


**ACHIEVEMENT VS. ADJUSTMENT: THE PARADOXICAL EFFECT OF
THE MODEL MINORITY MYTH ON ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

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Title: Achievement vs. Adjustment: The Paradoxical Effect of the Model Minority Myth on Asian American Students

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Abstract: This study aims to understand the differences between White and Asian students according to a specific set of psychological processes and role the internalization of the model minority myth plays. In my thesis I first examined what it means to be Asian American by looking at where the term first came from, the differences between race and ethnicity, and the diversity within the group. Then I examined the model minority's myth origins and looked into the effect the model minority myth has been found to have on Asian American development. Then I examined the achievement adjustment paradox and the mental health outcomes of Asian Americans to understand the current problem facing Asian Americans. After this, I explained my study, the psychological processes that I was studying, the results, and analyzed them. I found that belonging plays a particularly powerful role for Asian American students, Asian American students score lower on hope for the future in comparison to White students, and the internalization of the model minority myth can act as a buffer against negative feelings. I explained that belonging and the internalization of the model minority myth may be playing a particularly influential role because there is not a clear understanding or language to describe the Asian American experience.

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Introduction

The mental health concern facing Asian Americans is a critical issue and it is deserving of a lot more attention. Currently, Asian American males and females have the highest percent deaths caused by suicide of any racial group from the ages of 15-24 and 25-34.¹ From the ages of 15-24, it is the second leading cause of death.² Moreover, across the literature Asian Americans score particularly low on psychological adjustment and high on depressive and anxiety symptoms. Despite these alarming statistics, Asian Americans are largely ignored in psychology literature focusing on undergraduate students because Asian Americans are academically high achieving. The result of this is that Asian Americans are completely left out as a racial group of study in the analysis or they are grouped together with White students when comparing outcomes. For example, in an annual literature review conducted on Asian American psychology only 16 of the 332 articles included were primarily focused on educational experiences, which ranged from preschool to higher education.³

This pattern of study is problematic for a multitude of reasons. For one, high academic achievement does not necessarily correlate with high psychological adjustment as the statistics regarding Asian Americans show. Moreover, high academic achievement is not a reason to ignore the mental health problems affecting the Asian American community. Second, Asian Americans are a diverse racial group with large differences within the community, so grouping them together and ignoring them acts as a disservice for ethnic groups within the Asian

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. (2018) [2020 Nov 5]. www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars

² Ibid

³ Kiang, et al. "Annual Review of Asian American psychology, 2015," *Asian American Journal of Psychology* 7, no. 4 (2016): 219.

American community that are particularly struggling.⁴ For example, in one study, Asian American students performed well in one experiment focusing on achievement gaps, so they were not classified as disadvantaged in later experiments.⁵ Third, the choice to exclude Asian Americans from the literature or group them with White students perpetuates the model minority myth by implicating that the community has successfully overcome the systemic racial barriers set up in American society. Furthermore, in doing so, the literature implies that Whiteness is something that could be ascended to through academic achievement. When grouping Asian and White students the literature implies that the experiences of Asian Americans in the classroom are the same as White students because they are high achieving, however, the mental health outcomes clearly demonstrate why that is not the case.

In order to account for this issue, research has begun to look further into the psychological adjustment outcomes of Asian Americans. Researchers have named the pattern of ignoring Asian American psychological adjustment due to their high achievement as the achievement adjustment paradox.⁶ Moreover, qualitative research focused on Asian Americans in schools and mental health outcomes have identified some problems facing Asian Americans that help explain the struggles facing the community. That being said, there is still a dearth of quantitative research on Asian Americans that helps to explain why Asian Americans are struggling with mental health. From my research on the topic, I have gathered that Asian Americans score low on psychological adjustment even though they are high achieving because

⁴ Lisa Kiang, Virginia W. Huynh, Charissa SL Cheah, Yijie Wang, and Hirokazu Yoshikawa, "Moving beyond the model minority," *Asian American Journal of Psychology* 8, no. 1 (2017): 1-6.

⁵ This is only one example of a pattern that is continuously found in the literature. Yeager et al. "Teaching a lay theory before college narrows achievement gaps at scale," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113, no. 24 (2016): E3341-E3348.

⁶ Qin, D. B., and E. J. Han. "The achievement/adjustment paradox: Understanding the psychosocial struggles of Asian American children and adolescents." *Immigrant children: Change, adaptation, and cultural transformation* (2011): 75-97.

the internalization of the model minority myth and the awkward placement of Asian Americans along the American racial dichotomy lead to a unique set of pressures that manifest as mental health issues.

However, to date no one has studied the psychological processes that may be causing the poor adjustment outcomes of Asian Americans. That is why for my thesis I conducted a study that analyzed the differences between Asian and White students across multiple psychological processes that are popularly studied in relation to undergraduates (belonging, stress, and imposter syndrome) and the role the internalization of the model minority myth may be playing in affecting the outcomes of Asian American students. For my study, I conducted and analyzed information from a survey that went out to undergraduate students enrolled in Chemistry 301 at the University of Texas at Austin that received over 1800 responses.

The analysis from my study will be a contribution to the field for many reasons. For those studying Asian American psychology, most quantitative studies looking into the internalization of the model minority myth focus directly on psychological adjustment, like depressive and anxiety symptoms. There is little to no understanding of what other processes reflect the mental health issues that are facing Asian Americans. For those studying undergraduate students in relation to academic achievement, there has almost been no focus on the difference between Asian and White students and the role of the psychological processes generally used in this research, that I included in my study, have outside of the context of achievement. Overall, the study I conducted for my thesis seeks to give new meaning and understanding of the experiences of Asian Americans in the classroom in order to better understand the mental health struggles faced by the community in a way that hasn't been done before by bringing together Asian American psychological literature and academic achievement literature.

Part 1: The Asian American Experience

I am going to begin by giving background on the immigration, racial, and ethnic histories of Asian Americans in the United States. I wanted to start here because what it means to be Asian in America has changed significantly throughout America's history, and it is tied to broader social and historical movements regarding race and immigration. Furthermore, defining race and ethnicity is essential to discussing the role, histories, and developmental contexts of Asian Americans intentionally.

Moreover, as I previously mentioned, Asian Americans are grouped together in ways that may not accurately reflect the wide variety of experiences within the group. In order to understand the difficulties regarding using Asian as a category to understand this large group of people, explaining this history is essential. Outlining this history is also essential to understanding the model minority myth, its effects, and who is potentially most implicated by it, which I will also be discussing in this section. Finally, giving context to the Asian American experience in this way is essential to understanding the results of the survey.

Brief History of Asian American Immigration

Initially, the rise of the yellow peril stereotype and fear regarding economic mobility led to exclusionary immigration policies that limited Asian migration. Efforts such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* Supreme Court case, and more, kept Asians from entering the United States and obtaining citizenship.⁷ These exclusionary policies were based on fears of economic displacement and the racial stratification history in the United

⁷ Lisa Kiang, Vivian Tseng, and Tiffany Yip, "Placing Asian American child development within historical context," *Child Development* 87, no. 4 (2016): 995-1013.

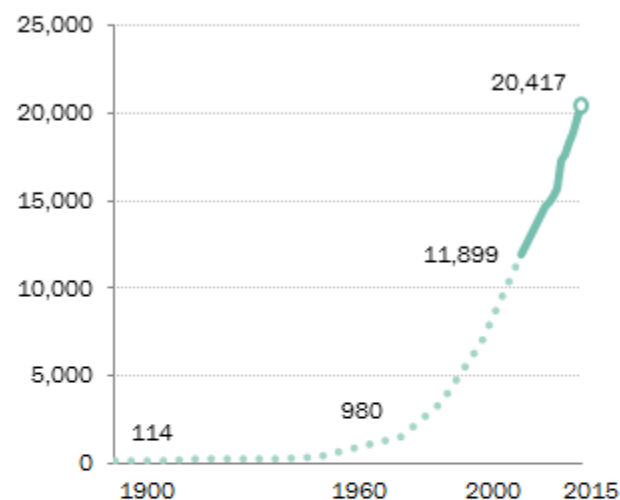
States along dimensions of white and non-white.⁸ Moreover, before the late twentieth century, ethnic and racial identities were “generally assumed to have an unquestionable, objective reality of their own.” This has been called the primordialist view, and it motivated a lot of the early immigration policies of exclusion and quotas in the United States.⁹

During the 1960s, the tide of inclusionary immigration policies shifted to allow more immigration from Asia as demonstrated by the figure on the right.¹⁰ Since then Asian immigration to the United States has primarily been characterized as fitting along one of the following dimensions: voluntary or forced. It is important to note, however, that the immigration pathways as represented by this

dichotomy simplifies the actual push and pull factors that immigrants face, which can be more appropriately categorized along a spectrum.¹¹ That being said, family reunification, labour migration and international student migration are seen as voluntary, and refugee and asylum seeking are seen as forced.¹²

The Asian population in the U.S. has grown 72% since 2000

In thousands



⁸Sharon M Lee, "Asian immigration and American race-relations: From exclusion to acceptance?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 12, no. 3 (1989): 368-390.

⁹ Pierre L. Van den Berghe, "Race and ethnicity: a sociobiological perspective," *Ethnic and racial studies* 1, no. 4 (1978): 401.

¹⁰ Pew Research Center, The Asian Population in the U.S has grown 72% since 2000. (Pew: 2017), https://www.pewresearch.org/st_17-09-09_asianamerican_featured-image-1/

¹¹Marta Bivand Erdal, and Ceri Oeppen, "Forced to leave? The discursive and analytical significance of describing migration as forced and voluntary," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 6 (2018): 981-998.

¹² Erdal, 982.

The pattern of voluntary migration was primarily made possible through the Hart-Celler Act, or the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, as it “abolished the national origins quota system, established a seven-category preference system for the unification of families and for persons with needed skills, and set an equal 20,000 per-country limit.”¹³ The occupational preferences category in particular led to the voluntary migration of highly skilled laborers that were in demand in the United States. On the other hand, the pattern of involuntary migration was led primarily by refugee seekers from South East Asia from Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and more in the 1970s.¹⁴ These differing immigration histories still have implications today between ethnicities within the broader Asian American racial group.

Now, Asian Americans are the fastest growing racial group and make the largest share of immigrants coming to America.¹⁵ In order to best understand the demographic makeup of Asian American immigration today we must consider the role ethnicity plays as well.

Ethnicity

The difference between race and ethnicity is complicated, and there is not one clear difference that easily maps onto any group of people. As for Asian Americans, there is a wide range of ethnicities and sub-groups that encompass the term as the figure showcases.¹⁶

¹³ Min Zhou, "Coming of age: The current situation of Asian American children," *Amerasia Journal* 25, no. 1 (1999): 4.

¹⁴ Zhou, 3.

¹⁵ Abby Budiman and Neil G. Ruiz, “Asian Americans are the fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in the U.S.,” Pew Research Center, April 9, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/09/asian-americans-are-the-fastest-growing-racial-or-ethnic-group-in-the-u-s/>

¹⁶ Pew Research Center, Six Asian origin groups in the U.S. had populations of at least 1 million people in 2019, accounting for 85% of the nation’s Asian population, (Pew: 2021), https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/29/key-facts-about-asian-origin-groups-in-the-u-s/ft_2021-04-29_asianorigins_01/

Six Asian origin groups in the U.S. had populations of at least 1 million people in 2019 ...

In thousands

Origin group	Population			% growth, 2000–2019
	2019	2010	2000	
Chinese	5,399	4,010	2,865	88%
Indian	4,606	3,183	1,900	142%
Filipino	4,211	3,417	2,365	78%
Vietnamese	2,183	1,737	1,224	78%
Korean	1,908	1,707	1,228	55%
Japanese	1,498	1,316	1,160	29%
Pakistani	554	409	204	171%
Thai	343	238	150	128%
Cambodian	339	277	206	64%
Hmong	327	260	186	75%
Laotian	254	232	198	28%
Bangladeshi	208	147	57	263%
Nepalese	198	59	9	2,005%
Burmese	189	100	17	1,031%
Indonesian	129	95	63	105%
Sri Lankan	56	45	25	127%
Malaysian	38	26	19	106%
Mongolian	27	18	6	358%
Bhutanese	24	19	<1	11,288%

That being said, I am going to use Brubaker's defining characteristics to explain this difference.¹⁷ Because Brubaker's work focuses on bringing together the fields of race, ethnicity, and nationalism, I feel that his explanation will apply well for the purposes of this thesis. According to Brubaker, race and ethnicity fall generally along these dimensions "race to be a matter of external categorization, ethnicity of internal self-identification; race to be based on differences of

phenotype or nature, ethnicity on differences of culture; race to be rigid, ethnicity flexible; race to involve super and subordinate, ethnicity coordinate groups; race to arise from processes of exclusion, ethnicity from processes of inclusion; race to have grown out of the European colonial encounter."¹⁸ In other words, race is based on external or phenotypic qualities that have been made salient by oppression, while ethnicity has more to do with group formation based on identity.

The difference between race and ethnicity is best exemplified by the history behind the inclusion of "Asian" as a racial category on the Census. In 1860, the Census included the category "Chinese" and added "Japanese" in 1870 in order to encompass all of the Asian immigrants. Then in 1910 the Census added the category of "other", which gave other

¹⁷ Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity, race, and nationalism," *Annual Review of Sociology* 35 (2009): 21-42.

¹⁸ Brubaker, 25.

immigrants a place to write in their ethnicity or select one of the Asian ethnicities listed on the Census until the 1980s.¹⁹

Asian became an official racial category by the OMB in 1997, when the United States began to require five racial categories on the Census: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Since then more changes have occurred to be more encompassing of the Asian American experience, so that multi-racial Asian Americans and more ethnic groups can be included.²⁰

This demonstrates how the concept of being “Asian” in America is an identity that has been manufactured by the majority to group individuals. Underscoring this point is essential to the study of the model minority myth and its effects. For one, the nature of its creation showcases how the Asian identity marker can fail to represent the more salient parts of many Asian American experiences. For example, a second generation immigrant from India may strongly identify as an Indian American rather than as an Asian American, which could have effects on how stereotypes that are associated with being “Asian” can then have on that person. In other words, ethnicity may act as a more influential moderator on behavior than race for certain persons who do not feel strongly aligned to the idea of Asian identity.²¹

¹⁹Anna Brown, "The changing categories the US census has used to measure race," *Pew Research Center* (2020).

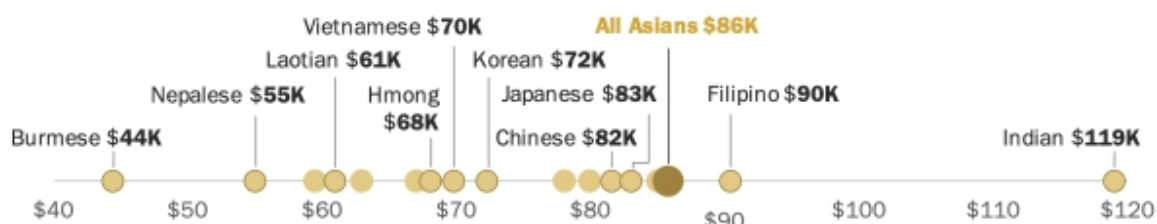
²⁰ Elizabeth M. Hoeffel, Sonya Rastogi, Myoung Ouk Kim, and Hasan Shahid, “The Asian Population: 2010,” *U.S. Census Briefs (2012)*, U.S. Census Bureau.

"The changing categories the US census has used to measure race," Pew Research Center (2020).

²¹ I will return to this point when I talk about the categories I have included in my survey

Median household income varies widely among Asian origin groups in the U.S. ...

Median annual household income, 2019, by origin group



Another reason this is important to the study of the model minority myth, is that the Asian racial category is extremely broad, which can erase some of the important differences between ethnic groups that affect the model minority myth. For example, the figure above²² demonstrates the wide range of income levels between Asian Americans, illustrating the wide socio-economic differences within the community.

Moreover, immigrants who have come to the United States under the skilled labor categories, such as Japanese and Korean immigrants, have higher levels of educational attainment than their counterparts in their origin countries while the same trends haven't been represented by immigrant communities who came to the U.S. due to forced migration.²³ Even though Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese Americans all mark Asian on the Census, the economic factors that their ethnic communities are surrounded by are very different. This is especially important to the model minority myth as this stereotype relies on certain pre and post immigration histories, economic assumptions and more to maintain its influence.

That being said, I will continue to use the term Asian American throughout my thesis and as the primary identifier for the groups I will be talking about. Even though the Asian identity, or

²² Pew Research Center, Median household income varies widely among Asian origin groups in the U.S., as does the share who live in poverty, (Pew: 2021). https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/29/key-facts-about-asian-origin-groups-in-the-u-s/ft_2021-04-29_asianorigins_01/

²³ Social, Pew, and Demographic Trends. "The rise of Asian Americans." Pew Social & Demographic Trends. Retrieved from (2012).

race more generally, has been assigned and defined by others, it still has an effect on what people do and how they are able to act. Moreover, the term Asian American is used widely in the literature I will be discussing in relation to the model minority myth, academic achievement outcomes, psychological processes, and it is the term I used to identify participants in my study. That being said, I will address the role ethnicity plays in my analysis and ensure that experiences or studies related to a particular group are not attributed to the entire Asian American population.

The Model Minority Myth's Origins

From its onset, the term *model minority* was used to distinguish Asian Americans from other minority groups. In the article where the term model minority was first introduced, Peterson writes: “for all the well meaning programs and countless scholarly studies now focused on the Negro, we barely know how to repair the damage that slave traders started. The history of Japanese Americans, however, challenges every such generalization about ethnic minorities, and for this reason alone deserves far more attention than it has been given.”²⁴ By contrasting the success of Japanese Americans to the struggles faced by the Black community, Peterson not only reduces the Japanese American story to a monolithic experience, he pits the two groups against each other. Although this article initially only references Japanese Americans, over time the term and its implications went on to broadly encompass all Asian Americans. That being said, the use of the term model minority as a means of oppression was not lost on Asian American civil rights activists of the time.

In 1971 Amy Uyematsu wrote that “Asian Americans are perpetuating white racism in the United States as they allow white America to hold up the ‘successful’ Oriental image before other minority groups as the model to emulate. White America justifies the blacks’ position by

²⁴ Petersen, William, “Success Story Japanese-American Style,” *New York Times*, January 9, 1966, 21.

showing that other non-whites -- yellow people -- have been able to ‘adapt’ to the system.”²⁵

Moreover, Uyematsu also points to the diversity within the Asian community as a rebuttal: “the myth of Asian American success is most obvious in the economic and social position of Filipino Americans... Indeed, Filipinos are a forgotten minority in America. Like blacks, they have many legitimate complaints against American society.”²⁶ Noting Uyematsu’s objection at this time is especially important as it demonstrates that the term model minority, even as it was embraced by certain Asian Americans at the time as it is now, was always clouded in criticism.

That being said, in 1977 Suzuki clearly delineated the problem at hand by labeling the model minority stereotype as a myth in order to encapsulate the problems and critiques associated with the prescription of the model minority stereotype to Asian Americans.²⁷ Suzuki calls to attention the critiques levied by Uyematsu and some of his own in order to debunk the myth.

Suzuki begins by examining the theory central to the model minority stereotype: cultural determinism. According to this theory, the inherent cultural values and traits of the Asian American community is what allows them to be uniquely successful. Suzuki fuses the criticisms and merits of this explanation in order to present one of his own: the socialization of Asian Americans in schools has led them to suppress cultural traits that may be harmful to their upward mobility while selectively reinforcing and cultivating others that are more suitable.

Even though Suzuki presents this explanation, he maintains that the model minority stereotype is a myth. He debunks the stereotype and contextualizes their advancements by pointing out that the upward mobility of Asian Americans was still limited “by the effects of

²⁵ Amy Uyematsu, "The Emergence of Yellow Power in America." in Tachiki, et al., *Roots: An Asian American Reader* (Los Angeles. 1971), 11.

²⁶ Uyematsu, 13.

²⁷ Bob Suzuki, "Education and the socialization of Asian Americans: A revisionist analysis of the “model minority” thesis," *Amerasia Journal* 4, no. 2 (1977): 23-51.

racism [as] most [Asian Americans] have been channeled into lower-echelon white-collar jobs having little or no decision-making authority,”²⁸ the suppression of cultural traits and conformity that Asian Americans are subjected to, and racial employment discrimination.

Suzuki elucidates that the mobility of Asian Americans was made possible through the demand for low level workers and the socialization undergone by Asian Americans in school. Suzuki explains the key role socialization plays in schooling by looking to the work done by two sociologists, Bowles and Gintis, regarding the American meritocracy thesis. According to this thesis, the educational system functions in such a way that those with innate intellectual abilities in our society are generally able to advance regardless of their socioeconomic background.²⁹ This means that the rich are rich because they deserve to be as it is a reflection of their educational ability.

However, according to Bowles and Gintis’ statistical analysis income level is dependent on level of schooling, not cognitive skills or childhood IQ. This presents a paradox, as Suzuki puts it, because the effects that schooling has on IQ levels are irrelevant to income earning, but they still matter in general. This means that the years of schooling have some other effect on students that allows them to earn more money. Bowles and Gintis explain that the years of schooling help cultivate non-cognitive traits such as “personality characteristics appropriate to adequate job performance in the occupational roles of the parents. The children of managers and professionals are taught self reliance within a broad set of constraints; the children of production line workers are taught conformity and obedience.”³⁰ In other words schooling “contributes to

²⁸ Suzuki, 38.

²⁹ Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in capitalist America: Educational reform of economic life*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976.

³⁰ Samuel Bowles, "Getting nowhere: Programmed class stagnation," *Society* 9, no. 8 (1972): 48.

the reproduction of the unequal class structure of American society by reinforcing and inculcating noncognitive traits in students that are characteristic of their family.”³¹

It is for this reason Suzuki attributes the role of American schooling, the mechanism that suppresses Asian Americans into confirming with the white majority, as a key tenant of their mobility. Bowles and Gintis’ work helps to contextualize parts of Suzuki’s arguments and the model minority myth within larger American perspectives regarding mobility. It is precisely because of the American meritocracy myth, which ignores context-specific factors that allow for mobility amongst richer and whiter populations, that the model minority myth could be born. Because the general American understanding of what allows for mobility in the United States is ill-informed by pervasive ideas like the meritocracy myth, stereotypes that propagate and uphold this larger ideal are ripe to form.

Suzuki expands on this process in his article from 2002 where he revisits the model minority myth. He states that one of the reasons he initially worked to debunk the increasingly pervasive stereotype was because it was used as a shield to ignore many of the problems that Asian Americans were still facing: “complaints about [racial] discrimination were often not taken seriously and dismissed by employers as baseless.”³² In other words, the institutions where Asian Americans were succeeding that perpetuated the seemingly positive stereotype, were the same systems that later used the stereotype to purposefully ignore problems faced by Asian Americans.

³¹ Bob Suzuki, "Education and the socialization of Asian Americans: A revisionist analysis of the “model minority” thesis," *Amerasia Journal* 4, no. 2 (1977): 33.

³² Bob H. Suzuki, "Revisiting the model minority stereotype: Implications for student affairs practice and higher education," *New directions for student services* 2002, no. 97 (2002): 21-32.

Since Suzuki's first article, the model minority myth has continued to be a pervasive stereotype affecting Asian Americans despite concentrated efforts to dispute it.³³ Suzuki has attributed the continued prevalence of the myth to the large proportions of Asian Americans that graduate from college, the rising socioeconomic status of Asian Americans, the rise of Asian countries as economic powers globally, and the immigration of wealthy immigrants after 1965.³⁴ Although these factors may seem like evidence in support of a model minority, they hide the larger institutions at play that have allowed for these changes and the detrimental effects this has on the Asian American community.³⁵ In other words, even though the evidence used to support the model minority stereotype has changed, the function and process that has allowed for the stereotype to prevail has remained.

One major process that changed in regards to the model minority myth according to Suzuki, is its growing connection with the re-emerging *perfidious foreigner stereotype*. The perfidious foreigner stereotype, the view that Asian Americans are untrustworthy foreigners, has gained steam recently because of China's growing power.³⁶ According to Suzuki, this stereotype works alongside the model minority myth and leads to subtle forms of racial discrimination that keep Asian Americans from moving to higher positions at work.

The model minority myth's assumption that Asian Americans are problem-free high achievers leads to an underdevelopment of verbal and linguistic skills and the perfidious foreigner stereotype makes it so that "the few who achieve management and other leadership roles are often viewed suspiciously as untrustworthy."³⁷ The joint effects of these two processes

³³ There have been many articles that have been written to demonstrate this such, one example is by R.M. Jiobu, *Ethnicity and Assimilation: Blacks, Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, Mexicans, Vietnamese, and White*, Albany: State University of New York Press in 1988.

³⁴ Suzuki, 23.

³⁵ I will revisit these factors later on when discussing more negative affects of the model minority myth

³⁶ Suzuki, 24.

³⁷ Suzuki, 28.

demonstrates how the model minority myth's pervasiveness allows it to subtly influence many parts of Asian American life that may seem disconnected. There are also many other lasting effects of the model minority myth on Asian Americans that I will cover and attempt to understand in my survey.

Part 2: Mental Health and Adjustment

For this section I will be outlining the current state of mental health of Asian American adolescents, and then going into the role the model minority myth plays in affecting these outcomes. Because the study of the model minority myth comes from a diverse range of fields I will be including information from child developmental research to augment my analysis. Moreover, I will be using the findings in this research to help me navigate and interpret the results of my own study later on.

Mental health of Asian Americans

Asian Americans have struggled particularly with mental health. This is most exemplified by the fact that percent of deaths caused by suicide for Asian Americans is disproportionately larger when compared to other racial groups. In fact, both Asian American males and females have the highest percent deaths caused by suicide of any racial group from the ages of 15-24 and 25-34.³⁸

It is hard to find a direct explanation as to why this is, but there are many reasons that could be coming together to cause this outcome. One contributing reason could be that Asian Americans, particularly those of first or second generation, use mental health related services at a lower rate than the general population³⁹ and do not seek the services they need.⁴⁰ This may be influenced by larger cultural differences, as Asian Americans do not look to professional help but

³⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. (2018) [2020 Nov 5]. www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars

³⁹Michael S. Spencer, Juan Chen, Gilbert C. Gee, Cathryn G. Fabian, and David T. Takeuchi, "Discrimination and mental health-related service use in a national study of Asian Americans," *American Journal of Public Health* 100, no. 12 (2010): 2410-2417.

⁴⁰ Stanley Sue, Janice Ka Yan Cheng, Carmel S. Saad, and Joyce P. Chu, "Asian American mental health: a call to action," *American Psychologist* 67, no. 7 (2012): 532.

rather to their personal support networks, which may be due to the stigma around mental health in Asian culture that suggests mental health problems exist due to a lack of self control.⁴¹ In turn, these factors can lead to a lack of attention paid by teachers and counselors to the psychological or social difficulties Asian Americans face, thus furthering the issue.⁴²

Another reason identified in focus groups by a study conducted by the NIH to determine and discuss the mental health issues facing Asian American young adults, was pressure to meet parental expectations of academic achievement, which was furthered by pressures outside of the community to live up to the model minority myth. The model minority myth wasn't the only reason students felt this way, as they identified other stressors such as "balancing two different cultures and communicating with parents, family obligations based on strong family values, and discrimination or isolation due to racial or cultural backgrounds." However, the model minority myth plays a larger role in these other identified stressors as one of the implications of the stereotype is that cultural assimilation is easier for Asian Americans, which directly contrasts with the actual mental health stressors identified by the community.

The larger implications of the model minority myth on stressors affecting Asian American mental health outcomes is one of the reasons I decided to investigate the mental health of Asian Americans through the lens of the model minority myth for this thesis. There has already been some research regarding the effects of the model minority myth on development and particular psychological processes, like the stereotype threat, that begin to explain how and why the stereotype is able to have an effect on Asian Americans.

⁴¹Sunmin Lee, Hee-Soon Juon, Genevieve Martinez, Chiehwen E. Hsu, E. Stephanie Robinson, Julie Bawa, and Grace X. Ma, "Model minority at risk: Expressed needs of mental health by Asian American young adults," *Journal of community health* 34, no. 2 (2009): 144-152.

⁴² I will be addressing this concept in the section about the achievement adjustment paradox

The Model Minority Myth's Effects on Development

There are many layers of an environment that affect a child's development⁴³, and for children of color, their status in society affects them differently. Because they are moving through the world in a way that is impacted by systems of racism, oppression, and more, the systems that children of color are raised in and navigate through lead to "unique conditions that more directly influence the developmental process" as they indirectly and directly interact with discrimination.⁴⁴ Moreover, as adolescents face racial discrimination in their life, it begins to affect self-concept and identity formation leading to long term consequences that affect self-esteem, self-efficacy and control, and the development of depressive symptoms over time.⁴⁵

For Asian Americans, there has been research about the model minority myth's effect on the developmental context of Asian American adolescents. It is important to note, however, that the model minority myth in combination with the perpetual foreigner stereotype has contributed to a dearth of research on developmental contexts and has skewed towards focusing on academic achievement and success.⁴⁶

That current research demonstrates that the model minority myth has acted similarly to stereotypes affecting children of color more generally and operate for Asian Americans as well by influencing their social status and their developmental competencies so as to affect their "ethnic identity, academic outcomes, and social and peer relationships."⁴⁷ Moreover, the

⁴³Urie Bronfenbrenner, "Toward an experimental ecology of human development," *American psychologist* 32, no. 7 (1977): 513.

⁴⁴ Cynthia Garcia Coll, Keith Crnic, Gontran Lamberty, Barbara Hanna Wasik, Renee Jenkins, Heidie Vazquez Garcia, and Harriet Pipes McAdoo, "An integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children," *Child development* 67, no. 5 (1996): 1891-1914.

⁴⁵Melissa L. Greene, Niobe Way, and Kerstin Pahl. "Trajectories of perceived adult and peer discrimination among Black, Latino, and Asian American adolescents: patterns and psychological correlates," *Developmental psychology* 42, no. 2 (2006): 218.

⁴⁶Kiang, 996.

⁴⁷ Kiang, 999.

internalization of the model minority myth by parents can affect their parenting strategies, which are then transmitted to children and affect their identity development and outcomes as well.⁴⁸ The model minority myth also puts an undue stress on children by setting up an expectation of success that is difficult to live up to.⁴⁹ Overall, the model minority myth affects Asian American development by influencing their self concept, which presents itself in a wide-variety of ways.

That being said, other differences within the Asian American community lead to a range of diverse contexts that affect development as well. The diversity within the Asian American experience, can be exemplified by the number of ethnic groups (over 30), differing immigration experiences or migration patterns, socioeconomic status, academic achievement, which all affect developmental contexts. What is interesting and unique about the model minority myth, however, is that it paints Asian Americans as a part of a monolithic experience, which in turn reduces the importance of the other contexts across a broad range of outcomes. In other words, even when the model minority myth isn't acting as a contributing factor, its ability to either diminish or emphasize other ones, still makes it pervasive.

For example, among groups who voluntarily immigrated to the United States academic achievement is high, while other ethnic groups that have undergone different migratory patterns (Cambodia, Laotian, Hmong, Bhutanese, Burmese, and Nepali) have higher dropout rates and proportions of disconnected youth.⁵⁰ In this case immigration history is correlated with achievement outcomes, which is often erased by the image portrayed by the model minority myth.

⁴⁸Ramaswami Mahalingam, *Cultural psychology of immigrants*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2006.

⁴⁹ This sentiment has been expressed in many different parts of the literature, like the NIH study on Asian American adolescents, writings on the achievement adjust paradox and in Mahalingam, Ramaswami. "Misidentification, misembodiment and the paradox of being a model minority." *Sikh Formations* 8, no. 3 (2012): 299-304.

⁵⁰Asian American Federation. *The State of Asian American Children*. New York, NY (2014)

This research demonstrates how the vast range of ways the model minority myth affects adolescent development. Even though developmental contexts can't directly point to the model minority myth as a reason for mental health disparities, it definitely helps to explain how the stereotype plays a role in affecting Asian American development. In order to further our understanding of how Asian Americans are affected by the model minority myth, we can look to the achievement adjustment paradox.

The Achievement Adjustment Paradox

Despite performing well in school, Asian Americans have continuously scored low on psychological outcomes in comparison to white and other minority students. This discrepancy in outcomes, can best be described as the *achievement adjustment paradox*, a term first coined by Qin in 2004.⁵¹ The importance of identifying this paradox can not be understated. As previously noted, literature often assumes that good educational outcomes are a reflection of good psychological adjustment. As Qin puts it: "We often assume that students' academic achievement is positively linked to their psychological state: when a student is doing well in school, with the approval of parents and teachers, he should be feeling good. The pattern in Asian American children and adolescent development indicates a perplexing achievement/adjustment paradox."⁵² This notion is especially problematic because research clearly demonstrates that there is an achievement adjustment paradox amongst Asian American adolescents.

⁵¹ Qin, D. B., and E. J. Han, "The achievement/adjustment paradox: Understanding the psychosocial struggles of Asian American children and adolescents," *Immigrant children: Change, adaptation, and cultural transformation* (2011): 75-97.

⁵² Qin, 79.

Asian American students have reported poorly on psychological and social adjustment in many research studies and have been found to be at increased risk for depression.⁵³ In one study where psychological adjustment was scored according to self-esteem and depressive symptoms, Asian Americans reported the lowest psychological well-being amongst African American, Latino, and Asian American students. In another study, Asian Americans were found to be academically oriented and good students, while simultaneously reporting higher levels of depressive symptoms, social problems, and more negative perception of themselves.⁵⁴ Low self-esteem has also been an especially salient issue facing Asian Americans, as they have consistently reported the low self-esteem in research studies examining adolescents.⁵⁵

The psychological literature including Asian American adolescents demonstrates how the academic achievement of Asian Americans creates a blind spot regarding their psychological adjustment. The achievement adjustment paradox is important to underscore because it helps explain why the psychological adjustment of Asian Americans in literature, classrooms, and among peers is largely ignored. Moreover, it can help explain the effect the model minority myth is potentially having on mental health outcomes of Asian American adolescents.

Because the model minority myth perpetuates the stereotype that all Asian Americans are high achieving and successful, it necessitates that the connotations of this perceived success applies to mental health as well. Essentially, the model minority myth perpetuates the idea that Asian Americans are successful *and* psychologically adjusted.⁵⁶ Moreover, research has indicated

⁵³US Department of Health and Human Services, "A supplement to mental health: a report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services," *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services* (2001).

⁵⁴May Kwan Lorenzo, Abbie K. Frost, and Helen Z. Reinherz, "Social and emotional functioning of older Asian American adolescents," *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 17, no. 4 (2000): 289-304.

⁵⁵ Qin, 483.

⁵⁶ Qin, 75.

that psychological well-being and adjustment is negatively affected by racial discrimination.⁵⁷

The pervasiveness of the model minority myth means that the racial discrimination inflicted due to the stereotype has harmful effects on adolescents, some of which has been directly tied to the model minority myth according to research.⁵⁸ For my thesis, I'm going to be evaluating how the internalization of the model minority myth is connected to psychological processes that affect or correlate with low psychological adjustment outcomes in order to better understand the achievement adjustment paradox. I will also be looking into how Asian Americans score in comparison to White students despite traditionally performing well, in order to see how the achievement adjustment paradox is reflected in processes that aren't traditionally studied.

⁵⁷Margaret Beale Spencer, "Social and cultural influences on school adjustment: The application of an identity-focused," *Educational psychologist* 34, no. 1 (1999): 43-57.

⁵⁸ Not all research regarding the psychological well-being of Asian Americans directly explains or ties the outcomes to racial discrimination or the model minority myth more specifically. However, there is research that makes this connection more directly, some of which I have already cited and more that I will explain later in this paper.

Part 3: Psychological Processes

The specific psychological processes I am going to be writing about are ones that I have included in my survey. I will look at the literature behind the psychological process, how it functions, and how it is correlated with the model minority myth. I will examine its correlation by looking at studies that specifically use the internalization of the model minority myth scale or able to draw clear connections between the stereotype and the results found.

Internalization of the Model Minority Myth

I want to begin by explaining the internalization of the model minority myth before delving into the psychological processes because I will be referencing this throughout that part of the discussion. As previously mentioned, the model minority myth can have damaging effects on adolescents in many ways that affect their development, psychological adjustment, and more. However, the direct psychological implications of the model minority myth have not been studied deeply.⁵⁹

In order to study this researchers created a measure to study the internalization of the model minority myth that would allow them to “shift the literature from discussing the model minority image as an external stereotype to an internal individual-difference process.”⁶⁰ One way this internal individual-difference process affects people can be explained by how or if it is correlated with other internalized psychological processes.

In previous studies looking at these correlations they have found that the effects of the internalization of the minority myth are somewhat unclear as some studies found there to be no

⁵⁹ Hyung Chol Yoo, Kimberly S. Burrola, and Michael F. Steger, "A preliminary report on a new measure: Internalization of the Model Minority Myth Measure (IM-4) and its psychological correlates among Asian American college students," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 57, no. 1 (2010): 114.

⁶⁰ Yoo, 116.

correlation while others found some.⁶¹ This may be explained by the contrasting internal and external behaviors of the stereotype: “The model minority myth of achievement orientation emphasizing group’s comparative success based on stronger work ethics, perseverance, and drive to succeed may lead individuals to internally attribute success to their own behavior and actions, therefore leading to increased academic expectations stress. In contrast, the model minority myth of unrestricted mobility emphasizing group’s comparative success based on greater belief in fair treatment and lack of perceived racism may lead individuals to externally attribute success to circumstances beyond their control (e.g., experiencing or not experiencing fair treatment or racism by others) therefore leading to decreased academic expectations stress.”⁶²

That being said, there have been very few studies that have explored this topic, let alone, why the correlations are unclear. In order to further this research I am going to look at how the internalization of the model minority myth is correlated with the following psychological processes: stress, belonging, and imposter syndrome. Some of these processes have been studied in previous studies using the internalization of the model minority myth, like stress, while others still haven’t been explored, such as belonging and imposter syndrome.

⁶¹ These studies use a scale to identify the correlation, unlike the previous studies cited that draw from externalities to explain the role of the model minority myth. This is why even though the effects of the stereotype are clear in other research studies, the effects are said to be unclear here. Chen, Jessica Lin. "The internalization of the model minority stereotype as a predictor of depression among Chinese Americans." PhD diss., ProQuest Information & Learning, 1995; Thompson, Taylor L., and Lisa Kiang. "The model minority stereotype: Adolescent experiences and links with adjustment." *Asian American Journal of Psychology* 1, no. 2 (2010): 119; Yoo, Hyung Chol, Matthew J. Miller, and Pansy Yip, "Validation of the internalization of the Model Minority Myth Measure (IM-4) and its link to academic performance and psychological adjustment among Asian American adolescents," *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 21, no. 2 (2015): 237;

⁶² Yoo, 243.

Stress

There has been a rich history of research to understand stress as a psychological process.⁶³ For the purposes of this thesis, I am going to discuss the stress mindset since that has been a key part of academic research regarding undergraduate students. According to stress mindset, “the stress response is determined by the balance of perceived resources (e.g., knowledge, skills) and perceived demands (danger, uncertainty).”⁶⁴ If the amount of resources meets the perceived demand, then the situation can be deemed as a challenge. However, if the amount of resources does not meet the perceived demands, the situation can be deemed as a threat. These distinctions are important because under challenging situations the body reacts differently⁶⁵: “increased cardiac efficiency and hormonal responses related to thriving and growth, preparing the body for action and signaling approach motivation as well as increases in cognitive performance.”⁶⁶ On the other hand, threatening situations are associated with “lower cardiovascular efficiency, heightened hormonal responses, negative affect, and poorer cognitive performance.”⁶⁷

This mindset approach means that changing the amount of resources that a person perceives as available to them can improve the way they approach stress in a situation. That being said, the relationship between stress and race can be slightly complicated. If someone’s race is a cause of stress, because they feel like they have to live up or live down a certain

⁶³ Lazarus’ initial work regarding stress appraisal and coping mechanisms, are essential to the stress mindset model that was developed later. Lazarus, Richard S., and Susan Folkman. *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer publishing company, 1984.

⁶⁴ Crum, Alia J., Modupe Akinola, Ashley Martin, and Sean Fath. "The role of stress mindset in shaping cognitive, emotional, and physiological responses to challenging and threatening stress." *Anxiety, stress, & coping* 30, no. 4 (2017): 379.

⁶⁵ Kassam, Karim S., Katrina Koslov, and Wendy Berry Mendes. "Decisions under distress: Stress profiles influence anchoring and adjustment." *Psychological science* 20, no. 11 (2009): 1394-1399.

⁶⁶ Crum, 380.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

stereotype, they may not have the resources to overcome that stereotype because that burden can be too great to overcome as a single person. This isn't to say that anyone who faces stereotypes is inevitably left in a threatening situation, but rather that if a person constantly feels as if they have to overcome their stereotype in a given environment, that could be detrimental.

This correlation between race, stereotyping and stress, can be explained by the stereotype threat. According to Steele, the stereotype threat is "the social-psychological threat that arises when one is in a situation or doing something for which a negative stereotype about one's group applies."⁶⁸ In other words, the stereotype threat occurs when someone is acting in a way that fulfills a negative stereotype about a group they belong to. The stereotype threat can result in a process of disidentification, which is a reconceptualization of the self that separates the domain from one's identity. Importantly, the stereotype threat does not require an internalization of the stereotype in order to affect someone. Instead, the stereotype is a situationally relevant process wherein which someone who is aware of the stereotype, regardless of if they believe it or not, is affected. Essentially, even if someone doesn't internalize the stereotype they have to be aware that other people may believe it.

Stereotype threat has been found to affect performance in many studies across many different races and minority groups.⁶⁹ There have also been studies that use stress mindset theory to frame problems regarding stereotype threat in order to create interventions that help reframe the situation as a challenge instead of a threat.⁷⁰ That being said, the effects of the stereotype threat on the Asian Americans is different because the model minority is superficially positive.

⁶⁸ Steele, Claude M. "A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual identity and performance." *American psychologist* 52, no. 6 (1997): 613.

⁶⁹ Schmader, Toni, Michael Johns, and Chad Forbes. "An integrated process model of stereotype threat effects on performance." *Psychological review* 115, no. 2 (2008): 336.

⁷⁰ Alter, Adam L., Joshua Aronson, John M. Darley, Cordaro Rodriguez, and Diane N. Ruble. "Rising to the threat: Reducing stereotype threat by reframing the threat as a challenge." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 46, no. 1 (2010): 166-171.

One study focused on Asian American women found that the model minority myth still acted as a threat to academic performance.⁷¹ In another study, they found that the model minority myth only acted as a threat to low performing Asian Americans students, which could be explained by stress caused by their inability to live up to the stereotype.⁷² As noted previously, these unclear outcomes fall in line with the results of many of the studies regarding internalization of the model minority myth.

That being said, it is important to note that stress and stereotype threat literature has primarily focused on performance, which may not get at some of the psychological adjustment issues that face Asian Americans. Moreover, the stress mindset theory aims to address short-term demand versus resource availability. However, if race is affecting a long-term understanding of what resources someone feels are available to them, stress may act as a constant stressor in their life. This outcome aligns with the long-term affects of racial discrimination that were previously mentioned. That is why I will be specifically looking at students' responses to global distress, which focus on how stressed they generally feel in the class. Even though there are questions about stress mindset specifically, I am not going to focus on whether or not Asian students see stress as a mindset, because I want to see how Asian students feel about the demands of the environment they are in, so as to understand how their race may be acting as an added stressor. Stress also has other long-term effects on mental and physical health that are worth noting in terms of psychological adjustment issues facing Asian Americans. That is why for the purposes

⁷¹ Cheryan, Sapna, and Galen V. Bodenhausen. "When positive stereotypes threaten intellectual performance: The psychological hazards of "model minority" status." *Psychological Science* 11, no. 5 (2000): 399-402.

⁷² This finding is particularly important, however, when considering the diversity of the Asian American experience. If students who are scoring low on academic performance are a part of ethnic groups whose histories have been erased by the model minority myth, the implications of the threat can affect ethnic identity development. This isn't measured by performance, but is an important effect of the model minority myth Yoo, 243.

of the study, I will also examine stress in correlation with other outcomes that aren't necessarily related to academic performance, like belonging, imposter syndrome, and internalization of the model minority myth.

Belonging

Belonging is a powerful and dynamic psychological process that can predict favorable outcomes.⁷³ A lot of the studies in relation to belonging in the classroom are focused on belonging correlated with academic achievement: “in academic and professional settings, members of socially stigmatized groups are more uncertain of the quality of their social bonds and thus more sensitive to issues of social belonging. We call this state belonging uncertainty, and suggest that it contributes to racial disparities in achievement.”⁷⁴

Belonging uncertainty acts as a broader lens that is used to understand and identify concerns about the way people feel in achievement oriented settings that can affect the saliency of processes like stereotype threat. Studies have found that social psychological interventions aimed at increasing a sense of belonging amongst minority students can greatly affect their academic achievement.⁷⁵ Even very small signals of belonging, or mere belonging, can greatly affect levels of social connectedness and motivation.⁷⁶

As previously mentioned, however, much of the focus in relation to belonging is focused on academic achievement. For Asian Americans, who do well in achievement outcomes, the literature ends up largely ignoring them since the effects of a sense of belonging outside of

⁷³ Walton, Gregory M., and Geoffrey L. Cohen. "A question of belonging: race, social fit, and achievement." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 92, no. 1 (2007): 82.

⁷⁴ Walton, 82.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Walton, Gregory M., Geoffrey L. Cohen, David Cwir, and Steven J. Spencer. "Mere belonging: The power of social connections." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 102, no. 3 (2012): 513.

academic achievement are rarely included. One study that specifically looked at the way Asian American college students construed belonging⁷⁷ found that whenever students faced threats to their belonging in either academic or social settings they “engaged in one of three processes: remake themselves, reposition themselves, or remake space.”⁷⁸ Oftentimes their belonging in academic settings was challenged because of the model minority stereotype. As Samura explains, “Asian American students must contend with the racial stereotype of being high academic achievers. Assumptions by faculty, peers, family, and society about students’ Asian American-ness as somehow equated with automatic academic success results in certain expectations with which students must negotiate.” The process of reconstructing their sense of belonging in response to these expectations through the processes previously mentioned demonstrates how belonging for Asian American students can be a dynamic and intensive process.

Moreover, many studies related to belonging that aren’t focused on academic achievement have found that social support, which is a crucial aspect of belonging, has been positively and causally related to mental and physical health.⁷⁹ Social support works with belonging, “which in turn should reduce his or her physiological arousal and emotional distress.”⁸⁰ This is especially important in the context of Asian Americans who have been found to struggle in psychological adjustment and peer contexts. Studies have shown that Asian American students experience peer-related discrimination more so than from adults in

⁷⁷ Samura, Michelle. "Remaking selves, repositioning selves, or remaking space: An examination of Asian American college students' processes of" belonging"." *Journal of College Student Development* 57, no. 2 (2016): 135-150.

⁷⁸ Samura, 140.

⁷⁹ Thoits, Peggy A. "Mechanisms linking social ties and support to physical and mental health." *Journal of health and social behavior* 52, no. 2 (2011): 145-161.

⁸⁰ Thoits, 155.

comparison to other racial groups, which is significantly associated with poor psychological adjustment.⁸¹

One study attributed the pattern of peer discrimination towards Asian Americans as a part of a larger cycle wherein which teachers treat Asian American students well due to their internalization of the model minority myth while treating African American and Latino students poorly (these two racial groups attributed discrimination primarily to authority figures) which then created a contentious peer group environment.⁸² As Rosenbloom explains, “When students’ perceive teachers have high expectations for some students and low expectations for others, they perpetuate a zero-sum game where only some students can succeed. Consequently racial and ethnic groups are pitted against each other. The prevailing logic is, if Asian Americans are hardworking and successful then African American and Latino students are lazy and unsuccessful.”⁸³

Although peer contexts are not necessarily tied to measures of belonging, they can play a role in the way belonging is construed. The struggle the Asian American community faces in relation to peer contexts and the lack of attention paid to the effects of belonging outside of achievement, demonstrate a need for further research in this area.

Imposter Syndrome

As previously mentioned, discrimination has a large effect on children of color’s development and their lives. One way to better understand how the discrimination takes effect is

⁸¹ Leong, Frederick T., Linda Juang, Desiree B. Qin, and Hiram E. Fitzgerald, eds. *Asian American and Pacific Islander Children and Mental Health* [2 volumes]. ABC-CLIO, 2011.

⁸² Rosenbloom, Susan Rakosi, and Niobe Way. "Experiences of discrimination among African American, Asian American, and Latino adolescents in an urban high school." *Youth & Society* 35, no. 4 (2004): 420-451.

⁸³ Rosenbloom, 444.

by examining its role in other psychological processes like imposter syndrome. Originally focused on high-achieving women in academia, imposter syndrome was a process used to describe the inability of women to internalize their success. As Clance describes, “they consider themselves to be ‘impostors.’ Women who experience the impostor phenomenon maintain a strong belief that they are not intelligent; in fact they are convinced that they have fooled anyone who thinks otherwise.”⁸⁴ By describing their success as something that has fooled others, the imposter syndrome creates a cycle that makes any success achieved feel unwanted and unimportant.

Importantly, the imposter syndrome has been found to have effects on people’s mental health, stress, anxiety, and depression. For Asian American students who consistently struggle with their mental health, examining the imposter syndrome may be helpful in understanding this pattern. Moreover, imposter syndrome has been specifically researched in regards to undergraduate students of color. As Cokley explains “given the challenges faced by students of color on college campuses, the impostor phenomenon is an area deserving of more attention than has been conducted so far. This gap is especially critical in light of studies indicating that impostor feelings are prevalent among racial/ethnic minority students.”⁸⁵

These findings have been consistent across racial and ethnic minority students. For Asian American students in particular, imposter syndrome was found to have a moderating effect on psychological distress and wellbeing across multiple studies.⁸⁶ This is especially important when

⁸⁴ Clance, Pauline Rose, and Suzanne Ament Imes, "The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention," *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice* 15, no. 3 (1978): 241.

⁸⁵ Cokley, Kevin et al, "Impostor feelings as a moderator and mediator of the relationship between perceived discrimination and mental health among racial/ethnic minority college students," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 64, no. 2 (2017): 142.

⁸⁶ Cokley, Kevin et al, "An examination of the impact of minority status stress and impostor feelings on the mental health of diverse ethnic minority college students," *Journal of multicultural counseling and development* 41, no. 2 (2013): 82-95.

noting that Asian Americans consistently score higher on imposter syndrome than other minority students. Early studies on imposter syndrome explained its causes to be rooted in home life. However, more recently on studies focused on undergraduate minority students in particular, models link the cause of imposter syndrome to experiences of discrimination. However, for Asian American students perceived discrimination was not a significant predictor of imposter feelings.⁸⁷ There is still a lack of understanding as to why Asian Americans feel this way, however, by looking at its relation to the internalization of the model minority myth, that may become more clear.

Part 4: Research Study

Survey

For my survey, I have included a wide range of questions in order to support my analysis. I will explain the general survey design, how I chose specific scales for the psychological processes I am measuring, demographic question choices, and the circumstances surrounding the survey responses. I have included a complete version of the survey in the appendix on page 76.

Design

I designed my survey with the help of Dr. Yeager, my thesis supervisor, who wrote some of the language that was used in the survey, helped to organize the ordering of the questions, and aided with the qualtrics design for the ease of coding. Dr. Yeager also played a crucial role in the distribution of the survey, which I will get into later.

⁸⁷ Ibid

The survey begins with a note about the survey's purpose and how the answers for the survey will be used. The note mentions goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion but does not specifically mention any specifics of the types of questions the survey will be analyzing. The survey then asks respondents for their name and EID in order to ensure they get credit for completing the survey, but this section clearly mentions that their identifying information will be separated from the analysis.

The next part of the survey asks questions about their psychological processes in blocks separated in the following order: belonging (5 questions), stress (7 questions), and imposter syndrome (8 questions). All of the questions asked students to choose how they felt according to a scale, so that the coding would be able to account for people's responses relative to each other. Following this section the survey asks basic demographic questions about gender identity, race, ethnicity, and immigration status. The ethnicity and immigration sections were only asked if respondents selected certain questions that flowed into them, which I will explain in more detail later.

Finally, the last part of the survey asked questions about the internalization of the model minority myth (15 questions). These questions are composed of two subsets: achievement orientation and unrestricted mobility. These two subsets delineate the implications of the model minority myth along these two sections, which is helpful during analysis. These questions only went to students who marked Asian as a part of their ethnicity and who specifically marked that they would be willing to answer these questions. After the completion of the survey, the students had the opportunity to add anything they'd like to share in a free response section and were thanked for their participation.

Psychological Processes

For the sections on belonging and stress, I based these questions off of the UT Stress Mindset survey that was made by my supervisor Dr. Yeager. I pulled questions from this survey, so that there could be consistency in the way psychological processes are measured across UT and to ensure that future data analysis could track how responses changed over time. There were many specific choices made for each of the questions within the psychological processes.

Four of the questions on belonging were focused on the feeling of belonging at UT specifically. The one question that wasn't focused on belonging asked about hope for the future. This question is helpful for analysis as responses can demonstrate how people's feeling in the moment is connected to or differs from how they feel about the future more generally. Moreover, belonging is a powerful social process connected to many different mental health wellbeing outcomes, which this question can be somewhat of a stand-in for understanding how belonging can play a role in that way.

There were three different subtypes of stress questions: 1. Stress regarding class-related activities, 2. global distress, and 3. stress mindset. The questions regarding class-related activities asked how students felt during exams and quizzes and sought to understand how strongly that stress affects them in class. This subset of questions helps to separate feelings regarding the class and the extent to which that affects them in the moment from general feelings of stress outside of class that the global distress subset focuses on. The global distress subset includes two questions that aim to examine the overall feeling of stress the student is experiencing in their lives and whether they feel capable of meeting the demands of the stress around them. The stress mindset questions are formulated using the basic premises of stress mindset literature regarding how students perceive the value of stress and if they see it as a mindset that can benefit them.

The imposter questions were pulled off of Leary's scale for imposter syndrome.⁸⁸ There are many different attributes associated with imposter syndrome, but Leary's scale specifically focuses on the feeling of being a fraud.⁸⁹ I chose to use Leary's scale because in a study examining the different scales used to study imposter syndrome Leary's was rated strongly for construct validity.⁹⁰ I also used Leary's scale because I could use the entirety of the seven-item scale in my study, which would ensure that my data collection wasn't missing any particularly important questions that would affect my analysis.

I pulled the questions to measure the internalization of the model minority myth from Yoo's scale. That being said, I didn't include the first part of all of the questions that Yoo included, "In comparison to other racial minorities." The scale focuses on two essential parts of the model minority myth: 1. That they are successful comparatively to other races and 2. That the success of Asian Americans can be attributed to individual efforts.⁹¹ These two themes are separated by subsets of questions within the scale titled unrestricted mobility (10 questions) and achievement orientation (5 questions). The questions I used were the ones that were specifically listed in Yoo's article, and they were validated in a follow-up study.⁹²

⁸⁸ Leary, Mark R., Katharine M. Patton, Amy E. Orlando, and Wendy Wagoner Funk. "The impostor phenomenon: Self-perceptions, reflected appraisals, and interpersonal strategies." *Journal of personality* 68, no. 4 (2000): 725-756.

⁸⁹ Leary's article separates the attributes generally applied to imposter syndrome from the core feeling of being a fraud in order to understand the best way to evaluate the phenomena. Specifically, Leary distinguishes the worry imposters have about the way other people perceive them from the core imposter feeling, because his study found that those things are not necessarily predictive of each other.

⁹⁰ Mak, Karina KL, Sabina Kleitman, and Maree J. Abbott. "Impostor phenomenon measurement scales: a systematic review." *Frontiers in Psychology* 10 (2019): 671.

⁹¹ Yoo, 116.

⁹² Yoo, Hyung Chol, Matthew J. Miller, and Pansy Yip. "Validation of the internalization of the Model Minority Myth Measure (IM-4) and its link to academic performance and psychological adjustment among Asian American adolescents." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 21, no. 2 (2015): 237.

Demographics

The demographic questions ask about gender identity, race, ethnicity and immigration. The gender identity question gives participants a wide range of choices, which are not all completely accounted for in the analysis. However, I chose to include them so that students who didn't conform to the male-female gender binary do not feel excluded from the survey.

The questions about race and ethnicity gave participants the ability to select multiple choices. When analyzing the data we used a ranking system that counted all the respondents as a single race; however, more research into multiracial groups can be accounted for in the future.

The ethnicity question only went to students who marked Asian, since I am focusing on this particular racial group for my thesis. I have included a question about ethnicity in order to account for the diverse range of experiences within the Asian American community and to analyze how migratory experiences may play a role. As previously mentioned, migratory patterns, which are tied to specific ethnic groups due to pre-immigration histories, have an effect on development and achievement outcomes. In the case of the internalization of the model minority myth, I wanted to see if the model minority myth's high academic achievement stereotype has more harmful effects on students from ethnic groups that did not come to the United States through voluntary migration.

Although the survey didn't ask for immigration status or details regarding their migratory path, I did ask about student's immigration generation levels. I asked this because many mental health outcomes differ across generational status in the Asian American community,⁹³ and I wanted to see if that holds true for this analysis.

⁹³ Spencer, Michael S., Juan Chen, Gilbert C. Gee, Cathryn G. Fabian, and David T. Takeuchi. "Discrimination and mental health-related service use in a national study of Asian Americans." *American Journal of Public Health* 100, no. 12 (2010): 2410-2417.

Survey Circumstances

This survey was administered to students in CNS 301 on March 23rd. Students had a week to take the survey as a part of extra credit for their class. The CNS 301 class is split across three different sections with differing professors, but the content and examination requirements are the same across the classes. It is important to note that the survey went out right after Spring Break, which is an especially stressful time for students on campus due to upcoming deadlines and the transition out of vacation back to school. Another important event that affected the context of the survey was the Atlanta Shootings on March 16th⁹⁴, which was attributed as an anti-Asian hate crime by much of the general public.⁹⁵ After these shootings there was a lot of public outlash and engagement regarding Asian American hate crimes, racism against Asian Americans during the pandemic, and more. All of this likely affected the way that respondents filled out the internalization of the model minority myth portion of the survey.

Part 5: Results

For this section, I will be explaining my results by looking at each of the psychological processes individually in the preliminary analysis, and then seeing how they are correlated with each other, in the main analysis. This way I can conduct further analysis for any results that are particularly salient for Asian Americans. I will primarily look at the differences between Asian and White students when looking at individual differences and how the psychological processes are correlated with each other. Finally, I will see how gender plays a role when race is salient.

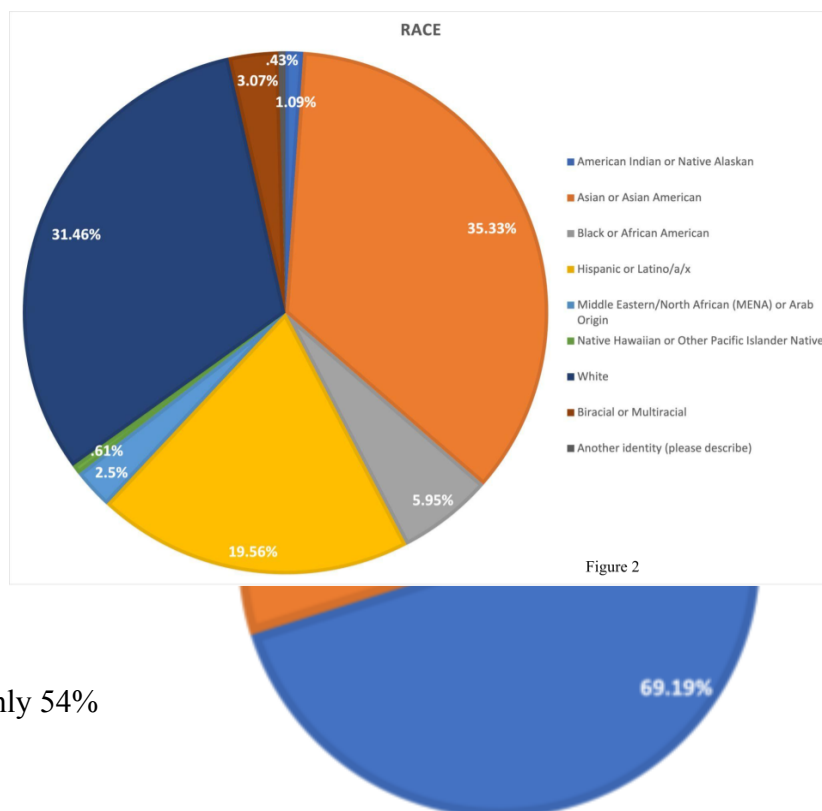
⁹⁴ New York Times, “8 Dead in Atlanta Spa Shootings, With Fears of Anti-Asian Bias,” *New York Times*, March 26, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/03/17/us/shooting-atlanta-acworth>.

⁹⁵ The sheriff at the time stated that there is not reason to suspect that the crime was related to race, but many countered that by saying that the lack of attention paid to Asian hate crimes more generally and the nature of the crime was clearly targeted.

Response Demographics

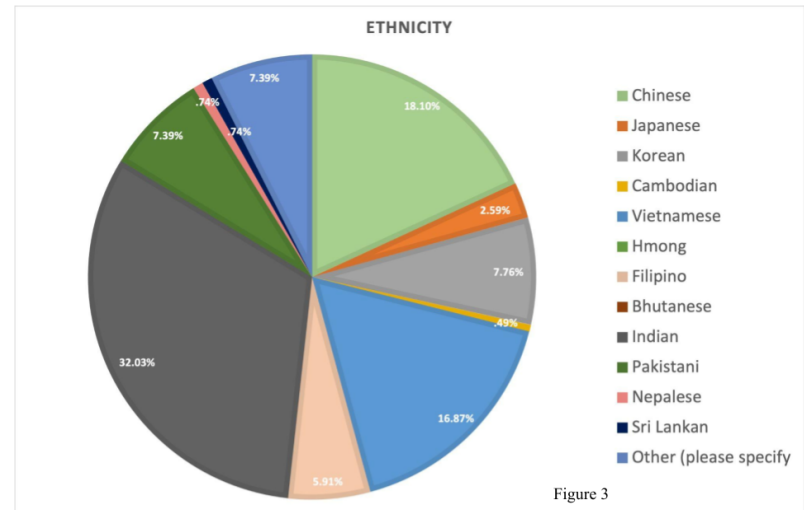
I will begin by including the demographic data of the survey respondents that I will be using for my analysis. Firstly, 1271 of the respondents were women, 538, were men, and 28 picked one of the other options. The gender breakdown of the class does not match UT's general population. 69% of the respondents were Female but they are only 54% of UT's population.⁹⁶

As for race, 748 respondents selected Asian, 666 selected White, 414 selected Hispanic or Latino, 126 selected Black or African American, and 153 selected another one of the options. Students had the ability to check more than one box so some of these races are double counted as there were 2117 responses to this question but only 1837 who took the survey. Anyone who checked more than one box was marked other or included in one of the racial groups they marked. The racial breakdown of the class does not match the racial breakdown of UT perfectly. Specifically, Asian Americans make up 31% of the class but 20% of UT's population, Hispanic Students make up 20% of the class but 23.4% of UT's population, and White students make up 35% of the class but make up 39% of UT's population.



⁹⁶ It is important to note that these graphs are showcasing the survey respondents. The actual class breakdown may reflect UT's general demographics more so than the participants who filled out the survey.

As for ethnicity, this question only went to respondents who selected Asian as one of their categories for race. 260 respondents selected Indian, 147 respondents selected Chinese, 137 respondents selected Vietnamese, 63 respondents selected Korean, 60 respondents selected Pakistani, 60 respondents marked other, and 48 selected Filipino.



Preliminary Analysis

There was not a mean difference between Asian and White in belonging, global distress, and imposter feelings. This means that Asian and White students are not experiencing any of these psychological processes at significantly different levels from each other. This means that Asian American students are not feeling more or less belonging, global distress, or imposter feelings in comparison to White students.

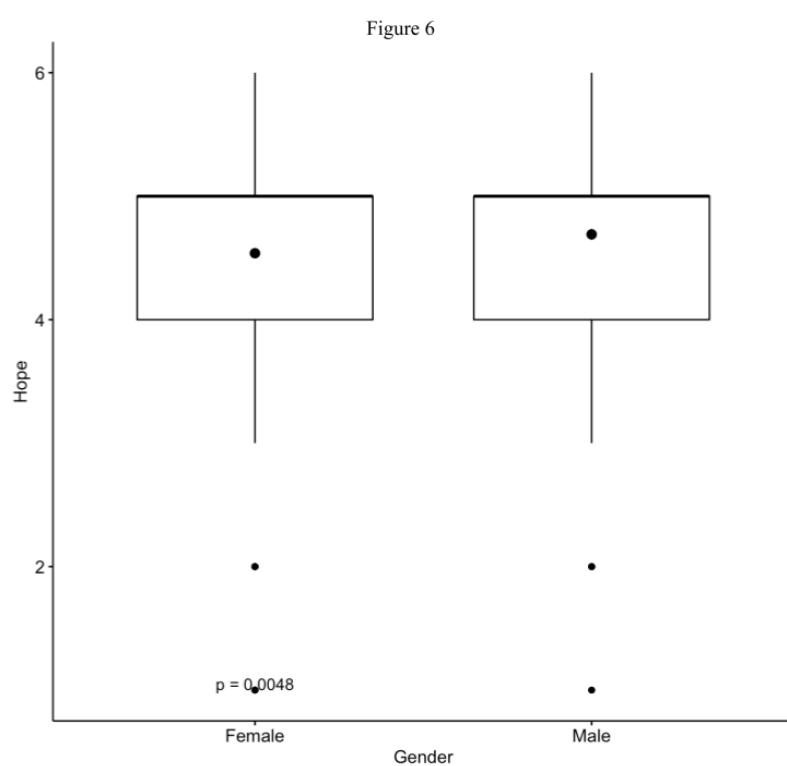
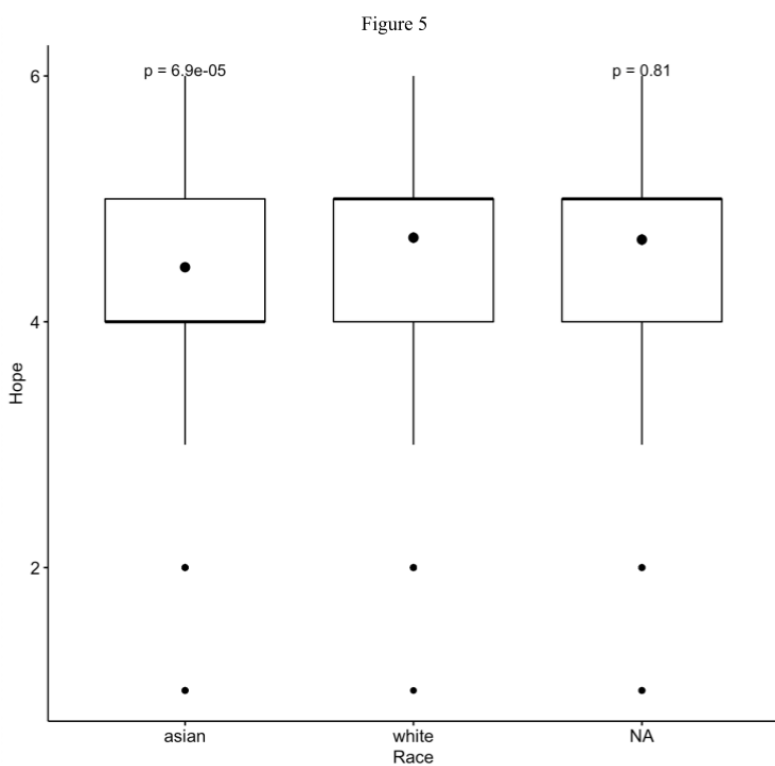
	Belonging	Global Distress	Imposter Feelings
b (estimate)	0.06720	0.05613	-0.04401
p value	0.201	0.195	0.45

Table 1: Difference between Asian and White students in Individual Psychological Processes

As for hope, there was a significant difference between Asian and White students in regards to hope: $b = 0.24104$, $p < .0001$, Figure 5. There is also a significant difference between male and female students in regards to hope: $b = 0.15272$, $p < .01$, Figure 6. However, there is not

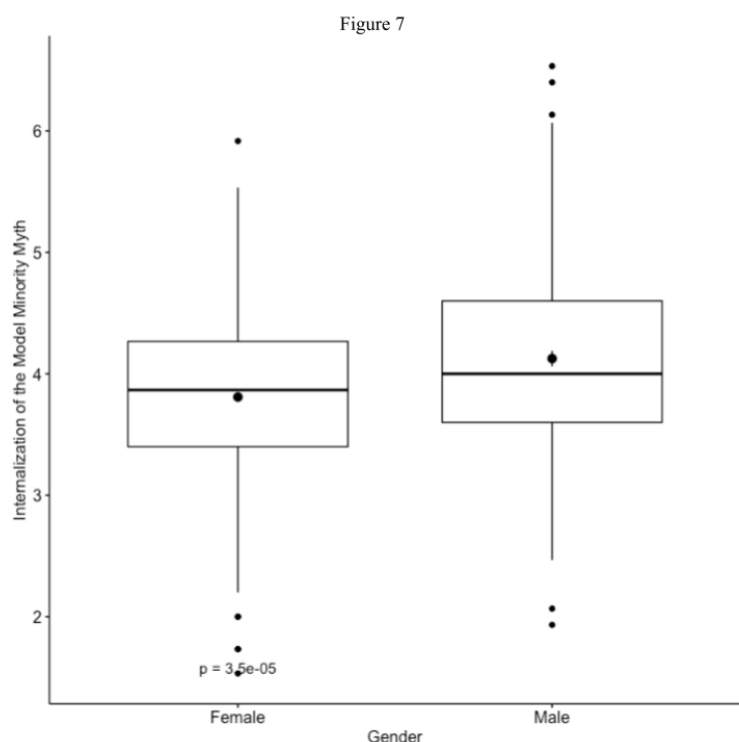
a significant three-way interaction between hope, race, and gender, which means that the difference between Asian female students and White female students is not significantly different than that between Asian male students and White male students.

Overall, this means that Asian students were significantly less hopeful for the future in comparison to White students. This finding is particularly interesting because there is no mean level difference for any other measure. This means that despite not feeling very differently on any of the other measures, something is making Asian Americans feel less hopeful for the future. One way to better understand why hope is particularly different is by looking into the process in correlation with each other in the main analysis.



Internalization of the Model Minority Myth

There is a significant difference in the internalization of the model minority myth between male and female students: $b=0.31667$, $p<.0001$, Figure 9. There is a significant difference between male and female students across both subsets as well: achievement orientation, $b=0.26826$, $p<.00403$; unrestricted mobility, $b=0.37459$, $p<.0001$. As a whole and across all subsets, men internalize the model minority myth more than women.



For ethnic groups, there was a significant difference between Korean students and the rest of the Asian student population in the internalization of the model minority myth generally: $b=-1.85556$, $p<.001$, and the achievement orientation subset: $b= 0.78262$, $p<.0001$. There was no other instance of a single ethnic group being significantly different from the rest of the Asian population for internalization of the model minority myth.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ There were some biethnic groups that significantly internalized the model minority myth; however, they were not a significant enough sample size to compare.

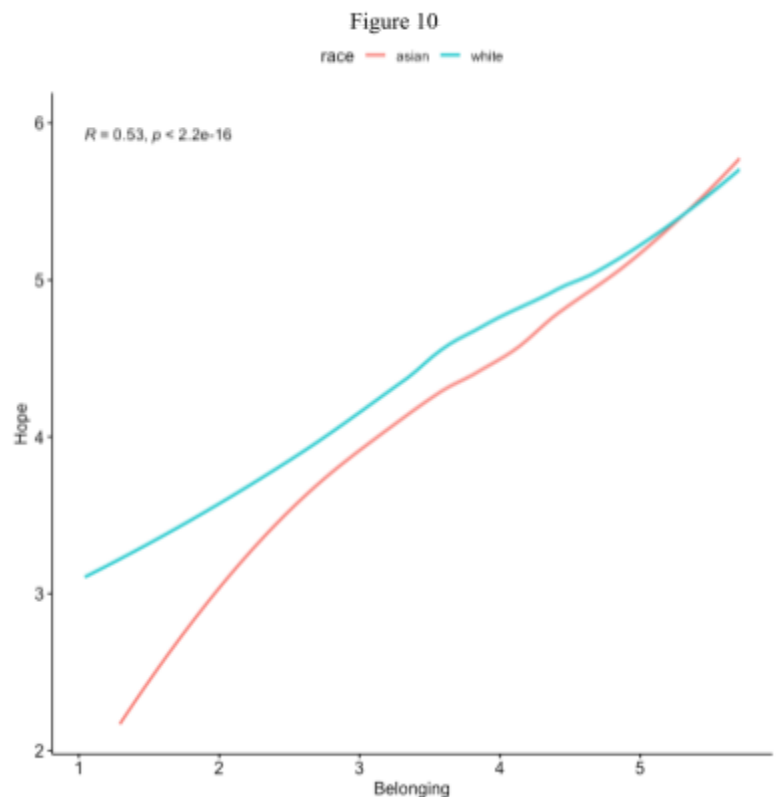
Main Analysis

Although there is not a significant difference between White and Asian students in any of the psychological processes besides hope, when you look at them individually, that doesn't hold when looking at the processes in relation to one another.

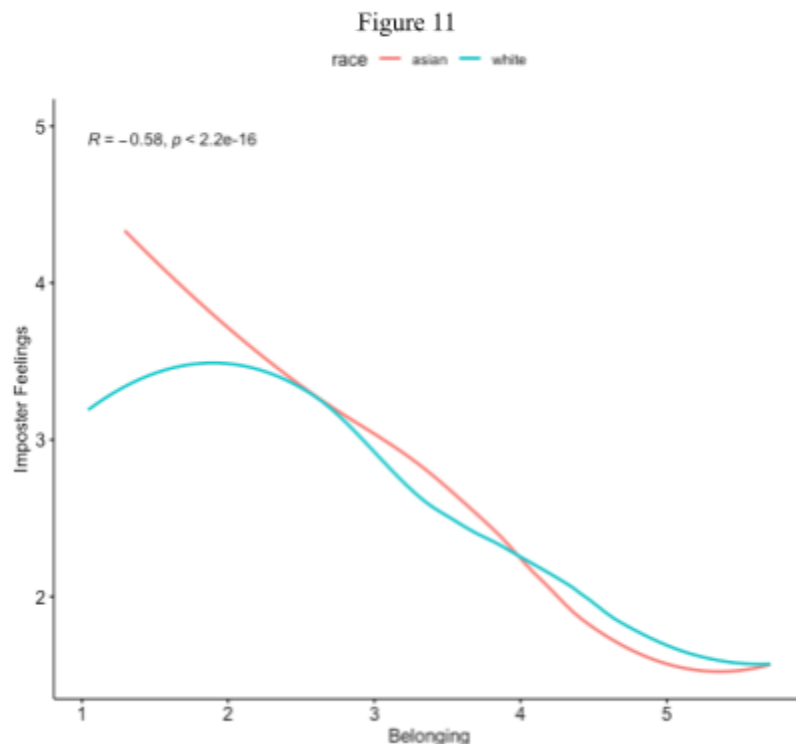
Belonging as a Predictor

Belonging consistently plays a more significant role for Asian American students in correlation with other psychological processes in comparison to White students despite there not being a significant difference in the base level of belonging between the two groups.

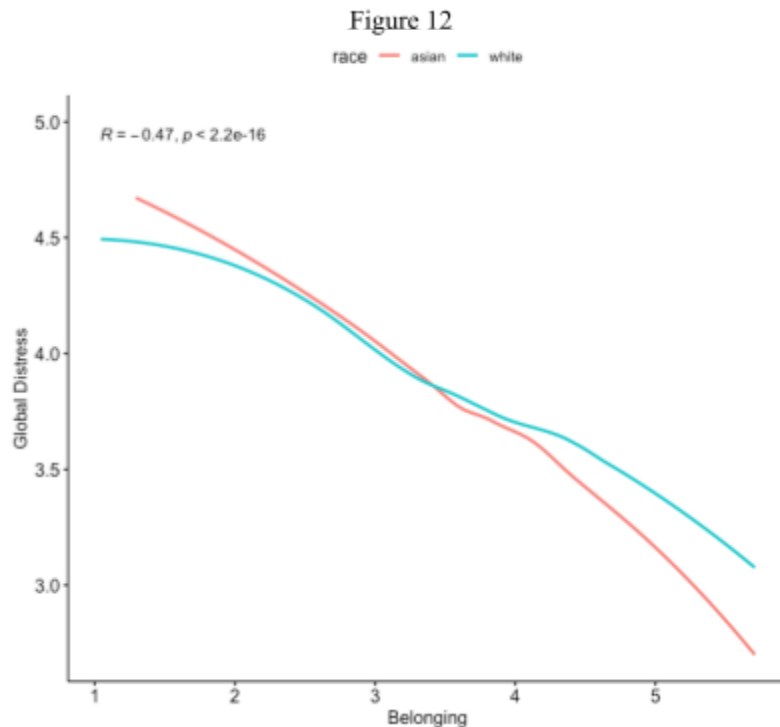
Belonging is a significant predictor for hope for both White and Asian students: for White students $b=0.55271$, $p<.0001$, for Asian students: $b=0.66840$, $p<.0001$, Figure 10. There is a statistically significant difference in the way belonging is a predictor for hope for Asian and White students. The relationship is more strongly correlated for Asian students than White students: $b=-0.11569$, $p<0.05$.



Belonging is a significant predictor for imposter feelings for both White and Asian students: for White students $b = -0.58464$, $p < .0001$, for Asian students: $b = -0.68867$, $p < .0001$, Figure 11. There is a statistically significant difference in the way belonging is a predictor for imposter feelings for Asian and White students. The relationship is more strongly correlated for Asian students than White students: $b = 0.10403$, $p < 0.05144$.



Belonging is a significant predictor for distress for both White and Asian students: for White students $b = -0.33301$, $p < .0001$, for Asian students: $b = -0.44658$, $p < .0001$, Figure 12. There is a statistically significant difference in the way belonging is a predictor for distress for Asian and White students. The relationship is more strongly correlated for Asian students than White students: $b = 0.11357$, $p < 0.006$.



These findings showcase that at low levels of belonging, Asian students are more affected than White students. It seems that belonging is a particularly important process for Asian American students that has significant relationships with their other processes.

Belonging is a significant predictor for the internalization of the model minority myth for Asian students: $b=0.06620$, $p<0.1$. Belonging is a significant predictor for the unrestricted mobility subset of the internalization of the model minority myth as well: $b=0.14078$, $p<.004$,

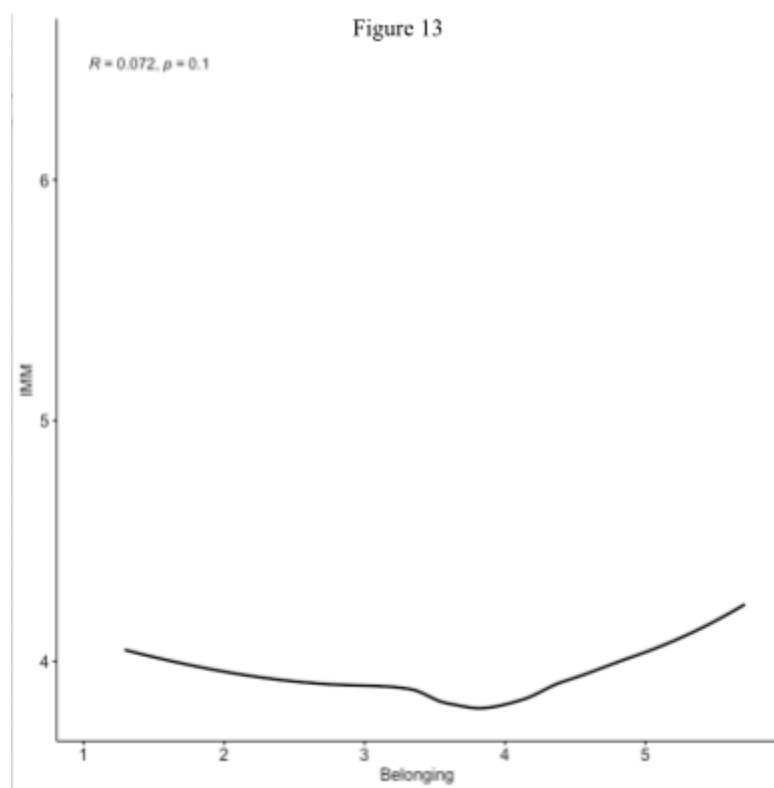


Figure 13. It seems that at lower levels of belonging the internalization of the model minority myth does not play a role; however, higher levels of belonging are correlated with higher internalization of the stereotype. This means that for Asian Americans the internalization of the model minority myth acts as a buffer for the belonging process⁹⁸, which is particularly important considering the saliency of belonging as a process as a whole.

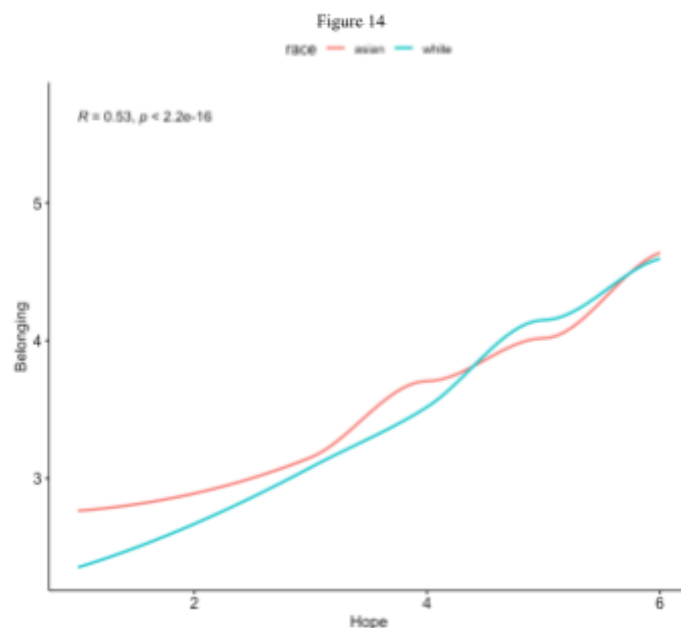
There is not a significant difference between male and female students in the way belonging is a predictor for the internalization of the model minority myth. This means that although men and women internalize the process differently at a base level, that difference doesn't hold when looking at the internalization of the myth in correlation with another psychological process.

⁹⁸ By buffer I mean preventive barrier against negative feelings.

Hope as a Predictor

Hope is a significant predictor of distress, imposter feelings, and belonging. There is not a significant difference between Asian and White students in the way hope predicts distress and imposter feelings.

However, there is a significant difference between Asian and White students in the way hope is a predictor for belonging. The relationship is more strongly correlated for White students than Asian students: $b=0.09908$, $p<0.025$; for White students $b=0.51778$, $p<.0001$; for Asian students: $b=0.41870$, $p<.0001$, Figure 14. This means that at low levels of hope, White students are more likely to feel less belonging than Asian students. Hope is a more salient process for White students in relation to belonging than



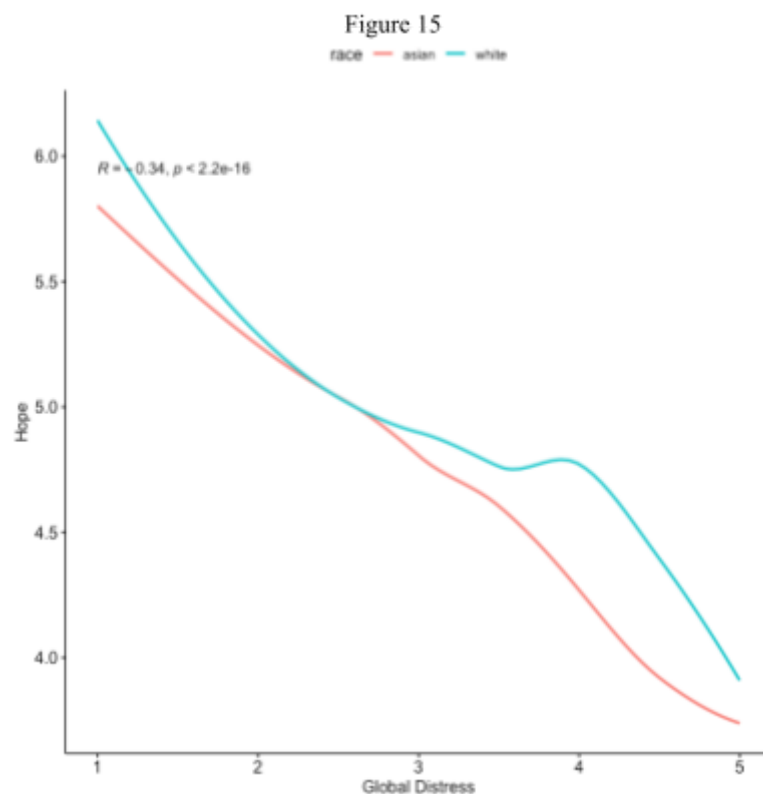
Asian students. This finding is particularly interesting because the opposite is true when belonging is predictive of hope. The difference may be the case for two reasons. First, this may be due to the fact that hope doesn't have the same effect on belonging that belonging has on hope for Asian students. Second, there may be a ceiling issue with the data. It is possible that if Asian students could have scored higher on feelings of hope the belonging effect would've evened out. Essentially, if the data could account for more information there may not have been as much of a difference.

There is not a significant relationship between hope and the internalization of the model minority myth generally and in any of the subsets. This is interesting because it means that

despite the internalization of the model minority myth acting as a buffer in some cases, it does not for hope.

Global Distress as a Predictor

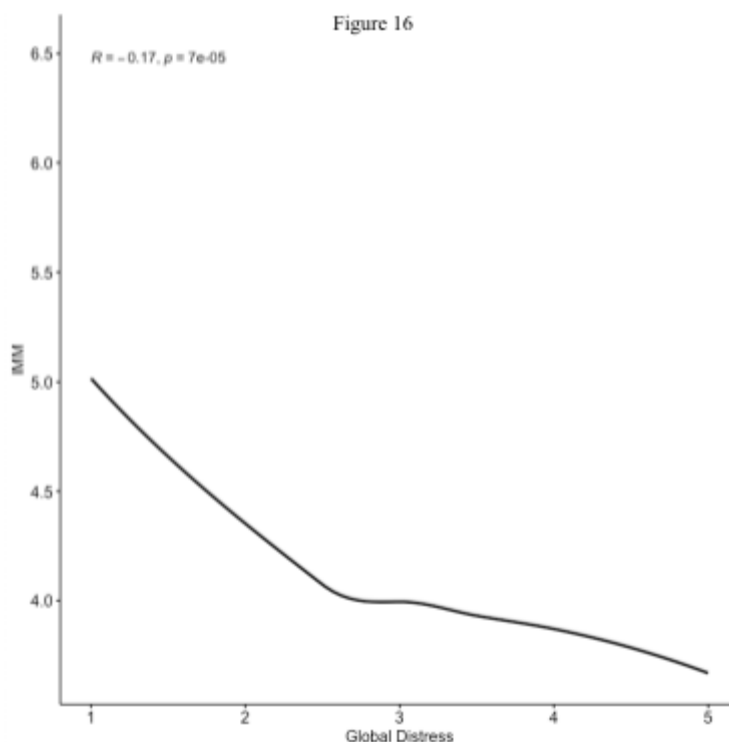
Global Distress is a significant predictor of belonging, hope, and imposter feelings. However, there are no significant differences between Asian and White students in the way distress predicts imposter feelings or belonging. There is a significant difference between Asian and White students in the way global distress predicts hope. The relationship is more strongly correlated for Asian students than White students: $b=0.16761$, $p<0.03$; for White students $b= -0.38558$, $p<.0001$;



for Asian students: $b= -0.55319$, $p<.0001$, Figure 15. The way that Asian Americans feel stress in the moment says more about their hope for the future than it does for White students. It is important to note that the reverse is not true. Hope is not predictive of feelings of global distress in a way that is particularly different for Asian American students. This means that the way Asian students evaluate the stress they feel affects their sense making of their future and hope, but not the reverse.

Global distress is a significant predictor for the internalization of the model minority myth for Asian students: $b= -0.18567$, $p<0.0001$, Figure 16. Global distress is a significant predictor for both the subsets of the internalization of the model minority myth as well: unrestricted mobility $b= -0.3043$, $p<.0001$; achievement orientation $b= -0.10471$, $p<.075$. Similar

to belonging, high internalization of the model minority myth allows for more of a buffer for feelings of stress. Unlike belonging, however, the effects of internalizing the myth are more consistent because high levels of stress are predictive of low levels of internalization of the myth. This means that global distress is a process that is predictive of the internalization of the model minority myth as a whole.



There is not a significant difference between male and female students in the way belonging is a predictor for the internalization of the model minority myth, which means the gender difference doesn't hold when the stereotype is being predicted by another psychological process.

Imposter Feelings as a Predictor

Imposter feelings are a significant predictor of distress, hope, and belonging. However, there are no significant differences between Asian and White students in the way imposter feelings predict any of these psychological processes. This means that the levels of imposter feelings and the way these feelings are experienced in relation to other processes is not significantly different for Asian and White students.

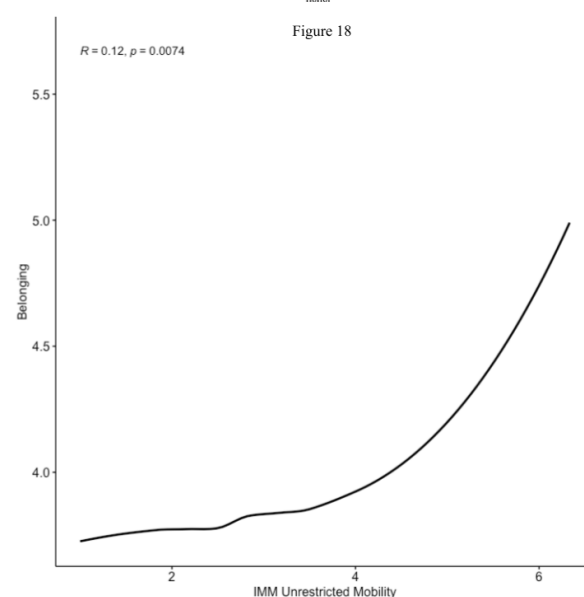
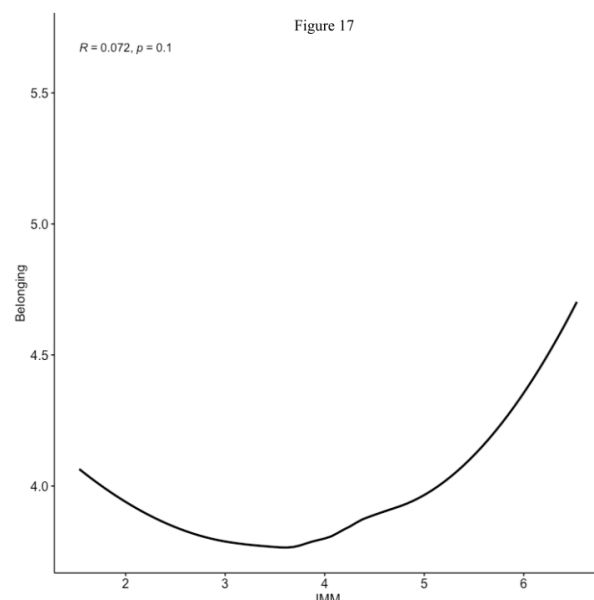
Internalization of the Model Minority Myth as a Predictor

Internalization of the model minority myth is a significant predictor of belonging and distress. There is a difference in the correlation between the unrestricted mobility subset and belonging and the internalization of the model minority myth process as a whole: general $b = 0.08109$, $p < .1$, Figure 17; unrestricted mobility $b = 0.11313$, $p < .004$, Figure 18. This is because internalization of the model minority myth as a whole does not have a linear correlation with belonging. At low levels of internalization of the model minority myth, the effect is not particularly significant. The internalization of the myth really begins to play a role and act at high levels. This means that a high level of internalization of the stereotype can act as a buffer for feelings of belonging.

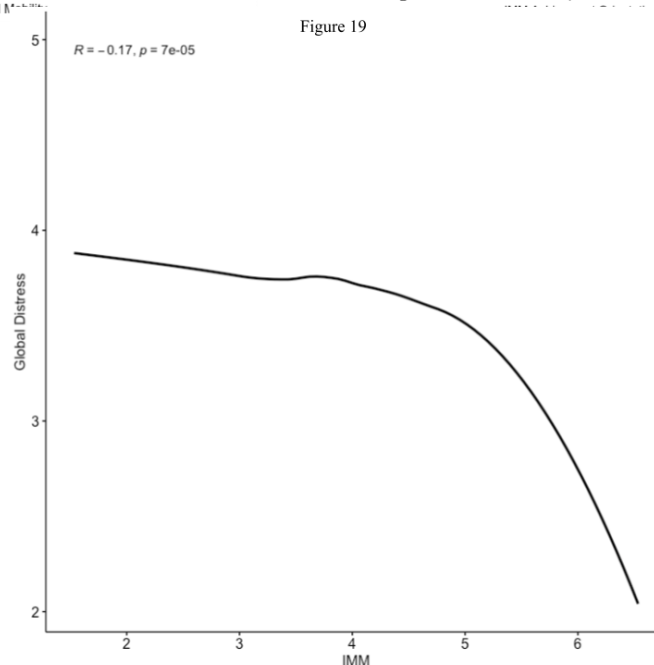
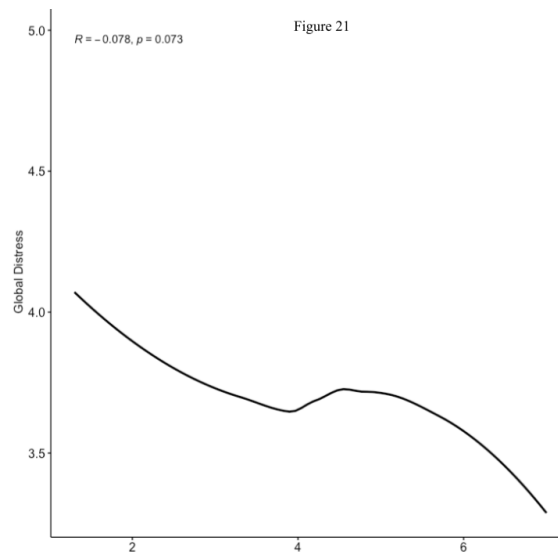
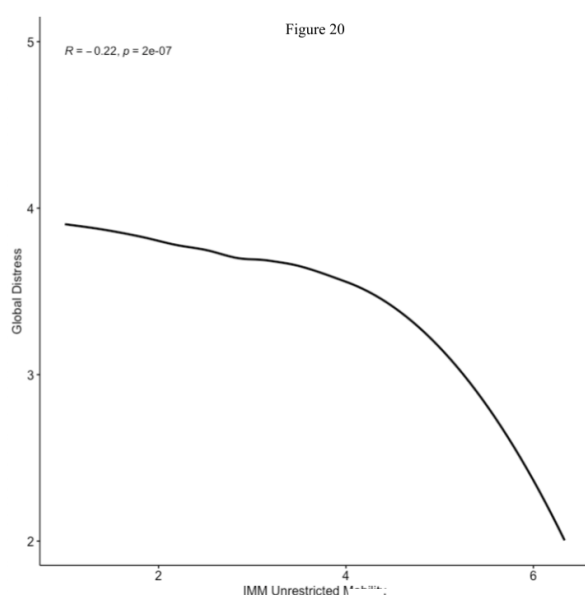
The internalization of the model minority myth unrestricted mobility subset does have a linear correlation with belonging. That being said, the effect is still very similar, where the stereotype's subset really begins to take hold at higher levels.

There is not a significant difference between male and female students in the way the internalization of the model minority myth or any of the subsets is a predictor for belonging, which means the gender difference doesn't hold.

The internalization of the model minority myth is a significant predictor for distress as a general process and across both the subsets: unrestricted mobility $b = -0.17823$, $p < .0001$, Figure 19, achievement orientation $b = -0.05795$, $p < .08$, Figure

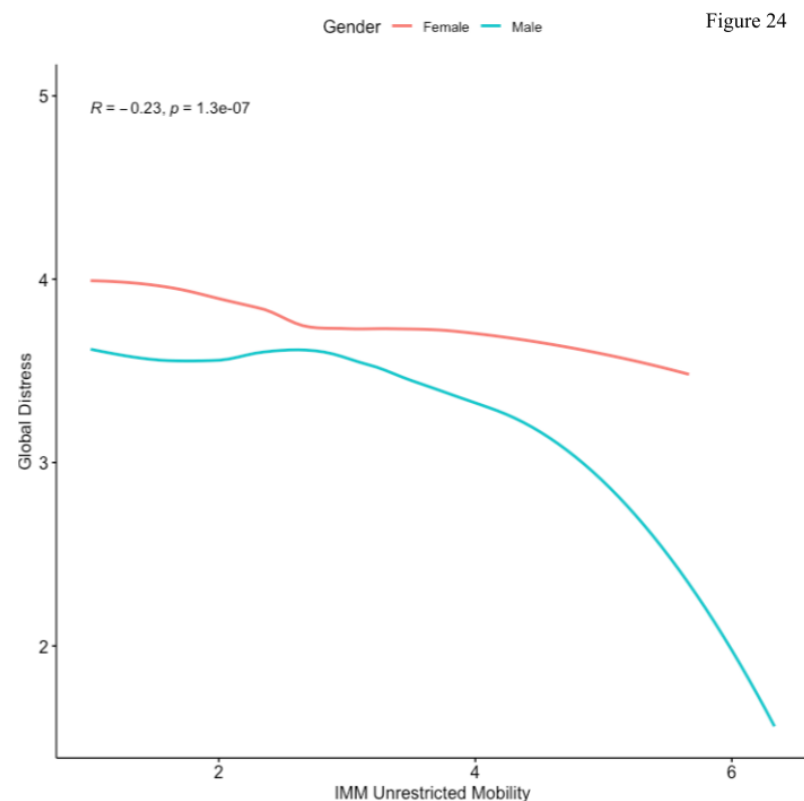
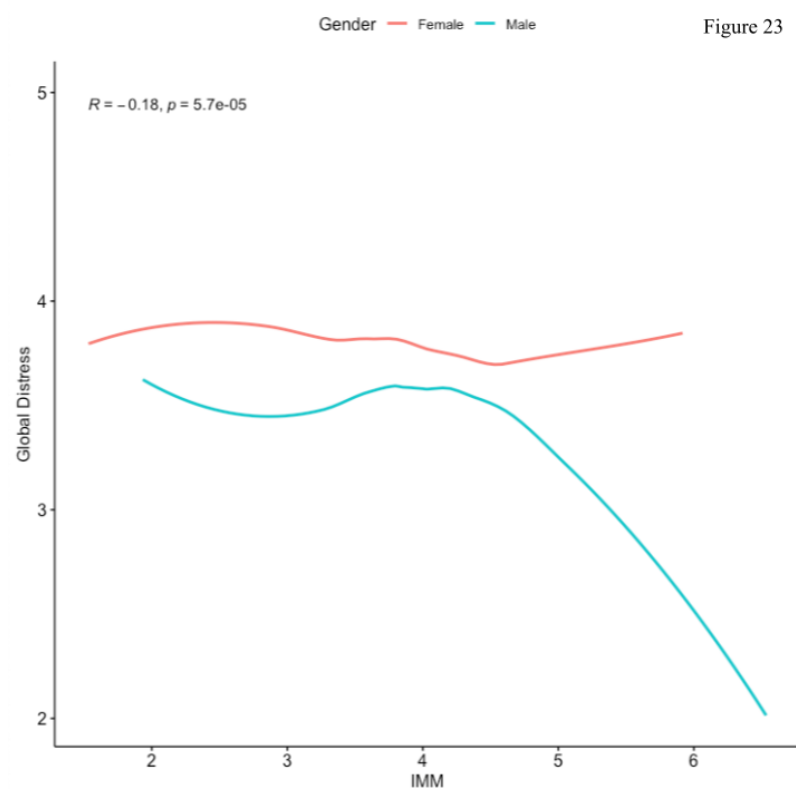


20; general $b = -0.16577$, $p < .0001$, Figure 21. For the unrestricted mobility subset and the process more generally, it is clear that after a certain point, the internalization of the stereotype can act as an important buffer for stress. Because stress levels are largely the same at low to medium levels of internalization, the stereotype really begins to take hold at high levels. On the other hand, the achievement orientation subset demonstrates a somewhat more linear relationship. The stereotype along this subset does act as a buffer against higher levels of internalization like the other two, but at low levels of internalization there seems to be a higher level of stress as well. This means that there may be something specific about the rejection of the achievement orientation subset of the model minority myth stereotype that may cause more stress.



There is a significant difference in the relationship between the internalization of the model minority myth and distress between male and female students generally and for the unrestricted mobility subset: general $b = -0.17506$, $p < 0.04$, Figure 22; unrestricted mobility $b = -0.11692$, $p < 0.08$, Figure 23.

The general internalization of the model minority myth process is a predictor of stress for men but not women: men $b = -0.23738$, $p < .003$, women $b = -0.06233$, $p < .2$. The unrestricted mobility subset of the internalization of the model minority myth process is a predictor of stress for men and women, but significantly more so for men: men $b = -0.21682$, $p < .0004$, women $b = -0.09990$, $p < .009$. This means that high internalization of the model minority myth only acts as a buffer for stress for men, so internalization of the stereotype means different things when it comes to stress for Asian men and women. This difference makes sense considering that Asian men as a whole internalize the stereotype more than women. It is important to note, however, that there is not a gender difference along the achievement orientation, which seems to have a completely different relationship with stress for men and women.



As for ethnic differences in the internalization of the model minority myth's correlation to other psychological processes, more data analysis needs to be done in the future to account for that as I was not able to do so in my analysis for this thesis.

Part 6: Discussion

The preliminary analysis demonstrated that in individual psychological processes Asian students do not score significantly differently when compared to White students except in regards to hope. The mean difference in hope for the future can be explained by the way Asian American students score significantly lower in psychological adjustment outcomes than White students. Most of the questions asked in the study were not aimed at understanding psychological well-being other than the question about hope, and the significant difference found in that analysis is representative of a larger phenomenon regarding psychological adjustment.

It is also important to note that the question on hope was a part of the larger belonging subset in the questionnaire, but was separated for the coding analysis. The purpose of this question was to get at the power behind belonging, which is a particularly meaningful process that can buffer a lot of psychological adjustment issues. The fact that Asian American students did not score significantly differently in comparison to White students in regards to belonging as a whole, but they did in regards to hope means that something is making Asian Americans struggle with feeling secure in hope for the future. That being said, the mean difference in hope between Asian and White students may be explained or better understood by the way belonging was consistently a predictor for other psychological processes in a way that was significantly different from White students for Asian American students in the class. In other words, the mean

difference in hope may be explained by the role belonging plays for Asian American students because hope and belonging are processes that are connected.

Belonging was consistently more predictive across all the psychological processes for Asian students than White students. It is clear from this that belonging is a particularly powerful process for Asian American students that deeply affects other parts of their lives in a way that is different from White students. This finding is particularly interesting considering that Asian American students make up the plurality of the class, which means that the higher numerical representation within the classroom doesn't outweigh issues with belonging Asian Americans face outside of it.

The importance of belonging for Asian American students may be explained by the difficulty in regards to peer adjustment issues Asian students consistently face. The literature has consistently demonstrated that the triangulation of the Asian American experience, being pitted against Black or African Americans and being othered by White Americans, leaves Asian Americans without any place to belong on either side of the racial dichotomy in the United States. This issue has manifested itself in literal forms through peer harassment, and in other ways, one of which could be the role belonging has played in this classroom context. Moreover, the lack of a clear Asian identity could make belonging a process that is clouded in more confusion and alienation that makes low levels of belonging particularly harmful for Asian American students. I will be getting more into the relationship between belonging and the internalization of the model minority myth later on.

The powerful role belonging plays for Asian Americans is particularly important when considering that most of the literature on belonging in the classroom ignores Asian American students because it focuses on achievement outcomes. These findings demonstrate that belonging

is important to Asian American students and it is a process worth studying in relation to them, regardless of how they are achieving in the classroom. Moreover, considering the particularly high suicide rates of Asian Americans studying belonging in relation to Asian American students could be essential. It is also important to note in the case of belonging that this study was done in a STEM classroom where Asian Americans are consistently well represented. It would be interesting to learn what role belonging plays for Asian Americans in fields where they are less represented.

One of the most interesting things about belonging as a predictor is that there were almost no other processes that were predictive of belonging in a way that was significantly different for Asian and White students. Meaning that even though belonging plays an important role in predicting imposter feelings and global distress, neither of those processes are predictive of belonging in a way that is significantly different for Asian and White students. This means that the difference in feelings of belonging is particularly poignant and this process deserves special attention.

Furthermore, the fact that hope was predictive of belonging in a way that was more important for White students necessitates discussion. As previously noted, this may be because the data has a ceiling issue and there is not enough information to showcase that eventually the effect would be equal. However, if that isn't the case, the reason could be that feelings about the future and feelings about the present mean different things to Asian American students. Because the belonging questions are focused on the present, how students are feeling at UT in the moment, the impact of the present may be particularly important in making sense of feelings about the future. However, feelings about the future do not act as a tool to make sense of feelings about belonging in the moment for Asian students. Essentially, the way Asian American students

are making sense of their current circumstances has more impact on how they are doing than how they imagine their future to be. This explanation regarding the difference between hope and belonging as a predictor if true would be consistent with the findings on stress.

The analysis focused on questions that were part of the global distress subset and it demonstrated that stress is a predictor of hope in a way that is more significant and consistent for Asian American students than White students. In other words, the more stressed Asian students were the more likely they were to report lower feelings of hope. Interestingly, like belonging, stress is a predictor for hope, but hope is not a predictor for stress. This could be understood as another manifestation of the fact that present feelings, stress about how they will perform in the class, affects how Asian students view their future more so than White students. In order to understand why this is, additional analysis into stress mindset and the way Asian students are able to conceptualize stress may explain why it affects their feelings about their future significantly.

That being said, other things could also explain why stress in the moment could be particularly impactful for Asian students. For one, stress about performance may be related to other life stresses, like living up to the model minority myth, which can affect the way students feel about the future more deeply. It could be the case that failure to perform well on the current assignment or exam leads to worries about their future overall because the model minority myth associates high performance with being Asian, so a failure on an exam may be associated with a failure of their identity. This pattern could be explained by the relationship between stress and the model minority myth, wherein low levels of stress are predictive of higher internalization of the model minority myth. This relationship may seem counterintuitive because it seems like internalization of the stereotype makes people feel less stressed; however, the relationship could

be demonstrating something different if you focus on the students who are facing higher levels of stress. Students who are stressed in the class may be unable to internalize the model minority myth, because their feelings in the class directly counter the assumptions made about Asian Americans being successful and high performing. The rejection of the myth in this case could be because their outcomes are not reflective of their identity, which necessitates them rejecting the stereotype. This pattern may also be demonstrated by the relationship between the internalization of the model minority myth achievement orientation subset as a predictor of stress. This was the only relationship wherein any part of the internalization of the model minority myth had a linear relationship as a predictor with another psychological process; meaning the effects of the stereotype were there for both low and high levels of internalization. In this case, low internalization of the myth was correlated with higher levels of stress. One analysis of this relationship is that rejection of the stereotype leads to higher stress because the stress is a reflection of their failure to meet the standards of associated with the myth and Asian identity. Because the interaction with stress and the achievement orientation subset of the model minority myth are both predictive of each other in a linear relationship, this could be an example of how stereotype threat works in relation to seemingly positive stereotypes.

That being said, in every other instance, internalization of the model minority myth and its subsets did not have a linear relationship when it was a significant predictor for stress and belonging. In all other cases, the effect of the internalization of the myth only played a role at high levels. Essentially, the internalization of the model minority myth acted as a buffer against low levels of belonging and high levels of stress. On the surface this may seem like the internalization of the myth has a positive effect on Asian students, as previously mentioned, but in reality the non-linear relationship could be reflecting a feedback loop. Because belonging,

stress, and internalization of the stereotype are predictive of each other, when students are performing well and feel a sense of belonging they might internalize the stereotype more, then they continue to perform well and meet the standards of the stereotype, which then makes them feel higher levels of belonging and lower stress levels, thus continuing the cycle. This cycle has particularly deleterious effects considering that the model minority myth stereotype is used as a means of suppression against African Americans and affects certain segments of the Asian population negatively. Interestingly, the stereotype only had more of an effect on men than women when the internalization of the model minority myth as a whole and the unrestricted mobility subset were predicting levels of stress, despite there being an overall mean difference between men and women in the preliminary analysis. This difference may be due to the fact that despite the difference in gender for the stereotype generally, when making meaning of the stereotype in context, Asian men and women don't act significantly different from each other except when it comes to stress. The difference in stress may be due to the fact that Asian women face stereotype threat due to their gender that negates the buffer of high internalization the stereotype can have.

One important thing to note is the lack of ethnic differences when it comes to the internalization of the model minority myth. Only Korean Americans had significantly different levels of internalization of the myth, which may have more to do with the questions than actual levels of internalization. Because the questions focused on "Asian" identity and the term Asian may not be the most salient identification term students within the racial group may use, they may have felt distanced from the questions. For example, if an Indian American answering these questions doesn't see themselves primarily as Asian, the wording may make them pick answers that are more neutral than if the same questions were applied to their ethnic group specifically.

This line of questioning would be interesting because it would be able to explain a lot more about the way model minority myth becomes internalized along ethnic lines. Furthermore, the analysis didn't look into the differences between specific ethnic groups from White students more generally. I didn't include this in part because the size of the ethnic groups and also because conducting analysis along ethnic groups was more complicated than I expected. This is still an area worth looking into the future, however, because the ethnic differences may play a more clear role with a different line of questioning and certain modes of analysis.

Finally, imposter syndrome was not predictive of any of the psychological processes studied. This finding was particularly salient considering that Asian students score higher on imposter feelings than any other racial groups in other studies. This outcome may be attributed to the type of scale I used. Because I used Leary's scale and it wasn't context specific, it may not have been the best examination of imposter feelings in the undergraduate class setting. Moreover, the scale is primarily focused on the part of imposter syndrome that is defined as feeling like a phony, which may not take into account the other manifestations of imposter syndrome that undergraduate students face more generally. Overall, this finding is worth noting, but it may say more about the scale used and the way imposter syndrome should be identified in undergraduate students, than the way Asian American students feel about imposter syndrome as a whole.

Conclusion

Initially, when beginning my thesis I wanted to understand how Asian and White students differed from each other, why that mattered, and what role the internalization of the model minority myth plays in all of this. In my study I found three important answers to these questions. Firstly, I found that belonging is a particularly important process for Asian students. Second, the way that Asian Americans feel in the moment, about stress or belonging, has stronger connections with how they feel about the future than it does for White students. Third, that the internalization of the model minority myth largely acts as a buffer against negative outcomes.

Although these three results may seem disconnected the way I began my thesis, I believe they are extremely connected. I began by explaining the immigration histories of Asian Americans, ethnic and racial identity markers, developmental contexts, and the model minority myth before getting into my study. There isn't a clear language or frame of reference for speaking about Asian Americans, which is why my research spanned a wide breadth of time and disciplines in order to create a basic framework to build on. The effort and research that had to go into explaining what it means to be Asian American because of the lack of popular understanding, makes sense when considering how important a role belonging plays for this group. If you know who you are and you don't need to justify your own existence, your sense of belonging, while it does matter, may not affect you as deeply. Essentially, the work that went into the beginning of my thesis is a reflection of the lack of understanding of the Asian American experience which in turn may be what makes belonging a particularly powerful process for Asian American students in the classroom.

I find this connection to be particularly salient when considering the larger policy issue concerning Asian American mental health outcomes. It is clear that this group is particularly suffering and there needs to be interventions or systems of support that exist to help improve the mental health of Asian Americans, and I believe the outcomes from my study demonstrate that being able to learn and talk about the rich history and diversity within the Asian American experience could be one way to do so. When there isn't that language, it could lead to people filling in the gaps about what it means to be Asian American with general societal attitudes around them. This doesn't inherently have to be a good or bad thing, but it can be an issue because of the pervasiveness of the model minority myth, which I found to be the case in the analysis.

Internalizing the model minority myth at high levels was predictive of lower levels of stress and higher levels of belonging, so it acted as a protective buffer. The ability for the internalization of the model minority myth to act as a buffer leads to a complicated dynamic. It could be the case that there is a feedback loop where doing well with stress and belonging leads people to be more willing to internalize the myth, which then also leads them to handle stress and belonging well. However, this has negative implications because it shouldn't be the case that internalizing the model minority myth comes with handling stress well or feeling a greater sense of belonging. There should be something else that could be understood and internalized about the Asian American experience that doesn't involve potentially negative implications for other racial groups and underrepresented ethnicities.

Furthermore, the mean difference in regards to hope and the way that Asian Americans weigh their feelings in the present to make sense of the future are all reflections of the larger mental health concerns facing Asian Americans. I believe this finding helps to answer another of

my original questions that asked how psychological adjustment outcomes may be manifesting themselves in other psychological processes. This finding can guide future research as a way to quickly identify distinguishing factors between Asian American and White students.

Overall, this thesis has demonstrated that there is a difference between Asian and White students in class and the role the model minority myth plays on that difference based on how the student is already doing in the class. I believe that this is caused by the lack of understanding and language available for talking about the Asian American experience at the general level, and finding a solution to this, whether it be through systemic educational changes or increased representation and dialogue, could help Asian Americans in a meaningful and impactful way.

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Appendix.

Survey: Spring CNS survey 2021

Survey Flow:

Block: Basic Info (3 Questions)

Standard: Belonging-new base (6 Questions)

Standard: stress-new base (8 Questions)

Standard: Imposter Questions (8 Questions)

Standard: Demographics (6 Questions)

Branch: New Branch

If: If How do you usually describe yourself? (Please select all that apply) Asian or Asian

American Is Selected

Standard: Internalization of the mm-achievement orientation (17 Questions)

Standard: Block 6 (2 Questions)

-----Page Break-----

Start of Block: Basic Info

Q62 Welcome to the Spring 2021 CNS Student Experiences Survey

This is a short (5-10 min) questionnaire that asks about how students are experiencing UT this academic year. It was developed through a partnership among the College of Natural Sciences, the College of Liberal Arts, and several other groups on campus who are motivated to continuously improve the student experience at UT.

By adding your voice to this survey, we can learn what UT has been like for you and students who are similar to you. With this knowledge, we can provide better, and more useful, advice to faculty and administrators at UT. For instance, we can improve the university's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives.

Your answers are confidential. Your individual data will never be shared with your instructors. Instead, all results will be presented as averages. Each question is optional, and there is no penalty for skipping questions.

Thank you in advance for your honest reflections on your experiences. They will be incredibly helpful for UT as it moves forward.

-----Page Break-----

Q1 Please write your name in the box below.

We only need this information to confirm which students have completed the survey. All identities will be deleted from the dataset once the data have been merged.

Q5 Please enter your UT EID in the box below

End of Block: Basic Info

-----Page Break-----

Start of Block: Belonging-new base

Q12 When answering the questions on the next few pages, think about how you're feeling currently about your semester at UT.

Note that you may have been asked similar questions in the past, on other surveys. That is fine. Please just provide an answer based on how you are feeling right now, as this time.

-----Page Break-----

belong1 At UT, how often do you feel that there are people you can turn to?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Quite often (4)
- ☐ All the time (5)

-----Page Break-----

beluncert1 When you think about UT, how often, if ever, do you wonder: "Maybe I don't belong here?"

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Hardly Ever (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Frequently (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

-----Page Break-----

belong2 How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

I am confident that I belong at UT.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

-----Page Break-----

beluncert2 How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Sometimes I worry that I don't belong at UT.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

-----Page Break-----

hope How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)

- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

End of Block: Belonging-new base

Start of Block: stress-new base

Q20 This section asks how you normally feel when you take tests, and how you feel about stress.

-----Page Break-----

testanx1 How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

During a test or quiz I often get so nervous that I forget the answers that I know

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

-----Page Break-----

testanx2 How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

As soon as a test or quiz is over, I try to stop worrying about it, but I just can't.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)

- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

-----Page Break-----

testanx3 How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Even when I am well prepared for a test or quiz, I feel very nervous about it.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

-----Page Break-----

pss In the last few weeks, how often did you feel overwhelmed or stressed out?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Hardly Ever (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Frequently (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

-----Page Break-----

stressappraisal In the last few weeks, how confident were you that you could handle the stresses you were experiencing this semester?

- ☐ Not confident at all (1)
- ☐ Slightly Confident (2)
- ☐ Moderately Confident (3)
- ☐ Very Confident (4)
- ☐ Extremely confident (5)

-----Page Break-----

stressmindsetpos How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

In general, the effects of stress on my learning and health are good and I should make use of them.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly Agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

-----Page Break-----

stressmindsetneg How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

In general, the effects of stress on my learning and health are bad and I should avoid them.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)

- ☐ Mostly disagree (3)
- ☐ Mostly Agree (4)
- ☐ Agree (5)
- ☐ Strongly agree (6)

End of Block: stress-new base

Start of Block: Imposter Questions

Q29 Read each of the following statements carefully and indicate how characteristic it is of how you feel at UT.

-----Page Break-----

imposter1 How true does this statement feel about your experience at UT?

Sometimes I feel like a phony.

- ☐ Not at all true (1)
- ☐ Slightly true (2)
- ☐ Somewhat true (3)
- ☐ Very true (4)
- ☐ Extremely true (5)

-----Page Break-----

imposter2 How true does this statement feel about your experience at UT?

I'm afraid people important to me may find out that I'm not as capable as they think I am

- ☐ Not at all true (1)
- ☐ Slightly true (2)

- ☐ Somewhat true (3)
- ☐ Very true (4)
- ☐ Extremely true (5)

-----Page Break-----

imposter3

How true does this statement feel about your experience at UT?

In some situations I feel like an imposter

- ☐ Not at all true (1)
- ☐ Slightly true (2)
- ☐ Somewhat true (3)
- ☐ Very true (4)
- ☐ Extremely true (5)

-----Page Break-----

imposter4

How true does this statement feel about your experience at UT?

Sometimes I'm afraid others will discover how much knowledge or ability I really lack.

- ☐ Not at all true (1)
- ☐ Slightly true (2)
- ☐ Somewhat true (3)
- ☐ Very true (4)
- ☐ Extremely true (5)

-----Page Break-----

imposter5 How true does this statement feel about your experience at UT?

In some situations I feel like a "great pretender"; that is, I'm not as genuine as others think I am.

- ☐ Not at all true (1)
- ☐ Slightly true (2)
- ☐ Somewhat true (3)
- ☐ Very true (4)
- ☐ Extremely true (5)

-----Page Break-----

imposter6

How true does this statement feel about your experience at UT?

In some situations I act like an imposter.

- ☐ Not at all true (1)
- ☐ Slightly true (2)
- ☐ Somewhat true (3)
- ☐ Very true (4)
- ☐ Extremely true (5)

-----Page Break-----

imposter7 How true does this statement feel about your experience at UT?

I tend to feel like a phony.

- ☐ Not at all true (1)
- ☐ Slightly true (2)
- ☐ Somewhat true (3)

- ☐ Very true (4)
- ☐ Extremely true (5)

End of Block: Imposter Questions

Start of Block: Demographics

Q69 Next, please answer these demographic questions. This information will help us to understand different groups' experiences at UT.

-----Page Break-----

gender Which term do you use to describe your gender identity?

- ☐ Woman or female (1)
 - ☐ Man or male (2)
 - ☐ Trans woman (3)
 - ☐ Trans man (4)
 - ☐ Genderqueer (5)
 - ☐ Agender (6)
 - ☐ Genderfluid (7)
 - ☐ Intersex (8)
 - ☐ Non-binary (9)
 - ☐ Another identity (please describe) (10)
-

-----Page Break-----

raceeth How do you usually describe yourself? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ American Indian or Native Alaskan (1)
- ☐ Asian or Asian American (2)
- ☐ Black or African American (3)
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino/a/x (4)
- ☐ Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) or Arab Origin (5)
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Native (6)
- ☐ White (7)
- ☐ Biracial or Multiracial (8)
- ☐ Another identity (please describe) (9)

-----Page Break-----

Display This Question:

If How do you usually describe yourself? (Please select all that apply) = Asian or Asian American

asian Are you? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Chinese (1)
- ☐ Japanese (2)
- ☐ Korean (3)
- ☐ Cambodian (4)
- ☐ Vietnamese (5)

- ☐ Hmong (6)
- ☐ Filipino (7)
- ☐ Bhutanese (8)
- ☐ Indian (9)
- ☐ Pakistani (10)
- ☐ Nepalese (11)
- ☐ Sri Lankan (12)
- ☐ Other (please specify (13) _____)

-----Page Break-----

bornus Were you and both of your parents/guardians born in the United States?

- ☐ Yes, both I and my parents/guardians were born in the United States (1)
- ☐ No, either I or one of my parents/guardians was born in another country (2)

Skip To: End of Block If Were you and both of your parents/guardians born in the United States?

= Yes, both I and my parents/guardians were born in the United States

-----Page Break-----

generation What generation immigrant are you? (please select the option that best describes your most recently immigrated parent)

- ☐ 1st generation (I was born in another country and moved to the United States after I was 15) (1)
- ☐ 1.5 generation (I was born in another country and moved to the United States before I was 15) (2)

- ☐ 2nd generation (I was born in the United States, but my parents/guardians were born in another country) (3)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Internalization of the mm-achievement orientation

Q71 You said that your race/ethnicity was "Asian or Asian American." The final set of questions relate to the Asian/Asian-American experience at UT.

Would you be willing to answer 10 short questions before wrapping up? Your answers will be very helpful for the University. You may also skip the questions without any penalty if you wish.

- ☐ Yes I will answer a short set of questions (1)
- ☐ No I will not answer a short set of questions (2)

Skip To: End of Block If You said that your race/ethnicity was "Asian or Asian American." The final set of questions relat... = No I will not answer a short set of questions

-----Page Break-----

Q40

On the following few pages, you will see some statements that have been made about Asians / Asian Americans. Please indicate the answer which best matches your agreement of disagreement with each statement. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers.

-----Page Break-----

mm1 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans have stronger work ethics.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)

-----Page Break-----

mm2 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are harder workers.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)

-----Page Break-----

mm3 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Despite experiences with racism, Asian Americans are more likely to achieve academic and economic success.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)

-----Page Break-----

mm4 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are more motivated to be successful.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)

-----Page Break-----

mm5 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans generally have higher grade point averages in school because academic success is more important to them.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)

- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm6 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans get better grades in school because they study harder.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm7 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans generally perform better on standardized exams (i.e., SAT) because they value academic achievement more.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)

- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm8 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans make more money because they work harder.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm9 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are more likely to be good at math and science.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm10 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are more likely to persist through tough situations.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm11 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are less likely to face barriers at work.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm12 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are less likely to encounter racial prejudice and discrimination than other minority groups in the United States.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm13 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are less likely to experience racism in the United States.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm14 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

Asian Americans are more likely to be treated as the equals of White or European Americans.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)

- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

-----Page Break-----

mm15 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement.

It is easier for Asian Americans to climb the corporate ladder.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (8)
- ☐ Disagree (9)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (10)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (11)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (12)
- ☐ Agree (13)
- ☐ Strongly agree (14)

End of Block: Internalization of the mm-achievement orientation

Start of Block: Block 6

Q89 Optional: Is there anything else you'd like to share?

-----Page Break-----

Q62 You have completed the Student Experiences Survey. Thank you so much for participating.

At the end of the semester, we will share an aggregate report on the results with your instructor.

(Again, no personal information will be shared).

End of Block: Block 6

Biography

Praveena Javvadi is a Plan II and Government major at the University of Texas at Austin. She will be graduating from the University of Texas in the fall of 2021, and is excited to see where her life goes next. Praveena is interested in topics of racial justice across a wide variety of disciplines and hopes to make the world a slightly better place in the future. Outside of school, Praveena enjoys watching movies, hanging out with friends and family, biking, and being a baddie!