

Survive and Thrive: Exploring How Immigrant-Origin Asian American Adolescents Experience,  
Cope, and Adapt to Life During Covid-19

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**Abstract**

Survive and Thrive: Exploring How Immigrant-Origin Asian American Adolescents Experience,  
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In 2020, the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism led to crises of public health, economic fallout, racial reckoning, and K-12 school closures in the United States. Asian American youth not only have to navigate the stressors and change of routines as other adolescents, but they also must navigate the heightened anti-Asian racism and xenophobia during Covid-19. The purpose of the current study is to explore the ways immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American adolescents in the Pacific Northwest experience, cope, and adapt to life during the dual pandemics. The Integrative Risk and Resilience Framework (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018) for immigrant children's adjustment and an intersectionality approach were used to frame the study. Fourteen immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American adolescents from an Asian-majority city in a metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest participated in this critical qualitative study via a survey and an interview with a mapping activity. Three school staff and one parent identified as

support by the adolescent participants provided input on Asian American students' resilience via a survey. The constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965), an inductive data coding process was used to analyze the interview and mapping activity data. The youth participants in the current study experienced challenges of anti-Asian racism, intergenerational disconnection, and other unique stress shaped by their intersectional social positions. In response to these challenges, they adapted by increasing self-reflection, deepening social connections, and shifting their acculturation strategies away from assimilation, toward integration. The participants also identified maintaining heritage culture and language, parent being open-minded, and teacher practices of offering flexibility in assignment completion and holding space for discussions about racism as supportive. Implications for educators include enhancing student-teacher relationships, providing emotional support, and holding space to discuss racism at school.

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### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The population of immigrant-origin children who have at least one parent born outside the United States is growing faster than the non-immigrant population (US Census Bureau, 2019a). The wellbeing of immigrant-origin children has great implications for society's future. Immigrant-origin youth have universal developmental tasks as other non-immigrant children as well as special developmental contexts and processes. Immigrant-origin children experience unique transnational family contexts, school contexts navigating multiple cultural, behavioral, and linguistic expectations, and unique stressors and resilience brought by undocumented status. Immigrant-origin youth also experience special developmental processes, including acculturation, ethnic identity development, and language development.

Asian American is the fastest-growing group compared to any other race groups in the United States (Hoeffel et al., 2012). The Asian American community's unique cultural and historical contexts have implications for youth's wellbeing. The first Asian group came to the United States and Hawaii in large numbers in the 1830s (Hung, 2014), but the anti-Chinese and anti-Asian sentiments rose immediately. In the last third of the 19th century, due to the growing fear of the number of people of Chinese descent living in the United States, Congress passed the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years, and was made permanent in 1904 (Ngai, 2014). The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was the first massive form of immigration restriction in the United States (Lee, 2003). It was not until the Immigration Act of 1965, with a preference for professionals with specialized skills (Kwong & Chen, 2010), that allowed mass immigration of people from Asian countries (Ngai, 2014). The historical treatment of Asian immigrants contributed to the contemporary racialization of Asian Americans in the US society as perpetual foreigners and model minorities (Ngai, 2014). These

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racial stereotypes erase the stability, equal rights, and sense of belonging of Asian Americans (Ng et al., 2007), and sets the Asian American communities against other groups of color (Kwong & Chen, 2010). With these contextual factors in mind, maintenance of heritage language and cultural practices, parental support, and positive school climate were theorized to have protective effects on immigrant Asian American youth's mental health and wellbeing (Zhou et al., 2012). Acculturative stress (Birman & Addae, 2015), where parents and children adapt to a new culture at different rates using different strategies, as well as the level of experiences with discrimination (Wang & Atwal, 2015), are risk factors for immigrant Asian American youth's mental health.

In 2020, the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism (Jones, 2021) led to crises of public health, economic fallout, racial reckoning, and K-12 school closures in the United States. Asian American youth not only have to navigate the stressors and change of routines as other adolescents, but they also have to navigate the heightened anti-Asian racism and xenophobia during Covid-19. Asian Americans have reported a surge of racially motivated physical and verbal attacks since the beginning of the pandemic, with more than 3795 incidents reported between March 2020 and February 2021 to the Stop AAPI Hate organization (Jeung et al., 2021). Many Chinese American families had experienced direct racial discrimination at the beginning of the pandemic, and the perceived discrimination was associated with poorer mental and behavioral health outcomes in Chinese American children (Cheah et al., 2020).

The serious negative effects of Covid-19 on youth's wellness and development are real and warrant attention. However, empirical studies that explore youth and families' protective factors and resilience during the pandemic are urgently needed to inform policies and practices as the pandemic unfolds (Cheah et al., 2020; Prime et al., 2020; Stark et al., 2020). It is even

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more urgent to understand the resilience of immigrant Asian American youth, who have been disproportionately affected by the heightened anti-Asian racism. Understanding the protective factors and resilience also helps shift the dominant narratives away from a damage-centered view toward an asset- and strength-based portrait of the Asian American community (Tuck, 2009). The course of the pandemic remains unclear. With the rollout of vaccines and more schools offering in-person learning, the current study aims to understand immigrant Asian American youth's culturally specific ways of coping and protective factors that helped them navigate schooling in 2020 to 2021. The findings of the study can inform education and services provided to Asian American youth to support their adjustment in a post-Covid world.

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### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Immigrants and children of immigrants, defined as those with at least one parent born outside of the US, comprise approximately 14.1% of the US population and are growing faster than non-immigrant populations (US Census Bureau, 2019a). The well-being of children of immigration origin has implications for a large percentage of our child population and our society's future. Immigrant-origin children and youth experience similar developmental tasks as all other children and unique developmental contexts and processes that influence their wellbeing.

#### **The Contexts of Immigrant-Origin Youth Development**

Urie Bronfenbrenner's influential ecological systems theory provides a useful framework in understanding immigrant youth's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The ecological systems theory views the developing person as nested within different levels of systems. Immigrant-origin children and youth have to navigate critical and distinct contexts of family, school, and political environment across different systems that have cultivated strengths and presented challenges throughout their development.

#### ***Family Contexts***

Global migrations have increasingly led to an increase in transnational familyhood, where immediate family members reside in different countries during immigration (United Nations Development Program, 2009). Typically, migration proceeds as one family member going ahead, followed by others later (Orellana et al., 2001). Nearly a third of documented immigrant youth living in North America from ages six to 18 had been separated from at least one parent for two or more years, with the rate of separation being highest for children of Latin American origin (Gindling & Poggio, 2009). The duration of separation between parents and their children varied

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widely across regions of origin (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2002), cultural practices, political and economic pressures, and policy restraints (Coe, 2013). Even though emerging technologies have enabled more transnational communication (Bacigalupe & Parker, 2015), many families still find it difficult to maintain steady long-distance communication and intimacy, especially when children were young at the time the parents left, and when parental absences were long-term (Suárez-Orozco, 2015).

### *School Context*

Immigrant children and adolescents account for more than 20% of the school-age population (Camarota & Zeigler, 2016) and spend a significant amount of time in schools with varying resources, services, and student- teacher-characteristics in the United States (Marks & Pieloch, 2015). In the primary school years, roughly from kindergarten to eighth grade, schools are the primary context for children to socialize with peers, interact with non-family adults, and develop academic competencies (Marks & Pieloch, 2015). Some studies indicate that schools with a high percentage of ethnic or racial minority students may be under-resourced due to having a larger student body, less experienced teachers, more students living in poverty, and more problems in the surrounding neighborhood (Crosnoe, 2005). However, having teachers who value diversity in schools with an inclusive climate is crucial for immigrant children's emerging ethnic and racial identities, which impact their self-esteem, physical health, and perceived ability to achieve (Marks et al., 2015). Similarly, when entering secondary schools (grades nine through 12), students' exploration of ethnic and racial identities increases in frequency and intensity (French et al., 2006), which exacerbates the negative effects of discrimination on their well-being and achievement (Marks et al., 2015). School-based interventions to prevent discrimination and empower immigrant youth with social support from

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teachers and peers can significantly affect immigrant adolescents' achievement potential (Marks & Peiloch, 2015).

### *Undocumented Status*

Undocumented immigrants grew dramatically because of the economic boom of the last decade of the 20th century (Passel & Cohn, 2011). The number of undocumented immigrants also increased due to long backlogs, bureaucracy, and the increasing rates of legal status denials for immigrants (Suárez-Orozco, Bang, et al., 2011). Approximately one in 10 children living in the US is growing up in mixed-status households with at least one member of the family is undocumented (Fix & Zimmermann, 2001). Two groups of children are influenced by undocumented status: those who came during their childhood (approximately one and a half million), and those considered *citizen-children* (about four and a half million, seven percent of school-age children), who were born in the United States to undocumented parents (Passel & Cohn, 2011).

Challenges brought by the undocumented status exist in the contexts of child development, even though parents want the move to support the child's developmental outcomes (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, et al., 2011). The scholarship of Suárez-Orozco and Yoshikawa (2015) detailed the impact of undocumented status on multiple levels of the contexts that immigrant children live in. At the neighborhood level, undocumented families are more likely to live in areas with similarly undocumented immigrants with limited social capital benefits (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, et al., 2011). Schools are more likely to be under-resourced. Their children need to move often, leading to negative academic and social-emotional outcomes (Suárez-Orozco & Yoshikawa, 2015). At the family level, undocumented status limits parents' ability to enroll in programs that they are eligible for and subjects them to exploitation, such as

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working long hours, low wages, and unacceptable working conditions. These hardships have harmful effects on child development by creating economic hardship and psychological distress in the family while blocking access and resources parents needed to address these issues (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, et al., 2011). At the personal level, undocumented and citizen-children may live in the fear of being separated from parents and other family members, have limited access to educational and work opportunities, limited physical space at home, less access to books or toys, and an obligation to take care of younger siblings (Suárez-Orozco & Yoshikawa, 2015). Despite all the challenges, undocumented parents do not differ in the rates of engaging in cognitively stimulating activities with their children (Suárez-Orozco & Yoshikawa, 2011). However, immigrant parents with undocumented status might not always be fully available to their children physically or psychologically because of their intense work schedule (Suárez-Orozco & Yoshikawa, 2011).

### **The Processes of Immigrant-origin Youth Development**

Immigrant children experience many similar developmental processes that all children go through. However, the unique developmental processes immigrant-origin youth experience bring particular stressors as well as protective factors to their wellbeing. The processes of acculturation, ethnic identity development, and language development bring specific assets and pose particular risks to the social-emotional wellbeing of immigrant-origin youth, especially youth of color.

#### ***Acculturation***

Human development is a cultural process where people use cultural and language tools to learn from each other across generations (Rogoff, 2003). Acculturation refers to the process of cultural, psychological, and behavioral change that occurs when two or more cultural groups and

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their individual members interact (Berry, 2005). Cultural groups and people engage in the acculturation process in a variety of ways that changes over time. For people from minority groups, like immigrant-origin children and youth, the ways they engage with acculturation strategies are conceptualized on two continuums. One continuum refers to the degree of preference for maintaining the heritage cultural practices and identity, and the other continuum refers to the degree to which they prefer to engage in the larger society and adopt the norms and values of other ethnocultural groups (Berry, 2006). Based on the conceptual overview of acculturation by Berry (2006), acculturation strategies for nondominant groups are categorized into four quadrants based on the two continuums: assimilation (i.e., individuals who do not wish to maintain heritage culture and seek to interact in ways that adhere to the mainstream culture), marginalization (i.e., individuals who do not wish to maintain their heritage culture nor enact the majority culture), separation (i.e., individuals who embrace their heritage culture and identity while rejecting the mainstream culture), and integration (i.e., individuals who seek to maintain their heritage culture while also adopting characteristics of the majority culture). Empirically validated by Berry and colleagues (2006), immigrant youth who pursued integration strategies demonstrated the highest psychological adjustment (e.g., few psychological problems, high self-esteem, high life satisfaction) and sociocultural adaptations (e.g., better school adjustment, fewer behavioral problems), while youth using marginalization strategies scored the lowest on both domains. Immigrant youth who used more separation strategies had moderately good psychological adjustment but less ideal sociocultural adjustment, while those who used more assimilation approaches scored lower on both types of adjustment (Berry et al., 2006).

Acculturation occurs in various contexts for immigrant youth across different systems within the youth's ecological environment. For immigrant youth, acculturation is both a result of

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the subtle influences and messages they receive from their environments and a deliberate process “by which parents, schools in the new country, and others transmit cultural practices, beliefs, and values as well as attitudes about which culture(s) is/are more desirable to adopt” (Birman & Addae, 2015, p.124). For immigrant youth, each of the contexts they live in reflect different cultural repertoires and exercise acculturative pressure on immigrant children (Trickett & Birman, 2005). For example, immigrant parents may expect their children to preserve heritage cultural traditions and values, while teachers may expect immigrant children to assimilate into the mainstream culture (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2002). Furthermore, parent-school communication is often lacking (Delgado-Gaitan, 2007), and immigrant children often have to navigate misaligned goals and values at home and school. Neighborhoods often exert acculturative pressure on immigrant children as well. Immigrants may be perceived as a threat to the dominant culture and experience assimilationist pressure in neighborhoods with fewer immigrants, whereas little acculturative pressure is present in ethnic enclaves (Birman & Addae, 2015). More broadly, cultures of both the country of origin and the host country can influence immigrant children’s acculturation experiences (Birman & Addae, 2015).

### ***Ethnic Identity Development***

Ethnic identity is viewed as “a person’s beliefs, attitudes, and feelings about the meaning of their ethnicity” (Schwartz et al., 2015, p. 145). Ethnic identity represents the integration of exploration of one’s ethnic group’s subjective meaning and the positive regard of one’s ethnic group (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Feeling different from others, immigrant-origin youth face unique challenges when exploring their ethnic identity (Schwartz et al., 2015).

The process of ethnic identity development can be initiated through experiences with discrimination, social exclusion, or feeling different (Syed & Azmitia, 2010). About ages three to

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four, children can group people according to physical features associated with ethnicity, such as skin color and facial features (Schwartz et al., 2015). Around ages five to six, children understand the meanings of socially constructed groups such as “Americans” and “immigrants” (Brown, 2011). During middle school years, the ability to think about oneself abstractly begins to emerge, enabling youth to explore the subjective meaning of one’s ethnicity (Williams et al., 2012). Ethnic identity development is generally promoted by parents’ efforts to teach children about the family’s heritage and is also dependent on the heritage culture resources available in youth’s contexts (Schwartz et al., 2015). Youth from ethnic minority groups tend to increase their ethnic identity exploration and affirmation during early adolescence and emerging adulthood, whereas white youth appear to be less invested in their ethnic group membership (French et al., 2006; Pahl & Way, 2006).

For immigrant and minority individuals, ethnic identity is an additional, salient domain in which personal identity development unfolds (Schwartz, 2001). The effects of ethnic identity are both protective and triggering. Ethnic identity was found protective against anxiety, depression, and behavior problems if ethnicity is central to an individual’s sense of self (Brittian et al., 2013). In contrast, the adverse effects of discrimination on immigrant youth’s externalizing and internalizing problems can be triggered by youth’s ethnic identity development (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2011; Wei et al., 2012; Yoo & Lee, 2009). The process of ethnic identity development itself, including thinking and talking to others about the meaning of one’s ethnic group and engaging in activities typical of one’s ethnic group (Syed et al., 2013), is stressful (Schwartz et al., 2009).

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### *Language Development*

Immigrant-origin children in the United States, as children in many countries worldwide, have to learn multiple languages to navigate different social and cultural environments.

Immigrant-origin children develop their multilingual skills through interactions with their environments in different ecological systems (Páez & Hunter, 2015). The community context, perceived status of languages, and societal factors can also influence a child's multilingual development.

At the family level, a literacy-rich home language environment predicts immigrant youth's later literacy development in schools (Reese et al., 2000). However, literacy experiences at home vary based on social and cultural characteristics, such as parent socioeconomic status, parental education and literacy levels, and available home support for literacy development (Snow, 2007). At school, researchers found that multilingual students attending bilingual programs, where instruction is provided in both English and children's primary language, scored higher on tests of English than children in all-English immersion programs did (Rolstad et al., 2005; Slavin & Cheung, 2005). At the individual level, factors like motivation, personality, aptitude, cognitive maturity, and knowledge of the structure of a first language all influence the immigrant-origin children's development of English and heritage language (Paradis, 2011). The uneven development of language within different linguistic domains is common for multilingual children (Paradis, 2011).

Language brokering is another process through which immigrant children develop. Language brokering refers to the practice that immigrant-origin children use their skills in two languages to read, write, listen, speak, and do things for their families (Orellana, 2009). Usually regarded as a "normal" practice by immigrant-origin children themselves, language brokering

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provides unique benefits and stress on their development (Orellana & Guan, 2015). Language brokering experiences have supported immigrant youth's transcultural dispositions and psychosocial competencies, such as reading social cues, perspective-taking, and flexibility in understanding and using languages for particular audiences (Guan et al., 2014). Language brokering was also found to support youth's heritage language maintenance and ethnic identity development (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005), relationship building with their parents (Chao, 2006), and biculturalism-- the involvement and comfort felt with both heritage and host cultures (Acoach & Webb, 2004; Buriel et al., 1998; Tse, 1996). However, language brokering was also related to depression, adolescent stress, and internalizing problems (Chao, 2006; Jones & Trickett, 2005; Love & Buriel, 2007). The unique stress children experience during language brokering occurs in high-stakes situations (e.g., legal, medical, public, professional) and in places where families were viewed in racist and xenophobic ways (Jones & Trickett, 2005; Kam, 2011; Reynolds & Orellana, 2009). It is important to note that youth vary in feelings toward language brokering depending on individual factors (e.g., ethnicity, ethnicity identity, gender), and their view about language brokering changes as they mature (Orellana, 2009).

### **Immigrant Asian American Youth**

Asian American is the fastest-growing group compared to any other race groups in the United States (Hoeffel et al., 2012). The population in the United States identified as Asian or part-Asian has increased by 46% between 2000 and 2010 (Hoeffel et al., 2012). Moreover, about 60% of Asian Americans were born outside of the United States (Gryn & Gambino, 2012; Department of Labor, 2014). In many urban school districts within Washington State, Asian students consist of more than 25% of the student population (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, n.d.). To understand and support the social-emotional wellbeing of immigrant Asian

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American youth attending K-12 schools in the United States now, it is important to understand the history of the immigrant Asian American communities, racialization of Asian Americans, and the unique risk and protective factors for their wellbeing.

### *Historical Context*

As the first Asian group to come to the United States and Hawaii in large numbers, Chinese immigrants began arriving in 1830s, as US companies established big plantations in Hawaii in 1830s and the country acquired California in 1840s (Hung, 2014). After the number of new arrivals skyrocketed around the 1850s, the anti-Chinese sentiment quickly developed (Ngai, 2014). In the last third of the 19th century, due to the growing fear of the number of people of Chinese descent living in the United States, Congress passed the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years, and was made permanent in 1904 (Ngai, 2014). The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was the first massive form of immigration restriction in the United States (Lee, 2003). Due to the intensified anti-Chinese sentiment and violence, Chinese migrants began to think of Chinatowns as safe havens to settle (Hung, 2014). The settlement stimulated ethnic economy in Chinatown with restaurants, small grocery stores, and laundries, but also reinforced the isolation and alienation of the Chinese community (Hung, 2014).

It was not until more than one year after the United States and the Republic of China became allies in World War II in 1943 when the repeal of the Asian Exclusion Act began (Hung, 2014). Ultimately, the Immigration Act of 1965 allowed mass immigration from Asian countries which included a quota of 20,000 immigrants per year per country, and those who immigrate through sponsorship of immediate family members do not count against the quota (Ngai, 2014). The post-1965 immigrants transformed the Asian American community. Unlike the first wave of

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immigrants who were predominantly laborers, the recent immigrants came from across different regions and have different socio-economic and religious backgrounds with various levels of education (Ngai, 2014; Hung, 2014).

### ***Racialization of Asian Americans***

The discourse around the racialization of Asian Americans is two-fold: racialization as outsiders and racialization as a model minority (Ancheta, 2006). The racialization as outsiders establishes Asian Americans as forever foreign-born outsiders in the United States, stripped of the stability, equal rights, and belongingness as citizens of the country (Ng et al., 2007). The perpetual foreigner stereotype was suggested to be the primary contributor to the discriminatory treatment of Asian Americans in the US (Uba, 2012). Being constructed as an intruder and perpetual foreigner in the Black/White racial discourse in the United States, Asian Americans “rarely gain voice and visibility as a racial minority” (Ng et al., 2007, p. 96).

The Model Minority Myth is the stereotype of Asian Americans as “high-achieving, hardworking, and intellectually superior” despite being a minority group in the United States (Yi & Museus, 2015, p.1). The Model Minority Myth originates back to the nineteenth century when the recent Chinese immigrants were compared with their black counterparts and praised for their work ethics (Yi & Museus, 2015). During the civil rights movements of the 1960s, the Model Minority Myth reemerged and was used to dismiss the negative impacts of racism claimed by civil rights activists and justify the maintenance of racial order (Yi & Museus, 2015). Recent Asian immigrants are more likely to land high-paying jobs quickly, enter themselves and their children into prestigious universities because the immigration policy favored professionals with specialized skills, which was used to perpetuate the notion that Asian is the model minority (Kwong & Chen, 2010). The proponents of the Model Minority Myth prescribed the supposed

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success of Asian Americans to their adherence to traditional Asian cultural values and family structures, arguing that Asian Americans were more obedient to authority, good at math and science, hardworking, cooperative, well behaved, and quiet (Kwon & Au, 2010). The model minority stereotype not only ignores the diverse experiences within the Asian American community, perpetuates the notion that Asian Americans are passive and apolitical, but also sets the Asian American communities against other groups of color (Kwong & Chen, 2010).

### *Risk Factors for Asian American Youth's Adjustment*

Considering the unique developmental tasks for immigrant-origin youth, various factors specific to immigrant-origin Asian American youth, including the racialization of Asian Americans, are associated with negative developmental outcomes and maladjustment. These factors are also nested within the contexts Asian American youth exist in. Specifically, perceived discrimination and acculturative stress are risk factors specific to immigrant-origin Asian American youth that may negatively impact their development.

**Experiences of Discrimination.** Immigrant-origin youth and children are likely to experience discrimination based on their social identities, such as race, gender, immigration status, which is associated with negative psychological and physical outcomes (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018). Experiencing discrimination was theorized to undermine the resources and opportunities available to ethnic minority children in their social interactions, which poses risks for their maladjustment (Coll et al., 1996). For ethnic minority youth, perceived discrimination has been theorized to affect various aspects of their development, such as self-identity, peer relationship, academic performance, and mental health (Taylor & Turner, 2002). For Asian American adolescents, the incidents of discrimination increase over time during their schooling,

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and the increased perceived discrimination is associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms (Wang & Atwal, 2015). In addition, English proficiency and speaking English with an accent were associated with increased rates of being stereotyped as perpetual foreigners, which was also associated with increased risk for depressive symptoms (Kim et al., 2011).

**Acculturative Stress.** Beyond perceived discrimination, high levels of acculturative stress is also associated with negative developmental outcomes for immigrant-origin Asian American youth. Acculturative stress is conceptualized as a stress response when an individual experiences distress while interacting between two cultures during the acculturation process (e.g., navigating conflicting cultural values and social expectations), especially when the distress cannot be easily resolved by simple behavioral changes toward one or the other culture (Berry, 2006). Immigrant children experience intercultural contacts regularly as they navigate the home culture and school culture, which may have opposing values and behavioral expectations for children and youth. Acculturative stress is associated with decreased mental and physical wellbeing due to increased feelings of confusion, anxiety, alienation, and identity confusion (Berry et al., 1987).

Another source of stress as a result of acculturation is heightened intergenerational conflict in immigrant-origin families (Rogers-Sirin et al., 2014). Immigrant children experience the acculturation process differently than their parents (Birman & Addae, 2015). Therefore, acculturation gaps develop when parents and their children retain their heritage culture and adapt to a new culture at different rates, which is associated with more pronounced intergenerational parent-child conflicts (Telzer, 2010). Acculturation gaps have been linked to child maladjustment and family conflict for immigrant families from a variety of ethnic groups (Birman & Addae, 2015). For example, Costigan and Dokis (2006) found that within immigrant

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Chinese families living in Canada, when parents were strongly oriented toward Chinese culture, lower levels of orientation to Chinese culture in their children were related to higher levels of depressive symptoms in children and more intense parent-child conflicts (Costigan & Dokis, 2006). Immigrant children may experience varied levels of acculturative stress and mental health problems beyond the family context as well (Birman & Addae, 2015). Open discussions about cultural differences among immigrant parents and children were found to reduce acculturation gaps and mitigate distress (Pantin et al., 2003).

### *Protective Factors for Asian American Youth's Adjustment*

Despite the risk factors such as perceived discrimination and acculturative stress associated with Asian American children's development, various intrapersonal, interpersonal, and contextual characteristics are associated with positive adjustment outcomes and reduced maladjustment for Asian American youth and children. At the child level, child's maintenance of heritage culture and language was theorized to positively influence immigrant Asian American children's adjustment (Zhou et al., 2012). For instance, Chinese American adolescents who maintained their heritage language that matched the level of their mothers' heritage language proficiency were found to have fewer depressive symptoms and higher levels of academic achievement (Liu et al., 2009). Cognitively, researchers found that multilingual students develop cognitive skills such as executive functioning, attention, and inhibitory control more rapidly than monolingual children (Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008). For social and emotional development, multilingual students were found to show more interpersonal social skills (Han, 2010; Han & Huang, 2010) and sociolinguistic awareness (Cheung et al., 2010) compared to monolingual students.

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Furthermore, being able to cope with universal and specific stressors in an adaptive way is another individual-level protective factor for immigrant Asian American youth (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018). Coping is defined as an effortful cognitive or behavioral response, rather than an automatic response, to tolerate, escape, or minimize the effects of internal and external stress (Dumont & Provost, 1999; Halstead et al., 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Youth's knowledge and use of a variety of coping strategies increase with time (Williams & McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 1999), and in general, distraction, endurance, parent support, problem-solving, and entertainment coping strategies were found to support adolescents' adjustment (Fields & Prinz, 1997). For Asian Americans coping with perceived discrimination, more indirect and culturally specific ways of coping (e.g., problem avoidance, social withdrawal, passive acceptance) were associated with less distress (Chang, 2001; Noh & Kaspar, 2003).

In addition to culturally specific ways of coping with perceived discrimination, developing critical consciousness was also found to be protective for youth from marginalized communities against negative consequences of discrimination. Critical consciousness is the process through which the social and political basis for marginalization and inequalities is developed and understood, and changes are enacted individually or collectively to address those inequalities (Pillen et al., 2020; Diemer et al., 2017; Freier, 1993). Critical consciousness may promote positive developmental outcomes among youth who experience marginalization based on their social identities (Herberle et al., 2020). Pillen and colleagues (2020) compiled a framework of critical consciousness development by systematically reviewing empirical studies that includes the stages of (1) priming of critical reflection, which includes “the historical exposure to oppressive events or incidents, the adoption of belief systems cognizant of unjust social relations, and having unmet psychological needs” (p. 1522); (2) information creating

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disequilibrium: an individual receiving information that generated uncomfortable thoughts and feelings; (3) Introspection: the individual examines themselves in respond to the disequilibrium; (4) Revising frame of reference: the individual recognizes the systematic and social nature of oppression and examines one's own position in social relations; (5) developing agency for change; and (6) acting against oppression. Godfrey and colleagues (2019) found that being critically aware of the inequalities and taking actions to address those inequalities can be protective for youth's mental health and academic achievements. Critical consciousness is found to have protective effects on Latinx college students to resist everyday discrimination and protect their psychological wellbeing (Cadenas et al., 2021). For Asian Americans, critical consciousness is found to be necessary to distract from behaviors that perpetuate internalized racial oppression (Trieu & Lee, 2017). Increasing the level of critical consciousness may also improve overall level of hopefulness for Asian American emerging adults at the beginning of the pandemic (Castro et al., 2021).

At the family level, parental support is conceptualized as another protective factor for Chinese American youth's mental health and adjustment (Zhou et al., 2012). Parenting strategies that were more flexible in adapting methods in the new cultural context, had more open communication between parents and children despite various barriers, and valued educational achievement, as well as other aspects of their children's development, were practiced by Asian immigrant parents of adolescents with less psychological stress (Qin, 2008). Moreover, parental racial socialization, where parents convey information, values, and perspectives about race and ethnicity to their children, were found to have protective effects against racial discrimination (Hughes et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2010). For Asian American adolescents, parents' messages

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about cultural traditions and history as well as promotion of cultural pluralism and diversity protect children from psychological distress in the face of discrimination (Atkin et al., 2018).

At the school level, a positive school climate was found to have protective effects for Asian American students (Wang et al., 2018). Characterized by perceived higher levels of adult support, peer support, cultural acceptance, and school connectedness, a positive school climate was found to have protective effects against Asian American middle school students' suicidal thoughts and behaviors (Wang et al., 2018). School assets, measured as student-perceived caring relationships, high expectations, and meaningful participation, also promoted Asian American youth's utilization of school-based prevention-based mental health services (Anyon et al., 2014). In short, maintenance of heritage culture and language, adaptive coping, higher level of critical consciousness, parental support and racial socialization, and a positive school climate were associated with positive developmental outcomes for immigrant-origin Asian American youth.

### **The Dual Pandemics of Covid-19 and Systemic Racism**

Various risk and protective factors affect the developmental outcomes for immigrant-origin Asian American youth, especially in crisis situations. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to create crisis situations at the global scale that impacts individuals' daily life. On December 31st, 2019, Wuhan Municipal Health Commission, China, reported a cluster of pneumonia cases caused by a novel coronavirus in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China (Wang et al., 2020). A week later, the scientists were able to identify the genetic sequence novel coronavirus, later named SARS-CoV-2, that caused the disease referred to as Covid-19 (World Health Organization, 2020). By mid-January, the Covid-19 began to spread across Asia and globally, and on March 11th, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the Covid-19 as a pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020). In Washington State, school districts in the Greater Seattle area

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announced school closure on March 11th, 2020, shortly after the governor's announcement of social distancing proclamation ("COVID-19 pandemic in Washington (State)," 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted people's daily life around the globe. People continue to deal with the uncertainties as the pandemic unfolds. Covid-19 not only brought negative health consequences but also magnified the existing race-based structural inequities in US society "in a manner that was impossible to unsee or to look away" (Jones, 2021, p. 427). The murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN ignited the massive Black Lives Matter protests on racism and police brutality against Black people within the US and around the world. Racism is embedded in all aspects of our life and negatively impacts the health of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC, <http://thebipocproject.org/>; Jones, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic and the systematic racism exacerbated the negative outcomes for the BIPOC community. Latinx, Black, and Indigenous communities suffered disproportionately high rates of severe cases and death from Covid-19 (Gravlee, 2020). Remote learning further exposed the digital divide among students who have access to reliable internet access and computers and those who do not (Seymour et al., 2020). Researchers have also found that elementary and secondary students experienced learning loss as measured by academic achievements that were exacerbated by racial inequalities (Dorn et al., 2020; Donnelly & Patrinos, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic intensified the racial inequities that existed in US society (Jones, 2021). Asian American youth also have to navigate the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systemic racism.

### *Asian American Youth Navigating the Dual Pandemics*

Asian American youth had to navigate the stressors and change of routines like other adolescents during Covid-19. de Figueiredo and colleagues (2021) alerted the public health community on the multifactorial impact of Covid-19 on children and adolescents' mental health.

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School closures, canceled group activities, disruptions in sleeping and eating routines, boredom and frustration, exposure to social inequalities and race-based trauma, as well as prolonged isolation all contributed to the distress on adolescents' mental health (de Figueiredo et al., 2021). These stressors may have negative long-term consequences on adolescent health, such as underdeveloped brain neural networks, substance abuse, lack of emotional processing, and suicidal thoughts (de Figueiredo et al., 2021). As all American youth adjusting to the routines during Covid-19 (e.g., wearing a mask, social distancing, and stay-at-home orders) and the anxiety and uncertainty of the new disease, Asian American youth “have been additionally burdened by heightened racial tension and associated racist microaggressions and verbal attacks” (Gover et al., 2020, p. 648). Asian Americans have reported a surge of racially motivated physical and verbal attacks since the beginning of the pandemic, with more than 3795 incidents reported between March 2020 and February 2021 to the Stop AAPI Hate organization (Jeung et al., 2021). The heightened xenophobia and anti-Chinese sentiment, well documented on social media and instigated by then-president Trump (Chiu, 2020), reflect the racial stereotypes of Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners in the United States (Huynh et al., 2011). In fact, Asian American families disproportionately chose to stay remote when school districts across the country offered in-person learning due to concerns about being targeted by anti-Asian racism (Balingit et al., 2021).

Based on the Stop AAPI Hate Youth Report (Jeung et al., 2020) that tracked the incidents of anti-Asian discrimination experienced by youth from March to July 2020, Asian American youth were more likely than adults to be harassed at school, public parks, and online. The perpetrators in over half of the incidents employ anti-Chinese hate speech, blaming China and the Chinese as a source of the virus, and mocking Chinese dietary habits (Jeung et al., 2020).

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Furthermore, bystanders tend to intervene in only a fraction of the cases, even though adults were present in almost half of the incidents (Jeung et al., 2020). Similarly, in a study of specific racial discrimination experiences in Chinese American families, nearly half of the youth and parents had experienced direct discrimination online and/or in person, and many more had witnessed discrimination of others of Asian descent (Cheah et al., 2020). Higher levels of experiences with racism were associated with poorer mental health, including decreased psychological wellbeing, increased symptoms of anxiety and depression, and increased internalizing and externalizing problems in youth (Cheah et al., 2020). This study occurred between March and May of 2020, and the impacts have likely accumulated, adding to the long history of discrimination experienced by the Asian American communities before the current pandemic ever arrived.

### ***The Need to Explore Youth's Resilience during Covid-19***

The risk and threat of the effects of Covid-19 on youth's wellness and development are real and warrants attention. However, "a sole focus on risk will miss resilience processes that can advance science, services, education, and policy aimed at understanding how children and adolescents respond to crisis" (Dvorsky et al., 2020, p. 1). In fact, the field of psychology has been calling for a shift to support the resilience of children and families during the Covid-19. The field calls for more empirical studies to understand youth and families' protective factors during the pandemic (Cheah et al., 2020; Prime et al., 2020; Stark et al., 2020). One study has found that during Covid-19, increasing texts, phone calls, and video calls with families and friends was associated with emotional wellbeing for adults (Brown & Greenfield, 2021). Other researchers have found that school-age participants employed the following coping strategies during Covid-19 to cope with the heightened stress: adopting Covid-19 preventative practices,

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staying connected with others, positive framing, and self-distraction (Demaray et al., 2020; Waselewski et al., 2020).

One major limitation of the research to date on the adaptation and resilience for school-age children during Covid-19 is the underrepresentation of children of color respondents (Parker et al., 2021). Understanding the resilience of immigrant Asian American youth, who have been disproportionately affected by the heightened anti-Asian racism and Sinophobia (Jeung et al., 2020), apart from their White peers, can reveal social- and cultural-specific factors that educators can promote. Understanding the protective factors and resilience also helps shift the dominant narratives away from a deficit view, toward an asset- and strength-based portrait of the Asian American community (Tuck, 2009). The course of the pandemic remains unclear, but with the rollout of vaccines and more schools offering in-person learning, understanding immigrant Asian American youth's culturally specific ways of coping is crucial to inform education and services provided to support their adjustment to a post-Covid world.

### **Study Rationale**

The dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism caused acute and prolonged stress that negatively impacts immigrant Asian American youth's development and wellbeing. Research is urgently needed to explore protective factors and identify adaptive coping skills for this population that can ameliorate the negative effects of these stress (Cheah et al., 2020). The purpose of the current study is to explore the ways immigrant-origin Asian American youth in a metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest experience, cope, and adapt during the Covid-19 global pandemic, racial reckoning, and remote learning. Specifically, the research questions are:

1. What were the challenges immigrant Asian American students experienced because of the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systemic racism?

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2. In what ways did local immigrant Asian American high school students cope with those challenges and adapt to their life impacted by the dual pandemics?
3. What were the protective factors that support the adjustment of immigrant Asian American students during the Covid-19 pandemic, remote learning, and racial reckoning?

### **Conceptual framework**

To contextualize and interpret immigrant Asian American students' experiences and coping strategies during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Integrative Risk and Resilience Framework (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018) for immigrant children's adjustment and an intersectionality approach were used. The Integrative Risk and Resilience Model (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018), built upon the seminal model created by Coll and colleagues (1996), synthesized the ecological and the risk and resilience frameworks of child development for immigrant-origin children. The intersectional approach considers the "simultaneous and mutually constitutive effects" (Viruell-Fuentes et al., 2012, p. 2099) of multiple social categories (e.g., race, class, gender, immigrant status hierarchies), and how these shape immigrant health inequities (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1990). Together, both concepts provide a lens to understand and analyze the protective factors and coping strategies immigrant Asian American students used during Covid-19, eventually informing policies and practices to support their continued adjustment and social-emotional wellbeing in the "new normal."

**The Integrative Risk and Resilience Model.** This model incorporated a multi-level approach to understand immigrant youth's developmental risks and resilience, with the added contexts of globalization and undocumented status (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018). The model proposes that immigrant youth's development is nested within the global context, influenced by political and social contexts of reception in the host country, interconnected with the

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microsystems of neighborhood, school, and family factors, and is shaped by youth's individual level factors (e.g., biological predisposition, social-emotional resources, coping with perceived discrimination). The immigrant-origin youth's development and adaptation were also conceptualized into universal tasks of development (e.g., independence, academic achievement, social connections) and psychological adjustment (e.g., wellbeing, identity, sense of belonging) for all youth, as well as acculturative/enculturative tasks specific to immigrant-origin youth (e.g., learning and maintaining heritage culture, ability to bridge cultures). A simplified version of the model based on what was most applicable to the current study can be found in Figure 1. The Integrative Risk and Resilience model provide the flexibility to examine the socialization forces and coping resources for immigrant Asian American students across the different, comprehensive interpersonal and intrapersonal levels.

**An Intersectionality Approach.** Immigrant Asian American students experience other systems of oppression in addition to racism. An intersectional approach is needed to understand immigrant youth's contextualized and complex lived experience. Intersectionality theory is rooted in Black feminists' theory and critical race theory by scholars who argued that Black women's experiences were shaped by race and class in addition to gender (Collins, 2002; Crenshaw, 1990). Rather than conceptualizing race, gender, class, and other identities as separate social categories, the intersectionality framework considers "the meaning and consequences of multiple categories of social group membership" because these systems of oppression work together to produce inequality (Cole, 2009; Collins, 2002; Crenshaw, 1990; Viruell-Fuentes et al., 2012). Utilizing an intersectional approach also rejects the essentialized notion of race and culture that cultures are static and immutable and are tied to specific racial groups (Tseng & Lee, 2021). Using the intersectional approach helps the narratives about Asian Americans away from

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a deficit and pathologized view and toward an authentic way, revealing their full complexity and humanity (Tseng & Lee, 2021). The current study explored the effects of the intersectional social identities immigrant-origin Asian American youth have on their experiences during the dual pandemics to uncover their authentic stories.

### **Chapter 3: Method**

#### **Research Design**

A critical qualitative research design was used in this study to understand Asian American immigrant youth's lived experiences and coping strategies during Covid-19 pandemic. Qualitative research seeks to understand and explore one's experiences through collecting relevant information surrounding the experience and reporting them (Bhattacharya, 2017). Critical qualitative research also interrogates one's experiences influenced by race, gender, and other forms of identities in social categories, highlighting the issues of inequities and marginalization (Bhattacharya, 2017). In the current study, the qualitative research method allowed me to center students' voices in exploring the resilience of local Asian American immigrant students across various interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts during Covid-19. It also helped me interrogate how their intersectional experiences of multiple social categories in the US shaped the ways they cope during the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### **Context of the Study**

Participants were recruited from a city in a metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest with 35% of the population identified as Asian (US Census Bureau, 2019), which is higher compared to all other cities in the surrounding area. All participants attended two public high schools, Blue Crane High School and Sunshine High School located in the Grandview school district.<sup>1</sup> The student populations in the two schools have contrasting sociodemographic characteristics. Of the four high schools in the Grandview School District, Sunshine High School has the highest percentage of students identified as Asian, and the lowest percentages of students characterized as English Language Learners and low-income by the state. The Blue Crane High

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<sup>1</sup> Pseudonyms were used for the two schools and the school district.

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School has the opposite: the lowest percentage of students identified as Asian, highest percentage of students characterized as English Language Learners and low-income. The socio-demographic information of the two schools can be found in Table 1. The Grandview district provides a unique context to look at the interactions of factors at the political and social context of reception level (e.g., attitude toward immigrants in the host society) and the microsystem level (e.g., school, neighborhood, and family) within the risk and resilience model (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018).

### **Participants**

Fourteen adolescents (Male = 6, Female = 7, Nonbinary = 1) who identified as Asian origin, have at least one parent born outside of the United States, and attended high school in 2020 and 2021 calendar years were recruited in the study. The average age of the participants was 16.64 years old. Many of the student participants were in 11th grade during the 2020-2021 school year ( $n = 6$ ), while other participants attended 9th ( $n = 1$ ), 10th grade ( $n = 4$ ), 12th grade ( $n = 2$ ), and freshman year in college ( $n = 1$ ) in the 2020-2021 school year from home. A summary of the youth participants' sociodemographic information can be found in Table 2. Detailed presentation of participants' other sociodemographic information can be found in the Results section. Four adult participants (i.e., three school staff, one parent) identified by the student participants as supports participated in the study via a survey.

### **Participant Recruitment**

Upon the approval of the dissertation proposal by my supervisory committee, I submitted the UW IRB application for the study and received approval on July 6th, 2021. The interviews were collected between July 2021 and November 2021. Purposeful, criterion sampling was used to recruit youth participants to investigate Asian American high school students' experiences

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during Covid-19. Youth who identify as Asian-origin, who attended high schools since the Covid-19 school closure in March 2020, who lived in a city with the biggest Asian population in a metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest, were recruited. A \$20 gift card of the participant's choice was offered as an incentive to recruit participants. An electronic recruitment flyer with a link to a Google Form with screening questions was sent out to the school staff identified on the local schools' websites who are likely to work with many Asian American students (e.g., Asian Student Union club advisors). The flyer was also posted on my Instagram account as I am personally connected with local Asian American youth and families. I also engaged in snowball sampling where the recruitment flyer was shared with enrolled participants to distribute to their peers who may be interested in participating in the study.

If the youth was eligible to participate based on their responses to the screening form, a recruitment email to both the youth and their parents/guardians with information about the researcher and the study was sent to explain the consent and assent process. Parent consent and student assent to participate in the study were collected via emails or text messages to enroll the youth in the study. For youth participants who were age 18 at the time of the study, consent was directly obtained from the youth electronically. The consent forms can be found in Appendices A, B, and C. Then, the youth participants were asked to fill out the pre-interview Google Form survey with questions about their socio-demographic information (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, language preferences), as well as their preferences for in-person or Zoom interviews. The blank Google Form survey can be found in Appendix D.

I consulted with my supervisory committee members to determine the minimum of 10 participants were needed for the study to generate themes from the interviews. Thirteen participants were recruited between July and September 2021, with two participants from Blue

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Crane High School and the rest from Sunshine High School. After consulting with my supervisory committee chair, the recruitment process stopped after the last participant from Blue Crane was recruited in November, 2021 due to time constraints.

### **Protocol Development**

Pre-interview survey responses, semi-structured individual interviews, the maps generated from mapping activities, and survey responses to questions for adult participants were the forms of data generated for the study. I first developed the semi-structured individual interview and mapping activity protocol. Questions about the participants' sociodemographic information (e.g., gender, age, sexual orientation, immigration status, years living in the US) and about the participants' family members (e.g., years living in the US, languages used between family members, parents' education level) were asked to understand the participants' social positions. The instruction of the mapping activity and probing questions were composed based on the intersectionality framework and factors embedded in the ecological systems the participants were in.

The draft of the protocol was first tested on other graduate students in the School Psychology program participating in my faculty advisor's research meeting. Revisions were made to the instructions to be more open-ended to encourage participants' interpretation as they were regarded the expert in their own experiences. It was also decided that a template for the mapping activity should be used to provide a temporal anchor to help the participants recall significant events during Covid-19.

Further revisions were made once the protocol was reviewed by my supervisory committee members. The participants' sociodemographic information was converted into a survey to be sent before the interview to shorten the interview time, hoping to reduce fatigue

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during the mapping activity and related probing questions. Questions about participants' family immigrant story and sociodemographic questions were kept in the interview to establish rapport with the participants. The example questions sent to adult participants to triangulate the data collected from youth participants were also drafted and approved at this time.

The pre-interview survey, the protocol for the individual interview and mapping activity, and the template for the mapping activity were piloted with three adults that I recruited from my personal network who identify as Asian. One interview occurred in person and the other two occurred via Zoom. Feedbacks on the wording of questions and the pacing of the interview were provided and adopted. The finalized version of the pre-interview survey, the protocol for individual interview and mapping activity, the template for the mapping activity, and the example questions to adult participants can be found in Appendices D, E, F, and G.

### **Data Generation Procedure**

The youth interviews lasted 41 to 151 minutes, with an average interview time of 85 minutes, depending on how much the youth participants had to share. Two participants chose to complete the interview in person at a communal place (i.e., one in a park, the other in the outdoor seating area of a coffee shop), while the remaining 12 participants completed the interview via Zoom. Two participants chose to respond in Mandarin Chinese during the interview, and one participant used a mixture of English and Chinese, while the rest of the participants used mostly English in the interview. I am bilingual and biliterate in the Mandarin and English.

The interview began with clarifying questions on the pre-interview survey, as well as questions about the student participants' family's demographic information and immigration story. Next, participants were instructed to complete a three-part mapping activity. First, I asked the participants to identify significant moments or events during Covid-19 on a timeline. After

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the events were identified, participants were asked about their thoughts and feelings about those events and probing questions about their experiences and perception on racism. Second, I asked the participants to draw or write down the people, resources, places, and activities that helped them go through those identified significant events as the mapping activity. The participants were given as much time as they wanted to work on the mapping activity. After the participants finished drawing or writing, they were asked to explain the maps verbally. Participants were encouraged to use any languages, colors, lines, or other creative outlets when constructing the map and share what they composed. Probing questions about supports from peers, family, school, and the community were asked. Lastly, I asked the participants to reflect on what they learned from the whole experience with Covid-19 and how this experience had shaped them as a future adult.

During the mapping activity, I also constructed my own personal map with the participants to limit my gaze when the participants were working on theirs, to promote authentic interchange, and to reduce the power difference between the researcher and the researched (Annamma, 2018). For participants completing the activity online, a shared Google Slide Deck was used to construct the map. For participants completing the activity in person, paper with the printed timeline like the Google slide, blank paper, and colored markers were provided. The Google Slide template can be found in Appendix F. All participants chose to use the template to construct their maps in person and virtually. The maps generated from the mapping activity were converted and saved electronically. All sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim afterward. Member checks were integrated throughout the interview as I summarized and reflected the participants' answers to each question to ensure my interpretations represent participants' experiences (Glesne, 2016).

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After the individual interview, participants were encouraged to identify individuals that supported their social-emotional wellbeing during Covid-19 and share their contact information. Twelve school staff members and three parents were identified as supports and were contacted and invited via email to participate in the study to give input on what helped Asian American youth survive and thrive during Covid-19 through a Google Form survey. The survey can be found in Appendix G. Twenty-five percent of the school staff members ( $n = 3$ ) and 33% of the parents ( $n = 1$ ) responded to the invitation and contributed to the study by completing the Google Form survey. Participants were also asked to identify any social media products (e.g., social media accounts, YouTube videos) that have supported them during this time. The identified social media products were reviewed for data triangulation.

### **Data Sources**

Individual interviews and the narratives and maps coming out of the mapping activity embedded in the interview with Asian American youth were the main data sources of the study. Social media content identified by the youth participants as supportive, and the input from school staff members and parents identified by the youth participants were supplementary data sources to triangulate the findings. In-depth, semi-structured individual interviews with a mapping activity were conducted to answer the research questions. In-depth interviews focus on understanding one's experiences thoroughly, using probes to peel away the superficial understandings to gain a deeper understanding of one's experiences (Bhattacharya, 2017). Semi-structured interviews involve prepared questions in advance to maintain consistency across interviews, allowing comparisons of responses for each question for the participants, as well as the flexibility to ask follow-up questions particular to participants' responses in the study (Bhattacharya, 2017). The individual interview in the current study was designed to be in-depth

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*and* semi-structured to gain insight into the youth participants' experiences, maintain consistency across the interviews, and provide flexibilities to ask follow-up questions specific to each participant.

Mapping, as a qualitative method, connects theories and the stories people talk about themselves across time and space and facilitates the understanding of identity processes, social representations, and the effect related to these processes and representations (Futch & Fine, 2014). In addition, mapping allows participants to interrogate the space between individual experiences and the social structures, revealing the relationships between personal experiences and macro-level inequities (Futch & Fine, 2014). Finally, mapping provides an opportunity for historically marginalized students to offer counterexamples to challenge the dominant representations of the world (Annamma, 2018).

Interviewing and mapping allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of Asian American students' experiences and coping during Covid-19 from their perspectives. The interview protocol included asking participants questions about their socio-demographic information and their family's immigration story to help get to know the participants and help them warm up to the mapping activities. The mapping activity provided a temporal anchor and physical space for students to reflect on their experiences during Covid-19 and identify the intersectional factors that helped them survive and thrive during this time.

To triangulate the data generated from the interview and mapping activity, surveys on Asian American youth's adaptation completed by school staff and parents who were identified by youth participants were collected. Obtaining inputs from adults who were supportive in the youth participants' life provided an observer's perspective on immigrant-origin Asian American

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youth's development during Covid-19 that the youth themselves might not be aware of. The survey responses made up another source of data for the current study.

The content of social media products that participants identified as helpful was reviewed as well to triangulate the data from participant interviews and mapping activity. I reviewed the social media content independently from the participants' own interpretation of those content. The social media content provided richer information on the political and social contexts the participants existed in during Covid-19 to enhance the understanding of the data generated from the interview and mapping activity.

Taken together, the youth interviews and the maps produced from the mapping activities were the primary data sources for the current study. The input from identified adult supports and social media products that were identified by the participants were supplementary data sources to enhance the credibility of findings from the interview and mapping activity. Using multiple sources of data allowed me to re-represent the local Asian American youth's adaptation during Covid-19 more accurately.

### **Researcher Positionality**

Being an immigrant Asian American woman graduate student myself, Covid-19 and related social events have drastically shaped my working and schooling experiences. As an adult, I grappled with issues on health and safety, maintaining relationships with transnational family members, reckoning with racial and social justice issues, and exploring my self-identity during the 2020-2021 school year. Working at the local high schools as a mental health intern this school year, I witnessed firsthand the distress among high school students during Covid-19 and remote learning. Taking the methodological stance of humanizing research with historically marginalized youth (Paris, 2011) and aspiring to shift from damage-centered to asset- and

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strength-centered work with communities of color (Tuck, 2009), I wonder about the other side of the story-- how did students, especially Asian American students with multiple social identities, experience the Covid-19 pandemic? What were some successful strategies they used to adjust to the “new normal”? Having shared experiences with Covid-19 as an immigrant Asian American woman myself, I believe the role of the researcher in qualitative research is to collaborate with participants to make sense of the collective experiences.

When working as an intern-mental health counselor in the 2020-2021 school year at Blue Crane and Sunshine, I participated in the general meetings of the equity-oriented student clubs at Blue Crane and Sunshine high schools as a guest staff member once a week for about eight weeks at the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Even though I was not directly involved in participants’ daily life as someone who only worked in the schools for one day a week, I still must attend to the power dynamics both with the participating students and staff. Presenting as an Asian American staff member and sharing my personal stories in the club meetings where I could potentially recruit participants helped establish relationships and gain trust from my participants. My position as an Asian American, previous school staff may encourage Asian American students to share their stories because of our collective experiences, which may be inaccessible to “outsiders” due to concerns about shame and misunderstanding. On the other hand, I needed to constantly reflect on how my own immigration experiences-- born in the US, attended K-12 schools in China, and went to college in the US myself, might affect how I interpret the participants’ experiences. For example, I may project my positive experiences interacting with my transnational family members on my participants, who may have family members in Asian countries but do not view them as close or supportive. Constant self-reflection

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and regular member checks (Glesne, 2016) were important for me to capture my participants' voice.

Furthermore, as a graduate student in a prestigious university and a former school staff member, students and adult participants might regard me as an authority, feeling forced to share their experiences or only parts of their experiences they thought I preferred to comply with my requests. Therefore, I needed to convey humility, honor the value of the participants' experiences, and emphasize the volunteering nature of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

For interviews conducted via Zoom, automatic transcripts were generated and then I transcribed each interview verbatim based on the automatic transcript. The audio recordings of the two interviews occurred in-person, as well as the two audio recordings of the interviews where the participants chose to respond in Mandarin Chinese, were first automatically transcribed by Sonix (Sonix.Inc, 2022), an online speech-to-text service that were capable of transcribing contents in multiple languages, including English and Chinese. Afterwards, I transcribed each interview verbatim based on the automatic transcripts in either English or Chinese. I wanted to authentically represent participants' experiences, so I completed my analysis based on the transcripts in languages the participants responded in (i.e., English and/or Chinese). I only translated direct quotes from my participants from Chinese to English using a combination of verbatim and general meaning translation (Oxley et al., 2017) when I used the quotes to support my claims.

The constant comparative method was used to analyze the interview and the mapping activity data. The constant comparative method combines the analytic procedure of constant comparison with explicit, systematic coding procedure with theory development (Glaser, 1965).

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The constant comparative method, an inductive data coding process, allowed me to identify themes that are common in Asian American youth's experiences navigating and coping with Covid-19.

Right after each individual interview with Asian American students, I wrote down initial thoughts about themes that came up in the interview. The recordings were transcribed and maps were converted electronically when all the interviews were completed. Responses to surveys sent out to youth-identified supports were compiled into a text document. Identified social media content was reviewed and notes were taken on contents that related to the themes generated.

### ***Codebook Development***

I collaborated with another Chinese American school psychology doctoral student from my graduate cohort, who is bilingual and biliterate in Chinese and English, to generate the codebook. We first independently open-coded two transcripts from Yanzhe and Sharon<sup>2</sup>. The open coding process included using one word or a short phrase to capture the attribute of participants' narrative or content that may have been potentially relevant for understanding the current study's research questions (Miles et al., 2014). Yanzhe and Sharon's interviews were selected as a starting point for open coding because they generated rich, detailed information for developing a coding theme. Interviews were read multiple times to detect and identify possible codes. For example, one potential code was a reference to social connections, so notes were taken when either of the participants mentioned texting friends, or video-chatting family members they could not visit in person. The code was further broken down for references to the participants' actively seeking social connection or grappling with a loss of social connection.

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<sup>2</sup> All participant names are pseudonyms.

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We then discussed the list of all codes we generated and looked at major and subcategories, combine redundant codes, and then put together a coding scheme informed by the study's conceptual framework (Glesne, 2016). For example, we grouped codes of "getting a job", "getting a driver's license", and "time management" into a category of "independence" as they all related to youth gaining more skills and privileges. Another example is that we separated the category of "intergenerational conflicts" into two subcategories, one "universal intergenerational conflicts" and "intergenerational conflicts specific for immigrant-origin youth" to capture the nuances of how the immigration produced specific intergenerational conflicts for immigrant-origin youth related to acculturation.

Afterwards, we coded transcripts of Lily and Kyle using the tentative draft codebook to see if additional codes are needed. Lily and Kyle were selected because they have contrasting sociodemographic characteristics than Yanzhe and Sharon in terms of grades, language preferences, and years living in the US. Some new codes emerged from coding Lily and Kyle's transcripts and reflecting back on Yanzhe and Sharon's transcripts. Some example new codes include "building an Asian American community", referring to their efforts of organizing events and school clubs for Asian Americans to come together, and "invisibility of racism against Asian Americans" when they internalized model minority myth or identified that they were not personally affected by racism against Asians. A finalized codebook was generated, and I coded the rest of the transcripts using the finalized codebook. The codebook can be found in Appendix I.

### *Thematic Analysis*

I first made lower-inference and higher-inference claims based on the content of the categories and looked for evidence in the data to build a "pyramid of claims" (Erickson, 1986, p.

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148). For example, in the category of “independence”, I made lower inference claims to describe what happened, that the participants obtained jobs, learned how to drive, and increased study skills and time management skills during the economic fallouts and remote learning. I then made a higher inference claim that the dual pandemics created circumstances that forced the Asian American youth to increase their level of independence to interpret the relationship between the contexts and the participants’ achievement.

I further compared the categories and looked for themes emerged across the categories. The categories were examined based on their content, connecting to contexts, comparing to each other, and relating to the study’s conceptual framework. Initial themes were identified, and I wrote analytic and reflective memos to capture my thoughts and hypotheses (Charmaraz, 2001). For example, the category of identity development, where the youth talked about the process of exploring heritage culture at home through interacting with their families and strengthening their own ethnic identity, was further analyzed to detect more nuanced themes. Within the category, some participants described their efforts to stop trying to fit in to the mainstream culture, and others described the process of identifying and selecting cultural practices from both the mainstream and their heritage cultures. Therefore, the themes of the participants moving away from assimilation and moving toward integration acculturation strategies emerged.

### *Establishing Trustworthiness*

To strengthen the credibility of my study, rapport needed to be established with the participants. I participated in the meetings and activities held by students’ clubs where I could potentially recruit participants to share my positionality, the inspiration, and intent of my study. During data collection, I started out each interview expressing my appreciation for the youth participants time spent to complete the surveys and participate in the interview. I then shared my

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positionality and explained the confidentiality of data to establish a safe environment for the participants to talk. I also reminded the participants that there was no right or wrong answers to the questions and encouraged them to speak to their personal experiences. Asking the participants about their family's sociodemographic information and immigration story was another strategy to establish rapport. Occasionally, I spoke of my personal challenges during Covid-19 to model vulnerability and open communications. I frequently checked in with the participants and reminded them that they could stop the interview at any time.

To further improve the trustworthiness of my study, I regularly reflected on and summarized the participants' answer to each question to confirm the intention of the participants' responses and ensure that I accurately re-represented their ideas. I also offered the participants the transcripts to the interviews at the end of each interview. I shared analytical thoughts with one participant, Katie, via an outdoor walk at her college campus, who reached out to me and was interested in the progress of the study.

Triangulation, the process to use various methods to gather data, multiple data sources, multiple investigators, or multiple theories to confirm the findings, is used to strengthen the credibility of qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I used the survey, the mapping activity, as well as the interview to generate data from the youth participants. I also utilized multiple data sources from the parent, school staff, and social media content to confirm the findings.

Lastly, I engaged in the peer review and examination process (Merriam, 2009). I collaborated closely with my faculty advisor and committee members throughout the project. I also used audit trail (Glesne, 2016) to document activities related to the research project, such as recruitment activities, email exchanges with participants, consultation with the faculty.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Sociodemographic Survey Results

Fourteen adolescents (Male = 6, Female = 7, Nonbinary = 1) who have at least one parent born outside of the US participated in the study. The average age of the participants was 16.64 years old. Many of the student participants were in 11th grade during the 2020-2021 school year (n = 6), while other participants attended 9th grade (n = 1), 10th grade (n = 4), 12th grade (n = 2), and freshman year in college (n = 1) in the 2020-2021 school year from home. Six of the youth participants were born in an Asian country, while eight of them were born in the US. For the six participants who had lived in places other than the US during their life, the average years living in the US is 6.17 years, with a range of 3 to 11 years living in the US. In terms of sexual orientation, 11 of the participants identified as heterosexual, one identified as homosexual, one identified as lesbian, and one identified as “fluid.” For language status, all participants identify as multilingual. One participant received the school’s formal multilingual support in the 2020-2021 school year. Six participants identified as comfortable in both their heritage language and English, while six participants prefer English, and two participants prefer their heritage language. The participants’ ethnic identity also falls on a spectrum when asked to only identify with one category (i.e., “of a specific Asian ethnicity like Chinese, Korean” = 3, “South Asian/East Asian/Southeast” = 2, “Asian” = 4, “of a specific ethnicity of Asian American” = 3, “Asian American” = 2). None of the participants chose to identify as “American” only. For religion, the majority of the participants (n = 7) identified as Atheist or having no religion, with the rest of the participants identifying as Christian (n = 2), Buddhist (n = 1), Catholic (n = 1), or Agnostic (n = 3). Most of the participants (n = 12) were a part of school clubs during the 2020-2021 school year. See Table 2 for a detailed summary of the sociodemographic information of participants.

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### **Family Sociodemographic Information**

The average number of people living in the households of the participants is 3.85, ranging from two to five people living in the same household. The majority of the participants ( $n = 10$ ) live with their biological father, mother, and full siblings during the calendar year 2020 to 2021. Among the other four participants, Hunter lives with his biological father and paternal grandmother. Wushan lives with his biological mother and step-father. The other two participants live in transnational split households. Yanzhe lives with his biological father in the US, while his biological mother was still living in China. Kyle lives with his biological mother in the US while his biological father and older adult sister live in China. For participants' parent educational levels, the majority of the participants' parents have bachelor's degrees and above ( $n = 11$ ), while one participant was unsure of their parent educational level, and the two other participants' parents have primary or middle school levels of education.

### **Results from the Mapping Activity and Interview**

The number of events participants identified as significant for them since the beginning of the pandemic ranged from four to 17, with an average of six events. The maps and the narratives generated from the mapping activity constitute rich information on how the local immigrant-origin Asian American youth survived and thrived during the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism. Figure 2 is an example map from the mapping activity completed by Linda online, and Figure 3 is another example map completed by Sarah by hand in person. The following sections documented the challenges they faced and the ways they coped with the challenges and adapted to the situations. The participants also shared helpful supports from their contexts, as well as protective factors that were present before the dual pandemics that have promoted youth's resilience during the dual pandemics.

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### *Challenges*

The youth experienced intrapersonal challenges that occurred within themselves, as well as interpersonal challenges they experienced in relation to others. Like youth from other studies (Demaray et al., 2020; Waselewski et al., 2020), the participants in the current study also identified health concerns about themselves and loved ones around Covid-19, grappling with the sense of uncertainty, loss of social connections, academic worries, as well as grief over the loss of family members, fun activities, and celebrations personal milestones as challenges. The following sections elaborated on the challenges that are specific to immigrant-origin Asian American youth exacerbated by the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systemic racism: experiences of racism, intergenerational disconnection, and intersectionality.

**Experiences of Racism.** Within the United States, the immigrant-origin Asian American youth not only have to cope with stressors and change of routines as other adolescents, but they also have to navigate the heightened anti-Asian racism and xenophobia during Covid-19. Fortunately, when asked to reflect on direct or indirect experiences with racism during Covid-19, none of the participants reported experiencing direct racially-motivated overt aggression since Covid-19. Nevertheless, two participants experienced direct microaggressions in person during Covid-19: Hunter was “laughed at” during his bus commute because he was wearing a mask during summer 2021 when Covid-19 cases were declining but mask mandate was still in place; Calvin had an interaction at a grocery store where another person avoided him and whispered something when he passed by. Two out of the three school staff members who responded to the survey also confirmed that “racial violence against Asian Americans in the news” was one major challenge for their Asian American students during the 2020-2021 school year. Moreover, one school staff member who worked as a Graduate Success Coach to help struggling students, also

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pointed out that “while it was relatively rare, there were a few instances of students at our school saying offensive things or posting offensive memes in the online classes, as well.” The spotlight on anti-Asian racism also prompted youth to reflect on their experiences before Covid-19. Some youth who grew up in the US reflected on their experiences with microaggressions prior to Covid-19, including incidents related to the pronunciation of their names, the shape of their eyes, the model minority myth, and student-teacher interactions, especially in elementary and middle schools. Many had witnessed, since before Covid-19, racist comments against Asian people online.

When asked about the significant events since Covid-19, all but one participant mentioned reading about the news on anti-Asian hate crimes and its impact on their thoughts, feelings, and daily life. Many became even more cautious about going outside of the home. For example, Sharon’s family stopped going out for groceries and started using an Asian grocery delivery service. More were worried about their elder relatives who live in areas in the US where anti-Asian hate crimes were reported (e.g., San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, and Seattle). Katie, who was already active in racial justice work by participating in the Students Organized Against Racism club and starting the Asian American Students Union (AASU) at her school, was physically impacted by the news of the Atlanta mass shooting on March 16th, 2021, where a shooting spree in Atlanta caused the death of six Asian women (“2021 Atlanta spa shootings”, 2022):

“... [The Atlanta mass shooting] happened a couple of days before an AASU leadership meeting... it was very, it was bad. I had never felt so like, emotionally, like just emotional about... oh I had like physical anxiety, like shakes for like a full 24 hours. It is like that, and I never had that before. And so like I could feel sad all I want, but that was

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like a very, I couldn't super control that. I could like, because if it's a mental thing I can just, I can distract myself, I can think about something else, I can do homework, or whatever, but that was very like, present, all the time I was like doing this. And I realized that, that's sort of anxiety thing that I do...I was angry about...like we're seeing articles and conversations happen [about the shooting], and it was all like, it was kind of gaslighting towards Asians and Asian activists and I was really like I was, I think I was more mad about that, than what had actually happened because... I'm always expecting bad things to happen, to us, by white people, but it was just really weird and made me really mad to see, like all the racial, or racial equity... advocates and activists also add to the fire.”

For Katie, the level of violence the hate crime against Asian women, as well as the invalidation of Asians' experiences of racially motivated hate crimes by some social justice advocates, caused intense emotions that manifested physically. Most of the youth participants have experienced overt racism or microaggressions long before Covid-19. Since Covid-19, the drastic increase in anti-Asian racism violence further exacerbated their stress related to racism and impacted their daily life.

**Intergenerational Disconnection.** The quarantine and social isolation significantly increased the time immigrant-origin youth spent at home interacting with their parents. The increased awareness and display of systematic racism during this time magnified the acculturation differences between the youth and their parents. The acculturation differences in language use, attitude toward mental health, and the understanding and socialization into the US racial system created a sense of disconnection and conflicts between the youth and their parents that are specific for the immigrant-origin youth. Sarah, who was born in the US to parents who

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immigrated from Thailand, shared her reflection on why she was leaning more on friends than on her parents for support during the pandemic:

“I kept mentioning how my friends were a large part in my ‘survival.’ I think it was mainly because friends were easier for me to talk to, since I could talk about things in English. Whereas with my parents, I couldn’t speak or go into full detail with my now limited Thai vocabulary. Another thing... was that my friends could more easily understand and help me...my parents grew up in such a different environment and lifestyle. They would give me advice and such, but it felt less helpful compared to the ones that my friends could give me. I think this is just something about living with immigrant parents ... it feels as if we have such different life experiences, which makes me feel disconnected from them, and vice versa.”

The language barrier and the drastically different environment Sarah grew up in created a disconnection between Sarah and her parents, which led to her relying on her friends more for support.

Calvin, who was born in South Korea and moved with his family to the US when he was seven years old, mentioned the cultural differences in perception of mental health between him and his mother. The intergenerational gap in perception of mental health made it easier for him to ask his school counselor and teachers for help, rather than his mother, about his struggles during remote learning:

“...my mom, she, well she tried to talk to me about what was wrong, but then, I just didn't feel, I wasn't as opened-up as I was [with] my counselor because, especially like in Asian culture like, like mental and that stuff isn't really considered to be like a real problem. So like when I was like having those problems, mentally like opening up to my teachers and

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asking for help, yes. I don't think that [my mom] would understand. So I just didn't really...talk to her about that..."

Calvin chose not to ask his mother for help to avoid invalidation due to perceived differences in their acculturation on mental health issues, and relied on his school counselor and teachers for support.

In addition to language use and cultural values, another key difference that emerged between the parent and child generation of immigrants is the degree of understanding and socialization into the US racial structure. This difference was magnified and intensified between the parent and child during Covid-19 because of the racial reckoning social movements and the stay-at-home quarantine. Linda talked about having "tough conversations" with her parents who have different opinions and approaches to political issues due to their immigration backgrounds:

"...for my mother, it's because she grew up in mainland China and she never really um, even when she came here, she didn't really assimilate into the political structure of the two-party system, and so she never really like fully identified with one of the other and didn't really feel strongly about it... And then my dad has got a kind of like a little bit of the, pull yourself up from your bootstraps, immigrant refugee sort of mindset, that's like settled into him... It's a weird dynamic, but we don't really talk about politics, just in general, unless I bring it up and want to just start stuff..."

Linda, among other youth participants, had to initiate these conversations with her parents, assuming the role to educate their parents on the history and formation of systematic racism in the US due to different acculturation levels.

Katie, who was born in the US to parents who immigrated from South Korea in their 30s, talked about the lack of conversations about race in her household growing up. Because her

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parents grew up in a racially homogenous environment, she felt confused growing up when she encountered microaggressions in a white-majority elementary school. During the pandemic, their contrasting experiences growing up, especially pertinent to the US racial system, fueled the disconnection between her and her parents:

“[Race and ethnicity] affected my relationship with my parents. We were both, all of us are Asians in this house, obviously, but I mean I was like a biological child but, the fact that I grew up in [a Pacific Northwest State] and that I've had those experiences and I'm very invested in like racial work and just talking about race all the time, I will not shut up about it, and the fact that they're so, not like, not that they haven't experienced racism before, obviously that they have, but they never talked about it with me until I started this work and I was very like loud about it. And they also, I think that I when I first began, I really like, because there was no one to talk to, unless I call my friends or unless, or I just talked to my parents who were the other people... in the house. And I was sort of digging up and like going through past like my childhood and, like the fact that I grew up in that kind of space, not that I just experienced it, but it like really formed like my elementary school, like every developmental thing that I had in that stage of my life was also like affected by that. And so the weird mental things that I have, they don't really relate to, and they didn't get it and I don't think they get it now either, but that's fine like I don't know. So that's just sort of like. Added to maybe like if immigrant parents and their children often do not, like, understand each other just on a cultural level, like that was like another step that way of just being like, oh you guys don't get it, how like, sort of that eats away at you mentally...”

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During the Covid-19 stay-at-home quarantine and the racial reckoning, Katie initiated and engaged in conversations about race and racism in the US with her parents. She perceived a sense of disconnection from her parents because they grew up in racially homogenous South Korea as part of the majority, while she grew up in an environment with white supremacy as a minority. In the meantime, she also felt “I like didn't want to talk to them about [racism] because I felt like it was like my responsibility to like deal with racism, if you know and I mean like, to protect my own parents, [from] that sort of experience...” As the member in the family who was more familiar with the US mainstream culture, especially pertinent to the systematic nature of racism, Katie went between being “the one that's sort of constantly trying to educate them” and “avoiding the conversations” because she wanted to protect them from the physical and emotional harm of race-based hate crimes.

**Intersectionality.** The immigrant-origin Asian American youth in the current study experienced the challenges of anti-Asian racism and intergenerational disconnections that were specific to their backgrounds. Furthermore, throughout the mapping activity and the interview, the immigrant-origin Asian American youth’s intersectional identities (i.e., race, ethnicities, gender, sexuality, religion, nationality) uniquely shaped their experiences in the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism.

**Gender, Sexuality, and Acculturation.** For the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer plus (LGBTQ+) youth in the current study, their experiences during Covid-19 were uniquely impacted by the intersectional effects of their race, gender, family acculturation, and sexuality. Hunter and Jackie’s experiences offered some insights on how they navigated the environments within and outside of the home. Hunter identified as Asian American, male, and homosexual. Hunter explained how his sexuality influenced his experience during Covid-19:

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“During this time, I was able to like really do a lot of self-reflection, and then, so that has really allowed me to explore my like sexual orientation, more. And then so, because I've had that time, I'm like fully comfortable and kind of out about being gay, but the Asian aspect is kind of tough, because, my dad mainly, is really traditional I guess, in terms of like Confucianism and like that type of stuff like, he's like ‘oh, a man should be the head of the house’ and stuff ...so it's, it's kind of difficult having both aspects. And so, while in quarantine, like while I'm like exploring one side of myself outside of the house, whenever I do get the chance to go out, every time we come back, I do have to like, like kind of code switch.”

Remote learning, being less structured compared to going to school in person, increased the amount of time Hunter spent at home, but also provided him the time and space to reflect on his sexuality and ultimately became comfortable with his sexual orientation at the beginning of the pandemic. For Hunter, “it's kind of difficult having both aspects” of his Asian cultural roots and his sexual orientation. However, with online shopping available and that “my parents don't really care or check my room for anything”, Hunter was able to express himself through clothes when he was at home in his room.

Jackie identified as Thai, nonbinary, and lesbian. Like Hunter, Jackie also had to navigate their home culture in their extended family that was not accepting toward the LGBTQ+ community:

“...when I think about... how that identity and then also me being Asian, I kind of like first think about my family and... I feel like in my family like, especially with my extended family there isn't much acceptance for like the LGBTQ community, so I don't

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like really talk about it much with them... like I said earlier, I kind of... surround myself with people who I know are going to be accepting and stuff so. Yeah.”

Jackie coped with the differences in acculturation and values with their extended family regarding LGBTQ by intentionally steered clear of those topics to protect their own wellbeing, and selectively connecting with people who were supportive of them.

*Nationality, Family Citizenship Status, and Socioeconomic Status.* The multiple factors, including nationality, citizenship status, and socioeconomic status, and the global nature of the pandemic, created unique challenges for the youth participants who were born in an Asian country and still have close family members living in their countries of origin. Yanzhe’s mother could not return to the US as planned because of the travel bans between the US and China since the Covid-19 pandemic. Kyle could not attend his grandfather’s funeral in China due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, as well as the skyrocketing price of airfare between China and North America. Lily “really missed” the city she grew up in China because she could not visit for two years due to travel restrictions and the prolonged quarantine practices in China. However, Calvin was able to visit South Korea with his family in summer 2021, where he underwent strict quarantine practices when they landed:

“so um we scheduled this [trip]...when Covid was starting to get a little bit better, so we're like, ‘oh it's a perfect time to go,’ but then with the Delta variant... got suddenly worse, so like, they had all these new restrictions we had to like take a test, and then we sent the results in, and then a day before we get on a plane, we have to also take another test, so we take two there. And then once we got to Korea, we had to quarantine for two weeks and get three tests in that time. And then two weeks after I got out of the

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quarantine, I had to get another test, and then... a week before leaving, I also did another test..."

The travel restrictions and quarantine policies imposed by governments around the globe during Covid-19 directly impacted the lives of individual Asian immigrant-origin youth.

In addition, the pandemic brought economic uncertainties. Three participants in the current study dealt with their parents' loss of employment. These immigrant-origin youth not only had to grapple with the economic uncertainties brought by their parent's loss of employment, but they also had to grapple with issues with citizenship and immigration because their parents originally entered the US on a work visa. Henry, who was born in the US but his parents were Australian citizens, experienced the ripple effects of his father's six-month unemployment during Covid-19:

"So it was scary for many reasons, on the first one, obviously, is like my sister. She's going to [an out-of-state university] that's really, really, really expensive like. Like we had enough saved up to pay for her first semester, um but then, like the second semester was like really like we didn't know if we could afford that and then another thing is like you know we're Australians. We were about to like get kicked out because um, you know. We can't stay here unless he's got like employment, the visa stuff...yeah and... they haven't bothered with like green card or anything so. Yeah, they don't have the permanent status..."

Henry's father's loss of employment not only created the family's economic instability but also triggered uncertainty in their country of residence. Henry worried if he could finish his four-year high school experience in the same school, or if he could afford to attend a rigorous high school for only one year and go to a prestige college in Australia. Nationality, citizenship, and

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socioeconomic status created unique challenges for these immigrant-origin Asian American youth.

To summarize, immigrant-origin Asian American youth in the current study experienced challenges specific to them that were exacerbated by the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systemic racism. Many of them experienced racially-motivated microaggressions and were impacted by the anti-Asian violence that were highlighted during the dual pandemics. The youth also experienced intergenerational disconnection where the perceived acculturation differences caused additional stress and a sense of disconnection from their parents that were exacerbated by situations brought by the dual pandemics. The intersectionality of the youth's other social identities, including gender, sexuality, nationality, immigration status, socioeconomic status also created unique challenges for the youth participants in the study.

### *Adaptation*

Facing the challenges during the dual pandemics, the immigrant-origin youth in the current study employed resources within themselves and resources available in their communities to adapt to their ever-evolving daily life. Contrary to the popular assumptions that the children and youth endured "learning loss" academically and socially during the Covid-19 pandemic and remote learning, the immigrant-origin Asian American youth in the current study adapted to the challenges during the dual pandemics that resulted in their overall development at an accelerated the rate. They had to accomplish universal and specific developmental tasks for immigrant-origin youth within a shorter period. Essentially, they had to grow up faster. Many participants got a job they "otherwise would not have gotten" (Lily) because they were motivated by their parent's loss of employment and economic uncertainty during Covid-19. Many participants also identified improved problem-solving skills, time management skills, study

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strategies, and daily living self-care skills because of remote learning. In particular, these immigrant-origin Asian American youth gained valuable time to learn about themselves and from their families during this time. They gained insights on who they are through self-reflection, stumbled through the process of seeking and deepening social relationships in unstructured environments, moved through acculturation processes, and gained a deeper understanding of the systematic nature of US racism.

**Self-Reflection.** One theme that emerged from youth's experiences is their increased self-reflection as the result of spending more time alone and away from others during the pandemic, where they developed an increased ability to observe and evaluate their own cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes going through life. The ability to engage in self-reflection starts in adolescence and is linked to increased resilience and self-efficacy (Barkai, & Rappaport, 2011). For many participants, the isolation during Covid-19 provided them an opportunity to reflect on who they are and what they like as individuals, rather than trying to be like other people. For example, Sarah shared that "... I feel like I know myself a lot better now... I feel like I can be myself a lot more and like not have to try to, like, be like other people."

Furthermore, the self-reflection, combined with the Covid-19 related social events, allowed the youth participants to reflect on their own interests and what they want to do in the future. Sharon, who originally wanted to study computer science at the state university because that's what everyone else wanted to do, reflected on her personal values and interests for her future career:

"... I got to spend time away from like classmates who you know, like after Covid started, I realized that like I had been comparing myself to other people a lot... And I didn't even realize that I was like comparing myself to other people so yeah... I think it definitely

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made me feel like I want to be somebody who like directly helps other people when I grow up so... it's really changed, you know at first like last year, I thought I would do CS and college since everyone is doing CS in college. I didn't really have my own idea of what I wanted to do, but I think after seeing everything that's happening around the world, it made me feel like I want to do something when I grow up where I interact with people directly rather than like sit in an office all day and just you know behind like a technology, technological device all day you know. Maybe the technology, the technology part is just from being on Zoom the whole year. Yeah I was like, I'm gonna do something like actually go meet people and stuff you know.”

Similarly, Kyle also discovered his future goals during the pandemic through self-reflection:

“I'm more mature... before the pandemic, I only played [video games] every day. But now I've grown to like to study more, compared to before, I take more initiative to study. Beforehand, I really played video games from dusk to dawn, but it's different now... [because] I wanted to give back to my country [China]...like that, I wanted to go to [the state university] medical school or the school of foreign affairs because both of these are useful... Beforehand, I only thought about making money, getting more money... doing whatever job that makes more money. But it's different now, I have goals.”

Having lived in the US for four years, Kyle witnessed the conflicts and differences in public health practices between US and China during Covid-19. Witnessing the importance of international relations during globalization and increased exposure to information on public health, Kyle was inspired and formed his future career goals. The unstructured downtime away from others provided these youth time and space to engage in self-reflection, learn from real-life events, and discover who they are and what they want.

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**Seeking and Deepening Social Connections.** The youth participants shared various ways they coped with stress and situations that came with the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism, like self-reflection. Consistent with what researchers found when the Covid-19 pandemic first started (Demaray et al., 2020; Waselewski et al., 2020), participants in the current study also used coping skills of self-distraction, creative means, and positive framing. One particularly important coping strategy the youth in the current study developed is seeking and deepening social connections. Not only did the youth participants recognize the importance of social connections on their wellbeing, but they also developed the social skills needed to maintain those relationships that helped them adjust to post-high school life. For instance, Lily described how Covid-19 circumstance taught her how to make friends in real life, outside of the school environment:

“Because, I guess Covid has taught you how to like try to maintain [relationships], even if you can't see them in person, and you know it really taught you, it's like, if you're important to someone like, you know they'll, you'll make an effort and you'll stay close to each other. I think... that will be very helpful in college, because we will all be leaving, and I think it's just like, making friends, I guess, when you don't have school, it's like in life, like meeting new people, connecting with people like, how would you do that without like a classroom...”

On her accelerated ride to adulthood, Lily explained how she needed to adapt to maintain relationships outside of a structured environment of a physical classroom during Covid-19.

In addition, many participants deepened their emotional connections with their existing relationships by being able to ask for help from each other and talk about “heavier topics” (Henry) like sociopolitical events, mental health issues, and experiences with racism since the

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Covid-19 pandemic. The connections they made through the collective experience of dual pandemics made them feel less alone in this trying time. Calvin and his friends “matured” a lot through the pandemic and became closer:

“I got a lot closer with friends. Before... like underclassmen, we're kind of you know just like messing around and everything, but I guess when suddenly [things] got so serious because of Covid, and that we realized like something that we were juniors, seniors and then college freshmen, we were just like everything was like changing so fast. And we had time to sit down with friends and just like reflect about what changed and how like, we're changing ourselves and it just kind of we feel like the first time that we opened up and talked about like these like serious issues. Before we just know, we were still like just sort of out middle school and everything the freshman, sophomore, it was like this goofing around. But with Covid happening, I guess it kind of, I guess woke up and started to realize that you know, we had to like adjust to this new world...”

Calvin and his friends matured rapidly during Covid-19, and they started supporting each other on a deeper, emotional level than before by talking about “heavier topics.” Similarly, Dana learned that seeking social connections is a crucial way to cope with similar stressors in the future: “So I feel like I definitely learned that it's like okay to rely on other people. It's okay to like, talk about your feelings. It's okay to like, find someone to connect to.” Dana’s father also confirmed that “talking regularly to friends” helped Dana cope with stress in the 2020-2021 school year. Henry talked about distraction– “not thinking about” the stressful situations was a big coping mechanism for him, but through the pandemic, he was able to connect with his friends on a deeper level: “... I do feel like I can talk to people now. I need to...Because of this years’ experience, a lot of my friends have become like ... better people...we can talk about

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these heavier topics when we need to.” Sarah also talked about how over the past year, she opened up more with her friends about stress and anxiety and that helped her cope:

“... in the past year, I've also felt like some people...that I can more easily talk to about these [anxiety] issues and like, it does take off some of the stress, sometimes... I feel like I'm being able to like chat with people like even just online, like just having like a fun little conversation was always like a nice mood booster just made me feel like a lot happier.”

Furthermore, Sarah connected with her one friend on a deeper level through shared experiences with mental health challenges, which made her feel less alone and instilled hope of recovery:

“...I reached out to one of my friends who...she kind of like, opened up and also mentioned like how she used to struggle with something. So I had... like this one evening where I was just talking with her and that just like, made me feel a lot better... This was like right before we went on that picnic [which was a turning point for me to return to a normal life]. We both were like, she had some kind of an unhealthy relationship like that she managed to recover [from]... Yeah, she just understood kind of what I was going through, so yeah, that's what was really helpful... And I was just like feeling like I had a bit more confidence in myself that like I could break some of the habits that I had...”

Through a deeper connection with her friend, Sarah felt less alone in her struggle and gained confidence in her ability to recover. During Covid-19, the youth participants recognized the importance of social connections, found new ways to establish and maintain connections with others, and deepened their existing relationships through their collective experiences. Being able to talk with others about shared struggles validated their feelings during the dual pandemics and helped them feel less alone when they stayed at home.

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**Moving Away from Assimilation and Toward Integration.** Berry (2006)

conceptualized acculturation strategies in four general categories: assimilation, marginalization, separation, and integration, based on two continuums of attitudes and behaviors toward heritage culture and attitudes and behaviors toward mainstream culture. Empirically, immigrant-origin youth who engage in integration strategies had optimal psychological and sociocultural adjustment, followed by those engaging in separation, assimilation, and marginalization (Berry et al., 2006). Individuals' acculturation strategies can move between these categories over time and are influenced by social events. Youth participants in the current study showed patterns of acculturation moving away from assimilation and toward integration.

First, many youth participants moved away from assimilation strategies that they used earlier in middle school. Sharon shared how her own beauty standards and how she felt about her looks as an Asian person moved away from the Eurocentric ideals during the pandemic:

“... And she [my best friend in middle school who is white] had like you know the long eyelashes and the big eyes, you know all of that, so I definitely, in middle school was like, wow like, you know, I wish I had those like, features and I guess, I thought, a lot about like my outer appearance, whereas once I got to high school, I was like happy with you know who I am and I was happy with being Asian... I think now I've definitely come to terms that like you know I'm Asian in and I'm like proud of it and I'm glad I'm Asian so that was definitely like it took me a while to get there, but I'm glad I did...”

Sharon later identified influences that helped her move away from assimilation in terms of beauty standards, including spending more time at home away from others, and the influence of Korean popular music (K-pop). Similarly, Jackie recognized their own shifting in mindsets in balancing the mainstream US culture and their home Thai culture:

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“... I guess, when I was younger, I just kind of wanted to fit in more and... I felt like in order to fit in, I would like need to more like, erase my culture and... just the years in high school I've like realized that it's like something that's actually kind of important to me.”

Moving away from assimilation, Jackie has been “more involved” in the Thai community through activities like fundraising for Covid-19 relief in Thailand and attending the annual local Thai festival in the city.

Second, many youth participants in the current study shared their behaviors and attitudes that are moving toward the integration of their heritage culture and the mainstream culture. Some of them started exploring more of their heritage culture. Lily started a school club exploring mental health in Asian Americans. The school club activities included weekly meetings and conducting research by interviewing different generations of Asian Americans and their view and experiences with mental health. Lily’s club project explored how the mainstream topic manifested in their heritage cultural groups. Sharon further explored her heritage culture through critical reflection. Sharon critically reflected on the cultural differences between her heritage Japanese culture and the US culture and contemplated what works best for her:

“...so there are times when I'm like, I just don't like America because of all the racism and stuff but then I think that's like well Asian people in Asia are also really racist... for a few like weeks, I was like ‘oh, when I grow up, I want to live in Japan [because] maybe I would fit in better.’ Like it's I don't think I'd be able to live in Japan because of how conservative the culture is it's really you know, although there's a lot of bad things about America one good thing about like where we live, in the liberal areas that it's very

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progressive and like accepting towards people who like might be different from us, I think that's something that you know, I was really grateful for after thinking about it..."

Sharon's reflection was an indication of her integration acculturation strategy where she critically reflected on her heritage culture and identified what works for her in the mainstream culture.

Other participants were integrating their home culture to the mainstream school culture. Dana, who used to worry about the stereotype of "the South Asian, like saying that like...all of our food is like stinky," started to integrate her home culture with the mainstream school culture: "I've always been scared to, like, bring my food in at school, which I've now been bringing [after return to in-person learning in fall 2021]. Yay!" Linda was "avid" about her heritage cultural identities when meeting people:

"Oh well, people have to know I'm Chinese... if I'm meeting someone new I like, slip in that I know Mandarin or whatever, so that they don't accidentally like... assume like I'm Korean or something because like not that that's offensive or anything, but it's a very important part of my identity and my like home life as well. And so I also mentioned that I'm Chinese Cambodian...And I definitely try to mention my ethnicity and how important it is to me I think most people know at this point because I do so many projects on it and I'm very avid about it..."

For participants who had been interacting with people from their own cultural and ethnic backgrounds, they started having more contact with the mainstream ethnocultural groups. Calvin is moving from an Asian-majority high school to an Asian-minority college, where he was noticing his behavioral and attitude changes about interacting with non-Asian peers:

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“So growing up... I was always a little scared in a way to be like closer to...white people when I was here because ... I just didn't think I was really comfortable... When I started to meet more people at [the Asian-minority college] and expose myself to more non-Asian communities, I just think, I did notice, like the change in how I acted... With my [Asian] friends here, obviously more comfortable with them, so I acted more immature and the silly like that, but then... when I was like with my White friends and just act a little bit different, like I act more you know, mature and just more... I just change how I act around them, and I know that's not a good thing, but I just, I don't know, I'm working on, you know, being more comfortable with everybody...”

Calvin wanted to integrate his mannerisms when interacting with Asian and with non-Asian friends. The youth participants in the study were moving away from assimilation strategies that they used in middle school or before. Some spent more time exploring their heritage cultures critically. Some selected aspects from the heritage culture and mainstream culture that worked for them. Others started integrating their home cultural practices to school. Those who grew up with people with shared heritage backgrounds increased contact with people from the mainstream ethnocultural groups.

**Increasing the Level of Critical Consciousness.** The youth participants adapted to the challenges brought by the dual pandemics within themselves through self-reflection. They also adapted in relation to their heritage culture, moving away from the assimilation acculturation strategy and toward the integration strategy. The youth participants further adapted in ways in which they relate to the larger US society through increasing the level of critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is the process through which the social and political basis for marginalization and inequalities is developed and understood, and changes are enacted

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individually or collectively to address those inequalities (Pillen et al., 2020; Diemer et al., 2017; Freier, 1993). Many immigrant-origin Asian American youth in the current study grew up in an Asian-majority neighborhood in the US. For them, the rise of anti-Asian hate crimes since Covid-19 was the first time that they felt like racism could happen to them and to people they know. The related social events during Covid-19 increased their awareness of the systematic and prevailing nature of racism, increased the sense of urgency, and helped them develop an agency for change in immigrant-origin Asian American youth to advocate for racial justice for all. Linda shared that through “slow realization,” that the hate crimes could also happen to her grandma who is elder, lives in Seattle, and doesn’t speak English, and helped her arrive at the conclusion of “ I can't leave this alone now.” Similarly, Sharon also recognized how embedded racism has been in her life, which previously felt “distant” to her, until the rise of anti-Asian hate crimes since Covid-19:

“...I was always aware that there was like disproportionate like racism towards like, Black people, but I don't think I realized the extent of [racism] until the whole thing happened last year and then I also wasn't aware that, like it could happen to Asian people at all. It felt like something I was like really distant from, and I think this year when all that was happening, I was like, so this problem is like more personal than I thought...”

Through engaging in conversations with others at her Asian-American oriented school club, research initiated by herself, and witnessing discourses on microaggression on social media, racism was brought into Sharon’s awareness. She could recognize racism at display in her daily life. As a result, Sharon realized the urgency and her own agency to advocate for social justice: “the whole thing during quarantine has really helped me feel like there is something I can do, even if it's small it's still something like I can start to change, you know.” In fact, four out of the

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nine participants who identified specific social media content as supportive throughout the dual pandemics included social media products that provide educational information and advocacy on US racial justice issues. As observed by an adult participant who worked as a high school counselor in the 2020-2021 school year, “[the Asian American students] came together as a community, not just for Asians but also realizing the BLM Movement was something they wanted to support due to the racial injustice they were experiencing due to Covid-19 accusations.”

Katie’s journey during the 2020-2021 calendar year shed light on how the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism catalyzed her exploration of her own racial identity, racism, and activism for Asian Americans. Katie was born in the US to parents who immigrated to the US in their 30s. Growing up, Katie attended elementary school in a white-majority suburb and moved to the current Asian-majority area in middle school. Katie’s journey of exploring racial justice specific for Asian Americans in the US began when she took a class in high school called *Race, the US*. In January 2020, she joined the school’s Students Organized Against Racism (SOAR) club because “I wanted to keep talking about [racism], but there was literally no place to do it, so I was like I will just be here now.” She identified “George Floyd and the racial reckoning stuff” as her first significant event since Covid-19, where she entered a period of “a very self-doubting time.” Not being allowed to physically go to the BLM protests, Katie wondered “am I like walking my talk?” Since the “George Floyd and the racial reckoning stuff,” Katie also consolidated her passion for racial justice work because the experience and people’s positive reactions to racial justice work made her realize “oh, this is actually something that I do want to do, and also other people care.” Wanting to explore more about Asian Americans’ unique experiences with racism, at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year,

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Katie created the first Asian American Student Union (AASU) club at Sunshine High School, where over 50% of students identified as Asian. AASU created a safe space for Asian American students to engage in the conversation about racism and provided crucial supports for them during the rise of anti-Asian hate crimes. As Katie reflected on her journey during the interview, she acknowledged the catalytic effect of Covid-19:

“I probably would not have done it [starting AASU], if it was not Covid... and the fact that, like it upturned everything... if Covid didn't happen or just a regular couple years of school, I probably would have just, I would have hated it, but I probably still would have just like been in drama club, just sort of not caring about it, but on paper, it looks good to rise from secretary to president or whatever. So yeah I probably that's probably what I would have done, and so I like totally realize that.”

The Covid-19 pandemic, remote learning, and racial reckoning nudged Katie to explore her values, find her passion, and consolidate her identity as an Asian American woman. Instead of continuing with the drama club that she “doesn't care about but looks good on paper,” Katie founded the Asian American Student Club at Sunshine High School, where people may have been oblivious to Asian American's experiences of racism because of the “majority status” Asian American students have at the school. The immigrant-origin Asian American youth in the study increased their level of critical consciousness and enacted changes individually and collectively to address racial justice issues that were catalyzed by the exposure to the anti-Asian racism and violence highlighted during the dual pandemics.

### ***Protective factors***

Protective factors refer to conditions or attributes that were present in the individuals, families, schools, and communities before the stressful events occurred that can buffer the

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negative effects of the stressful events and increased the likelihood of adaptive responses from the individuals (Copeland-Linder et al., 2010). In the current study, the youth participants identified protective factors within themselves, family practices, school practices, and at the community level that helped them survive and thrive during Covid-19. The following sections shed light on unique protective factors that are specific for immigrant-origin youth.

**Individual Protective Factors.** Maintaining heritage language and connecting with heritage culture were individual factors that protected immigrant-origin youth in this study. Maintaining heritage language and culture allowed the youth participants to consume heritage cultural products (e.g., TV shows, popular songs, social media platforms in their heritage languages), which provided an escape from the constant exposures to white supremacy present in the US society in their daily life. Katie reflected on how going back to watching Korean drama helped her escape emotional burnout during the dual pandemics:

“I remember I got really into, I never really watched like K dramas or Korean TV, I mean I did when I was a kid. I was like one show that was fun. But then I got REALLY back into it like I’m still...but I like I really enjoy it like in the beginning of the pandemic, and I think, that also pulled me to like, when the racial reckoning is happening and whenever I felt blue about being American, and this country and everything... I wouldn't watch anything in English. I was like I will fully remove myself from the society, even though I can't do that and I still see race everywhere, it's not but it's less obvious that's fine and I don't know anything about that country, I guess, is what I told myself...”

Using her heritage language and cultural products, Katie temporarily escaped the white supremacy present in the US society and reconnected with something she enjoyed before. For

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Lily, she continues to follow Chinese news, social media, and entertainment that helped her “pass time and connect with the culture:”

“So fun fact about me like I really like to keep up with the celebrities, as for like I watched the Chinese dramas so like I like to keep up with like, Chinese stars, so I have Weibo [a twitter-like Chinese social media], so I will go on it a lot... And I watched that [very popular Chinese show] and that also it was like it was the way, I don't know it's like it's a way to pass the time but also, it was a way to like connect me like, back to Chinese stuff because I watched a lot of Chinese stuff just, one, it helps with my Chinese because I don't want to lose it all and two it's like, it's nice to be in a familiar culture.”

For many immigrant-origin youth, being immersed in their heritage cultural products can bring comfort and security, especially when uncertainties and social uprising were going on in the host country. Being able to access their heritage culture through their heritage language, as well as knowing the means to get to those heritage cultural products, provided them more ways to cope with uncertainties.

**Supportive Family Practices.** A few practices done by the family were identified as helpful for immigrant-origin Asian American youth to adapt to the challenges. Providing an environment to facilitate and maintain immigrant youth’s heritage culture and language was identified as helpful for immigrant-origin youth. For Dana, “during quarantine, I definitely got better at like learning my language... To me, it's important” because her dad would intentionally speak only their heritage language, Konkani with her. Dana’s home environment was extremely important for her to maintain her heritage language, Konkani, because “it's so hard to like find people who speak Konkani because it's like, it's not a very common language, especially here.”

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Similarly, Sharon's family practices also fostered her connection with heritage language and culture, while provided tools for Sharon to integrate the heritage culture with the mainstream culture. Sharon was born in Japan and moved to the US when she was about five years old. Sharon's family speaks Japanese to each other, and she was enrolled in Japanese school on the weekends where she has made friends. During the pandemic, Sharon also worked in a Japanese-owned small business where she got to "practice my Japanese with people outside of my family." Sharon also mentioned that her parents told her about what education and social rules were like in Japan, where Sharon reflected on her personal preference for US education that focuses on expressing one's own opinion. Routinely, Sharon's family also "...watch like Japanese news like together so that's kind of a time for us to like, you know, watch something together and then like talk about it" at night when they have dinner. Maintaining heritage language, providing access to heritage cultural products, and open communication with the youth about cultural differences fostered Sharon's ability to critically evaluate and accept the advantages and disadvantages in both US mainstream and heritage Japanese cultures, promoting adaptation during the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systemic racism.

Dana also found her family's faith was protective for her when coping with stressors brought by the dual pandemics. Dana was born in the US to parents who immigrated to the US from India in the 1990s. Most of Dana's extended family are back in India. Dana's family practices Catholicism. Dana and her family participated in their church's virtual mass every Sunday at the beginning of the pandemic and volunteered when the church activities resumed in person. Their faith has been an integral part of Dana's family's adaptation during Covid-19:

"Like over quarantine, like, my dad lost his job due to like all of like the things. But I think like...my family is very strong in like our faith, our Catholic faith. So having that,

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my dad, like he wasn't very stressed...He was really confident that like that with like our faith we could like go through and like, persevere and like. He ended up getting a job that he likes a lot and it ended up being a position where, like, he is really enjoying currently as well.”

Dana’s father’s faith gave him confidence and calmness when facing the loss of employment, which also reassured Dana and provided her a sense of security. In addition, faith also provided Dana more opportunities for social connections during this isolating time:

“I feel like during Covid like... I definitely found like who I knew I would be close with, like with my friends and stuff having that close like connections. I found out with these like church community, I found like, I'll probably be like friends with them for life, like kind of thing. And so that I'm not just like understanding my faith, but also knowing that there's going to be someone like within my faith who will always be there for me is kind of, it was comforting.”

The involvement with her church community not only deepened Dana’s understanding of her faith and provided a sense of security, but also provided her more opportunities for social interactions and created a sense of community.

Furthermore, the youth found their parents being open to learning about the mainstream culture, sometimes from their children, as protective to buffer the stress brought by the pandemic. For example, Linda identified her mother as the “most conservative” politically in her family. Linda was surprised and encouraged that her mother was “really open minded and open to learning [racial equity materials provided by her work] and...I thought that was really great...” as Linda herself was increasing her involvement in advocacy work during the dual pandemics. Similarly, seeing that her family is open to learning new things, Dana found support

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and relief when she initiated the conversation talking about the anti-Asian hate crimes with her parents and her siblings:

“So my family was like pretty open to the idea, to like to knowing and to learning. My dad and my mom both like think it's like important to like to stand up for the rights of every human. No matter what ...I think for like the AAPI hate, they definitely saw, like it's very like, it happens a lot. It is like evident in just like things that we see almost every day. So for those ones, they were definitely open to learning...which I was grateful for.”

For Dana, when her parents are open to learning new things from her, she felt relieved. For Jackie, parents' occasional acceptance and openness to learning from them was supportive:

“Sometimes like, I don't know, like my parents, I find like sometimes they just kind of say like a lot of ignorant things too and I don't know sometimes [when I correct them] they just get really annoyed over and like mad, but sometimes they're just kind of more like ‘thank you for correcting me.’”

For parents of immigrant-origin Asian American youth, it is important to recognize that the youth may be using different acculturation strategies (e.g., integration vs. separation). Being open to learning about the mainstream culture, sometimes from their children, can provide emotional support for the youth and boost their confidence, thus enhancing the parent-child relationship.

**Supportive Teacher Practices.** The youth participants in the current study shared various ways that their teachers and school have supported them through the Covid-19 pandemic, remote learning, and racial reckoning. One common theme was that the youth participants found their teachers' practice to reduce students' stress in turning in assignments, especially during remote learning, as helpful in relieving their stress from witnessing the social events and

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balancing obligations outside of academics. For example, Katie shared how her teacher's constant reminders on his flexibility about turning in assignments during remote and hybrid learning was helpful, even though she did not plan on using the extension at the beginning:

“My AP art history teacher...was much constantly really good at being like, ‘if you just message me, if you need like an extension on a homework, or if you need like to not do something, and all this is very cool’ about that and so...in the last couple months of school, I was constantly at school doing work for the musical production. And I was like ‘hey I’m really busy. I couldn’t completely finish this project, but I did do like, try my hardest’ and also like I did do like six slides out of the 10. And, and he was like ‘that was great, that’s a good boundary for yourself, way to go’... and I got full points on that and I think that was very helpful.”

Katie’s teacher’s constant reminders and following through with his flexibilities made it easier for Katie to balance her academic workload and extracurricular activities while maintaining physical and mental health. Sharon described how teachers’ flexibility and asking for students’ input made her feel like they are on the students’ side:

“I think it feels like some teachers are really on your side and other teachers are really like not on your side. It’s just like some teachers, I really, understanding of your circumstances, and you know gives you multiple chances. Even if you forget to turn in a homework assignment like you can still turn it in late, while other teachers are like ‘oh you forgot to turn it in you’re going to get to zero.’ And then there were times when I felt like that was unfair since like when the teacher makes a mistake it’s just a mistake, but when you make a mistake it’s like you know, and I guess like because of that it was really stressful to like be able to turn in all my assignments and stuff. So that stuff made me feel

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like maybe the teacher wasn't really on the student side... But it's not like I don't understand you know you have to draw that line-- I'm sure there are people making excuses, so you know you have to draw a line somewhere, but, especially when teachers asked for student input, I really appreciated it. It felt like they were really trying their best to make it a good experience for their students.”

By providing flexibility, asking for student input, and understanding the student's circumstances, the students felt respected, supported, and cared for by the teachers. The student-teacher alliance supported the students' adaptation to stressful events during the dual pandemics.

Another common theme in supportive teacher/school practices is the personal connections between teachers and students. In remote learning, the youth participants found teachers who intentionally fostered personal connections with them as supportive. Specifically, youth participants identified the following helpful practices that made them feel connected to their teachers, even during remote learning: (1) sending students individual messages to check in about academic related issues as well as about adjustment in life; (2) using check-in questions with the class before instructions began during remote learning; (3) sharing what was happening in their own personal lives. As Sharon summarized, “so I guess teachers who like are more human, I really like.”

**Supportive Teacher Practices Specific to Systemic Racism.** Specifically for events related to systematic racism at display during Covid-19, many teachers directly addressed this issue in their classrooms by sharing their solidarity and holding space during class for students to have conversations about what was happening in the society. Most youth students found those conversations helpful in their own processing of these events, even though they might not have directly spoken up during the conversations. Linda shared how two of her teachers addressed

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events related to systematic racism and related social events in two different ways that she found both helpful:

“There was one that was like ‘oh yeah, we're here for you the marginalized communities, especially, and I am a white woman... and I don't know these things I don't understand your experience, but if you need any time off or if you need space to like process this I'm here if you need it’, and I really appreciated that but, the other teacher that decided that the way that he would do it was educating us about the current events and I mostly knew about the current events, but I really did appreciate for the students that don't keep up with the news and so he basically did that and then left us to our own devices.”

Linda’s teachers, though through different approaches, directly addressed systematic racism as they occurred in social events during this time. The teachers validated the students’ feelings and centered the students’ needs during the tumultuous time, rather than focusing on traditional academic tasks. As Sharon summarized the effects of those conversations for her: “...a big thing was that, like people were talking about it so... I didn't feel alone, you know, even though I didn't really have much to share it was more just listening to other people.”

In contrast to the popular opinion, Katie voiced her concerns about the harm these conversations may have done if they were not facilitated well:

“The popular opinion is that, at least if the teachers trying to talk about it in class, then it's good. I don't, just personally, I feel like unless you're... a teacher who is very like going to talk about it well, or like conduct a conversation well, I would rather you just don't talk about it because I think more harm can come from bad conversations than good. It has been my own opinion.”

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Katie's reflection emphasized the needs for teachers to take conversations about racism thoughtfully, and be prepared and equipped to talk about systematic racism in the classroom. Students may be confused or even re-traumatized if those conversations are not handled appropriately.

**Asian-majority Environment as a Protective Factor.** Most of the participants identified the area they live in with high percentage of Asian population as a protective factor for their experiences growing up. The prevalence of Asian population at school and in the neighborhood provided them with an increased sense of belongingness because of shared cultural backgrounds. As Hunter put it:

“For like the Sunshine community that was there, the fact that there is such a large Asian community is nice in terms of not feeling like you're not part of something, because generally you do at least find someone because there's such a large like, group like, it's just so many Asians, that you have something to like, have like in common.”

However, the influences from the larger society, the US racial system, is inescapable. Practices that reinforce white supremacy and anti-Asian racism do not disappear automatically when the percentage of Asian population increased at school and in the neighborhood. Many participants reported experiencing microaggressions when interacting with others, and shared their own reflections on internalized racism, especially the model minority myth. Jackie also had direct experiences with “being called a dog eater” or “making fun of my parents' accents” in middle school, perpetuated by peers of white and Asian descents equally because those racist comments were perceived as “dark humor.” Hunter explained “a false sense of security” from anti-Asian racism prevalent in the Asian-majority school:

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“...I feel like because Sunshine has normalized having such a large Asian population and that's just like... I feel like it has caused... a false sense of security... like the awareness that Asians are still technically a minority as a whole in this country, is definitely thought about less. Going literally anywhere else in the country... if we ever go on vacation like to people who like move for like college, and then it's like a sudden shift...I guess is that false sense of security.”

Anti-racism practices and racial equity do not come automatically when a minority becomes the majority. Effort is still needed to address microaggressions and stereotypes, and to make the invisible practices that foster white supremacy visible.

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### **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The current study found that immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth's development was accelerated by the crises brought by the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism. Immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth experienced unique challenges pertaining to their social positions, including experiences of racism, intergenerational disconnection, and stress brought by their intersectional identities. The youth in the current study also adapted in ways in relation to themselves, to others, to the larger society. Individual factors, family practices, teacher practices, and the neighborhood environment supported youth's adaptation. The following sections explore how the findings were consistent with the Integrative Risk and Resilience Model for immigrant-origin children and youth. The findings also supplemented the model by adding critical consciousness development as an outcome of adaptation for immigrant-origin youth experiencing xenophobia and discrimination. Arguing against a "learning loss" perspective, the findings also promote an asset- and strength-based view on immigrant-origin Asian American youth's development during Covid-19. Practical implications will be discussed for educators and parents. Limitations on the current study design and methods, as well as future directions will be also discussed.

#### **Connecting to the Integrative Risk and Resilience Model**

The Integrative Risk and Resilience Model (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018) proposes that the nested levels of contexts immigrant-origin youth exist in and their development influence each other. The dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism have profoundly impacted the various contexts youth exist in, which in turn accelerated their development. The Integrative Risk and Resilience Model (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018) states that global forces, including global economic, geopolitical and social dynamics create unique social contexts for the

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development of immigrant-origin children. Covid-19 pandemic itself is a manifestation of globalization and uncovered the global forces that influenced individuals' daily life. The immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth in the current study experienced challenges that were prompted by the Covid-19 global pandemic, including grappling with a sense of loss and uncertainty, travel restrictions, health-related concerns, and academic challenges and worries (Demaray et al., 2020; Waselewski et al., 2020). To overcome these challenges brought by global forces, the youth participants adapted to the disrupted daily life and completed universal developmental tasks of increasing independence, growing a secure sense of overall identity, and maintaining social connections with others at an accelerated speed.

The Integrative Risk and Resilience Model (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018) describes the political and social contexts of reception as the political, societal, and economic factors, including attitudes toward immigrants, that are present in the host societies that can impact the development of immigrant-origin children and youth. For participants in the current study, the rise of anti-Asian racism and xenophobia negatively impacted the youth's emotional wellbeing. They worried for their own safety and the safety of their family members, and experienced "gaslighting," which included the denial of their own experiences. In response to the challenges within the political and social contexts of reception in the US society, the youth participants adapted by strengthening their connection to the heritage cultures and engaging in racial and social justice work within themselves and with others.

The Integrative Risk and Resilience Model (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018) defines the local circumstances and proximal interactions within neighborhoods, schools and families as the microsystems level of contexts that have profound impact on the development of immigrant-origin youth, and vice versa. The current study first highlighted the influences of the family

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context on the immigrant-origin Asian American youth's development. The current study revealed the challenges associated with intergenerational disconnection that these youth participants experienced due to acculturation differences from their parents. To address the challenges in the family context, the youth participants adapted to the intergenerational disconnection by deepening their knowledge and ties to their heritage culture and developing an increased sense of belonging with their ethnic communities when they spent more time at home for the quarantine. Using concepts from the acculturation model proposed by Berry (2006), the youth in the study were moving away from assimilation strategies by maintaining identification with their heritage culture, while also moving toward integration strategies, which are associated with higher self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological wellbeing (Berry et al., 2006). Because of the influence from the family context, the immigrant-origin Asian American youth in the study further engaged in acculturative tasks of developing a sense of social belonging and the ability to bridge cultures.

On the microsystems level, the current study also illustrated the impact of immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth's development and adaptation on their family context. During this time, some youth participants spent more time with their parents and found that parents who were flexible and open-minded as supportive during the dual pandemics, which was consistent with previous research on Asian American parenting (Qin, 2008; Atkin et al., 2018). In fact, the dual pandemics may have impelled some parents in the current study to adopt a more "lenient" and "less strict" (Jackie) parenting style to prioritize the overall wellbeing of their children during this time.

Within the individual level of the model (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018), one crucial factor for youth's development is intersectionality, that an individual's experiences are shaped by their

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intersecting social positions. The youth's experiences of the dual pandemics were complicated by their intersecting social positions of gender, sexuality, acculturation, legal status, and socioeconomic status. Gender, sexuality, and acculturation combined with the Covid-19 remote learning and stay-at-home quarantine created unique challenges for youth based on their social identities. Legal status and socioeconomic status combined with the travel restrictions brought by Covid-19 created unique loss of spending time with family members for Kyle and Yanzhe, and stress about relocation for Henry. To mitigate those stress, the youth adaptively learned from the experiences brought by their intersecting social positions and came up with creative and personalized ways to reconcile the stress. The LGBTQ+ participants used "code switching" as a strategy as they interacted with family and with friends, where they shift their behaviors based on the sociocultural contexts they are in. Other youth participants adopted strategies such as identifying other supports in their environment (Yanzhe), expressing themselves in creative ways (Hunter), and setting interpersonal boundaries by hanging out with supportive people (Jackie) to promote their wellbeing. The intersectional approach allowed a fuller picture of immigrant-origin Asian American youth's experiences during Covid-19 and rejected the essentialized notion of race and culture from a deficit view (Tseng & Lee, 2021).

### **Developing Critical Consciousness in Response to anti-Asian Racism**

One unique adaptation task the Integrative Risk and Resilience model did not include is immigrant-origin youth's critical consciousness development as a result of coping with xenophobia and racial discrimination. Critical consciousness is the process through which the individual develops and understands the social and political basis for marginalization and inequalities and enacts changes to address those inequalities (Pillen et al., 2020; Diemer et al., 2017; Freier, 1993). Critical consciousness is predicted to have protective effects against

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experiences with racism in marginalized youth, especially through engaging in actions against oppression (Herberle et al., 2020; Cadenas et al., 2021; Marker Castro et al., 2021). The current study provided insights on how the Asian/Asian American youth developed critical consciousness that is consistent with the model proposed by Piller and colleagues (2020) through racial reckoning during Covid-19. The series of events of police brutality at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic served as priming events and created the information disequilibrium for many youths in the study. They witnessed the system of oppression in action and they could not look away due to quarantine at home. Many youths then started introspection, researching topics on race and racism in the US through social media and reflecting on their own beliefs and practices. The news about anti-Asian racism violence further created disequilibrium in their knowledge system that race-based violence is, in fact, close to them as Asians, created uncomfortable thoughts and feelings of worry for the safety of their elder relatives. Many of the youth furthered their research and introspection on the history of Asians in America, the Model Minority Myth, and microaggressions. With a refined understanding of the systematic nature of racism in the US, the youth developed an agency for change, such as discussing issues about racism with their family members and joining the equity-oriented school clubs. Many youth participants in the study also organized and participated in events that address the system of oppression specific for Asian Americans in person and via social media. The current study provides insights on the formation of critical consciousness as a developmental task for immigrant-origin children and youth as they cope with xenophobia and discrimination based on their race among other social identities.

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### **Learning Loss vs. Learning Found: Promoting an Asset-based View**

The risks and threats of the ongoing dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism on youth's wellness and development is real and warrants attention. Researchers have found that elementary and secondary students experienced learning loss as measured by academic achievements that were exacerbated by racial inequalities (Dorn et al., 2020; Donnelly & Patrinos, 2021). Indeed, some participants in the study also voiced academic challenges during remote learning that might have kept them from going to their dream college. However, a sole focus on risks and maladjustments during the dual pandemics could dismiss the resilience youth and their families possess, especially those from marginalized backgrounds (Dvorsky et al., 2020). Solely focused on risks, threats, and loss can also lead to pathologizing and viewing the marginalized communities in a deficit way (Tuck, 2009).

Moreover, the US education system was found to maintain the systematic racism and inequalities evident by the biases in standardized assessments, disproportionality of BIPOC students in the special education, disproportionality in punitive discipline for Black and Brown youth, as well as the underrepresentation in highly capable learning programs (Diamond, 2018). Covid-19 disrupted the traditional education format, providing an opportunity to redefine learning in a way that dismantles white supremacy and capitalism over time (Jones, 2021). Ishimaru and colleagues (2021) found that African American students in the Seattle Public Schools accessed their family and community resources and engaged in child-centered learning at home during Covid-19. Similarly, the current study sheds a light on how the immigrant-origin Asian American youth found learning outside of the formal educational setting, which has accelerated their development. Without the formal structure of in-person school during this time, the youth in the current study found learning within themselves through engaging in self-

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reflection on their identities, values, and interests, rather than following the success standards as defined by others in the capitalist society. The youth also found learning with peers on how to initiate, maintain, and deepen their social connections without the physical proximity, which prepared them for life after high school. They also learned from their families and communities and strengthened their heritage culture and language through extended daily interactions with their families, consuming heritage cultural products and social media, and participating in community-organized activities. The current study offers insights on what and how learning was found based the immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth's experiences, offering the ways for educators to build upon the students' learning during remote learning as school transitioned back to in-person learning.

### **Implications for Practice**

Immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth's experiences during Covid-19 provided insights on how to support these youth in time of crisis and cultivate resilience in spite of crises. Several implications for educators, mental health professionals working with immigrant-origin youth, and those working with parents of immigrant-origin youth were discussed. For educators, prioritizing student-teacher relationships, accessing family and community's funds of knowledge, as well as disrupting the whiteness in the educational system were highlighted to promote immigrant-origin youth's wellbeing. For mental health professionals working with immigrant-origin youth, it is important to attend to their intersectional social identities and the unique experiences brought by those social positions. For those working with immigrant parents, it is important to encourage them to provide access to heritage culture and language to their children, keep an open mind to learning, and enhance their understanding of intergenerational acculturation differences.

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### *Enhancing Student-teacher Relationships*

Similar to what Parker and colleagues (2021) found in their study, the immigrant-origin Asian American students also found teachers' offering of flexibility in assignment completion as emotional support. The flexibility signaled that the teachers understood the stress the students were going through, even though most of the students did not end up using the offer. Moreover, the youth in the study found teacher's seeking personal connections with the students (e.g., individual chat messages, getting to know the class from check in activities) as well as being "more human" by sharing their own personal experiences as helpful for their adjustment during Covid-19 and remote learning. Both offering flexibility and establishing personal connections with the students emphasized the importance of student-teacher relationships in youth's adjustment under high-stress situations. Consistent with what Ishimaru and colleagues (2021) recommended, educators should continue to use practices they used in remote learning to build relationships with students, learning from the students and their families as schools return to in person learning.

### *Accessing Family and Community's Funds of Knowledge*

The current study also revealed the crucial role family and community's funds of knowledge play in immigrant-origin youth's development and wellbeing. Funds of knowledge refers to "the competence and knowledge embedded in the life experiences of under-represented students and their families" (Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011, p.164). Considering and identifying the funds of knowledge in immigrant-origin families as valuable for teaching and learning in school helps shifting away from a deficit view and toward an asset- and strength-based view of immigrant-origin students and their families (Moll et al., 1992). The remote learning environment created an environment that allowed youth to be immersed in their family and

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community's funds of knowledge that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to do so. The youth participants in the current study reported improving on their heritage languages because more time spent on speaking or hearing them from their parents at home, rather than speaking English at school. Therefore, it is important for educators to continue to create opportunities for youth, especially those from marginalized communities, to access their family's funds of knowledge to enrich the learning for all.

### ***Disrupting Whiteness in the Educational System***

Even within an Asian majority school like Sunshine, students still perceived the school as a White space because of how the larger educational system is constructed. It will take continuous efforts from educators, school administrators, and policy makers to uncover and disrupt the white supremacist ideologies embedded in the US school system and empower youth from diverse backgrounds to celebrate who they are. During the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism, most students in the study found teachers who held space in and out of the class for students to discuss current events as they related to systematic racism as helpful. Gaslighting, "the systematic manipulation of a person into questioning their own sanity and experience" (Jones, 2021, p.428) was found to further exacerbated BIPOC individuals' racial distress. Acknowledging and talking about visible and invisible oppressions that exist within and outside of the school can validate students' experiences and empower them to address those inequalities. Merely having a high percentage of non-White students does not automatically remove racism from the school. Continuous effort to disrupt the Whiteness in the educational system is needed to create a more socially just learning environment for all.

### ***Implications for Mental Health Professionals***

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Two participants in the current study identified their mental health therapy experiences as supportive during the Covid-19 pandemic. The current study provided cultural knowledge on the intersectional experience immigrant-origin Asian American youth have navigating home and school culture, as well as reckoning with their intersectional identities. Attending to youth acculturation strategies and their experiences with intergenerational disconnections as related to racism can offer insight on immigrant-origin youth's distress. The multi-facets nature of immigrant-youth experiences further calls for mental health professionals to develop cultural humility by learning from the clients. Mental health professionals should also increase competencies working with culturally diverse clients to promote their culturally specific ways of healing and provide access to treatments.

### ***Implications for Working with Immigrant-origin Families.***

Consistent with previous findings on Asian American parenting, flexible parenting strategies, open communications between parents and children, and explicit conversations about racism and cultural pluralism were protective of youth adjustment during crisis like Covid-19 (Qin, 2008; Atkin et al., 2018). It is important for those working with immigrant-origin families to understand that much like language brokering (Orellana, 2009; Orellana & Guan, 2015), immigrant-origin youths often assume the role of "teacher" to their immigrant parents about the US systematic racism. The reversed role could create conflicts and distress in the parent-child relationship, but parents who were open to understanding and learning from their children were perceived as supportive by the immigrant-origin youth and alleviated their stress.

### **Design Limitations and Future Directions**

Due to limitations on time and the scope of the study, maximum variation in sampling was not achieved. Most of the participants in the current study are of East Asian backgrounds (n

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= 11), with one participant from South Asian background and two from Southeast Asian background. Most of the participants attended Sunshine High School (n = 11) and only three participants attended Blue Crane High School. Only one participant received multilingual support from school in the previous school year. Future research could further explore the unique and intersectional experiences of youth from other ethnicities within the Asian race to highlight the heterogeneity of Asian Americans' experiences in the US. Recruiting more participants from Blue Crane High School could potentially further explore the effects of the school contexts (e.g., Asian majority in Sunshine vs. Asian minority in Blue Crane) on Asian American youth development. Investigating the experiences of more recent immigrant-youth could also deepen the understanding of language and global forces at play for the youth's adjustment.

Moreover, the varying degree of rapport established before the interview occurred with the participants may have limited the participants' willingness to share their deepest feelings. I have had interactions with many of the participants (n = 8) before the study was conducted as intern-mental health counselor at the schools. I had one incidence of in-person interactions with three of the participants and virtual interactions with five participants. For the other four participants in the study, I did not have any interactions prior to the interview. While my background in mental health care and prior experiences working at the schools have given me practice in establishing rapport quickly, it is possible that the varying degrees of rapport built prior to the interview impacted how much some participants were willing to share, which may have limited my findings. To address this issue, I started out each interview explaining my positionality and explained the confidentiality of data to establish a safe environment for the participants to share. I also reminded the participants that there was no right or wrong answers to the questions and encouraged them to speak to their own personal experiences. Occasionally, I

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spoke of my personal challenges during Covid-19 to model vulnerability and open communications. I frequently checked in with the participants and reminded them that they could stop the interview at any time. When I noticed one participant's emotional distress when talking about the challenges, I showed empathy, paused the interview, and initiated use of coping skills (e.g., deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation) together with the participant. I resumed the interview only after the participant verbally confirmed that they were ready to begin again.

Another limitation of the study is that no direct observations of Asian American students using coping strategies or interacting with their support systems were conducted. To address this issue, input from adults and reviews of social media products that were identified by Asian American youth as supportive and healing were used to triangulate their interview data. However, only one parent and three school staff responded to my request for input via email. Furthermore, only one interview was conducted with each youth participant, which may not capture their experiences dealing with the ever-evolving Covid-19 situation (e.g., return to in-person learning full time, dropping of the mask mandate). Future designs could incorporate multiple interviews with the youth before and after they transitioned back to in-person learning to strengthen the claims made in the study. The focus group format could also be used to gather input from youth participants and the identified supports, potentially embedded in other community or school events the participants are already attending to avoid adding extra burden to the participants.

Furthermore, post-interview member checks (Glesne, 2016) on data interpretation were not conducted with all participants. Due to time constraints, I only met with one participant who initiated contact with me to follow up on the study post-interview and shared my initial interpretation with them. I did not share the findings with other participants to gather their

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feedback, which may risk the trustworthiness in my re-representation of their experiences. To mitigate this issue, I summarized and reflected the participants' answers to each of my questions during the interview to ensure that I accurately re-represented their thoughts.

Lastly, the interview questions were written in English and interpretation support was not available for languages other than Mandarin Chinese. Asian American students who speak Asian languages other than Chinese might not have felt compelled to use their heritage languages in constructing the maps because I do not speak their languages. To address this limitation, the participants were explicitly encouraged to use any languages they prefer at the beginning of the mapping activity. For future studies, recruiting researchers who could speak the youth's heritage Asian languages could strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings.

### **Conclusion**

The dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism have turned our daily life upside down. The immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth experienced challenges that are specific to their intersectional social positions. They reported experiencing the drastic rise of anti-Asian racism violence since the beginning of Covid-19, both from their personal experiences and from the political and social contexts. They also experienced intergenerational disconnections brought by acculturating at different rates than their parents, specifically on topics about US racism. Their experiences were shaped by their other social positions, including gender, sexual orientation, acculturation status, family citizenship status, and socioeconomic status.

Despite these challenges, the immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth accelerated their development through adapting to the crises brought by the dual pandemics, with the support from their social-ecological systems. The youth engaged in self-reflection, deepened their social

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connections with peers, shifted acculturation strategies away from assimilation and toward integration, and reckoned with racial justice issues in the US. They also found support from their family, teacher, and the community. For educators, efforts to enhance student-teacher relationships, access the immigrant-origin families' funds of knowledge, and identify and disrupt white supremacist ideologies in the education system are urgently needed to support the wellbeing of immigrant-origin youth as schools gradually return to "normal." Mental health providers should continue to develop cultural competencies working with immigrant-origin Asian American youth through understanding their unique experiences brought by intersectional social positions. Those who work with immigrant-origin parents should inform parents about potential stress that could be brought by acculturation differences and encourage the parents to keep an open mind to learning from their children. The experiences of immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth during the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systematic racism highlighted the need for researchers and educators to shift focus away from youth's "learning loss" during remote learning and attend to the learning youth *found* from their home and communities. Investigating the protective factors and celebrating the resilience these immigrant-origin Asian American youth embodied, I hope this study add to the collective effort to shift the dominant narratives on marginalized communities away from a damage-centered view and toward an asset- and strength-based stance, offering a glimpse of the full complexity and humanity of immigrant-origin Asian/Asian American youth.

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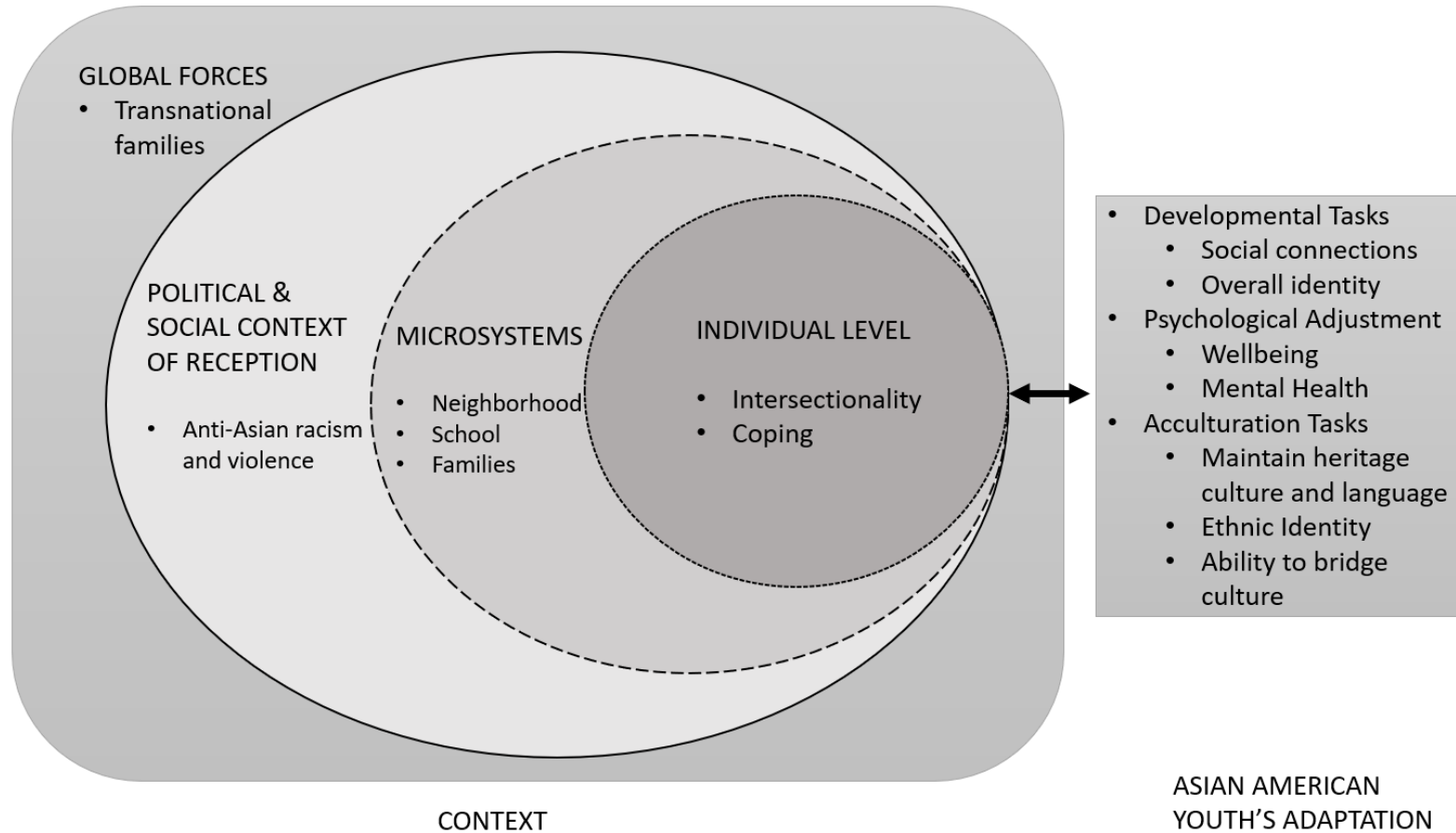
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**Figure 1**

*Simplified Version of the Integrative Risk and Resilience Model*



*Note.* The figure was adapted from the Integrative Risk and Resilience Model. From “An integrative risk and resilience model for understanding the adaptation of immigrant-origin children and youth,” by Suárez-Orozco, C., Motti-Stefanidi, F., Marks, A., & Katsiaficas, D., 2018, *American Psychologist*, 73(6), 781. Copyright 2018 by the American Psychological Association.

Figure 2

Example Map Completed by Linda Online

# Significant events or moments during Covid-19

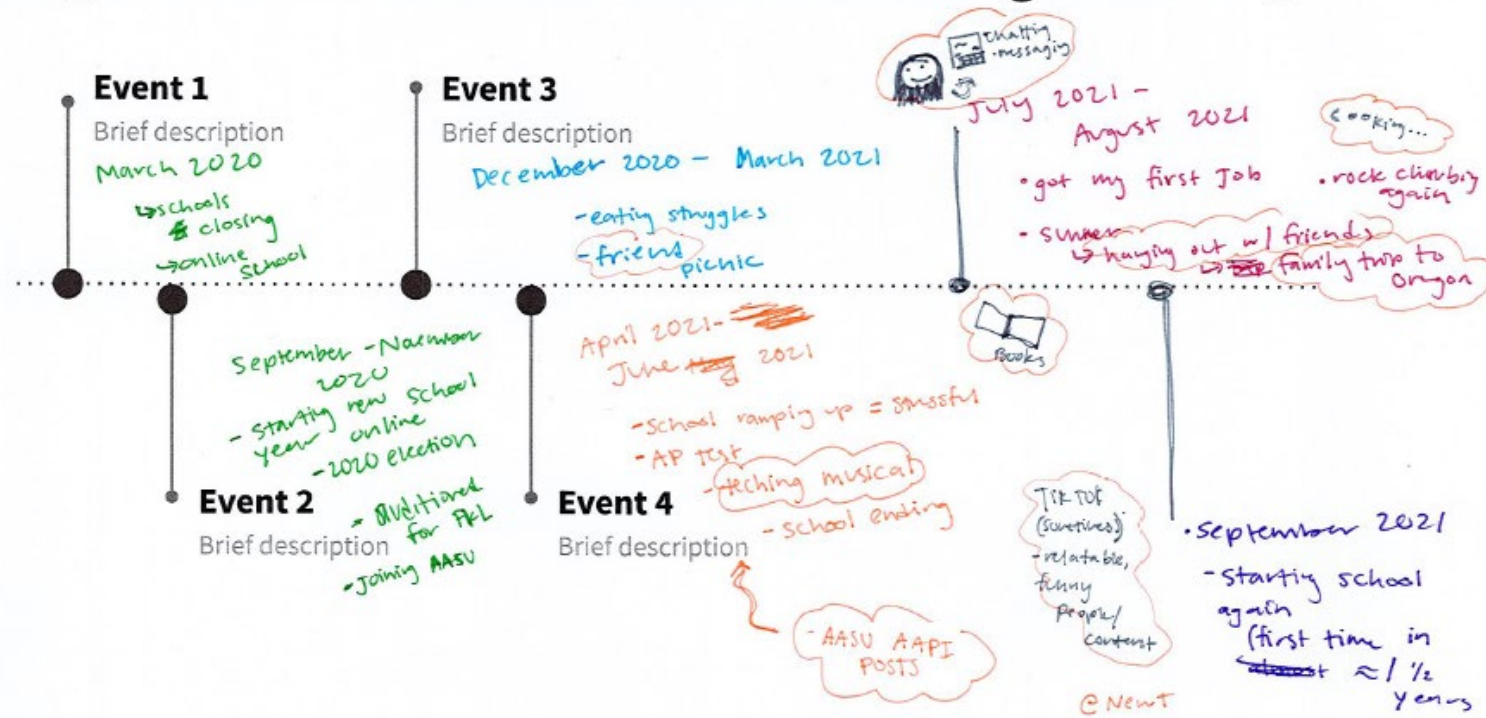


ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

Figure 3

Example Map Completed by Sarah in Person

# Significant events or moments during Covid-19



## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Table 1***Student Demographics by School for 2019-2020 School Year*

	Gender			“English Language Learner”	Programs		
	Female	Male	Gender X		Low Income	Highly Capable	
Blue Crane High School	47.3% (597)	52.3% (660)	0.3% (4)	10.4% (131)	32.2% (406)	4.4% (56)	
Sunshine High School	46.2% (818)	53.6% (949)	0.3% (5)	4.8% (85)	9.4% (166)	14.0% (248)	
	Race/Ethnicity						
	Native	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanics/Latino of any races	Pacific islander/Hawaii Native	Two or more races	White
Blue Crane High School	0.3% (4)	20.4% (257)	4.9% (62)	22.3% (281)	0.5% (6)	9% (114)	42.6% (537)
Sunshine High School	0.1% (1)	52.9% (938)	1.7% (31)	8.0% (142)	0.2% (4)	8.5% (150)	28.6% (506)

*Note.* The sociodemographic information of the two schools was retrieved from *Washington State Report Card* by Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2021 (<https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/>).

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Table 2***Youth Participants' Sociodemographic Information*

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Grade	Sexual Orientation	Birthplace	Lived outside of the US?	Languages other than English	Religion	Student Club	Ethnic Identity
Yanzhe	Male	17	11 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	China	Yes	Mandarin	None	Yes	Asian
Sharon	Female	16	11 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	Japan	No	Japanese	None	Yes	Asian
Lily	Female	17	11 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	China	Yes	Mandarin	Christian	Yes	Chinese American
Henry	Male	17	11 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	US	No	Chinese	Agnostic	Yes	Chinese
Katie	Female	18	12 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	US	No	Korean	Agnostic	Yes	Korean American
Kyle	Male	15	10 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	China	Yes	Chinese	None	No	Asian
Wushan	Male	17	11 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	China	Yes	Chinese	None	Yes	Asian
Linda	Female	15	9 <sup>th</sup>	“Fluid”	US	No	Mandarin, some Spanish	Agnostic	Yes	Chinese-Cambodian American
Leah	Female	18	College Freshman	Heterosexual	US	No	Mandarin	Buddhist	Yes	Asian American
Hunter	Male	17	11 <sup>th</sup>	Homosexual	US	No	Cantonese, Mandarin	Atheist	Yes	Asian American
Sarah	Female	16	10 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	US	No	Thai	None	Yes	Southeast Asian
Jackie	Nonbinary	16	10 <sup>th</sup>	“Lesbian”	US	No	Thai	Atheist	No	Thai
Calvin	Male	18	12 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	South Korea	Yes	Korean and French	Christian	Yes	Korean
Dana	Female	16	10 <sup>th</sup>	Heterosexual	US	No	Konkani	Catholic	Yes	South Asian

*Note.* Yanzhe, Wushan, and Dana attended Blue Crane High School in 2020-2021. The rest of the participants attended Sunshine High School in 2020-2021.

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Appendix A****Parent Permission Form****UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON****PARENT PERMISSION FORM**

Survive and thrive: Exploring how immigrant-origin Asian American adolescents in two high schools experience, cope, and adjust to life during Covid-19

Investigator: Biwei “Vivian” Huang, Ed.S., [bvhuang@uw.edu](mailto:bvhuang@uw.edu), 657-235-2069

Faculty Advisor: Janine Jones, Ph.D., [jjones2@uw.edu](mailto:jjones2@uw.edu), 206-616-6370

**Investigator’s Statement**

I am asking your child to be in a research study that I am completing as part of my doctoral coursework at the University of Washington. The purpose of this consent form is to give you all the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to have your child be in the study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask your child to do, the possible risks and benefits, your child’s rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want your child to be in the study or not. This process is called “informed consent.” I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences and adjustment of immigrant Asian American high school students in the Greater Seattle area during the Covid-19 pandemic, social events, and remote learning.

**PROCEDURES**

If you agree to have your child be in this study, I will send a survey to your child to gather some demographic information, like their age, identities, and preferred languages. The survey should take about 10 to 15 minutes for your child to complete. Then, I will interview your child individually for about 1.5 to 2 hours remotely via Zoom or in-person at a coordinated communal space (e.g. public park) of your child’s choice. I will ask demographic questions about your family, like when the family moved to the United States. I will ask your child questions about what people, places, or activities helped them finish the 2020-2021 school year during the Covid-19 pandemic, remote learning, and related social events. I will also ask your child to draw a map that reflects their journey through the Covid-19 pandemic.

With your permission, I would like to audio tape my interview with your child so that I can have an accurate record of our conversation. I will transcribe this recording without identifiable information and destroy the recording after the study is over. Only I will have access to the recording, which will be kept in a secure location.

**RISKS, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT**

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below. Some people feel self-conscious when notes are taken or interviews are recorded. Some memories related to Covid-19 may bring sadness or discomfort for your child. If you observe your child experience significant distress

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

after talking about events related to Covid-19, please contact the research team and we will provide relevant resources for you.

### **BENEFITS OF THE STUDY**

Your child can receive a \$20 Amazon gift card or a gift card of their choice within 24 hours after they completed the individual interview. They can still receive the gift card if they cannot or choose not to finish the interview for any reason. One benefit of this study is that understanding the resilience and protective factors for local Asian American students under stressful situations like Covid-19 can help inform educational programs and policies to support the wellbeing of Asian American students.

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You and your child may refuse to participate and are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Information about your child is confidential. I will assign your child a pseudonym and code the study information. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your child's name, or any other identifying information.

I may want to re-contact your child to ask follow-up or clarification questions about the current study. Please let me know if you do not want me to re-contact your child. Giving me permission to re-contact you or your child does not obligate you in any way.

Government or university staff sometimes review studies such as this one to make sure they are being done safely and legally. If a review of this study takes place, your records may be examined. The reviewers will protect your privacy. The study records will not be used to put you at legal risk of harm.

If you think you have been harmed from being in this research, contact the investigators Biwei "Vivian" Huang, Ed.S., [bvhuang@uw.edu](mailto:bvhuang@uw.edu), 657-235-2069 or Janine Jones, Ph.D., [jjones2@uw.edu](mailto:jjones2@uw.edu), 206-616-6370.

### **USING YOUR DATA IN FUTURE RESEARCH**

The information that we obtain from your child for this study might be used for future studies. We may remove anything that might identify you or your child from the information. If we do so, that information may then be used for future research studies or given to another investigator without getting additional permission from you or your child. It is also possible that in the future we may want to use or share study information that might identify you or your child. If we do, a review board will decide whether or not we need to get additional permission from you.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact Vivian Huang or Dr. Janine Jones at the telephone numbers or emails listed at the top of this form. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the UW Human Subjects Division at (206) 543-0098 or call collect at (206) 221-5940.

Vivian Biwei Huang



## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Appendix B****Youth Assent Form****UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON****ASSENT TO RESEARCH**

Survive and thrive: Exploring how immigrant-origin Asian American adolescents in two high schools experience, cope, and adjust to life during Covid-19

Investigator: Biwei “Vivian” Huang, Ed.S., [bvhuang@uw.edu](mailto:bvhuang@uw.edu), 657-235-2069

Faculty Advisor: Janine Jones, Ph.D., [jjones2@uw.edu](mailto:jjones2@uw.edu), 206-616-6370

My name is Vivian and I am a doctoral student in the School Psychology program at University of Washington.

I am asking you to be in a research study because I am trying to learn more about the experiences and adjustment of immigrant Asian American high school students in the Greater Seattle area during the Covid-19 pandemic, social events, and remote learning.

If you agree to be in this study, I would like to first have you fill out a survey with questions about yourself, like your age, identities, and preferred languages. The survey should take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Then I will interview you individually for about 1.5 to 2 hours remotely via Zoom or in-person at a coordinated communal space (e.g. public park) of your choice. I will ask demographic questions about your family, like when the family moved to the United States. I will ask you questions about what people, places, or activities helped them finish the 2020-2021 school year during the Covid-19 pandemic, remote learning, and related social events. I will also ask you to draw a map that reflects your journey through the Covid-19 pandemic.

With your permission, I would like to audio tape my interview with you so that I can have an accurate record of our conversation. I will transcribe this recording without identifiable information and destroy the recording after the study is over. Only I will have access to the recording, which will be kept in a secure location. If you would like a copy of the transcript of the interview, I will gladly provide you with one.

**RISKS, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT**

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below. Some people feel self-conscious when notes are taken or interviews are recorded. Some memories related to Covid-19 may bring sadness or discomfort for you. If you feel significant distress after talking about events related to Covid-19, please contact the research team and we will provide relevant resources for you.

**BENEFITS OF THE STUDY**

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

You can receive a \$20 Amazon gift card or a gift card of their choice within 24 hours after they completed the individual interview. You can still receive the gift card if they cannot or choose not to finish the interview for any reason. One benefit of this study is that understanding the resilience and protective factors for local Asian American students under stressful situations like Covid-19 can help inform educational programs and policies to support the wellbeing of Asian American students.

### PARENT CONSENT

Please talk this over with your parents/guardians before you decide whether or not to do this. We will also ask your parents/guardians if it is okay for you to be in this study. But even if they say “yes”, you can still decide not to do this.

If you don't want to be in the study, you don't have to participate. Remember, being in this study is up to you and no one will be upset if you don't want to participate or even if you change your mind later and want to stop.

You can ask any questions about the study. If you have a question later you can call/text me at 657-235-2069, or email me at [bvhuang@uw.edu](mailto:bvhuang@uw.edu). You can also contact my university professor: Janine Jones, Ph.D., [jjones2@uw.edu](mailto:jjones2@uw.edu), 206-616-6370

Vivian Biwei Huang



## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Appendix C****Adult Student Consent Form****UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON****ADULT STUDENT CONSENT FORM**

Survive and thrive: Exploring how immigrant-origin Asian American adolescents in two high schools experience, cope, and adjust to life during Covid-19

Investigator: Biwei “Vivian” Huang, Ed.S., [bvhuang@uw.edu](mailto:bvhuang@uw.edu), 657-235-2069

Faculty Advisor: Janine Jones, Ph.D., [jjones2@uw.edu](mailto:jjones2@uw.edu), 206-616-6370

**Investigator’s Statement**

I am asking you to be in a research study that I am completing as part of my doctoral coursework at the University of Washington. The purpose of this consent form is to give you all the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to be in the study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called “informed consent.” I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences and adjustment of immigrant Asian American high school students in the Greater Seattle area during the Covid-19 pandemic, social events, and remote learning.

**PROCEDURES**

If you agree to be in this study, I will send a survey to you to gather some demographic information, like your age, identities, and preferred languages. The survey should take about 10 to 15 minutes for you to complete. Then, I will interview you individually for about 1.5 to 2 hours remotely via Zoom or in-person at a coordinated communal space (e.g. public park) of your choice. I will ask demographic questions about your family, like when the family moved to the United States. I will ask you questions about what people, places, or activities helped them finish the 2020-2021 school year during the Covid-19 pandemic, remote learning, and related social events. I will also ask you to draw a map that reflects your journey through the Covid-19 pandemic.

With your permission, I would like to audio tape my interview with you so that I can have an accurate record of our conversation. I will transcribe this recording without identifiable information and destroy the recording after the study is over. Only I will have access to the recording, which will be kept in a secure location.

**RISKS, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT**

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below. Some people feel self-conscious when

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

notes are taken or interviews are recorded. Some memories related to Covid-19 may bring sadness or discomfort for you. If you experience significant distress after talking about events related to Covid-19, please contact the research team and we will provide relevant resources for you.

### **BENEFITS OF THE STUDY**

You can receive a \$20 Amazon gift card or a gift card of your choice within 24 hours after you completed the individual interview. You can still receive the gift card if you cannot or choose not to finish the interview for any reason. One benefit of this study is that understanding the resilience and protective factors for local Asian American students under stressful situations like Covid-19 can help inform educational programs and policies to support the wellbeing of Asian American students.

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate and are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Information about you is confidential. I will assign you a pseudonym and code the study information. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your name, or any other identifying information.

I may want to re-contact you to ask follow-up or clarification questions about the current study. Please let me know if you do not want me to re-contact you. Giving me permission to re-contact you does not obligate you in any way.

Government or university staff sometimes review studies such as this one to make sure they are being done safely and legally. If a review of this study takes place, your records may be examined. The reviewers will protect your privacy. The study records will not be used to put you at legal risk of harm.

If you think you have been harmed from being in this research, contact the investigators Biwei “Vivian” Huang, Ed.S., [bvhuang@uw.edu](mailto:bvhuang@uw.edu), 657-235-2069 or Janine Jones, Ph.D., [jjones2@uw.edu](mailto:jjones2@uw.edu), 206-616-6370.

### **USING YOUR DATA IN FUTURE RESEARCH**

The information that we obtain from you for this study might be used for future studies. We may remove anything that might identify you from the information. If we do so, that information may then be used for future research studies or given to another investigator without getting additional permission from you. It is also possible that in the future we may want to use or share study information that might identify you. If we do, a review board will decide whether or not we need to get additional permission from you.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact Vivian Huang or Dr. Janine Jones at the telephone numbers or emails listed at the top of this form. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the UW Human Subjects Division at (206) 543-0098 or call collect at (206) 221-5940.



Vivian Biwei Huang

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

## Appendix D

## Sociodemographic Information Survey by Google Form

6/9/2021

Getting to know you

## Getting to know you

Hi! Thank you for your interests in participating in my study. Before we talk in-person/via Zoom, I'd like to get to know you more first. Please answer the following questions about yourself. Your answers will be confidential. You will be assigned a participant number and I will be the only one who connect you with you number. You are also welcome to skip any questions you don't feel comfortable answering. Please contact me at [bvhuang@uw.edu](mailto:bvhuang@uw.edu) if you have any questions. Look forward to talking with you soon!

\* Required

1. Email \*

---

2. What's your name?

---

3. What's your age?

---

4. What's your gender?

---

5. How do you describe your sexual orientation?

---

6. What grade were you in for the 2020-2021 school year?

---

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

6/9/2021

Getting to know you

7. Where were you born?

---

8. How many years have you been attending schools in the US?

---

9. How many years have you been living in the US?

---

10. What are the language (s) you can speak?

---

11. What are the language (s) you prefer to speak?

---

12. What's your religion/spirituality background?

---

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

6/9/2021

Getting to know you

13. How do you identify yourself (you can choose multiple)? \*

*Check all that apply.*

- Of an Asian ethnicity (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese)
- Asian
- South Asian, East Asian, Southeast Asian etc.
- A specific ethnicity of Asian-American (e.g., Chinese-American, Korean American, Vietnamese-American)
- Asian American
- American

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

14. If you chose "Other" above, please specify here

\_\_\_\_\_

15. Describe what are some strengths you have? What are some things you are good at, in general?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. Describe what are some areas of growth for you? What are some challenges you face, in general?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Appendix E****Interview and Mapping Activity Protocol**

Immigrant Asian/Asian American Students' Experiences and Resiliency during Covid-19

*Hi. My name is Vivian Huang and I am a graduate student at UW. Thank you for filling out the survey and agreeing to participate in the interview. I am interested in your experiences as an Asian/Asian American student during Covid-19 the pandemic, remote learning, and racial reckoning. I am also interested in the factors that helped you through this time so others like you can learn from your experiences. I will ask you to answer some questions and do a mapping activity. The interview will be recorded. You can stop at any point in the interview. And, at any point, if you'd like me to turn off the recording, just let me know. Do you have any questions for me before we get started?*

1. ***First, I want to learn more about you and your family. Tell me about your family's immigration story.***

Family members:

Who lives with you?

Family years living in the US:

Languages by family members:

Languages used by family members with each other and you:

Educational level of family members:

Any transnational family members?

## **2. Mapping activity**

For participants doing interviews remotely:

1. *Now we are going to do an activity using this shared Google Slide deck (remote) this print-out and blank papers and markers (for participants in person). You can see this slide with boxes. Please write down any events, moments, or places that are significant to you during Covid-19 since the end of 2019 until now. You can list them in chronological order, based on significance to you, or any other order of your own choice. You can add more boxes to add more events if you want, or start from a blank slide. Feel free to use any languages you are most comfortable with. I will work on my copy during this time as well. After you complete the significant events or moments, let me know. We will talk about it and I will give you the instruction for next steps.*

After participants identify events, ask about thoughts, feelings, and actions during the events.

**Probes if participants have a hard time identifying events:**

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

- **Pandemic health-related events and concerns**
- **Remote learning:** isolation, academic achievement
- **Quarantine/travel restrictions:** visiting family members, transnational families

**Probes on experiences of racism:**Online Direct Experience of Racism

Have people said mean things to you online because of your race?

If yes: Tell me more about it. What did you do? What went well? What do you wish to do differently?

If no: move on to the next question

Online Vicarious Experience of Racism

Have you seen other people saying mean or untrue things about Chinese/Asian people online?

If yes: Tell me more about it. What did you do? What went well? What do you wish to do differently?

If no: move on to the next question

In-person Direct Racism

Have people been unfriendly, avoiding, or rude to you because of your Asian background?

If yes: Tell me more about it. What did you do? What went well? What do you wish to do differently?

If no: move on to the next question

In-person Vicarious Racism

Have you seen people being unfriendly, avoiding, or rude to other Asian people?

If yes: Tell me more about it. What did you do? What went well? What do you wish to do differently?

- **Why do you think some people say or do mean things to others because of their Asian background?**
- **How does your race/ethnicity influence your relationship with other people?**

2. *Now in the areas within, around or between the boxes, write or draw the people, places, activities, resources that helped you survive and/or thrive during this time. Feel free to use any languages you are most comfortable with. You can also use different colors to show different feelings, use symbols like lines and arrows or words. These are just suggestions. Be as creative as you like and, if you don't want to draw you can make more of a flowchart or tell me about it verbally. I will work on mine during this time as well. When you are done, let me know and we will talk about it together.*

Probes for protective factors and coping strategies:

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

- What did you do here (\*point to\* a place on the timeline) to make you feel better?
- If and how did your **friends or peers** support you here (\*point to\* a place on the timeline)?  
If and how did your **family members** support you here (\*point to\* a place on the timeline)?
- If and how did your **school/teachers** support you here (\*point to\* a place on the timeline)?
- If and how did your **community members** support you here (\*point to\* a place on the timeline)?
- If and how did **any social media contents** support you here (\*point to\* a place on the timeline)? Can you give me the names or links to those contents?
- What have you learned since here (\*point to\* a place on the timeline)?

*3. Thank you for sharing these specific events with me. I have learned a lot. Here are some of my last questions: now reflecting on this whole experience:*

- What will you continue to do to cope with similar stressors in the future?
- What new solidarities emerged for you as a result of COVID19?
- How has this experience shaped you as a future adult?

### 3. Logistical questions for ending:

#### **\*if identified parents as support:**

*You identified your parents as a source of support during this time. Do you feel comfortable if I reach out to them and ask them about what they think helped you survive and thrive during Covid-19?*

#### **\*if identified other people as support:**

*For the people you identified as supports, do you feel comfortable selecting two of them and giving me their contact information so I can reach out to them. I want to ask them about what they think helped for Asian American students survive and thrive during Covid-19 in general? I won't let them know you identified them.*

**Snowball sampling:** *I am still recruiting participants for my study. If you know any Asian/Asian American peers at your school who may be interested in participating in my study, please let me know.*

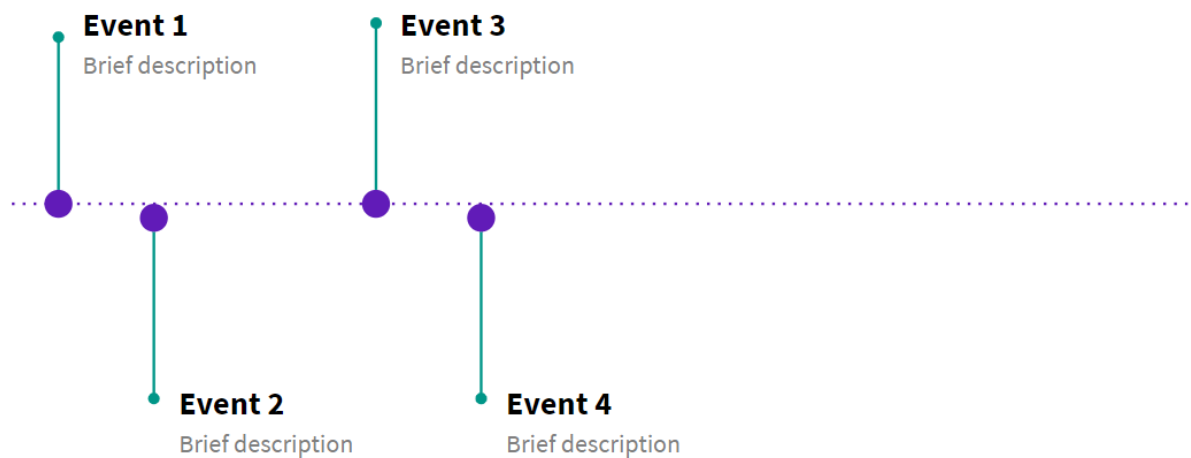
*Thank you very much for your participation. I will organize what we talked about and share with you later. If I have any questions in the meantime, can I contact you for clarification?*

*Thanks again. Have a great rest of your day!*

Appendix F

Mapping Activity Template

# Significant events or moments during Covid-19



## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Appendix G****Adult Participants Example Survey Questions****Survey questions for adults identified by student participants as supportive during 2020-2021 school year**

*A student has identified you as a source of support for them during the 2020-2021 school year, helping them deal with stress come from Covid-19, remote learning, racial reckoning.*

1. In what capacities have you worked with Asian American high school students/adolescents during the 2020-2021 school year?
2. What were the strengths you saw in the Asian American students you have worked with this year?
3. What were the challenges you saw the Asian American students you worked with had to face this year?
4. What coping skills did you noticed your Asian American students engage in?

**Survey questions for parents identified by student participants as supportive during 2020-2021 school year**

*Your child identified you as a source of support for them during the 2020-2021 school year, helping them deal with stress come from Covid-19, remote learning, racial reckoning.*

1. What were the strengths you saw in your child about making through this year? What activities and factors helped them this year (e.g., school, community, online)?
2. What were the challenges you saw your child had to face this year?
3. What coping skills/family activities did you notice your child engage in to cope with the stress this year?

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

**Appendix H****Codebook**

CODE LEVEL 1	DESCRIPTION	CODE LEVEL 2	CODE LEVEL 3
	how the individual adjusted to life during Covid-19 at an individual level, a universal developmental task that the youth takes on more responsibilities and improves on self-regulation	<i>Independence</i>	<b>Individual level development-universal</b>
<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for a solution; and implementing a solution.		
<b>TIME MANAGEMENT</b>	scheduling different activities and school tasks by youth themselves without the help of an adult		
<b>STUDY STRATEGIES</b>	including organizational skills, the ways that the youth used to specifically promote academic achievement		
<b>GETTING A DRIVER'S LICENSE</b>	getting a driver's license, signing up for driver's school, taking the driver's license test, being able to drive in a car		
<b>GETTING A JOB</b>	having an income by working a part-time or full-time job when not in school		
<b>EXPLORING IDENTITY</b>	The student participant exploring, doing research, asking questions, discussing with peers about their own gender, sexuality, dis/ability identities that are universal to all children		

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

<b>SELF-REFLECTION</b>	Evaluate one's own thought processes, emotions, and values; and as a result, more sure of self and increased confidence	
	ways to endure or change uncomfortable feelings or situations during Covid-19 the pandemic, remote learning, racial reckoning	<i>coping strategies</i>
<b>COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING</b>	Changing unhelpful thought patterns into helpful thought patterns in attempt to improve mood and cope with difficult emotions	
<b>NATURE</b>	Coping with daily remote life by going out for a change of environment (e.g., nature, parking lot with a view etc.)	
<b>DISTRACTION</b>	Youth finding activities to pass time (watching videos, finding things to do).	
<b>PROBLEM-SOLVING</b>	where the youth describe encountering a problem and tried different ways to solve it, such as trying out different strategies, asking for help, doing research	
<b>SEEKING SOCIAL CONNECTION</b>	fostering a sense of connection with others intentionally when in-person interaction is not available. e.g., going on social media seeing others are struggling as well	
<b>CREATIVE MEANS</b>	the participant uses music, creative writing, band choir etc. and other creative means to cope with stress	
<b>EXERCISE</b>	Physical exercise and sports	
<b>GRAPPLING WITH A SENSE OF LOSS</b>	loss of routine, loss of school activities, loss of opportunities	<i>Intrapersonal Challenges</i>

ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

<b>LOSS OF SOCIAL CONNECTION</b>	loss of in-person interactions with others, loss of connection		
<b>ACADEMIC WORRIES AND CHALLENGES</b>	worries and struggles with academic tasks (e.g., school subject, SATs/APs standardized testing; self-advocacy)		
<b>COVID-19 HEALTH RELATED WORRIES</b>	worries about health of self and others as a result of Covid-19		
	racial, cultural, generational status, language and other aspects of identities that are unique to IOC&Y	<i>identity development specific to IOC&amp;Y</i>	<b>Individual level development-specific to IOC&amp;Y</b>
	the student participant spending more time with family members to improve heritage language and engage in home heritage cultural practices during quarantine	<i>learn and maintain home culture and language</i>	
	the student participant's ability to recognize characteristics of home and host cultures and select characteristics that speak to them while feeling content and good about their selection; reconciled/integration of acculturation	<i>ability to bridge cultures and select ones that works</i>	
	a sense of social belonging at various social settings (e.g., home, school, peers, church)	<i>develop sense of social belonging</i>	
	initiating and leading to bring Asian American community members together e.g., creating project Lotus.	<i>building an Asian American community</i>	
	Support from family to adjust to the pandemic	<i>Parent/family support</i>	<b>influence from the microsystem context</b>

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

<b>MAINTAINING ROUTINES</b>	family's practices that supported participants' sense of routine, providing reassurance	
<b>FLEXIBILITY</b>	family giving flexibility and freedom for youth to manage their own schedule and life activities	
<b>PROVIDING HERITAGE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE</b>	family providing environment and practices of heritage language and culture	
<b>EMOTIONAL SUPPORT</b>	emotional support from family members, e.g., listening ear	
<b>COVID-19 VACCINE AND PRECAUTIONS</b>	family members and friends got vaccinated quickly and were cautious about going out before the vaccine was available	
<b>PARENT LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT</b>	one or more parent/adult caregiver lost employment during the course of the pandemic	<i>Parent/family stress</i>
<b>INTERGENERATIONAL CONFLICT- UNIVERSAL</b>	conflicts with parents in terms of values (e.g., gender roles, conservative vs. liberal values, political viewpoints)	
<b>INTERGENERATIONAL CONFLICT- SPECIFIC TO IOC&amp;Y</b>	conflicts with parents originated from contrasting sociopolitical environments the parents grew up in from country of origin and the US sociopolitical environments the child/youth is growing up in.	
<b>LOSS OF FAMILY MEMBER</b>	the death of a family member, usually grandparents	
	friends who are of similar age that provided the participant support	<i>peer support</i>

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

<b>MAINTAINING COMMUNICATION</b>	e.g., texting, calling, messaging, video chatting	
<b>DOING ACTIVITIES TOGETHER</b>	e.g., going out together (nature)	
	romantic partner who provided support	<i>romantic partner support</i>
	community members who provided support	<i>community support</i>
<b>SCHOOL CLUBS AS A PLACE FOR CONNECTION</b>	identified individuals in school clubs as supports that foster connection	
<b>SCHOOL PROJECTS THAT ACCESS FAMILY'S FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE</b>	e.g., family history investigation giving students a chance to interview family members	<i>school/teacher practices</i>
<b>SCHOOL/TEACHER FLEXIBILITY</b>	teachers provide flexibility, initiating accommodations to students' workload without the students having to ask.	
<b>HOLDING SPACE IN CLASS</b>	teachers providing space in class to discuss distressing current events	
<b>HOLDING SPACE FOR DROP-IN Q&amp;A</b>	teachers providing space outside of class for drop-in Q&A on academics or personal issues (e.g., tutorials)	
<b>IGNORING/BUSINESS AS USUAL</b>	teachers who did not change practice in remote learning; teachers who ignored racial microaggressions in class	
<b>FOSTERING PERSONAL</b>	teachers who messaged students individually, teachers who used check-ins with the whole class before content instruction	

ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

<b>CONNECTION WITH STUDENTS</b>			
<b>BUILDING ROUTINES ADAPTIVELY</b>	teachers tries to "make it normal during this period of time" and students appreciate teachers' effort; creating and maintaining a sense of school routine during remote learning		
<b>SCHOLARSHIP</b>	School providing access to scholarship on tuition or testing fees		
	public figures who promoted student's wellbeing e.g., BTS	<i>positive public figure</i>	<b>Influence from the Context of reception</b>
	public figures who added to students' distress e.g., Trump	<i>negative public figure</i>	
	The news or news received from social media that have positive influences on students-- normalization of feelings, not alone	<i>News/social media positive</i>	
	The news or news received from social media that have negative influences on students-- e.g., added stress, perpetuating white supremacy	<i>News/social media negative</i>	
	The political environment (e.g., election) that influenced youth's thoughts and wellbeing	<i>Political environment</i>	
	positive changes that were brought by the pandemic on a global level. e.g., environmentalism?	<i>Global Forces positive</i>	<b>global forces/making sense of the influence of pandemic</b>

## ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH RESILIENCE IN COVID-19

	negative changes brought by the pandemic on a global level: restriction of international traveling; skyrocketed flight ticket price; other country's quarantine practices	<i>Global Forces negative</i>	
	restriction of international traveling-- not close with them beforehand	<i>Global Forces neutral</i>	
	participants' experiences with race in the US society		<b>racialized experiences</b>
	internalized racism and racial stereotype (e.g., Asian people worked harder to have achieved results)	<i>internalized racism and stereotypes</i>	
	e.g., "I have not personally experienced racism" "everyone was treated equally at school", forms of racism not publicized; internalized model minority myth; Asians perpetuating Asian stereotypes	<i>invisibility of racism against Asian Americans</i>	
	others directed violence or microaggression at the participant due to their Asian background in person	<i>Direct experience of racism in person</i>	
	others directed violence or microaggression at the participant due to their Asian background online	<i>Direct experience of racism online</i>	
	seeing others being discriminated against due to their Asian background in person	<i>indirect experience of racism in person</i>	
	seeing others being discriminated against due to their Asian background online	<i>indirect experience of racism online</i>	
	emotional responses when learning about the Anti-Asian violence	<i>feelings</i>	<b>Making sense of anti-Asian violence</b>

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	actions taken after learning about the anti-Asian violence	<i>behaviors</i>	
	thoughts about the rise of anti-Asian violence, making sense of it, reasoning	<i>thoughts</i>	
<b>STEREOTYPES</b>	e.g., model minority myth; yellow peril	<i>System-level characters</i>	<b>Making sense of anti-Asian violence (why)</b>
<b>HISTORICAL REASONS</b>	AAPI immigrant history		
<b>ECONOMIC REASONS</b>	Perception that Asian immigrants taking economic resources (jobs) from white people		
<b>MAINTAINING WHITE SUPREMACY</b>	violence and microaggression as means to feel more powerful, maintaining White supremacy; showing Black people instigating violence on AAPI mostly		
<b>NEGATIVE IMPACT OF COVID</b>	participant empathizing with perspective of negative feelings associated with deaths and inconvenience caused by Covid, but do not agree with the violence	<i>Individual Level characters</i>	
<b>DIFFERENCES</b>	values, looks etc. are different in the US vs. Asia		
	family's practices and discussion around race in the US	<i>family racialization</i>	<b>Family influence on racialization</b>
	school's practices and activities supporting racial equity	<i>school practices that support equity</i>	<b>Racial dynamic in schools</b>
	school racial dynamics that promotes AAPI students' sense of safety and belongingness	<i>Asian majority as supportive</i>	
	school racial dynamics that undermines AAPI students' sense of safety and belongingness	<i>Asian majority unsupportive</i>	

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	school racial dynamics that perpetuates racial stereotypes	<i>perpetuating stereotypes</i>	
	school racial dynamics, especially the AAPI students there internalized racism and perpetuate stereotypes	<i>internalized racism displayed in school</i>	
	the influence of the neighborhood racial makeup		<b>racial dynamic in the neighborhood</b>
	the influence of the broader political environment in the greater Seattle area/WA state		<b>racial dynamic in the city/state</b>
	thoughts about race in the US relating to participants themselves	<i>racial reckoning and self</i>	<b>New solidarities</b>
	thoughts about race in the US relating to the bigger society, systemic racism	<i>racial reckoning and the larger society</i>	