

The Economics of Affirmative Action Admissions Policies for Asian American Students

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Introduction

In the realm of higher education, Asian American students have thrived in terms of academic excellence. During the last fifty years, many Asian Americans have done so well academically that they are no longer underrepresented on college campuses in the United States. For instance, in 2000, Asian Americans made up 5.9% of college students, but only 4% of the United States population (Harvey & Anderson, 2004). Although this may seem like a success story for Asian Americans, who were often discriminated against in the past, their triumphs in the academic world have actually caused them to again become victim to discriminatory affirmative action policies.

Affirmative action is defined by the United States Commission of Civil Rights as “any measure, beyond simple termination of discriminatory practice, adopted to correct and compensate for past or present discrimination or to prevent discrimination from recurring in the future” (U.S. Commission of Civil Rights, 1977). Instead of being treated as a minority group that is given preferential treatment in college admissions, the opposite is occurring for Asian American students of East Asian or Indian descent. In college admissions, affirmative action policies often result in an Asian American student being passed over in favor of a non-Asian American minority student with lower grades, test scores, or achievements (Espenshade & Chung, 2005). This paper aims to illustrate that regarding college admissions, even though affirmative action policies were aimed at helping minorities, they have hurt Asian American students of East Asian or Indian descent more than they have benefited these students. The paper also includes a discussion on alternatives to affirmative action policies that are fair to all racial/ethnic groups, the future of college admissions policies, and whether America is ready to

eliminate affirmative action policies.

Section I: A Brief History of Affirmative Action in the United States

Affirmative action has its roots in the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, which provides equal protection under the law to all individuals. But after its passage, discriminatory policies, such as Jim Crow laws and zoning laws, still prevented minorities from receiving equal opportunities in terms of salaries, education, and promotions. It wasn't until the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s that affirmative action policies were implemented to remedy the effects of past discrimination toward minorities. Specifically, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 barred all federally assisted programs from discriminating on the basis of race or ethnicity. Although this law originally only impacted employment opportunities, it eventually expanded to include admission into higher education institutions. Public colleges and universities were now obligated to desegregate schools and make up for the effects of previous discriminatory practices by giving preferential treatment to minorities who applied to their institutions (Dale, 2002).

During the first few years after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, minorities saw their enrollment in public institutions increase dramatically. But in spite of affirmative action's good intentions and its success in increasing minority groups' college enrollment rates, it quickly became evident that affirmative action policies also had many flaws. Reverse discrimination began to occur; white students felt that they were denied admission to colleges because the colleges were compelled to save seats for minorities. This debate culminated in the landmark 1978 Supreme Court case *Regents of the UC v. Bakke*. In this case, the Supreme Court addressed affirmative action policies in education for the first time and outlawed quotas in schools. This ruling meant that affirmative action policies could not explicitly provide benefits

to minorities at the expense of the majority. However, the Supreme Court did not outlaw the use of race or ethnicity as a criterion for acceptance, for they believed that doing so did not violate the Equal Protection Clause.

There were no major successful legal challenges against affirmative action in higher education until *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996). In this case, the Fifth Circuit ruled that the University of Texas School of Law could not use race-based admissions policies, even for the sake of diversity or for remedying previous discriminatory actions. Many legal experts believed that this ruling would have led to the demise of affirmative action policies, but seven years later the Supreme Court reversed the *Hopwood* ruling. In *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), the Court declared that the University of Michigan's race-conscious admissions policies were constitutional since student body diversity is a "compelling interest" in higher education. Race was also only one of the many factors used in an admissions decision, along with socioeconomic status, area of residence, athletic or musical ability, alumni connections, and unusual life experiences. Thus, the court reasoned, since the school conducted thorough and individualized reviews of all applicants, a student would not be accepted or rejected solely on the basis of his or her race.

The latest major Supreme Court cases to examine the constitutionality of affirmative action were *Fisher v. University of Texas* (2013) and *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action* (2014). The *Fisher* case made it more difficult for institutions to justify using race-based admissions policies to achieve diversity while the *Schuette* ruling declared that affirmative action bans were legal. Even though affirmative action policies are still being used in institutions around the country, the outcomes of these cases signal a shift in the Supreme Court's stance on affirmative action policies.

Section II: College Enrollment – Racial/Ethnic Demographics

The implementation of affirmative action policies greatly affected the racial composition of college campuses. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics show that while Asian American enrollment in public institutions have increased, they have remained steady at around 6.5% since 2000 (Snyder & Dillow, 2012). On the other hand, the percentage of blacks enrolled in college increased by two percentage points from 2000 to 2012. Hispanic enrollment also increased from 4.0% in 1976 to 16.5% in 2012, and this number seems to still be growing. The percentage of white enrollment has been steadily decreasing since the inception of this study in 1976, falling from 83.5% of college enrollees to 60.0% in 2012.

While this data includes both two-year and four-year degree granting institutions, the National Center for Education Statistics also released studies that separate the two-year and four-year college enrollees. The earliest study, which was published in 2000, showed that among public undergraduate 4-year college enrollees, 69.1% were Caucasian, 12.6% were African American, 6.9% were Hispanic, and 6.1% were Asian American (Knapp, Kelly, Whitmore, Wu, & Gallego, 2002). The latest study was released in 2012. By then, the study shows that the demographics at public four-year postsecondary institutions had changed to 58.7% Caucasian, 11.4% African American, 13% Hispanic, and 6.2% Asian American (Ginder & Kelly-Reid, 2013).

The effects of affirmative action policies in higher education are best seen in the top schools in America: the Ivy Leagues. Even though Asian American students constitute a larger percentage of the enrollees at these elite institutions, they still experience the greatest negative effects of race-based admissions. Unz (2000) shows that from 1991-2011, Asian American enrollments have consistently made up about 16% of all students in all of the Ivy League schools. However, this stagnant enrollment rate correlates with neither the 94% increase in the

Asian American population in America nor the 250-400% increase in Asian American applicants to the Ivy League schools (Unz, 2000). Some people may argue that increases in the number of Asian American applicants do not directly lead to increases in Asian American enrollment rates, for even a person with mediocre test scores, low grades, and no extracurricular activities can apply to an Ivy League college. However, the number of Asian American students at the top public magnet schools and prep schools in the United States has skyrocketed (Unz, 2000), implying that many of the Asian American college applicants are highly qualified. It is clear that affirmative action policies have had a large impact on the number of Asian Americans admitted to Ivy League schools.

Unfortunately, none of the data accurately reflect the effects of affirmative action policies on changes in demographics in the public 4-year universities. For instance, some students may not choose to disclose their race or ethnicity out of fear that it may influence their chances of admission (Unz, 2000). There are also many other outside factors, such as non-Asian American students placing a greater emphasis on attending college and academically preparing themselves more effectively than in previous years, that may have affected the results for all of the above studies. As a result, it is rather difficult to find data that both notes the race/ethnicity of all applicants and controls for all variables except affirmative action policies when examining college enrollment demographics.

Section III: The Benefits of Affirmative Action for Asian American Students

Affirmative action policies may benefit students of all races and ethnicities, including Asian Americans. One of the most common arguments supporting affirmative action is the positive effect of diversity on college campuses, for diversity may lead to increases in income and human capital. Diversity may also induce personal growth and increased civic

participation in a multicultural society by improving awareness and acceptance of other racial/ethnic groups' beliefs and cultures. According to Hinrichs (2011), diversity has a possible positive effect on a student's satisfaction with his or her school's racial climate. However, other studies have found mixed results regarding the effects of diversity on earnings and civic activity. Arcidiacono and Vigdor (2010) found a negative relationship between earnings and self-reported ratings of working effectively with college students of other races/ethnicities, while Daniel, Black, and Smith (2001) found a positive relationship between the percentage of blacks at a university and the future earnings of whites. Another study found that student-body diversity was indirectly related to a better understanding of individuals of other races/ethnicities (Pike, Kuh, & Gonyea, 2007).

The balkanization effect may explain why we do not have a better understanding of the effects of diversity on college campuses. The balkanization effect is defined as the self-segregation of college students by race or ethnicity (Duster, 1991), and it occurs in college campuses throughout the country. This self-segregation could be attributed to a multitude of factors, ranging from positive ones like cultural pride and group affinity to negative ones such as ethnocentrism and racial intolerance (Antonio, 2001). Hurtado and her colleagues broke down the origins of the balkanization effect into two main dimensions: behavioral and psychological. While the behavioral dimension shows that college students believe they have many opportunities for interracial interactions as well as the freedom to make these connections, the psychological dimension holds them back (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998). That is, they still hold stereotypes as well as perceptions of racial conflict, which causes them to see their campus as segregated by race and ethnicity. Due to the lack of consensus on the effects of diversity on college campuses, more research should be conducted on this topic to determine whether diversity, and consequently balkanization, actually benefit

or harm the student population. This is especially critical at a time when the benefits of affirmative action policies for Asian American students have been called into question.

Section IV: The Costs of Affirmative Action for Asian American Students

As seen in the data discussed above, the percentage of Asian American students at public, and especially private, universities has been fairly constant over the last ten to twenty years. Even though the Supreme Court ruled in *Regents of the UC v. Bakke* (1978) that quotas for minority groups were illegal, it is rather obvious that there is an unofficial quota in place for the number of Asian American college enrollees. Meanwhile, there has been an increasingly large number of Asian American college applicants whose family members are increasingly affluent, highly educated, and eager to see their children receive a high-quality education (Unz, 2000). Asian American parents place a large emphasis on hard work and instill in their children that internal and controllable factors lead to success in the academic world (Kim & Chun, 1994). As a result, many Asian American students internalize these messages and strive to both please their parents and succeed for their own benefit. The effects of traditional Asian cultural values on Asian American students are compounded by their own resolve to be the best of the best. Due to colleges not admitting more than a certain amount of Asian American students, Asian American students are forced to compete against each other for a very limited number of seats. Even when Asian American students are near the top of the academic performance curve, they still have to worry about being the best, for simply being above average is not enough to improve their chances of admission.

In order to obtain one of these prized seats, Asian American students must score better on the SAT test than other racial and ethnic groups, for they receive a 50-point reduction (on a 1600-point scale) to their score during the application review process (Espenshade, Chung, &

Walling, 2004). On the other hand, African American applicants receive a 230-point boost and Hispanics receive a 185-point boost. This is neither fair to Asian American students nor does it encourage African American and Hispanic students to set high academic standards for themselves in high school. While test scores are only one component of a student's application, these boosts and reductions can still affect a student's chances of admission. Highly qualified Asian American students who are not admitted to their top college choices due to affirmative action policies must settle for less prestigious and academically demanding schools. Unfortunately, studies have shown that if these students enroll in colleges that are not selective or challenging enough for their academic qualifications, then their chances of graduation decrease significantly (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009).

There may also be other economic consequences for Asian American students who have been harmed by affirmative action policies in college admissions. For instance, the increased support, prestige, and preparation a student receives at a more selective college result in higher acceptance rates at professional and graduate schools (Carnavale & Rose, 2003). Furthermore, graduates of top-ranked colleges earn five to twenty percent more in wages than their peers who graduated from less selective colleges (Gaertner, 2011). Brewer, Eide, and Ehrenberg (1999) found evidence that attending an elite private college, such as an Ivy League school, is strongly correlated with a significant economic rate of return that is still increasing over time. Thus, affirmative action policies may cause highly qualified Asian American students who settle for a less prestigious school to miss out on future earnings and opportunities. This leads to untapped, and even wasted, abilities since these students will not be performing at their full potential in terms of productivity and contributing to the United States economy.

Furthermore, Asian American students who are not near the top of the academic performance curve are subject to additional stressors. Not only do they experience the pressure

of doing well in school, but they also experience the stress of not fitting the model minority stereotype. The model minority stereotype praises Asian Americans for achieving academic success, high incomes, low crime rates, and stable families (Wong & Halgin, 2006). However, this model minority myth does not accurately reflect all Asian Americans. Instead, it is built on the achievements of the top members of this minority group, thus masking the diversity of the entire group in terms of socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and job occupations (Tang, 2007).

This masking effect may also lead to harmful psychological consequences. For instance, one study found that the model minority stereotype makes it more difficult for Asian American students to make friends with their peers (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Another study found that the stereotype might lead to cultural marginalization, where individuals feel that they do not have a social or emotional attachment to a particular social group (Sue & Sue, 1990). Not only do these Asian Americans feel that they cannot connect with other Asian Americans, but they also have difficulty empathizing with people of other races. A college's affirmative action policies further exacerbate these issues caused by the model minority myth by admitting relatively few Asian American students – the ones who are part of the model minority – thus creating a vicious cycle.

Section V: Attitudes Toward Affirmative Action Policies in Higher Education

Studies conducted on attitudes toward affirmative action generally found that practices or policies are higher rated if they are perceived to be fairer to all parties involved.

Unfortunately, there are very few studies that break down their results by race/ethnicity.

Although it is rather outdated, one of the best descriptive studies on this topic is by Sax and Arredondo (1999), who examined the attitudes of different groups toward college admissions

affirmative action policies as well as the factors that drive these attitudes. They found that white freshmen students were the most likely to believe that affirmative action should be abolished (25.6%), followed by Asian Americans (16.5%), Hispanics (9.2%), and African Americans (5.3%). Smith (1999) also found similar results in his study, with whites and Asian American students being more opposed to affirmative action policies than African Americans and Hispanics. He also examined affirmative action views and factors that may influence these views, such as parents' income and education, SAT scores, political views, gender, and choice of college. Overall, his results show that white, Asian American, and Hispanic students who have higher SAT scores or whose parents have high levels of education and income are more opposed to affirmative action policies in higher education. However, the opposite is true for African American students who have high SAT scores or who come from wealthy and highly educated families.

More generally, racial preferences in higher education admissions policies are very unpopular among voters, who consistently oppose it by a two-to-one margin (Rasmussen Reports, 2012). A 2013 Gallup poll also found that two-thirds of Americans believe college applicants should be admitted to a university solely on the basis of merit, even if it lowers the admissions rate for minority students. The poll notes that affirmative action policies in college admissions do not have much support because many Americans believe that the consequences of this policy outweigh the benefits. That is, they feel that the admission of low and average-performing minority students for the sake of diversity does not justify the rejection of high-performing students.

These negative attitudes toward affirmative action policies are not likely to improve over time. The increase in minority populations in America may lead to policies that put an end to racial preferences. For example, the shift in California's demographics, where the white

population dropped below fifty percent in 2000, may explain why it was the first state to eliminate affirmative action in 1996 (Rodriguez, 2010). The increase in interracial marriages and biracial children could also pose challenges for race-based affirmative action policies (Morello, 2012). Not only would it lead to questions about racial/ethnic identities, but also it would also lead to an increased number of students who can be categorized as part of a minority racial/ethnic group. The justification for affirmative action policies may also become less persuasive to new generations of Americans. According to a *Washington Post* poll from 2009, only twenty-six percent of Americans believe that racism is a “big problem” in the United States (Fletcher & Cohen, 2009). This number has dropped significantly from fifty-four percent in 1996.

Section VI: Affirmative Action Alternatives

These attitudes imply that many Americans are not opposed to changing affirmative action policies. Indeed, there have been many changes in college admissions policies around the country. In the last twenty years, ten states have successfully implemented race-neutral admissions policies at their public universities. However, many of these states are still concerned about the loss in diversity as well as the racial and economic injustices that may occur as a result of a purely meritocratic admissions policy, for it may lead to colleges becoming institutions for privileged students who have always received a high quality education. As a result, many of these states have invented new admissions systems that place a greater emphasis on socioeconomic status instead of race and ethnicity. These new admissions policies mean that students will no longer be discriminated against as a result of their race.

Two of the best-known race-neutral admissions systems are the ones that have been implemented at Texas and California public universities. In 1997, the Texas legislature passed

the Top Ten Percent Plan, which guarantees Texas high school seniors who graduated in the top ten percent of their class automatic admission into a public Texas university of their choice. This percentage plan opens up doors for students from high schools who usually do not have many students who go on to college. The plan also includes a list of eighteen factors for state universities to consider if an applicant is not in the top ten percent of his or her class. While these factors still include racial markers, they place a larger emphasis on socioeconomic markers, such as family income, first generation college student status, parents' education levels, and the academic and financial records of the student's school district (Long & Tienda, 2008). The universities also encourage students to submit letters discussing any other special circumstances the students or their families are currently facing.

In 1996, California voters approved Proposition 209, which banned state institutions from considering race, ethnicity, or gender in contracting, public employment, and education. In its place, the University of California enacted a system that guarantees students in the top nine percent of their graduating class a seat at a UC campus, but not necessarily at the campus of their choice (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2012). It is up to each individual campus to use additional admissions criteria to select students to attend, which ensures that the students who are guaranteed admissions will be more uniformly dispersed throughout the state. This means that all University of California applicants, both in and not in the top nine percent of their graduating class, are subject to a "comprehensive review" policy that evaluates students' academic achievements with regards to the opportunities available to them (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2012). Other factors that are considered include unusual circumstances, relevant life experiences, and the location of the student's school and place of residence.

Although public Texas universities still take race into account, the greater emphasis placed on both the Top Ten Percent plan (eighty-one percent of 2014's freshmen class were

admitted through this program) and socioeconomic factors have altered the demographic makeup of the UT campuses. From 2010 to 2014, the percentage of Hispanic students has hovered around 22%, the percentage of black students has stayed steady at 5%, and the percentage of white students has fallen from 48% to 45% (“Fall Enrollment,” 2014). Most notably, the number of Asian American students has increased from 17% to 23% of the freshman class.

Similarly, in California, the number of Hispanic students has risen from 15.4% of the freshman class in 1996 to 23% in 2010, which is a 145% increase (Lehrer & Hicks, 2010). The percentage of black students has also increased, rising from 4% in 1996 to 4.2% in 2010. The number of Asian students increased from 29.8% to 37.7%, and the number of white students declined from 44% to 34%. Similar numbers were also reported at other universities that used race-neutral admissions plans. Furthermore, the demographics at seven of these ten universities show that the percentage of blacks and Hispanics either met or exceeded the levels achieved when the universities were still using affirmative action admissions policies. The changes in demographics at these public universities demonstrate that changing affirmative action policies is both feasible and successful, for the new policies ensure that the enrolled students are both diverse and highly likely to succeed in college.

After these new admissions policies were implemented, the University of Texas and University of California schools also created new outreach, support, and recruitment programs to target students from underrepresented high schools. The University of Texas-Austin runs programs at these high schools to increase college accessibility to students and to provide challenging academic experiences for them (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2012). Other programs also provide test preparation, application guidance, and financial aid advice to participating high schools. California has also implemented similar programs. One of their most successful new

programs, the School/University Partnership Program, increased partnerships between UC and K-12 schools by providing additional services such as mentoring and educational resources (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2012).

All of these new programs not only increase awareness among high school students about the opportunities and accessibility of attending college, but they also address an important problem that affirmative action admissions policies ignore. Unlike in affirmative action, where under-qualified and less-prepared students were often admitted in place of highly qualified students, these programs ensure that the students who enroll in college are more academically prepared and have earned the seat that they are offered. These K-12 partnerships focus on developing talent at the primary and secondary education levels, which is preferable to simply giving preference to certain groups in college admissions.

However, even after the new admissions systems and outreach programs were implemented, some people still argue that without affirmative action, it becomes more difficult for minorities and the poor to attend the top-ranked schools. For example, the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action believes that Proposition 209 has caused the “flagship” University of California campuses, specifically UC Berkeley and UCLA, to become segregated, elitist institutions that relegate poor and minority students to the other, less-selective UC campuses (Lehrer & Hicks, 2010). While it is true that UC Berkeley and UCLA did not admit as many black students after Proposition 209 was passed (Lehrer & Hicks, 2012), this is not the result of elitist or segregationist ideologies. In fact, at these two institutions, over 30% of all undergraduates come from families whose parents’ incomes are less than \$45,000 a year, thus making them eligible for Pell Grants. Furthermore, the University of California enrolled the highest percentage of Pell Grant recipients as compared to any other private or public four-year institution in the nation. The University of California also reports that 39.4% of the fall

2012 freshman class will come from low-income families, and 38% of the class has parents who have never received bachelor's degrees (Lehrer & Hicks, 2012). Yet, this class still has an average GPA of 3.84. Further weakening the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action's argument, the U.S. News and World Report ranks UCLA and UC Berkeley as the top two economically diverse universities in the United States (Lehrer & Hicks, 2012).

Although many public universities are beginning to see the benefits of race-neutral admissions policies, the top private institutions are still reluctant to change their practices, especially since they are not under the control of the state government. They believe that achieving racial and ethnic diversity without using race/ethnicity as an admissions criterion is more difficult and less efficient than simply looking at an applicant's skin color (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2012). Furthermore, the top universities are unwilling to pursue race-neutral alternatives, for they fear that these alternatives may jeopardize the racial/ethnic makeup of their student body and thus their traditions, rankings, and prestige.

In order to determine how class-based admissions preferences would change the student body makeup of the nation's top universities, Carnvale and Rose (2003) conducted a study that included students who attended the top 146 schools in the nation. These schools represent the most selective ten percent of four-year colleges in America. Their findings showed that class-based preferences would lead to undergraduate classes that were ten percent black and Hispanic, which is only two percentage points lower than the number of black and Hispanic students who currently attend the top universities. Asian American applicants would also no longer be discriminated against due to their racial background, thus resulting in an increased number of Asian American students who would be able to attend a college that matches their academic skills.

Furthermore, Carnevale and Rose (2003) found that this type of admissions policy would lead to increased levels of socioeconomic diversity without a decrease in graduation rates. Another study also found similar results. Bowen, Chingos, and McPherson (2009) found that if race-neutral admissions policies were used, the percentage of students from low-income families who attend a selective college could increase by over fifty percent (from eleven percent to seventeen percent) without a sacrifice in their school's academic standards. These studies demonstrate that the nation's top universities should not be averse to changing their current affirmative action admissions policies, for there seem to be many benefits and very few consequences that result from these changes.

Most importantly, there is the question of whether America is actually ready to end college admissions affirmative action policies. While there are many people who feel believe that affirmative action is no longer necessary, there are still aspects of American life, such as discrimination and unequal treatment toward some minority groups (specifically blacks and Hispanics), that prevent more people from calling for a switch from affirmative action to race-neutral admissions policies. Moreover, colleges are comparable to businesses, where the students are the consumers, the alumni are the investors, and the president is the CEO. There are a lot of costs and risks that come with completely overhauling admissions policies and admitting a different, albeit more capable and diverse, group of students. Universities are therefore averse to making any changes that may upset their donors or affect their rankings and prestige. This is especially true at private elite institutions where donations are a large part of maintaining the university, the campus culture and traditions are extremely important, and the university is not under state control. While race-neutral admissions policies are becoming increasingly popular and successful at public universities, the top-ranked universities

are still not convinced that making this change will not significantly affect their financial operations and campus culture.

Concluding Comments

There are a few limitations for the data used in this paper. For instance, data involving Asian Americans include both Asian Americans of East Asian, Indian, and South Asian descent. Since South Asian Americans are still considered to be a minority group that is given preferential treatment under today's affirmative action policies, the data used may not accurately reflect the attitudes and experiences of Asian Americans of East Asian and Indian descent. The data used in this paper also include states that have already abolished affirmative action policies. For example, the data from the National Center for Education Statistics include large-population states such as California, Florida, and Texas, which have all banned affirmative action. This inclusion masks the true effect of affirmative action policies on public institutions by a few percentage points, for the number of Asian American, black, and Hispanic students would increase while the number of white students would decrease. Also, the increase in minority enrollments at the UT and UC schools are influenced by the changing racial/ethnic make-up of these two states. Lastly, there is no data available on the admission rates of each racial/ethnic group. There are only enrollment rates, which give information about the percentage of students from each racial/ethnic group who actually attend the university and may differ from the admission percentages. Therefore, admission rates would be a more accurate reflection of the effects of affirmative action policies, for they truly show the percentage of students from each racial/ethnic background that were accepted to or denied by a university.

The principles that form the foundation of race-neutral admissions policies have been

proven correct. That is, disadvantaged and minority students have shown that, if given the opportunity, they can succeed and continue to be admitted to good universities in a new system that focuses more on socioeconomic factors instead of racial/ethnic markers. Furthermore, Asian American students will gain from this new policy, for their accomplishments can be viewed without regard to their race or ethnicity. This makes Asian American students less subject to the cultural, economic, and psychological costs they face under current affirmative action admissions policies. In the future, it would be ideal if all college applicants were judged by their socioeconomic background, academic and extracurricular achievements, and potential, and not by their race or ethnicity.

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