

**THE WORSENING RACISM AGAINST ASIANS UNDER THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY OF 2021 ATLANTA SPA
SHOOTINGS**

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Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, 2022

ABSTRACT

The study issue is discussed about Asian discrimination under the epidemic, and why this case of Atlanta spa shootings influences many Asians willing to speak up for themselves. Because of specific stereotype and diversity in this community, people always think they tend to ignore those actions when facing racism. But In fact, hate crimes against Asian Americans are not a new criminal phenomenon, the earliest hate discrimination dates to the late 19th century. So, the case of Atlanta spa shootings was a turning point that raise the identity of Asians. More contents need to be found out and explained through the content analysis.

This research exhibits three potential factors were identified to the research question. The first finding is people pursue equitable policy and public safety, the second is impact of Asian Americans' history and past discriminatory incidents hold them together, and the third is the Asian Americans consciousness make solidarity of Asians.

This study is expected to make people think and face the issues relating to Asian discrimination and raise the awareness of existing anti-Asia problem.

Key words: Asian solidarity, Asian Activism, Racism, Atlanta Spa Shootings

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Among the countless racial incidents against Asians, the case of Atlanta Spa Shootings was a breaking point amid two-years of growing anti-Asian violence. Since it happened on March 16th, 2021, a major shooting series broke out in the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia, United States. The attack locations were all massage parlors specializing in oriental spas. Among the eight victims, six of the deceased were "Asian women". One day later, at a news conference, a law enforcement official said early indications were that Atlanta-area mass shooter Robert Aaron Long may have been motivated by issues stemming from "sexual addiction," not racism— but he cautioned that the investigation was in an early stage. "Yesterday was a really bad day for him and this is what he did" — a law enforcement official explained Robert Aaron Long's killing motivation. Meanwhile, statements from police that Long had declared that the attack was not racially motivated spurred further outrage and widespread skepticism.¹ Because it was difficult for the general public to accept a law enforcement official explains Robert Aaron Long's killing motivation—"Yesterday was a really bad day for him and this is what he did"—They feel that there is no definite evidence to prove that this incident is a hate crime, does it mean that Asians are more vulnerable to attack ? Additionally, the idea that sex addiction is a disorder is not supported by research, nor is it accepted as a clinical diagnosis. Apryl Alexander, associate professor in the graduate school of professional psychology at the University of Denver, previously explained to NBC News that such defenses have been used by white men to absolve themselves of responsibility for their behaviors.² The reality, she emphasized, is that such gender-based

¹ Guardian staff, "Georgia Officer Condemned for Saying Atlanta Shooter Was 'Having a Bad Day'," *The Guardian* (2021).

² "Why Atlanta Spa Shooter's Asian 'Acquaintances' Can't Tell Us Much About His Racial Biases," (2021).

violence takes place at the intersection of misogyny, racism, xenophobia, and homophobia. Such violence “doesn’t just occur in isolation,” she said. Though a hate crime distinction would be largely symbolic given the magnitude of Long’s punishment, experts said the failure to acknowledge the racial component in the killings could have dangerous societal implications.³

In July 2021, Robert Aaron Long agreed in a Cherokee County courtroom to plead guilty to 23 charges in all, including four counts of malice murder, and was sentenced to four consecutive life sentences without the possibility of parole, plus 35 years. The sentence represents the first part of a lengthy legal path ahead, which this case is still unfinished issue now because Long still faces an additional 19 charges in nearby Fulton County, where prosecutors will be pursuing the death penalty for hate crimes targeting the sex and race of the victims.⁴

Notably, in 2017, President Trump signed an executive order banning people from six Muslim-majority countries from entering the USA and slamming the door on refugees. The “Muslim Ban” not only impacted people attempting to enter the United States but people who are currently in the U.S. Muslim Americans residing in the U.S. have been cut off from their families and friends who are barred from entering the country. And we've also seen a rise in incidents of intimidation, bias, and violence against people in Muslim-American majority communities. Since taking office, Trump has worked to dramatically reduce immigration to the United States, particularly of people of color—by keeping Muslims and other people out, deporting people who are here, and creating an atmosphere of nativism and fear. In fact, the expansion of the Muslim ban has led some advocates to criticize the policy as an “African ban.”⁵

³ Ibid.

⁴ Amara Walker Maria Cartaya, Angela Barajas and Eric Levenson, "Atlanta-Area Spa Shooter Pleads Guilty to Four Killings and Gets Life in Prison, but Still Could Face Death Penalty," *CNN* (2021).

⁵ Peniel Ibe, "5 Things to Know About the Muslim Ban," (2020).

Furthermore, some advocates have blamed President Trump's remarks for the attacks on Asians in 2020. A photo of Trump's notes at a news conference was made publicly, which with the word "Corona" for the coronavirus crossed out and the word "Chinese" was added. Trump defended his use of the term, saying: " Because it's actually from China." In addition, he has repeatedly referred to the Covid-19 as "Kung Flu".⁶

In the other hand, Stop AAPI Hate, a national coalition aimed at addressing anti-Asian American discrimination, stated the New Data Shows that Asian Americans Remain Under Attack — Over 9,000 Anti-Asian Incidents between March 19, 2020, and June 30, 2021⁷, which attack from being spat on, to verbal harassment, to various physical assaults. Under the epidemic, whether it is the above-mentioned things relating to political words on Covid-19 or the controversy over the Atlanta incident, there is a common point that makes parts of Asian people realize the importance of their identity.

Although under the epidemic, incidents of hate crimes against Asian Americans have soared, hate crimes against Asian Americans are not a new criminal phenomenon. The earliest hate discrimination dates to the late 19th century when the Chinese Exclusion Act was proposed. The basic exclusion law prohibited Chinese laborers—defined as “both skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining”—from entering the country.⁸ When the exclusion act expired in 1892, Congress extended it for 10 years in the form of the Geary Act. This extension, made permanent in 1902, added restrictions by requiring each Chinese resident to register and obtain a certificate of residence. Without a certificate, they faced deportation. The Geary Act expired after ten years but was replaced by the Scotts Act in 1902 and extended the ban on Chinese immigration for an additional ten years. Two years later, in 1904, the ban on Chinese immigration was extended again – this time indefinitely, until its

⁶ LARA JAKES KATIE ROGERS, ANA SWANSON, "川普無視批評，堅稱「中國病毒」不是種族歧視," (2020).

⁷ Sara Braun, *STOP AAPI HATE* (2021).

⁸ Yuning Wu, "Chinese Exclusion Act," *Britannica* (2021); .

repeal in 1943. The Chinese Exclusion Act and the subsequent legislation were the first and only of its kind to discriminate based on ethnic background.⁹

Additionally, Japanese internment camps were established during World War II by President Franklin D. Roosevelt through his Executive Order 9066. From 1942 to 1945, it was the policy of the U.S. government that people of Japanese descent, including U.S. citizens, would be incarcerated in isolated camps, which preventing espionage on American shores. Enacted in reaction to the Pearl Harbor attacks and the ensuing war, the incarceration of Japanese Americans is considered one of the most atrocious violations of American civil rights in the 20th century (Life before Exclusion, 2022). With the end of internment, Japanese Americans began reclaiming or rebuilding their lives, and those who still had homes waiting returned to them. The internment took its toll on Japanese Americans. They typically spent some three years living in isolated prison camps in an atmosphere of tension, suspicion, and despair. Then when they were released and returned to mainstream U.S. society, they were subjected to hostility and discrimination. In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford officially repealed Executive Order 9066. A presidential commission in 1982 identified race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership as the underlying causes of the government's internment program. In 1988, the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act, which awarded more than 80,000 Japanese Americans \$20,000 each to compensate them for the ordeal they had suffered. Congress also issued a formal apology for the government's policy toward Japanese Americans.¹⁰ Furthermore, there is also the Asian-American movement that began in the 1960s, and many incidents related to racial discrimination against Asians in the past, such as the Vincent incident.

The case of Vincent Chin in the 1980s, which is similar to the case of Atlanta spa shootings. It happened on the night of 19th June, Ronald Ebens, and Michael Nitz bludgeoned

⁹ "Life before Exclusion," (2022).

¹⁰ "Japanese Internment Camps," (2021).

Chin to death with a baseball bat after a confrontation at a night club in which Ebens said, 'It's because of you little motherfuckers that we're out of work.'¹¹ The shock of the murder was compounded by the tragic realization that the post-civil rights age of color-blindness would offer no reprieve from racism's deadly consequences. The murder case and subsequent acquittal of the killers ignited a grassroots movement led by Asian Americans calling attention to the spate of racially motivated hate crimes against people of Asian descent and demanding justice for Vincent Chin. Spearheaded by the Detroit-based group, American Citizens for Justice, which comprised Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Filipino Americans, the movement was deliberately pan-ethnic and crossed class lines, and it spanned coast to coast.¹² These struggles and scars are an indelible history until the spread of the epidemic has brought new generations of people to start paying attention to this issue.

Another key point to remember is Asian American have also mobilized to protect themselves. By the late 1960s a new generation of political activists emerged in Berkeley from Vietnam War protests and protests in support of Farmworkers, Free Speech, and Civil Rights. The Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) was founded in May 1968, sparked the emergence of a political movement that united Americans previously divided by ethnicity such as Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Chinese, who were stereotyped as "Oriental" or as part of a "silent minority". AAPA originated and popularized the more comprehensive term, "Asian American". Conceived as a national grassroots organization, they published the AAPA Newsletter, and quickly sprouted many chapters encouraging other Asian American individual and collective progressive activism. In opposition to the possibility of future incarcerations of entire populations, such as what happened to the Japanese Americans during WWII, AAPA members fought to repeal the McCarran Internal Security Act authorizing emergency detention and deportation of alleged "subversives." They strengthened the

¹¹ Hua Hsu, "The Many Afterlives of Vincent Chin," (2022).

¹² Simeon Man, "Anti-Asian Violence and Us Imperialism," *SAGE* (2020).

international Third World Liberation Movement through their active support of the Black Panther Party, the Occupation of Alcatraz by Native Americans and other “anti-imperialist” struggles worldwide.¹³

Now, countless grassroots groups across the US are organizing in their communities and building intersectional alliances to achieve equity, inclusivity, and justice.¹⁴ The main organizations for fighting Anti-Asian Racism are Stop AAPI Hate, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Asian American Federation, Red Canary Song, National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum, Asian Mental Health Project, Asian Mental Health Collective and so on.¹⁵ Besides, the organization of Stop AAPI Hate has documented the widespread nature of racism against Asian Americans, which is significant evidence because some people don’t believe that Asian Americans have experienced discrimination.

In light of the Atlanta shootings case, the organization of National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) has organized a petition that calls on elected officials to take action. Some calls to action include centering the community’s needs, tackling systemic racism and white supremacy, and providing resources for people affected by anti-Asian hate. Also, the organization of Asian Americans Advancing Justice in Atlanta (AAAJ-ATL) was one of the first to respond to that incident and one of the first to really speak out very publicly about the vulnerability and intersectional vulnerability of the women who were senselessly murdered.¹⁶ Besides, President Biden signed legislation that aims to combat the spike in hate crimes against Asian Americans during the coronavirus pandemic. The measure, spearheaded by Democratic Senator Mazie Hirono of Hawaii and Congresswoman Grace Meng of New York, was approved by the House. On Saturday, March 12th, 2022, Asian

¹³ "Asian American Political Alliance (Aapa)," *e-PLAQUE* (2005).

¹⁴ Joe McCarthy, "9 Groups Fighting for Asian Americans That You Can Support Right Now," (2021).

¹⁵ "A Community-Centered Response to Violence against Asian American Communities," <https://www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org/aaajcommunitystatement>.

¹⁶ Hatewatch Staff, "Anti-Aapi Hate: A Conversation with Dr. Jennifer Lee," (2021).

Americans Advancing Justice – Atlanta (AAAJ-ATL) hosted a Community Remembrance Day to mark the one-year anniversary of the Atlanta spa shootings and to honor the lives of the victims, their families, and community members. As we continue to mark anniversaries of bigotry and violence, we must acknowledge that they are rooted in a history of systemic violence and oppression, and that they demand a response anchored in solidarity.¹⁷

Nowadays, many of the organizations have looked to address racism from the individual, interpersonal, community, and policy levels with the hopes that it will create systemic change.¹⁸ The activism of Asian American today is continuous in many ways with Asian American movement. The movement is contagious, and the people in it are the ones who pass on the spirit.

To sum up, in recent years, Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) voices are taking to social media to spread awareness to #StopAAPIHate. These notable AAPI voices share why they are taking to social media to spread awareness.¹⁹ Particularly, Asian American Podcasters, a membership group launched earlier in 2019, counts roughly 300 podcasts created by Asian American Pacific Islanders—out of more than 700,000 podcasts total.²⁰ A necessary voice in the world of podcasting to highlight AAPI voices and issues, which amplified Asian American voices and discusses important topics.

¹⁷ "Solidarity and Community as a Healing Balm in Atlanta," (2022).

¹⁸ Kayla Hui, "Fight Anti-Asian Racism by Supporting These Organizations," (2021).

¹⁹ Yola Robert, "Aapi Voices Are Taking to Social Media to Spread Awareness to #Stopaapihate," (2021).

²⁰ Eileen Guo, "A New Podcast Amplifies Asian American Stories," (2019).

Motivation

The researcher started to pay attention to Asian issues when seeing a celebrity shared a video on Instagram which is about a 76-year-old Asian grandmother who was attacked by a 39-year-old white homeless man.²¹ But at the moment, she was quick to react and picked up a wooden plank to fight back. In the end, the homeless man was beaten to lie on a stretcher. In an interview from other news, the Asian grandmother said that she had lived for 26 years in San Francisco and encountered such a sudden attack for the first time, then she subconsciously fought back at that time.²² This incident not only caused her future trauma, but also made her afraid of going out normally.

For scholars, the researcher thinks the related issues are worthy of discussion, reflection, and research. If more and more scholars focus on these issues, which represent it could raise the awareness of people for Asians.

Also, it is necessary for us to have a right mindset of identity and respect for different individuals, no matter what country we are from.

²¹ Kaitlin Stanford, "Badass 76-Year-Old Grandma Completely Turns Tables on Assailant During Anti-Asian Attack," (2021).

²² Sarah Ruiz-Grossman, "Elderly Asian Woman Attacked in San Francisco Is 'Traumatized' and 'Terrified' to Go Out," (2021).

Research Purpose

According to the diversity of Asian Americans, the main reasons that make it difficult for Asians to unite are, first, the lack of a voice channel and legal constraints, the second is the culture of dislike directly conflict with others, and the third is that there are too many internal cultures and languages.

The devastation of the Atlanta shootings compelled many Asian Americans to speak out in a new way. What began as a tagline on social media ultimately evolved into a national movement, spurring a reckoning across different interest groups, prompting new policies at the federal and state levels, and transforming broader awareness of anti-Asian racism.²³

Therefore, the purpose of the study is to discuss about the background of worsening discrimination against Asians and extend the issues about why cause the Asians solidarity by the case study of Atlanta spa shootings.

Research Questions

The research aimed to explore the relationship between racial incidents focused on Asians and what the behind motivation caused the rise of Asian solidarity.

With this research proposal, the researcher set up the following research question for using content analysis and narrative analysis.

Research Question: Why did this case of Atlanta spa shootings influence many Asians to speak up for themselves?

²³ Li Zhou, "The Stop Asian Hate Movement Is at a Crossroads," *VOX* (2022).

Limits

The limits of research are the money budget and time limited. For the part of the money budget, the researcher cannot go to the US to do observation or interview qualitatively with Asian Americans. In addition, for the part of time-limited, because the topic talked about the background of Covid-19 pandemic, the information to those scholar articles was not too much that reference from this was limited.

Delimits

Research scope is limited to Asians American in the US. To confront research question is to mainly explore the motivation behind discrimination incidents that caused Asians speak out against violence. Most of the research scholars in relevant academic articles think the histories of Asian American Activism, and movement were important, so the researcher will go to find out what movements and organizations have been done by Asian American activists in the past and present, and then the researcher will also go to learn about the Vincent Chin event mentioned by most.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Stereotype of Asian American

The Cold War made the United States seek allies in the Pacific. Historian Ellen Wu states this provided an ideological space for Asians to ‘prove’ their loyalty to the United States.²⁴ In fact, they promoted beliefs that Asians were docile, good workers, and good students thus are model citizens. Furthermore, there were an increasing number of early Asians now serving in the American military. This resulted in the community becoming the center of new flattering stories. Across the nation in the 1950s and 1960s, journalists lauded Asians in their local communities for being hard-working, well-behaved, and upwardly mobile. This belief was then utilized to deny other minority groups, specifically African Americans and Hispanics, any aid as it brought up the question: if Asians can do it, why can’t they? In 1966, sociologist William Peterson first articulated the model minority myth in *New York Times Magazine*. He wrote that AAPI achieved all their successes “by their own almost totally unaided effort”, implying that it was solely through early Asian’s hard work that they “progressed” and overcame everything American society threw at them.²⁵ Peterson used this to call African Americans “problem minorities” who rightfully earned the prejudices against them as they do not work hard enough as Asians. This put minority groups in conflict with each other, especially for opportunities and services offered in the United States. This divided minority groups and prevented solidarity. This model minority myth also created a hierarchical system between minority groups and by putting these groups in a hierarchical system, it puts these groups in competition with one another to divide individuals and

²⁴ Sarah Yoon, "The Need and Emergence of Political Power for 'Asian American' or Aapi and Its Impacts Today: Comparison between the Black Power Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Rise of Asians" (2022).

²⁵ Ibid.

minority groups from coming into solidarity. Even with the model minority myth, this did not stop the racist attacks or stereotypical labels against early Asians. Asian Americans are also viewed as foreigners who cannot fully integrate into U.S. society (exclusion of the perpetual foreigner; see Tuan, 1999). This categorization ultimately results in ostracizing Asian Americans from the dominant group while also engendering tensions with minority groups occupying lower valorization positions (Kim, 1999).²⁶

Afro-British sociologist Stuart Hall states that for racism to remain potent, it must continually be reproduced. Dehumanization, discriminatory treatment, and stereotypical labels persisted. For instance, the perception of Asian women evolved from being prostitutes to being exotic, subservient, and always available – an idea that emerged from America’s long history of prostitution of Asian women to American servicemen.²⁷

The Cold War, which influenced black and other Third World movements, transformed Asian Americans from an ostracized and humiliated group in solitary confinement into a "model minority." This changed the place of Asian Americans in American racial politics. Because of this history of the model minority myth, people generally have a stereotype of Asians, thinking that Asians generally just don't like to speak up for themselves or suffer silently when they are attacked. Even this myth is used to divide minorities and create opposition. Seeing them as role models in the minority community and attributing their "success" to their culture and idiosyncrasies means that some minorities are not good enough and need to be reviewed.

Additionally, in March 2022, Asians marks the one-year anniversary of the mass shooting of six Asian American women by a white gunman in Atlanta. Against the backdrop of a history in which this population is portrayed as exotic and hypersexual, these senseless

²⁶ CLAIRE JEAN KIM, "The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans" (1999).

²⁷ Regis University Sarah Yoon, "The Need and Emergence of Political Power for 'Asian American' or Aapi and Its Impacts Today: Comparison between the Black Power Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Rise of Asians," (2022).

killings are seen that the killer just had a bad day, and he has a sexual seduction. Sadly, because Asian Americans are portrayed as a model minority, violence against them is often downplayed, preventing them having a less channel to say.

Worsening Discrimination During the COVID-19 Pandemic—"Othering"

In the face of a crisis such as public health threat, people tend to resort to "othering"—dissociating themselves from the threat and blaming others—other countries, foreigners, stigmatized groups, or other minorities, which helps reduce the powerlessness experienced during the crisis (Eichelberger, 2007).²⁸

The act of othering involves a process that labels those thought to be different from oneself, wherein the racial group with the most power in American society (e.g., whites) or the group that believes they have "civic belonging" (i.e., believe they intrinsically belong in the U.S.) stigmatize and distance individuals who are racially different (i.e., Asian Americans). Othering also serves to reinforce these dominant groups' notions of their own "normality," and position those who are different as deviant through a historical and ongoing process of marginalization, disempowerment, and social exclusion.²⁹

Scambler (2020) states that the circumstances of COVID-19 have placed a new emphasis on differences, where new "visible exclusionary practices" have been created that focus "on race or ethnicity" (p. 146).³⁰

Hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic are an extreme manifestation of othering illustrating the replicative and cumulative effects of the historical embeddedness of racism and xenophobia. That is, perpetrators exact violence to dehumanize and ostracize Asian Americans, stigmatizing and "marking" them as deviant to destroy their sense of belonging,

²⁸ Jr. Yao Li and Harvey L. Nicholson, "When "Model Minorities" Become "Yellow Peril"—Othering and the Racialization of Asian Americans in the Covid-19 Pandemic," (2021).

²⁹ "Anti-Asian Hate Crime During the Covid-19 Pandemic: Exploring the Reproduction of Inequality," (2020).

³⁰ Brooke MacNab, "Behind the Scenes of Covid-19: The "Hidden Pandemic" of Anti-Asian Racism," (2021).

encourage and perpetuate ongoing exclusion, sustain feelings of superiority, and restore feelings of normalcy and comfort. It is likely that this rash of COVID-19 related hate crimes and incidents will have enduring deleterious psychological, emotional, and physical effects on Asian American victims and Asian communities, exacerbated by decades of generational trauma.

The Understanding of Hate Crime

Hate crimes have been referred to as “a concept that inspired legal and social change designed to protect people from being persecuted simply because of who they are, or who they are perceived to be.” Hate crimes are also described as ‘message crimes’, since they are intended by the perpetrator(s) to target not only the direct victim(s), but also the community the latter belong to, or anyone perceived as ‘different’ or ‘other’.³¹

Contemporary discrimination narratives and practices can shape policies in different countries, which also lead to specific groups being targeted. For example, in countries where the media portrays biased coverage of refugees and migrants, or where parliaments adopt legislation restricting the civil rights of members of the LGBTI+ community, depicting them as promoting behavior contrary to national traditions, or when certain groups (ex. persons of Asian descent) are blamed for the spread of the coronavirus.³²

Hate crime victims’ information needs are often linked to criminal justice proceedings, which might be seen as difficult to navigate and understand. Therefore, it is essential to satisfy the victims’ need for access to justice by facilitating their active participation in the process. To this end, hate crime victims should be kept informed about developments and procedures in their case. Acknowledgement of a victim’s experience, the bias motivation(s)

³¹ "Policy Brief: Specialist Support for Hate Crime Victims," (2022).

³² Ibid.

and impact of the crime within criminal justice proceedings sends a message to the perpetrator(s) and general public that any form of hate is not tolerated.³³

A Strong Sense of Belongings: Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory has been developed and applied, with varying degrees of conceptual strictness, in a broad range of areas (e.g., Abrams & Hogg, 1990a; Hogg & Abrams, 1993a; Robinson, 1996): For example, cohesion and solidarity.³⁴

Social identity allows people to be part of groups and gain a sense of belonging in their social world. These identities play an important role in shaping self-image. Social identification is important because it influences how people see themselves and how they interact with others. If people have a positive view of their identity within a group, they are more likely to relate well to others in that group and feel positive emotions about themselves.³⁵

Virtually all ethnic minority groups have been subjected to discrimination, and negative ingroup attitudes, such as the desire to belong to the dominant group, have been noted by members of most minority groups (Phinney, 1989). A developmental perspective suggests that the formation of an achieved ethnic identity based on learning about one's ethnic group and making a commitment to the group leads to the rejection of negative views based on stereotypes (Phinney, 1989). As Cross and Fhagen-Smith(2001) pointed out, many Black youths develop identities with positive connotations about being Black. An achieved ethnic identity implies that attitudes about one's group have been examined and evaluated independently and are not simply the internalization of what other people think. Empirically,

³³ *Ibids.*

³⁴ Paul Grieve Michael A. Hogg, "Social Identity Theory and the Crisis of Confidence in Social Psychology: A Commentary, and Some Research on Uncertainty Reduction," (2002).

³⁵ Lauren DiMaria, "The Importance of a Child's Social Identity," (2022).

a number of studies (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Roberts et al., 1999) have found positive attitudes such as pride and feeling good about one's group to be part of an achieved ethnic identity. Positive feelings for one's group have been shown to predict happiness on a daily basis (Kiang, Yip, Gonzales, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006).³⁶

Asian Solidarity: Ethnic Identity and Ethnic Involvement

Racial/ethnic identity is the part of the self-concept that focuses on cultural group membership and perception of that membership (Sellers, Copeland-linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). While racial identity and ethnic identity may reflect the differences between race and ethnicity, they commonly include some sense of a shared history, values, and a cultural bond (Brondolo et al., 2009).³⁷

According to Berry and Padilla, immigrants in a host society tend to rely on one of the four strategies for acculturation: assimilation, separation, integration, or marginalization. Berry views that integration is the healthiest form of acculturation when immigrants are integrated into the larger society while keeping the ethnic group involved. On the other hand, marginalization happens when immigrants do not have close contact with traditional cultural groups or are involved with the larger society. Therefore, marginalization is considered the least ideal form of acculturation strategy.³⁸

Experts say a mix of feeling marginalized, being seen as perpetual foreigners, the rise in anti-Asian hate and violence and social media's power to highlight injustice are driving Gen Z Asian Americans to feel less accepted in the US than older generations who felt more

³⁶ Jean S. Phinney, "Conceptualization and Measurement of Ethnic Identity: Current Status and Future Directions.," (2007).

³⁷ "Asian Americans' Ethnic Identity Exploration and the Role of Ethnic Community in a Southern City in the United States," (2021).

³⁸ *Ibids.*

pressure to assimilate.³⁹

In the other hand, ethnic involvement strengthens ethnic identity. Menzies, Filion, Brenner, and Elgie found that ethnic involvement is strengthened by an ethnic group's experience of societal prejudice and discrimination. Simultaneously, ethnic involvement can enhance social and human capital that facilitates incorporation into the host country. Involvement includes social, cultural, political, and economic aspects. Socially, members gather to interact and to connect with one another as a way to form friendships. Culturally, members often organize and share their native culture with one another as well as with outside groups. Ethnic involvement relies on a willingness to serve and work with one's community.⁴⁰

Empirical evidence indicates that a strong racial consciousness might make it more likely that individuals and groups cultivate intergroup solidarity to challenge the systems that harm their communities. Existing scholarship also suggests that perceived shared suffering, which can be characterized by minoritized groups experiencing similar forms of mistreatment or disempowerment, can lead to stronger intergroup empathy and coalitions. For example, Cortland et al. conducted a series of five experiments with Asian American, Black, and Latinx groups, as well as White women and found that both blatant and subtle connections to shared experiences of discrimination led to more positive intergroup attitudes and relations.⁴¹

³⁹ "As Gen Z Asian Americans Come of Age, the Vast Majority Feel They Don't Belong," (2022).

⁴⁰ "Asian Americans' Ethnic Identity Exploration and the Role of Ethnic Community in a Southern City in the United States," (2021).

⁴¹ "Here's What the New Hate Crimes Law Aims to Do as Attacks on Asian Americans Rise," (2021).

The Importance of Storytelling: Podcast

Lindgren (2016) described the rise of narrative nonfiction podcasts as a cultural phenomenon that was borne out of the uniqueness of the medium, which allowed for more personal storytelling. Citing Coward's (2013) support of personal narratives in print journalism, Lindgren (2016) linked this style to the more intimate audio-only online space, in which interviewees and journalists alike are more apt to share their real-life personal experiences on topics that might otherwise seem mundane and directly antithetical to the top-down structure of traditional journalistic storytelling.⁴²

In their analysis of the podcasts True Murder, STown, and Ear Hustle, the authors noted that the key to success was the use of deepdive, long-form storytelling designed to captivate audiences for extended periods.⁴³

Jacobson, Marino, and Gutsche (2016) argue that the digital age has ushered in a new period of literary journalism, which is informative, but also interpretive, incorporating elements of "description, characters, and storylines that appeal to readers' emotions".⁴⁴

In the podcast of "Dear Asian American", the host mentioned that about the importance of storytelling. He said, "narrative based on just simple data is something important just to bring the facts to the national narrative on Asian Americans. There are people are realizing the storytelling is important the data for the 22 million plus Asian Americans, so that their voices can be heard in again in untainted, objective way."⁴⁵ Asian American groups are so diverse and everyone with different unique cultures, languages and so many ways that people came into that state. So, narrative based on just simple data is something important just to

⁴² Rebecca C. Nee & Arthur D. Santana, "Podcasting the Pandemic: Exploring Storytelling Formats and Shifting Journalistic Norms in News Podcasts Related to the Coronavirus" (2021).

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ *Attorney & Community Organizer*, podcast audio, Dear Asian Americans, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/161-charles-jung-attorney-community-organizer/id1500293933?i=1000575240419>.

bring the facts to the national narrative on Asian Americans. So, obviously a podcast is about making sure that it is data-driven and as fact driven as they can so that it is a little bit more defensible.

METHODOLOGY

The research for this study is content analysis and narrative analysis. In this paper, the researcher proposes the research question: Why did this case of Atlanta spa shootings influence many Asians to speak up for themselves? By conducting literature review and a qualitative content analysis and narrative analysis are utilized to understand the potential factors influence Asians solidarity. Data is collected through podcast and a checklist is used as a tool to ensure reliability and validity. This analysis allows for a deeper understanding of what reasons motivate Asians stand up against violence within the context of covid-19 pandemic.

Research Design

In my current study, a content analysis was utilized to find out the motivation behind the unity of Asian Americans by podcast, which called “Dear Asian American.” The sample section process began in the podcast series in March 2021 (Atlanta spa shootings happened) to September 2022. The sampling procedure included the search for the content in relation to “Asian racism”, “Asian activism”, and “Asian American history”. Furthermore, the selected series coded raw data to transcripts, collected and processed them into categories, then themes and concepts.

Content analysis was conducted by examining how conversation under the podcast frame the speakers' key words or sentence to find what potential factors around their topic make this group unity and what potential factors make them choose to be voiceless. In addition, narrative analysis was conducted those scholars and activists by their conversation with the podcast host, narratives of how the podcasters interpret the worsening discrimination against Asians under the context of pandemic, and how they relate to ethnic/social identity

and solidarity. Furthermore, to answer research question, the researcher discussed their words to determine relevant themes and patterns, as informed by the literature review.

Source of Data

In relation to content analysis, the data used to address the research question of Why did this case influence many Asians to speak up for themselves? are sourced from podcast called "Dear Asian American." The reason why the researcher chose this podcast because "Dear Asian Americans" is a podcast for and by Asian Americans, focusing on authentic storytelling rooted in origin, identity, and legacy, which is a platform that amplified Asian American voices and discusses important topics.

However, the researchers will select series of "Dear Asian American", which talk about "Asian-American History", "Asian Activism", and "Asian Racism" of related content from March 2021 to September 2022, collecting a total of six podcast episodes.

First, "Fight for Equality" on July 6, 2021, on Episode 120 to share journey through academics into activism, and the legacy for future generations.

Second, "One Year After Atlanta" on March 16, 2022, on Episode 137 to shares these thoughts on what this day means for their community as they remember the lives, they lost one year ago in Atlanta.

Third, "Asian American History" on May 24, 2022, on Episode 149 to listen in as the three discuss the history of the term "Asian American" and how it has evolved over time, and where they're going as a collective.

Fourth, "More Data, More Answers" on June 1, 2022, on Episode 150 to say about the violence being directed at Asian Americans as well as how it helps to affirm their experiences to those outside their community.

Fifth, "Stop AAPI Hate" on August 2, 2022, on Episode 160 to talk about the history of

Asian America, what’s going on in their community right now, and how they got here.

The last, “Attorney & Community Organize” on August 5, 2022, on Episode 161 to talk about the Korean American experience, advocating for the voiceless in their community, and what they can do to take action to protect each other.⁴⁶ Table 1 below classifies the data sources of content analysis into time and event.

Furthermore, many people will return to the Chinese Exclusion Act, and sometimes back to the Korean War and the Vietnam War. These are important things to historicize, but it is really the most immediate legacy of the discourse on racial violence and organizational infrastructure about how they fight it.

Table 1. Summary of Data Sources of content analysis

Episode & Name	Date	Brief Description of the Content
EP#120 <i>Fight for Equality</i>	July 6, 2021	Share journey through academics into activism.
EP#137 <i>One Year After Atlanta</i>	March 16, 2022	Shares these thoughts on what this day means for their community.
EP#149 <i>Asian American History</i>	May 24, 2022	Discuss the history of the term “Asian American”
EP#150 <i>More Data, More Answers</i>	June 1, 2022	Say about the violence being directed at Asian Americans
EP#160 <i>Stop AAPI Hate</i>	August 2, 2022	Talk about what’s going on in our community right now
EP#161 <i>Attorney & Community Organize</i>	August 5, 2022	Advocate for the voiceless in their community

⁴⁶ "Dear Asian Americans," (2020).

DATA ANALYSIS

Ways of Data Analysis

The method is used for content analysis and narrative analysis. The following are the steps to evaluate my finding: Content analysis were systematically categorized to gain insight into the factors make the unity of Asian American. In addition, storytelling of the narratives was analyzed and linked to understand their thoughts and goals in this communities for Asian American consciousness under the worsening discrimination against Asians.

First, the researcher selected podcast of “Dear Asian American” to the content of analysis. Second, define the units and categories of analysis, which are fit into content of research under the series on the podcast, and the researcher find some resources in relation to research question through literature review, which are “Asian History”, “Asian Activism”, and “Asian Racism”, then find among the episodes from March,2021 to September,2022, then total six series of related content. Third, develop a set of rules for coding, the researcher coded raw data into transcripts and find some key sentence through transcripts, which may the reasons cause Asians speak out against violence. Fourth, code the text according to the rules, the researcher codes those sentence to preliminarily codes, and preliminary codes were coded over four times to ensure consistency and accuracy. Then, use the final themes to solve the research question and analyze the results.

As the researcher have said with the data collection procedure described in the methodology section, the researcher has identified three major themes along with 8 subthemes. Data were collected from the podcast of “Dear Asian American” and turned into the transcripts. Data were collected six episodes among March 2021 to September 2022 and selected in accordance with three major parts, “Asian-American history, Asian Activism, and “Asian American History”, of related key words because the three major related key words can interpret motivation behind the Asian solidarity. Furthermore, the unit of analysis for the

data was by podcast.

The six episodes are respectively, Ep.120 “Fight For Equality”, which talk about Asian Activism; Ep.137 “One Year After Atlanta”, which talk about what does the case of Atlanta spa shootings influence them; Ep.149 ”Asian American History”, which talk about the importance of knowing and understanding Asian American history; Ep.150 “More Data, More Answers”, which talk about the violence being directed at Asian Americans; Ep.160” Stop AAPI Hate “, which talk about the importance of data gathering to help create policies as preventative solutions to hate and harassment; Ep.161 “Attorney & Community Organizer”, which talk about advocating for the voiceless in their community.

Coding Process

Initially transcribed the podcast into a transcript using Google Voice, and the researchers listened to the podcast again to fix some transcription errors and tidy up the conversation for coding. At the preliminary coding, each segment was coded for the first time and then for the second encoding. It was found that in the process of the second coding, several coding had similar meanings, so the third coding divided them into the same categories. However, in order to ensure consistency, the researchers went back to the first coding to check, from the initial coding to the second coding and then to the third coding. However, there was a slight difference in the previous classification, which were made modifications. When continuing with the third coding, through the literature, find the coherence of these related categories and subdivide these coding into the fourth coding, so in the fourth coding, the similar categories were merged into the final codes, which helped to finalize the themes and subthemes of the collected data.

A total of 150 pieces of data were collected. 71 pieces of data came from the potential reason influence ethnic involvement and 9 pieces of data came from the potential reason

influence people choose to be a voiceless in this community. After sorting this data, the researcher found there to be a total of 70 unrelated pieces of data, which is like some insignificant conservation. This left a total of 80 pieces of codable data for the researcher to analyze. An outline of the data collected can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Raw Data Collected

Raw Data	
Data Input.....	150 pieces
Data from the potential reason influence ethnic involvement.....	71 pieces
Data from the potential reason influence people choose to be a voiceless.....	9 pieces
Unrelated Data.....	70 pieces
Total Data Analyzed.....	80 pieces

Description of Final Codes and Major Themes

Through the literature review, the stereotype of Asian American, which provides an accurate explanation of the structural factors currently at work. Interracial Asian Americans are stereotyped as perpetual foreigners and model minorities. In this case, they often serve as foils or wedges to the historical and ongoing racialized rivalry between blacks and whites. Because Asian Americans are portrayed as a model minority, violence against them is often downplayed, thereby reducing their channel of voice. One of the things that got the attention of the Atlanta shooting was that officials said the suspect was motivated only by the fact that he had a bad day today, making a hate crime not valid, which make many Asian people pay attention to these related issues.

All things considered, because of the theories discussed in the literature review, coding and issues targeting hate crimes, which keywords related to “Pursuit of Equitable Policy and Public Safety” as the first theme and subdivided into the “failure of hate crime law” and “the impact of public policy.”

Second, because of this history of the Model Minority Myth, there is a common stereotype of Asians that Asians generally just don't like to speak up for themselves or suffer in silence when attacked. Even this myth is used to divide minorities and create opposition. Therefore, the general impression of Asian-Americans is that they do not speak out when they are bullied, for fear of being targeted. This a turning point of the case of the Atlanta shooting influence many Asian Americans to speak out in a new way. Additionally, hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic are an extreme manifestation of othering illustrating the replicative and cumulative effects of the historical embeddedness of racism and xenophobia.

All things considered, the stereotypes of Asian American and their common trauma of "othering" under the covid-19 mentioned in the literature review contain keywords related to the “past and events and history” in the code as a second theme; “Impact of Asian Americans’ History and Past Discriminatory Incidents” and subdivided into “past and common experience” and “inhibition of vicious circle”.

Third, ethnic identity referred to in the literature often includes a sense of some shared history, values, and cultural ties, and racial participation reinforces racial identity. And ethnic groups' experiences of social prejudice and discrimination reinforce ethnic involvement. At the same time, ethnic involvement can enhance the social and human capital that facilitates integration in the host country. A strong racial consciousness might make it more likely that individuals and groups cultivate intergroup solidarity to challenge the systems that harm their communities.

All things considered, the related literature and related solidarity behaviors are taken as the third themes; “The Solidarity of Asian Americans”, and subdivided into consciousness of unity, the thoughts of positive energy, the impact of stands up against violence and the strong connection with communities.

The coded transcripts helped to answer the research question below.

Research Question: Why did this case of Atlanta spa shootings influence many Asians to speak up for themselves?

Table 3. Categorization of Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
Pursuit of Equitable Policy and Public Safety	The failure of hate crime law The impact of public policy
Impact of Asian Americans’ History and Past Discriminatory Incidents	Past and common experience Inhibition of vicious circle
The Solidarity of Asian Americans	Consciousness of unity The thoughts of positive energy The impact of stands up against violence The strong connection with communities

The major themes that emerged from the coded data were “Pursuit of Equitable Policy and Public Safety”, “Impact of Asian Americans’ History and Past Discriminatory Incidents”, “The Solidarity of Asian Americans”.

Within these major themes, subthemes developed, these major themes and subthemes can be seen above in Table 3. Pursuit of equitable policy and public safety include the two subthemes of the failure of hate crime law and the impact of public policy.

What's more, impact of Asian Americans' History and past discriminatory incidents included two subthemes of past and common experience and Inhibition of vicious circle.

Lastly, the solidarity of Asians includes four subthemes; consciousness of unity, the thoughts of positive energy, the impact of stands up against violence, and the strong connection with communities.

Pursuit of Equitable Policy and Public Safety

The formation of Pursuit of Equitable Policy and Public Safety is composed of three categories: official statement, law, and the impact of public policy. The coding appears twelve times in total, five of which revolve around the category of the failure of hate crime law. Seven around the category of the impact of public policy, which included the coding of the law protection of Asian American of woman and the elder.

The case of Atlanta spa shootings influences so influential, the first of which is a law enforcement official explains Robert Aaron Long's killing motivation—"Yesterday was a really bad day for him and this is what he did." The second is about this incident did not constitute a hate crime, and the third is legal protection, especially for the elderly and women who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

Through these three points, the system of American race can be learned through one of guests on the Episode 149, Dr. Ian Shin, Asst. Professor of history and American culture, who said:

Violence has been part of the very fabric of American Society from the beginning, right? It's almost, almost racist violence . It's almost the United States original sin. ”⁴⁷

⁴⁷ *Asian American History* podcast audio, Dear Asian Americans2022, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/149-christine-peralta-ian-shin-asian-american-history/id1500293933?i=1000563476878>.

The narrative frames the race system in the U.S. No matter what the stereotype of Asian American or the worsening discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic. This incident of Atlanta spa shootings involved issues of xenophobia, racism, misogyny, etc., but it was denied, causing some Asian people think if ignore this issue, which will lead to a more dangerous society.

Issues related to public safety and hate crime, centered around the conversations over these six episodes of podcasts, will be listed as one of the underlying factors behind the rally. In this paragraph, the researchers describe the broader narrative of the failure of hate crime law, followed by a discussion of the impact of public policy.

The failure of hate crime law

Mass murder of eight Georgians, six of whom were Asian women, many people across the country are outraged that local and state officials appear hesitant about, if not opposed to, classifying the massacre by the alleged gunman, who is white, as a racist and misogynistic attack. The anger over the exculpatory statements by the law-enforcement spokesperson Captain Jay Baker, who quoted the suspect as saying he'd had "a bad day," is rightfully placed. But the public call for hate-crime prosecution would be better served by an understanding that such designations are often purely symbolic.

That legacy of overlooking sexual violence is one of the many reasons that contemporary hate-crime legislation fails to reconcile how people can be simultaneously targeted for their race, gender, sexuality, and other identities. Couple that with the high legal threshold for establishing motivation, and it becomes clear that hate-crime laws at best hyper-punish perpetrators without expanding the law's capacity to identify and target discrimination. Instead of encompassing the racial and gendered violence that brutalized Taylor and the Atlanta victims, hate-crime legislation asks that the state decide whether

victims were women or people of color in the minds of their attackers. Hate-crime legislation is nationally ineffective at protecting marginalized groups. Until these statutes are used to expand our understanding of this kind of violence and provide the resources that targeted communities need to be less vulnerable, and until gender violence is recognized as our most prevalent hate crime, then these statutes are little more than an extension of the carceral state.⁴⁸

On the Episode 120, one of guest, scholar Simran focus on this case and said,

“But regardless, the community feels like they were targeted, and I think the frustration and I’ll speak for myself here, the frustration that I felt in dealing with this story and trying to get some advocacy mobilized around it was that very much left to the community to bring this story forward.”

“And I think that’s the challenge if we’re not actually able to get to the point where we see white supremacy and hatred as the core of our challenges that we share and that we need to come together around in order to resolve and we’re going to be stuck in these same problems that we’ve been dealing with our entire lives.”⁴⁹

The conversation revealed that those frustration make people trying to get some advocacy mobilized around it was very much left to the community to bring this story forward. From previous literature, Asians in the U.S. have historically been classified as between white and black, under the framework of white supremacy, neither fully white nor fully black. As a result, Asian Americans have been torn between solidarity with the white majority or other Asian and minority groups. In such this country, these things will always happen.

The major theme on this issue revealed that the underlying factor behind unity in Episode 149, one of the guests, Dr. Ian Shin said

⁴⁸ Saida Grundy, "Calling the Atlanta Shootings a Hate Crime Isn't Nearly Enough," *The Atlantic* (2021).

⁴⁹ *Fight for Equality* podcast audio, Dear Asian Americans 2021, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/120-simran-jeet-singh-scholar-activist-author-fight/id1500293933?i=1000527960820>.

Where are you trying to go? What choices are you trying to make? And if the choice were trying to make is to fight for a more inclusive and just society, right? Then you set aside certain things, and you come together around certain things. So strategic essentialism, understanding that it is like political identity that we form so that we can achieve certain things as a community. I think that to me is the driving idea behind the Asian American label that hopefully will continue to take us forward in the future.⁵⁰

The narrative shows when comment thing that people focus on hate crimes because it's not true that most of these incidents can ever be characterized as hate crimes because they have to push something that's very difficult to prove.

Furthermore, there was happened on May 22, 2021, President Joe Biden signed into law a bill that is aimed at countering a rise in anti-Asian hate crimes during the coronavirus pandemic, which the legislation is part of the nation's first step toward unity. The legislation, called the Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act, will create a new position at the Justice Department to expedite review of potential Covid-19-related hate crimes and incidents reported at the federal, state, or local level.⁵¹

As mentioned by literature review, [Menzie, Filion, Brenner, and Elgie] found that ethnic involvement is strengthened by an ethnic group's experience of societal prejudice and discrimination. ethnic involvement can enhance social and human capital that facilitates incorporation into the host country, which involvement includes social, cultural, political, and economic aspects.

The impact of public policy

The conversation data reveals the major theme on the importance of data and policy influence. In the previous introduction, Stop AAPI Hate, a national coalition aimed at

⁵⁰ *Asian American History*

⁵¹ Maegan Vazquez, "Biden Signs Bill Aimed at Addressing Rise in Anti-Asian Hate Crimes," (2021).

addressing anti-Asian American discrimination, in Episode 160, one of guest, Dr. Russell Jung, head of the movement, he said

So, to make any issue legitimate, make any issue at the forefront above policymaker's concerns, you need to demonstrate that you're clear all has a real issue. Something around complete over the model minority. Because we know the importance of documenting and you know the policymakers, you know mainstream media journals, all of user data to justify and to demonstrate and put in context individual stories of risk.⁵²

The guest indicates that that's evidence when they say there's a dark increase of hate crime. So, they knew that they had to document the Racism, which make things persuasive and push the public policy.

The major theme on this conversation revealed that the underlying factor behind unity in Episode 120, scholar Simran mentioned

We're so tribal and in some of the way that we view our own communities and so I hope that as we go forward, we cannot have to worry about at least inter Asian, struggles debates, things of that nature as we continue to advocate both at the policy level at so many different levels, there's gonna be this fight to make sure that we can all feel safe. One thing about both of those attacks that troubled me quite a bit were the ages of those people who were murdered and to think how we as a society could do better so that when my grandpa don't have to sort packages or to do laundry or to work at a spa and aside from you and me sitting in our educated privilege thinking about that part of our community that often is silenced right?⁵³

This narrative shows people thinking about what it means to them, how to do better, how to keep family and friends safe, and how to pursue public safety in this community, provided that silence can no longer continue.

⁵² *Stop Aapi Hate* podcast audio, Dear Asian Americans2022, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/160-russell-jeung-stop-aapi-hate/id1500293933?i=1000574864024>.

⁵³ *Fight for Equality*

Impact of Asian Americans' History and Past Discriminatory Incidents

The case of Atlanta spa shootings isn't the first tragic incident, nor will it be the last. The coding appears twenty-one times in total, eleven of which revolve around the category of past and common experience, ten of which around the category of the inhibition of vicious circle.

In these six series of podcast, the guests usually mentioned about some famous historical events like Japanese internment camps, modern minority, Vincent Chin incident etc. More specifically, in Episode 149, Dr. Ian even shared how past experience affected him

What changed for me in my childhood was I was a senior in high school when the terrorist attacks in 9/11 happened. You know, that was life changing in a lot of ways for me, but the biggest was watching my community and others just be ravaged just be attacked all over the country.⁵⁴

Seeing that former President Trump referred to the covid-19 as "kung fu" causing more racial incidents. Among the Episode 160, Dr. Russell Jeung mentioned this phenomenon

It's the racialization, the lumping together of us as all. Being similar or were indistinguishable, that's our common experience is we may be diverse in culture. We are similar in how we're being treated in the United States and in the past, we've been excluded officially and even today.⁵⁵

All things considered, this theme is mainly composed of the category of history, past and common experience, preventing the next event from happening as three major directions.

The podcast of Dear Asian American make people to narrative their personal experience through storytelling, to make sure that there is justice for those who were harmed, thirst care for those left behind and that there are actions being taken, so they can do what they can to prevent the next attack from happening. As previous literature review mentioned, podcast is making sure that it is data-driven and as fact driven as we can so that it is a little bit more defensible.

⁵⁴ *Asian American History*

⁵⁵ *Stop Aapi Hate*

Overall, in this paragraph, the researcher described the broader narrative of the past and common experiences, followed by a discussion of the inhibition of vicious circle.

Past and common experience

When people talk about racial violence to this community, it's always about the history and the bad experiences they've had. In these six episodes of podcast, the topic always revolves around the 9/11 incident, modern minority myth, Vincent chin case etc., which represent the importance of history.

Reference to model minorities in previous literature are linked to what Dr. Christine said in Episode 149. She stated

American loved to accept Asian labor and bring in Asian migration, but only that, right? When it comes to integration as citizens, they're casted as perpetual foreigners, right? And so, when we look at that, then the model minority myth. Becomes kind of gross because it's what is causing our further alienation from the country, right to continue to be workhorses, to continue to be perceived as people who are able to defy this race hierarchy actually.⁵⁶

These narratives revealed that the history of modern minority myth contribute to invisible discrimination against Asian Americans in society.

More specifically, the conversation data revealed the major theme on the underlying factor behind the unity. Through Episode 160, Dr. Russell Jeung focuses on racialization and mentioned, *“Even though Asians have higher class backgrounds. We still don't feel like we fit in. I think that's a common experience that holds us together.”⁵⁷* Furthermore, in Episode 149, Dr. Ian also mentioned, *“But we have to continue to stay loud on these things because history does repeat itself and history is the only thing.”⁵⁸* These two narratives showed that there's an

⁵⁶ *Asian American History*

⁵⁷ *Stop Aapi Hate*

⁵⁸ *Asian American History*

important lesson here around activism and representation too, which is like things haven't changed in so many years, people can't really expect things to change on their own.

Inhibition of vicious circle

A year later, Atlanta remembers the eight people killed in spa shootings, which represented that this case still influences many people.

According in Episode 161, the conversation data reveals a major theme on the underlying factor behind unity, Charles Jung, who is executive director of the California Asian Pacific American (APA) bar association and organizer with the Asian Justice Movement, mentioned

*You know, we all know that this violence that we're seeing is just a symptom of a broader, disease and, you know, we're not gonna be able to address that broader disease if we don't say the truth.*⁵⁹

This narrative shows that it same as the previous introduction mentioned, if people don't admit that this matter is targeted and keep silence, the problem will only become more serious and out of control.

Another key point to remember is the narrative indicate racism as disease. As previous literature review mentioned, hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic are an extreme manifestation of othering illustrating the replicative and cumulative effects of the historical embeddedness of racism and xenophobia. It is likely that this rash of COVID-19 related hate crimes and incidents will have enduring deleterious psychological, emotional, and physical effects on Asian American victims and Asian communities, exacerbated by decades of generational trauma. For Asian American groups, it is a crisis because they need to face racism, not COVID-19.

⁵⁹ Attorney & Community Organizer.

What's more, in Episode 137, the host Jerry also publicized specially

To speak up, to take up space, to make your voice heard. Because it's important. Perhaps not only for you, but those others in the room, and definitely for those coming up after us and so as we spend today, wherever we are in the world, Reflecting, thinking about grieving, thinking what we can do collectively, individually, as a community, as a society to make sure that we don't have any more March 16th in our lives.⁶⁰

This narrative shows that the host hope audiences think what actions can be taken, so they can do what they can to prevent the next attack from happening.

The Solidarity of Asian Americans

The coding appears forty-seven times in total, fifteen times of which revolve around the category of consciousness of unity, which also include coding of to achieve balance, keep family's safe, and raise awareness of ethnic identity. Eight times around the category of the thoughts of positive energy. Sixteen times of which revolve around the category of the impact of stands up against violence. The last, eight times of which revolve around the category of the strong connection with communities.

What comes first is that among the Episode 161, one of the guests, Charles Jung, executive director of the California Asian Pacific American (APA) bar association and organizer with the Asian Justice Movement, mentioned his optimism about Asian American unity

The point is that the events, the point is to continue to raise visibility, to activate the movement, to activate young people and what gives me optimism is seeing these young leaders coalesce, continue to lead it. As you know older people as a Gen X for myself you know my role is to support them and courage them and connect them and I do have optimism. I've lot optimism for the issue of Asian American movement.⁶¹

⁶⁰ *One Year after Atlanta* podcast audio, Dear Asian Americans2022.

⁶¹ *Attorney & Community Organizer.*

Back to the literature of ethnic involvement, which reinforces racial identity. And racial group experiences of social prejudice and discrimination reinforce ethnic involvement. With this in mind, the researchers listed this topic as one of the third factors that caused Asian people to speak out and divided this topic into four sub-items to illustrate: Consciousness of unity, the thoughts of positive energy, the impact of stands up against violence, and the strong connection with communities.

Consciousness of unity

The formation of consciousness of unity is composed of four categories: achievement, family safe, awareness of ethnic identity, and solidarity with other communities of color.

Back to the previous literature, social identity theory stated that our identities are shaped by the groups we belong to. As a result, we purposefully improve the image and status of our group relative to other groups, which is connected in Episode 161, Charles Jung, executive director of the California Asian Pacific American (APA) bar association and organizer with the Asian Justice Movement, said, *“And fighting racism and ending discrimination means that you also need to stand up for yourself and to advocate for other Asian Americans.”*⁶²

This narrative reveals that those stereotypes that they experience, that's real and it's time to speak up for the community in they own voice and Charles Jung emphasized they need to do it unabashedly.⁶³

Another key point to remember is in the 160 Episodes of dialogue, Dr. Russell mentioned the solidarity of the third world

The whole identity of being Asian American is not just for our sense of identity but are also included our sense of solidarity with the third world. So those who adopted the Asian American political identity in the past,

⁶² Attorney & Community Organizer.

⁶³ Attorney & Community Organizer.

*even today, maintain a strong sense of ethnic identity, racial identity, and then racial solidarity, other pains color.*⁶⁴

This narrative focus on who have Asian American's political identity like it's very challenging when they think about the diversity of Asian Americans. They often think about ethnicity. But generations also see themselves differently the way that language and culture is passed down, adding more complexity, mixed race families, or becoming more and more common in their community. So, sense of ethnic identity, racial identity, racial solidarity, other pains color makes them have consciousness of unity.

The thoughts of positive energy

To begin with the previous literature, ethnic identity is identification with the group shared commitments and values. In fact, social circles still aren't very acutely aware of the violence that is directed towards in this community. And maybe there's a part of people may feel like racism not really a problem anymore, if yes, it's only a very small group of irrational individuals. That's a challenge facing people see things in a different way.

There's no denying that in the total six episode of podcast, those guests are optimism, they have a positive mind thought through storytelling.

According to Episode 161, Charles said

*I mean, like allowing people to kind of express themselves without kind of burdens and limitations of prejudice and barriers to see that possibility to imagine big and to be able to live it. But, you know, also to embrace being what it means to be a minority and that Asian American in this society, in this moment where for the rest of this country, right?*⁶⁵

What's more, the host Jerry also mentioned

Being us, that somehow it inspires them to feel more pride and just have one a healthy identity and then not to have some of the self-doubting

⁶⁴ *Stop Aapi Hate*

⁶⁵ *Attorney & Community Organizer.*

*thoughts or just assimilation or self-hate almost, which also is pretty relevant in our communities.*⁶⁶

Furthermore, research has linked ethnic identity development with positive self-evaluation and self-esteem. Ethnic identity development has also been shown to serve as a buffer between perceived discrimination and depression.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, back to previous literature of social identity, if people have a positive view of their identity within a group, they are more likely to relate well to others in that group and feel positive emotions about themselves.

These narratives revealed that they have a positive energy in this community is such important although they cannot choose their identity, but to be hopeful.

The impact of stands up against violence

As far as I am concerned, there's a segment of Asian Americans from internet who think it's not meaningful to them to speak up for the community, and that it just gets them red-tagged. When compared with Episode 150, the Associate Director of Race, Neil mentioned about the importance of change and emphasized the impact of stands up against violence

“And I think other people are excited about just revealing the state of these voices, these attitudes. That's important because then that could lead to change.”

“That's important because you wanna accurately depict the voices, their attitude, so they could actually take in the direction that they wanna go and hopefully elected officials will take it in the direction or listen to them or people will understand us better right. They'll know Asian are not all the same right or where there's they're different right. So, appreciate it rather than you know just but usually they lump everyone together or to feel complete opposite like; Do you wanna have that you know part of the fabric of American public opinion research are part of America. I think that's what I'm excited about providing and that's what I've been excited all these events. I think there's people are realizing the storytelling is important the data or really making visible with invisible for the longest

⁶⁶ *Fight for Equality*

⁶⁷ "Ethnic Identity Development," *Wikipedia* (

time for the 22 million plus Asian Americans, so that their voices can be heard in again in untainted objective way."⁶⁸

This narrative reveals the importance of storytelling, because silences will pass over into forgetting. In previous literature mentioned, everyone with different unique cultures, languages and so many ways people came into that state. So, narrative based on just simple data is something important just to bring the facts to the national narrative on Asian Americans. Oftentimes when they share their story, they get gaslit.

As an illustration with the sharp rise of hatred against Asia under the epidemic, many people have come forward, this led to small possibility is more real. Just like at the federal level, Congress approved the Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act last May, and on other hand, at the state level, several bills have gained more momentum in the last year. In Illinois and New Jersey, lawmakers passed bills requiring schools to teach Asian American history after groups including Asian Americans Advancing Justice Chicago pushed lawmakers to take up the legislation. Furthermore, another effect of the Stop Asian the Hate movement has been a surge of engagement and participation in Asian American organizations in the past year.⁶⁹

Obviously, in previous literature review mentioned about Asian solidarity, empirical evidence indicates that a strong racial consciousness might make it more likely that individuals and groups cultivate intergroup solidarity to challenge the systems that harm their communities and that's the power of standing up against violence.

⁶⁸ *More Data, More Answers*, podcast audio, Dear Asian Americans2022, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/150-neil-ruiz-associate-director-of-race-and/id1500293933?i=1000564925301>.

⁶⁹ "Here's What the New Hate Crimes Law Aims to Do as Attacks on Asian Americans Rise."

The strong connection with communities

The host Jerry in Episode 161 mentioned about the diversity in this community

*We almost expected the racism welcomed being treated differently because we did not have the audacity or the thinking to view ourselves as American, to be expected, be treated this way. And I think when it comes to conversations around our identity, that's what makes it we often talk about the richness of the diversity of the community, but also makes it really complicated and complex to talk about because people see themselves so differently than we're not even talking about.*⁷⁰

According to this narrative, in fact, Asian Americans rarely give priority to their ethnic identity when constructing their identity, that is, which group they belong to. Most people first want to integrate into the mainstream, emphasize American identity, and then under the national constructing subgroup identities based on the country of origin.

Through the previous literature of the social identity theory, Asian-American individuals' identification with their own race or ethnicity mainly remains in the "diffuse" stage, and they have hardly explored their own identity as Asians and made corresponding commitments, nor do they regard themselves as Asians members of a constructive ethnic group, let alone thinking about the possibility and practice of ethnic "great unity" in the context of political participation. Therefore, in the context of the epidemic, the construction of Asians' ethnic identity has gradually entered the stage of "deferred compensation". Asian individuals have begun to expand their self-identity into ethnic groups, exploring the construction of Asian identity, resulting in Passionate about ethnic solidarity, began to engage in political activities directly related to Asian-American affairs.⁷¹

⁷⁰ *Attorney & Community Organizer.*

⁷¹ 陈思涵, "疫情背景下的种族主义激化: 美国亚裔政治参与“大团结”的新契机?," (2022).

What's more, in Episode 161, the host, Jerry talked about his perspective of this community

I mean, we are a valuable mirror to America, and we should be willing to have the uncomfortable conversations and to brace the role in not just to align ourselves with one community or another, but to brace our own truths and, you know, even thinking, abstracting from that to the bigger picture.⁷²

Simultaneously, according to Episode 120, the scholar Simran said

Really formed a new consciousness for me where I became aware of my own racialization how people perceived me, and I felt this really strong connection with these communities.⁷³

These narratives shows that the Asian American consciousness, and the obvious one is they wish less racism, less hate, more safety and along the same lines of hopefulness, which common goals contribute a strong connection with this community.

With regard to previous literature review of ethnic identity, which implies that attitudes about one's group have been examined and evaluated independently and are not simply the internalization of what other people think. Empirically, a number of studies (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Roberts et al., 1999) have found positive attitudes such as pride and feeling good about one's group to be part of an achieved ethnic identity. Positive feelings for one's group have been shown to predict happiness on a daily basis (Kiang, Yip, Gonzales, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006).

⁷² Attorney & Community Organizer.

⁷³ Fight for Equality

CONCLUSION

The key findings that arise from the data analysis are distinguished into three parts under conversation narratives. These concepts are the results of narratives into the three categories of defined issue, defined problem, and mobilization which comes from the formation of conversation narratives.

In six specially selected podcasts, the discourses were analyzed, and these people were all around related topics, and then divided into three aspects to explain the research question and why this matter affected people's decision to speak for them. A total of 150 codes were analyzed at the beginning, of which 71 codes came from the potential factors affecting people's voice, 9 codes came from the possibility that people were afraid to speak for themselves, and the remaining 70 coding were from conversations that were not related to the research question.

What comes first is that talking about the possibility that people are afraid to speak up for themselves in the 9 codes, including the historical white supremacy racism in the United States, the diversity of Asian ethnic groups, and the history of Asian Americans. Most American education does not mention the history of Asian Americans on class, many people do not know its complexity and diversity, so under the outbreak of the epidemic, because of political incitement, people's anger has shifted to China, which led to a series of rising hate crimes, the occurrence of the Atlanta incident, more and more serious things happened, which affect their life safety and physical and mental health.

Furthermore, in the study, three potential factors were identified to the research question: Why this case of Atlanta spa shootings influence many people speak up for themselves? The first finding is people pursue equitable policy and public safety, the second is impact of Asian Americans' history and past discriminatory incidents hold them together, and the third is the

Asian Americans consciousness make solidarity of Asians.

From my perspective, first of underlying factor of the pursuit of equitable policy and public safety, in the case of Atlanta spa shootings, this incident involved issues of xenophobia, racism, misogyny, etc., In fact, hate-crime legislation is nationally ineffective at protecting marginalized groups. Until these statutes are used to expand our understanding of this kind of violence and provide the resources that targeted communities need to be less vulnerable. So, result from the frustration of the case of Atlanta spa shootings, people trying to get some advocacy mobilized around it that was that very much left to the community to bring this story forward. That frustration in this case of Atlanta spa shootings were formed a new consciousness of Asian American, and which consciousness strengthened their ethnic involvement. Therefore, with this in mind by previous literature review, it is essential to satisfy the victims' need for access to justice by facilitating their active participation in the process. Things of that nature as Asian Americans continue to advocate and mobilize both at the policy level and at so many different levels, there's gonna be this fight to make sure that they can all feel safe.

Second of underlying factor of impact of Asian Americans' history and past discriminatory incidents, because of this previous literature mentioned of the Model Minority Myth, there is a common stereotype of Asians that Asians generally just don't like to speak up for themselves or suffer in silence when attacked. Furthermore, hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic are an extreme manifestation of othering illustrating the replicative and cumulative effects of the historical embeddedness of racism and xenophobia. There are people fears around since COVID-19 how they experience more discrimination. That is to say, it seems like they don't even have time to process them to grieve before the next one, so the Atlanta spa shootings meant is they need to take action so that prevent tragedy happened in the future. And the conclusion can be drawn that that's a common experience and trauma

that holds them together.

Third of underlying factor of the solidarity of Asians, with this in mind by the previous literature of the social identity theory, in the context of the epidemic, the construction of Asians' ethnic identity has gradually entered the stage of "deferred compensation". Asian individuals have begun to expand their self-identity into ethnic groups, exploring the construction of Asian identity, resulting in passionate about ethnic solidarity, began to engage in political activities directly related to Asian-American affairs. The previous literature review also mentioned ethnic involvement reinforces ethnic identity. Additionally, existing scholarship also suggests that perceived shared suffering, which can be characterized by minoritized groups experiencing similar forms of mistreatment or disempowerment, can lead to stronger intergroup empathy and coalitions. Furthermore, the conclusion can be drawn that the category of consciousness of unity, positive energy, awareness of racial identity and connection with this community, which would form a positive cycle to influence positivity of stand up against violence.

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