RISING VOICES

REVEALING TRUTHS

A COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT
OF THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER
AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN METRO DETROIT
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 Introduction
5 Executive Summary
9 Background
11 Methodology
12 — Phase 1: Quantitative Methodology
18 — Phase 2: Qualitative Methodology
19 Findings
21 — Employment
21 ——— Employment Status
22 ——— Workplace Environment
24 ——— Asian American Narratives of Unemployment
26 ——— Experiences of Employment Discrimination and Cultural Insensitivity
28 ——— Implications of Language and Communication
29 ——— Managerial and Promotion Challenges in the Workplace
31 ——— Barriers to Reporting Discrimination in the Workplace
32 — Education: K–12 Academic Experiences
35 ——— Curriculum
39 ——— Parent Involvement in K–12 Schools
40 ——— Adult Education
40 ——— College Preparation and Academic Support
42 — Education: K–12 Non–Academic Experiences
42 ——— Quantitative Findings
43 ——— Bullying
44 ——— Cultural Insensitivity
45 ——— Not Telling Parents or Teachers
47 — Education: College Academic Experiences
47 ——— College Admissions
48 ——— Access to Scholarships
49 ——— Discrimination and Insensitivity
50 ——— Networking for Jobs and Internships
51 ——— Education: College – Non–Academic Experiences
51 ——— Quantitative Findings
53 ——— Food
54 ——— Mental Health
56 ——— Immigration
56 ——— Immigration Status
58 ——— Barriers to Immigration and Citizenship Processes
63 ——— Problems Traveling Abroad and Crossing the Border
67 ——— Reducing Immigration and Citizenship Problems
71 — Civic Participation
71 ——— Concepts of Civic Participation
74 ——— Personal Participation
81 ——— Increasing Participation
83 ——— Voting and Elections
88 ——— Challenges to Providing Community Services
95 Discussion
96 — Research Challenges
97 — Lessons Learned about Community–Based Participatory Research
98 — Directions for Future Research
98 — APIAVote–MI’s Next Steps
99 Recommendations
100 — Recommendations for Policymakers and Administrators
101 — Recommendations for Employers
102 — Recommendations for Education System Administrators and Educators
102 — Recommendations for Service Providers
103 — Recommendations for Community Organization Leaders
104 — Recommendations for Foundations
105 Acknowledgements
109 Appendices
INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote – Michigan (APIAVote-MI) Needs Assessment Project was to better understand the issues of Asian Americans in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, i.e., Metro Detroit. Asian Americans are the fastest growing racial group population in Michigan. The purpose of the project was to help policymakers, administrators, educators, service providers, community leaders, and funders better serve these needs and inform the design and implementation of programs and services directed toward the Asian American community.

APIAVote-MI plans to leverage the findings from this project to develop community organizing and awareness initiatives around employment, education, immigration, and civic participation, and to continue programs to increase youth leadership.

APIAVote-MI received a grant from the Community Foundation for Southeast Detroit (CFSEM) Knight Donor Advised Fund to conduct this tri-county study with Wayne State University’s Center of Urban Studies (CUS). In Phase I, with CUS serving as the Principal Investigator, APIAVote-MI conducted phone, web, and field surveys from June to November 2011. Data was gathered on the topics of employment, education, immigration/citizenship, and civic participation. Phase I yielded statistically significant differences in responses for all of the topics, which were analyzed by age, gender, education level, ethnicity, and regional identity.

While Phase I provides crucial and statistically significant findings on similarities and contrasts in the needs of the Asian Americans, it clearly highlights the diversity in experiences by age, gender, and ethnicity on the topics of investigation. Therefore, a second phase was conducted from April to December 2012, with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) to collect qualitative data that would provide deeper insight into the community needs identified in Phase I. The Phase II focus group findings in this report serve as anecdotal evidence to support Phase I data and helped APIAVote-MI to develop actionable recommendations to address the needs of the Asian American community in Metro Detroit.

It is our hope that the quantitative and qualitative data presented in this report will help tell a richer, more thorough and nuanced story of Asian American experiences and challenges in Metro Detroit. This report can serve as a starting point for various Metro Detroit stakeholders to be better equipped to address the needs of the Asian American community.

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1 For the purposes of this study, the term Asian American is used to indicate any persons with ancestry from the Asian continent in congruence with the U.S. Census’ designation. It is not an indication of citizenship status; all those who reside in the United States are therefore considered Asian American in this assessment. The subgroup of Pacific Islander was omitted due to the lack of representation in this study to provide statistically significant data. Outreach was attempted to conduct a PI specific focus group but due to challenges with recruitment, the focus group did not occur. See Recommendations section for more.

2 According to the United States Census Bureau’s 2010 Census, the Asian population in Michigan grew by 34.9 percent from 2000 to 2010.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Asian Americans are often viewed as a monolithic group or as the “model minority.” Differences in ethnicity, religion, generational status, gender, language ability and sexual orientation are largely ignored. Data on the Asian American community that has not been disaggregated can overlook key differences and lend itself to the belief that all Asian Americans are doing well in areas such as financial stability and education. The detailed data found in this report counter this myth and serve as a reminder about the importance of gathering disaggregated data and amplifying the voices of diverse Asian Americans experiences.

It is important to note that across all categories, Asian American focus group participants discussed the tendency to not report problems and the inclination to feel shame about seeking help. In order to address these issues, stakeholders must consider this dynamic of saving face and underreporting.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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It is important to note that across all categories, Asian American focus group participants discussed the tendency to not report problems and the inclination to feel shame about seeking help. In order to address these issues, stakeholders must consider this dynamic of saving face and underreporting.

Asian Americans in Metro Detroit have a wide range of employment experiences

While some Asian Americans are employed full time, many are self-employed, unemployed, or employed part-time. Unemployed Asian Americans struggle to find gainful employment. While many participants shared experiences of employment discrimination, cultural insensitivity and stereotyping, others stated they had not experienced discrimination in the workplace. Some Asian Americans faced the “glass ceiling” and have not been able to advance as managers or faced challenges with their own managers. Many pointed out that differences in language ability or workplace culture may determine whether or not someone experiences discrimination in the workplace. Finally, many provided insights on why Asian Americans underreport employment discrimination and shared the feeling that reporting discrimination or insensitivity in the workplace would not result in positive outcomes.

Asian Americans in Metro Detroit want Asian American curriculum included in K-12 schools and have diverging views about bilingual education and ESL in schools

Many Asian Americans feel that K-12 schools in Metro Detroit lack Asian and Asian American curriculum in language, history and culture. A number of participants believe that a diverse curriculum or one that includes Asian and Asian American content is important given the context of the global economy. Some participants noted that language is also important to include in the curriculum. Participants had very mixed experiences and opinions about the quality and provision of English as a Second Language and bilingual education in schools.
Bullying and cultural insensitivity are largely unaddressed

Bullying is a problem for Asian American students in K–12 schools, particularly on school buses. Students also face issues of cultural insensitivity at school, especially with regard to names and food. Participants noted that Asian American students might not always tell teachers or parents about these problems and instead choose to “leave it alone.”

Asian Americans in Metro Detroit have a range of opinions and experiences with regard to higher education

Some Asian Americans in Metro Detroit are unaware of college scholarships, while others feel that access to college scholarships and funding is not an issue. Most believe that discrimination is an issue on college campuses. Networking for jobs and internships was sufficient for some, while others did not feel a connection to their college career offices. Food options and mental health on campus are two areas of concern for Asian Americans in Metro Detroit.

Asian Americans in Metro Detroit face significant immigration and citizenship process hurdles along with racial profiling while crossing the border

While many Asian Americans in Metro Detroit are citizens, a large segment is legal permanent residents or visa holders. The long wait time for visas and green cards are major obstacles facing Asian Americans in Metro Detroit. Many feel that the citizenship process is too arduous or complicated. Contrary to national narratives, Asian Americans across ethnic groups in Metro Detroit experience racial profiling when crossing the border to Canada or with airport security. There is a need for increased awareness about proper conduct when crossing the border as well as training for law enforcement officials.

While Asian Americans in Metro Detroit are involved in organizations, electoral participation is still lacking

Asian Americans in Metro Detroit are highly involved in schools, ethnic or cultural associations, and religious organizations. Voter registration and mobilization of Asian American voters remains necessary to ensure fuller civic participation. Asian Americans in Metro Detroit do not feel that candidates spend enough time getting to know the Asian American community and most feel that having more elected Asian American leaders would have a positive effect.

Taboos regarding mental health and social services are barriers to adequately addressing needs of Asian American families in Metro Detroit

Mental health remains a taboo subject in the Metro Detroit Asian American community. Newly emigrated Asian American seniors face health access issues due to high costs or lack of culturally appropriate health services. Many Asian Americans in Metro Detroit feel that more social and legal services are needed in the Asian American community. Asian Americans may not be aware of youth leadership opportunities available in Metro Detroit. The generation gap between the immigrant generation and second generation poses an issue for many Asian American families.
BACKGROUND
Prior to the Needs Assessment Project, much of the existing data regarding the impact of issues on Asian Americans existed only at a national level or East or West Coast states. The Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the Midwest report, released in September 2012 by the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, made important progress in highlighting key data about the Asian American community in the Midwest. However, there was and continues to be a need for localized data to shed light on relevant issues for Asian Americans in Michigan.

Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote – Michigan (APIAVote-MI) is a non-partisan organization that serves the Asian Pacific Islander American community through civic participation, advocacy, and education. Noticing a lack of data to support the voices of the Asian American community in Metro Detroit, APIAVote-MI sought funding to support an initial needs assessment of the Asian American community.

APIAVote-MI conducted a preliminary grassroots community survey in 2008. Eight hundred and thirty-eight voluntary participants were surveyed between January 1 and October 6, 2008. Surveys were collected by APIAVote-MI’s volunteers at community festivals and events, places of worship, student events, etc. The participants in the survey were from across the Asian American community in Michigan, cutting across age, ethnicity, and geographic location. Surveys were available in English, Hmong, Korean, and Chinese (traditional and simplified). Participants included registered voters and non-voters (some under 18 and some who are not citizens).

The survey gathered information about ethnicity, age, generation status, gender, county, party affiliation, and views about a specific health care proposal. Jobs and the economy were the number one priority issue, and health care was the second priority issue chosen.

However, the information gathered in 2008 was preliminary; we recognized that an in-depth needs assessment would more thoroughly identify specific problems for specific populations within the Asian American community. For example, jobs and the economy were listed as the highest priority issue. Are housing foreclosures affecting the Asian American community? Which segments? Are Asian Americans facing employment discrimination? In what careers are Asian Americans having the most difficulty finding employment?

Given the economic recession during that time, APIAVote-MI was interested in learning about not just what has changed in our community’s perception of priority issues since 2008, but what specific problems need to be addressed within each topic area and in new topic areas of exploration.

With support from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (CFSEM), APIAVote-MI was able to conduct the first phase of the Needs Assessment Project. The purpose of the Needs Assessment Project was to identify prominent needs and issues of the Asian American community in Metro Detroit, to disseminate information regarding Asian American community needs to the larger community as well as policymakers, and to provide training and leadership opportunities for young future Asian American community leaders. Phase I of the assessment included a quantitative survey study conducted in partnership with Wayne State University’s Center for Urban Studies (CUS) as the Principal Investigator. Phase II of the assessment, supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), included focus groups facilitated by the Needs Assessment Project Coordinator to provide in-depth anecdotal evidence that supports Phase 1 survey findings.
METHODOLOGY
**METHODOLOGY**

**PHASE 1: QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY**

As an initial step of the needs assessment, APIA-Vote–MI conducted one focus group with members of the Asian American community to gain an initial understanding of salient issues for Asian Americans in Metro Detroit and develop the survey based on these responses. We determined from the preliminary focus group that the key topics for study were identity, employment, education, immigration and citizenship, and community involvement and services. These areas became the key categories for the survey. (See Appendix A for the survey instrument.) After receiving training from CUS, APIAVote–MI administered the survey to Asian Americans in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. Data were collected over the telephone, in person, and via the web. Results from the data collection were analyzed and summarized by CUS to identify statistically significant findings.

There were 761 surveys completed between June and November 2011: 30.4 percent were administered over the telephone (n=231); 64.9 percent were administered in person (n=494); and 4.7 percent were administered via the web (n=36). APIAVote–MI volunteers conducted the telephone interviews under the supervision of CUS from September through November 2011. APIAVote–MI volunteers collected in-person surveys from July through November 2011. Web surveys were administered in October and November 2011. In order to participate in the survey, respondents had to be at least 18 years old, live in the tri-county area (i.e., Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne counties), and identify with one of the Asian Americans ethnicities.

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A NOTE ON THE KOREAN AMERICAN QUANTITATIVE DATA:

Korean American participants were skeptical of the quantitative data about Korean American experiences with discrimination. Some felt that saving face was a reason that some survey respondents may have underreported discrimination. Another noted that many Korean Americans are small business owners and do not share the large company experiences that other Asian American ethnic groups have.

“Korean people don’t want to reveal... I suppose, their... current situations. They don’t want to complain. If they complain that means they’re not promoted, they’re not managers, right? So... So they say, ‘hey, I have no problem with it,’ and pass by. Save face, and move on.”

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* Though health was identified as a strong need in the initial 2008 survey, it was the determination of community leaders to omit the topic from the Needs Assessment Project as several other Asian American organizations in Metro Detroit already hold the mission of studying and addressing health disparities in the Asian American community.
The means of contacting potential respondents varied across the three modes of data collection. For the telephone surveys, APIAVote-MI provided CUS with a list of 5,727 telephone numbers of Asian Americans in the tri-county area; the list was randomly selected from a list of Asian American voters in the tri-county area in the Voter Activation Network database. Volunteers called from a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) lab, attempting to contact each of these phone numbers at least once. Upon reaching a household, volunteers randomly selected the respondent by asking for the member of the household with the most recent birthday. For the in-person surveys, volunteers asked attendees at community events and places of worship to participate in the survey; the community events were typically organized for members of a given ethnic group. For the web surveys, APIAVote-MI emailed its member list inviting them to complete the web survey and promoted the web survey via social media and through partner organizations.

The survey varied slightly across modes of administration. There were questions asked on the in-person and web versions that were not asked on the CATI version. Also, the CATI version included skip patterns programmed into the instrument: a respondent’s response to one question would influence which question he/she was next presented. The skip patterns were not always followed with the other versions of the survey. When analyzing the quantitative data for this report, the content and structure of the CATI instrument was used; all additional data collected from the in-person and web versions were excluded.
Respondent Characteristics

Respondents were asked five demographic questions: gender, age, education, county of residence, and ethnicity. Their response to the question about their ethnicity was used to group respondents by their regional identity. The six respondent characteristics are used throughout the report to describe the survey findings.

Gender. A total of 647 respondents answered the question asking their gender. Of those, 48.4% were female (n=313) and 51.6% were male (n=334). (See Figure 1)

Age. A total of 716 respondents answered the question asking their age. Nearly half (47.9%) were between the ages of 36 and 55, with the remainder distributed across the following age categories: 18 to 25 (n=93, 13.0%); 26 to 35 (n=89, 12.4%); 56 to 65 (n=106, 14.8%); and over 65 (n=85, 11.9%). (See Figure 2)
**Education.** A total of 703 respondents answered the question regarding their highest level of education. Over one-third (36.8%) indicated they had earned an associate or bachelor’s degree (n=259), over one-quarter (27.9%) said they had earned a master’s degree (n=196), and one-fifth (20.1%) had a high school diploma or GED (n=141). Fewer respondents reported having a doctorate (n=63, 9.0%) or a professional school degree (n=44, 6.3%) indicated they had earned. (See Figure 3)

Due to the relatively smaller number of respondents with either a professional school degree or a doctorate, these two educational categories were collapsed into one category when analyzing the survey responses by highest degree earned; by doing so, more comparisons could be made to look for differences between educational levels.

**County.** A total of 720 respondents answered the question asking what county they lived in. Over half (51.9%) lived in Oakland County (n=374), followed by Wayne County (n=211, 29.3%). The remained reported living in Macomb County (n=135, 18.8%). (See Figure 4)
Respondent Characteristics (Continued)

**Ethnicity.** Respondents were asked to select, from a list of ethnicities, all response options that applied in describing their ethnicity. A total of 719 respondents answered the question. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents described themselves as one of the three ethnicities: Indian (n=254, 35.3%), Chinese (n=108, 15%), or Korean (n=91, 12.7%). The following ethnicities were represented by fewer respondents (approximately between 5% and 9% each): 8.8% Bangladeshi (n=63), 7% Hmong (n=50), 5.3% Filipino (n=38), 5.0% Vietnamese (n=36), 4.9% Pakistani (n=35).

The remaining ethnic categories combined represented just over 3% of all respondents: 2.6% Taiwanese (n=19), 0.6% Japanese (n=4), 0.1% Pacific Islander (n=1). Fourteen (n=14, 1.9%) respondents considered themselves multi-ethnic, while six (0.8%) selected another ethnicity that was not specified as a response option. (See Figure 5)

In order to make statistical comparisons between ethnicities, most of the ethnic categories were not included in the analysis due to the relatively small number of respondents. Tests of significance difference for the survey responses were made among Chinese, Indian, and Korean respondents and are displayed in the report below. The distributions of the survey responses for all ethnicities are included in Appendix B, without statistically tests associated with them.
Regional Identity. Responses from 719 respondents who answered the question about their ethnicity were used to construct regional identity categories. Forty-nine percent of respondents were Bangladeshi, Indian, or Pakistani, and these respondents were categorized as South Asian (n=352). Those who were Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Taiwanese (30.9% of respondents) were categorized as East Asian (n=222). The respondents who were Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Thai, and Vietnamese (17.2%) were categorized as Southeast Asian (n=124). The remaining 2.9% of respondents were Pacific Islander, another ethnicity, or multi-ethnic (n=21). (See Figure 6) Since there were too few respondents for the South, East, or Southeast Asian categories, these responses were not included in the analyses when comparisons are made by regional identity.

**FIGURE 6: REGIONAL IDENTITY (N=719)**

- **South Asian**: 49%
- **East Asian**: 30.9%
- **Southeast Asian**: 17.2%
- **Pacific Islander, Another Ethnicity, Multi-Ethnic**: 2.9%
METHODOLOGY

PHASE 2: QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Following the initial dissemination of the quantitative findings (See Appendix B), APIAVote-MI determined that further data collection was critical to provide anecdotal evidence of the survey findings, and in particular, to receive input from community members for the determination of concrete recommendations to policymakers and community leaders.

Between July and December 2012, the Needs Assessment Project Coordinator conducted eight focus groups including a total of 52 participants. The number and composition of focus groups for the project was determined to mirror the demographics of the tri-county area. The main topics discussed were employment, education (K–12 and college), immigration, and civic participation/family services, as was included in the Phase I data collection.

Focus groups were advertised in ethnic media outlets to solicit community member participation. APIAVote-MI also recruited focus group participants with the help of many community partners such as ethnic organizations. Participants were required to be residents of Macomb, Oakland, or Wayne county and 18 years and older. Each focus group participant was offered a $25 gift card. Participants were recruited to reflect diversity in age, gender, profession, and county.

The Project Coordinator presented focus group participants with an overview of the findings from Phase I and asked five questions on each of the four topic areas (See Appendix C). Focus group questions were based on initial findings from the quantitative data published in January 2012. Specifically, the questions were asked to gather individualized stories on issues and experiences, to solicit feedback and reactions to the quantitative data, and to receive policy recommendations from the focus group participants.

Focus groups were constructed as follows:
1. Bangladeshi Americans: 1 focus group with 5 participants – Location: Adult Education Center
2. Chinese Americans: 2 focus groups (1 for Mainland Chinese with 10 participants and 1 for Hong Kong/Taiwanese with 6 participants) – Location: Community Centers
3. Filipino Americans: 1 focus group with 10 participants – Location: Community Center
4. Hmong Americans: 1 focus group with 2 participants – Location: Church
5. Indian Americans: 2 focus groups – Locations: Temple and residence
6. Korean Americans: 1 focus group with 6 participants – Location: Community Center
FINDINGS
EMPLOYMENT

Employment Status

Respondents were asked to select, from a list of response categories, all options that applied in describing their current employment status. A total of 417 respondents answered the question. Approximately half (51.3%) reported some form of employment: 31.4% were working full time (n=131); 4.3% were working part time (n=18); 15.6% were self-employed (n=65). Nearly one-fifth (19.9%) indicated they were unemployed (n=83), 10.8% were retired (n=45), 8.2% were homemakers (n=34), and 3.6% were students (n=15).

Of the 26 (6.2%) with multiple employment statuses, the most frequent combination of statuses were working part-time and a student (n=7), unemployed and a student (n=4), working full-time and a student (n=2), working full-time and self-employed (n=2), and working part-time and self-employed (n=2).

Respondents who indicated they were unemployed (including those with multiple employment statuses—eight of which were unemployed only) were asked if they were currently experiencing any of the following problems when trying to find a job: no networking opportunities, being overqualified, language barriers, and the bad economy. The most frequently stated problem was the bad economy (67.5%), followed by being overqualified (48.6%). Less than a third of those unemployed who responded indicated that no networking opportunities was a problem (30.3%), while almost one-fifth experienced language barriers when trying to find a job (19.4%).

FIGURE 7: EMPLOYMENT STATUS DISTRIBUTION (N=417)
FINDINGS

EMPLOYMENT

Workplace Environment

Respondents were asked if they ever experienced any of the following discrimination problems at their workplace: not being promoted; not being hired as a manager; stereotyping; and cultural insensitivity (See Table 1).

By Gender: When looking at discrimination in the workplace by gender, females and males had similar experiences with regards to not being promoted (27.3% of females and 30.1% of males) and stereotyping (39.3% of females and 39.1% of males). More females experienced cultural insensitivity than males (42.9% and 32.5%, respectively). More males were not hired as managers compared to females (24.8% and 15.0%, respectively). These two differences were not statistically significant.

By Age: Not being promoted seemed to occur less often than stereotyping and cultural insensitivity for all age categories except for those older than 65; there were no significant differences between the individual age categories for these three workplace discrimination problems. There were too few cases for every age category to test for statistical differences when analyzing the discrimination problem on not being hired as managers.

By Education: For not promoted and not hired as managers, a higher percentage of respondents with higher level of education (e.g., master’s degree, professional school degree, or doctorate) experienced these discrimination problems than those with lower level of education (e.g., high school diploma, GED, associate degree, or bachelor’s degree). There was not a clear pattern when examining stereotyping and cultural insensitivity by educational level. There were no statistically significant differences between the respondent’s education and discrimination problems in the workplace.

By County: The proportion of respondents who experienced workplace discrimination did not statistically differ by the respondent’s county of residence. Looking across the four workplace discrimination problems, there was not a consistent pattern by county.

By Ethnicity: There were statistically significant differences between the respondent’s ethnicity and all four workplace discrimination problems. Specifically, Chinese and Indian respondents reported not being promoted and not being hired as managers more frequently (31.3% and 25.0% for Chinese respondents and 33.1% and 27.7% for Indian respondents respectively) than Korean respondents (9.5% and 4.0%) \( [X^2(2)=14.47, p < .01; X^2(2)=17.24, p < .001 \text{ respectively}] \). Differences were also apparent with regard to stereotyping and cultural insensitivity, though they were only statistically significant between Chinese and Korean respondents (51.3% and 50.0% for Chinese respondents compared to 28.0% and 22.4% for Korean respondents, respectively) \( [X^2(2)=6.17, p < .05; X^2(2)=9.52, p < .01, \text{ respectively}] \).

By Regional Identity: When looking at regional identity, there was not a consistent pattern across the four workplace discrimination problems. There were statistically significant differences between what South Asian and East Asian respondents reported for not being promoted (36.3% and 18.5%, respectively) \( [X^2(2)=10.99, p < .01] \). Stereotyping was reported more often by Southeast Asian respondents (60.0%)

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* In order to yield statistically significant results, ethnic groups were grouped together by region in order to meet the required population threshold. Three regional identities were used: South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladesh), Southeast Asian (Hmong, Vietnamese, Thai, Cambodian), and East Asian (Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, and Japanese)
than East Asian respondents (35.8%), which was statistically significantly different ($X^2(2)=6.99$, $p < .05$). Also, South Asian and East Asian respondents reported cultural insensitivity less often (39.1% and 34.4%, respectively) than Southeast Asian respondents (61.8%); these differences were statistically significant as well ($X^2(2)=8.46$, $p < .05$).

There were too few cases to test for statistical differences when analyzing the discrimination problem of not being hired as managers.

**TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION PROBLEMS AT WORK BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Not Promoted</th>
<th>Not Hired as Managers</th>
<th>Stereotyping</th>
<th>Cultural Insensitivity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>32.5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
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<td>51.6</td>
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<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>35.4</td>
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<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>48.5</td>
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<td>56 – 65</td>
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<td>17.0</td>
<td>38.5</td>
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<td>Above 65</td>
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<td>23.7</td>
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<td><strong>Highest Degree</strong></td>
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<td>40.6</td>
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<td>19.5</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>41.8</td>
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* Statistically significantly different from Korean ($p < .05$)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian ($p < .05$)
* Statistically significantly different from Southeast Asian ($p < .05$)
**FINDINGS**

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Asian American Narratives of Unemployment**

A number of participants spoke about unemployment experiences. Some of the qualitative data reinforces the finding that 67.5% of survey respondents felt the bad economy was a problem in trying to find a job and 30.3% felt that lack of networking opportunities was a problem.

One Bangladeshi American participant said it was hard to find a job that would pay more than the unemployment check. Another said that Michigan Works was a useful resource: “They [are] sending [us] to school. We are learning, you know, everything. We’re improving our language and ... they are helping us.”

An Indian American participant shared his/her experience of stereotyping at an employment agency while trying to find a job.

> When I lost my job, before I came here, I went to an employment agency, [name redacted], the consultant who was helping me for over six months to get a job - I never found one through him, at all, which is okay, there hasn’t been opportunities - he said, ‘you’re Indian, it won’t be hard for you.’ I asked, ‘what does that mean?’ and he said, ‘employers are going to snatch you up!’ ... So, just the idea in his mind, that ‘it’ll be fine for you.’ ...

He was stereotyping, ‘your community is the richest or smartest or you guys work the hardest’ but he’s putting the minority and the success stereotype, ‘You’re going to succeed and it doesn’t matter.’

Some Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participants spoke about the bad economy affecting Chinese restaurants in Michigan, which have now closed down. “The restaurants, the grocery stores, you know, how many do we have here? Not a whole lot, right? So there is only a certain number of jobs and if you lose them... Also, those Chinese restaurants [are] very competitive, they cannot compete with chain stores, with big stores. So they’re small business getting really [shot] out.” Participants noted that individuals without computer skills or lacking resources will have a difficult time finding a new job.

**“When I lost my job, before I came here, I went to an employment agency, [name redacted], the consultant who was helping me for over six months to get a job - I never found one through him, at all, which is okay, there hasn’t been opportunities - he said, ‘you’re Indian, it won’t be hard for you.’ I asked, ‘what does that mean?’ and he said, ‘employers are going to snatch you up!’ ... So, just the idea in his mind, that ‘it’ll be fine for you.’ ... He was stereotyping: ‘Your community is the richest or smartest or you guys work the hardest.’ But he’s putting the minority and the success stereotype, ‘You’re going to succeed and it doesn’t matter.’”**

**INDIAN AMERICAN FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**
Muslim names and hijab-wearing has proven to be a barrier for unemployed Bangladeshi Americans in Metro Detroit trying to find a job. One Bangladeshi American participant said:

Anything Islam or Muslim-related, if the people have names... they won’t accept these papers. They won’t ask for interview. Even if he has more scores, more qualities, but they don’t going to allow it.”

Another participant shared:

“Even a lot of people tell us, often, ‘You are good, you are smart, you know everything. Why you wearing hijab? Smart people don’t wear hijab.’

Some Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participants said that some people who become unemployed choose to move back to Asia, sometimes splitting apart the family. “I heard they just go back to Taiwan because they couldn’t survive here. So they go back home.” Another said: “They sometimes, the husband go to work in China and wife is still here. They lost a job here, and China has more opportunity, so their husband go to China but most cases, the people I know, the people I know are from Taiwan and kids grown up, but the people I know from China, kids are little and wife stay here, with the kids. So it is sad, you know.”

Many participants shared how shame is a large part of the unemployment experience for Asian Americans. One Indian American participant said that job fairs would not necessarily be successful because people will concentrate on “what if so and so sees me here.” Another Indian American participant said:

“We’re not big, stereotypically, when it comes to counseling or talking generally, we’re not good communicators. We do not open up very much about our personal experiences. So I think a lot of people who are struggling- like my parents’ friend, we have a friend who, whose daughter got married and had a huge wedding; thousand people came, and he lost his job, nobody knew, the daughter’s in-laws didn’t know, he has incurred so much debt, but he doesn’t want to talk about it. ... He’s sixty-something, with grown children, with nothing for his retirement and he didn’t want to speak up for help ... I don’t know any South Asian groups that help out a lot with employment and I don’t know anyone who would say, ‘I need the help. Can you help me find a job?’

“Even a lot of people tell us, often, You are good, you are smart, you know everything. Why you wearing hijab? Smart people don’t wear hijab.”

BANGLADESHI AMERICAN FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT
FINDINGS

EMPLOYMENT

Experiences of Employment Discrimination and Cultural Insensitivity

Participants in each focus group spoke about employment discrimination – some spoke about subtle versus more overt discrimination, some spoke about intraracial discrimination or stereotyping, while some pointed out differences in experiences based on language ability and having foreign-born as opposed to American-born status.

A Sikh American focus group participant spoke about the requirements for the U.S. military personnel to not have facial hair, remarking that only three exemptions have been made for Sikh Americans to enter the U.S. Army. A Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant spoke about the employment discrimination experiences of Chinese American factory workers:

I’m talking about factory workers, if you have a supervisor, and he or she knows that you don’t know English, you are dependent on someone else to help you, you don’t have a place to go. I hear that all the time. Factory workers. So it’s commonplace. There is still discrimination happening today.

A Filipino American participant spoke about anticipating a contract through the Detroit Public Schools, but being told “This one, this job is slated for minority enterprise, er, engineers.” The participant responded: “I’m a Filipino. As far as I know, I’m the minority.” The chief architect responded: “You may be, but you’re not the right type of minority.”

A Chinese American focus group participant noted that sometimes employment discrimination is subtler. The participant gave this example at General Motors: “When there is a chance of an opportunity, people assume that, because you’re a minority, that you’re not interested. So they don’t share the information. When you don’t have the information, you can’t apply for it. So those things are very subtle.”

Many participants talked about cultural insensitivity in the workplace. Some Bangladeshi American participants felt that they were being either ignored or targeted in the workplace. For example, one participant said: “We ask something ...and they don’t hear us because we’re Asian. You know, African American and other people asking or they [answer] right away. When we’re ...asking something, they don’t listen [to] us.” Another participant said that coworkers make comments when Bangladeshi American workers are walking or sitting, perhaps implying that they are not working as hard, even though those coworkers don’t say anything when other people aren’t actively working.

Several Filipino American participants shared experiences hearing remarks that were prejudiced or stereotypical at work. One participant said coworkers suggested that Filipinos Americans “should really just go back.” Another participant said that s/he sometimes talks to other Filipino American coworkers in Tagalog in the cafeteria, and has been asked by other coworkers to speak in English. Another participant spoke about gender discrimination – she overheard a member of the Board of Directors saying the company shouldn’t hire women because women ask for flex time when they have a family to take care of.
Some Chinese and Taiwanese American participants said that things are different in an academic setting—where it is more about results. For example, one Chinese American participant said: “My family is pretty much from [the] academic [world]. I think the hiring is from top to bottom, somebody the boss hire you, so the boss need to be, has to be, right. So in academic, the boss care[s] about: ‘Can you produce good scientific results or not?’ So they less discriminate.”

Some participants noted that they did not experience any workplace discrimination. For example, an Indian American participant said: “I work in a medical field, so I work in a stereotypical field… and I personally have never felt like I had any cultural insensitivity or been discriminated against in any way because of my background.” A Filipino American participant said that she has not had any issues at work for an insurance company or as a nurse. “As a matter of fact, they highly respect and actually like the Filipino nurses because … they take care of their patients really really well and, you know, they have this warmth and they can connect with the family and the patients. So I don’t have any issues.” Another Filipino American participant who had worked at Ford Motor Company said s/he did not get promoted but did not feel discriminated against.

“When there is a chance of an opportunity, people assume that, because you’re a minority, that you’re not interested. So they don’t share the information. When you don’t have the information, you can’t apply for it. So those things are very subtle.”

CHINESE AMERICAN FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT
FINDINGS

EMPLOYMENT

Implications of Language and Communication

Many focus group participants suggested that whether one is born in America or abroad and whether one can speak English fluently makes a difference in one’s employment experiences. For example, a Korean American participant said that because s/he is more Americanized, s/he feels “we’re being judged by our ability. That we’re being treated fairly.” A Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant remarked that: “For those who are immigrants to this country, if your language is bad, if you hardly speak any language, or English, you will be looked down. ‘I don’t want to talk to you. Go back to your hometown. Go back to your country.’ So language, I think, is a major issue.”

A number of Korean American participants said that learning American mannerisms, social cues, and communication is important. “It plays a role in the corporate world. If you know how to joke and understand how Americans joke and how they communicate, they get more of chance of probably promoting.”

A few participants spoke about intraracial issues. One Sikh American participant said that her husband applied for an IT company position, and an Indian American man who worked at the company “went to the manager who was doing the hiring, and told her that she shouldn’t hire Sikhs, that they’re terrorists, and that they’re not right. He’s Indian as well, so... And so that was the most blatant form of... very strange discrimination that occurred.”

A Hmong American participant spoke about how many Hmong Americans often are perceived as Chinese Americans: “They actually think we’re smart. So they hire us for us to go up the steps and, you know, that’s one unfortunate thing, because a lot of people, that I know that are hired, so they could go up the steps, they’re not really made to go up the steps. They just needed a job.” The quantitative analysis found that 60.0% of Southeast Asian American survey respondents reported stereotyping in the workplace, which was much higher than East Asian American respondents (35.8%), and much higher rates of cultural insensitivity (61.8% compared to 39.1% for South Asian Americans and 34.4% for East Asian Americans). It is possible that some of the stereotyping that was reported in the survey responses was related to the intraracial issues noted above.

“For those who are immigrants to this country, if your language is bad, if you hardly speak any language, or English, you will be looked down. ‘I don’t want to talk to you. Go back to your hometown. Go back to your country.’ So language, I think, is a major issue.”

TAIWANESE AMERICAN/HONG KONG FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT
Managerial and Promotion Challenges in the Workplace

A Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant spoke about direct experiences with the manager: “In my team, after I was made uncomfortable, I reported to my manager, my team leader, she asked, ‘Why do you want to come to United States? Why? Why you want to work here? After you finish this job, why don’t you go back to your country?’”

In the focus groups, participants from many ethnic backgrounds spoke about not being hired as managers. A Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant said: “I have a coworker, she from New York, no accent from her, but she doesn’t get promoted to manager because of her color. She is Chinese.”

A higher percentage of survey respondents with higher levels of education reported that they experienced problems with not being promoted or being hired as managers, compared to those with lower levels of education. Some of the qualitative data supports this finding. A Korean American participant noted that despite higher levels of education, other workers with less education are promoted over him or her:

My experience, I’ve been working in the industry for more than 30 years, and I definitely see that Asians—Asians not promoted. Asians not hired as managers. That includes myself, you know. Much higher, much more educated and have longer experience, and I know more about these than people, but people try to make me work for people who are not as educated, not as experienced, much younger than me, things like that. I see... I see many many times when that situation happens.

In contrast with the Korean American example, Hmong American participants spoke about how some people do not want to become managers because they are afraid of doing the job incorrectly or because they are aware of racism that has happened to other Asian American ethnic groups in the past.

In most Hmong people, I think there is this feeling of, “If I’m hired into manager, I’m scared of not being able to do the job correctly.” So sometimes, even if they are offered the position, they might deny it, because they don’t want that responsibility. And because they know that, “I’m a different skin tone or I’m a different race—It might reflect badly on me.” ... Because sometimes, they might be offered a job but they don’t want it, because of the responsibilities they might be faced with.

Other Hmong American participants spoke about how their parents were afraid of what could happen in the workplace. One participant said her mother was afraid her daughter would be killed if she lost a case as a lawyer; another participant’s parents were worried that if their daughter took a nanny position, she might end up in jail if the child was accidentally hurt.
For those Asian Americans who do become managers, another set of issues emerges. An Indian American participant spoke about a manager that does not speak English well and thus is ignored or overstepped by other people.

I think he will have a hard time here getting any further because... it is disrespectful to him to have me handle press, city officials, public rentals, talking to the fire department, but they don’t ever want to talk to him, even though he is the person in charge, because he has an accent. He is easy to understand, they just don’t want to bother talking to him. And I know lots of people who can understand what he is saying, so it isn’t that thick of an accent, they just don’t want to bother, because he doesn’t speak English ‘correctly’ but he is qualified to do his job.

A Sikh American participant who owns his own medical practice shared a story of cultural insensitivity and threats from a patient:

The patients I see, most of them are pretty respectful. But there have been a couple of times. Many patients still perceive me with a turban from the Middle East. ...That perception lead to one particular patient that was ranting and... He was cussing, this person, and he would not comply with treatment. He got very angry and started to use all kinds of obscenities and particularly, ‘you diaper heads,’ ‘you camel people,’ ‘You go back home’ and that type of stuff. This was coming from a patient of mine who uh... was coming from the height of cultural insensitivity. Later, we had to call the police, it was that, uh, situation... he was a physical threat.

“In most Hmong people, I think there is this feeling of, ‘If I’m hired into manager, I’m scared of not being able to do the job correctly.’ So sometimes, even if they are offered the position, they might deny it, because they don’t want that responsibility. And because they know that, ‘I’m a different skin tone or I’m a different race- It might reflect badly on me.’ Because sometimes, they might be offered a job but they don’t want it, because of the responsibilities they might be faced with.”

Hmong American Focus Group Participant
Barriers to Reporting Discrimination in the Workplace

Many participants shared their thoughts about why Asian Americans underreport employment discrimination. One Indian American participant noted:

I think people just stop. I know, in my case, how far is this going to go? Is it going to be constructive or is it going to be a big waste of my time? Is anyone going to listen, because they didn’t listen before. So after a certain point, you know what the correct thing to do is, but you know you’re not going to get anything, so in my case, I don’t say anything.

Another Indian American participant said: “The point is that most of the people don’t take that step because they are scared. We think rather than good happens, bad happens.” A Sikh American participant noted that:

In a workplace, it tends to be a lot of things are built on relationships. A lot of your hiring and promoting decisions and who’s going to lead the next project, and a lot of it is based on your perception in the office and how people... you know, are you a trouble maker? Are you one of the people who keeps things together, and I think if someone is going to go reporting something to HR, is going to be perceived as a troublemaker, as opposed to just handling it, a team-player.

A Bangladeshi American participant said when s/he has reported problems in the workplace, the supervisor ignores him/her. “After five minutes, he don’t know what I say, but he take the other side. If it [is] against Asian people, they don’t care.”

Many Chinese American focus group participants felt that it was hard to prove employment discrimination, so many people just do not even report it. One participant gave an example of a coworker who spoke out about discrimination by his coworkers; the company laid that worker off that same day.

A Sikh American participant who wears a turban shared that he once spoke at a company meeting, and that someone said in front of a large group: “How come we have people from Al Qaeda here? Are you related to Bin Laden?” When the participant reported this to the manager, and the manager did tell the individual who made the remarks to refrain from doing that. Now, the Sikh American participant is aware that others watch what they say when they are around him, because they don’t want to be reported to Human Resources. “That shook me so hard, I stopped wearing white turbans for the next seven or eight years.”
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: K-12 ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Respondents were first asked if they ever experienced the following academic problems with K-12 education in public or private schools: curriculum not having Asian American material; inaccuracies in Asian American curriculum; curriculum not being challenging; lack of ESL or bilingual resources; and no preparation for college. Table 2 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender: Among the five K-12 academic problems, the highest percentage of females and of males reported that they felt the curriculum did not have Asian American material (50.4% and 47.4%, respectively). For each of the five problems, a higher percentage of females indicated that they experienced the K-12 academic problems than males, but not every difference was statistically significant. Significantly more females responded that they experienced inaccuracies in Asian American curriculum than males (40.0% and 23.4%, respectively; p < .05), and significantly more females than males stated that curriculum was not challenging (48.6% and 32.5%, respectively; p < .05).

By Age: There were statistically significant differences when looking at the age categories for three K-12 academic problems: inaccuracies in Asian American curriculum \( [X^2(5)=14.06, p < .05] \); curriculum not being challenging \( [X^2(5)=12.41, p < .05] \); and lack of ESL or bilingual resources \( [X^2(5)=14.61, p < .05] \). Respondents older than 65 were significantly different from those 18 - 45 years old who experienced inaccuracies in Asian American curriculum and were significantly different from those 26 - 35 years old who experienced a lack of ESL or bilingual resources. For both of those differences, the percentage of respondents older than 65 who experienced the problems was smaller. Although there was a significant association between the problem with the curriculum not being challenging and age, there were not significant differences between the individual age categories.

By Education: When looking at the proportion of respondents who ever experienced K-12 academic problems by the respondent’s highest degree of education, there was not a pattern across the five problems. There were no statistically significant differences between the educational levels for all of the K-12 academic problems, except for the curriculum not being challenging \( [X^2(3)=10.44, p < .05] \). The proportion of respondents with either a high school diploma or GED who experienced a curriculum that was not challenging (23.9%) was statistically lower than respondents with a master’s degree who experienced a curriculum that was not challenging (52.0%).

By County: For all of the K-12 academic problems except the curriculum not being challenging, a higher percentage of respondents from Macomb County experienced these problems than respondents from Oakland or Wayne Counties. None of the differences between counties for the percentage of respondents who experienced K-12 academic problems were statistically significant.

By Ethnicity: Looking across the five academic problems with K-12 education, there seems to be a pattern based on ethnicity: the proportion of Korean respondents who experienced these problems was lowest, followed by Indian respondents, with the highest proportion being Chinese respondents who reported that they experienced these problems.
For the curriculum not having Asian American material, 67.7% of Chinese respondents and 53.2% for Indian respondents reported this problem compared to 30.3% for Korean respondents, which was statistically significantly different \( \chi^2(2)=15.57, p < .001 \). There were also statistically significant differences between Chinese and Indian respondents compared to Korean respondents for the curriculum not being challenging (59.1% of Chinese respondents and 49.1% for Indian respondents compared to 22.4% for Korean respondents) \( \chi^2(2)=16.91, p < .001 \). There was a significant association between no preparation for college and ethnicity, but there were not significant differences between the individual ethnicity categories \( \chi^2(2)=6.41, p < .05 \). There were too few cases to test for differences when analyzing the discrimination problem of inaccuracies in Asian American material.

**By Regional Identity:** When looking at regional identity, East Asian respondents reported experiencing each of these academic problems least often, while Southeast Asian respondents reported such experiences most often. South Asian respondents, proportionally, fell in between the other two groups. Asked about the curriculum not having Asian American material, a statistically significant difference was seen between East Asian and Southeast Asian respondents (41.9% compared to 70.6%) \( \chi^2(2)=9.23, p < .05 \). Both South Asian and East Asian respondents reported the lack of ESL or bilingual resources (32.5% and 24.3%, respectively) and no preparation for college (32.0% and 22.5%, respectively) less often than Southeast Asian respondents, which were statistically significant differences \( \chi^2(2)=17.67, p < .001; \chi^2(2)=24.10, p < .001, \) respectively. There was a significant association between no preparation for college and ethnicity, but there were not significant differences between the individual ethnicity categories \( \chi^2(2)=6.41, p < .05 \). There were too few cases to test for differences when analyzing the discrimination problem of inaccuracies in Asian American material. South and Southeast Asian respondents reported that they had experienced inaccuracies in Asian American curriculum more often (proportionally) than East Asian respondents; this pattern also applies to their experiences of the curriculum not being challenging. Both of these differences were statistically significant \( \chi^2(2)=10.63, p < .01; \chi^2(2)=11.11, p < .01, \) respectively.
## FINDINGS

### EDUCATION: K-12 ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

**TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED K-12 ACADEMIC PROBLEMS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Curriculum Does Not Have APIA Material</th>
<th>Inaccuracies in APIA Curriculum</th>
<th>Curriculum Is Not Challenging</th>
<th>Lack of ESL or Bilingual Resources</th>
<th>No Preparation for College</th>
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* Statistically significantly different from Male (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Above 65 (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from High school or GED (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Southeast Asian (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
**Curriculum**

LACK OF ASIAN & ASIAN AMERICAN CURRICULUM CONTENT

Many Asian American focus group participants noted that K-12 schools in Metro Detroit lack Asian and Asian American curriculum, in language, history and culture. This echoes the quantitative findings that the majority of Chinese American and Indian American survey respondents felt there was not enough Asian American curriculum. An Indian American participant said:

"I went to Troy High School, one of the most diverse schools in the country, [but] I can’t tell you anything that I learned about India. And we should have, because so many of the students were South Asian, whether they were from Bangladesh or Pakistan, or Nepal, it doesn’t matter, there was nothing. And there should be. If you’re going to boast that you’re the most diverse, there needs to be that type of discourse and there really isn’t."

A Sikh American participant noted that: “They learn zero about Sikh. Like 0.001.” Another Sikh American participant said: “I was looking at my son’s world history book. I think there are three or four pages about India. That’s all.”

A Bangladeshi American participant said: “The children don’t learn [our history].” A Chinese American participant noted that: “And then when they mention world history, it’s actually European history. Asian, like India, China, they have long glorious history, and then they’re never mentioned. And then the Middle East, and all those other countries, are not mentioned either.”

When curriculum about Asians or Asian Americans is included, it is often not representative. For example, a Sikh American participant said that even if there was a small amount of Asian history included in world history classes, it was from a Eurocentric point of view.

A Hmong American participant shared that Hmong people and their contributions to the Secret War for the CIA are not covered in the Vietnam War era sections of history textbooks. “Never in the book that I read in grade school mentioned the Hmong people. Or mentioned anyone who was like helping with the Americans. It was just like little bits of, because it’s called a secret war, so they just mention like bits and pieces of the good thing America was doing in that country. That’s it.”

Another Hmong American participant shared that in the Detroit Public Schools she attended, a lot of African American history was covered: “And I felt it was more of a focus on African Americans and not America as a history, as a whole. And going to college, I had to take American History all over again because I wasn’t taught this history [in high school]. How it was founded, who the founding fathers were, and the American Declaration of Independence, and things like that— the major parts of history, you learned about.”

When a Hmong American participant asked her teacher why Asian or Asian American history was not taught in school, the teacher said: “We don’t have time.”
EDUCATION: K-12 ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Curriculum

IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

A number of participants discussed why they believe a diverse curriculum or one that includes Asian and Asian American content is so important. One Indian American participant said: “It is absolutely important, not just our kids, but for everyone’s kids because we’re such a global society now that everyone needs to be learning about everyone else’s cultures. ... we’re not an insignificant minority group in this country, so in order to get along with everyone we need to understand where, what culture people have come from.” A Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant echoed: “Because we are moving towards a global world, a global economy, a global system, so without knowing what other countries do, I think that would really hurt us. So we really need to open up.”

A Filipino American participant said that s/he taught an advanced placement civics class. There was one high school at which the participant taught that had history books with a chapter on the Filipino American War. “I had to make it a point to present that chapter because I would think that someone else would select and probably not, probably skip that chapter.”

A Korean American participant noted the effect of non-inclusive curriculum on identity, sharing an example of his/her daughter:

When my daughter was attending a private school, there was only maybe 15–20 children. All she saw, what we see, from our eyes, right? She saw white-color and black-color, right? And my child happened to be kind of mixed, okay? ... And for a while, she kept bringing books home, like African American books. ... ‘They do touch all the countries, right?’ They go from every country. ‘You must be studying Africa, right?’ Some years passed by, she said, ‘Mom, what did I know? Just because I’m slightly brown, not quite white, everybody I saw was either white or black. So I thought I was African American.’

Some participants disagreed. For example, a Filipino American participant said it may not be important to include Asian American curriculum. “Nobody has it. And should they be including that in the curriculum? Well, we’re a minority. So I don’t necessarily think they should include it.”
REFLECTIONS ON ESL AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Some participants noted that language is also important to include in the curriculum, and pointed out that more school districts are teaching Mandarin Chinese. Participants had very mixed experiences and feelings about the quality of English as a Second Language and bilingual education in schools. Some focus group participants felt that ESL classes were either unnecessary or providing adequate services. For example, an Indian American participant said: “Most of [our kids] are born here, so they go to school here, so they learn [English] here, so [it’s not a problem].” Several Chinese American participants said that they felt the ESL programs available in Troy and Bloomfield Hills schools were “pretty good” or “doing enough.”

In contrast, other participants expressed the importance of bilingual resources. A Hmong American participant shared that: “I think bilingual resources are important. Very important. ... I went to ESL from about kindergarten to about sixth grade. And that was just because, I probably did need a little help with my English, growing up, but after about sixth grade, it was fine.”

Some participants felt that ESL and bilingual programs could be more effective. For example, a Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant shared that his/her son was placed into ESL unnecessarily when he had actually been born in the United States and spoke English fluently. I said, ‘Wait a minute! Wait a minute! You’ve got to be kidding me; he is born here. His English will be better than mine one day. Don’t waste your time, I don’t want him to be in that program. He said, ‘No, we have to,’ and I said, ‘No way.’ … I don’t know how they came up with it, I ended up speaking with the principal. He was going to be pulled into the program, pulled off his regular classes, to be put in an ESL class. He was born here! He is one of you guys! And I speak English [fluently], right? [laughs] So, it’s like... so messed up.

Hmong American participants said that bilingual classes could be improved – because sometimes the classes were not effective or not rigorous enough. For example:

There was [sic] two bilingual teachers. And the class I went to, his material was at a first to fifth grade level. Nothing challenging. I sat there and did the homework for them in like 30 minutes, it was that easy. And the bilingual students were struggling because, to me, I felt they weren’t being taught right when it came to learning English. And then I went to another bilingual teacher’s room and his materials were a lot harder— they were at a high school level— but he broke it down to them so they would understand it. And they were writing essays and they were writing book reports, they were doing things a high school student should be able to do but at a lower level, so that it’s broken down, so they can understand what they’re doing.
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: K-12 ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Curriculum

REFLECTIONS ON ESL AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

Some participants felt that it was important for students to learn the language of their parents. A Filipino American participant noted that more people are going to the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan so that they can relearn the language that they didn’t learn while growing up:

I also notice, kids who are now in college, or have jobs, come back here to relearn the language because when they were growing up, their own parents were conflicted on how they were to be raised. Whether they were to be completely assimilated into the mainstream culture, or whether identities had to be distinguished. And they lost out, they feel they missed out on this central aspect of their own culture because of the need to get ahead and to be completely assimilated into the culture. So they come back and they want to relearn so that they could understand or develop their own sense of themselves.

A Bangladeshi American participant shared that s/he wants to start a Bengali language school in Hamtramck because many young Bangladeshi Americans don’t know how to write in Bangla.

“They don’t know my language - they just speak, they don’t know how to write. So every day, I give them one hour in language, our language, at home. And I’m thinking that next year, I want to start a Bengali school here, with one or two kids, eventually make it big one.”
Some Hmong American participants felt that the curriculum was not challenging enough, but that curriculum rigor depended on the school. One participant said: “[In] Detroit Public Schools ... the material isn’t challenging. It’s easy to get good grades.” Another said:

I had a teacher who didn’t really care about challenging us, so, it was all very easy work. But I really think it depends on the teacher and what materials are available to the teacher. And it also depends on the student as well. My brother, he’s in high school right now, and he can do his homework in 15 minutes. High school. 15 minutes, he can do all his homework and I feel like that is not challenging enough and he needs harder material. He needs materials that will help him improve, not something that he can do in 15 minutes.

One Bangladeshi American participant said that she could not locate adequate home tutoring for her child who was in a special education class. “We are looking for teaching at home, teaching for the kid. But my husband, he look around at so many places but they say we don’t have any like that, to teaching come home. We need for teachers who are looking for home teaching on–on–one after school.”

Parent Involvement in K-12 Schools

Focus group participants shared contrasting examples of parents who were very active in schools and other parents who were not active in parent teacher organizations (PTOs).

Some parents took it upon themselves to try to increase cultural understanding within their child’s school. A Sikh American participant arranged five cultural days at his/her son’s elementary school: “We invited people from every culture – Japan, China, whatever people, whatever community people were there at the time– everybody’s parents were there. They had a complete lecture on eating, living, and all habits were discussed.” A Korean American participant shared how s/he arranged for the Korean government to donate Korean books to the elementary schools in his/her school district. An Indian American parent suggested that parents could teach short Indian history classes at the schools that invite parents into the classroom for International Day.

However, other participants shared how Asian American parents choose not to get involved in PTOs. “Part of the problem is that the Indian parents, the Asian parents, don’t get involved. They’re really busy at work, or running around to math classes, but not [involved in PTOs], at that basic level.” A Korean American participant said: “Most immigrant parents don’t go to these meetings because of the language barriers.”

A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant pointed out that blue-collar Chinese American immigrant workers “…have a problem to tutor their children. They live in areas that don’t have the resources. The parents don’t know how to tutor their children, some young families. To help the parents, we need to do that.”
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: K-12 ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Adult Education

Bangladeshi American participants were the only group to speak about adult education. Several participants felt that the adult education center they attend should provide a private prayer room for Muslim students. A participant said: “Here, I have a problem. Everyone not allowed to pray anywhere because we don’t use any room. We use corridor to pray. But they [say], ‘Go to mosque and do your praying. Why you praying here?’ That is not good.” Many participants felt that they would like to pursue other adult education resources but cannot afford to attend other trainings. One participant said: “Skill training is very hard. If we go there, you know, financial problems. Too much money.”

College Preparation and Academic Support

A number of participants said they felt that more college preparation was needed in schools. A Korean American participant remarked that the college entrance systems in Korea and the United States are quite different, making it difficult for immigrant parents to help their children navigate the school system and college application process:

I think American college acceptance or enrollment systems are very different than what Korean people are used to. Korean systems ...[are] a lot more systematic than American system is. American college entrance is very non-systematic. There is all that criteria that they send out, but it is not an absolute criteria. So it is not well understood. ... People who come from very systematic backgrounds, they want to think, ‘Okay, my child made a 4 point. My child did this. ...So why is my child not accepted?’ So, preparation for college is somewhat missing.

One Indian American participant said that new immigrants’ children might need assistance that they do not currently receive: “I remember school offering extra help but I don’t think it was enough. The help that was available was very expensive. It’s not accessible by everybody. And there are a lot of people who need help and cannot afford the ridiculous cost of these classes. So, yeah, I would say there is a need for ACT help, for SAT writing help, for thinking-help, especially for people who are new to this country or children of immigrants. They’re here and they need that help.”
A Hmong American participant felt s/he did not need more help preparing for college but realized that other students may not have had as close relationships with their advisors as s/he did. “I think, when I was in high school, my preparation for college was flawless. I had a great time. I understood what college was. You know, right when I went to high school, I understood what college was and I knew all the stuff. But I realize that, the reason why I knew what college was, and I knew what to do and everything, was because I was friends with my advisors.”

Another Hmong American participant commented on college preparation programs, stating that some are not very effective. “In Osborn [High School], there is this group from U of M called Project Lighthouse. And they’re college students, who come to the school, from February until May, and they try to help students- Hmong students- to encourage them to pursue post-secondary education. But the students, in my experience, most of them were just there to have fun. They didn’t really care about learning about college or how to get to college or what to do when you’re in college.”

A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant noted that not everyone has to go to college in order to achieve their career goals, saying: “Not every kid wants to go to college. Some might want to prepare a career. They can be vocational school. They can be a special wood-making, autoworkers, they can be seamstresses... they can be all sorts of things.”

Several Hmong American participants noted that family pressures or cultural traditions often prevent Hmong American youth from attending college. One participant referred to friends who graduated, got married and moved out of state. Another said:

Family comes into play a lot of the times where, especially for us Hmong girls, where once we turn 18, they’re like, “You’re getting older. Go get married. You’re old. 18. [Laughs] You’re done with high school. Think of your future. Think of your life.” They’re not encouraging daughters to go to school. They’re encouraging daughters to get married and have family. Sons are the same way too. Even though the son is very important to the family, once the son is done with high school, a lot of them say, “Hey, you’re 18 now. You’re a man now. Go find a job and support the family. Go get married. Have kids. Pass on the means.”
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: K-12 NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Quantitative Findings

Respondents were asked a second question regarding K-12 education focused on four non-academic areas of concern: cultural insensitivity from teachers and peers; bullying; discrimination; and non-inclusiveness. Table 3 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. For each of the four areas, female respondents reported experiencing these non-academic problems more often than males. In half of the four areas (cultural insensitivity and non-inclusiveness) the differences were statistically significant: cultural insensitivity (p < .05) and non-inclusiveness (p < .05). The highest percentage of both female and male respondents (56.1% and 42.2%, respectively) reported that they experienced cultural insensitivity more than the other three problem areas.

By Age. There were statistically significant differences when looking at the age categories for all four K-12 non-academic problems: cultural insensitivity [X^2(5)=11.96, p < .05]; bullying [X^2(5)=24.28, p < .001]; discrimination [X^2(5)=20.68, p < .01]; and non-inclusiveness [X^2(5)=11.52, p < .05]. Responses from the 26 - 35 age group were statistically significantly different from the above 65 age group in all four areas. Responses from the 18 - 25 group were statistically significantly different from the above 65 group in three of the four areas (cultural insensitivity, bullying, and discrimination). While the 18 - 25 age group also reported a higher rate of incidence with regard to non-inclusiveness when compared to the above 65 group, the difference was not statistically significant.

By Education. When looking at the proportion of respondents who ever experienced K-12 non-academic problems by the respondent’s highest degree of education, there was not a pattern across the four areas. There were no statistically significant differences between the educational levels for all of the non-academic areas.

By County. Respondents in Macomb County reported a higher level of agreement that they had experienced discrimination (59.4%) than respondents from Oakland County (34.9%), which was a statistically significantly difference [X^2(2)=11.78, p < .01]. Though not statistically significant, Oakland County respondents did report the highest rate of agreement that they had experienced some form of cultural insensitivity in a K-12 setting and the lowest rate of agreement that they had experienced bullying.

By Ethnicity. When looking at ethnicity, Chinese respondents reported the highest proportion for having experienced these non-academic problems compared to Indian and Korean respondents. These differences were statistically significant between Chinese and Korean respondents for the problems of cultural insensitivity (66.7% and 42.5%, respectively) [X^2(2)=6.70, p < .05] and bullying (56.0% and 18.8%, respectively) [X^2(2)=17.90, p < .001]. More Indian respondents reported having experienced bullying (43.9%) compared to Korean respondents (18.8%) — a statistically significant difference [X^2(2)=17.90, p < .001].

By Regional Identity. Overall, a higher percentage of Southeast Asians reported non-academic problems with K-12 education than South or East Asians. South and Southeast Asian respondents statistically significantly reported being bullied in a K-12 setting more often (47.1% and 68.6%, respectively) than East Asian respondents (28.2%) [X^2(2)=20.79, p < .001]. South and East Asian respondents reported experiencing discrimination significantly less often (35.9% and 37.3%, respectively) than Southeast Asian respondents (73.2%) [X^2(2)=19.47, p < .001].
Bullying

Many Asian American focus group participants discussed bullying that happened in K–12 schools. Some of the findings seem to reinforce the quantitative findings that South Asian American and Southeast Asian Americans in particular face high rates of bullying.

A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant said that s/he “heard a lot of ‘Ching-Chong.’ I just don’t say anything to them. I got shy.” Another Taiwanese American/Hong Kong participant said that students would bully by mimicking exaggerated karate moves. An Indian American participant shared the story of her son who was being bullied by another student to give him candy on a regular basis:

One time, in first grade, or second grade, there was one boy who used to bully my son and he said, ‘I need to take some candies,’ and I said, ‘why?’ He said, ‘I have to take for one of the boy because he is telling me you bring me candy.’ I said, ‘Okay, you can tell him he can come to our house and we have lots of candy and he can have as much as he wants but he has to come our house and he can have it.’ ‘No, mom, I have to take.’ ‘No, we are not taking,’ I told him, ‘you can stand up for yourself’ and then that boy was threatening him, and then I took it to his teacher. I told this was happening and she said, ‘I will make sure that I will observe it.’ But this was also happening on the bus, so that was a hard place to observe.

Other participants shared the opinion that bullying often took place on the school bus. One Indian American participant said: “[The bus] is where everything goes wrong.” A Hmong American participant also experienced bullying on the bus growing up: “So if the ones in the back pick on us, it’s just like they bully us, they throw at us, they make fun of the way we dress, they make fun of how we talk.”

A Hmong American participant also experienced bullying on the bus growing up: “So if the ones in the back pick on us, it’s just like they bully us, they throw at us, they make fun of the way we dress, they make fun of how we talk.” S/he shared that things were okay on the bus with a good caring bus driver. “But then she left and it got worse, to the point where Hmong parents had to come up to the school and demand protection from those kids.”

A Sikh American participant shared that Sikh boys are bullied in schools at high rates: “Thirty percent of children, in general, experience bullying. If you look at children just K–12, but if you look at Sikh kids, the numbers are 70–80 percent range. Especially the turban wearing Sikh boys.”

A Filipino American participant said: “When I was in high school, I went through a period where I was bullied a lot. And then, that one Korean kid, the VT shootings, last name Cho. I was scapegoated because of being Asian. I was blamed for doing this bomb threat that I didn’t do. And so they thought that because I’m Asian, and I was going through a lot at that time, I was the culprit of the bomb threat.”
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: K-12 NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Cultural Insensitivity

A number of Indian and Chinese American participant shared experiences of cultural insensitivity in schools with regard to cultural food. At least three Indian American participants expressed that their children or other students they knew do not want to take Indian food to school for lunch because they will be picked on. “He likes his food but he doesn’t want to take his food to school. Why? Because they make fun of him. They don’t know what it is or what we’re trying to eat.” A Filipino American participant said that her son was being taunted at school and being called “Eggroll.” The participant said: “And my son always [came] home crying. So I say, ‘...What happened?’ He [said] this kid is yelling at him ‘eggroll’ during lunchtime. Eggroll!”

A Chinese American participant said that the principal at a school received complaints from students about the smell of Chinese food, so that principal notified the parents not to have their children bring Chinese food into the school. “So I think that is kind of insensitive.” In contrast, the Bangladeshi American participants shared that the Hamtramck Public Schools have been very responsive to requests for halal meals in the schools.

One Indian American participant shared how s/he did not want to wear cultural clothing to school on International Day because s/he did not want to be picked on. Another Indian American participant said: “They make fun of our names.”

A Sikh American participant shared a positive example of cultural insensitivity being addressed in schools. The participant’s son used to wear a Patka and was asked by the principal: “Are you representing a clan or something? Why do you wear that on your head?” The participant spoke to the principal and offered to teach about the Sikh culture. The participant was allowed to speak and was covered in newspapers.

Several Hmong American participants shared the feeling that as students, they wanted to stay quiet about cultural insensitivity, and not make trouble. “About the cultural insensitivity from teachers and peers, I think that because most of us are taught to be quiet in school, and just sit there and learn, the teacher don’t have to worry about that because the student is quiet and the student is not a trouble-maker.”

“He likes his food but he doesn’t want to take his food to school. Why? Because they make fun of him. They don’t know what it is or what we’re trying to eat.”

INDIAN AMERICAN PARTICIPANT
A number of participants shared potential reasons why some Asian American students may not tell their parents or teachers about bullying or cultural insensitivity. For example, one Hmong American participant said:

Bullying, definitely, is a major concern. Because, as I said, we have such a, we’re so quiet and when people pick on us, we’re taught to say, from our parents, we go. We may not complain to the teachers because we feel like maybe the teacher might not be, might not do something. But when we go home, we complain to our parents, our parents are going to tell us, “It’s okay, sweetie. They’re going to bully you for a while and after you don’t do anything, they’re going to leave you alone.” And then we’re taught just to leave it alone.

“About the cultural insensitivity from teachers and peers, I think that because most of us are taught to be quiet in school, and just sit there and learn, the teacher don’t have to worry about that because the student is quiet and the student is not a trouble-maker.”

Hmong American Participant
# FINDINGS

## EDUCATION: K-12 NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

### TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED K-12 NON-ACADEMIC PROBLEMS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

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<th>Discrimination</th>
<th>Non-Inclusiveness</th>
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<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>47.1(^f)</td>
<td>35.9(^f)</td>
<td>33.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>37.3(^f)</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>68.6(^e)</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significantly different from Male (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Above 65 (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Oakland (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Southeast Asian (p < .05)
EDUCATION: COLLEGE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

College Admissions

A few focus group participants commented about the process of getting into college. One Chinese American participant noted that test scores are not the only factor in college admissions, and some Chinese American students face a problem with that: “Some kids have very high SAT score and it still doesn’t get them into a good university but they don’t explain the reason. There are a lot of factors.”

Bangladeshi American participants said, through the focus group translator, that many of the students are not going to college even though they have strong grade point averages and do have access to scholarships.

A Sikh American spoke about his/her belief that some universities do not want to accept too many South Asian Americans: “My son went to International Academy and there were a fair number of Indian students there and a lot of those students graduate from University of Michigan, but the University of Michigan has limits on how many Indians they want in their freshman cuts. So somehow, you do get discriminated even though you do have good scores and GPA and good academic background, just because you’re Indian, they can’t take too many Indians.” University admissions quotas were outlawed in the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Bakke (1978), but it is important to note that some community members hold the misconception that quotas can still exist.
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: COLLEGE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Access to Scholarships

Participants shared contrasting views about whether or not there was enough access to or awareness of scholarships. One Indian American participant said: “I don’t think there is a lack of resources for scholarships. I don’t think that. Maybe that [people don’t know about them] but I don’t think that is much of a problem.” A Chinese American participant said that most Chinese American parents in Oakland County are doing well and pay for their children’s education: “Kids, in some way, [are] pretty much guaranteed to go on to higher education so they don’t have to work part time or something.” Another Indian American participant noted that perhaps scholarship access is more of an issue for green card holders or visa students.

In contrast, a Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant said that many people “don’t know how to apply, don’t know what scholarships are available out there.” A Hmong American participant put the onus back on the students:

I think most of the time … the students aren’t willing to do the job, they’re not willing to find these scholarships. I told classmates and I tell younger high school students that they’re out there, but don’t target scholarships that are specifically for only Asians [but] that’s what most of them are looking for. Most of them aren’t willing to do the hard work. …They’d rather find easy scholarships.

A Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant said that many people “don’t know how to apply, don’t know what scholarships are available out there.”
Most participants believed that discrimination is an issue on college campuses. A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant said: “That is a serious issue because some people get into a high degree and they expend lot of efforts and they [are] being discriminated [against], being picked on, not graduated. That has become a serious problem.”

Another Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant said that dealing with discrimination by faculty is very difficult to deal with: “Any time you’re talking about discrimination by faculty, what are you going to do? Are you going to go talk to your counselor and complain about it? If you do, then you have to have specific examples that you need to document.”

A Sikh American participant shared that there is a Sikh endowed chair at the University of Michigan, but: “I think there is still entrenched beliefs within the highest level that the university, as far as who Sikhs are. …I don’t always get the best feeling from them. As far as them having understanding. They still carry some biases with them. And this is at the very highest level.”

A Hmong American participant shared how classroom interactions and ignorant comments sometimes provoke conversations about discrimination. A young White woman in her class said that she believed discrimination did not exist anymore. In another class, an African American student said she believed only African Americans faced discrimination. The Hmong American participant responded: “Excuse me. But you are completely wrong. One hundred percent.” One might wonder how this interaction would have played out differently if it had been outside of the classroom setting on a college campus.
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: COLLEGE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Networking for Jobs and Internships

Many participants felt that networking for jobs and internships was sufficient on college campuses or through informal networks. A Sikh American participant said: “They have a co-op office. Any student interested in internship pretty much gets one. So a lot of possibilities for undergrad students. No problems. Business students also get lots of opportunities.” A Hmong American participant said that “the Hmong people are very good about networking about jobs. ...Word passes out very quickly.”

However, others felt that Asian American students were not connected to career offices. One Taiwanese American/Hong Kong participant said: “When I was in school doing my master’s degree, I don’t even know what the placement office means. When I was in school, I don’t know what I am doing. Placement office, what does that mean? I don’t know what that means. Later, I found out, when recruiting is almost over, then I found out, almost too late.”

“The Hmong people are very good about networking about jobs... Word passes out very quickly.”

HMONG AMERICAN FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT
EDUCATION: COLLEGE – NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Quantitative Findings

Respondents were also asked about experiencing problems with four non-academic areas of concern for college students on campus: health and nutrition; sports or athletics; networking for jobs and internships; and counseling and mental health needs. Table 4 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. For two of the four areas (health and nutrition, and counseling and mental health needs), more female respondents reported experiencing these problems than males; while there was no statistically significant difference with regard to health and nutrition, the difference was statistically significant for counseling and mental health (29.5% for females and 16.5% for males; p < .05). In the other two areas (sports and athletics, and networking), there were similar experiences between female and male respondents.

By Age. For three of the four areas (health and nutrition, sports and athletics, and counseling) across all age categories, respondents had similarly experienced these problems, and, while the lowest proportion of respondents were those older than 65 for each of these areas, there were no statistically significant differences. There was a statistically significant difference when looking at networking for jobs and internships; the percentage who experienced a problem in that area for those in the 36 – 45 and above 65 age groups was significantly lower than those in the 26-35 age group [X^2(5)=13.69, p < .05].

By Education. When looking at the proportion of respondents who reported that they had experienced non-academic problems in college by the respondent’s highest degree of education, there was not a pattern across the four areas. There were no statistically significant differences between the educational levels for the non-academic areas.

By County. For all of the non-academic problems with college education, there were no statistically significant differences between the experiences of the residents in the three counties. The highest proportion of respondents who experienced a problem with one of these non-academic areas across all three counties was in networking for jobs and internships, where at least roughly a third of respondents had that experience.

By Ethnicity. Korean respondents reported experiencing these non-academic problems less often than Chinese and Indian respondents, but only the statistically significant difference was found between Indian and Korean respondents with health and nutrition issues (35.7% of Indian respondents compared to 6.8% of Korean respondents) [X^2(2)=20.94, p < .001]. There were too few respondents in the three ethnicities to statistically test for differences in having experienced problems in sports or athletics, and counseling and mental health needs.
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: COLLEGE – NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Quantitative Findings (Continued)

By Regional Identity. There was variation when looking response by respondent’s regional identity. There were statistically significant differences when looking at health and nutrition and at networking opportunities \( \chi^2(2) = 26.80, p < .001; \chi^2(2) = 19.02, \) Regarding health and nutrition, more South and Southeast Asian respondents reported this issue (37.9% and 40.0%, respectively) when compared to the East Asian respondents (9.9%). When asked about networking for jobs and internships, more Southeast Asian respondents reported this as a problem (67.6%) than South or East Asian respondents (37.6% and 26.7%, respectively). There were too few respondents to statistically test for differences between the regional identities in having experienced problems in sports or athletics, and counseling and mental health needs.
Food

Focus group participants felt that food options could be improved on college campuses. Bangladeshi American participants said that there is a lack of halal meal options in college. One participant talked about her husband who went to Subway every day and asked for halal meals on campus when he attended Wayne State University. After complaining four times, no changes were made.

One Chinese American participant said: “I feel that first they need to look at the health issue. Put healthy food, not sweet food, on the table.” Another Chinese American participant pointed out that: “Chinese food is different from American food. American food has salt – it’s awful – and lots of raw vegetables. In China we stir fry.”

A Hmong American participant pointed out how the differences in food preparation between Hmong culture and American culture can lead to challenges:

> And a lot of Hmong family, we grow our vegetables. We butcher our own meat. So it comes from, you know, free range farms. It comes from our backyard. And when kids are going to college, we get this whole new world. You get this frozen food and you’re like, “okay, what is this?” ...Everything we do, everything we grow, and the meat we get is from a farm. ...That way, the food, we know, we know where the meat is from, we know what the animal is being fed, we know these farmers, we, we, we formed a relationship with these farmers. So we know that this cow was healthy, this cow came from. I picked that cow. I picked that pig. I picked those 50 chickens. You know. ...When you go to college, you get this frozen food and you get this vegetable, and we have no idea where it is coming from. And it tastes different to you because it’s not being home cooked.

A Hmong American participant shared: “Americans focus on more healthier living vegetables or fruits and three meals a day and get the fiber and the proteins that you need and all the nutrients that you need but the Hmong culture... It’s a lot of fried food, a lot of stir fry, a lot of rice. So the diet is completely different ...So they don’t see the effects on their health, what those foods are doing to them.”

Bangladeshi American participants said that there is a lack of halal meal options in college. One participant talked about her husband who went to Subway every day and asked for halal meals on campus when he attended Wayne State University. After complaining four times, no changes were made.
FINDINGS

EDUCATION: COLLEGE – NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Mental Health

A few focus group participants shared that mental health was an issue for Asian American college students. One Sikh American participant said: “Sikh mental health, they’re always reluctant. More and more people are coming and kids are brought to my office but for a long time, a lot of times they feared parents and the stigma.” Echoing this sentiment, a Hmong American participant said: “They’re not being able to talk about what goes on in the family, what goes on in them. And they hold this, they bottle up all their emotions, and it becomes a mental illness that they try to project that it’s something else. ...they’re in denial.”

However, one Hmong American participant pointed out that social networks provide an outlet for some college students: “We provide our own psychological help. [Laughs] By talking with each other, offering each other advice. That becomes something that kind of helps us mentally grow.”

“Sikh mental health, they’re always reluctant... for a long time, a lot of times they feared parents and the stigma.”

SIKH AMERICAN PARTICIPANT
### TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED COLLEGE NON-ACADEMIC PROBLEMS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Health and Nutrition</th>
<th>Sports or Athletics</th>
<th>Networking for Jobs and Internships</th>
<th>Counseling and Mental Health Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>29.5&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>28.2&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>13.9</td>
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<td>23.7&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td><strong>Highest Degree</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>High school or GED</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>26.2</td>
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<td>Associate or Bachelor’s</td>
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<td>18.0</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
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<td>13.5</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional school or Doctorate</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>21.4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macomb</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
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<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>23.1</td>
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<td>Indian</td>
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<td>19.6</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>9.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Identity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
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<td>19.6</td>
<td>37.6&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>26.7&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>40.0&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Statistically significantly different from Male (p < .05)
<sup>b</sup> Statistically significantly different from 26 - 35 (p < .05)
<sup>c</sup> Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
<sup>d</sup> Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
<sup>e</sup> Statistically significantly different from Southeast Asian (p < .05)
FINDINGS

IMMIGRATION

After describing their current immigration status, respondents were asked if they had ever experienced problems with the immigration and citizenship process, as well as what would help reduce problems with that process. Respondents also answered a question about their experiences when traveling abroad.

Immigration Status

Respondents were asked one question about their current immigration status. The three response options to the question were American citizen, green card holder, and visa holder. Table 5 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. There were no statistically significant differences between genders with regards to the respondents’ immigration status. Over 80% of both females and males were American citizens (80.8% of females and 82.0% of males).

By Age. There were not enough cases to statistically analyze the respondent’s current immigration status by age categories. More than three-fourths of respondents in all age categories were American citizens, with the exception of those 26 – 35 years old. Just over half of respondents between 26 and 35 were American citizens (53.4%), a quarter was green card holders (25.0%), and roughly a quarter was visa holders (21.6%).

By Education. Statistical analysis of immigration status by educational levels could not be performed since there were not enough cases in all categories. For all categories of the highest degree earned, over three quarters of respondents were American citizens.

By County. There were statistically significant differences among counties \(X^2(4)=18.19, p < .001\). The proportion of respondents who were American citizens was significantly higher for residents of Macomb County compared to Oakland County (90.2% compared to 78.1%, respectively). The percentage of residents in Wayne County who were visa holders (1.0%) was significantly lower than that of Oakland County (6.4%).

By Ethnicity. Looking at ethnicity, there were no statistically significant differences. Similar to what was found when looking at other demographic characteristics, over 75% of all three ethnicities were American citizens.

By Regional Identity. The number of cases was too small to statistically analyze respondent’s immigration status by regional identity. There was a higher percentage of Southeast Asian respondents who were American citizens compared to South Asian respondents, and there was a lower percentage of Southeast Asians who were visa holders compared to South Asians, with the percentage of East Asian respondents falling between the other two groups.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>American Citizen</th>
<th>Green Card Holder</th>
<th>Visa Holder</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>53.4</td>
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<td>36 – 45</td>
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<td>80.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Macomb</td>
<td>90.2*</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
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<td>Oakland</td>
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<td>Wayne</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>1.0*</td>
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<td>14.4</td>
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<td>Indian</td>
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<td>12.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<td>Korean</td>
<td>76.4</td>
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<td><strong>Regional Identity</strong></td>
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<td>South Asian</td>
<td>78.0</td>
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<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>12.3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Statistically significantly different from Oakland (p < .05)
FINDINGS

IMMIGRATION

Barriers to Immigration and Citizenship Processes

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Respondents were asked whether they experienced problems with the following areas of the immigration and citizenship process: work visas, spouse visas, the green card process, language barriers, asylum or refugee services, and citizenship tests. See Table 6 for the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. When looking across all problems with the immigration and citizenship process, for both females and males, only the problems with the green card process and with language barriers were experienced by more than 15% of respondents (green card process: 15.3% of females and 20.9% of males; language barrier: 22.8% of females and 15.2% of males). There were too few cases to test for statistical differences when analyzing problems with asylum or refugee services, and there were no statistically significant differences between females and males for the rest of the problems with the immigration and citizenship process.

By Age. There were too few cases for every age category to test for statistical differences when analyzing the problems with the immigration and citizenship process, with the exception of the green card process, but there were no statistically significant differences among the age categories for problems with the green card process.

By Education. Respondents with a high school diploma or GED had the highest percentage of those who experienced problems with language barriers during the immigration and citizenship process compared to the respondents with the other educational levels (40.7% of those with a high school diploma or GED compared to 14.4% of those with an associate or bachelor’s degree, 12.9% of those with a master’s degree, and 16.0% of those with a professional school degree or doctorate) \( X^2(3)=20.42, p < .001 \). For the rest of the problems with the immigration and citizenship process, there were too few cases to test for statistical differences among education categories.

By County. Statistically significantly more residents in Oakland County had experienced problems with the green card process (24.2%) than residents in Macomb County (8.6%) \( X^2(2)=6.97, p < .05 \). There were fewer residents in Oakland County than Wayne County that experienced language barriers during the immigration and citizenship process (10.4% and 28.6%, respectively), and this was a statistically significant difference \( X^2(2)=13.14, p < .01 \). There were no statistically significant differences for problems with work visas. The remaining three problems could not be tested for statistical differences because there were too few cases.

By Ethnicity. All but one of the problems with the immigration and citizenship process could not be tested for statistical differences due to too few cases. The one problem with enough cases was problems with the green card process where just over a quarter of Chinese respondents (25.8%) had experienced this problem, which was similar to the percentage of Indian respondents (22.3%) and more than double the percentage of Korean respondents (10.3%), but it was not statistically significant.

By Regional Identity. The percentage of Southeast Asian respondents who experienced language barriers (37.0%) was more than twice the percentage of East Asian respondents who experienced that problem (16.2%). This difference was statistically significant \( X^2(2)=6.11, p < .05 \). There were too few cases to test the rest of the problems for statistical differences.
GETTING A VISA AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Participants shared stories about long wait times to get a visa to come to the United States.

A Filipino American participant spoke about how the immigration quota to the U.S. from the Philippines is a barrier. “We are given a quota. You have to wait. Now they will tell you if you verify from the immigration office, they will say, ‘Oh, we’re not issuing ones at this date and we’re two years back or three years back.’ And there are so many from our country that are applying for nurses or doctors or whatever, you know, in other Asian countries so it’s faster for them."

A Bangladeshi American participant shared that the processing interview took much longer for her compared to others she observed. “Even [though] I had more strong support and I have everything, but they just suspect[ed] me.”

Many Filipino American participants felt that the wait time was a big problem for families.

One participant shared: “A lot of the professionals, from a lot of countries, come here and most of those people have families, children, and husbands. And I think the reform should be that it should be a lot easier for the families to come here. Right now, it’s a process that takes, it takes years for them.” Another participant said: “It really really breaks most families, because of the length of time that it takes for them to be together. I think there should be a reform to that. Because those professionals come here, and serve this country."

Many of the Bangladeshi American participants came to the United States through the diversity lottery, in which less developed countries have a certain number of individual allotments for immigration to the United States without any connection to school, family or work.

“It really really breaks most families, because of the length of time that it takes for them to be together. I think there should be a reform to that. Because those professionals come here, and serve this country.”

FILIPINO AMERICAN PARTICIPANT
FINDINGS

IMMIGRATION

Barriers to Immigration and Citizenship Processes

OBTAINING A GREEN CARD

Problems getting a green card were prevalent among the focus group participants, especially for South Asian American participants. Several Indian American participants discussed the long wait times in the green card process. For example, one noted:

Too many people are in the pipeline, to get to the green card. I’ve been in this country for a total of 14 years, almost 15, and I still don’t have a green card. I came through the legal channel... I got an education, I came through the proper channels, 14 years, and I don’t have a green card. Another year or two years before I get one yet. So why? Because there are too many people in the process and the guidelines or whatever you need to get a green card needs to be revisited.

Similarly, a Sikh American participant stated: “We have been in the system, trying to get our green card for a good eight years, ten years. Today, we asked our attorneys and he has no answer; he has no idea how many more years it is going to take us. So it’s just wait and wait and wait and wait and wait. And wait.”

“A few Indian American participants said that some friends had changed their name in order to come into the country. “They would be told by so-and-so that there are so many Patel’s that have already come in, maybe you should change your name.”

Some community members may spend large sums of money on services to assist with obtaining visas or green cards. A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant said: “I know someone who was trying to get a visa, and they had a friend who said they were going to help him— they double charged him. Another friend, he called an 800- [number] to get his green card, they charged him double. Of course, they didn’t know that.”

“SIKH AMERICAN PARTICIPANT"
BECOMING A CITIZEN

Asian Americans also face obstacles when trying to become a citizen. For example, a Sikh American participant said: “I have a colleague who’s applying now [for citizenship] and he’s saying, if the system doesn’t change, he won’t get it before retirement. It’s going to take that long, for them to get it.”

A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant said that things are getting worse in recent years: “The waiting period is very high. I come here in 1976, but my sister, she apply me to come here, to become immigrant, it took me a half year to be approved. Now it is worse. It is very difficult.” Several Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participants identified the citizenship test as a barrier.

A Hmong American participant spoke about the lack of awareness about the citizenship process and the perception that the test will be difficult. “I can tell, like my parents, all I had to do was get the test booklet and just study it, study the answers. And they can memorize that, but a lot of them aren’t sure how to approach the whole situation. And so they’re not sure what’s going on and they’re probably like, “Oh, that’s going to be very hard.”

Bangladeshi American participants felt that the citizenship test was not that difficult, but for those who have language barriers, it was more challenging.

Several Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participants spoke about the citizenship test as a barrier for community members.
**FINDINGS**

**IMMIGRATION**

**Barriers to Immigration and Citizenship Processes**

**TABLE 6:** PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PROCESS PROBLEMS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Work Visas</th>
<th>Spouse Cisas</th>
<th>Green Card Process</th>
<th>Language Barrier</th>
<th>Asylum or Refugee Services</th>
<th>Citizenship Test</th>
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<td>16.7</td>
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<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Statistically significantly different from High school or GED (p < .05)

* Statistically significantly different from Oakland (p < .05)

* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
Problems Traveling Abroad and Crossing the Border

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Respondents were asked if they ever experienced any of the following problems while traveling abroad: security checks during air travel; border crossing by car; and racial profiling. Table 7 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. When looking at these issues by gender, females and males had similar experiences with regards to crossing the border in a car (41.0% of females and 40.3% of males) and racial profiling (32.3% of females and 30.9% of males). More males reported problems with security checks during air travel than females (50.0% for males and 44.8% for females), but this difference was not statistically significant.

By Age. Although not statistically significant, there were differences among the age groups for the proportion of respondents who experienced problem with traveling abroad. Those older than 65 tended to report the least amount of experience with these problems; in particular, the smallest percentage of respondents who experienced problems with border crossing by car (28.0%) and with racial profiling (20.9%) were older than 65. The age group who generally had a high percentage of respondents who experienced these problems compared to the other age group was those 26 – 35 years old; the 26 – 35 age group also had the most respondent experience problems with security checks during air travel (59.5%) and with racial profiling (48.3%).

By Education. There were no significant differences regarding these problems when looking at the respondents’ level of education. The percentage of respondents who experienced problems when traveling abroad by education was fairly similarly (i.e., less than ten percentage points apart), with the exception of the high school or GED group. When asked if they had experienced problems with security checks, 59.7% of respondents with a high school diploma or GED experienced this problem compared to the next highest percentage of 47.9% of those with a master’s degree.

By County. The proportion of respondents who experienced problems while traveling abroad did not statistically significantly differ by the respondent’s county of residence. Looking across the three problems, residents of Oakland County and of Wayne County more similarly experienced problems with security checks and with border crossing by car compared to those from Macomb County (50.9% and 51.2%, respectively, compared to 43.8% for security checks, and 44.5% and 43.6%, respectively, compared to 33.3% for border crossing) while Macomb and Wayne were more similar compared to Oakland for racial profiling (26.5% and 29.5%, respectively, compared to 36.5%).
FINDINGS

IMMIGRATION

Problems Traveling Abroad and Crossing the Border

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

By Ethnicity. A smaller percentage of Korean respondents reported experiencing problems with traveling abroad than Chinese and Indian respondents. More Chinese and Indian respondents reported that they had experienced problems with security checks (55.1% and 50.8%, respectively) compared to Korean respondents (17.7%), which was statistically significantly different \(X^2(2)=28.01, p < .001\). There was also a statistically significant difference for the problem of racial profiling (30.0% for Chinese and 38.3% for Indian respondents compared to 9.1% for Korean respondents) \(X^2(2)=21.22, p < .001\). While the highest percentage of Korean respondents experienced problems when crossing the border by car (26.3%) compared to their experiences with the other two problems, they still reported significantly lower levels from Chinese respondents (48.7%) \(X^2(2)=7.58, p < .05\).

By Regional Identity. When looking at regional identity, East Asian respondents reported the lowest proportion of respondents who experienced the three problems. These differences were statistically significant compared to those by South and Southeast Asian respondents regarding security checks (59.6% and 60.0%, respectively, compared to 31.5% of East Asian respondents) \(X^2(2)=29.66, p < .001\) and racial profiling (41.8% and 51.6%, respectively, compared to 15.7%) \(X^2(2)=27.17, p < .001\). There was a significant association between border crossing by car and regional identity, but there were no significant differences between individual identities \(X^2(2)=7.06, p < .05\).

RACIAL PROFILING/INSENSITIVITY

Racial profiling or insensitivity at the airport and at border crossings was an issue for many focus group participants, but a few others said that they had not experienced any profiling or disrespect.

Two Sikh American participants shared a story of a Sikh businessman of whom they know:

There is a Sikh businessman that has been in Detroit since, at least, the early 90s. He is a caterer. So he goes to Canada for something, because he had business there, ...and so he’s coming back into the US. And there is an Indian at the border patrol. So he makes some sort of backhanded comment to him like, ‘Are you a Muslim?’ and he didn’t answer how he should have. He didn’t answer a straight up, ‘no’ or ‘yes’ or whatever, he just made a joke and laughed. He said, ‘You know– you’re my countryman. You know.’ He made a comment he shouldn’t have made, he wasn’t serious, and he laughed it off. But ...he got pulled over. He hasn’t been able to re-enter the U.S. since June of 2011. His family is here.

Several Bangladeshi American participants agreed that the security checkpoint at airports was “pretty hard.”

A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant felt uncomfortable when she had to get out of her car at the Detroit–Windsor border crossing: “When I walk in, it make me really not comfortable. All colored people. Indian, and also people from Middle East, and the Chinese. No white. No any white people.”
A Sikh American participant expressed his/her fear that one day someone might impersonate a Sikh person and cause a problem. “I just fear the day that some crazy person does something [at the airport], you know, and they impersonate a Sikh and then it’s all over for us.” Another Sikh American participant noted that having a turban has been cause for a traffic stop.

A few participants said that they had not experienced any profiling. A Sikh American participant said: “The Sikh organizations have trained TSA, they’ve trained Homeland Security, they are very polite and they fully understand and are culturally sensitive to the Sikhs… I don’t think I’ve ever been disrespected, at the checkpoint, in this way.” A Korean American participant said: “I remember the one guy standing next to me was Caucasian. He got a lot more questions than I did. I don’t see any difference in border crossing.”

LACK OF AWARENESS ABOUT BORDER CROSSING “DOs AND DON’TS”

Some Asian Americans may not know the proper conduct at border crossings. A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant said that s/he was returning to Port Huron from Canada and had pork chop and rice lunch leftovers in his/her car. When s/he was asked if she brought any meat over the border, s/he assumed that the officer was asking about raw meat only, not cooked meat. The officer gave the participant a handout about what one can and cannot bring over the border and which items must be declared. When the participant returned back to the U.S., s/he disseminated copies of the handout to his/her Chinese American friends. In a similar vein, a Bangladeshi American participant said new families were coming to the United States with dried food and being fined 200 dollars for doing so.

A Hmong American participant gave an example of another misunderstanding at the border. The participant’s father did not understand the definition of the word “citizen” and answered the citizenship question incorrectly at the border. The father did have his citizenship certificate with him and presented it to the officer, but believed that citizenship referred to national origin.
FINDINGS

IMMIGRATION

Problems Traveling Abroad and Crossing the Border

TABLE 7: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED PROBLEMS WHEN TRAVELING ABROAD BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Security Checks During Air Travel</th>
<th>Border Crossing by Car</th>
<th>Racial Profiling</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>30.9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
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<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>48.3</td>
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<sup>a</sup> Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
<sup>b</sup> Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
Reducing Immigration and Citizenship Problems

**QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS**

Respondents were asked whether any of five possible courses of action would help reduce problems with the immigration and citizenship process: more awareness in the media on immigration problems; more citizenship classes; translation services during the citizenship test; educating the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Customs Information System (CIS) on cultural sensitivity; and working with elected officials on reforming immigration laws. Table 8 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

**By Gender.** Looking at gender, over half of the respondents felt that each of the five actions would help reduce problems with the immigration and citizenship process—three actions by over 70% of the respondents. There were statistically significant differences between female and male respondents with two of these actions: translation services during citizenship testing (74.8% for females compared to 63.0% for males; p < .05) and educating TSA and CIS employees (83.2% for females compared to 72.9% for males; p < .05).

**By Age.** When looking at working with elected officials, respondents across age groups similarly felt this action would help reduce problems with the immigration and citizenship process. There was an overall statistically significant association between age and those who felt more awareness in the media would reduce problems, but there were no significant differences between the individual age groups [X^2(5)=11.18, p < .05]. When analyzing more citizenship classes, both the 36 - 45 year old group and the 56 - 65 group had lower percentages of respondents who felt it would help (56.3% and 57.4%, respectively) when compared to the 18 - 25 year old group (84.8%) [X^2(2)=15.36, p < .01]. Regarding translation services, there were statistically significantly lower percentages of respondents amongst the 36 - 45, 46 - 55, and 56 - 65 year old groups (61.2%, 66.2%, and 51.9%, respectively) when compared to the 18 - 25 group (93.2%) [X^2(2)=24.09, p < .001]. When asking about educating TSA and CIS employees on cultural sensitivity, both the 36 - 45 and above 65 groups had fewer respondents indicate it would help (72.2% and 69.2%, respectively) compared to the 18 - 25 group (94.0%), which were statistically significant differences [X^2(2)=17.52, p < .01].

**By Education.** There was a statistically significant association between education and whether respondents felt more citizenship classes would reduce problems, but the differences between individual education levels were not statistically significant [X^2(2)=8.48, p < .05].

**By County.** The percentage of residents in Oakland County who felt immigration and citizenship problems would be reduced was lower for all five possible actions compared to the percentages of those in Macomb and Wayne Counties. There were statistically significant differences for three of these actions (more awareness in the media, more citizenship classes, and translation services) when comparing respondents in Oakland County to those in Wayne County [X^2(2)=8.43, p < .05; X^2(2)=12.69, p < .01; X^2(2)=19.35, p < .001, respectively].
FINDINGS

IMMIGRATION

Reducing Immigration and Citizenship Problems

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

By Ethnicity. Looking at ethnicity, less than 50% of Korean respondents felt these actions would help reduce problems with immigration and citizenship, with the exception of more awareness in the media (59.7%). Over 70% of Chinese and Indian respondents felt four of the five actions (more awareness in the media, translation services, educating TSA and CIS employees, and working with elected officials) would be helpful in reducing problems with immigration and citizenship (only more citizenship classes fell below 70%: 69.2% of Chinese respondents and 65.2% of Indian respondents agreed). Responses from Korean respondents were statistically significantly lower from those from Chinese and Indian respondents [more awareness in the media: \(X^2(2)=18.33, p < .001\); more citizenship classes: \(X^2(2)=16.29, p < .001\); translation services: \(X^2(2)=29.33, p < .001\); educating TSA and CIS: \(X^2(2)=36.86, p < .001\); working with elected officials: \(X^2(2)=64.75, p < .001\)].

By Regional Identity. A smaller proportion of East Asian respondents compared to South Asian and Southeast Asian respondents felt the five possible actions would help. Southeast Asian respondents had the highest proportion of agreement that more awareness in the media would be helpful (95.2%); this is statistically significantly different from East Asian respondents (74.1%) \(X^2(2)=13.92, p < .01\). There was even greater difference when looking at more citizenship classes and translation services: in both cases, South and Southeast Asian respondents’ level of agreement (68.8% and 90.2%, respectively, for more citizenship classes, and 75.5% and 92.7%, respectively, for translation services) was statistically significantly higher from that of East Asian respondents (48.5% and 53.9%, respectively); Southeast Asian respondents were also significantly statistically different from South Asian respondents when looking at more citizenship classes and translation services during the citizenship process [more citizenship classes: \(X^2(2)=27.52, p < .001\); translation services: \(X^2(2)=26.32, p < .001\)]. The actions educating TSA and CIS and working with elected officials had high levels of agreement among South Asian (84.8% and 86.5%, respectively) and Southeast Asian (96.2% and 94.3%, respectively) respondents; compared to East Asian respondents (64.1% and 66.4% respectively), these differences are statistically significantly higher [educating TSA and CIS: \(X^2(2)=30.14, p < .001\); working with elected officials: \(X^2(2)=23.42, p < .001\).]
QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Korean American participants felt that language services during the immigration and citizenship process would be beneficial. A Hmong American participant shared this opinion: “I think [having translators] might actually help a lot because it provides some, it provides a moral support as well as help, when it comes to translating. So if there is someone there, even if he or she understands English, so long as there is another person there who knows more, it helps them build up more confidence as well as build moral support for them.”

A Sikh American participant pointed out that the rhetoric must be changed in the immigration debate: “If you talk about policy change, if you talk about awareness, I mean, the vision of so many people is that ‘they’re taking our jobs’ and really, what they’re doing is contributing so heavily to your economy. There are so many unfilled positions…”

“I think [having translators] might actually help a lot because it provides some, it provides a moral support as well as help, when it comes to translating. So if there is someone there, even if he or she understands English, so long as there is another person there who knows more, it helps them build up more confidence as well as build moral support for them.”

Hmong American Participant
FINDINGS

IMMIGRATION

Reducing Immigration and Citizenship Problems

**TABLE 8: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO FELT ACTION WILL REDUCE IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PROBLEMS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>More Awareness in Media on Immigration Problems</th>
<th>More Citizenship Classes</th>
<th>Translation Services During Citizenship Test</th>
<th>Educate TSA and CIS on Cultural Sensitivity</th>
<th>Work with Elected Officials on Reforming Immigration Laws</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>74.8(a)</td>
<td>83.2(a)</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>56.3(b)</td>
<td>61.2(b)</td>
<td>72.2(a)</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>66.2(b)</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>57.4(b)</td>
<td>51.9(b)</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>69.2(b)</td>
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<td><strong>Highest Degree</strong></td>
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<td>High school or GED</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor’s Master’s</td>
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<td>61.1</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional school or Doctorate</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>75.8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>County</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Macomb</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>75.6(c)</td>
<td>55.4(c)</td>
<td>58.2(c)</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>75.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>84.3</td>
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<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>87.3(d)</td>
<td>69.2(d)</td>
<td>82.4(d)</td>
<td>84.8(d)</td>
<td>95.8(d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>83.2(d)</td>
<td>65.2(d)</td>
<td>71.5(d)</td>
<td>83.7(d)</td>
<td>85.5(d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>68.8(e)</td>
<td>75.5(e)</td>
<td>84.8(e)</td>
<td>86.5(e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>48.5(f)</td>
<td>53.9(f)</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>95.2(e)</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>96.2(e)</td>
<td>94.3(e)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significantly different from Male (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from 18 – 25 (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Wayne (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Southeast Asian (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from South Asian (p < .05)
CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The civic participation and community services section of the survey started with a question asking respondents to describe the meaning of civic participation. After answering a question about whether they participate in neighborhood or community events or activities, those who stated they participate were asked to describe those events or activities whereas those who stated they do not participate were asked what would help them participate. There were then two questions related to participation in elections and the effect of having more elected Asian American leaders. The final question in the section asked respondents if there were problems in providing Asian Americans with community and social services.

Concepts of Civic Participation

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Respondents were asked what civic participation meant to them by selecting all response options that applied to their concept of the term from a list of the following four options: voting and campaigning in elections; helping organize community events; giving back to the community; and fundraising. Table 9 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. When looking at civic participation by gender, there are no statistically significant differences in the responses between male and female respondents. Male respondents reported slightly lower rates of participation across all four actions, showing the largest difference with female respondents when asked about giving back to the community (69.0% for males, 75.7% for female respondents).

By Age. There was one statistically significant difference between age groups when looking at what civic participation meant to respondents. A higher proportion of respondents between the ages of 26 and 35 selected the option of giving back to the community as part of their definition of civic participation compared to those older than 65 (81.9% compared to 60.7%) [X^2 (5)=11.80, p < .05].
FINDINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Concepts of Civic Participation

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

By Education. When analyzing responses based on level of education, a statistically significantly higher percentage of respondents with a master’s degree (71.5%) thought helping organize community events was considered civic participation than those with a high school diploma or GEDs and those with an associate or bachelor’s degree (57.1% and 59.1%, respectively) \[X^2(3)=9.53, p < .05\]. There also was a statistically significant association between the highest degree earned and giving back to the community, but there were no statistically significant differences between individual educational levels \[X^2(3)=9.70, p < .05\].

By County. Regarding respondents’ county of residence, a statistically significantly higher percentage of residents in Wayne County considered voting and campaigning in elections (78.0%) to be civic participation than residents in Macomb County (63.7%) and Oakland County (58.8%) \[X^2(2)=20.58, p < .001\]. Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference between the proportion of residents in Wayne County who selected fundraising (52.4%) and the proportion from Oakland County who selected it (35.8%) \[X^2(2)=13.20, p < .01\].

By Ethnicity and By Regional Identity. The only statistically significant difference among ethnicity categories occurred between Indian respondents (65.0%) and Korean respondents (47.3%) in defining civic participation as helping organize community events \[X^2(2)=9.07, p < .05\]. When looking at regional identity, there were no statistically significant differences between the groups.

FUNDRAISING

Participants commented about difficulty fundraising in the Asian American community. Several participants said that people want to see a direct immediate benefit to their contributions, and some causes have less visible short-term benefits. An Indian American participant said: “People want instant gratification, which [is] totally unrealistic. I don’t know. What are you going to do for me?” A Chinese American participant said: “In our native country, we don’t have much fundraising. ... You have to give good reason why and you need to promote this kind of concept. Let people see this is important. It is good for you, or your kids or your family or something.”

One Indian American participant said that community members are more likely to donate money to social activities rather than address community needs: “I think people will give their money to things that are for more positive, social, fun things, than real critical issues like counseling or marriage counseling or whatever.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Voting and Campaigning in Elections</th>
<th>Helping Organize Community Events</th>
<th>Giving Back to the Community</th>
<th>Fundraising</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>40.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>81.9^</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>42.2</td>
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<td><strong>Highest Degree</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school or GED</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>57.1^</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor’s</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>59.1^</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional school or Doctorate</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macomb</td>
<td>63.7^</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>58.8^</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>35.8^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td>Chinese</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
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<td>65.0^</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Korean</td>
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<td>47.3</td>
<td>70.3</td>
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<td><strong>Regional Identity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significantly different from Above 65 (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Master’s (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Wayne (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
FINISHINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Personal Participation

Respondents were asked if they participated in neighborhood or community events or activities. Table 10 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. Slightly more that 70% of female respondents said that they participated in such activities or events (72.9%), while just less than 70% of male respondents reported that they participated (67.8%).

By Age. When looking at levels of participation based on age, there was a pattern of increased participation with each subsequent age group. The youngest group, 18 – 25 year olds, reported the lowest level of participation at 58.7% while the oldest group, those older than 65, had the highest level of participation at 77.3%, though this was not statistically significantly different. The greatest increase between contiguous age groups occurred between the 18 – 25 year old group (58.7%) and the 26 – 35 year old group (68.2%), but the difference was not statistically significant.

By Education. Respondents whose highest degree was a high school diploma or GED reported the lowest proportion of participation (58.4%) when compared to the other three education categories. The difference between respondents with a high school diploma or GED and those with an associate or bachelor’s degree (72.6%) or master’s degree (78.0%) was statistically significant \( X^2(3) = 15.49, p < .01 \), while the difference between the high school diploma or GED group and the professional school degree or doctorate group was fairly great (71.1%), it was not statistically significant.

By County. When looking at respondents’ county of residence, those in Macomb County reported the lowest level of participation in community events and activities (61.4%). This was statistically significantly lower when compared to Wayne residents (75.7%) \( X^2(2) = 8.32, p < .05 \), but it was not statistically significantly lower when compared to Oakland residents (72.6%).

By Ethnicity. Indian respondents reported the highest level of participation in such events or activities (76.4%); this was statistically significantly higher than Korean respondents who reported the lowest level of participation (61.2%) \( X^2(2) = 8.33, p < .05 \).

By Regional Identity. When looking at regional identity, respondents were fairly consistent in their levels of participation, ranging from 66.3% (East Asian respondents) to 74.6% (South Asian respondents).
**Table 10:** Percentage of Respondents who Participated in Community Events or Activities by Respondent Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Participate in Neighborhood or Community Events or Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>67.8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>58.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>68.2</td>
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<td>36 – 45</td>
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<td>Macomb</td>
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<td>Wayne</td>
<td>75.7</td>
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<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td>Indian</td>
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<td>69.2</td>
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* Statistically significantly different from High school or GED (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Wayne (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
FINDINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Types of Participation

Those respondents who said that they had participated in any neighborhood or community activities or events (n=499; 71.1%) were then asked one question about whether they participated in particular types of events or activities: volunteering at school, participating in city sports and recreation events, and neighborhood or subdivision activities (see Table 11); professional or political groups, ethnic community or cultural associations, and religious or charity organizations (see Table 12).

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL, RECREATIONAL, OR NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES

By Gender. Over four-fifths of female respondents reported that they participated in volunteering at school (84.0%); this was statistically significantly higher when compared to the proportion of male respondents who volunteered at school (70.5%; p < .05). A higher percentage of female respondents also reported that they participated in sports and recreation events (54.1%) when compared to male respondents (49.5%). More male respondents said that they were part of neighborhood or subdivision activities (75.2%) than female respondents (73.8%).

By Age. When looking at responses based on the different age groups, fewer respondents in the 56 - 65 group and the above 65 group reported that they participated by volunteering at school (64.0% and 50.0%, respectively) than younger age groups ($\chi^2(5)=28.69$, p < .001). Those 56 years old and older were statistically significantly different from those 18 - 25 years old (94.9% of them volunteered) and those 36 - 45 years old (85.4% of them volunteered), and those older than 65 were statistically significantly different from those 46 - 55 years old group (82.1% of them volunteered). There were also a smaller percentage of respondents in the two oldest age groups that were involved in sports and recreation events (41.7% and 39.3%, respectively) compared to the younger age groups; the 18 - 25 year old group reported the highest level of participation in sports and recreation events (70.4%) with a steady decline in levels of participation for each subsequent age group.
By Education. Respondents whose highest level of education was a high school diploma or GED reported the highest percentage of participation by volunteering at school (87.0%) and being involved in sports and recreation events (64.9%), but these were not statistically significantly different from responses of the other educational groups. Respondents who received a professional school degree or doctorate reported the highest percentage of participation in neighborhood or subdivision activities, but, again, the differences were not statistically significant when compared to the other groups.

By County. Based on respondents’ county of residence, there were no statistically significant differences in levels of participation across counties.

By Ethnicity. Korean respondents reported the fewest respondents who participated across all three activity types: 47.9% for volunteer in school, 29.8% for city sports and recreation events, and 36.7% for neighborhood or subdivision activities. These differences were statistically significantly lower when compared to Chinese respondents, with 91.4% of Chinese respondents had volunteered at school, 63.3% been involved with sports and recreation events, and 83.7% had participated in neighborhood/subdivision activities; there were also statistically significant differences between Korean and Indian respondents when looking at volunteering at school (77.7% of Indians) and involvement in neighborhood activities (83.7% of Indians) [school: X^2(2)=22.75, p < .001; sports: X^2(2)=9.10, p < .05; neighborhood: X^2(2)=42.42, p < .001].

By Regional Identity. When looking at regional identity, Southeast Asian respondents reported the highest level of participation by volunteering at school (95.7%); this was statistically significantly higher than South Asian respondents (80.0%) and East Asian respondents (68.4%) [X^2(2)=14.48, p < .01]. Southeast Asian respondents also reported the highest percentage of participants in sports and recreation events (73.1%), but this difference was not statistically significant. South Asian respondents had the highest level of participation in neighborhood activities (83.7%), which was statistically significantly different from East Asian respondents (62.0%) [X^2(2)=15.78, p < .001].
## FINDINGS

### CIVIC PARTICIPATION

#### Types of Participation

**TABLE 11:** PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN SCHOOL, RECREATIONAL, OR NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Volunteer at school</th>
<th>City Sports and Recreation Events</th>
<th>Neighborhood or Subdivision Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>84.0*</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>94.9h,c</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>85.4h,c</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>82.1t</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>82.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Degree</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school or GED</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>64.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor’s</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional school or Doctorate</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macomb</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>71.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>82.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>91.4d</td>
<td>63.3d</td>
<td>83.7d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>77.7d</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>83.7d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>80.0*</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>83.7d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>68.4*</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significantly different from Male (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from 56 - 65 (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Above 65 (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Southeast Asian (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL, ETHNIC, OR RELIGIOUS GROUPS

By Gender. Both female and male respondents had fewer participants in professional or political groups (53.5% and 66.1%, respectively) when compared to belonging to ethnic or cultural associations or religious or charity organizations, but there were no statistically significant differences based on respondents’ gender.

By Age. Similar to gender, there were no statistically significant differences when looking at participation in these three types of groups by age. The range of difference was approximately 11% for participation in professional or political groups (from 55.9% for the above 65 age group to 66.7% for the 26 – 35 age group) and for ethnic or cultural associations (78.6% for the above 65 group to 89.5% for the 26 – 35 group); the range was approximately 14% for participation in religious or charity organizations (from 83.3% for the 18 – 25 year old group to 97.5% for the 26 – 35 group).

By Education. When looking at levels of education, only participation in professional or political groups showed statistically significant differences between groups: 72.9% of respondents with a professional or doctorate degree were involved with such organizations, compared to only 42.4% of respondents who had their high school diploma or GED [X^2(3)=9.27, p < .05].

By County. Based on respondents’ county of residence, there were no statistically significant differences in levels of participation in such groups or organizations.

By Ethnicity. Statistically significantly more Chinese and Indian respondents reported being involved with professional or political groups (73.5% and 65.5%, respectively) when compared to Korean respondents (23.9%) [X^2(2)=27.92, p < .001]. There were higher percentages of Chinese and Indian respondents involved with ethnic or cultural associations (85.4% of Chinese and 94.8% of Indian) than Korean respondents (40.8%) [X^2(2)=69.61, p < .001].

By Regional Identity. A higher percentage of South Asian respondents were involved with these three types of organizations compared to East Asian respondents, and more Southeast Asian respondents were involved with ethnic or cultural associations (94.8%) than East Asian respondents (64.3%). All of these differences in participation in groups were statistically significant [professional or political: X^2(2)=7.26, p < .05; ethnic or cultural: X^2(2)=53.75, p < .001; religious or charity: X^2(2)=8.81, p < .05].
CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Types of Participation

**TABLE 12:** PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PROFESSIONAL, ETHNIC, OR RELIGIOUS GROUPS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Professional or Political Groups</th>
<th>Ethnic Community or Cultural Associations</th>
<th>Religious or Charity Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>84.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>86.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Degree</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school or GED</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor’s</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional school or Doctorate</td>
<td>72.9*</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macomb</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>73.5*</td>
<td>85.4*</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>65.5*</td>
<td>94.8*</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>66.4c</td>
<td>94.7c</td>
<td>90.7c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>80.4c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>94.8c</td>
<td>91.4c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significantly different from High school or GED (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
Increasing Participation

Respondents who said that they did not participate in neighborhood events or activities (n=203; 28.9%) were asked if certain activities would help them to participate more often. These were awareness of community civic events, house parties on civic issues or topics, opportunities for volunteering in civic events, and social opportunities. Table 13 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. Female and male respondents similarly responded that just over half of them felt house parties on civic issues or topics would help them participate (52.6% of females and 52.9% of males). Higher percentages were found for the other three activities. There were no statistically significant differences between females and males for any of the activities suggested to increase participation.

By Age. For awareness of community civic events and social opportunities, over 90% of respondents ages 18 to 35 felt these activities would help participation. Respondents in the 56 – 65 year old age group, less than 40% felt that house parties on civic issues or topics, opportunities for volunteering in civic events, and social opportunities would help. There were too few cases to test for statistical differences among age categories when analyzing these four activities.

By Education. For three of the four activities, those with an associate or bachelor’s degree had the lowest percentage of respondents who felt the activity would help them participate (43.8% for house parties, 51.4% for opportunities to volunteer, and 60.5% for social opportunities). None of the differences between educational levels were statistically significant.

By County. There was a statistically significant association between awareness of community civic events and county of residence, but there were no significant difference between individual counties [X²(2)=6.36, p < .05].

By Ethnicity. Fewer Korean respondents (33.3%) reported that opportunities for volunteering would help than both Chinese (78.6%) and Indian (70.8%) respondents [X²(2)=11.29, p < .01]. Just over a quarter of Korean respondents (26.7%) felt social opportunities would help them participate, which was statistically significant less than the percentage of Chinese (85.7%) and Indian respondents (69.2%) [X²(2)=19.93, p < .001].

By Regional Identity. Southeast Asians had the highest percentage of respondents who felt the four activities would help them participate. For all activities, the percentage of Southeast Asian respondents was statistically significantly higher than that of East Asians: for awareness of events, 95.5% compared to 67.9%, respectively [X²(2)=6.48, p < .05]; for house parties, 92.3% compared to 40.0%, respectively [X²(2)=11.26, p < .01]; for volunteering opportunities, 87.5% compared to 48.9%, respectively [X²(2)=9.79, p < .01]; and for social opportunities, 94.1% compared to 53.7%, respectively [X²(2)=10.67, p < .01].
# FINDINGS

## CIVIC PARTICIPATION

### Increasing Participation

**TABLE 13: PERCENTAGE OF NON-PARTICIPANTS WHO FELT ACTIVITIES WOULD HELP THEM PARTICIPATE BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Awareness of Community Civic Events</th>
<th>House Parties on Civic Issues or Topics</th>
<th>Opportunities for Volunteering in Civic Events</th>
<th>Social Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
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<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>60.0</td>
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<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Degree</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school or GED</td>
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<td>60.0</td>
<td>70.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor’s</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Professional school</td>
<td>87.0</td>
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<td>70.6</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or Doctorate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macomb</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>60.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Chinese</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>78.6*</td>
<td>85.7*</td>
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<td>70.4</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>70.8*</td>
<td>69.2*</td>
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<td>Regional Identity</td>
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<td>South Asian</td>
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<td>48.9</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>95.5*</td>
<td>92.3*</td>
<td>87.5*</td>
<td>94.1*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
Voting and Elections

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Respondents were asked whether they had ever voted in local or general elections. (See Table 14 for the results by respondent characteristics)

By Ethnicity. Korean respondents reported the lowest proportion of participants in elections (64.8%), but it was not statistically significantly different when compared to Chinese respondents (72.4%) and Indian respondents (78.3%).

By Regional Identity. Looking at regional identity, there were the fewest Southeast Asian respondents proportionally who had voted in elections (62.5%), but that was not statistically significantly different from South Asian respondents (74.6%) or East Asian respondents (71.3%).

By Gender. Approximately 70% of both female respondents (69.4%) and male respondents (72.8%) reported that they had, at some time, voted in at least one election.

By Age. Looking at the respondents based on their age group, there were statistically significant differences between the two youngest groups and the four oldest groups \(X^2(5)=40.11, p < .001\). All four of the older groups (36 - 45, 46 - 55, 56 - 65, and above 65 years old) had significantly higher rates of election participation than the 26 - 35 year old group; the oldest two groups also reported higher rates of participation that were statistically significant when compared to the 18 - 25 year old group.

By Education. Respondents whose highest degree was a high school diploma or GED reported the lowest percentage of participation in elections (52.8%). This was statistically significantly lower from the other three educational levels that reported percentages of participation that were over 75%, with respondents who attained their master’s degree reporting the highest percentage (79.9%) \(X^2(3)=29.76, p < .001\).

By County. Regardless of the respondents’ county of residence, there was an overall high rate of participation in elections across all three counties, ranging from 70.6% (Wayne) to 75.2% (Macomb).
FINDEINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

VOTING

Focus group participants talked about some of the barriers to voting for eligible voters who either have not registered to vote or do not turn out to vote.

Participants shared mixed feelings about whether translated election materials and ballots would help Asian American voters. One Indian American participant expressed that s/he did not feel that language barriers were the primary problem. Another Indian American participant said: “I think that would help, but I don’t know by how much because I think some people, especially people who are older, don’t vote because …they think ‘If I vote, it won’t really make a difference’ or ‘what is the point of me voting?’ I think that may be the problem.”

Chinese American and Taiwanese American/ Hong Kong focus group participants felt that some community members are unfamiliar with the idea and process of voting because it did not exist in Mainland China. One participant said: “Guys from Mainland China, they don’t have much interest in voting. Because in China, everything is run by the government.”

A Hmong American participant expressed that getting voters out to vote was the biggest barrier: “The voting registration part was easy. Actually getting them out there to go vote, that’s the hard part.”

“I think some people, especially people who are older, don’t vote because... they think ‘If I vote, it won’t really make a difference’ or ‘What is the point of me voting?’ I think that may be the problem.”

INDIAN AMERICAN PARTICIPANT
### TABLE 14: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO VOTED IN ELECTIONS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Ever Voted in Local or General Elections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>73.7&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>76.2&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>83.2&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>87.9&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td><strong>Highest Degree</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school or GED</td>
<td>52.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor’s</td>
<td>75.7&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Oakland</td>
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<td>Chinese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>78.3</td>
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<td><strong>Regional Identity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
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<td>East Asian</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Statistically significantly different from 26 – 35 (p < .05)

<sup>b</sup> Statistically significantly different from 18 – 25 (p < .05)

<sup>c</sup> Statistically significantly different from High school or GED (p < .05)
FINDINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Voting and Elections

EFFECT OF HAVING ELECTED ASIAN AMERICAN LEADERS

There was one question asking whether respondents felt having more elected leaders from the Asian American community in Michigan would have a positive effect, negative effect, or no effect. See Table 15 for the results by respondent characteristics.

Across all demographic categories, the majority of respondents (at least 60%) reported that more elected leaders from the Asian American community would have a positive effect and few (less than 6%) thought it would have a negative effect. For every characteristic, except gender, there were too few cases to test for statistical differences. With gender, there were no statistically significant differences between females and males.

"They don’t know the candidates. They don’t know what they stand for. They don’t know who is Republican or what is a Democrat.”

TAIWANESE AMERICAN/HONG KONG FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

FAMILIARITY OF CANDIDATES

Many participants said that voters were unfamiliar with candidates and would like candidates for office to spend more time interacting with the Asian American community. The Bangladeshi American focus group participants live in Hamtramck, a small city with several Bangladeshi American city council members. The participant shared that having elected leaders from the Bangladeshi American community helped.

A Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant said: “They don’t know the candidates. They don’t know what they stand for. They don’t know who is Republican or what is a Democrat.” An Indian American participant felt that candidates did not talk about the immigration issues s/he is primarily interested in.

The qualitative findings reinforced the quantitative finding that most Asian Americans in Metro Detroit think having more Asian American elected leaders would have a positive effect. Several participants said they would like to see more Asian American candidates for public office, and that parents should encourage their children to seek public service opportunities. “My parents never encouraged me to seek any sort of public office. I don’t think … that Indian parents necessarily [emphasize] the importance of [or] probably discourage their children from doing something like that.”

One participant said that candidates for offices should fully embrace their racial or ethnic identity, commenting about a South Asian American elected official: “There is nothing South Asian about him apart from the way he looks to me. ...There has to be a level of connection. ...If they’re trying to represent the South Asian community…they need to not be afraid of being South Asian.”
### TABLE 15: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO THOUGHT MORE ASIAN AMERICAN LEADERS WOULD HAVE AN EFFECT BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Positive Effect</th>
<th>Negative Effect</th>
<th>No Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>24.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>60.2</td>
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<td>Southeast Asian</td>
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FINDINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Challenges to Providing Community Services

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Respondents were asked if they felt that certain problems existed with adequate services being provided within the Asian American community. The five problem areas were no childcare services available, no intergenerational counseling, no leadership training or opportunities for youth, no health care for emigrated seniors, and no adult care services for elderly or retired persons. Table 16 displays the results by respondent characteristics.

By Gender. Across all problem areas, more female respondents consistently felt that services within the Asian American community were not adequate when compared to male respondents, but these differences were not statistically significant.

By Age. While there were some differences among the age categories when it came to no leadership training for youth and no adult care services, these differences were not significant. There was a statistically significant association between age and no health care for emigrated seniors, but there were no statistically significant differences between individual age categories \( \chi^2(5)=11.17, p < .05 \). For childcare services, however, a higher percentage of respondents from the two youngest age groups (18–25 and 26–35) felt this was a problem compared to the above 65 age group, and the difference was statistically significant \( \chi^2(5)=15.45, p < .01 \). The lack of intergenerational counseling also showed statistically significant differences between three of the age groups (69.6% for the 26–35 group, 64.6% for the 46–55 group, and 56.5% for the 56–65 group) and the above 65 group (22.2%) \( \chi^2(5)=23.90, p < .001 \).

By Education. Respondents with a professional school degree or a doctorate were statistically significantly different from those with a high school diploma or GED with regards to whether they felt no childcare services were available to members of the Asian American community (15.0% of those with a professional school degree/doctorate felt it was, compared to 47.3% of those with a high school diploma/GED) \( \chi^2(3)=11.94, p < .01 \). There also was a statistically significant association between the respondent’s education and whether they felt no intergenerational counseling was a problem, but there were no statistically significant individual differences between the educational levels \( \chi^2(5)=7.86, p < .05 \).

By County. When looking at these problems based on respondents’ county of residence, there were no significant differences.

By Ethnicity. Fewer Korean respondents felt that there were problems with these services within the Asian American community compared to Chinese and Indian respondents. While these differences were not statistically significant when asked about childcare services, they were significant when looking at the other four services categories. A smaller proportion of Korean respondents felt there was a lack of intergenerational counseling (29.9%) than Indian respondents (49.5%) \( \chi^2(2)=7.84, p < .05 \). In regards to whether or not respondents felt there was a lack of leadership training or opportunities, statistically significantly more Chinese and Indian respondents felt this was a problem (71.8% and 48.7%, respectively) when compared to Korean respondents (29.0%); there was also a statistically significant difference between Chinese respondents compared to Indian
Mental health remains a taboo subject for many Asian Americans in Metro Detroit. For example, an Indian American participant said: “Indian people, on a whole, don’t want to talk about depression or bipolar disorder. I see a lot of people in college who need those services but won’t go and get them. Because their parents don’t believe that’s a problem.”

Another Indian American participant shared a story of a friend’s son who committed suicide, saying that the family may have denied that their son needed help. A Hmong American participant shared she has a cousin who has a mental health issue but her family does not discuss it. “They keep it a secret.”

A Hmong American participant felt that mental health should be a major priority concern for the community. But, that’s very very hard to even try. But I think, if we could even step a foot in there, it would help out so much. Because, honestly, the only way you can do anything is by understanding yourself. And that’s the problem with the Hmong community. They can’t understand themselves because they’re afraid to understand themselves. Individuals are afraid to step out from their little ball. Their 9 inch bubble.

By Regional Identity. The lowest proportion of respondents that reported there was a lack of any of these services within the Asian American community was East Asians. For four of the five service areas, East Asian respondents were statistically significant different from South and Southeast Asian respondents: no childcare \(X^2(2)=16.71, p < .001\), no intergenerational counseling \(X^2(2)=8.93, p < .05\), no health care for emigrated seniors \(X^2(2)=39.00, p < .001\), and no adult care services \(X^2(2)=23.78, p < .001\). Southeast Asian respondents reported the highest level of percentage that felt no leadership training/opportunities for youth was a problem (82.0%), when compared to South Asian respondents (53.8%) and East Asian respondents (45.8%), a difference that was statistically significant \(X^2(2)=18.89, p < .001\).

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mental health remains a taboo subject for many Asian Americans in Metro Detroit. For example, an Indian American participant said: “Indian people, on a whole, don’t want to talk about depression or bipolar disorder. I see a lot of people in college who need those services but won’t go and get them. Because their parents don’t believe that is a problem.”

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“Indian people, on a whole, don’t want to talk about depression or bipolar disorder. I see a lot of people in college who need those services but won’t go and get them. Because their parents don’t believe that is a problem.”

INDIAN AMERICAN PARTICIPANT
CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Challenges to Providing Community Services

SERVICES FOR THE AGING

Participants across all ethnicities felt that language barriers were a problem in senior living facilities. For example, one Indian American participant shared the story of an older Punjabi American woman: “We have family friends who elderly Punjabi mother had come here, they had brought her here, but they couldn’t take care of her at home, so they put her in a nursing home, but they couldn’t speak Punjabi so no one could really understand her and so communication is a large issue.” Several Taiwanese American/Hong Kong, Chinese American, and Korean American participants shared this view that interpreters are crucial in providing adequate services to seniors.

A Chinese American participant said that cultural food was important for seniors: “I have a friend ... in [an] adult care center. ...You cannot cook, you have to eat the food [cooked by the senior living facility staff]. So think about that – a Chinese older lady, so they cannot eat this food. They get issues with that then, with their health.”

An Indian American participant and a Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant referred to senior living facilities in other states (California and Florida) that provide more culturally appropriate services to Asian American seniors.

Cultural expectations and cost were discussed as barriers to giving Asian American seniors the care they need. Indian American and Hmong American participants spoke about the cultural expectation that an Asian American son or daughter should take care of his or her parents and in-laws. An Indian American participant stated: “There is a cultural responsibility. ...When I get married, my in-laws will live with us. I still have the belief that they have given me everything, both my parents and my in-laws, I don’t want to leave them, because it is my responsibility and my wish to look after my in-laws.”

Hmong American participants echoed this sentiment: “[In] the Hmong community ...our senior citizens, our elderly people live with us. We do not, you know, take them to senior care or all those stuff.” “If you do, it’s viewed as a bad thing that you’re not a dutiful daughter or son.”

The fact that primarily South Asian and Southeast Asian American participants spoke about this cultural expectation may help to explain the large rates of South Asian and Southeast Asian American survey respondents who felt health care for emigrated seniors and adult care services for the elderly are problems.

Several Indian American, Taiwanese American/Hong Kong, Chinese American, and Korean American participants shared the view that interpreters are crucial in providing services to seniors.

Many Asian American focus group participants discussed the financial burden involved in paying for health care for emigrated seniors.
Participants felt that there probably are many leadership opportunities available for Asian American young people, but that Asian American parents may often be unaware of these possibilities or the importance of youth engagement and leadership development. One Indian American participant said: “There are a lot of those things out there but I don’t think Indian parents necessarily encourage their children to participate in those things because they think children should just be focusing on academics and not doing other things.”

Filipino American participants mentioned the Filipino Youth Initiative that provides an opportunity for youth to “talk about issues about identity, of cultural assimilation, the need to connect to an older generation.”

A Sikh American participant said: “[The price of] purchasing insurance … [is] just so astronomical, that you can’t buy it at all. It’s not available, to buy them healthcare.” A Filipino American participant said that his/her mother-in-law was not able to apply for Medicare when she arrived to the United States because she had not worked in the country. The participant said that s/he felt that system was fair, although, “there might still be hardship, there might still be a lot of expenses, for a doctor’s visit or anything. But, well, [I] got her here, [I] have to pay for her.”

Some participants felt that there was not enough assistance for people who bring their parents to the U.S. from overseas. An Indian American participant said: “I would like to bring my in-laws here, because my children are growing up and I’d like for them to stay with my grandparents, but only thing, they have unique health condition and I cannot take care of that part … Their health requirements, you cannot provide here without the insurance.”

Focus group participants identified transportation as an issue facing Asian American seniors. An Indian American participant said: “They often can’t drive, or they’re older so they’re not so comfortable learning to drive, or they don’t have a car, so that’s a large issue.” Another Indian American participant said that seniors do not attend the senior group at the temple because of the lack of transportation. A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong focus group participant agreed that senior citizens lack the transportation to go see the doctor or take care of other needs.
FINDINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Challenges to Providing Community Services

ADDRESSING THE GENERATION GAP

The generation gap between the immigrant generation and second generation appears to pose an issue for many Asian American families. It may often be a point of conflict and misunderstanding, where second generation youth are more acculturated in Western American culture and customs in comparison to their parents.

A Hmong American participant felt that the generation and cultural gap was a big challenge in the Hmong American community. These dynamics may help to explain the large percentage of Southeast Asian American survey respondents who felt that intergenerational counseling and youth leadership opportunities are needed.

Because then [the elders in the community are] kind of scared of change. They’re really scared of change. I was involved with another organization, as the leader of that other organization, we faced a lot of hardships because it was a wall between our youth group and our elders. Because our elders were viewing us as competition because then they’re thinking we want to take their positions as community leaders. When we’re trying to actually bridge that age-gap and that culture gap, with the Hmong community and the American culture.

A Bangladeshi American participant said that the generation gap does exist: “A lot of time we don’t understand our kids.” A Sikh American participant noted: “I think there is a large language and cultural gap. I see, with my children. Culture and language. They speak Punjabi, but they can’t talk deep discussions. So the children think deeply in English, the parents think deeply in Punjabi. And no one can talk.” Another Sikh American participant discussed the different views of each generation about offering food to guests in one’s home:

I’ll give you an example, about food. Somebody comes to your house, I don’t care who it is, you have to offer. My kid says, ‘We did ask and they said no.’ I said, ‘It doesn’t matter. You still have to...’ So those smallest little things, ...you are thinking that they observing you, and it still doesn’t happen. That’s where you get, ‘Oh my god, what happened?’ You tell them, ‘I don’t care, you got to do it.’ [My son/daughter responded:] ‘You’re force feeding them.’ I said, ‘No, I’m not force feeding.’ To me it’s a matter of honor.

“A lot of time we don’t understand our kids.”

BANGLADESHI AMERICAN PARTICIPANT

“We’re trying to actually bridge that age gap and that culture gap, with the Hmong community and the American culture.”

HMONG AMERICAN PARTICIPANT
HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES

Access to health programs was a problem for some. A Taiwanese American/Hong Kong participant noted that many health insurance programs do not cover traditional medicine: “In Michigan, we don’t cover any acupuncture in Blue Cross. ...But in California, in San Francisco, my mother stay there about ten years ago, they cover everything, acupuncture, herbal medicine, so you can find your Chinese doctor and get your herbal medicine. It is all covered.”

Filipino and Bangladeshi American participants shared concerns about providing adequate health care to the uninsured. Bangladeshi American participants said they lacked insurance and, “we have to pay ourselves.” One participant said that even if community members have Medicaid, the doctor some people see does not accept Medicaid. A Filipino American participant said:

There is this idea floating around with doctors’ leadership, to try to help our Filipinos without insurance. It’s ...part of the reason why they want to go back home is that they’re so worried about getting sick here, because they’ve no insurance. So, you know, they stay as long as they can in the Philippines because, you know, they know that no matter what happens, they’ll be taken care of. So that is a big worry.

Filipino and Bangladeshi American participants were aware of an annual health fair but felt that a one-day service was not enough.

Asian American participants shared a variety of other concerns about social services. A Hmong American participant said that it was very difficult to locate services to help her family obtain legal guardianship for an autistic individual. At least two Bangladeshi American participants shared they felt Bangladeshi American families need better childcare services. “A lot of families don’t have enough people to take care of children. They don’t have enough time.”

One Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant felt that the community needed more legal counseling services. Another Taiwanese/Hong Kong focus group participant felt that family counseling was needed.
FINDINGS

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Challenges to Providing Community Services

TABLE 16: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO FELT PROBLEMS EXIST IN PROVIDING SERVICES FOR APIA COMMUNITY BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>No childcare Services Available</th>
<th>No Intergenerational Counseling</th>
<th>No Leadership Training or Opportunities for Youth</th>
<th>No Health Care for Emigrated Seniors</th>
<th>No Adult Care Services for Elderly or Retired</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>56.3*</td>
<td>62.5*</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>77.3*</td>
<td>78.0*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significantly different from Above 65 (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from High school or GED (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Korean (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Indian (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from East Asian (p < .05)
* Statistically significantly different from Southeast
DISCUSSION

Upon completion of the two-phase Needs Assessment Project, APIAVote-MI made several observations that have helped us to identify implications for future community-based research in the Asian American community. Furthermore, as previously indicated, a major goal of this assessment was that APIAVote-MI would strategize about ways to incorporate what we learn from the needs assessment into our work and to respond appropriately to the study findings.
RESEARCH CHALLENGES

Several barriers arose during the research process that may have inhibited the ultimate findings of the Needs Assessment Project. First, the time commitment that was required to administer surveys via the CATI, at a rate that would allow for obtaining higher rates of survey completion, was far greater than anticipated. Volunteers experienced fatigue as they administered the surveys over a long period of time and several times per week. Future use of CATI administered surveys should involve a higher number of volunteers as well as incentives for volunteer hours.

A second challenge was that the CATI survey was offered only in English. Volunteers would often call households at which residents were unable to speak or understand English. This inadvertently disqualified them from the survey and may have impacted the randomness of the sample. Interpreters were not available on site at adequate levels for surveys to be administered in multiple languages. Additionally, when surveys were administered over the phone, several respondents expressed unease and distrust for being asked information over the phone. Though CATI allows for random selection of participants, community members were more likely to complete surveys in person when administered by other Asian Americans, perhaps due to a level of trust in persons who look like them.

In order to develop a random sample for the telephone survey, APIAVote–MI used the Voter Activation Network (VAN), the owner of which utilized a list of common Asian surnames to generate a list of Asian American voters. This may have left out potential participants due to human error or inaccuracies in the VAN itself. Overtime, the VAN or other voter databases may become more accurate and reliable tools for identifying Asian American households, but until then, it should be noted that relying on this list alone presents limitations.

Finally, the Project Coordinator faced challenges in recruiting focus group participants. Even with the provision of gift cards, many individuals were reluctant to participate. Some of the reasons stated by individuals who decided not to participate included (a) a perception that speaking out about these topics could result in negative ramifications in their own lives, (b) not wanting to be perceived as complaining, or (c) feeling like their opinions were not important enough to contribute. Recruitment was more successful when APIAVote–MI was able to work with a trusted community leader who was then able to recruit based on personal connections and established trust in the community. Future community based participatory researchers hoping to work with and in the Asian American community should keep in mind these barriers to participation and learn the cultural nuances of engaging various ethnic groups.
LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

APIAVote–MI ventured into our Needs Assessment Project with the desire to provide a vehicle for community members to speak candidly about real community needs. Therefore, it was important to APIAVote–MI that the Needs Assessment Project be led by a community member and that the design and implementation be driven by community members as well.

One major lesson learned in conducting community–based research is the importance of long–term relationship building. The relationships that APIAVote–MI has established with various ethnic organizations served as a strength in this assessment, particularly as it directly impacted our grassroots outreach and participation by community members as volunteers, survey respondents, and focus group participants. However, the research process also reminded us about ethnic communities with which we need to continue relationship building, as those communities were not well represented in the research process. For example, one group that was noticeably missing from the second phase of the assessment was the Vietnamese American community. Though several attempts were made to organize a Vietnamese American focus group, our relationships with community leaders in that particular ethnic community are not as strong as with other communities. This made it difficult to reach a critical mass of participants. As one of the largest Southeast Asian American ethnic groups in Metro Detroit, the lack of Vietnamese American narratives remains a void in this initial assessment. APIAVote–Michigan will make greater attempts to develop stronger relationships with leaders in the Vietnamese American community.

While the partnership with an academic research institution has its benefits, it also poses a tension in pursuing community–based approaches. APIAVote–MI approached CUS about partnering on the project in order to bring scientific validity to the needs assessment. CUS commits to great fidelity in their standard research procedures, which sometimes created difficult parameters to work within. For example, community members had little flexibility in the survey administration and were unfamiliar with this type of rigor in academic research. Though this rigorous scientific approach is important, it sometimes conflicted with the intent of the research to be participatory, which would have allowed for more culturally sensitive methods in the research process.

When university research institutions and community–based organizations pursue research partnerships, they should hold intentional discussions about expectations, cultural dynamics, and shared understanding of research processes prior to designing the research methodology. This will give university partners an opportunity to understand more fully the cultural nuances of an historically marginalized community virtually absent from mainstream research, and to understand potential barriers for working with communities with limited capacity and understanding of research methodology. It can also give community partners an opportunity to learn the benefits of academic research.
DISCUSSION

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The APIAVote-MI Needs Assessment Project is the first of its kind to be implemented in the State of Michigan, and is therefore a starting point for future research. APIAVote-MI recommends that more resources be directed toward more comprehensive research that is inclusive of a greater segment of our community.

Noticeably absent from the assessment was representation of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander American (NHPI) voices. Greater care and effort needs to be made to identify NHPI community members. The VAN may inadvertently leave potential NHPI community members out of Asian American lists. Due to the history of colonization, some NHPIs may have surnames that may not register as Asian American. A different strategy is advised for future research. The onus is on organizations like APIAVote-MI, which includes NHPIs in the organizational name, to actively build relationships and engage with this underrepresented community with unique needs of their own and virtually no local research data.

One of the unmet goals of Phase II of the Needs Assessment Project was to conduct an Asian American youth focus group to uncover emerging needs. A youth-specific needs assessment may be warranted in the near future to allow for a more proactive policy approach and development of community programs to meet the needs of our next generation of Asian American leaders.

APIAVOTE-MI’S NEXT STEPS

APIAVote-MI is currently in the process of determining how the organization can respond to the findings of this initial Needs Assessment Project to inform youth leadership programming, organizing initiatives, awareness campaigns, and other programming. The organization will be disseminating the findings from the report to various stakeholders at the local and state levels. APIAVote-MI will also partner with community organizations and other institutions to identify and obtain resources for addressing the needs identified in this assessment.

Additionally, APIAVote-MI is conducting a similar needs assessment in West Michigan, a region with a burgeoning Asian & Pacific Islander American population. Focus areas are similar to that of the Metro Detroit assessment, with the addition of health as a major focus area for research. Results of the West Michigan Needs Assessment Project are projected to be released later in 2013.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from both phases of the Needs Assessment Project suggest that there are indeed unmet needs in the Asian American community. APIAVote-MI is undergoing a process of developing long-term strategic organizing initiatives, awareness campaigns, youth leadership initiatives, and other programming in response to the various needs that arose in this study. The following is a list of recommendations for key decision-makers.
RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Employment

• To address the number of unemployed Asian Americans, state and local governments should strengthen public assistance and unemployment benefits programs, with specific outreach to Asian Americans, perhaps through partnerships with Asian American community groups.

• The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) and other agencies should ensure the enforcement of labor laws such as anti-discrimination laws. Regardless of immigration status, all workers’ rights should be protected by these agencies.

• The EEOC and MDCR should partner with APIAVote-MI and other Asian American community organizations to develop resource guides for Asian American employees.

• The EEOC and MDCR should work with Asian American community organizations to hold effective cultural sensitivity trainings and work to remove the glass ceiling in the workplace.

Immigration/Citizenship

• Federal, state and local governments should examine whether adequate resources are being directed toward needs of the Asian American community – particularly ESL classes and citizenship classes.

• Congress and the President must address the broken immigration system through comprehensive immigration reform, which should include reduction of the visa backlog, strengthening of family reunification, more sensible and industry need-based caps on immigration from each country, and a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants (aspiring citizens).

• The Michigan state legislature should reject any anti-immigrant legislation like Arizona’s SB1070 or E-Verify legislation.

• The state government and foundations should provide funding to increase the number of Asian American community organizations in Michigan providing citizenship classes or with Bureau of Immigration Appeals (BIA) accreditation.

• The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) should work with local Asian American organizations to host cultural sensitivity trainings for TSA employees in the Metro Detroit.

Civic Participation

• Local clerks should partner with APIAVote-MI to ensure that Asian American English Language Learner (ELL) voters are able to vote efficiently and accurately, by making multilingual voting information available in clerk offices and on clerk websites. Information from the Michigan Department of State’s website is already translated and available on APIAVote-MI’s website.

• The Department of Justice, Michigan Department of State, and local clerks should guarantee equal access to voting by enforcing voter protection laws and pursuing initiatives to increase access to the vote.
The Michigan legislature should consider policies that would expand the ease and access to the vote (such as early voting, no-reason absentee voting, and online voter registration) and reject any policies that impose additional barriers to voting (such as restrictive voter identification laws and citizenship confirmation on ballot applications).

The Department of Justice, Michigan Department of State and local clerks should work in partnership with APIAVote-MI to ensure compliance with Sections 203 and 208 of the Voting Rights Act, which facilitate the provision of assistance to voters.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

- Employers should cooperate and collaborate with government officials and community organizations to ensure that employment laws are upheld.
- Employers should consider pledging that they will participate in an “inclusive workplace” free of employment discrimination and cultural insensitivity.
- Employers should make statistics publicly available with regard to hiring and promotions across demographic characteristics.
- Employers should provide more training opportunities for managers to create more inclusive workplace environments.
- Employers should review, improve, and enforce human resources policy and procedures to address discrimination in the workplace.
- Employers should support the continuation and creation of affinity groups and involve them in decision-making processes about human resources.
RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATION SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS

1. School districts should consider incorporating Asian American material in their curriculums, especially in districts with high numbers of Asian American students.

2. School administrators should invest in bilingual curricula that embrace Asian languages.

3. School districts should enforce anti-bullying policies and codes of conduct. When Asian American students report being bullied, schools should conduct thorough investigations and take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the bullied student and to ensure that the bully does not repeat his or her actions again.

4. K-12 school administrators, colleges/universities and foundations should partner with Asian American community organizations on college readiness programs especially for underrepresented groups such as Southeast Asian Americans.

5. University health and mental health departments should conduct specific outreach to Asian American college students to educate them in culturally appropriate ways about the availability and importance of such services.

6. Universities should learn about the A/PIA Studies and classes at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor and Michigan State University, and consider supporting existing programs or initiating Asian American classes or programs where none currently exist.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Social service providers should increase efforts to recruit, hire and retain Asian American staff especially in areas with high Asian American population densities.

2. Social service providers should consider creating internship programs to build pipelines of future social service professionals from diverse backgrounds that represent client communities.

3. Social service providers should review and improve existing access points for clients with regard to culture and language, in consultation with community and ethnic organizations.

4. Mental health providers should increase culturally appropriate outreach to Asian American community members with guidance from and in partnership with Asian American community organizations.

5. Adult well-being agencies and community organizations with senior programs in municipalities with high numbers of Asian Americans should consider targeted, culturally appropriate outreach to Asian American seniors and, when necessary, design and implement Asian American senior specific programming.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION LEADERS

Employment

1. Asian American community leaders should consider working with APIAVote-MI to uncover more information about employment issues to identify industries, position types, and geographic locations within which employment issues may be concentrated.

2. Asian American community leaders should consider working with APIAVote-MI on potential awareness campaigns and resources guides about workers’ rights and how to report employment discrimination.

3. Organizations should monitor changes in the law and proposed legislation for their effects on employment and contracting as they may impact the Asian American community.

4. Familiarize organization staff with employment resources and create culturally appropriate referral pipelines for community members in need of assistance.

Education

1. Asian American community organizations should consider partnering with APIAVote-MI, foundations and other stakeholders to develop model Asian American curriculum content that highlights the local history and community. This model curriculum should be distributed to school districts with high numbers of Asian American students.

2. Community leaders should consider starting need-based scholarship funds for underrepresented Asian American students pursuing college degrees.

3. Organizations should monitor the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Fisher v. University of Texas for its implications for affirmative action in public higher education institutions.

Immigration

1. Organizations should host informational sessions on becoming a citizen, such as those arranged in 2012 by American Citizens for Justice, or how to obtain legal permanent resident status.

2. Organizations should provide information on protocol for border crossing and inform community members of their rights when crossing the border and airport security checks.

Civic Participation

1. Continuously encourage community members to become registered voters and vote in all elections. Provide materials and information to community members on their rights as voters.

2. Community leaders should monitor the court rulings on Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act for their effects on the Asian American community.
RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOUNDATIONS

1. Foundations should support the capacity building, community-based research, and organizing efforts of Asian American community organizations that wish to serve the employment, education, immigration/citizenship and civic participation needs identified in this study.

2. Foundations should support the development of model Asian American curriculum in Michigan that highlights the local history and community. This model curriculum should be distributed to school districts with high numbers of Asian American students.

3. Foundations and the state government should provide funding to increase the number of Asian American community organizations in Michigan holding citizenship classes or with Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) accreditation.

4. Foundations should consider adopting as a criterion for social service agency funding the provision of culturally appropriate services that reflect the diverse client communities served.

5. Foundations should consider developing Asian American advisory bodies to ensure funding is granted to address needs of the community.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
This project would not have been possible without the financial support from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (through its Knight Foundation donor advised fund) and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

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Shea Howell advised the development of focus groups for Phase II of the project. Ethnic media including Michigan Chinese American News, Filipino Star, Michigan Korean Weekly, and Miindia.com subsidized the costs of focus group recruitment ads. Leaders and staff from the Bharatiya Temple, Chinese Community Center, Korean American Cultural Center of Michigan, and Philippine American Community Center of Michigan opened their community centers for the focus group meetings.

The report design was generously donated by Ryan Co.
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APPENDICES
**Community Needs Survey**

Please take a few moments to fill out this survey. The survey is voluntary and completely confidential.

**IDENTITY**

1. Are you aware of the category Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA)? □ Yes □ No

2. How do you define your ethnicity? _____________________

**EMPLOYMENT**

3. Are you currently employed? □ Yes □ No

Or self-employed? □ Yes □ No

4. Have you ever experienced discrimination problems at your workplace? □ Yes □ No

5. What are some obstacles to progress at your workplace?
   Check one or more:
   - Not being promoted
   - Not hiring new workers
   - Discrimination as minority
   - Stereotyping
   - Cultural insensitivity
   - Other: _____________________________________

6. If unemployed, what are some obstacles in getting new jobs? If yes, check one or more:
   - Don’t have enough contacts
   - No networking opportunities
   - Overqualified
   - Language barriers
   - Bad economy
   - Other: _____________________________________

**EDUCATION**

7. Have you ever experienced any problems in K-12 education in public/private schools? □ Yes □ No

8. What are some specific problems in K-12 education in schools? Check one or more:
   - Curriculum excludes APIA related material
   - Inaccuracies in APIA curriculum
   - Cultural insensitivity from teachers and peers
   - Lack of ESL/bilingual resources
   - Bullying
   - No preparation for college

9. What are some specific academic problems for college students? Check one or more:
   - No access to scholarships
   - Discrimination by faculty
   - Discrimination by peers
   - Lack of APIA related courses
   - Other: _____________________________________

10. What are some non-academic problems for college students on campus? Check one or more:
    - Health and nutrition
    - Sports/athletics
    - Networking for jobs and internships
    - Counseling and mental health needs
    - Other: _____________________________________

**IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

11. What is your immigration status?
    - Citizen □ Green card holder □ Visa holder

12. Have you ever experienced immigration problems? □ Yes □ No

13. What immigration/citizenship problems have you experienced? Check one or more:
    - Work visas
    - Spouse visas
    - Green card process
    - Language barrier
    - Asylum/refugee services
    - Citizenship test
    - Other: _____________________________________

14. What important immigration/citizenship problem(s) is not told in the media? Check one or more:
    - Work visas
    - Spouse visas
    - Visa problems due to divorce
    - Family reunification
    - Other: _____________________________________

15. What problems have you experienced when traveling abroad? Check one or more:
    - Security checks during air travel
    - Border crossing by car
    - Racial profiling
    - Other: _____________________________________

**CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

16. What does “civic participation” mean to you? Check one or more:
    - Campaigning in elections
    - Vote in elections
    - Help organize community events
    - Giving back to the community
    - Other: _____________________________________

17. Do you participate in your neighborhood activities? □ Yes □ No
18. If no, what obstacles prevent you from participating in your neighborhood activities? Check one or more:
- No time
- Don’t know many people
- They’re not interested in my opinions
- Don’t feel accepted
- Other: __________________________

19. Are you involved in your own ethnic community associations? □ Yes □ No
Name of association: __________________________

20. Are you involved in religious organizations? Check one or more:
- Church
- Gurudwara
- Mosque
- Temple
- Other
Name: __________________________

21. What obstacles prevent you from participating in your ethnic and religious organizations? Check one or more:
- No time
- Don’t know many people
- Not interested
- Events don’t address civic issues
- Transportation
- Other: __________________________

22. What will help you participate more in civic organizations? Check one or more:
- More awareness
- Organized events
- Having leaders from community
- Getting incentives for participation
- I’m not interested
- Other: __________________________

23. If there were more elected leaders from the APIA community in Michigan, what effect would that have? Check one:
- No effect
- Negative effect
- Positive effect
- Other: __________________________

FAMILY

24. Do you think there are adequate services for senior citizens in the community? Check one:
- Strongly agree
- Don’t know
- Neutral
- Strongly disagree

Thank you for your participation!
Preliminary draft of focus group questions

Opening questions
1. How do you define APIA community?
2. How is APIA community doing in relationship to other marginalized communities?
3. What are some common things that bring all APIA groups together?

Question in 4 identified areas

Employment
1. What are some issues you encounter day to day at your workplace?
2. What are some obstacles on your way to progress in employment?
3. In your opinion how has the economy affected employment for APIA’s?

Education
1. What are some inequities in access to quality K-12 education?
2. What are some specific issues in K-12 schools that APIA kids are facing?
3. What are some classroom/learning needs that are not met for APIA college students?
4. What are some needs that are not met outside of classroom for APIA college students?

Immigration and Citizenship
1. What are some specific issues in immigration for APIA’s?
2. What immigration and citizenship story is not being told in local and national rhetoric?
3. What are some barriers to get citizenship?
4. What will help APIA’s become a citizen?

Community connection/civic participation
1. What does civic participation mean to you?
2. What are some issues that prevent you from networking within your neighborhood and with APIA community?
3. What do you need to be active in your neighborhood and APIA community?
4. In what ways is current leadership representing APIA interests and needs?
5. In what ways can leadership be improved to represent APIA community?
Closing questions

1. Is there anything you want to say that we didn’t touch upon?
2. What’s the most important topic/question that you heard in today’s discussion?
67.5% of unemployed Asian American respondents stated that the bad economy was a problem when trying to find a job.

48.8% of unemployed Asian American respondents stated that being overqualified was a problem when trying to find a job.

30.3% of unemployed Asian American respondents stated that the lack of networking opportunities was a problem when trying to find a job.

19.4% of unemployed Asian American respondents stated that language barriers were a problem when trying to find a job.

27.3% of females and 30.1% of males experienced not being promoted as a problem.

61.8% of Southeast Asian American respondents reported cultural insensitivity as a problem.

...whereas 39.1% of South Asian American and 34.4% of East Asian American respondents reported cultural insensitivity as a problem.

53.1% of Chinese Americans experienced stereotyping as a problem, while 36.4% of Indian Americans and 28.0% of Korean Americans experienced stereotyping as a problem.

www.apiaivotmi.org/needs-assessment.html
Asian Americans in Southeast Michigan K-12 EDUCATION

Almost one half of Asian American females and almost one third of Asian American males believe the K-12 curriculum is not challenging.

Many Asian Americans report a lack of ESL and bilingual resources in the K-12 education system.

- 34.3% 18-25 years
- 61.5% 26-35 years
- 29.9% 36-45 years

This lack is most often reported by young people.

BULLYING

28.2% of East Asians, 47.1% of South Asians, and 68.6% of Southeast Asians report being bullied in school.

DISCRIMINATION

35.9% of South Asians, 37.3% of East Asians, and 73.2% of Southeast Asians report experiencing discrimination in school.

Source: Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote–Michigan Needs Assessment Project; Phase 1 Findings, January 2012
www.apiavotemi.org/needs-assessment.html
INFOGRAPHIC: ASIAN AMERICANS IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN - HIGHER EDUCATION

Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote - Michigan

Asian Americans in Southeast Michigan
Higher Education

About 30% of Asian Americans in Southeast Michigan report no access to scholarships.

52% of Southeast Asian Americans report discrimination by peers...
...as opposed to 18.8% of East Asians and 29.9% of South Asians.

Discrimination by faculty has also been a problem in universities.

26-35 year olds struggled the most with finding networking opportunities for jobs and internships.

- 35.9% (18-25 years)
- 62.1% (26-35 years)
- 28.2% (36-45 years)
- 37.9% (46-55 years)
- 40.8% (56-65 years)

The same age group reported the greatest difficulty with meeting counseling and mental health needs in college.

Source: Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote - Michigan Needs Assessment Project: Phase 1 Findings, January 2012
www.apiavotemi.org/needs-assessment.html
INFOGRAPHIC: ASIAN AMERICANS IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN - FAMILY SERVICES

22.2% of Asian Americans above 65 years old felt the lack of intergenerational counseling was a problem.

...while 69.6% of those ages 26 to 35 felt it was a problem.

47.3% of those with a high school diploma or GED felt no childcare services were available.

15.0% of those with a professional or doctorate degree felt no childcare services were available.

71.8% of Chinese Americans felt there was a lack of leadership training or opportunities for youth.

29.0% of Korean Americans felt there was a lack of leadership training or opportunities for youth.

48.7% of Indian Americans felt there was a lack of leadership training or opportunities for youth.

78.0% of Southeast Asian Americans felt there were no adult care services for elderly or retired.

77.3% felt health care for emigrated seniors was a problem.

65.3% of South Asian Americans felt there were no adult care services for elderly or retired.

65.3% felt health care for emigrated seniors was a problem.

40.4% of East Asian Americans felt there were no adult care services for elderly or retired.

34.5% felt health care for emigrated seniors was a problem.

www.apiasvote.mi.org/needs-assessment.html
Asian Americans in Southeast Michigan

IMMIGRATION and CITIZENSHIP

Respondents with a high school diploma had the highest percentage of those who experienced problems with language barriers during the immigration and citizenship process, compared to:

- 14.4% of those with bachelor or associate degrees
- 12.9% of those with master’s degrees
- 16.0% of those with doctorate or professional degrees

- 24.2% of the Oakland County Asian American respondents experienced problems with the green card process
- 8.6% of the Macomb County Asian American respondents experienced problems with the green card process

37.0% of Southeast Asian American respondents reported language barriers as a problem in the immigration and citizenship process

...whereas only 16.2% of East Asian American respondents reported language barriers as a problem

The 26–35 age group experienced the most problems with border crossing by car, racial profiling and security checks during air travel:

- 50.0%
- 48.3%
- 59.5%

55.1% of Chinese Americans and 50.8% of Indian Americans reported security checks as a problem compared to only 17.7% of Korean Americans

The majority of Asian Americans in Southeast Michigan feel the following actions would reduce immigration and citizenship problems:

- Educate TSA and CBP on cultural sensitivity
- More awareness in media on immigration problems
- Work with elected officials on reforming immigration laws
- More citizenship classes
- Translation services during citizenship test

www.apiavote.mi.org/needs-assessment.html
Respondents whose highest degree was a high school diploma or GED reported the lowest proportion of participation in neighborhood and community events (58.4%) compared to those with an associate or bachelor’s (72.6%) and those with a master’s (78.0%).

83.7% of Chinese Americans and 83.7% of Indian Americans participate in neighborhood or subdivision activities, while only 36.7% of Korean Americans do so.

95.7% of Southeast Asian Americans volunteer in school, compared to 80.0% of South Asian Americans and 68.4% of East Asian Americans.

72.9% of those with professional or doctorate degrees were involved in professional or political groups, compared to 42.4% of those with a high school diploma or GED.

55.4% of 18-25 year olds and 52.1% of 26-35 year olds had ever voted. 93.2% of 56-65 year olds and 97.9% of those above 65 had ever voted.

Across all demographic categories, the majority of Asian Americans (at least 60%) reported that more elected leaders from the community would have a positive effect.

www.apiavote.mi/needs_assessment.html