

DISTORTED VIEWS AND PERCEPTIONS OF ASIAN AMERICAN COLLEGE
STUDENTS UNDER THE MODEL MINORITY STEREOTYPE

A Project

Presented to the faculty of the Division of Social Work
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MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

by

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Abstract
of
DISTORTED VIEWS AND PERCEPTIONS OF ASIAN AMERICAN COLLEGE
STUDENTS UNDER THE MODEL MINORITY STEREOTYPE

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Since the 1960s, the Model Minority stereotype is a terminology that has been inextricably linked with the Asian American/immigrant population. This stereotype suggests that Asian Americans are homogenous, intelligent, submissive to societal norms and emphasizes heavily in education and have been successful in American society. Despite the overwhelmingly positive qualities of the term, it remains to be a falsified view toward the minority population. The authors explored the historical and social context of the stereotype in three facets: education, employment and the media. The authors found that Asian American college students believe the Model Minority stereotype applies to all Asian groups; however, the benefits of being labeled with that term remain ambiguous. The findings indicated that government assistance is needed among Asian Americans, but Asian Americans do not seek supportive services.

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Serge Lee, PhD, MSW

Date

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Chapter 1

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The Asian American demographic contributes greatly to the diversity of the populations in the United States. According to the U.S. Census, there were 10,242,998 Asian Americans living in the United States in 2000. These individuals belong to various Asian ethnic groups who originated from countries such as China, India, Japan, Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), the Philippines, and Vietnam. People from the aforementioned countries immigrated to the United States for different reasons. Some immigrated in search for better employment and education while others resettled due to war (Barringer, 1993). Due to the significant change in the demographic of Asian Americans in past years, some were subjected to discriminatory labels. For example, the model minority stereotype became a well-known and influential label (Kawai, 2005). As is known, the term “model minority” can be found commonly used in multi-ethnic countries. The “model minority” refers to ethnic minorities who are more likely to attain higher success in academics, have a better economic advantage, family stability, and low crime involvement than other minority groups (Chou, 2008). Li and Wang (2008) state that Asian Americans were first characterized as “model minorities” in the 1960s during the height of the Civil Rights Movement. After the term was coined, many Asian American scholars criticized the model minority stereotype concept due to its social and political implications. They also argued that the stereotype does not truthfully describe the real life experiences of Asian Americans (Takaki, 1989).

Historically, Asian Americans were labeled with a multitude of negative stereotypes. For example, the first wave of Chinese immigrants found themselves in the gold mines of California in the late 1840s where they were given the negative stereotypes (Yu, 2006). At that time, Chinese immigrants were seen as “nothing more than starving masses, beasts of burden, depraved heathens, and opium addicts” (Chan, 1991). Acts of discrimination and violence erupted as a result of these prejudices and stereotypes of the Chinese. This led to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act which outlawed Chinese laborers from immigrating to the United States. The Chinese were not the only Asians to be targeted of such discriminatory measure. Other Asian ethnic groups such as the Japanese, Filipinos, and Indians have encountered similar discrimination (Min, 1995). In 1942, Japanese Americans were forcibly removed from their homes and placed in concentration camps when President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 as a result of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. During this time, Japanese Americans were viewed as a threat to national security due to allegations of espionage committed by some Japanese Americans. No evidence was ever found to support these accusations (Daniels, 2002).

According to Suzuki (1989), Asians continued to be viewed negatively. They were depicted and labeled as the “yellow peril” which Suzuki states as “a horde consisting of depraved, uncivilized heathens who were less than human and threatened to undermine the American way of life.” Kawai (2005) notes that Asian Americans are considered the yellow peril when they are portrayed as performing better than white Americans. Asian Americans as the yellow peril also exudes images of foreignness and masculinity that the U.S. feared would threaten its identity of a predominantly white

Christian nation. On the other hand, the model minority applies to Asian Americans when they are perceived as doing better than other minority groups because they have taken the initiative to work hard and succeed on their own without any protest. Under the model minority, Asian Americans also represented docility, femininity, and affirmed colorblind ideology. Suzuki discussed that the image of Asian Americans began to transform into this more positive model minority in the mid-1960s while in the midst of urban riots and unrest among blacks and other minorities. During this time, articles surfaced with titles like “Success Story, Japanese-American Style” and “Success Story of One Minority Group in the U.S.,” which spotlighted the sudden yet overwhelming success of Asian Americans. These articles, however, often did not mention that many of these presumed success stories pertained to Asian immigrants who immigrated to the United States with the passing of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. The act lifted previous immigration restrictions such as national quotas and allowed for a huge influx of immigrants from numerous countries. These newly arrived immigrants consisted of individuals reuniting with immediate family members who were already living in the United States as well as intellectuals in different professions and with various skills such as engineers and scientists (Le, 2011). Asian Americans were highly praised as the model minority who prevailed over prejudicial and discriminatory circumstances and had successfully “made it” in American society due to their diligence, perseverance, and easy adjustment (Suzuki, 1989).

This stereotype gained steam through the 1980s and 1990s as some Southeast Asian groups were characterized as the new whiz kids. This characterization failed to

acknowledge the diversity within the new Asian sub-groups. The model minority stereotype labeled and clumped the underachieving refugees from Southeast Asia as well as the high-achieving Asian American students who were doing extremely well all in one group. As a result, many voices were silenced and the educational needs and necessary resources for all Asian Americans were neglected (Louie, 2004). The model minority students were further marginalized and forgotten with the passing of No Child Left Behind Act in 2002. No Child Left Behind Act (2002) was passed with the purpose of helping students meet state proficiency standards and eliminating the achievement gaps. However, the model minority students were already performing above the expected standards. The model minority stereotype became detrimental to Asian American students because it hindered proper access to educational opportunities (Wong & Halgin, 2006) as well as resulted in negative reactions against Asian Americans among other minority groups and the whites (Chang, 2003).

Yu (2006) asserts that these stories suggest that Asian Americans are doing well in American society. They are believed to not encounter cultural conflict or discrimination and experience little to no adjustment difficulties. Asian Americans are said to possess many superb qualities such as hard-working, determination, strong family values, and dedication to education. It implies that their high level of educational attainment leads to more opportunities for employment (Suzuki, 2002). This perception of Asian Americans is reinforced through advertisement in the media. Asian Americans are often found in advertisements in scientific magazines and for technology-based products (Taylor, Landreth & Bang, 2005). Yu states that Asian Americans have been

defined by these outstanding characteristics and behaviors because of the perception that they have triumphed through adversity and they are able to easily move up the economic and social ladder compared to that of other minority groups. Yu also stresses that the model minority term stereotypes, over-generalizes, and misrepresents the diverse Asian American population. This misrepresentation silences the multiple voices of Asian Americans. According to Lee (1996), by painting Asian Americans as a homogeneous group, the model minority stereotype erases ethnic, cultural, social-class, gender, language, sexual, generational, achievement, and other differences.

Statement of Collaboration

This research project is a product of equal collaboration between both authors. The authors jointly worked on chapters one through five with equal distribution of effort. Both authors were integral in the analysis and development of the literature review, questionnaire formulation and administration as well as the submission of the human subjects application.

Statement of the Research Problem

The overgeneralization of Asian Americans under the model minority myth is misleading and false. It can present itself as a threat to those who do not fall under the terminology. Not meeting the expectations of outstanding academic performance, gainful employment, and socio-economic success can affect the physical and emotional nature of an individual. The term also implies that due to such achievements, Asian Americans do not need services such as government aid and mental health services. Therefore, there is a need to bring awareness and competent knowledge about the diversity among Asian

Americans to society in order to meet the different levels and areas of need for this diverse group.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of studying this topic has to educate the American society about the truth and misconceptions of the model minority myth. The authors feel that the model minority myth paints an unrealistic portrait and understanding of the Asian American community. By categorizing a broad minority group, the authors are inclined to believe that the basis for understanding Asian Americans will be narrowed and can potentially harbor false, detrimental awareness of these individuals. Studying the effects of model minority will help diminish the stereotypes and generalizations that are associated with the term.

Viewing the model minority stereotype as a practical and applicable conjecture completely falsifies and dehumanizes Asian Americans as a homogenized community. A secondary purpose is to highlight the needs and services that reflect the diversity of the Asian American population. The stereotype marginalizes Asian Americans by emphasizing the fact that this population has “succeeded” and has no major needs or concerns. This Master’s Project hopes to demythologize the notion that all Asian Americans uphold the characteristics of the model minority stereotype, as it creates speculative beliefs and assumptions.

Theoretical Framework

Hopkins points to Self-Categorization Theory (SCT) as a helpful approach that recognizes the multiple levels at which individual identity is constructed (as cited in

Schriver, 2010). According to the theory, the self may be defined at different levels of abstraction. Sometimes it may be defined in terms of individual uniqueness, at other times in terms of a specific group membership. Hopkins reinforces the importance of the interplay of individual will and the environment or context in defining (and potentially redefining) who we are, both individually and in terms of group identity, especially in the context of minority status within a dominant society. He also stresses that differences in power reflect that people are not equally placed in their ability to self-define either personal or group identity. The Self-Categorization Theory is appropriate in examining this research because it displays the multiple levels of systems that contribute to the creation and defining of the Asian American community. It provides insight and knowledge to how Asian Americans perceive and were indoctrinated with the model minority stereotype by an external force (Schriver, 2010).

The second theory (Schriver, 2010) that guided this study is the social systems perspective. As stated by Schriver, social systems perspective recognizes the dynamic nature of groups and the interrelatedness of the larger environment, the group itself, and the members of the group. Based on this definition, the social systems perspective allows us to fit the personal and historical experiences gained by group members in their interactions with the larger environment prior to joining a group with the impact of these experiences on the person's perceptions and behaviors inside the group. This perspective helps examine the relationship and interactions between the Asian American minority group and the larger dominant group. The social systems perspective is important

because it considers the influence of experiences and culture of the Asian American community in a larger environment.

Definition of Terms

Asian - An individual having any origin from areas of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian sub-continent such as Bangladesh, China, India, Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Asian American - A term used to define any Asian residing in the United States on a permanent or long-term basis, regardless of citizenship or other legal status.

Minority Group - Any group of people because of their physical and cultural characteristics, are singled out from others in society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination.

Model Minority - The term refers to ethnic minorities whose members are more likely to achieve higher success than other minority groups, especially in economic advantage, academic success, family stability, and low crime involvement.

Stereotype - A set of beliefs about the characteristics of groups of people that serve to mark those groups out as distinct entities.

Assumptions

The model minority is a myth that misrepresents the Asian American population. The term homogenizes Asian Americans under a single entity disregarding the unique experiences and cultural differences of each ethnic group. By classifying them as the model minority, there is the presumption that the “extremely successful” Asian

Americans do not face any economic, psychological, social, or cultural barriers but in actuality, they do indeed come across these obstacles.

Limitations

There are several limitations within this research study. The participants of the research study are all from Sacramento County. The sample size is also small for this research study. The responses collected from the questionnaire should not be generalized and be representative of the entire Asian American population. Another limitation includes the solicitation of responses that specifically targets Asians Americans. The research study does not incorporate opinions or perspectives from non-Asian Americans or people not directly affected by the model minority term.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The model minority term has repeatedly been used to define the success of all Asian Americans. It creates an over-generalized perception of Asian Americans as obedient, hardworking, intelligent, and highly accomplished individuals who do not experience any problems such as racial discrimination (Wang, 2007; Yu, 2006). The literature review in this chapter examines the complexity and diversity of Asian Americans in relation to the model minority myth. It also looks at the inaccuracies and misconceptions of the model minority myth which has resulted in both positive and negative effects on the Asian American population. The literature review begins with examining the historical derivation of the term model minority. The next section will include a generalized overview of the unrealistic perceptions of Asian Americans. In the last sections, particular attention is paid to Asian Americans and the model minority within the domains of education, employment, and the media. The review of past and current literature will lead to a better understanding of the experiences of the Asian American population and the model minority stereotype so that the needs of Asian Americans can be addressed.

History of the Model Minority

The term *model minority* emerged in the 1960s with its ubiquitous appearance in the U.S. media. It was first popularized in an article written by William Petersen entitled, "Success Story, Japanese-American Style," that was published in *New York Times*

Magazine in January 1966. In the article, Petersen recognized the Japanese Americans for being able to successfully incorporate themselves into American society through resilience. Petersen also argued that the accomplishments of Japanese Americans were due to their cultural beliefs in having respect for family, strong work ethic, and commitment to learning (as cited in Osajima, 2005). Another article emerged in *U.S. News and World Report* later that year that highlighted the achievements of Chinese Americans and their successful development of peaceful and prosperous Chinatowns. Similar to the Japanese Americans, the Chinese Americans were also acknowledged for having cultural values that promoted hard work, determination, and frugality (Osajima, 2005).

With the publication of these articles, the American public's perception of Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans began to change. They started to be perceived in a positive light where they were praised for overcoming numerous years of racial discrimination in order to achieve educational and socio-economic success (Osajima, 2005). According to Yu (2006), the model minority idea became validated through broad and simplistic early research during this time. These early studies found that the median annual income was higher among Asian American families than U.S. families and the median number of schooling completed by Asian Americans was higher than the general U.S. population. The articles in *New York Times Magazine* and *U.S. News and World Report* placed much emphasis on how these two Asian groups were able to triumph through their struggles on their own and with unaided effort.

As discussed by Kawai (2005) and Osajima (2005), appearing in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement, the concept of the model minority was believed to have political implications. Most importantly, Kawai argued that the model minority term served to support the colorblind ideology and to divide minority groups. In addition, Kawai states that the colorblind ideology blamed racial inequality on one's race and one's individual lack of performance and did not consider social and historical context and disregarded institutional racism. For example, both articles in *New York Times Magazine* and *U.S. News and World Report* failed to include the fact that African Americans were forced to come to the United States whereas many privileged Asian immigrants voluntarily entered the United States. Asian Americans became the epitome of success in America which suggested that it was possible for other minority groups to reach similar achievements. Osajima indicates that the Asian American success challenged the belief of the black militants' of the Black Power Movement that America is a fundamentally racist society that was developed to keep minorities in an inferior position. On the contrary, Osajima states that the Asian American success illustrated that America was the land of opportunities that rewarded people based on their skills, qualifications and behavior. Osajima further argues that the Asian culture was also presented as possessing good cultural values which made other groups feel that their culture was not good enough. According to the Kawai and Osajima, these feelings of inadequacy contributed to racial inequality.

More articles emerged recognizing other Asian groups such as the Filipinos, Koreans and Vietnamese under the model minority. This was primarily due to the

change in Asian American demographics in the United States. Osajima (2005) found that from 1970 to 1980 the Asian American population increased from 1.4 to 3.5 million people. The 1965 Immigration Act brought many Asian intellectuals and scholars to the United States as well as the fall of Saigon in 1975 that ended the Vietnam War and relocated many Southeast Asian refugees to the United States. Other articles began to compare Asian Americans and the dominant white race. According to Kawai, in a 1971 article titled “Success Story: Outwhiting the White” in *Newsweek*, the author discussed how Japanese Americans had surpassed the other minority groups including whites on all different levels of success. There was another headline that read “America’s Super Minority” in *Fortune* magazine which stated that Asians received A’s more often and failed less than whites and Asians performed higher on academic, intellectual, and cognitive tests than whites as well (Kawai, 2005). Kawai believes there was continuous empirical evidence to support the success of Asian Americans and perpetuated the term model minority among Asian Americans. Some articles highlighted the high number of Asian Americans in universities and their above averages math scores on their SATs. Like the articles of the 1960s, Osajima (2005) asserted that the Asian cultural beliefs and values of hard work and commitment to learning were behind their continued success in the 1980s.

The model minority continued to make waves among Asian Americans and other minority groups. Chou (2008) states that from the 1980s to the present the term is being used in the contemporary sense where Asian Americans were the model for all other minority groups who have been able to survive in America’s materialistic and capitalist

society. Chou argues that it was believed by many that Asian Americans have been able to be successfully assimilated into mainstream America without facing racial discrimination. However, Osajima (2005) found that there has been an increase in anti-Asian sentiments due to the numerous Asian Americans being accepted at major universities. Takaki (1992) also notes that Asian Americans were depicted as taking over these universities and limiting spots for whites and other minority groups (as cited in Wing, 2007). Wing writes (2007) that whites began to perceive themselves as victims who were stuck competing against the achievements of Asian Americans and the enforcement of affirmative action. In contrast, McGowan and Lindgren (2006) argue that opponents of affirmative action used the Asian American model minority status to portray Asian Americans as victims of discrimination. Many liberals worked to eradicate affirmative action by highlighting Asian Americans as the good minority who would suffer with the implementation of affirmative action. Thus, Asian Americans became a threat due to their success and meeting the stereotypes of the model minority.

Unrealistic Views of Asian Americans

Stereotypes of Asian Americans are not uniformly positive given that negative perceptions about Asian Americans also exist. Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick (2007) note that Asian Americans tend to be viewed as cunning, sly, selfish, nerdy, and lacking personal warmth and kindness. Lin, Kwan, Cheung, and Fiske (2005) found that the endorsement of negative stereotypes about Asian Americans has been shown to be linked to negative attitudes, emotions, and behaviors. However, Ho and Jackson (2001) argue that the support of the positive stereotypes of Asian American competence has demonstrated to

be associated with both positive and negative attitudes and emotions toward them. Ho and Jackson illustrated that people who indicated that they believed Asian Americans had traits consistent with the model minority stereotype such as intelligent, ambitious, and obedient, also indicated that they admired and respected Asian Americans but reported feeling hostile and jealous.

In a hypothesis experiment regarding the stereotype, McGowan and Lindgren (2006) argue against the model minority myth as they declared that the term is a gross generalization as well as misleading and false. They also argue that when the statistics are examined closely, they claim to prove comparative Asian American economic or educational success is often disingenuous. McGowan and Lindgren assert that by disregarding the existence of many poor and poorly educated Asian Americans, Asian critical scholars affirmed that the stereotype convinces people that Asians do not need assistance in achieving economic and educational success. These same scholars also disputed that the stereotype creates the impression that Asian Americans could not possibly endure widespread discrimination especially the kind that leads to physical violence. McGowan and Lindgren further state that these scholars reported that the complaints made by Asian Americans of discrimination were sometimes met with ridicule. However, the murder case of Vincent Chin of 1982 disproved the notion that Asian Americans are not likely to suffer from violent discrimination (Osajima, 1988). Vincent Chin was killed by two white men who thought he was Japanese. A lot of attention was focused on the brutal beating of Chin, who was beaten with a baseball bat by the two men who made racial slurs and remarks toward Chin (Osajima, 1988).

According to McGowan and Lindgren, Asian critical scholars are also concerned that the model is constructed to divide and conquer racial minority groups. They argued that the model infuses resentment and jealousy among minority groups in order to dissolve the collective power of racial minorities when America becomes “majority minority.”

Maddux, Galinsky, Cuddy, and Polifroni (2008) believe that the perception of Asian Americans or other groups having certain model minority traits, including being hardworking, intelligent, and ambitious, leads to a sense that such groups pose a threat to other groups in terms of educational, economic, and political opportunities. This sense of realistic threat may also lead to negative attitudes and emotions. Thus, Lee (1998) argues that the model minority narrative reflects the sociopolitical interests of the dominant white group and serves as a mechanism for their ideological control. As a device of political control, the voices of Asian Americans, other racial minorities, and disadvantaged whites become silenced because of the stereotype (Lee, 1998).

Education and the Model Minority

Asian Americans have not always been seen as the model minority. A prominent researcher on the model minority, Lee (1998) discusses that from the 1850's to the post World War II decade, Asians were dehumanized as a foreign contaminant, particularly in 1860, Wing (2007) writes how California banned Asians from public schools. Two decades later, in 1885, during the height of the “Chinese Must Go” incident, a Chinese student named Mamie Tape challenged the ban by attempting to enroll in San Francisco's Spring Valley School. A state judge overturned the ban, and the decision was upheld in the state Supreme Court. However, the ruling fell short in challenging “separate but

equal,” which left San Francisco in 1885 and Sacramento in 1893 to establish segregated schools (Wing, 2007).

Yu (2006) argues that the influence of the model minority stereotype is widespread in education. Since the beginning, the model minority rhetoric has been discounted for its monolithic treatment and inaccurate stereotyping of Asian students as being homogenously successful in academia. Yu writes that in 1966, when the model minority narrative began to receive attention, James Coleman organized a study of “Equality of Educational Opportunity.” The well-known Coleman Report discovered that Asian American students as a group were not succeeding academically nor were they outwhiting the whites (Newsweek, 1971). Yu’s article claims that subsequent works of other researchers all showed similar findings about the school failures of minority students including Asian American students. A major lawsuit, *Lau v. Nichols*, reached the Supreme Court in 1973-1974 over English immersion, sink or swim instruction. It was brought on behalf of the Chinese American students suing the San Francisco school system for not providing them with equal educational opportunities. The plaintiffs’ arguments were supported with statistics about the academic failures and struggles that the Asian American students encountered.

Furthermore, Jiobu (1988) conducted an exhaustive statistical analysis of the 1980 census data on eight main ethnic groups in California – Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, Mexicans, Vietnamese, blacks, and whites. One of his major findings was that none of the minority groups, excluding the Japanese, had achieved economic equality with whites when adjustments were made for such factors as weeks worked, work

experience, and education. Moreover, he found that whites consistently gained a substantially higher return on education than any of the minority groups. Despite both whites and Asian Americans having the same level of education, whites benefited more for being educated because on average, they often earned more than other groups (as cited in Suzuki, 2002).

Suzuki (2002) highlights that the perception of Asian Americans in education is that they “out-white” whites and they have no serious needs or problems. This view partially explains why Asian Americans are often overlooked in programs designed to serve minorities. For example, Asian students are frequently excluded from educational opportunity programs that provide supportive services to minority students. Similarly, Asian faculty and staff are also often neglected or overlooked in campus affirmative action programs. Suzuki further notes that many Asian students are undergoing extreme psychological stress and alienation. For some students, the pressure becomes so immense that their academic performance suffers, sometimes forcing them to drop out of school. Conversely, Qin, Way, and Mukherjee (2008) argue that much of the pressure and high expectations for academic success come from the parents of these Asian students. Often times, this leaves a negative impact on the parent-child relationship and creates conflict in the home. Qin, Way, and Mukherjee further state that the emphasis on their educational achievements also ignores Asian American student’s psychological and social well-being. The research by Way and Chen (2000) on Asian American students show that these students reported poor psychological and social adjustment which suggests an

achievement and adjustment paradox. Greene, Way and Pahl (2006) agree that Asian Americans have been often found to report the lowest self-esteem as well.

In a study conducted by Qin et al., (2008), they found that many Chinese parents focused an enormous amount of attention on their children's performance in school rather than the other parts of their life. If their child performed poorly on an exam or received an undesirable grade, the parents spent a majority of their time lecturing their child. Qin et al. reports that one student shared how she showed her mother her grade of 80 and her mother unhappily responded by saying her grade was not good enough and that she needed to get a 90. The students also expressed not being praised or acknowledged by their parents when they did do well in school. According to Qin et al., for the students, this created feelings of inadequacy and alienation in the home. As a result, the students said that they decided not to inform their parents about their academic performance. Asher (2001) stated that the internalization of the model minority stereotype by Asian American parents and their children creates a detrimental force that contributes to damaging academic and career choices of Asian Americans as well as playing a destructive role in the development of their self-identities.

Suzuki (1989) argues that these psychological problems have been exacerbated by incidences of racial harassment and even violence against Asian students on several campuses across the country. The study by Qin et al. (2008) also found that the Chinese students were being harassed by other students because of the belief that they did academically better than these other students. A lot of resentment was felt by the Chinese Americans and their image became known as not being cool yet nerdy due to their

emphasis on academics. The study by Qin et al. also illustrates that the misconception of these Chinese students was caused by the negative impact of the model minority stereotype and it had a direct effect on peer acceptance and peer harassment in schools. Thus, Yu (2006) believes the model minority label has created a mental trap for these Asian students and they have no other choice but to internalize the oppression given to them by the greater society.

In both the 1990 and 2000 censuses, they showed that academic success is not universal across Asian American groups. For example, Yu (2006) found that in 1998, the percentage of Southeast Asians adults with less than a high school diploma was 64%, which far exceeded the national average for all Asian Americans of 23%. With further examination, Ngo and Lee (2007) report that according to the 2000 U.S. Census, 59% of Hmong Americans, 52% of Cambodian Americans, 49% of Laotian Americans, and 38% of Vietnamese Americans 25 years old and over had less than a high school education. Although the presence of Asian Americans at prestigious universities is high and prominent, the different Asian subgroups vary greatly in enrollment. Yu (2006) discovered that in 2000, Chinese Americans were 7 times more likely than Filipino Americans to attend the University of California, Berkeley despite the population of both Asian groups were close in numbers in California.

Wing (2007) conducted a study that focused on Asian American students at Berkeley High School in Berkeley, CA. The study was part of a larger research project entitled the Diversity Project which was administered from 1996-2002 that looked at the racial achievement gap at this school. The school is known to be the most racially

integrated school in America with a population of 3,000 students and 10% being of the Asian race. The different Asian groups at this school included Chinese, Cambodian, Japanese, Hmong, Indian, Laotian, Pakistani Vietnamese, and many more. These students also came from a variation of cultures, family structures, immigration statuses and history, educational levels, and economic backgrounds. There are more than 15 different Asian languages spoken at this school. The purpose of this particular study was to explore the diversity among Asian Americans in regards to their academic achievement and to contest the model minority myth. Both qualitative and quantitative data was used to conduct this study. In the research, 6 students were chosen from a larger sample size of 30 to participate in private interview sessions.

Wing found that the GPA of the Asian American students per class level ranged from: freshmen 0.83 to 4.0, sophomores 1.0 to 4.0, juniors 1.57 to 4.0, and seniors 2.06 to 3.98 which demonstrated that there were no seniors with a 4.0 GPA. The data indicated that there were both high and low achieving Asian American students at the school. The interviews helped explore the academic difficulties of these students. Wing reports that one of the high-achieving students expressed investing in long hours of studying in order to earn good grades, but experiencing a lot of test anxiety. Another low-achieving student shared that his academic struggle was due to his limited English proficiency because he arrived to the United States and immediately entered the ninth grade. With the model minority stereotype, it often masks the academic struggles of these Asian American students.

When compared with other racial groups for meeting academic requirements for admission to UCs and CSUs, the data illustrated that in the Class of 1996, whites still did better than all the other racial groups. Wing reports that 70% of Asian American females met the academic requirements for admission to UCs and CSUs compared to that of 88% of white females and 64% of Asian American males to that of 73% of white males fulfilled those requirements. The data implied that the Asian students may have been taking different classes than the white students and some classes may not have met the prerequisites for admission to UCs and CSUs (Wing, 2007). Thus, this debunks the assumption that Asian students out-performed white students. Wing (2007) urges educators, policymakers, scholars, researchers and others to look beyond the white-black racial issues and instead challenge the assumptions and stereotypes of those invisible Asian individuals in order to meet their educational needs.

Museus and Kiang (2007) assert that by deconstructing the model minority myth and exposing its inaccuracies, it will help scholars to include Asian Americans in their research so that the lived experiences of Asian Americans are explored, studied, and acknowledged. The authors argued that the aggregated data collected often is oversimplified and ignored the diversity and complexity of Asian Americans. For example, Berkner, Ha, and Cataldi (2002) note that 71% of Asian Americans will obtain a bachelor's degree within 6 years compared to 67% of whites (as cited in Museus & Kiang, 2007). However, this type of data misrepresents Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders. When looked at in more detail, the 2004 U.S. census showed the discrepancies of bachelor's degrees attained by the various Asian subgroups. Although 63.9% of Asian

Indians and 54.3% of Pakistanis have obtained a bachelor's degree, the other side of the spectrum illustrated that only 7.5% of Hmong Americans, 7.7% of Laotian Americans, 9.2% of Cambodian Americans, and 19.4% of Vietnamese Americans have a bachelor's degree (Museus & Kiang, 2007). The aggregated data provided distorted views of the entire Asian American population in regards to academic achievement.

With their study on Southeast Asian Americans, Ngo and Lee (2007) explain that Southeast Asians are repeatedly viewed in dual contradictory roles. They are either perceived as part of the diligent high-achievers without problems or they are considered the government-aid dependent, gangsters, or high school dropouts that do not deserve assistance. However, Ngo and Lee (2007) argue that the academic experiences of Southeast Asian students are far more intricate than these preconceived impressions. The authors looked at 4 Southeast Asian groups: Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Vietnamese. Although all of these Southeast Asians are thriving academically, the Vietnamese were found to have a higher achievement rate than the other 3 groups whereas Cambodians and Laotians struggled the most academically. Their findings also illustrate that culture played an integral role in the educational success of the students in these 4 subgroups and emphasized how gender and the role of the family were contributing factors as well. Ngo and Lee (2007) attest that there needs to be more research completed on the educational experiences of Southeast Asian Americans.

In the article by Suzuki (2002), he explains that in 1989, the Asian Pacific American Education Advisory (APAEA) Committee of the California State University system was developed to study the problems and needs of Asian Pacific American

students on the CSU campuses. The committee found that there was a need to provide assistance with English proficiency among Asian American students who spoke English as a Second Language (ESL). The CSU system requires their students to pass a mandatory writing test in order to qualify for graduation. Many of the Asian American ESL students expressed experiencing much difficulty with passing the writing test. Some individuals took the test numerous times which delayed their graduation date by 1 or 2 years. The committee also discovered that only 1 or 2 CSU campuses offered services to help these students with their writing (Suzuki, 2002). Suzuki (2002) argues that Asian American students have not been encouraged to enhance or develop their verbal and linguistic skills since they are often viewed as high achievers who are free of problems and discrimination. As a result, their limited linguistic and proficiency skills in English prevents them from obtaining student leadership positions in college that affected them later on in their professional careers as well. Additionally, Suzuki found that other studies have illustrated that Asian American students frequently major in math and science related fields as opposed to social sciences and humanities that require well-developed verbal, written, and linguistic skills in English.

Employment

The model minority thesis provides the image that Asian Americans are too successful to be regarded as a disadvantaged minority group (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994). In a study conducted by Wong, Lai, Nagasawa and Lin (1998), their results indicate that whites, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and even Asian Americans believed that Asian Americans were more prepared, determined, and had a

better chance of achieving higher career success than whites. The results showed that there were Asian Americans who truly believed in the model minority stereotype. The supporters who believe Asian Americans are a model minority affirm that the unemployment rate of Asian Americans is low.

According to the 2010 U.S. statistics, 5.6% of Asian Americans are unemployed compared to 6.1% of whites, 8.7% of Latinos, and 11.1% of African Americans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). These critics argue that the low unemployment rate is due to the strong cultural forces of Asian Americans. Working a low-paying menial job that is either part-time or seasonal is highly preferable for unemployed and underemployed Asian Americans in order to save face rather than resorting to government assistance (Cheng, 1997).

In a study by Chan (1991), she discovered that Asian Americans are more likely to be self-employed managers than in managerial positions at large corporations. Woo (1994) states that their businesses are usually small and located in ethnic enclaves and their operation different from larger businesses. Tang (1997) argues that many Asian Americans move towards self-employment or side jobs due to the obstacles that hindered their career advancement. Tang (1997) found that in other employment fields such as in sales and clerical work, Asian Americans frequently occupied positions like retail clerks, file clerks, typists, and office machine operators where the pay is low rather than the positions as the well-paid brokers and insurance agents or high paid secretaries and receptionists. In the same study, Asian Americans were found to be more prominently employed in areas of accounting, dentistry, nursing, medical, technology and engineering

but they were not as present in the areas of law, teaching, administration, social services, and higher level medical professions (as cited in Cheng, 1997). 8.9% of Asians occupy the science and engineering labor force in the U.S. even though the Asian American population is only 2.4% of the entire U.S. population (Tang, 1997). Sue (1973) also found that Asian Americans are overrepresented in professions and occupations that require minimal verbal proficiency but are underrepresented in people-contact professions such as law, advertising and journalism (as cited in Suzuki, 2002).

According to Suzuki (2002), not only is there a disproportion in representation, but Asian Americans groups face labor market discrimination at the top. Suzuki reports that Asian men may encounter a racial barrier commonly known as the glass ceiling, as they try to move upward in management. It was discovered that Asian men were less likely to be in management positions and to earn substantially less. Xin (2004) argues that supportive studies indicated that only 0.3% of Asian Americans hold top leadership positions in Fortune 500 companies. In subsequent reports, Suzuki states that Asian Americans have not yet been treated equally or been completely accepted in American society. Park (1992) declares in his dissertation that Asian American workers were being exploited due to the model minority stereotype. He found that they were perceived as disposable workers that could be easily laid off and replaced without protest because of their stereotypical passive and docile behavior (as cited in Cheng, 1997). They still face disparities in the areas of income and employment especially in comparison to their white counterparts. Tang (1997) asserts that Asian Americans are still trailing behind whites

when attempting to move up the employment and economic ladder. With the same level of education, whites often earn more than Asian Americans.

Although many Asians are well educated and gain relatively easy access to entry-level jobs, they appear to encounter subtle discrimination when they attempt to move up on the occupational hierarchy to managerial, administrative or executive positions. Wong, Lai, Nagasawa, and Lin (1998) found that they are often excluded from executive positions due to the discriminatory belief that they are complacent with their current position or they do not qualify for the managerial position despite their education and skills. Pham, Hokoyama, and Hokoyama (2006) argue that Asian Americans are not represented in leadership positions in the private, public and nonprofit sectors because there are no mentors or role models to pave the way for other Asians to obtain these leadership roles. As a result, Asian Americans remain hidden in the background and continue to be perceived as not possessing leadership qualities. These authors further state that for those few Asian Americans who do obtain management or leadership positions, they are looked upon as deceitful and a possible threat due to the discriminative perception of Asians as the dangerous and betraying foreigner. This image of Asian Americans perpetuated with the case of Wen Ho Lee, a Los Alamos nuclear scientist who was accused of mishandling classified information and for being a Chinese spy. Despite his natural U.S. citizenship, he was falsely charged due to the assumption that he was an insidious foreigner who was committing espionage against the United States. He was later released and his charges dropped due to lack of evidence (McGowan & Lindgren, 2004; Yu, 2006; Wing, 2007).

Suzuki (1989) explains that a 1970 U.S. census data reached the conclusion that the model minority characterization of Asian Americans was inaccurate, misleading, and a gross overgeneralization. He found that while many Asian Americans had indeed, achieved middle class status, there was still a far larger proportion of people with incomes below the poverty level among Asians than among whites. Suzuki notes that the Asian scholars also found that even for the more educated middle class Asian Americans, the model minority stereotype remained problematic. Based on his findings, Suzuki states that although the median income of Asian families was high than that of white families, the median income of individuals was found to be lower for Asian Americans than for whites. This apparent paradox was due to the following factors: 1) there was a larger proportion of Asian families in which both spouses worked than among white families; 2) Asian children remained with their families longer and thereby contributed longer to family income; and 3) Asian families were larger on the average and, therefore, had more earners contributing to family income.

More recently, the 2000 U.S. Census demonstrated that Asian American families' annual household income was \$59,324 in comparison to \$50,046 for all families in the U.S. Additionally, Asian Americans who worked full-time had a higher income per year than those in other racial groups. Asian American men made roughly \$40,750 compared to \$37,057 of other men while Asian American women made \$31,049 and the other women \$27,194 (as cited in Moua, 2009). These statistics indicate that Asian Americans are economically successful. On the contrary, Moua (2009) declares that these statistics are false and inaccurate overgeneralizations of the Asian American population.

According to Li (2005), the statistics do not distinguish the number of family members living in the home which in the case of Asian Americans are often above average. As a result, the additional members skew the data. The statistics also do not consider the diversity of the Asian Americans such as newly arrived immigrants and/or refugees and Asians that have been in the U.S. for numerous generations, but instead, the data lumps all Asians together (as cited in Moua, 2009). The data ultimately misrepresents Asian Americans.

Additional statistics found in the U.S. Census 2000 illustrate similar misconceived information about Asian Americans. When examining poverty, 9.2% of families of the total U.S. population are living in poverty. 6.3% of white families are living in poverty compared to 9.7% of Asian American families which indicate that the percentage of Asian American families living in poverty is above the total U.S. population. By looking at the disaggregated data of the Asian subgroups, there is great discrepancy between the subgroups. For instance, only 4.8% of Japanese American families are living in poverty in comparison to 17.1% of Laotian American and 34.8% of Hmong American families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Therefore, the statistics do not correctly sum up the level of poverty among Asian Americans as a whole.

Media Representation of Asian Americans

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2004), Asian Americans are the fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S. The projected increase of this ethnic group was an increase of 213% from 10.7 million in 2000 to 33.4 million in 2050. In comparing other ethnic groups, Asian Americans are traditionally underrepresented in the mainstream

media, but when they do appear, they are often misrepresented with stereotypical roles relating to the model minority stereotype (Lee & Joo, 2005; Yuen, Chin, Deo, Lee, & Millman, 2005). Both Kawai (2005) and Lee (1999) argue that media representations of Asian Americans have transformed from the blatant negative yellow peril, coolie, gook, and deviant stereotypes to the current seemingly positive model minority stereotype to suit the changing political, social, cultural, and economic circumstances. An example is that Asians are consistently represented as inassimilable foreigners (Suzuki, 2002; Wu, 2002), who are never American, speak poor English, and lack appropriate social skills (Lee & Joo, 2005; Park, Gabbadon, & Chernin, 2006). Although the characteristics of the model minority stereotype sound positive, they actually harbor false admissions and beliefs about Asian Americans, such as being non-American, quiet, nerdy, and passive (Lee & Joo, 2005). Suzuki (2002) asserts that most racial-ethnic stereotypes about Asian Americans are constructed, shaped and perpetuated through the media lens.

According to Perse (2001), the media's content help create stereotypes and affects ethnic groups schemata about themselves and others. It influences perceptions about the stereotyped groups. Due to the repeated exposures of stereotypes to the mass audience, it becomes an automated cognitive process. With the similar content exacerbated on television programs, newspapers, movies, and magazines, stereotypes about the Asian community become an automatic mechanism that can produce detrimental consciousness and judgments.

In an investigation of the media portrayal of Asian Americans on primetime television series in Fall 2004 (e.g., *ER*, *Lost*, *Crossing Jordan*, *Law & Order: SVU*, and

Boston Legal), Yuen et al. (2005) found that Asian Americans were underrepresented. It was revealed that Asian Americans occupied 2.7% of the total characters. Most of the Asian Americans present were characterized as holding high status positions that required a high degree of intelligence and advanced degrees (often in sciences), which might reinforce the model minority stereotype. There was also an invisibility of Asian Americans in situational comedies that generally feature family and domestic settings. Due to the lack of Asian Americans in these types of settings, it may strengthen the stereotype that Asians do not represent the ideal American family. It was also observed that other ethnic groups portrayed in the media had four times as many romantic or familial relationships as Asian Americans, which perpetuated Asians as asexual and isolated.

In addition, Mastro and Stern (2003) discovered that only 2.4 percent of speaking characters were Asian Americans on television. Their findings also indicate that Asians appeared most often in commercials for technology-related products and in work settings. They also classified the portrayals of the Asians models as being too passive. They note that these depictions may contribute to perceptions of Asian Americans as being submissive, devoted to work, and only able to feel self-worth through superior achievement.

Taylor, Landreth and Bang's (2005) study surrounding media advertising found that the model minority characteristics pertaining to Asians are hardworking, technologically savvy, business oriented, successful and well assimilated. These are clearly reflected in advertising portrayals. When Asian Americans are featured in

magazine ads, they are typically represented in advertisements for technology products, in business and science publications, and in business settings and relationships. There is also a lack of representation of Asian models in women's magazines. Results of this study show that mainstream magazines portray Asian Americans as predominantly successful, intelligent, work oriented and well versed in technology. The lack of family and social settings may give the impression that Asian Americans do not spend as much time socializing with peers or families. This reinforces the false pretense that Asian Americans are quiet and passive individuals. In addition, Asian women and men are also stereotyped in their personality and character traits. Other findings of the study indicated that Asian women are frequently depicted as contradictory stereotypes such as humble, silent, obedient, exotic, hyper sexualized figures, evil, deceitful, seductive and ruthless dragon ladies. Lee and Joo (2005) found that Asian men are often depicted as culturally incompetent, effeminate, isolated, subservient martial artists or cunning villains. In a study of children's television advertising, Bang and Reece (2003) found Asian American models in only 3.7 percent of a sample of 808 ads, which is a small figure compared to the overall population of Asian Americans in the U.S. The article reveals that there was not a single ad that showed Asian models exclusively and that Asians were underrepresented in ads for toys, clothing and movies. Once again, none of the ads showed an Asian in a family and domestic setting.

In a fifty-year long exploration study between racialized power and politics of television representation about the images of Asian Americans, Hamamoto (1994) discovered that the television images of Asian Americans are quite frequent. Through the

research, it was revealed that there was a lack of positive representations of the ethnic group. The Asian population was commonly characterized as murderous, amoral, exotic and menacing individuals. Through these media portrayals, Hamamoto argues that Asian Americans were depicted in the most vicious and damaging forms of racial stereotyping.

Through the media, creations of stereotypes have also been present. Lee and Joo (2005) discovered that Asians are usually showcased as individuals who communicate poorly, quiet, shy, humble, passive, non-confrontational, and speak poor English with accents. In addition, Asians are stereotyped as “all work, no play” nerds or workaholics, who are technologically savvy, but are not interested in social or fun activities, lacking proper communication, social skills, and cultural knowledge. The portrayal of Asian Americans in advertisements is geared toward business and technology based products, but they are rarely seen in family, domestic, romantic and social settings. As a result, the portrayal of Asian Americans in those settings may reinforce the stereotype that Asians are hardworking and technologically advanced, and the lack of positive representation in family and social settings may reinforce the belief that Asians are not sociable and having impaired social and communication skills (Taylor et al., 2005).

Suzuki (2002) writes that another pervasive stereotype about Asian Americans is the foreigner stereotype. Asian Americans are rarely ever depicted as full-fledged Americans. Rather, they are characterized as an exotic, non-American, foreign, inassimilable, and act FOB (fresh off the boat), and are routinely treated as if they do not belong or should coexist in the U.S. to the same degree as other racial/ethnic groups (Lee & Joo, 2005; Taylor et al., 2005). In an ethnic comparative study, Asian Americans were

ranked the least American compared to other ethnic groups, particularly whites (Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Devos & Banaji, 2005). Cheryan and Monin (2005) conducted an experimental study about the perception of “American-ness” and discovered that Asian faces were rated the least American, follow by Hispanic faces, black faces, and white faces. White faces were rated as the most American. The foreigner stereotype is a form of identity denial because it suggests that Asian Americans are ostracized and considered outsiders. Their inclusion as Americans are denied and are less accepted than other racial-ethnic minorities. In many cases, Kawai (2005) argues that Asian Americans are depicted as deceitful foreigners who are evil and untrustworthy; and as a result, they are subjected to racially motivated discrimination, xenophobia and hate crime. The foreigner stereotype could exasperate harassment and hate crime against Asian Americans incurred by the model minority stereotype. As a result of this, Suzuki (2002) asserts that it could worsen Asian Americans psychological stress and alienation.

Not only do media stereotypes shape society perceptions and attitudes of the stereotyped groups, but they also effect their interaction with one another. Perse (2001) argues that negative ethnic stereotypes may arouse fear and hesitation and limit social interactions with stereotyped groups. Aboud and Mendelson (1996) indicate that popularity and socialization skills promote peer acceptance, whereas shyness and poor communication skills deter social capitalism. Zhang (2010) further argues that given the perception and belief that Asian Americans lack social skills and are predominantly passive, it is inferable that peers will be less likely to interact with Asian Americans.

In the study by Zhang (2010) on society's perception of Asian Americans through media stereotypes indicates overwhelming influence of media information. Results show that people's perception and attitudes toward Asian Americans are aligned with media representations. Findings from comparison of peer racial-ethnic groups show that Asians are perceived as the model minority who excel academically, lack social skills, and are the excluded foreigners. In the study, it is expressed that through the media's cultivation of a standardized ideology about Asian Americans, society's views are consistent with the perception of Asians. The media's stereotype about Asian Americans appears to be widely accepted by the general population.

The media can also play a very important and impactful role among Asian Americans. The media's influence that Asians are shy, passive and poor English speakers appears to encourage society's perception of Asian Americans (Lee & Joo, 2005; Park et al., 2006; Taylor et al., 2005). The nerd stereotype could be very detrimental to Asian's socialization process because of the possible peer exclusion of individuals who are perceived to lack social skills and a good grasp of the English language (Sunwolf & Leets, 2004). Buhs and Ladd (2001) also highlight the importance of peer rejection and how it can be devastating toward Asian Americans social, emotional, psychological well-being. According to Paek and Shah (2003), the poor communicator stereotype could also limit their career opportunities. Asian Americans will have to break through barriers to attain management positions, promotions and obtaining jobs that require solid communication skills.

Although overall representation of Asian Americans has increased during the past ten years, the portrayals continue to conform to the stereotypes of the group (Taylor et al., 2005). Taylor et al. state that there has been some improvement in Asian American representation in general interest magazines, but Asian models remain almost invisible in women's magazines. These studies and analyses show us from a societal perspective that it is important that advertisers show minority groups in a wide variety of contexts. This way, both members of the minority group and society at large can obtain a fuller view of the group (Taylor et al., 2005).

Summary

The literature review explores the historical context and symbolism behind the model minority stereotype. The review extensively covers the three most common facets in which Asian Americans are depicted which include education, employment, and the media. Both past and contemporary researches are included to highlight the important trends and perceptions that have taken place over the course of years. In the following chapter, the methodology of the study will be discussed.

Chapter 3

METHODS

Research Design

This research project utilized the exploratory research design. An exploratory research design is appropriate in this research project because of the limited data surrounding Asian American college students under the model minority stereotype. According to Rubin and Babbie (2011), an exploratory design is used “when a researcher is examining a new interest, when the subject of study is relatively new and unstudied, or when a researcher seeks to test the feasibility of undertaking a more careful study or wants to develop the methods to be used in a more careful study (p. 133).” By using an exploratory research design, the study will produce additional insight and knowledge about Asian American college students under the model minority stereotype.

Instrumentations

A quantitative approach was utilized to create an inflexible and highly structured questionnaire that would allow the researchers to compare responses among participants (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). The quantitative method was used to develop the questionnaire in order to examine multiple variables that possibly reflect the views and perceptions of the model minority stereotype by Asian American college students. The research questionnaire constituted two main sections that included scaling and close-ended questions. The first section of the questionnaire consisted of eleven demographic questions that solicited information about their background. Some of the questions used in this section included; “At what category is your age?”, “What is

your primary language?”, “Please indicate your current grade level in college”, “What is your major?”, “What is your current income status?”, and “How proficient are you in English?” The researchers and Project Advisor were instrumental in the creation of these questions. The Project Advisor helped edit the questionnaire terminologies to reflect the clarity and accuracy of each question. The first eleven demographic questions were not pretested for reliability and validity prior to the research administration.

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of questions and statements asking the participant of their knowledge of the model minority as it pertains to himself/herself or the greater society. This part of the questionnaire focused on the participants’ own perception of the model minority stereotype and the assumptions behind the stereotype. The questions were structured rigidly to include closed ended questions and categorized responses to the questions. Sample questions included: “How knowledgeable are you of the model minority stereotype?”; “In your view, the model minority applies to every Asian ethnic group. Would you say you?”; “Do you feel that you meet the criteria of the model minority?”; “In your view, Asian Americans place a higher value on education than other minority groups in the United States. Would you say you.” Based on the question and statement, the pre-coded answers asked participants on a sliding scale whether they agreed with the statement or not. For example, the pre-coded answers included: “Yes, No, I don’t know”; “Not Knowledgeable at All, Knowledgeable, I Don’t Know, Somewhat Knowledge, Very Knowledgeable”; and “Strongly Disagree, Disagree, I Don’t Know, Agree, Strongly Agree.” This section of the questionnaire was not pretested for reliability and validity prior to the research.

Protection of Human Subjects

The researchers took various steps to explore prospective participants for this research study. The researchers searched the California State University, Sacramento website for applicable student organizations on campus. In early September 2011, the researchers began drafting the Institution Review Board (IRB) application, the questionnaire, and the consent form. The first submission of these documents to the authors' thesis advisor was on September 22, 2011. The thesis advisor returned the documents with corrections and suggestions noted on the IRB application, questionnaire, and consent form on September 26, 2011. The researchers made the appropriate revisions and resubmitted the documents on September 27, 2011.

On October 07, 2011, the authors' thesis advisor returned all three forms and advised the researchers to change the consent form to reflect the targeted population as mentioned on the IRB application. The researchers resubmitted the forms on October 24, 2011. On October 26, 2011, the researchers' thesis advisor recommended the researchers to modify sections of the demographic questions on the questionnaire. The researchers edited their documents and resubmitted the forms on October 28, 2011 to their thesis advisor for approval. Three copies of the forms were made on October 28, 2011 to be submitted to the California State University, Sacramento committee and the Division of Social Work. On November 17, 2011, the documents were tentatively approved with the following conditions: 1) to change the wording of the consent form from "no risk" to "minimal risk" and 2) the researchers were only authorized to conduct research on 2 student organizations on campus. The researchers made the revisions and resubmitted

the forms on January 31, 2011. The documentation was approved by the California State University, Sacramento committee and the Division of Social Work as minimal risk on February 09, 2011. The human subjects' approval number is 11-12-040.

The participants were informed verbally and in written English that participation in the research study was strictly voluntary. They were also given the option to leave any questions unanswered. The questionnaire is anticipated to be minimal risk because the probability of harm or discomfort for the participants is no greater than what might be encountered in psychological exams or encounters in daily life. If the participants do experience any discomfort, they were instructed to contact the counseling and psychological services at California State University, Sacramento.

To ensure the privacy and protection of the participants, identifiable information such as name, social security number, student identification number, street address, and phone number will not be collected. Demographic characteristics include such variables as gender, age, ethnic background, educational level, and employment status as well as potential perceptions and views of Asian Americans college students under the model minority stereotype. After the completion of the questionnaire, participants were asked to place the form in a manila envelope. The researchers collected the envelope after all participants completed the questionnaire. The participants were informed that the final product would only include aggregate information shared by all of the participants. The completed documents were stored in a locked file cabinet only accessible to the researchers in order to guarantee the confidentiality of the participant's responses. After obtaining information from the original questionnaire, the information were be inputted

into the computer program SPSS and later retrieved for analysis. As soon as the data was entered into SPSS, the original packets were destroyed.

Data Collecting Procedures

The researchers used purposive sampling in their recruiting process. Purposive sampling was chosen because the participants needed to meet the exact characteristics of the targeted population (Mack et al, 2005). Mack et al., (2005) notes that purposive sampling groups together participants based on pre-selected criteria significant to a particular research study. The prospective participants of the research study had to be an Asian minority between the ages of 18-65 years old. Participation in the research study was restricted to Asian descendants, who can read, write, speak and understand English. The participants have to be current students of California State University, Sacramento. No incentives were provided to the participants.

The researchers searched for Asian campus organizations through California State University, Sacramento's website. After identifying possible Asian organizations, the researchers contacted the club presidents' via e-mail informing them of the research study. The purpose of the research study, confidentiality, data collection procedure, risks, and a consent form was discussed in the e-mail. After being granted permission to conduct the survey to its members, the researchers collected an authorization letter from the organization presidents. After the IRB application, consent form, and questionnaire were approved by the Protection of Human Subjects, the authors scheduled to attend the club meetings to administer the questionnaire.

There were a total of 96 questionnaires distributed among the surveyed organizations. 36 surveys were distributed and completed by the Samahang Filipino organization. 60 surveys were distributed to the Hmong University Student Association and 57 were completed. Overall, a total of 93 questionnaires were completed between both organizations. All of the questionnaires were considered in the final tabulations and entered into SPSS for analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

After the completion of the questionnaires, the researchers collected the data to input into the computer program, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The quantitative data collected will be pre-coded to reflect the demographic information of the participants and their perceptions regarding Asian American college students under the model minority stereotype. By examining the demographics of participants, there can be a comparison made in regards to the effects of independent variables such as gender, age, ethnicity, and educational level toward the participant's perception of the model minority stereotype as it applies to Asian American college students. The researchers will then analyze the information using descriptive statistics to produce a comparative summary of our findings.

Study Limitations

There were a few limitations identified in this exploratory study. The researchers were able to contact nine Asian student organizations that were noted as active on the California State University, Sacramento website, however only two organizations authorized consent to administer the survey (Samahang Filipino, Hmong University

Student Association). Another limitation identified was that not all distributed questionnaires were completed. These limitations hindered the researchers' ability to obtain a wider scope of perceptions and views from other Asian minority groups.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the survey research. To reiterate, the survey aimed to assess the perception of the model minority stereotype among Asian American college students. The participants were students involved in Asian organizations on campus at the California State University, Sacramento. The first section of Chapter 4 provides an overview of the demographics of the participants. The demographics discussed include gender, ethnicity, age, location of birth, yearly income, the field of study, and English proficiency. The next section is followed by an analysis of the participants' knowledge and perception of the model minority stereotype as it applies to Asian Americans. The final section of Chapter 4 concludes with an overall summary of the data set.

Demographics

A total of 96 surveys were distributed to the members in the student organizations, but only 93 of them were completed by the prospective student participants with a response rate of 96.88%. Out of the 93 participants, 54.8% (n=51) were males and 45.2% (n=42) were female (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Gender of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	51	54.8	54.8
Female	42	45.2	100.0
Total	93	100.0	

The largest Asian ethnic group that participated in the survey were Hmong at 60.2% (n=56), followed by Other/Mixed at 37.6% (n=35), Chinese 1.1% (n=1), and Vietnamese 1.1% (n=1) (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

Ethnic Background of the Student Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Chinese	1	1.1	1.1
Hmong	56	60.2	61.3
Vietnamese	1	1.1	62.4
Other/Mixed	35	37.6	100.0
Total	93	100.0	

When inquired about age, the majority of the participants were between the ages of 18-21 years old (76.3%). The second largest age group of the participants were ages 22-25 (19.4%) followed by the age group 26-29 with 3.2% and only 1 individual was 30 years old or older (1.1%) (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Age of the Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-21	71	76.3	76.3
22-25	18	19.4	95.7
26-29	3	3.2	98.9
30+	1	1.1	100.0
Total	93	100.0	

The researchers were also interested to know where the student participants were born. Of the participants, 80.6% (n=75) reported that they were born in the United States while 19.4% (n=18) were born outside the U.S.

Table 4.4

Place of Birth

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Born in the U.S.	75	80.6	80.6
Born Outside the U.S.	18	19.4	100.0
Total	93	100.0	

The researchers wanted to know about the yearly income of the participants in order to get a better understanding of their economic background. Many respondents currently earned less than \$5,000 per year (67.7%, n=63). 17.2% (n=16) of the participants grossed \$6,000-\$10,000 per year, 5.4% (n=5) made \$11,000-\$15,000 per year, and only 4.3% (n=4) earned \$21,000 and more per year (see Table 4.5). There were 5 missing responses to this question.

Table 4.5

Yearly Income

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than \$5,000	63	67.7	67.7
\$6,000-\$10,000	16	17.2	84.9
\$11,000-\$15,000	5	5.4	90.3
\$21,000-more	4	4.3	94.6
Missing	5	5.4	100.0
Total	93	100.0	

When examining the majors of the participants, it was discovered that 23 of the 93 participants declared a Health and Human Services (24.7%) field of study; 15 Natural Sciences and Mathematics (16.1%); 12 Arts and Letters (12.9%); and 12 Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies (12.9%). The remaining participants were listed under the

Business Administration, Education, Engineering and Computer Science and Undeclared majors (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6

Major

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Arts and Letters	12	12.9	12.9
Business Administration	11	11.8	24.7
Education	2	2.2	26.9
Engineering and Computer Science	8	8.6	35.5
Health and Human Services	23	24.7	60.2
Natural Sciences and Mathematics	15	16.1	76.3
Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies	12	12.9	89.2
Undeclared	10	10.8	100.0
Total	93	100.0	

The researchers wanted to know the participants grasp of the English language.

The English proficiency of the participants was found to be 41.9% very proficient, 33.3% proficient, 22.6% somewhat proficient, and 2.2% not proficient (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7

English Proficiency

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not Proficient	2	2.2	2.2
Somewhat Proficient	21	22.6	24.7
Proficient	31	33.3	58.1
Very Proficient	39	41.9	100.0
Total	93	100.0	

Knowledge of the Model Minority Stereotype

In order to begin a dialogue on the model minority stereotype, the authors wanted to gauge into the participants' understanding of the model minority. The participants were asked about their knowledge of the model minority stereotype (see Table 4.8). Of the 93 samples, 10 indicated that they were not knowledgeable at all about the model minority stereotype (10.8%). 18.3% of the participants reported that they were knowledgeable about the term. 26 of the respondents noted that they were unsure of their comprehension of the term (28%). Many of the participants (38.7%) reported that they were somewhat knowledgeable. Only 4 of the 93 respondents stated that they were very knowledgeable about the model minority stereotype (4.3%).

Table 4.8

Knowledge of the Model Minority Stereotype

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not Knowledgeable At All	10	10.8	10.8	10.8
Knowledgeable	17	18.3	18.3	29.0
I don't know	26	28.0	28.0	57.0
Somewhat Knowledgeable	36	38.7	38.7	95.7
Very Knowledgeable	4	4.3	4.3	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Application of the Model Minority to All Asian Groups

Since the model minority specifically targets Asians, the researchers wanted to know the thoughts of Asian Americans on the universal usage of the term. The question asked the participants if they felt the model minority term applied to every Asian ethnic group (see Table 4.9). 5 of the 93 respondents reported that they strongly disagreed

(5.4%) while 10 of the participants indicated that they disagreed (10.8%). Out of the participants, 38.7% (n=36) stated that they were not sure if the term applied to all Asian ethnic groups. However, 35.5% (n=33) indicated that they agreed and 8.6% (n=8) stated that they strongly agreed. 1 of the 93 participants did not answer the question.

Table 4.9

Model Minority Applied to All Asian Ethnic Groups

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	5	5.4	5.4	5.4
Disagree	10	10.8	10.8	16.1
I don't know	36	38.7	38.7	54.8
Agree	33	35.5	35.5	90.3
Strongly Agree	8	8.6	8.6	98.9
Missing	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Meeting the Criteria of the Model Minority

The researchers wanted to learn about the participants' own understanding and internalization of the term. The participants were asked if they felt that they meet the criteria of the model minority stereotype (see Table 4.10). 28 (30.1%) of the participants indicated that yes they do feel that they meet the criteria whereas 9 (9.7%) respondents reported that they do not feel they meet the requirements. 60.2% (n=56) indicated that they were not sure if they do or do not meet the criteria of the model minority.

Table 4.10

Meeting the Criteria of the Model Minority

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	28	30.1	30.1	30.1
No	9	9.7	9.7	39.8
I don't know	56	60.2	60.2	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Benefits of Being Labeled the Model Minority

The literature points out that there are positive and negative connotations with the term. The following question inquired about the participants' view regarding if they felt Asian Americans benefited from being labeled the model minority (see Table 4.11).

5.4% (n=5) of the respondents noted that they strongly disagree. 21.5% (n=20) stated that they disagreed where they felt Asian American did not benefit from being given that title. 50.5% (n=47) reported that they were unsure whether or not Asian Americans did benefit from the label. 17.2% (n=16) participants indicated that they agreed and 4.3% (n=4) reported that they strongly agreed with the statement. 1 participant did not answer the question.

Table 4.11

Benefits of Being Labeled the Model Minority

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	5	5.4	5.4	5.4
Disagree	20	21.5	21.5	26.9
I don't know	47	50.5	50.5	77.4
Agree	16	17.2	17.2	94.6
Strongly Agree	4	4.3	4.3	98.9
Missing	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Media Portrayal of Asian Americans

The media is an influential tool that shapes views of individuals in society.

Participants were asked if the media influenced their perceptions of Asian Americans (see Table 4.12). 64.5% (n=60) stated yes; that the media played a role in their perceptions of Asian Americans. 31.2% (n=29) indicated that the media did not influence them. 4.3% (n=4) indicated that they were unsure if the media played a role in their perceptions.

Table 4.12

Media Portrayal of Asian Americans

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	60	64.5	64.5	64.5
No	29	31.2	31.2	95.7
I don't know	4	4.3	4.3	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Value of Education

Education is another major area that the model minority term highlights. This question asked participants if they felt that Asian Americans placed a higher value on education as opposed to other minorities in the United States (see Table 4.13). 5.4% (n=5) reported that they strongly disagreed with the statement. 10.8% (n=10) of the participants disagreed with the statement. 9.7% (n=9) were unsure whether or not Asian Americans placed a higher value on education than other minorities. 53.8% (n=50) agreed with the statement. 18.3% (n=17) strongly agreed with the statement. 2.2% (n=2) participants did not answer the question.

Table 4.13

Asian Americans' Value on Higher Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	5	5.4	5.4	5.4
Disagree	10	10.8	10.8	16.1
I don't know	9	9.7	9.7	25.8
Agree	50	53.8	53.8	79.6
Strongly Agree	17	18.3	18.3	97.8
Missing	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Achievement of Higher Education

Looking at the perception of Asian Americans' achievement of higher education will provide a better understanding of their educational experiences. Table 4.14 presents data on the participants' opinion regarding whether or not they believed that Asian Americans were more likely to achieve a higher degree of education such as a Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate/and or Ph.D. 5.4% (n=5) strongly disagreed with the notion that Asian Americans' were more likely to achieve a higher degree of education. 26.9% (n=25) disagreed with the statement. 10.8% (n=10) did not know if Asian Americans were more likely to achieve a higher degree of education. 49.5% (n=46) stated that they agreed with the statement. 7.5% (n=7) strongly agreed that Asian Americans were more likely to achieve a higher degree of education.

Table 4.14

Asian Americans' Achievement of Higher Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	5	5.4	5.4	5.4
Disagree	25	26.9	26.9	32.3
I don't know	10	10.8	10.8	43.0
Agree	46	49.5	49.5	92.5
Strongly Agree	7	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Level of Intelligence

The model minority stereotype often describes Asian Americans as intelligent and self-sufficient. This question asked participants if they believed Asian Americans were more intelligent than other minority groups in the United States (see Table 4.15). 10.8% (n=10) strongly disagreed that Asian Americans were more intelligent than other minorities. 36.6% (n=34) stated that they disagreed with the statement. 23.7% (n=22) indicated they did not know if Asian Americans were more intelligent than other minority groups. 21.5% (n=20) indicated that they agreed and believe Asian Americans were more intelligent than other minority groups. 7.5% (n=7) strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 4.15

Asian Americans' Level of Intelligence

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	10	10.8	10.8	10.8
Disagree	34	36.6	36.6	47.3
I don't know	22	23.7	23.7	71.0
Agree	20	21.5	21.5	92.5
Strongly Agree	7	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Work Ethic

Asian Americans are often defined by their diligence and hard work, so it is necessary to see how they view themselves and their own work ethic. The participants were asked if they felt Asian Americans worked harder than other minority groups in the United States (see Table 4.16). 11.8% (n=11) strongly disagreed with the notion that Asian Americans worked harder than other minority groups. 29% (n=27) disagreed with the statement. 21.5% (n=20) indicated they do not know if Asian Americans worked harder than other minorities. 30.1% (n=28) agreed with the statement. 7.5% (n=7) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 4.16

Asian Americans' Work Ethic

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	11	11.8	11.8	11.8
Disagree	27	29.0	29.0	40.9
I don't know	20	21.5	21.5	62.4
Agree	28	30.1	30.1	92.5
Strongly Agree	7	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Involvement in Crime

The literature states that crimes surrounding Asian Americans are often unreported, underreported or simply nonexistent. The researchers' were interested in knowing the opinions of the participants regarding this topic. This question asked participants if they felt Asian Americans commit less crime than other minority groups in the United States (see Table 4.17). 10.8% (n=10) indicated that they strongly disagreed that Asian Americans committed less crimes than other minority groups. The majority of the participants (33.3%, n=31) indicated that they disagreed with the statement. 21.5% (n=20) stated they were unsure if Asian Americans committed less crime. 29% (n=27) agreed with the statement and 5.4% (n=5) strongly agreed that Asian Americans commit less crime than other minority groups.

Table 4.17

Asian Americans' Involvement in Crime

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	10	10.8	10.8	10.8
Disagree	31	33.3	33.3	44.1
I don't know	20	21.5	21.5	65.6
Agree	27	29.0	29.0	94.6
Strongly Agree	5	5.4	5.4	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Better Employment Opportunities

Participants were asked if they believed Asian Americans have a better chance of obtaining employment than other minority groups in the United States (see Table 4.18).

10.8% (n=10) indicated that they strongly disagreed with the notion of easier

employment for Asian Americans. 35.5 (n=33) disagreed with the statement. 34.4% (n=32) indicated that they did not know if Asian Americans have a better chance of obtaining employment than their minority counterparts. 16.1% (n=15) agreed with the statement. 3.2% (n=3) strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 4.18

Asian Americans' Better Employment Opportunities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	10	10.8	10.8	10.8
Disagree	33	35.5	35.5	46.2
I don't know	32	34.4	34.4	80.6
Agree	15	16.1	16.1	96.8
Strongly Agree	3	3.2	3.2	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Higher Income

Examining how the participants' felt about the earned income of Asian Americans will assist in understanding the accuracy or inaccuracy of the model minority stereotype. Table 4.19 presents data on the participants' view regarding if they felt Asian Americans have a higher income than other minority groups in the United States. 10.8% (n=10) had indicated that they strongly disagree with the statement. Overwhelmingly, 36 of the participants stated they disagree with the notion that Asian Americans have higher incomes than other minorities. 28% (n=26) were not sure of the income bracket between Asian Americans and other minority groups. 20.4% (n=19) agreed with the statement of higher income among Asian Americans. 2.2% (n=2) strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 4.19

Asian Americans' Higher Income

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	10	10.8	10.8	10.8
Disagree	36	38.7	38.7	49.5
I don't know	26	28.0	28.0	77.4
Agree	19	20.4	20.4	97.8
Strongly Agree	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Lack of Government Assistance

The researchers wanted to understand perceived Asian Americans utilization of governmental aid to help determine the actual needs for resources. The participants were asked if they felt Asian Americans were less likely to obtain help from government assistance such as food stamps, social security and so forth (see Table 4.20). 9.7% (n=9) strongly disagreed with the statement. Most of the participants (n=37) disagreed with the statement (39.8%). 26.9 (n=25) were unsure if Asian Americans were less likely to obtain governmental assistance. 19.4% (n=18) agreed with the notion that Asian Americans were less likely to seek help from the government. 4.3% (n=4) strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 4.20

Asian Americans' Lack of Government Assistance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	9	9.7	9.7	9.7
Disagree	37	39.8	39.8	49.5
I don't know	25	26.9	26.9	76.3
Agree	18	19.4	19.4	95.7
Strongly Agree	4	4.3	4.3	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Asian Americans' Lack of Supportive Services

Supportive services is also another area that needs to be thoroughly examined to understand the needs of the Asian population. This question asked participants if they felt Asian Americans were less likely to seek supportive services such as mental health, counseling, therapy and so forth (see Table 4.21). 4.3% (n=4) indicated that they strongly disagreed with the statement. 18.3% (n=17) had disagreed with the statement. 30.1% (n=28) were unsure of Asian Americans utilization of supportive services. The majority of the participants (n=31) stated they agreed that Asian Americans were less likely to seek out supportive services (33.3%). 14% (n=13) indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 4.21

Asian Americans' Lack of Supportive Services

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	4	4.3	4.3	4.3
Disagree	17	18.3	18.3	22.6
I don't know	28	30.1	30.1	52.7
Agree	31	33.3	33.3	86.0
Strongly Agree	13	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	93	100.0	100.0	

Chapter 5

SUMMARY

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the major findings from this research study. The findings are based on the knowledge, understanding, and perception of the model minority stereotype as it applies to the Asian American population. The first section reviews the significant findings related to the research purpose as stated in Chapter 1. The second section consists of a discussion on the major findings as they are compared and contrasted with the literature review from Chapter 2. This chapter also comprises of the implications for social work as well as recommendations and suggestions for future research will be discussed.

Overall Findings

One of the purposes of this research study was to educate American society about the truth and misconceptions of the model minority stereotype. Another purpose was to highlight the needs and services that reflect the diversity of the Asian American population. With the findings from the collected data, the researchers were able to provide information that supports these purposes. As defined in Chapter 1, the model minority refers to ethnic minorities who are more likely to attain higher success in academics, have a better economic advantage, family stability, and low crime involvement than other minority groups (Chou, 2008). One major finding is that the majority of the participants (44.1%, n=41) believe that the model minority stereotype applies to all Asian ethnic groups; however, the respondents (50.5%, n=47) are not sure if

there are any benefits being labeled with that term. Based on evidence obtained from the research study, it is safe to propose that there are neither advantages nor disadvantages to being characterized as the model minority. Another unclear finding was that more than half these participants (60.2%, n=56) indicate that they do not know if they meet the criteria of the stereotype. This information suggests that a good percentage of Asians are being perceived as homogeneous and grouped under the term. The researchers believe that there is a level of discrepancy of the model minority term as it pertains to the participants and the Asian American population. The researchers also feel that this data shows an internalization and transference of the term onto other Asian minorities.

A second significant finding is that Asian Americans value education and they achieve a higher level of education compared to other minority groups. An overwhelming number of the participants (72.1%, n=67) either strongly agreed or agreed that Asian Americans value education. The respondents also reported that they either strongly agreed or agreed (57%) that Asian Americans obtain higher education. This information reinforces the model minority stereotype. In contrast, another major finding is that Asian Americans do not have better employment opportunities than other minority groups. Evidence suggests that 46.3% (n=43) of the participants strongly disagree and disagree with the statement that Asian Americans had better chances obtaining employment. Certainly, this finding does not support the model minority stereotype.

An additional finding was that Asian Americans (49.5%, n=46) are more likely to obtain government assistance; however, they are less likely to seek supportive services (47.3%, n=44). Cheng (1997) indicated that many unemployed and underemployed Asian

Americans prefer to work low-paying menial jobs in order to save face rather than resort to government assistance. Despite the model minority characteristic that Asian Americans are self-sufficient and independent, this data displays otherwise. The data illustrates that there is a need for governmental assistance among Asian Americans. On the other hand, when reviewing the data regarding supportive services, the researchers believe that there could be numerous factors that attribute to Asian Americans' declination to seeking supportive services. Due to the nature of the survey and research study, these factors remain unknown.

After reviewing the major findings, some of the collected data supports and contradicts the literature. According to the collected data, the participants were unsure of the benefits of being labeled the model minority. Much of the literature reveals that there are negative effects when the model minority term is branded on Asian Americans. Suzuki (2002) states that Asian Americans are often overlooked in programs designed to serve minorities. He also notes that Asian students undergo a lot of psychological stress, low self-esteem and difficulties with social adjustment leading to alienation and harassment from peers (Way & Chen, 2000; Greene, Way & Pahl, 2006). McGowan and Lindgren (2006) also argued that the term infuses resentment and jealousy among the other minority groups.

Education is a domain that illustrates the differences of educational achievement among Asian Americans. The data collected by the researchers show that Asian Americans achieve a higher level of education. However, relevant literature by Wing (2007) and Ngo and Lee (2007) states that there is a variation with educational success

among Asian Americans. There are both high achieving individuals as well as low achieving individuals, some of whom have not obtained their high school diploma. Although there are gaps in educational achievement among Asian Americans, education is highly valued among the population. Qin et al., (2008) found that many Asian parents focused much of their attention on their children's academic performance and success. The surveys' results were comparable to the literature.

Another area of education affecting Asian Americans is their field of study. Suzuki (2002) stated that the area of study for Asian Americans often encompassed math and science related fields as opposed to social sciences and humanities which may require well-developed verbal, written, and linguistic skills in English. However, the collected data of the participants indicated that the most common major among the respondents 24.7% (n=23) are in the health and human services field. The information gathered also revealed that 41.9% (n=39) of the participants felt they are very proficient and 33.3% (n=31) proficient in the English language. Due to the non-random samples for the research project, evidence obtained does not reflect the literature as stated by Suzuki.

When examining the employment of Asian Americans, the data gathered is comparable with the relevant literature. The accumulated information from the questionnaires determined that Asian Americans do not have better employment opportunities and they do not earn a higher income than other minority groups. In comparison, the literature showed that the unemployment rate among Asian Americans is low due to Asian Americans willingness to work low-paying unskilled seasonal or part-time jobs in order to avoid embarrassment from obtaining government assistance (Cheng,

1997). This literature does not support the findings reported by 49.5% (n=46) of the participants regarding Asian Americans being more likely to obtain government assistance. However, the information compares with the collected data agreeing that Asian Americans are less likely to seek supportive services. Suzuki (2002) further argued that Asian men were less likely to be in management positions and to earn substantially less due to a racial barrier called the glass ceiling. The literature also indicated that the median household income of Asian American families were often misconstrued as a result of not considering the total number of family members in the home. The poverty level is also another area that revealed a discrepancy among Asian Americans. This literature exhibits that the income of Asian Americans varies across the economic spectrum.

The media is another area that impacts Asian Americans under the model minority stereotype. The findings illustrate that a vast number of the respondents 64.5% (n=60) felt that the media plays an important role in their perceptions of Asian Americans. Perse (2001) found that the media is a powerful tool that helps create stereotypes and affect group schemas about individuals and others. When examining television shows and advertisements, Mastro and Stern (2003) and Taylor, Landreth and Bang (2005) discovered that Asians present in these media outlets were being presented as passive, devoted to work, technologically savvy, business oriented and well assimilated. These characteristics that portray Asian Americans help perpetuate the misleading stereotype.

Social Work Implications

The results from this research project reveal that there is a continual growing need to educate society about the misrepresentation of Asian Americans. The historical origin and context of the model minority term has been ingrained in the culture as evidenced by media outlets and distorted levels of data. It is the researchers' goal that the unique individualities of the Asian American community are highlighted and identified. It is important for social workers and those working with the Asian American population to remain diligent and dispel stereotypes that categorize minorities into homogenous entities. On a micro level, social workers need to be culturally sensitive to the diversity among Asian Americans. Social workers should not make generalizations about Asian Americans, but rather understand their culture, language, and traditions in order to provide more appropriate and effective services to this population. Thus, it is imperative for those working with the Asian population to educate and raise awareness of the potential psychological, social, and emotional effects of the model minority term.

Additionally, education about the model minority stereotype is crucial in order for others to learn the effects of the stereotype on Asian Americans. The information about the model minority can be immersed in school curriculum, workshops and trainings to provide a higher level of cultural competency to students, educators, researchers, paraprofessionals, and professionals. Journal articles and books discussing the model minority should be incorporated into the syllabi of relevant courses. In addition, social workers can take part in creating dialogue around the topic and changing the language of

this term can also help in eliminating the stereotype and generalizing Asian Americans as a homogenous group.

On a macro level of practice, social workers need to focus on advocating for policies and legislations that provide direct service and support for different Asian American populations that are often unnoticed due to the categorization of the Asian community. Social workers can also advocate and address the issue on a more global-international scale by collaborating with entities that work directly with the Asian population. It is also extremely important for social workers to advocate and work with the media to help eradicate harmful beliefs about Asians as the media plays an immense role in the shaping of society's views and perceptions.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although the term model minority was first coined in the 1960s, it continues to have much influence on the Asian American population to this day (Li & Wang, 2008). One of the purposes of this study was to educate American society about the model minority stereotype through academic literature and the Asian college population in order to provide a clearer and better understanding of the stereotype. Despite the researchers' completion of this study, there are always opportunities for future research. This leads to the recommendations as suggested by the researchers. There should be current and updated research regarding the model minority stereotype. Having present research information can assist professionals like social workers in understanding the needs of Asian Americans. The updated research can provide a look at the trends of the model minority stereotype among Asian Americans since its origin. There may be relatable

topics that stem from new research on the model minority myth such as bullying or psychological issues faced by Asian Americans.

The future research should also include all Asian American populations under the model minority in order to highlight the differences among the groups. For example, more research needs to be generated around recent Asian refugees or immigrants and the underrepresented Asian groups such as the Mien and the Burmese. By researching these groups, individuals can learn about differences in the culture, language, traditions, and environmental factors contributing to the struggles and successes of these Asian groups. The research should also include information on Asian Americans in small towns and rural areas who go unnoticed, but may be affected by the model minority stereotype.

Another recommendation is for researchers to invest more time in collecting data and increasing the sample size. There were time constraints for this research study due to the requirements by the department. The limited time hindered the production of a more in depth research study. The sample size was also quite small because the researchers focused primarily on college students. Also, the students were all from the California State University, Sacramento and they were participants of 2 Asian organizations on the campus; therefore, it does not provide a concrete depiction of the Asian American population as a whole. Future researchers may want to devote more time in conducting this research topic as well as collect more data on this population in order to dispel the stereotype.

In addition, a recommendation is to provide a qualitative approach on the research topic. By conducting an interview or asking open-ended questions, it will help future

researchers in understanding the effects of the stereotype on Asian Americans. In regards to the questionnaire, the questions can be formulated differently with a qualitative approach. The researchers can obtain a first-hand account of the experiences of Asian Americans. Also, it is recommended that researchers assess the validity and reliability of the questionnaire by conducting a pre and post test. This will help determine the accuracy of the information.

Conclusion

By conducting this research study, the authors hoped to educate American society about the model minority stereotype. It is apparent that the stereotype continues to impact the Asian American population. As a result, there still needs to be education and awareness of the model minority stereotype among American society even Asian Americans. It is important to increase awareness of the term due to its historical contexts and social implications on individuality. By educating others in order to dispel the stereotype, it will help alleviate the detrimental effects the term causes. Learning about true and lived realities of Asian Americans will allow others including social workers, to build better relationships and provide effective and appropriate services to this population.

APPENDIX A

Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Research Form

You are being asked to participate in a research project that will be conducted by David Lam and Pang Nyia Vang, two master's students in the Division of Social Work Department at California State University, Sacramento. The purpose of this exploratory research study is to understand views, perceptions and knowledge about Asian American college students when viewed under the scope of the Model Minority stereotype. Your voluntary participation is crucial in helping us understand attitudes and views regarding Asian Americans.

There will be no identifying information recorded to ensure your anonymity and confidentiality. All information shared by you will be kept strictly confidential. Unfortunately, there will be no incentives given for taking this voluntary questionnaire. We do value your participation and opinions regarding Asian Americans college students under the Model Minority stereotype. Your contribution to this research will allow others to understand the diversity among Asian Americans in order to provide culturally competent and adequate social services to this population.

There is a minimal level of harm or risk involved with this questionnaire, however if at any time you feel uncomfortable or do not wish to continue with the questionnaire, you may stop at any time. If you experience any emotional discomfort during your participation in this study, you are encouraged to contact the counseling and psychological services at California State University, Sacramento at (916) 278-6416.

After your participation, if you have any questions about this research, you may contact the researchers, David Lam by phone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or by email at xxxxxxxxx@gmail.com and Pang Nyia Vang by phone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or by email at xxxxxxxxx@yahoo.com or our thesis advisor, Dr. Serge Lee at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or xxxxx@csus.edu.

By signing below, I understand that the research questionnaire is voluntary and involves minimal risks. With this taken into account, I freely agree to take part in this study. I have received a copy of the consent form and have understood the aforementioned information.

Thank you for participating in our study.

Signed name: _____

Date: _____

Printed name: _____

APPENDIX B
Survey Questionnaire

Questionnaire**Demographic Information**

1. At what category is your age?
 - A) 18-21
 - B) 22-25
 - C) 26-29
 - D) 30+

2. Please circle your gender
 - A) Male
 - B) Female

3. What is your primary language?
 - A) English
 - B) Chinese (Mandarin)
 - C) Chinese (Cantonese)
 - D) Hmong
 - E) Japanese
 - F) Khmer
 - G) Korean
 - H) Laotian
 - I) Mien
 - J) Vietnamese
 - K) Other: _____

4. What is your ethnic background?
 - A) Cambodian
 - B) Chinese
 - C) Hmong
 - D) Japanese
 - E) Korean
 - F) Laotian
 - G) Mien
 - H) Vietnamese
 - I) Other/Mixed: _____

5. Please indicate your place of birth
 - A) Born in the U.S.
 - B) Born outside the U.S. / Please specify: _____

6. What is your marital status?
 - A) Single
 - B) Married
 - C) Divorced
 - D) Widowed
 - E) Separated
 - F) Other: _____

7. Please indicate your current grade level in college
 - A) Freshmen
 - B) Sophomore
 - C) Junior
 - D) Senior
 - E) Graduate Student
 - F) Ph. D Student
 - G) Other: _____

8. What is your major?
Please specify: _____

9. Are you currently employed?
 - A) Yes
 - B) No

10. What is your current income status?
 - A) Less than \$5,000
 - B) \$6,000-\$10,000
 - C) \$11,000-\$15,000
 - D) \$16,000-\$20,000
 - E) \$21,000-more

11. How proficient are you in English?
 - A) Not Proficient
 - B) Somewhat Proficient
 - C) Proficient
 - D) Very Proficient

Perception and Views of Asian Americans under the Model Minority Stereotype

12. How knowledgeable are you of the Model Minority stereotype?
 - A) Not Knowledgeable at All
 - B) Knowledgeable
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Somewhat Knowledgeable
 - E) Very Knowledgeable

13. In your view, the Model Minority applies to every Asian ethnic group. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
14. Do you feel that you meet the criteria of the Model Minority?
- A) Yes
 - B) No
 - C) I don't know
15. In your view, Asian Americans benefit from being labeled the Model Minority. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
16. Does the media play a large role in shaping your perception of Asian Americans?
- A) Yes
 - B) No
 - C) I don't know
17. In your view, Asian Americans place a higher value on education than other minority groups in the United States. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
18. In your view, Asian Americans are more likely to achieve a higher degree of education (i.e., Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Doctorate/Ph. D). Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree

19. In your view, Asian Americans are more intelligent than other minority groups in the United States. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
20. In your view, Asian Americans work harder than other minority groups in the United States. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
21. In your view, Asian Americans have strong family values. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
22. In your view, Asian Americans commit less crime than other minority groups in the United States. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
23. In your view, Asian Americans have a better opportunity to obtain employment than other minority groups in the United States. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree

24. In your view, Asian Americans usually have a higher income than other minority groups in the United States. Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
25. In your view, Asian Americans are less likely to obtain help from government assistance (i.e., food stamps, Social Security Insurance). Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree
26. In your view, Asian Americans are less likely to seek supportive services (i.e., mental health, counseling, therapy). Would you say you...
- A) Strongly Disagree
 - B) Disagree
 - C) I don't know
 - D) Agree
 - E) Strongly Agree

APPENDIX C

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