticisms of such jokes are often dismissed as a lack of humor, thereby shielding the stereotypes from scrutiny. In this way, humor has served as a vehicle to normalize and embed stereotypes more deeply within social and political narratives [18,19].

It is important to distinguish stereotyping from the natural reliance on preconceptions and mental schemas, which help individuals navigate the world, particularly in unfamiliar situations. Mental frameworks have been adaptable and capable of evolving through new experiences. In contrast, stereotypes have been rigid, resistant to change, and tended to entrench social divisions by portraying group traits as fixed and unalterable. Unlike everyday cognitive processes, which have been flexible and responsive, stereotypes have reinforced existing power imbalances and legitimize discrimination. While mental schemas have evolved with exposure to new information, stereotypes have functioned to essentialize group characteristics, sustaining social hierarchies and justifying exclusionary practices.

Individuals often have internalized stereotypes about their own group, even when they do not personally endorse them [20]. This has triggered stereotype threat—a psychological state characterized by anxiety over confirming a negative stereotype associated with one's social identity [21]. Stereotype threat has been particularly evident in educational settings, where it has contributed to gender and racial/ethnic disparities in S&E fields. For example, research has demonstrated that activating self-relevant negative stereotypes has impaired women's working memory, adversely affecting their math performance [22]. Beyond cognitive performance, stereotype threat has eroded a sense of belonging, reduced motivation, and increased the risk of withdrawal from academic or professional environments [23]. More broadly, it has been linked to negative behavioral outcomes, such as heightened aggression [24] and unhealthy decision-making [25]. Ultimately, stereotype threat has not only diminished individual potential but also sustained broader social inequalities.

The persistence of stereotypes can be understood not simply as individual perceptions but as products of broader structural and organizational dynamics. In particular, workplace norms in U.S. technology firms often privilege specific forms of communication, self-presentation, and leadership that are culturally coded and informally reinforced through everyday interactions. As a result, individuals who do not conform to these expectations may be perceived as less suitable for leadership roles, even when their technical competencies are strong. These dynamics are further reinforced by organizational practices such as informal networking and subjective evaluation criteria, which can reproduce existing biases while appearing neutral. The stereotypes are not merely attitudinal but are embedded within institutional processes that shape professional trajectories.

Stereotypes have commonly been perceived as rigid and resistant to change. Historically, women have been stereotyped to roles such as caregivers and homemakers, restricting their access to intellectual and professional fields while reinforcing male privilege. Yet, history has also illustrated how women have actively contested these limiting portrayals, gradually broadened their roles and reshaped societal perceptions. Despite significant strides, gender bias has persisted—for instance, the assumption that women are inherently

better suited for domestic work than careers in S&E. Importantly, research has demonstrated that stereotypes are not immutable. One study found that several ethnic and national stereotypes had shifted over the past 60 years [26]. A prominent example is the evolving perception of Asian Americans in the United States. Once vilified as the “yellow peril” [3], they are now frequently characterized as a “model minority” [27], a stereotype suggesting they have surmounted structural obstacles and, in some cases, surpassed the socioeconomic achievements of White Americans.

Sociologist William Peterson has been credited with introducing the term “model minority,” applying it to Japanese Americans whom he characterized as embodying a strong work ethic and moral values [28]. He contrasted this with what he called the “problem minority.” By the 1980s, Rose described Asian Americans as shifting from “Pariahs to Paragons,” highlighting how they have overcome systemic barriers to achieve the American dream through education, stable employment, and financial success [29]. Sowell suggested that Asian Americans could serve as a model for Black Americans [30]. Meanwhile, Herrnstein and Murray controversially argued a negative correlation between intelligence and people of African descent, while asserting a positive correlation for people of Asian descent [31]. Rushton went further, making debatable claims linking brain size and physical characteristics to intelligence [32].

Since the late 1960s, U.S. media has spotlighted the success of Asian Americans through striking headlines such as: “America’s Super Minority: Asian Americans Have Wasted No Time Laying Claim to the American Dream” (*Fortune*); “Success Story: Outwhiting the Whites” (*Newsweek*); “Asian Americans: A Model Minority” (*Newsweek*); “A Formula for Success” (*Newsweek*); “A Drive to Excel” (*Newsweek on Campus*); “The Triumph of Asian Americans: America’s Greatest Success Story” (*New Republic*); “Why Asians Succeed Here” (*New York Times Magazine*); “The Promise of America” (*Parade*); “Why They Excel” (*Parade*); “*The New Whiz Kids: Why Asian-Americans Are Doing So Well, and What It Costs Them*” (*Time Magazine*); and “Success of One Minority Group in the U.S.” (*U.S. News and World Report*). Even publications with significant Asian American readership have echoed these stereotypes [33]. These narratives have framed Asian Americans as achieving success through their commitment to education, strong work ethic, family support, and self-reliance. Often, public perceptions of Asian Americans largely mirror these media portrayals, and such stereotypes significantly influence people’s willingness to interact with Asians [34].

Interestingly, Whites are viewing Asian American success as a threat. Earlier research demonstrated that math-proficient White males performed worse on challenging math tests when exposed to stereotype threat by being compared to Asian Americans [35]. Today, this perception has expanded beyond academic competition to include broader concerns over Asian American educational and occupational achievements. Many White families have withdrawn from school districts if they deemed them “too Asian,” fearing their children will struggle to compete academically [36,37]. This perception has extended to the professional sphere, with figures like President Trump’s former Chief Strategist, Steve Bannon, claiming there are too many Asian American CEOs in Silicon Valley [38], framing them as a national threat.

The model minority stereotype, though seemingly positive, has been widely criticized for reinforcing racial/ethnic hierarchies and obscuring systemic inequalities [27]. It has portrayed Asian Americans as uniformly successful both academically and professionally, overlooking the diversity and distinct experiences within Asian subgroups. In 2020, the U.S. Asian population numbered 22 million people from over 20 countries, yet significant disparities have persisted. For instance, in 2019, Mongolians had a high poverty rate of 25%, while Indians had the lowest at 6%. Educational attainment also varied widely: 65%

of Malaysian adults in the U.S. held at least a bachelor's degree, compared to just 15% of Bhutanese adults [39]. Research has highlighted the unique challenges faced by low-income Southeast Asian students, such as Vietnamese, Cambodians, Hmong, and Laotians [40], as well as South Asians from Pakistan [41].

Although often portrayed as a model minority, Asian Americans have simultaneously been cast as perpetual foreigners in the United States [42]. Physically and culturally distinct from Whites, they have long been excluded from full acceptance as “true” Americans. Regardless of how many generations their families have lived in the U.S., Asian Americans are consistently perceived as never fully belonging [5]. These racial dynamics tend to resurface whenever Asian nations or individuals become central to major events. For example, the rise of the “Buy American” and “Made in America” movements in the early 1990s reflected growing unease with China and other Asian countries, fueling resentment toward Asian Americans. This hostility intensified in the late 1990s as the outsourcing of high-tech jobs to China and India deepened the “Us (Americans) versus Them (Asians)” divide. After the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, South Asians—primarily Muslims and Sikhs—were subjected to a surge in both interpersonal hostility and state-level repression, including racial profiling, intensified law enforcement scrutiny, surveillance, detention, and deportation. Following the coronavirus outbreak in March 2020, discrimination and violence against Asian Americans surged. President Trump's use of terms like “China Virus” and “Kung Flu” fueled anti-Asian sentiment, leading to a rise in hate crimes targeting both Chinese and the broader Asian American community. A 2022–2023 Pew Research Center survey found that about one-third of Asian adults (32%) knew an Asian person who had been threatened or attacked because of their race or ethnicity since the pandemic began [43].

When gender intersects with perceptions of Asian Americans, Asian American women are often stereotyped as exotic, inferior, submissive, and hypersexual [44]. Common tropes depict East Asian women either as the compliant “China doll” or “lotus flower” or as the manipulative “dragon lady”—stereotypes rooted in White male sexual fantasies [1,9]. These hypersexualized portrayals were intensified during the Korean War (1950–1953) and the Vietnam War (1955–1975), when many East Asian women were forced into sexual submission as a means of survival. The continued U.S. military presence in Asia has perpetuated the exploitation of Asian women's bodies [45]. Although the model minority stereotype has portrayed Asian American women as successful in S&E fields, they continue to face structural barriers shaped by both gender and ethnicity [46]. This intersectional challenge is often referred to as the “double bind”—a term that captures the compounded effects of sexism and racism experienced by women of color in S&E disciplines.

Finally, it is no coincidence that the model minority image emerged during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, a period defined by the struggle for equal rights and the end of racial segregation, culminating in landmark legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Scholars have argued that this stereotype has been used to pit Asian Americans against other minority groups, particularly Black Americans [4]. Unlike Black leaders who historically demanded systemic reforms, Asian Americans have often been portrayed as politically compliant and submissive to authority [47]. The model minority stereotype has subtly suggested that other minorities should emulate Asian Americans' perceived ability to succeed without challenging institutional structures, thereby diverting attention from systemic racism. This framing has further exacerbated racial tensions, positioning Asian Americans as evidence of American meritocracy and fueling resentment among non-Asian minorities who feel marginalized.

In sum, while the model minority stereotype has been used to suggest Asian Americans have achieved success through hard work and conformity, it has simultaneously obscured the challenges they continue to face. From Cold War-era exclusion to post-pandemic hate

crimes, Asian Americans have been caught in a cycle of conditional acceptance, celebrated for their perceived success yet vilified as threats in times of crisis. These intersecting stereotypes not only have contributed to social and institutional inequities but have also reinforced a persistent narrative of exclusion within the broader American racial landscape.

3. Methodology

The data for this paper comes from a large study supported by the National Science Foundation (2017–2019) on the return migration of scientists and engineers from the U.S. to India. Given that there is little information on the subject, the qualitative approach to gaining in-depth knowledge was considered useful from a scientific point of view. We interviewed 50 India-born scientists and engineers who returned to India after work and study in the U.S.; for a comparative group, we interviewed 40 India-born scientists and engineers, who were working in technology companies in the U.S. The latter group is the foundation of this paper on stereotypes. We excluded the 50 India-born scientists and engineers who had returned to India, as their perspectives would have reflected stereotypes formed during their time in the U.S., which may not represent contemporary views.

We selected 40 India-born scientists and engineers who had been working in the U.S. for at least three years, so that they had sufficient experience living in the U.S. This threshold also corresponds to the initial duration of H-1B work visa. We focused on the information and communication technology (ICT) and biotechnology industries as they are the largest employers of India-born scientists and engineers. Interviewees were recruited from major cities in four states—California, New York, New Jersey, and Texas—which have high concentrations of technology companies and large Indian populations. Due to the lack of an accessible database for identifying India-born scientists and engineers and the difficulty of securing company access, we used snowball sampling. The process began with a small group of initial interviewees who met the study's criteria. These individuals referred others who also qualified, and the referral process continued until we reached thematic saturation at the sample size of 40; we believed that additional interviews would not yield substantively new themes or insights.

Principal and co-principal investigators conducted in-depth interviews using a semi-structured interview guide, with each session lasting over an hour. Most interviews were conducted face-to-face, while a few were held via telephone. This paper draws on responses to the following three questions:

- What are some stereotypes that exist about Indians? Have others subtly expressed their stereotypical beliefs about you? If yes, can you give an example?

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, two independent coders conducted a detailed line-by-line analysis to generate initial codes. Any discrepancies in initial codes were resolved through discussion. We collaboratively developed a coding frame consisting of a list of initial codes, each with a corresponding definition. The coders independently applied the coding frame, recording the frequency of each code and identifying the interviewee associated with each instance. Since interviewees often provided multiple responses, coders documented both the total occurrences and the primary code mentioned. We calculated percentage agreement to assess coding reliability, achieving an 87% agreement rate. The use of two independent coders helped mitigate researcher bias and increased the confidence in internal validity [48]. To protect interviewees' privacy and comply with Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines, all identities and company names were anonymized. The findings are presented in two ways: (1) selected interview excerpts to illustrate the complexity and nuance of the topics discussed, and (2) frequency data to highlight the relative prominence of themes.

The sample of 40 interviewees consisted of 28 males (70%) and 12 females (30%). Most of them (76%) were employed in technical roles, while 24% held project management positions. Most interviewees (83%) had a graduate degree, with 63% holding a master's degree and 20% a doctorate; the remaining 17% held an undergraduate degree. A significant portion (65%) earned their terminal degrees in the U.S., while 35% completed them in India. These degrees were primarily in engineering (66%) and science (34%). In terms of immigration status, 62% of interviewees held an H-1B visa, 23% were U.S. citizens, and 15% were permanent residents. The age distribution showed that most interviewees (68%) were between 30 and 39 years old, while 15% were between 20 and 29, 10% were between 40 and 49, and 7% were over 50. A majority (83%) were married, and nearly half ($n = 21$) had at least one child.

The methodology used in this paper has some limitations. First, the analysis relied exclusively on responses from the targets—Indian immigrant scientists and engineers—without incorporating perspectives from the perceivers, namely their U.S.-born colleagues. Second, the data were collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, so any shifts in stereotypes related to the pandemic are not captured. Third, interviews did not explicitly examine the caste background of the respondents, which can be a significant dimension shaping professional experiences. Fourth, because of the small number of female respondents, gender-specific patterns are discussed only where they are sufficiently supported by the data. Fifth, though our respondents came from two industries, the sample was not intended to be statistically representative of a specific industry. Additionally, demographic data were primarily available for the broader Indian population in the U.S., which includes both India-born individuals (66%) and U.S.-born individuals of Indian ancestry (34%).

4. Findings

In response to the general question about stereotypes of Indians in the U.S., interviewees often provided multiple responses. The reported percentages do not sum to 100% because they reflect the frequency with which different stereotypes were mentioned, rather than mutually exclusive categories. Out of 40 interviewees, only three reported no exposure to any stereotypes, while the remaining 37 interviewees shared a wide range of stereotypes projected onto them as Indians. A total of 78 stereotypes were identified, which interviewees categorized as either positive or negative. These were grouped into three positive and four negative stereotypes [48]. The data revealed a clear predominance of negative stereotypes (62.8%) compared to positive ones (33.3%) across gender representations. Men were more frequently associated with both positive (21.8%) and negative (37.2%) stereotypes than women, who accounted for 11.5% and 25.6%, respectively.

4.1. "Positive" Stereotypes

The positive stereotypes described by interviewees coalesced around three central themes: Indians work in technical fields, possess advanced education in science and mathematics, and are hardworking. The most prevalent stereotype was that Indians dominate technical sectors, which are often viewed as prestigious and socially respected. Among the 37 interviewees, 27% reported encountering the stereotype of being scientists or engineers, with no notable gender differences. This perception appears to be reinforced by the widespread belief that the U.S. faces a domestic shortage of scientists and engineers—a gap perceived to be filled by skilled immigrants, including Indians. Additionally, S&E fields in the U.S. are marked by racial and gender disparities, where women, Black, Hispanic, and Native American individuals remain underrepresented, while Indians are perceived as overrepresented. As an interviewee recalled, "The first time I went to a barber shop, he started talking while cutting my hair. And the first thing he said was, 'You must be in com-

puters.” Another interviewee noted, “People joke that it is in [Indians’] genes to be good [information technology] professionals.” A third interviewee remarked that a colleague frequently comments, “Indian and Chinese engineers will take over U.S. engineering.”

Advanced education in science and mathematics was frequently identified as a key factor underlying the significant representation of Indians in the technology sector. Notably, 24% interviewees reported being stereotyped as highly educated. A gendered dimension also emerged, with a greater proportion of women (33%) than men (20%) stating that Indians are commonly viewed as highly educated and possessing advanced technical skills. Interviewees widely acknowledged the prevailing societal belief that S&E education is essential for maintaining U.S. competitiveness in the global economy. While much public discourse emphasizes the need to encourage women and minority groups in the U.S. to pursue science and mathematics, interviewees noted that Indians were often perceived as inherently inclined toward these fields, requiring less external motivation. Consequently, Indians were frequently admired for their pursuit of advanced education in S&E disciplines. As an interviewee remarked, “They will say that Indians are good at mathematics, good with numbers.” Another added, “We are seen as having very good math skills, very good analytical skills, very well-rounded technically.” A female interviewee laughed, “People freak out when they see me solving complex problems.”

Finally, interviewees observed that Indians are often perceived as more willing to work hard than others. Notably, 23% of interviewees reported being stereotyped as hardworking, with slightly more women (25%) than men (20%) mentioning this characterization. This stereotype often resulted in heightened expectations regarding commitment to projects. While framed as a positive attribute, the “hardworking” label was also closely tied to labor undervaluation. Many interviewees attributed this perception to the competitive pressures of immigration and professional advancement. An interviewee shared, “Indian scientists are seen as less likely to say they don’t have time than Americans.” Another added, “They know we put in long hours. They do not hesitate to give us work.” Women connected this stereotype to a constant need to prove themselves, especially amid structural barriers in both social and professional hierarchies. As one female interviewee articulated, “We want to establish ourselves here. . . So, when we are given a task, nothing else matters, and we will get the job done.” It should be noted that the impact of hard work also negatively affects the balance between work and social life.

4.2. “Negative” Stereotypes

Interviewees described four interrelated negative stereotypes they had encountered: poor communication skills, lack of managerial abilities, having traditional values, and not being considered as Americans. Among the 37 interviewees, the most prevalent stereotype was that Indians have “poor communication skills” (43%). More women (58%) than men (36%) reported being perceived as poor communicators. Communication was regarded as a multifaceted skill, encompassing proficiency in English, speaking, writing, marketing, and presentation. Interviewees emphasized that effective communication was an essential aspect of their work. While they recognized English as their second language, they considered themselves fluent, having been educated in English-medium institutions in India. They admitted that accents might sometimes affect comprehensibility but believed their English proficiency was strong. Despite their fluency, they frequently encountered stereotypes tied to language and accent differences. As an interviewee expressed, “People make fun of the Indian accent. Period. Some even try to mimic it when talking to me, thinking they are being friendly, but I don’t find it humorous.” Since Indians were not generally expected to have strong English skills among their American colleagues, they often received compliments if they spoke fluently with little or no accent. However, some

found this condescending. An interviewee remarked, “People often compliment me on how well I speak English, how easy it is to understand me, or how excellent my English is. . . I find it patronizing.” Similarly, a female interviewee shared her frustration: “People frequently tell me how delightful my accent is, how much they enjoy hearing such an exotic accent. . . It does not feel like a genuine compliment.”

Another communication stereotype that interviewees encountered was the perception of being soft-spoken. While they did not hear direct comments from Americans explicitly labeling them this way, they perceived it based on the work assigned to them and the roles they performed. Interviewees observed that Indians tend to be less direct in communication, often relying on subtle and nuanced expressions, whereas their American colleagues were more direct, unambiguous, and used concise language. An interviewee explained, “All of us are expected to meet deadlines. If these deadlines are unrealistic, our American colleagues have no hesitation in saying ‘no,’ whereas we would say ‘yes’ or ‘maybe.’” Another noted, “We are seen as culturally polite and humble, whereas Americans are seen as asserting their rights.” They felt that such stereotypes resulted in more work being assigned to them. Some female interviewees also highlighted that both American and Indian male colleagues frequently interrupted them in meetings, often preventing them from finishing their sentences. They felt that people believed it was “normal” to interrupt women.

An interrelated stereotype was that while Indians are perceived to have superior technical skills, they are often seen as having inferior managerial abilities. Over one-third of interviewees (35%), with no noted gender differences, reported that Indians were considered poor workplace managers. Beyond the communication issues previously mentioned, interviewees attributed these perceptions to cultural and social factors linked to their nationality and ethnicity. They believed that both upper management and colleagues generally viewed Indians as less effective in people management than those born in the U.S. The stereotype of not being good managers was reinforced by the perception that Indians lack familiarity with company and industry histories, do not fully understand U.S. legal issues, are hesitant to take business risks, struggle with networking in high-level circles, and place a strong emphasis on hierarchy. As an interviewee explained, “People in positions of power believe that [Indians] are not leadership material mostly because we are not seen as assertive and outspoken. These qualities are seen as positive for technical positions but negative for management positions.” Another interviewee noted, “Deep down, people believe that just because Indians are good engineers, that does not mean they are also good managers.” A female interviewee further elaborated, “We do not talk very loudly. We focus on work and do not promote ourselves. . . But you will find Americans projecting certain images about themselves. They know how to promote themselves.” Even Indians who held managerial roles encountered these biases. One such interviewee shared, “Often when I attend business gatherings, people automatically assume that I am at the technical end.” When asked for an example, an interviewee stated, “Indians are not asked to participate in accelerated leadership training workshops. They are not apprenticed to senior managers.”

Though Indians were admired as highly educated scientists and engineers, they were also perceived as traditional. One-third of interviewees (30%) reported being stereotyped as adhering to traditional practices, with more women (50%) than men (20%) identifying this stereotype. The perception of traditionalism was reflected in a wide range of comments related to spirituality, social customs—particularly arranged marriages—the joint family structure, caste identity, the role of women, ethnic clothing, sacred cows, worshiping cobra snake, and vegetarianism. This cultural centrality was mostly viewed negatively, reinforcing the perception that Indians adhere to socially conservative traditions. Many American colleagues were puzzled by the idea that Indians are willing to enter “arranged marriages,” where parents select a life partner they deem suitable for their child. A related

discussion often revolved around the role of women in Indian society. American colleagues tended to believe that Indian women were subordinate to their families and expected to uphold chastity and domesticity. One female interviewee expressed discomfort with how her colleagues joked about “the Indian taboo of keeping virginity until marriage.” Another noted that her colleagues frequently made comments, “Whether [she] will allow her children to go on a date. When I say yes, they will ask whether I will allow them to date a non-Indian. When I say yes, they will ask whether I will allow my daughter to date a non-Indian.” Reflecting on these interactions, another female interviewee resented, “Sure, these are presented as jokes, but after a point, these are not funny.”

Despite being highly educated and employed as scientists and engineers, often Indians in the U.S. were not perceived as fully American. Nearly a quarter of interviewees (24%)—with little gender difference—reported being seen as “perpetual foreigners” or “strangers,” as if they did not belong in American society. Notably, these stereotypes persisted regardless of citizenship status or length of residency in the country. Interviewees most frequently encountered such stereotypes outside the workplace, often laced with racial undertones. They recalled hearing remarks like, “Go back to India,” “Why are you here?” “You don’t belong here,” and “You are taking our jobs.” While other stereotypes mentioned previously affected them, the perception of being a perpetual foreigner seemed to reflect a deeper discomfort among U.S.-born individuals. At times, these assumptions extended into the workplace due to visible differences and perceived lack of assimilation. One interviewee shared, “Whenever I meet people for the first time, they always ask where I am from.” Another added, “People often mispronounce my name.” Others mentioned receiving comments about their “food habits.” While interviewees acknowledged that such remarks were sometimes well-intended, they also reinforced feelings of being an outsider. Because they were not seen as fully American, some found themselves excluded from important projects. As one interviewee expressed frustration: “It gets a little frustrating because I am not put on high-impact projects. Even though, theoretically, I could contribute because I have the qualifications, I am just left out. . . It is more of an unspoken thing—that you are not American.”

5. Discussion

Since 1965, U.S. immigration policies have favored highly skilled individuals from India, contributing to a well-educated and economically successful Indian immigrant population. Indian immigrants in the United States stand out for their educational, occupational, and economic achievements compared to the overall U.S. population. In 2023, 81% of Indian adults aged 25 and older held at least a bachelor’s degree, compared to 36% of U.S.-born adults. Additionally, 49% of Indians had attained a postgraduate degree—significantly higher than the shares among U.S.-born (14%) population [49]. This educational orientation has translated into high-paying careers in the United States. In 2023, the median household income among Indians was \$166,200—more than double of U.S.-born (\$77,600) households. In 2023, the poverty rate—having an income below USD 30,900 for a family of four before taxes—among Indians was 6%, which was half that of the overall U.S. population [49]. This success is partly attributed to the selective U.S. immigration policies and the long hours of rigorous academic preparation Indian immigrants undergo in India, which instills a strong work ethic and adaptability [50,51].

Indian immigrant scientists and engineers bring a distinct combination of technical expertise, interpersonal skills, and cultural adaptability to the United States, shaped by their upbringing and training. Because many are educated in English in India, they often integrate more easily into American professional environments. This background contributes to the widespread perception of Indian immigrants as highly educated, mathematically proficient, technically skilled, hardworking, professionally successful, law-abiding, and

fluent in English. These positive stereotypes have helped Indian scientists and engineers gain entry into mainstream U.S. society. Moreover, these perceptions suggest that Indian immigrants have succeeded primarily through their own efforts, requiring minimal external support. Many have internalized these beliefs, further reinforcing the notion of their self-sufficiency. This has contributed to their depiction as “model immigrants” [11].

At first glance, the portrayal of Indians as “model immigrants” may seem flattering. As Stacey Lee asked, what could be wrong with being described as smart and hardworking? [52]. Similarly, Vijay Prashad questioned, how does it feel to be a solution? [53]. Yet, the label of “model immigrant” is deeply problematic. For one, aggregate figures often conceal significant inequalities within the Indian community. More importantly, a narrow focus on demographic indicators such as education, occupation, income, and poverty levels can obscure critical aspects of social reality.

The “model immigrant” stereotype can be detrimental to Indians, as it assumes they require no mentoring, guidance, support, or additional resources. This paper has demonstrated that interviewees encountered deeper, often overlooked biases related to communication, managerial aptitude, cultural traditions, and national identity. The most prevalent negative stereotype reported was that of poor communication skills, identified by 43% of interviewees—particularly among women, who were more likely to note this perception. This stereotype reveals how race/ethnicity, accent, and language proficiency intersect to shape judgments of professional competence. Despite being fluent in English and having been educated in English-medium institutions, many interviewees encountered the assumption that their communication skills were lacking. Praise for their fluency was often delivered in a patronizing manner, treating it as an unexpected accomplishment. Such interactions, though superficially positive, reinforced feelings of marginalization and underscored the subtle forms of exclusion embedded in everyday professional discourse.

In addition to communication challenges, the perceived lack of managerial abilities among Indian immigrants emerged as a significant barrier. Over one-third of interviewees reported being perceived as effective in handling programmed decisions—routine, structured tasks—but not in managing non-programmed decisions that require improvisation, judgment, or risk-taking. Such perception can hinder career advancement, particularly in leadership roles, despite individuals having demonstrated technical and administrative expertise. It reflects a broader workplace bias—one in which individuals are evaluated against dominant cultural norms rather than their actual qualifications or performance. These findings are consistent with earlier research by an earlier study which identified a “silicon ceiling” restricting the upward mobility of Indian immigrant scientists and engineers in both public and private sectors [54]. More recent work found evidence of a glass ceiling within academic settings [55]. The stakes are especially high for Indian immigrants because of their stereotyped identity as technically skilled but lacking in communication and leadership abilities. This persistent stereotype positions them as better suited to following orders rather than initiating action or assuming leadership roles.

A recurring theme in the interviews points to a structural tension between the managerial culture prevalent in U.S. technology firms and the predominantly technical orientation of many Indian scientists and engineers. Respondents frequently described being well-prepared for technically complex, task-oriented roles but less aligned with organizational expectations surrounding leadership, which often emphasize communication style, informal networking, and the ability to navigate unstructured, ambiguous situations. Several respondents noted that advancement into managerial positions required not only technical competence but also visibility, self-presentation, and participation in informal social interactions—areas where they felt disadvantaged due to differences in linguistic expression and cultural norms. This mismatch contributes to what can be described as

a “professional bottleneck,” wherein individuals remain concentrated in technical roles despite possessing the expertise required for advancement. Importantly, these patterns emerge from respondents’ accounts of workplace experiences and should be understood as reflecting organizational dynamics rather than individual deficits.

The persistence of these stereotypes can be understood not simply as individual perceptions but as products of broader structural and organizational dynamics. In particular, workplace norms in U.S. technology firms often privilege specific forms of communication, self-presentation, and leadership that are culturally coded and informally reinforced through everyday interactions. As a result, individuals who do not conform to these expectations may be perceived as less suitable for leadership roles, even when their technical competencies are strong. These dynamics are further reinforced by organizational practices such as informal networking and subjective evaluation criteria, which can reproduce existing biases while appearing neutral. Viewed in this light, the stereotypes identified in this study are not merely attitudinal but are embedded within institutional processes that shape professional trajectories.

Nationality, skin color, and socio-cultural differences continue to present significant barriers for Indian immigrants, even within ostensibly inclusive technology companies. This paper has highlighted how Indian immigrants are frequently perceived—both implicitly and persistently—as “foreigners,” “outsiders,” or “strangers,” distinguishing them from their White colleagues. These findings are consistent with broader research on Asian Americans and the enduring “perpetual foreigner” stereotype [1,7,27,34]. As perceived outsiders, Indian immigrants are subject to social narratives that question their trustworthiness and loyalty to the United States. Their foreignness is occasionally framed as a cultural threat, reinforcing exclusionary boundaries within professional spaces. While public perceptions of Indian immigrants have improved in recent decades—driven in part by the global rise of the high-technology sector and increasing demand for skilled labor—the underlying suspicion that they benefit more from the U.S. economy than they contribute still lingers [27]. Nearly one-quarter of interviewees reported encountering this stereotype, which reflects broader racial and national anxieties surrounding immigration. Even individuals who have lived in the United States for decades were often regarded as outsiders, based solely on appearance, accent, or cultural practices. This persistent perception not only impedes social integration but also limits professional advancement, as some interviewees recounted being excluded from high-impact projects or passed over for leadership roles due to a perceived lack of “Americanness.”

In addition to being perceived as foreigners, Indian immigrants are often stereotyped as traditional. This paper demonstrates that such perceptions stem from cultural practices such as religious rituals, arranged marriages, conservative gender norms, joint family structures, yoga, vegetarianism, and the enduring relevance of caste. Approximately one-third of interviewees reported being stereotyped as traditional, with half of the women identifying with this characterization. These findings align with Edward Said’s broader theoretical lens of orientalism, which critiques the Western tendency to depict Eastern people as inferior, subservient, and in need of modernization [56]. This orientalist framing is evident in Western media portrayals of India, which frequently juxtapose traditional symbols—such as henna, gold jewelry, and veiling—with emblems of modernity like computer code (e.g., the cover of *Wired*, February 2004). Such imagery constructs a narrative in which Indian immigrants are simultaneously mystified and technologically emergent yet still marked as “other.” This exoticization can undermine perceptions of professional competence by framing Indian contributions to science and technology as mystical or derivative rather than innovative and equal. When people are portrayed as overly traditional or mythologized, their expertise is more easily dismissed or undervalued.

Despite being labeled as “model immigrants,” Indian immigrant scientists and engineers continue to experience both subtle and overt forms of discrimination within and beyond the workplace. Although this study did not explicitly ask interviewees whether they had faced discrimination, the findings reveal that such experiences are a recurring theme in their narratives. Many interviewees described being treated as perpetual foreigners based on skin color or deemed unfit for managerial positions due to perceived “Indian values”—both of which reflect persistent biases against Indian immigrants. These findings align with the Carnegie Endowment survey, which reported that one in two Indians experienced discrimination within the past year [57]. Notably, these experiences persist despite Indian immigrants not being the primary targets of the recent surge in hate crimes against Asian Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. The continued prevalence of discrimination underscores the limitations of the “model immigrant” narrative and highlights the complex and often contradictory ways Indian immigrants are perceived and treated in American society.

The characterization of Indians as hard working, while often seen as a positive attribute, also presents challenges, particularly in the context of work–life balance. The expectation that Indian immigrants will consistently work long hours without complaint may lead to both exploitation and the undervaluation of their contributions. This “hardworking” stereotype can, therefore, be a double-edged sword, serving to enhance professional reputations while also placing undue pressures on individuals to conform to high expectations, especially for women, who are often expected to navigate both cultural and professional barriers in proving their worth.

The higher prevalence of both positive and negative stereotypes attributed to Indian men suggests that they occupy a more prominent place in the U.S. public’s social imagination. This visibility may stem from demographic factors such as higher male migration rates in earlier immigration waves, greater occupational representation in fields like technology and entrepreneurship, and stronger media and leadership presence. In contrast, Indian women appear less frequently stereotyped along either dimension. While this might initially seem like a sign of reduced bias, the lower frequency of mentions more likely reflects social invisibility or marginalization rather than an absence of stereotyping. This interpretation aligns with longstanding feminist critiques of intersectionality, which emphasize how women of color often face dual exclusions—from both mainstream society and their own ethnic communities.

Labeling Indians as “model immigrants” suggests that their success stems from intrinsic cultural traits, effectively downplaying the role of systemic racism in shaping outcomes. Their achievements are frequently held up as proof that the U.S. functions as a color-blind meritocracy, where hard work alone determines success. This framing implies that if Indian immigrants can overcome historical and structural barriers, other non-Indian minority groups should be able to do the same. In doing so, the narrative shifts responsibility for inequality onto individuals, promoting a self-help ethos instead of advocating for structural reforms or targeted support in areas like education, health, and economic opportunity. The idealization of Indian immigrants thus reinforces racial hierarchies by positioning them in contrast to other marginalized communities. This can foster resentment on multiple fronts—non-Indian minorities may feel further marginalized by limited access to the same opportunities, while some White Americans may view Indian immigrants as a competitive threat.

Finally, the narrative of “model immigrants” often suppresses critical reflection within immigrant communities themselves. It tends to erase the experiences of working-class individuals, Dalits (formerly known as “untouchables”), and others who do not fit the dominant success narrative. By centering only on the high-achieving elite, such portrayals obscure the internal diversity—and persistent inequalities—within the Indian diaspora.

This essentialization can also lead to the marginalization and stigmatization of those from lower castes and socioeconomic backgrounds. In recent years, caste identity has gained visibility in the U.S., especially with the emergence of Dalit and lower-caste Indian voices. Many report losing access to educational, housing, and job opportunities once their caste status is known to upper-caste Indian peers. A 2018 survey by Equality Labs found that 67% of Dalits in the U.S. had experienced caste-based harassment in the workplace, and 27% had suffered verbal or physical assault due to their caste. Respondents also described experiences of exclusion in schools, religious spaces, and community settings [58]. In 2020, the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing filed a lawsuit against Cisco, accusing the tech company of caste discrimination against a Dalit employee [59]. This lawsuit brought to light additional cases of caste-based discrimination within other tech companies, including Google, Netflix, Amazon, and Facebook [60,61]. While the U.S. has long grappled with discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, and sexual orientation, caste discrimination—imported by the so-called “model immigrants”—remains largely unrecognized in U.S. legal frameworks.

Stereotypes of “model immigrants” question CRT’s claims about systemic inequality. These narratives highlight the success of certain minority groups to suggest that structural barriers are minimal or can be overcome through effort alone. However, this interpretation tends to selectively use group outcomes while ignoring internal diversity, barriers to leadership, and the ways in which success itself may coexist with exclusion or constrained mobility. From a CRT perspective, stereotypes—whether “negative” or “positive”—are not random beliefs but part of a systemic pattern that maintains hierarchy. This paper has shown that stereotypes about Indian scientists and engineers being technically competent but lacking leadership or communication skills can channel them into specific occupational roles while limiting advancement. Even “positive” stereotypes (e.g., being hardworking or disciplined) impose narrow expectations, justify overwork, and obscure discrimination by suggesting success is purely merit-based. In this sense, stereotypes function as structural mechanisms that normalize unequal outcomes, aligning closely with CRT’s emphasis on embedded and institutionalized bias.

6. Conclusions

While Indian immigrants in the United States are often hailed as “model immigrants” due to their high levels of education, income, and occupational achievement, this label oversimplifies and distorts the realities of their lived experiences. The prevailing narrative of success obscures the systemic biases they continue to face, including stereotypes about communication skills, leadership ability, and cultural foreignness. These challenges are compounded by internal hierarchies within the Indian diaspora itself, especially along lines of caste and gender. As this paper has shown, positive stereotypes can be just as limiting as negative ones, creating unrealistic expectations, masking discrimination, and perpetuating exclusion—both within and beyond immigrant communities. To truly understand the experiences of Indian immigrant scientists and engineers, we must move beyond celebratory portrayals and engage with the complex intersections of race, nationality, class, caste, and gender that shape their everyday lives. Only then can we challenge the myth of meritocracy and begin to envision more inclusive and equitable professional and social landscapes.

The findings of this study have important implications for organizational policy and practice. In particular, they suggest that corporate human resource frameworks must move beyond surface-level diversity initiatives to address the structural effects of both positive and negative stereotypes. One key intervention is the re-evaluation of promotion and leadership criteria, which often rely on implicit norms of communication style, self-presentation, and informal networking that may disadvantage individuals from different

cultural backgrounds. Organizations should also incorporate training that explicitly addresses the dual nature of stereotypes, including the ways in which “positive” assumptions can impose undue pressure and mask exclusion. Additionally, increasing transparency in evaluation and promotion processes—such as clearly defined criteria and accountability mechanisms—can help mitigate the influence of informal biases. Taken together, these measures can contribute to more equitable pathways to leadership and reduce the persistence of professional bottlenecks identified in this study.

Funding: This research was funded by National Science Foundation U.S.: grant numbers 1655322 and 1655366.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The University of New Mexico and the University of Dallas at Texas. This submission meets the criteria for exemption #2 of Chapter 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 46.101(6) and therefore no further IRB review or approval is required.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The datasets presented in this article are not readily available because these are qualitative data, and the IRB approval was on the grounds that they will not be made public.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank all participants for giving their valuable time; Meghna Sabharwal for conducting half of the interviews; and Tenzin Yonten, Moumita Ghosh and Michael Young Hillyer for the transcription and assistance with the data analysis.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- Tran, N.; Birman, D. Questioning the model minority: Studies of Asian American academic performance. *Asian Am. J. Psychol.* **2010**, *1*, 106–118. [CrossRef]
- Wong, F.; Halgin, R. The ‘model minority’: Bane or blessing for Asian Americans? *J. Multicult. Couns. Dev.* **2006**, *34*, 38–49. [CrossRef]
- Lee, E. The “Yellow Peril” and Asian exclusion in the Americas. *Pac. Hist. Rev.* **2007**, *76*, 537–562. [CrossRef]
- Poon, O.; Squire, D.; Kodama, C.; Byrd, A.; Chan, J.; Manzano, L.; Furr, S.; Bishundat, D. A critical review of the model minority myth in selected literature on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2016**, *86*, 469–502. [CrossRef]
- Wu, E.D. *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority*; Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, USA, 2014.
- McGee, E.O.; Thakore, B.K.; LaBlance, S.S. The burden of being ‘model’: Racialized experiences of Asian STEM college students. *J. Divers. High. Educ.* **2017**, *10*, 253–270. [CrossRef]
- Ng, J.C.; Lee, S.S.; Pak, Y.K. Contesting the model minority and perpetual foreigner stereotypes: A critical review of literature on Asian Americans in education. *Rev. Res. Educ.* **2007**, *31*, 95–130. [CrossRef]
- Lee, Y.T.; Ottati, V.C.; Lin, C.; Chan, S.X. How are Asian Americans seen and evaluated? Examining ethnic stereotypes and their cultural complexity. *Cross-Cult. Commun.* **2014**, *10*, 98–111.
- Teranishi, R.T.; Behringer, L.B.; Grey, E.A.; Parker, T.L. Critical race theory and research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education. *New Dir. Institutional Res.* **2009**, *2009*, 57–68. [CrossRef]
- National Science Board. *Science and Engineering Indicators*; National Science Board: Alexandria, VA, USA, 2024.
- Wadhwa, V. Are Indians the model immigrants? *Bloomberg Business Week*, 13 September 2006. Available online: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2006-09-13/are-indians-the-model-immigrants?embedded-checkout=true> (accessed on 1 May 2026).
- Stahl, L. Imported from India. *60 Minutes*, CBS, 12 January 2003. Available online: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/imported-from-india/> (accessed on 26 April 2026).
- Lippmann, W. *Public Opinion*; Free Press Paperbacks: New York, NY, USA, 1922.
- Hilton, J.L.; von Hippel, W. Stereotypes. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* **1996**, *47*, 237–271. [CrossRef]
- Steele, C.M. *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*; W.W. Norton & Company: New York, NY, USA, 2010.
- Schneider, D. *The Psychology of Stereotyping*; Guilford Press: New York, NY, USA, 2004.
- Czopp, A.M. When is a compliment not a compliment? Evaluating expressions of positive stereotypes. *J. Exp. Soc. Psychol.* **2008**, *44*, 413–420. [CrossRef]
- Lockyer, S.; Pickering, M. (Eds.) *Beyond a Joke: The Limits of Humour*; Palgrave Macmillan: London, UK, 2005.
- Weaver, S. *The Rhetoric of Racist Humour: US, UK and Global Race Joking*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2018.

20. Atkin, A.L.; Yoo, H.C.; Jager, J.; Yeh, C.J. Internalization of the model minority myth, school racial composition, and psychological distress among Asian American adolescents. *Asian Am. J. Psychol.* **2018**, *9*, 108–116. [CrossRef]
21. Steele, C.M.; Aronson, J. Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* **1995**, *69*, 797–811. [CrossRef]
22. Schmader, T.; Johns, M. Converging evidence that stereotype threat reduces working memory capacity. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* **2003**, *85*, 440–452. [CrossRef]
23. Walton, G.M.; Spencer, S.J. Latent ability: Grades and test scores systematically underestimate the intellectual ability of negatively stereotyped students. *Psychol. Sci.* **2009**, *20*, 1132–1139. [CrossRef]
24. Inzlicht, M.; Kang, S.K. Stereotype threat spillover: How coping with threats to social identity affects aggression, eating, decision making, and attention. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* **2010**, *99*, 467–481. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
25. Guendelman, M.D.; Cheryan, S.; Monin, B. Fitting in but getting fat: Identity threat and dietary choices among U.S. immigrant groups. *Psychol. Sci.* **2011**, *22*, 959–967. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
26. Madon, S.; Guyll, M.; Aboufadel, K.; Montiel, E.; Smith, A.; Palumbo, P.; Jussim, L. Ethnic and national stereotypes: The Princeton trilogy revisited and revised. *Personal. Soc. Psychol. Bull.* **2001**, *27*, 996–1010. [CrossRef]
27. Hartlep, N.D. *The Model Minority Stereotype: Demystifying Asian American Success*; Information Age Publishing: Charlotte, NC, USA, 2021.
28. Petersen, W. Success story, Japanese-American style. *The New York Times Magazine*, 9 January 1966; pp. 20, 21, 33, 36, 38, 40, 41, 43. Available online: <https://www.nytimes.com/1966/01/09/archives/success-story-japaneseamerican-style-success-story-japaneseamerican.html> (accessed on 1 May 2026).
29. Rose, P.I. *Mainstream and Margins Revisited: Sixty Years of Commentary on Minorities in America*; Taylor & Francis: Oxfordshire, UK, 2017.
30. Sowell, T. *Ethnic America: A History*; Basic Books: New York, NY, USA, 1981.
31. Herrnstein, R.J.; Murray, C.A. *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*; Free Press: New York, NY, USA, 1994.
32. Rushton, P.J. *Race, Evolution, and Behavior: A Life History Perspective*; Charles Darwin Research Institute: Puerto Ayora, Ecuador, 2000.
33. Taylor, C.R.; Landreth, S.; Bang, H.K. Asian Americans in magazine advertising: Portrayals of the ‘model minority’. *J. Macromark.* **2005**, *25*, 163–174. [CrossRef]
34. Zhang, Q. Asian Americans beyond the model minority stereotype: The nerdy and the left out. *J. Int. Intercult. Commun.* **2010**, *3*, 20–37. [CrossRef]
35. Aronson, J.; Lustina, M.J.; Good, C.; Keough, K.; Steele, C.M.; Brown, J. When white men can’t do math: Necessary and sufficient factors in stereotype threat. *J. Exp. Soc. Psychol.* **1999**, *35*, 29–46. [CrossRef]
36. Hwang, S. The new white fight. *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 November 2005. Available online: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB113236377590902105> (accessed on 22 April 2026).
37. Pitt, L. White Fight-In the Wrong Direction. *Chicago Tribune*, 22 August 2021. Available online: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2005/11/29/white-flight-in-the-wrong-direction/> (accessed on 22 April 2026).
38. O’Brian, M. Donald Trump’s chief strategist doesn’t understand what makes America great. *The Washington Post*, 17 November 2016. Available online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/11/17/donald-trumps-chief-strategist-doesnt-understand-what-makes-america-great/> (accessed on 22 April 2026).
39. Budiman, A.; Ruiz, N.G. *Key Facts About Asian Americans, a Diverse and Growing Population*; Pew Research Center: Washington, DC, USA, 2021; Available online: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/04/29/key-facts-about-asian-americans/> (accessed on 23 April 2026).
40. Ngo, B.; Lee, S.J. Complicating the image of model minority success: A review of Southeast Asian American education. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2007**, *77*, 415–453. [CrossRef]
41. Ghaffar-Kucher, A. The religification of Pakistani-American Youth. *Am. Educ. Res. J.* **2012**, *49*, 30–52. [CrossRef]
42. Lee, J.; Zhou, M. *The Asian American Achievement Paradox*; Russell Sage Foundation: New York, NY, USA, 2015.
43. Ruiz, N.G.; Carolyne, I.M.; Ziyao, T. *Asian Americans and Discrimination During the COVID-19 Pandemic*; Pew Research Center: Washington, DC, USA, 2023; Available online: <https://www.pewresearch.org/race-and-ethnicity/2023/11/30/asian-americans-and-discrimination-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/> (accessed on 23 April 2026).
44. Azhar, S.; Alvarez, A.R.; Farina, A.S.; Klumpner, S. “You’re so exotic looking”: An intersectional analysis of Asian American and Pacific Islander stereotypes. *Affilia* **2021**, *36*, 282–301. [CrossRef]
45. Woan, S. White sexual imperialism: A theory of Asian feminist jurisprudence. *Wash. Lee J. Civ. Rights Soc. Justice* **2008**, *14*, 275–301.
46. Varma, R. Being Asian women scientists and engineers in the United States: Intersection of ethnicity and gender. *Am. Behav. Sci.* **2022**, *67*, 1138–1154. [CrossRef]
47. Varma, R. Asian Americans: Achievements mask challenges. *Asian J. Soc. Sci.* **2004**, *32*, 290–307. [CrossRef]
48. Varma, R. Demystifying qualitative data analysis: Unveiling strategies and insights from NSF proposals. *J. Ethnogr. Qual. Study* **2023**, *17*, 208–220.

49. Greene, M.; Batalova, J. *Indian Immigrants in the United States*; Migration Policy Institute: Washington, DC, USA, 2024; Available online: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/indian-immigrants-united-states> (accessed on 21 April 2026).
50. Varma, R. India-born in the U.S. science and engineering workforce. *Am. Behav. Sci.* **2010**, *53*, 1064–1078. [CrossRef]
51. Varma, R. Transnational migration and entrepreneurialism: Indians in the U.S. technology sector. *Perspect. Glob. Dev. Technol.* **2011**, *10*, 270–287. [CrossRef]
52. Lee, S.J. *Unraveling the Model Minority Stereotype: Listening to Asian American Youth*; Teachers College Press: New York, NY, USA, 2009.
53. Prashad, V. *Karma of Brown Folks*; Minnesota University Press: Minneapolis, MN, USA, 2001.
54. Varma, R. *Harbingers of Global Change: India's Techno-Immigrants in the United States*; Lexington Books: Lanham, MD, USA, 2007.
55. Sabharwal, M.; Varma, R. Are Asian Indian scientists and engineers in academia faced with a glass ceiling. *J. Ethnogr. Qual. Res.* **2017**, *12*, 50–62.
56. Said, E. *Orientalism*; Pantheon Books: New York, NY, USA, 1978.
57. Vaishnav, M.; Badrinathan, S.; Kapur, D.; Robaina, A. Indian Americans in a Time of Turbulence: 2026 Survey Results Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2026. Available online: <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2026/02/indian-americans-in-a-time-of-turbulence-2026-survey-results> (accessed on 1 May 2026).
58. Zwick-Maitreyi, M.; Soundararajan, T.; Dar, M.; Bheel, R.F.; Baladrishan, P. *Caste in the U.S.: A Survey of Caste Among South Asian American*; Equality Lab.: Oakland, CA, USA, 2018.
59. California Department of Fair Employment and Housing. 2020. Available online: <https://www.cand.uscourts.gov/newly-filed-case/ca-dept-of-fair-employment-housing-v-cisco-systems-inc-et-al> (accessed on 21 April 2026).
60. Dutt, Y. The specter of caste in Silicon Valley. *The New York Times*, 14 July 2020. Available online: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/opinion/caste-cisco-indian-americans-discrimination.html> (accessed on 22 April 2026).
61. Rai, S. How Big Tech Is Importing India's Caste Legacy to Silicon Valley. 2021. Available online: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021-03-11/how-big-tech-is-importing-india-s-caste-legacy-to-silicon-valley> (accessed on 21 April 2026).

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.