**Effects of Racial Discrimination Against Asian-Americans due to COVID-19**

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**Introduction**

The term COVID-19: used to define the pandemic and commonly used in the last two-three years to refer to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, has impacted various aspects of people's lives (WHO, 2022). Some aspects include physical and mental health, socioeconomic status and living conditions, and cultural conditions. Over ten percent last year said their mental health needs were not met (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). One group: COVID-19 impacts on the mental health of adolescents was researched heavily and concluded that mostly all participants subjected to isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic expressed an increase in depression, anxiety, stress, and higher rates of declining mental health (Imran et al., 2020; Fusar-Poli., 2021). Many studies/meta-studies have showcased the effects of COVID-19; however, there are a few sub-areas of interest that remain unexplored. The impacts of COVID-19 concerning the discrimination of Chinses-American adolescents: such topics are not as well covered and are not well investigated: hence this paper's goal is to research and bring light to the systematic disparity of Asian hate culture, specially Chinses-Americans, concerning specifically those caused by COVID-19; there are many standpoints on this topic, politically speaking, which is why this paper will not discuss this topic from a political viewpoint, and will only objectively report. This paper will argue, however, that COVID-19 has increased the severity of Asian hate systematically and on a personal level.

**Impact of COVID-19 on Adolescents Mental Health**

The negative impact of COVID-19 is nothing new: studies in many different cases. Adolescents' mental health: worsened by COVID-19. Fusar-Poli et al., (2021): did a systematic meta-analysis on the mental health of adolescents less than or equal to 19 years of age. They scanned through 61 articles regarding 54,999 adolescents. They reported: "Anxiety and depression to be the most common outcomes" with 49.5 percent to 63.8 percent respectively. Other emotions that were common included "Irritability and anger" with ranges of 73.2 percent to 51.3 percent respectively. Such notions concluded by Fusar-Poli and others are agreed upon by Imran et al., (2020), who also conducted a meta-analysis on the impacts of COVID-19 on varying different subject groups: parents, adolescents, adolescents with needs/mental illness and gave interventions to oppose such risks. In the paper, they detailed how teens would feel "Frustrated, nervous, disconnected, nostalgic, and bored because of social distancing during this pandemic" underlying due to the isolation brought on by COVID-19, teens would miss the Identity vs. Role Confusion stage, a stage needed for psychosocial development. Following this trend, children in isolation, and quarantine, experienced "Mental health disorders such as anxiety, acute stress, and adjustment disorders" and stated that they show a "Four times increase in mean post-traumatic stress scores" when "Compared to non-quarantined children". In both cases, both authors could agree that adolescents are more perceptible to mental harm than other subject groups.

**Impact of COVID-19 on Chinese-American’s Mental Health**

The work of Wu et al., (2021) furthers the argument by narrowing the before-mentioned notions further: they agree with Fusar-Poli et al., (2021) and Imran et al., (2020). Adolescents are at a higher risk, but they argue that specifically Chinses-American adolescents show higher cases of mental illness compared to any other race group due to the recent increase of racial discrimination of Asian hate brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Within their descriptive analysis, they surveyed over 8,500 adolescents, separating their subject pool into three main categories: Whites, Asian-American, and Asian immigrants. They concluded that "Asian Americans and Asian immigrants reported having encountered more instances of COVID-19-related acute discrimination than whites" and "Asian immigrants and Asian Americans also experienced higher levels of mental disorders during the pandemic" pointing to the notion that Asians, specifically Asian Americans must deal with "The associated stigmatization, violence, and discrimination". They also mentioned any "Discrimination examined in our study... directly related to COVID-19". This trend of racial discrimination can also be seen in the works of Zong, X., et al., (2022): who surveyed and analyzed the mental health statuses of 213 Chinese Americans ages 10 to 18 years. They divided the participants into three groups. The bicultural: participation of both American and Chinese cultures. The marginalized: disengagement of both American and Chinese cultures. The separated: participation primarily in the Chinese culture rather than American. They concluded that bicultural and marginalized adolescents were more "vulnerable to direct and vicarious racial discrimination"; more specifically, the boys from the marginalized and bicultural group and the girls from the separated group were "more negatively affected by COVID-19-related racial discrimination". These finds agree with what Wu et al., (2021) concluded in their study: a reported increase in racial discrimination towards Chinese Americans directly caused by COVID-19. It would then lead them to have worse mental health: anxiety, stress, and depression. Moving along this discussion, Litam, S. D. A., et al., (2022) introduce their study: 257 participants ages 16 to 63 were asked to take a survey via professional networking sites and conclude similar results. Those who reported having "COVID-19 related racial discrimination" caused worse "life satisfaction via increased level of depression"; the more "COVID-19 related racial discrimination... experienced and/or witnessed, the less life satisfaction they experienced, in part due to increased levels of depression". It indicates that "depression mediated the negative effect of COVID-19-related discrimination on life satisfaction". Another source agrees, from the Society for Research in Child Development, state the same if not worse reports. They detail that “over 60%” of Asian Americans faced and reported, while “80%... 18-year-old Chinese Americans experienced or witnessed COVID-19-related discrimination in person or online). They also reported that these mental barriers held to “disruptions to peer relationships, family routines, and kinship” and “can exacerbate mental health problems including PTSD, depression, and anxiety.” Cheah, C. S., (2020) followed these finds and detailed that “Higher levels of parent- and youth-perceived racism and racial discrimination were associated with their poorer mental health”. All these claims and findings are agreed upon by Wu et al., (2021), Zong, X., et al., (2022), the SRCD, Litam, S. D. A., et al., (2022), and Cheah, C. S., (2020): which point to the severity of this growing problem. These four articles agree that: COVID-19 causes declining mental health in adolescents but also add that racial discrimination towards Chinese Americans is a byproduct of that.

**Impact from Modern Media**

Modern media also has picked up on this trend, and many outlets have spoken out. Images and pictures display what the articles reported. In figure one, we can see a woman of Asian descent holding a sign that reads, "I am not a VIRUS", pointing to the idealized notion that Asians are responsible for the cause of COVID-19 and therefore discriminated against. Another powerful symbolic representation of the struggle can be seen in figure two, where a woman is holding a large sign that details everything she is not: she is not a foreigner, a contagion, a fetish, and a temptation. She ends the message by stating that she is a living, breathing, feeling, and hurting member of this nation. Similarly, many Twitter posts can be seen talking about this topic one such post shows an article about the hate crime committed by a 26-year-old person on an Asian American student for COVID-19. The man in question told the student “Thanks for COVID,” he then asked if the student wanted to fight, and after hearing no, he punched the student. That man was sentenced to ten years in prison. With issues and events like these, it can be certain: the media acts as a catalyst for this anti-Asian movement stemming from COVID-19. It brings the urgency for such measures to an all-time high. It also voices the notion: cases such as these will only keep growing.

**Summation**

In conclusion, the research conducted on this topic dives deeply into racial discrimination and mental health issues: all from COVID-19. This research further narrows this big topic: the works of Imran et al., (2020) and Fusar-Poli et al., (2021) reported that adolescents tended to show the worse signs of being impacted by COVID-19. They had worse depression, anxiety, and stress compared to the other subject groups. Wu et al., (2021) and many more agree that this trend can also be seen among Asian Americans, specifically Chinese-American adolescents. They also reported an increase in discrimination against Asian Americans due to COVID-19. Modern Media has also played a role in the spread of information and discrimination, as evidenced by the recent attacks on Asian Americans, being blamed for the virus, and protests. There is no denying there is a correlation between mental health, COVID-19, and discrimination levels. Some limitations might be that the participants were from New York City, and the results may be specific to that region/location of the United States. Another limitation is the time the study took place; jumping from 2020-2022 can be risky when correlating data. However, with that, the general trends all point to a very dark future.

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