

ELECTION 2024

# What Will Motivate Indian American Women To Vote This November?

*Women of color represent an enormous potential vote but may not vote for people unless they see change and their values represented*



by Anjana Nagarajan-Butaney

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Women of color prioritize womens rights and representation of their their values in the coming election (image courtesy: Ethnic Media Services)

## Poll shows women of color agree on priorities

A first-of-its-kind national [poll by Intersections Of Our Lives](#) showed remarkable agreement between women of color (Latina, Black & AAPI) on their priorities heading into this year's election. Women of c

including Indian American women, are united in their priorities about issues like economic security/opportunity, reproductive justice, and abortion rights. They all agree that policymakers must do better.

57% of Latinx women, 55% of the AAPI, and 49% of black women think things have become worse in the country over the past year. They also feel like their values and voices are not heard or represented by the political leaders.

Here in California, [\*\*Tara Sreekrishnan\*\*](#), candidate for California Assembly District 26 confirmed, “It is clear from my conversations on the ground that women, and women of color, are eager for change, particularly around economic and healthcare issues, which they see as interconnected with broader systemic problems. This is a voting bloc that will be a powerful collective voice at the polls come November.”

Results of the poll that revealed the connections between women of color voters were analyzed at a May 10 Ethnic Media Services briefing on how women of color will vote in November.

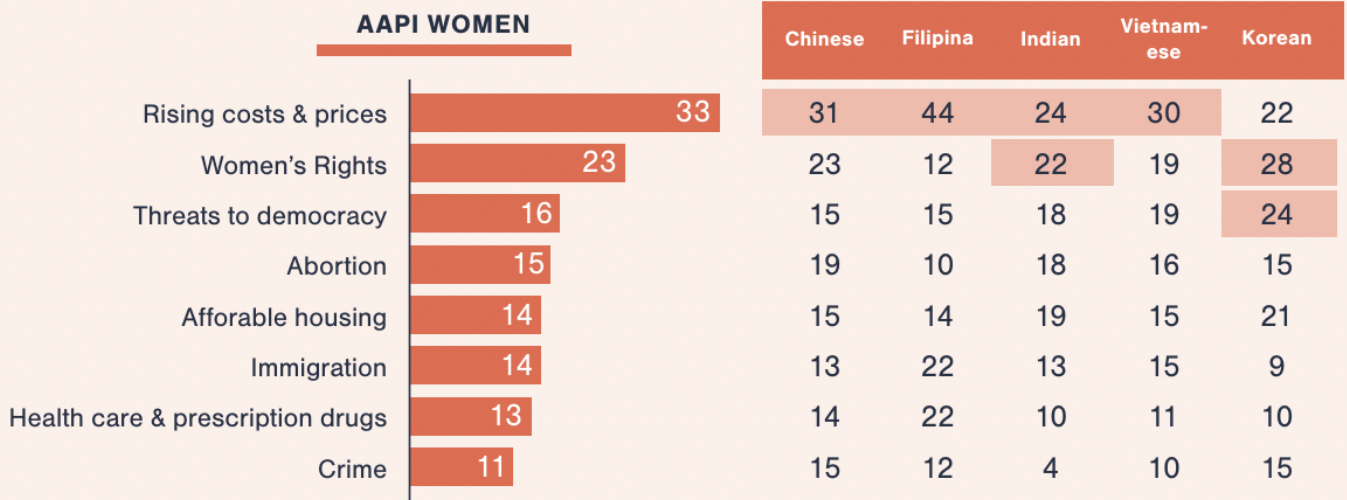
This poll was conducted by [\*\*Intersections Of Our Lives\*\*](#) in collaboration between [\*\*NAPAWF\*\*](#), In Our Own Voice: [\*\*National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda\*\*](#), and the [\*\*National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice\*\*](#) – Pollster [\*\*Celinda Lake\*\*](#), and [\*\*Roshni Nedungadi\*\*](#), partner at HIT Strategies. It sampled 850 black women registered voters, 850 Latina women registered voters, and 850 Asian American (Indian, Filipina, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean American) women.

## **What do Indian American women care about?**

Among Indian-American women, economic mobility and body autonomy were top of mind this year according to the poll. Women’s rights and rising costs top their list of priorities. “Women are seeking tangible solutions – policies that support working families, ensure good-paying jobs, and provide affordable healthcare as well as childcare support,” added Sreekrishnan.



## MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT WILL DETERMINE AAPI WOMEN'S VOTES IN THIS YEARS ELECTIONS ARE . . .



The main Congressional policy priorities for AAPI women include safety concerns like criminal justice reform, and gun violence prevention, as well as economic concerns like creating good-paying jobs and access to affordable health care and housing.

Source: <https://intersectionsofourlives.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Intersections-AAPI-Women-Fact-Sheet-Eng.pdf>

### A woman's right to choose is a top priority

Indian American women view healthcare and access to it as a women's rights issue according to the poll.

"Abortion access rose as a very, very high priority for Indian American women," says [Sung Yeon Choimorrow](#), executive director of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum.

The important issues included ensuring medication abortion is available to everyone, abortion is legal, affordable, and accessible, and that everyone has affordable health care.

[Harini Krishnan](#), National Organizing Chair for [South Asians for America](#) (SAFA) concurs. "In talking to South Asian women voters at the doors and on the phones over the recent months leading to primary elections in many key states, it is clear that not just the right to bodily autonomy, but in particular, access to reproductive care is one of the top issues of importance for these women this election cycle."

In a conversation, a conservative (Libertarian) South Asian woman told [Shubhra Sinha](#) that this was a straight-forward single-issue election. No matter how much she disagreed with Biden’s policies, the woman said would still vote for Biden as “a woman’s right to choose” is more important to her than any other policies. [Sinha](#) is a member of [They See Blue](#) National Strategy Group and the DMV Chapter Lead.

“This I have heard from many Republican women, and South Asian conservative women who are against Biden’s immigration and economic policies, but will vote for him to keep abortion legal,” said [Sinha](#).

## Other priorities

South Asian women also wanted politicians to act on reforming the criminal justice system by enacting gun violence prevention laws and passing paid family medical leave.

“The South Asian women I have connected with in phone banks and canvases talk about the need for substantive policies to curb gun violence, especially as it relates to domestic violence in our communities, as well as policies to address the increasing incidence of hate directed at AAPI communities,” said Krishnan.

## Will the Indian American vote make a difference?

Indian Americans are now the most populous Asian-alone group in the United States, according to the [US Census](#). At nearly 4,400,000, they have grown 55% over the last decade. With little language barriers for the vast majority, their participation in the elections this year will be pivotal.

A number of elections in the recent past were won by very slim margins, and in certain places, “Asian-american voters could have been or had been the decisive vote”, said Choimorrow.

Christine Chen, executive director of [Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote](#) explained that political parties needed to think beyond engaging with Chinese or Korean voters when campaigning in Georgia, Virginia, Ohio, Michigan. They “actually need to have a strategy to actually engage Indian Americans,” she said.

## Motivation to Vote

AAPI women are a crucial voting bloc in the 2024 elections. 87% are somewhat or very motivated to vote, 62% of AAPI women see voting as extremely important, but only 52% see voting as extremely effective in creating the change they want to see. Poll results show that more than any other group, AAPI women are

motivated by their values when it comes to voting. The common consensus is that they do not see their experiences and priorities addressed by politics or policy.

84% of AAPI women say that racism has gone on for too long in America and leaders need to address it. 83% of AAPI women think it is important for Congress to address racial/ethnic discrimination and anti-AAPI, hate-related violence.

## Reaching voters

“I think voter education is very important,” because it takes away the mystery of voting said [Swati Joshi](#), Board Member of They See Blue National and lead for TX and AZ

“I think it’s a two way street,” Joshi continued. “It’s upon the candidates and their elected officials to woo the voters and get their ideas to the voters. But it’s also important that the voter also reaches out to the elected officials and the candidates and tells them what they want from the government because I think that it’s like a two way street. Neither side is doing enough.”

Most campaigns operate in their comfort zone, added Joshi, but they are finally starting to understand that they need to reach out to all communities.

Candidates must engage with this critical voting bloc and not take them for granted, Nedungadi pointed out, because women of color feel frustrated at being overlooked.

## What do other women of color care about?

Black, Latina/x, Asian American, and Pacific Islander women solidly agree that they want their elected officials to understand how their experiences and needs differ from those of white women. Rising costs and concerns about the economy are the single most important issue to them. 92% of Black women, 89% of AAPI women, and 88% of Latino women prioritize the creation of good-paying jobs, according to poll data.

Reproductive Justice, which is defined by people’s ability to decide if they want to become a parent, when to become a parent, and how to parent the children they have, is also important to women of color voters.

The majority of women of color voters – nearly 9 in 10 – say the 2024 election is extremely important. They also believe that voting in elections is the most effective action they can take to effect the change they want to see in the country.

“The way to hold elected officials accountable is to vote every time and vote on their priorities and vote for candidates who they believe represent their priorities” explains [Dr. Regina Davis Moss](#), President and CEO of In Our Own Voice.

“Women of color represent an enormous potential vote but we are at a crossroads. They are not gonna vote for people unless they see change, they see their values represented and they see policies talked about to them that affect their daily lives” says Celinda Lake.

Voter motivation in this election cycle has been low across the entire electorate but women of color could be the difference.

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