Asian Immigrant Experiences with Racism, Immigration-related Fears and the COVID-19 Pandemic
Study Overview

• Survey of a convenience sample of over 1,000 Asian patients at four community health centers
  – Asian Health Services, Alameda County, CA; North East Medical Services, San Francisco, CA; HOPE Clinic, Houston, TX; International Community Health Services, King County, WA
  – Respondents largely low-income and 80% born outside the United States

• Survey developed and fielded with Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations and participating health centers
  – Recent experiences with racism and discrimination
  – Immigration-related fears
  – Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic

• Fielded during early 2021
  – Conducted in Burmese, Chinese, English, Korean, Vietnamese
  – Completed online, in-person, by paper, and via phone
1 in 3 Asian Health Center Respondents Have Felt More Discrimination Since the Coronavirus Pandemic Began

Have you personally felt more discrimination or less discrimination based on your racial or ethnic background since the coronavirus pandemic began in the U.S., or has the discrimination been about the same?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have Not Felt Any Discrimination</th>
<th>Less Discrimination</th>
<th>About the Same Discrimination</th>
<th>More Discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children in the Home</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-64</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA Health Center Respondents</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Center Respondents</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asian Health Center Respondents Report a Range of Recent Negative Experiences Due to Their Race or Ethnicity

In the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following because of your racial or ethnic background?

- Received Poorer Service at a Store or Other Public Place: 35%
- Denied a Job You Were Qualified For: 20%
- Denied Housing You Could Afford: 18%
- Criticized for Speaking a Language Other than English: 16%
- Accused of "Spreading or Causing COVID-19": 15%
- Told You Should Go Back to Your Home Country: 15%
- Verbally or Physically Attacked: 14%

Over 4 in 10 Asian Health Center Respondents Say They Worry a Lot or Some About Detention or Deportation

Regardless of your own immigration or citizenship status, how much, if at all, do you worry that you or a family member could be detained or deported?

![Figure 4](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Not at All</th>
<th>Just a Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-64</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children in the Home</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 in 4 Asian Health Center Respondents Say They Avoided a Program in the Past Year Due to Immigration Fears

Was there a time in the past 12 months when you or a family member in your household decided not to apply for or stopped participating in a government program to help pay for health care, food, or housing, because you were afraid it might affect you or a family members’ immigration status?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children in the Home</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA Health Center Respondents</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Center Respondents</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over Half of Asian Health Center Respondents Lack Enough Information on Recent Immigration Policy Changes

Do you feel you have enough information about recent changes to U.S. immigration policy, such as public charge, to understand how they might impact you and your family?

In the past 12 months, how often have you used any of the following to get information about U.S. immigration policy?

- Very Often
- Somewhat Often

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Somewhat Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native-language TV and Radio</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Friends or Family</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native-language Newspapers</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English TV and Radio</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Newspapers</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit Organization</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Sources</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Organization/Church</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Attorney</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over Half of Asian Health Center Respondents Say Someone in Their Household Lost a Job or Income Since the COVID-19 Pandemic Began

Since February 2020, have you or another adult in your household lost a job, been placed on furlough, or had your income or hours reduced because of the coronavirus outbreak, or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-64</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children in the Home</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA Health Center Respondents</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Center Respondents</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8

The Pandemic Has Negatively Affected Asian Health Center Respondents’ Finances, Mental Health, and Children’s Education and Care

Percent who say the coronavirus pandemic has had a negative impact on the following:

- Ability to Pay for Basic Needs: 48%
- Mental Health: 43%
- Ability to do Your Job: 40%
- Children’s Education: 52%
- Ability to Care for Children: 41%

Figure 9

Worry or Stress Due to the Pandemic has Affected Asian Health Center Respondents’ Behavior and Health

Percent who say worry or stress related to the coronavirus outbreak caused the following experience in the past 2 months:

- Trouble Sleeping: 50%
- Poor Appetite or Overeating: 41%
- Frequent Headaches or Stomachaches: 15%
- Worsening Chronic Health Conditions: 10%
- Difficulty Controlling Temper: 9%
- Increased Alcohol or Drug Use: 6%

Most Asian Health Center Respondents Say They Have Worried About Ever Being Exposed to Coronavirus

Have you ever been worried that you might have been exposed to coronavirus, or not?

- Yes: 58%
- No: 41%
- Refused/Not Reported: 1%

Percent who say they have personally been tested for coronavirus:

- Total: 46%
- Among those Worried About Exposure: 60%

Implications

- Findings provide new insight and understanding into the experiences of Asian immigrants, a group for whom there remains very little data
  - Document increasing experiences with racism and discrimination amid the pandemic
  - Show how immigration-related fears are contributing to increased reluctance to access assistance programs at a time when many have increased need
  - Illustrate the broad impacts of the pandemic on health, well-being, and finances
- Findings can help shape response and recovery efforts as well as efforts to address disparities more broadly
- Study underscores the importance of research and data to assess and understand the experiences of smaller population groups, who often remain invisible in public data sources