

INDIAN COMMUNITY IN NORTH TEXAS

QUICK OBSERVATIONS

Country/region of origin	India
Population (community leaders)	100,000
Population (census 2000)	30,030
Main reasons for migration	Economic hardship, religious intolerance, political oppression
Years in this region	20-40 years
Primary areas of residence	Arlington, Euless, Fort Worth, Garland, Irving, Plano
General level of education	Bachelor's degree
Employment	Restaurant, professional, industrial worker
Principal religions	Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, Christianity
Languages	Hindi (different dialects), Gujrati, Tamil, Telugu, Punjabi, Bengali, Malayalee, Sindhi, English
Media (newspaper or radio)	One monthly magazine, several radio stations, movie theaters
Community newsletter	None
Cultural organizations	85

The larger Indian population in the North Texas region has doubled in the past ten years. Many of the Indian heads of family came to America twenty to thirty years ago to pursue advanced degrees and subsequently gravitated to a booming economy that was hungry for talented employees. In the late 1960's, changes in immigration law tilted the scales in favor of skilled workers. Doctors arrived first, taking hard-to-fill jobs in rural areas and engineers rapidly followed.

A second group of more recent immigrants has arrived with H1-B visas granted for jobs the domestic work force cannot fill. Indians claim 41% of the H1-B visas granted, and many have been recruited in this manner by information-technology firms in Las Colinas and the Richardson Corridor. The economic impact they exert both as consumers and producers is very significant

Products of an intensely competitive education system and a society that pushes both girls and boys to do well, Indian immigrants are the mostly highly educated immigrant population in the region, with 80% of the men and 65% of the total adult population holding a Bachelor's degree or higher, vs. 20% for US born individuals. This is higher than any other immigrant population. Moreover, Indian immigrants are generally from middle class urban families.

The Indian presence at DFW area universities is significant. There are 2,382 Indian students, making up 25% of all international students. They are the largest body of international students at UNT, UTA, UTD and SMU. 80% of local Indian students are enrolled in Masters and PhD Programs. This is especially important since so many of these international students subsequently remain in the North Texas area to work.

92 Indian professors teach in Metropolis universities and 3.5% of tenured/tenured-track faculty is Indian. Most teach engineering, computer science or business administration.

89% of Indian-American families are two-parent households. Most of the earlier arrivals are now in their middle year, with second-generation children who are well acculturated and who consistently win high honors in the region's academic competitions. Gujarat and South India are the areas more heavily represented here.

The median household income of Indian-Americans is \$48,320, the highest of any ethnic group and over 50% higher than that of native households. Their annual buying power is \$20 billion and the highest per capita among all ethnic groups. Half of all Indians in the U.S. own their own homes. These immigrants are employed in managerial/professional jobs, and approximately half of the women also work. Indians are professional engineers, physicians, high tech scientists and corporate managers. Indians own Thirty percent of U.S. hotels and that figure is probably valid for the North Texas region also, where Indians, especially Sikh Indians have purchased and revived ailing motels.

North Texas Indian-Americans come from regional subcultures in India where a variety of languages flourish, but since English is commonly used in the education system and in official circles, most are fluent in English.

More than 85 Indian cultural associations that encompass regional as well as artistic and religious organizations are active in the region. Around each religious center or temple, strip shopping centers fill with Indian-themed businesses such as jewelry stores and sari shops, where sales have jumped 30-35% in the last two years. There are approximately ten Indian dance schools, and local troupes have frequently won the national competition in classical or folk dance. Three Indian traditional orchestras perform regularly and an Indian movie theater serves the large population. Halls for parties and restaurants offer traditional dishes from the various regions, and vegetarian cuisines are increasingly available.

Indian immigrants have thrived in North Texas because of the importance they place on education and their experience with democracy in their native country. Both of these elements promote cooperation and community effort, and participation in political life.

OTHER SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Age Distribution	Primarily middle-aged
Percentage of men and women	50% men, 50% women
Ties to country of origin	Close relatives remain, phone relatives regularly, send money back regularly
Frequency of travel to country of origin	Every 2-5 years
Estimate of undocumented	Less than 5%

Material Source: DFW International
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OUTREACH STRATEGIES

The most effective way will be with college students using social events and one on one relationship.

Other ways to build relationships with adults is to get to know community leaders, offer churches to house cultural events, begin reciprocal cooking classes with women (one night American cuisine and one night Indian cuisine), supper clubs including a mix of Indian and American couples and courses such as ALPHA to learn about Christianity rather than Bible study per say.

Children's events

Business Chaplaincy – ministers to Indian in the tech workplaces

HOW DO YOU OPEN THE DOOR TO CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FAITH?

Share your everyday relationship with God...answered prayers, Scriptures that comfort

Ask about how needs are met through their faith...loneliness, courage, direction

Offer to pray for their needs

Give books/videos that tell a faith story

Discover their interests and find Christians in that field to share their story

Look for Bible stories or principles that teach a value they respect.