The Fight for Representation: The State of Chinese Americans 2022

COMMITTEE OF 100

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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Committee of 100 is a non-profit U.S. leadership organization of prominent Chinese Americans in business, government, academia, healthcare, and the arts focused on public policy engagement, civic engagement, and philanthropy. For over 30 years, Committee of 100 has served as a preeminent organization committed to the dual missions of promoting the full participation of Chinese Americans in all aspects of American life and constructive relations between the United States and Greater China. Visit https://www.committee100.org.

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The Fight for Representation: The State of Chinese Americans 2022

Executive Summary

Background

Chinese Americans are one of the fastest growing population groups in the United States, estimated to be 5.5 million or 1.7% of the U.S. population according to the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS). Chinese Americans are also one of the fastest-growing groups of voters. While Asian Americans have historically demonstrated lower levels of political engagement than some other groups, they experienced the largest increase in voter turnout between the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections among all racial or ethnic groups. Yet, Chinese Americans have been systematically marginalized and excluded from American society since their arrival in the 1850s. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the first U.S. law ever implemented to prevent entry to the country and pursuit of naturalization based on race or nationality. Further, Chinese Americans have been historically underrepresented in politics and policy, and underserved in healthcare, education, and social services.

The COVID-19 pandemic saw a sharp increase in anti-Asian hate crimes and incidents in the U.S. Harmful rhetoric linking the virus to individuals of Chinese descent fueled this surge in hostility. Chinese Americans in particular faced abuse, harassment, and violence. Among all 11,467 hate incidents reported to Stop AAPI Hate between March 2020 and March 2022, nearly half targeted people of Chinese descent. The impact of this hate has been severe. Across the country, Chinese and other Asian Americans reported increased fear, anxiety, and vigilance, suffering from deteriorating mental health, and decreased business revenue and income.

To address these issues, we must continuously collect comprehensive and accurate data on the diverse and multifaceted backgrounds and needs of Chinese Americans, including information related to demographic characteristics, cultural identity, healthcare, education, employment, economic security, and political engagement. Prior to the current study, large-scale survey data on Chinese Americans was limited. Most nationally representative surveys include samples of Chinese Americans too small to draw conclusions on, and instead report only on Asian Americans at-large. Further, these surveys are typically only administered in English and Spanish, preventing participation from Chinese Americans that prefer or are only able to communicate in Chinese. Some nationwide surveys of Asian Americans include a relatively large sample size of Chinese Americans, but their focus is typically narrowed to one or two topic areas such as cultural identity or political engagement, and lack measures on other aspects of the living conditions of the Chinese American population. Collecting a wide range of data on a large nationwide sample of Chinese Americans is key to understanding the characteristics, experiences, and opinions of this population, which, in turn, enables us to address the issues, concerns, and challenges faced by Chinese Americans.

Objectives

As a collaborative initiative between Columbia University and Committee of 100, the State of Chinese Americans Survey examines the demographic, economic, health, sociopolitical, and other characteristics and dynamics of the Chinese American population. It is intended to inform policymakers and the public regarding the status, contributions, and needs of the Chinese American population, and to inform timely and responsive policies, programs, and services that will address the identified gaps.

This survey project examines three main research questions:

First, what are the demographic characteristics of Chinese Americans regarding birthplace, place of upbringing, languages spoken at home, and English language proficiency? In terms of a sense of belonging and cultural identity, how accepted do Chinese Americans feel in American society? How do they feel about living across and navigating American and Chinese cultures? And, how prevalent are racial discrimination experiences among Chinese Americans and how do they cope with such experiences?

Second, what are the political opinions and levels of engagement among Chinese Americans? What proportion of Chinese American citizens are registered to vote and turn out in elections? What do Chinese Americans see as the most important problems facing the U.S.? How do they want the U.S. to engage with China on economic issues, and in what areas do they see the two countries working together? Moreover, how do U.S.-China relations affect the daily lives of Chinese Americans?

Third, what is the health and economic status of Chinese Americans? What does their household income distribution look like? What do levels of physical and mental health and life satisfaction look like among Chinese Americans? How prevalent are medical disadvantages and economic hardships in this population? Finally, what kind of support and resources do they need?

Methodology

The State of Chinese Americans Survey questionnaire included 77 questions across six modules: Demographics, Racial and Cultural Background, Health, Economic Activities and Insecurity, Social Engagement, and Political Engagement. Two open-ended questions in the survey asked respondents to describe their experiences with racial discrimination and coping mechanisms and the impact of U.S.-China relations in their daily lives. The nationwide survey was conducted online in English, simplified Chinese, and traditional Chinese, and invited participation from anyone over the age of 18 who self-identified as a person of Chinese ethnic origin and living in the United States. Survey respondents received no incentives for their participation.

Study participants were recruited through community outreach in partnership with more than 100 organizations throughout the country. This study used a non-probability sampling method with targeted subgroup recruitment efforts focusing on a set of key demographic characteristics for diverse representation. Special efforts were made to recruit participants in geographical areas where Chinese Americans are underrepresented. To ensure sufficient sample sizes for the harder-to-reach individuals with lower income, education, or English proficiency, roughly one-third of the partner organizations

specialized in community engagement, resource provision, and housing. The remaining two-thirds were affiliated with advocacy, commerce, culture, religion, and various professions.

After data collection was completed, statistical weights were created using the post-stratification raking method. The raking method is commonly used in survey research to adjust for nonresponse and sampling biases. The method involved calibrating the sample statistics so that the sample distribution of key demographic characteristics including gender, age, education level, English proficiency, U.S. citizenship, income level, and region aligns with the known distribution of the national Chinese American population based on the 2020 ACS 5-year estimates. All results reported are with the statistical weights applied.

The final sample included 6,481 respondents across regions and various demographic and socioeconomic subgroups. It is important to note that the sample is not nationally representative due to its non-probability sampling method. However, the survey design, recruitment methods, and statistical weighting ensure that study results reflect the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and views of the Chinese American population across the country.

Key Findings

The State of Chinese Americans Survey findings reveal the challenges and opportunities Chinese Americans face today. Three sets of key findings highlight the diverse experiences, wide-ranging access and needs, and aspirations of the Chinese American population.

First, Chinese Americans are diverse with regard to birthplace, place of upbringing, language spoken at home, and English proficiency. While the overwhelming majority of Chinese Americans see themselves as accepted in American society and culturally blended between American and Chinese cultures, they also often face marginalization and have experienced discrimination in their daily lives.

- About one in three Chinese Americans was born in the U.S., and 40% named the U.S. as their place of upbringing.
- Chinese Americans are a multilingual population. At home, nearly half spoke English, and nearly 40% spoke two or more languages. The majority (80%) reported being English proficient.
- Nearly three-quarters reported feeling accepted in American society, and over 80% reported feeling blended and harmonious between American and Chinese cultures.
- Nearly three out of four Chinese Americans experienced racial discrimination in the past 12 months. Two in three reported staying vigilant due to worries about safety related to hate crimes or harassment, nearly half reported being treated with less respect than other people, and over a quarter experienced bias or hate incidents such as being physically intimidated or assaulted, having their property vandalized or damaged, and being called names or made racial slurs.
- Chinese Americans are advocating for education and funding for greater awareness, calling for community support and solidarity, and urging authorities to pursue accountability in addressing racial discrimination and hate incidents.

Second, Chinese Americans are active political participants. The overwhelming majority of Chinese American citizens vote. They care deeply about issues facing American society and want improved relations and more collaboration between the U.S. and China.

- Eight in ten Chinese American citizens were registered voters, and 88% of registered voters voted in the 2020 presidential election.
- Racism, gun control, the economy, and crime were identified as the top four most important issues facing the U.S. by the survey respondents.
- Respondents expressed high-level anxiety about U.S.-China relations. About four in five Chinese Americans viewed the current U.S.-China relations as negative.
- Eight in ten Chinese Americans agreed that the U.S. should build a collaborative economic relationship with China. They identified economy and trade as the two top areas for mutual benefit from U.S.-China collaboration efforts.
- Respondents most frequently mentioned words such as "family" and "people" when describing the impact of U.S.-China relations on their daily lives.

Third, Chinese Americans are not homogenous. While often stereotyped as a "model minority," which fuels the perception that Chinese Americans are more prosperous and face fewer challenges than other racial groups, many face disadvantages or hardships in health and economics and need better support from policies and services.

- There was a wide household income distribution among Chinese Americans surveyed, with one-tenth in low income.
- Nearly a quarter received some form of assistance, with public assistance being the most common form of assistance.
- One in four Chinese Americans reported at least one form of health disadvantage, including either fair or poor physical or mental health or one or more disabilities. Households with low incomes and those with limited English proficiency experienced a greater prevalence of health disadvantages.
- Nearly one in four Chinese Americans were at moderate or severe risk of mental illness based on self-reported psychological distress, including feelings of worthlessness, depression, hopelessness, restlessness, nervousness, or that everything was an effort. Nearly one in three reported low-to-moderate life satisfaction.
- Nearly a quarter faced some form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship, including delayed medical care, difficulty paying for food or bills, or lack of health insurance coverage in the past 12 months.

Recommendations

The State of Chinese Americans Survey provides important context for promoting greater equity and inclusion of Chinese Americans. The diversity of Chinese Americans calls for proactive research and education to design equitable and inclusive policies, programs, and services. Not all Chinese Americans will have the same set of experiences and needs. The findings also highlight significant marginalization and hardship in the Chinese American community as a whole, despite individual differences among respondents. As such, policymakers must discern the opportunities and challenges associated with their respective areas in American society and how related policies may affect Chinese Americans. Moreover, Chinese Americans are active political participants, and policymakers should put a greater emphasis on their perspectives and voices in political discourse and decision-making.

Recognizing the wide-ranging experiences and perspectives of Chinese Americans is the first step to promoting greater equity and inclusion. Based on the findings from the State of Chinese Americans Survey, we offer the following recommendations.

To promote greater equity and inclusion of Chinese Americans, we recommend:
- Incorporate or expand Asian American history lessons across all levels of education, from K-12 to higher education, to help Americans understand the diverse accomplishments, contributions, and challenges of Chinese and Asian American populations.
- Allocate or increase funding for language access to provide Chinese Americans with low English proficiency with equal access to the same level of services and opportunities as English-speaking individuals. Partner with community members and organizations and solicit their feedback to improve the quality and implementation of new or existing language access services.
- Allocate or increase funding for community programs and organizations that bring support services and initiatives directly to Chinese Americans.
- Establish clear guidelines on addressing and responding proactively to reports of anti-Asian hate and discrimination. Authorities and organizations must ensure clear and culturally-informed protocols for incidents of anti-Asian hate and discrimination. This will promote the safety and wellness of those affected as well as to seek accountability for perpetrators of hate crimes.
- Uplift diverse creative voices to share stories and lived experiences of Chinese and Asian Americans to educate the public and build community.

To increase levels of political engagement and reduce the negative impact of contentious political rhetoric and strained U.S.-China relations on the lives of Chinese Americans, we recommend:
- Increase get-out-the-vote efforts and political mobilization of Chinese Americans, especially at the grassroots level to increase political participation of groups whose voices tend to be less heard and who tend to turn out at lower rates: younger, lower income, less educated, and less English-proficient groups.
- Actively discourage and speak up against inflammatory and derogatory language in discussion of U.S.-China relations, which has a direct and negative impact on the lives of Chinese Americans.
- Establish and increase opportunities to encourage more in-depth, meaningful conversations about political and civic engagement issues among Chinese Americans and across different racial or ethnic groups to enhance mutual understanding and respect and promote joint efforts and alliance building.

To address the health and economic needs of Chinese Americans, we recommend that policymakers, government officials, and service providers take steps to:
- Provide public assistance and health care services in various languages and dialects to support Chinese Americans with limited English proficiency to receive the economic support and medical services they need.
- Raise visibility and facilitate discussions of disadvantages and hardships among the Chinese American community to improve awareness and dismantle model minority stereotypes.
- Facilitate culturally-informed services and resource outreach to improve access to services and assistance programs among the Chinese American population with low incomes or limited English proficiency.
- Increase the number of bilingual, culturally-competent Chinese and Asian American mental health and social work professionals. Establish funding and scholarships to encourage multilingual services and provide language classes and training to support this goal.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Mission and Goals

Chinese Americans are one of the fastest growing population groups in the United States, yet they have been systematically marginalized and excluded from American society since their arrival in the 1850s. Chinese Americans have also been historically underrepresented in politics and policy, and underserved in healthcare, education, and social services. The State of Chinese Americans Survey project, launched jointly by Columbia University and Committee of 100, aims to be the primary data source on the demographic, health, economic, and sociopolitical conditions of the Chinese American population. This project seeks to inform policymakers and the public regarding the status, contributions, and needs of the Chinese American population, and aims to help develop timely and responsive policies, programs, and services.

As the first and largest project of its kind to gather wide-ranging data on Chinese Americans, the State of Chinese Americans Survey collected data from October to December 2022 from nearly 6,500 participants recruited in partnership with over 100 community, professional, and advocacy organizations from across 46 states. The survey generated findings that reflect the diverse identities, experiences, and views of the Chinese American population across regions and diverse demographic and socioeconomic subgroups. Based on analysis of the rich data collected, this report first presents results on the demographic characteristic, cultural identity, and racial discrimination experiences of Chinese Americans. It then examines the political opinions and levels of engagement among Chinese Americans, with a focus on their views on U.S.-China relations. This report then delves into the health and economic status of Chinese Americans, with an in-depth look at health and medical disadvantages and economic hardships. The report concludes by summarizing the findings and offering policy recommendations.

Chinese Americans: A brief history

Chinese American history spans several centuries, and Chinese Americans have endured many challenges to the present day. The first significant wave of Chinese immigrants to the United States arrived in California during the mid-1800s seeking economic opportunities. However, they were met with discrimination, racism, and xenophobia (Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project, 2020). Anti-Chinese sentiments manifested in the form of restrictive immigration policies. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the first U.S. law ever implemented to prevent entry to the country and pursuit of naturalization based on race or nationality and was in place for 61 years (Zhang, 2019). The repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 and the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 marked the official end of discriminatory immigration quotas based on race or nationality. These legislative movements, along with the normalization of U.S.-China relations in the 1970s, led to a new surge of growth of the Chinese American population. As shown in Figure 1.1, in 2021, the number of people of Chinese descent in the U.S. reached 5.5 million, constituting 1.7% of the total U.S. population. Chinese Americans are the largest group of Asian origin in the U.S., making up 24% of the Asian American population in 2019 (Budiman & Ruiz, 2021).

Chinese Americans are one of the fastest growing populations in the U.S., reaching 5.5 million in 2021
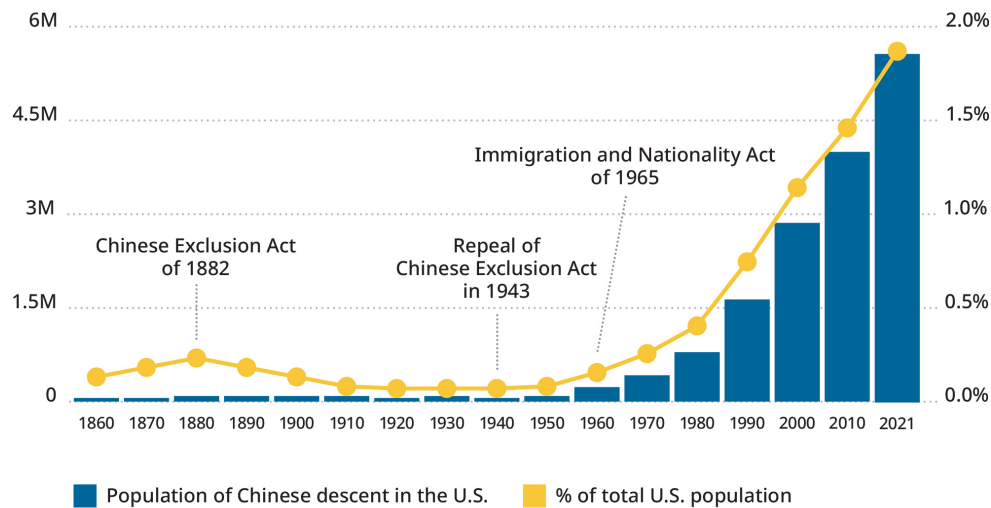
Figure 1.1 Population Growth Trend of Chinese Americans

Chinese Americans have had an increasingly significant impact on shaping the social, cultural, and economic fabric of American society. In the face of discriminatory laws and practices throughout history, Chinese Americans used legal action to fight for their rights to equal protection (*Yick Wo v. Hopkins*, 1886), U.S. citizenship (*United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, 1898), and primary education (*Gong Lum v. Rice*, 1927; *Tape v. Hurley*, 1885). Chinese American representation in the arts began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the Cantonese opera tours (The Music of Asian America Research Center, 2023). Talented and groundbreaking Chinese American actors, artists, filmmakers, and writers continue to enrich American culture. In the economic realm, Chinese Americans owned more than 160,000 businesses in 2019, accounting for $304 billion of the U.S. gross domestic product and 1.2% of the American workforce across various industries and occupations (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020). Chinese Americans are also represented among innovative and influential entrepreneurs in the American economy and increasingly hold leadership roles in companies.

However, systemic and pervasive obstacles and marginalization have accompanied the advancements and successes of Chinese Americans and the broader Asian American community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, false and harmful rhetoric against people of Chinese descent fueled a surge in anti-Asian and anti-Chinese discrimination and violence. Stop AAPI Hate (2022) received 11,467 reports of hate instances between March 2020 and March 2022; 43% of those who reported incidents identified as people of Chinese ethnicity. Yet, in a survey on attitudes and perceptions related to Asian Americans, about one-third of Americans reported that they were unaware of the increased attacks against Asian Americans (The Asian American Foundation [TAAF], 2022).

Building on and informed by history, the State of Chinese Americans Survey provides updated and timely data on the cultural identity, racial discrimination experiences, political engagement, and health and economic conditions and needs of the Chinese American population. It offers crucial information

for educating the public and policymakers about the contributions of and challenges faced by this population and promotes a deeper understanding of the Chinese American community, which in turn enriches understanding of Asian Americans and American society at large.

Methodology

The State of Chinese Americans Survey was a self-administered online survey conducted nationwide from October to December 2022 in three languages: English, simplified Chinese, and traditional Chinese. The survey invited the participation of any adult self-identifying of Chinese-ethnic origin and living in the United States. The final sample included 6,481 respondents across 46 states and various demographic and socioeconomic subgroups.

The survey questionnaire included 77 questions across six modules: demographics, racial and cultural background, health, economic activities and insecurity, social engagement, and political engagement. Two open-ended questions asked respondents to describe their experience with racial discrimination, coping mechanisms, and the impact of U.S.-China relations in their daily lives. Before launching the survey, the research team conducted test online surveys in all three languages and in-person and virtual focus groups in English and Mandarin to assess the survey's technological ease, linguistic relevance, and cultural appropriateness, and made revisions to reduce the survey length and narrow down the survey scope. Survey respondents received no incentives for their participation.

Study participants were recruited through community outreach in partnership with more than 100 organizations throughout the country. This study used a non-probability sampling method with targeted subgroup recruitment efforts focusing on a set of key demographic characteristics for diverse representation. Special efforts were made to recruit participants in geographical areas where Chinese Americans are underrepresented. To ensure sufficient sample sizes for the harder-to-reach individuals with lower income levels, education, and English proficiency, roughly one-third of the partner organizations specialized in community engagement, resource provision, and housing. The remaining two-thirds were affiliated with advocacy, commerce, culture, religion, and various professions. Moreover, in order to help boost the representation of harder-to-reach subgroups, the research team engaged in in-person outreach in local neighborhoods.

After data collection was completed, statistical weights were created using the post-stratification raking method. The raking method is commonly used in survey research to adjust for nonresponse and sampling biases. The method involved calibrating the sample statistics so that the sample approximates the national Chinese American population on the known distribution of key demographic characteristics including gender, age, education level, English proficiency, U.S. citizenship, income level, and census region based on the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. All results reported are with the statistical weights applied.

It is important to note that the sample is not nationally representative due to its non-probability sampling method. However, the survey design, recruitment methods, and statistical weighting ensure that study results reflect the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and views of the Chinese American population across the country. Appendix A offers a more detailed explanation of The State of Chinese Americans Survey methodology.

Preview of findings

The State of Chinese Americans Survey findings reveal the challenges and opportunities facing Chinese Americans today. Three sets of key findings collectively highlight the diverse experiences, vocal aspirations, and wide-ranging needs of the Chinese American population. These findings are presented and discussed in greater detail in Chapters 2-4, respectively, followed by Chapter 5 which concludes the report.

First, Chinese Americans are diverse and feel accepted in American society, but they often face marginalization and experience discrimination in their daily lives.
- The majority of Chinese Americans were English proficient and nearly half spoke two or more languages.
- The overwhelming majority of Chinese Americans felt accepted in American society and culturally blended between American and Chinese cultures.
- Despite the strong sense of acceptance, Chinese Americans also faced marginalization and experienced high levels of discrimination in their daily lives.
- Nearly three in four respondents reported having experienced racial discrimination or racism-related vigilance in the past 12 months.

Second, Chinese Americans are active political participants.
- The overwhelming majority of Chinese American citizens were registered voters.
- Respondents identified racism, crime, gun control, and the economy as the top four most important issues facing the U.S..
- Most respondents agreed that the U.S. should build a collaborative economic relationship with China.

Third, Chinese Americans are not homogenous.
- While often stereotyped as a "model minority," many Chinese Americans faced health or medical disadvantages or economic hardships.
- Nearly one in four Chinese Americans surveyed reported fair or poor physical or mental health, or were at moderate or severe risk of mental illness.
- Nearly a quarter faced some form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship, including delayed medical care, difficulty paying for food or bills, or lack of health insurance coverage in the past 12 months.

Chapter 2: Identity and Discrimination

This chapter examines the cultural identity and racial discrimination experiences of the Chinese American population. We first showcase the diversity of Chinese Americans in this study with regard to birthplace, place of upbringing, language spoken at home, and English proficiency. We then examine respondents' sense of acceptance in American, Asian American, and Chinese American societies as well as their self-perception of cultural identity. Next, we present findings on the prevalence and forms of racial discrimination experiences and racism-related vigilance among Chinese Americans, including stories and coping strategies shared by the study participants. The chapter concludes by highlighting responses that call for awareness of and action against anti-Asian racial discrimination.

Key Findings

- About one in three Chinese Americans in this study was born in the U.S., and 40% named the U.S. as their place of upbringing.
- Chinese Americans are a multilingual population. At home, nearly half spoke English and nearly 40% spoke two or more languages. The majority (80%) reported being English proficient.
- Nearly three-quarters reported feeling accepted in American society, and over 80% reported feeling culturally blended and having cultural harmony between American and Chinese cultures.
- Nearly three out of four Chinese Americans experienced racial discrimination in the past 12 months, with two in three staying vigilant due to worries about safety related to hate crimes or harassment.
- Chinese Americans advocated for education and funding for greater awareness, called for community support and solidarity, and urged authorities to pursue accountability in addressing racial discrimination and hate incidents.

Diversity of Chinese Americans

Chinese Americans were diverse with regard to birthplace, place of upbringing, language spoken at home, and English proficiency.

To understand the respondents' backgrounds, we asked about their birthplace and place of upbringing, as measured by where they mostly lived when they were 12 years old.[1] As shown in Figure 2.1, over half of the respondents were born in Mainland China (52%) while less than one-third were born in the U.S. (27%). But examining the place of upbringing shows that similar shares of Chinese Americans in this study grew up in Mainland China (44%) and the U.S. (41%). The percentages of those born and brought up in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and other parts of the world remained similar. The shifting distributions of the birthplace and place of upbringing highlight the diversity of Chinese Americans' dynamic personal histories that shape their cultural identity.

Growing up in America: A much larger share reported the U.S. as place of upbringing compared to place of birth

Place of Birth

Mainland China (52%)

United States (27%)

Other (7%)

Hong Kong (8%)

Taiwan (6%)

Place of Upbringing

Mainland China (44%)

United States (41%)

Taiwan (5%)

Other (4%)

Hong Kong (6%)
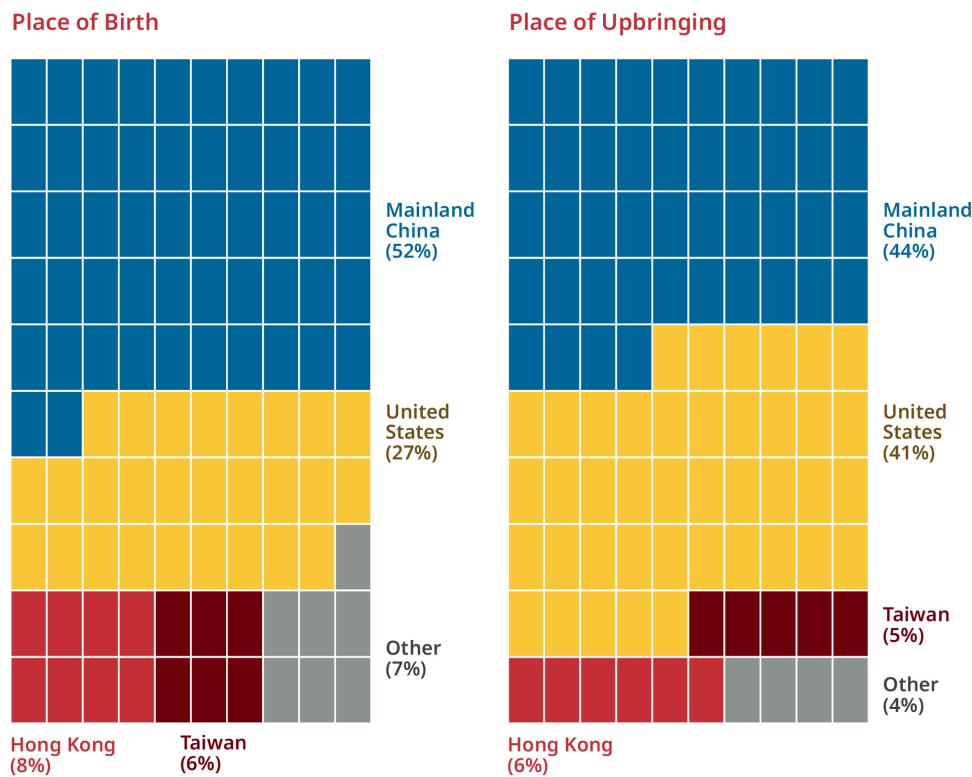
Figure 2.1 Birthplaces and Places of Upbringing

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[1] We referenced the following question in the General Social Survey: "In what state or foreign country were you living when you were 16 years old?" Our question lowered the reference age from 16 to 12 based on existing research that identity formation and meaning-making can start in early adolescence (Erikson, 1968; Sokol, 2009).

The distribution of languages spoken at home further highlights the diversity of the study participants. Figure 2.2 shows that 36% of the respondents spoke two or more languages at home, while 64% spoke one language. About half spoke English at home, either as the only language (24%) or in combination with other languages such as Mandarin or Cantonese (27%).

A multilingual population: At home, nearly half spoke English & nearly 40% spoke two or more languages
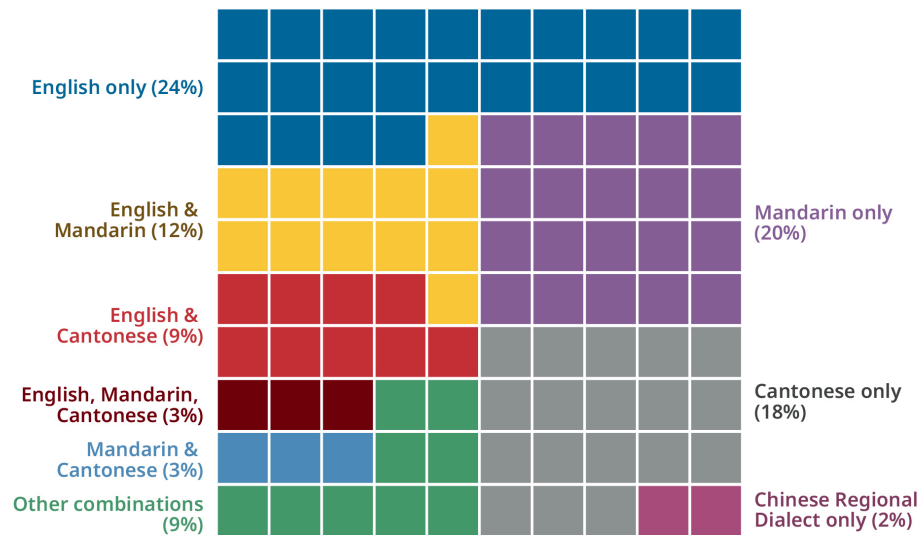
Figure 2.2 Languages spoken at home

Figure 2.3 shows that four in five respondents reported being English proficient, with three in five (57%) speaking English very well and one in five (22%) speaking English well. The remaining share indicated that they did not speak English well (17%) or at all (4%).

Most were English proficient
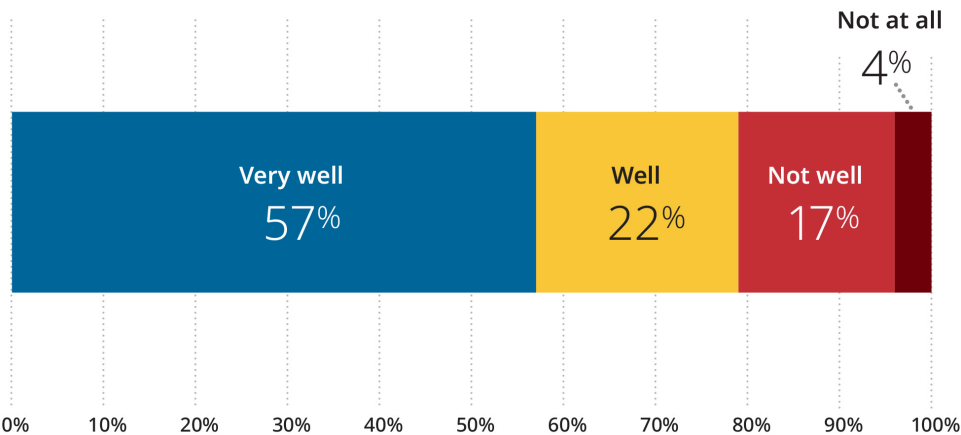
Figure 2.3 Self-reported English Proficiency

Sense of Acceptance

The vast majority of Chinese Americans in the study reported feeling accepted in American society.
Among respondents who reported their sense of acceptance in American society, nearly eight out of
ten said that they felt accepted in American society, as shown in Figure 2.4.[2] The high prevalence of
feeling accepted was similar when we asked about the sense of acceptance elsewhere: nine out of ten
reported feeling accepted in Asian American (88%) and Chinese American (90%) societies.

Majority felt accepted in American society
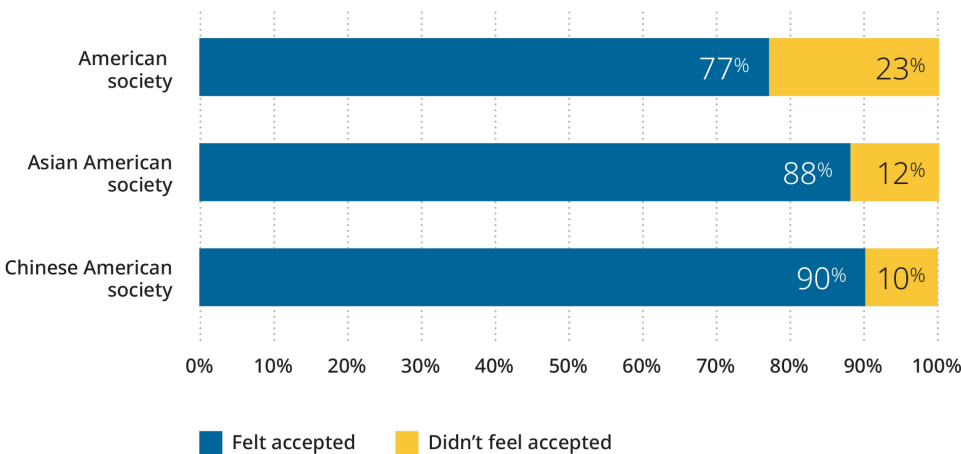
Figure 2.4 Sense of Acceptance

Figure 2.5 shows that the sense of acceptance in American society varied by English proficiency.
Notably, the prevalence of those who felt accepted decreased with less English proficiency. Among
those who reported speaking English very well, about eight out of ten (82%) felt accepted in American
society, as compared to slightly over half (55%) among those who did not speak English at all. These
differences are not surprising, given the role of shared language in facilitating social interactions and
increasing access to information and resources.

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2 The original wording of this set of questions is "How much do you agree with each of the following statements? I feel that I am accepted
in the American/Asian American/Chinese American society." The response categories include strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat
disagree, and strongly disagree. In the figure, we grouped "strongly agree" and "somewhat agree" into "felt accepted" and "somewhat
disagree" and "strongly disagree" into "didn't feel accepted."

Feeling of acceptance in American society varied by English proficiency
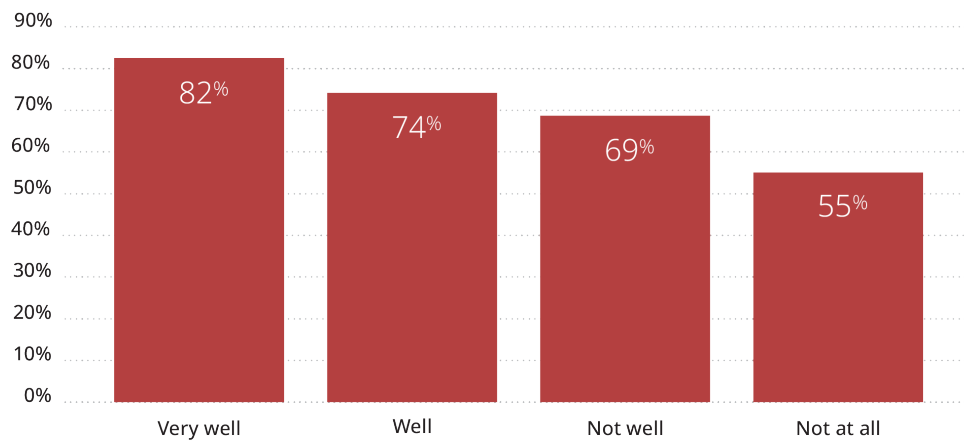
Figure 2.5 Sense of Acceptance in American Society, by English Proficiency

As one might expect, Chinese Americans who were U.S. citizens were more likely to feel accepted in American society than non-citizens, yet even among non-citizens, the sense of acceptance in American society was high. As shown in Figure 2.6, among respondents who reported their birthplace and U.S. citizenship, 80% of Chinese American citizens—regardless of being U.S.- or foreign-born—felt accepted in American society, compared to 70% of non-citizens.

Strong sense of acceptance in American society across birthplace and U.S. citizenship status
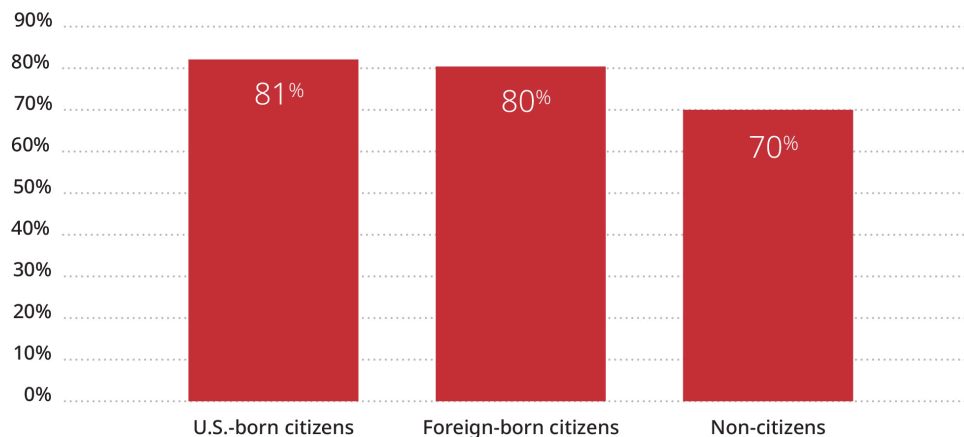
Figure 2.6 Sense of Acceptance, by Birthplace and U.S. Citizenship Status

Cultural Blendedness, Harmony, and Conflict

Majority reported a sense of blendedness and harmony between American and Chinese cultures.
The survey asked three questions related to how respondents perceived themselves as part of both American and Chinese cultures.[3] The first question asked whether they felt part of a combined American and Chinese culture (i.e., cultural blendedness). The second question asked whether they felt like someone moving between American and Chinese cultures (i.e., cultural harmony). And the third asked whether they felt conflicted between the American and Chinese ways of doing things (i.e., cultural conflict).

As shown in Figure 2.7, most Chinese Americans in this study felt a strong sense of cultural blendedness and harmony. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents reported feeling part of a combined culture and 81% reported feeling like someone moving between two cultures. Despite the high level of self-reported cultural blendedness and harmony, about six out of ten (58%) also reported feeling conflicted between the American and Chinese ways of doing things, while about four out of ten (42%) reported not feeling such cultural conflict.

Strong sense of cultural blendedness between American and Chinese cultures
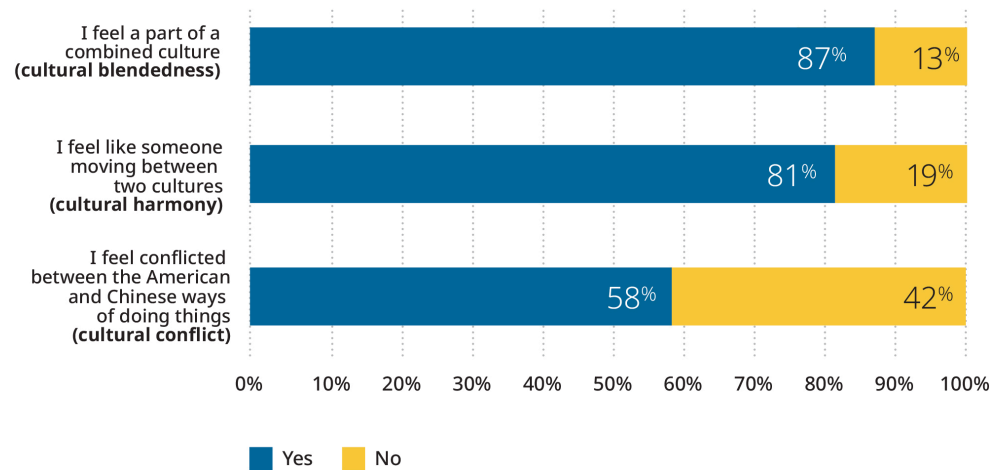
Figure 2.7 Cultural Blendedness, Harmony, and Conflict

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[3] This study adopted the Bicultural Identity Integration Scale–Version 2 (BIIS-2) to measure the sense of blendedness (i.e., overlap v. separation), harmony (i.e., compatibility and cohesion), and conflict (i.e., incompatibility and clash) between American and Chinese cultural orientations (Huynh et al., 2018).

As expected, Chinese Americans who were U.S. citizens reported a higher sense of cultural blendedness than non-citizens. Figure 2.8 shows that nine in ten Chinese American citizens–regardless of U.S.- or foreign-born–and eight in ten non-citizens in this study indicated feeling part of a combined culture.

Majority felt part of a combined culture across birthplace and U.S. citizenship status
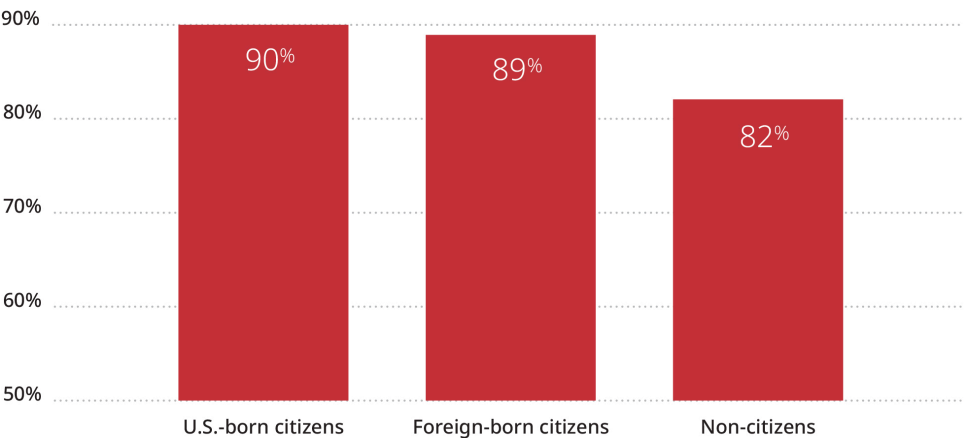
Figure 2.8 Cultural Blendedness, by Birthplace and U.S. Citizenship Status

While the majority of Chinese Americans in this study reported a strong sense of cultural blendedness, some still felt conflicted between American and Chinese cultures. Figure 2.9 shows that the sense of cultural conflict was more prevalent among those with lower English proficiency. About seven in ten respondents who did not speak English well or at all felt conflicted between the American and Chinese ways of doing things. By comparison, a smaller share of respondents who spoke English very well or well felt similarly (52% and 64% respectively).

Sense of cultural conflict was stronger among those with lower English proficiency
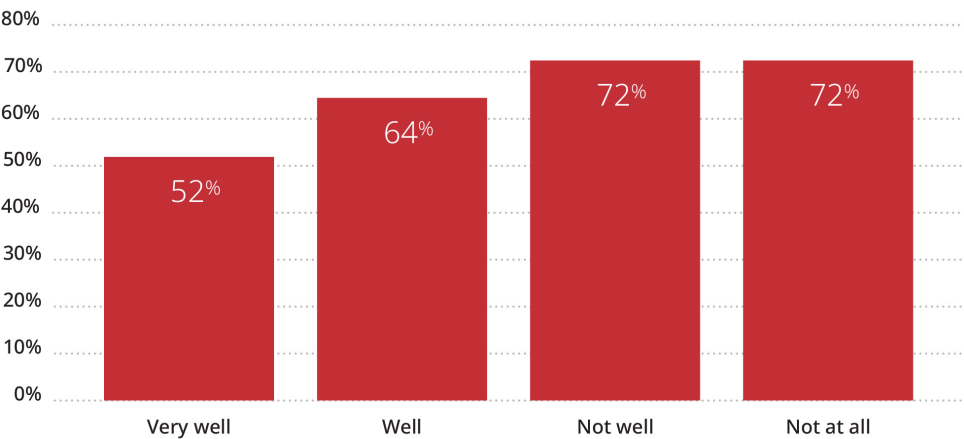
Figure 2.9 Cultural Conflict, by English proficiency

Racial Discrimination Experiences

Nearly three in four reported having discrimination experience at least once in the past 12 months.

This study adopted three sets of measures to capture the forms and degrees to which Chinese Americans experienced racial discrimination. *Bias and hate incidents* capture explicit forms of verbal and/or physical harassment, assault, violence, and other biases (Gao et al., 2022). *Everyday discrimination* measures subjective experiences of discrimination or unfair treatment in one's daily life (Williams et al., 1997). *Racism-related vigilance* refers to a chronic stress response originating from constantly being on guard from ruminating over past experiences of discrimination and planning for action against future experiences (Gao et al., 2022).

As shown in Figure 2.10, nearly three quarters of Chinese Americans in this study experienced racial discrimination in the past 12 months, with two-thirds staying vigilant due to worries about racial discrimination. Nearly half reported experiencing discrimination in their daily lives, and over a quarter experiencing bias or hate incidents. It is noteworthy that the reports of racism-related vigilance were more prevalent than reports of everyday discrimination and experiences of bias and hate incidents, highlighting the mental burden carried by Chinese Americans due to racial discrimination experiences and worries.

High prevalence of racial discrimination experience in the past 12 months
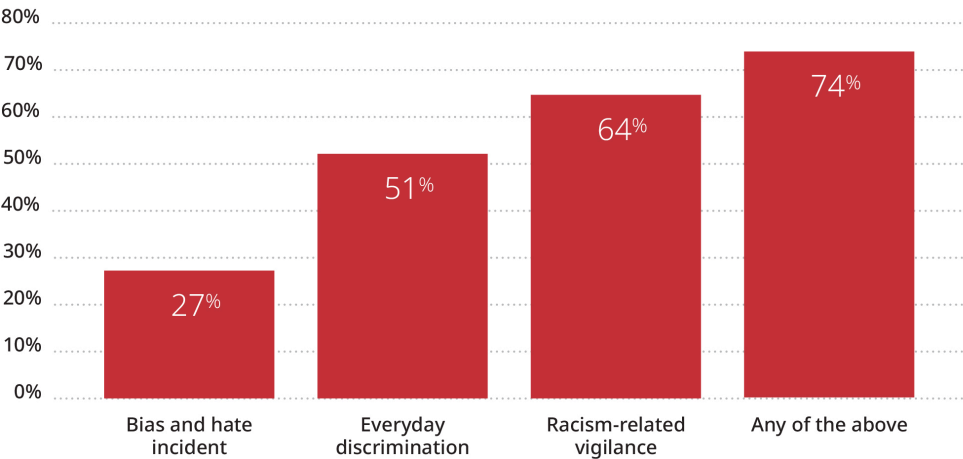
Figure 2.10. Racial Discrimination Experiences

Figure 2.11 presents the reported racism-related vigilance based on three specific measures. Among respondents who reported experiences of racism-related vigilance, more than half (55%) worried about their own or their family members' safety from a hate crime or harassment. In addition, 38% tried to avoid certain social situations or places due to worries about racial discrimination, and 37% felt unease in public areas or worried how other people might look at them.

Majority worried about safety and kept vigilant in the past 12 months
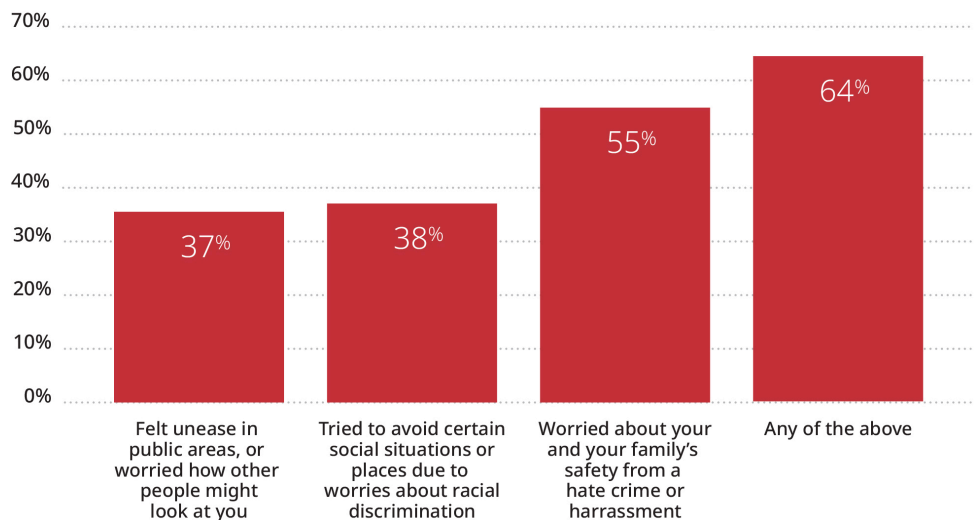
Figure 2.11 Racism-related Vigilance

As mentioned earlier, over half of racial discrimination reports pertained to discrimination in respondents' daily lives. Figure 2.12 shows the prevalence of specific forms of everyday discrimination experienced by Chinese Americans in this study. Among respondents who reported everyday discrimination experiences, 11% said that people acted as if they were afraid of them. About a quarter (26%) reported that they were treated unfairly at restaurants or stores, and nearly half (46%) reported that they were treated with less respect than other people.

Many experienced discrimination in daily lives
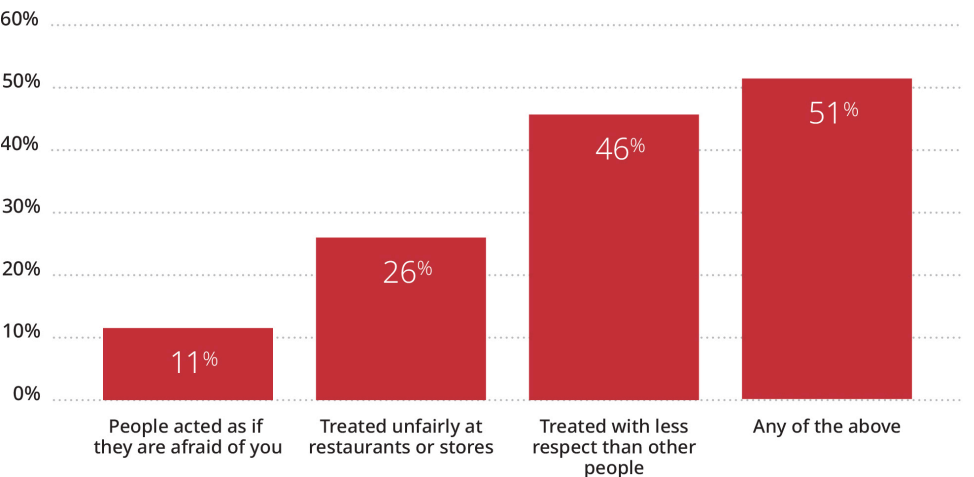
Figure 2.12 Everyday Discrimination Experiences

As mentioned earlier, nearly one in three Chinese Americans reported experiencing a bias or hate incident between 2021 and 2022. Figure 2.13 shows that, among respondents who reported experiencing a bias and hate incident, the most prevalent type of incident was being called a racial slur or a name or being harassed in person or online (20%). In addition, 9% were physically intimidated or assaulted and 7% had their home, car, or other property vandalized or damaged.

Verbal harassment reported as the most prominent form of bias and hate incident
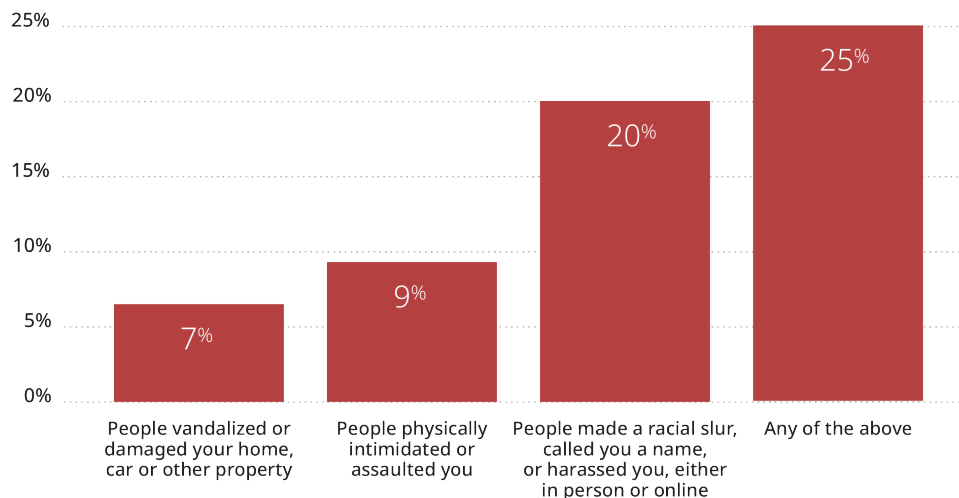
Figure 2.13 Bias and Hate Incidents

Call for Awareness and Action

The survey included the following open-ended question related to anti-Asian discrimination and coping strategies:

> *As many people are aware, there has been a spike in anti-Asian racial discrimination and violence in recent years. In the past 12 months, have you and/or your family experienced anti-Asian racial discrimination, hate crimes, and/or violence? If so, do you mind sharing briefly about the experience(s)? How did you and/or your family react to and cope with the experience(s)?*

Entering their responses in the text box that followed this question, 2,837 respondents (44% of the sample) shared their experiences of racial discrimination and coping strategies at various lengths. The vast majority of these experiences aligned with the three types of racial discrimination discussed earlier in this chapter: racism-related vigilance, everyday discrimination, and bias and hate incidents. Many respondents either implied or explicitly stated a range of actions needed to combat anti-Asian racial discrimination, including education and funding for greater awareness, community support and solidarity, and the need for authorities to pursue accountability. The selected quotes below illustrate the need for these recommended actions[4].

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4 Parts of the quotes in bold are our emphasis and not of the respondents'.

Need for education and funding for greater awareness

Chinese Americans who described their experiences of racial discrimination underscored the lack of awareness in their immediate community as well as in American society at large. Some stated that they responded to negative experiences by educating themselves or others about discrimination, hate crimes, and violence against Asian Americans. Others participated in political action and supporting community organizations that work with Asian American communities.

> I experienced **anti-Asian comments at work**. My boss said she didn't want to focus on Asian American experiences or stories in our work as district level educational leaders. She said Asian American stories didn't matter as much as Black experiences. She looked me in the eye and said **"I'm sorry but I don't care about Asians."**

> Had an experience while in **jury duty.** We had a break and a fellow juror said the only reason we have **COVID is due to Chinese people eating weird things like bats!**
>
> I had to re-educate them that they were completely wrong and that **they should not talk about things they know nothing about** and make false accusations.

> I have not experienced anything personally but remain **very actively engaged with policies and funding** that combat the rise of anti-Asian hate.

Need for community support and solidarity

A number of respondents coped with racial discrimination by supporting local Chinese and Asian American communities. Community support ranged from frequenting Chinese and Asian American-owned local businesses, attending rallies, and revitalizing local community spaces.

> It troubles me to see seniors and families afraid to go out. In the midst of a lot of talk about anti-Asian hate and crimes/violence, I have chosen instead to **redirect my attention, energy and focus on positive actions in our local Chinatown community** that have a positive indirect impact on these issues. For example, working to rebuild our recreation center so the community has **a safe haven to feel belonging, safety and community**. I personally am revitalized by working on these positive projects and feel less weighed down by the burden of having to address racism and hate directly.

> We do **patronize Asian businesses in Chinatown** and elsewhere where hate crimes have occurred.

> **I've attended many Asian rallies** in SF, San Jose and actively follow social media in tracking attacks and incidents.

Need for authorities to pursue accountability

A common theme across responses was the lack of support, follow-up, and accountability by authorities against anti-Asian discrimination, hate crimes, and violence. In cases where Chinese Americans in this study reported bias and hate incidents to authorities, most did not receive any follow-up actions or were discouraged from further pursuing accountability. Those who did not report bias and hate incidents to authorities decided so because they did not trust that authorities would believe their accounts or would take necessary action. They called for local leaders and authorities to be vocal against anti-Asian discrimination and hate and take action to pursue accountability and justice.

My son-in-law's mother, aged 70s, **was struck in Boston's Chinatown, with no reason**. She fell down and was treated in the hospital. Boston Police and local TV news channel interviewed her. Local CCTV recorded the potential suspect, but **no one was arrested**. Police said that person probably had mental illness.

I have been **denied reporting hate bias crimes/incidents** to the local police department because they would not accept the report, I have been hesitant to report to the local police department because of **'lack of trust' with the local police**.

Almost no politicians nor media have stood up, nor got the guts to stand up and called out the **totally unfair bias labeling and scapegoating** of us.

Summary

Chinese Americans in this study were diverse with regard to birthplace, place of upbringing, language spoken at home, and English proficiency. Although the majority of respondents felt accepted in American society and had a strong sense of cultural blendedness and harmony between American and Chinese cultures, many experienced various forms of anti-Asian discrimination, hate crimes, and violence in their daily lives. Nearly half of the study participants described their discrimination experiences and coping strategies in response to an open-ended question, which revealed the ongoing need for education, awareness, community support, and stronger action by authorities against anti-Asian discrimination and hate.

Chapter 3: Political Engagement

This chapter examines the political engagement and views among Chinese Americans and how U.S.-China relations have affected their lives. The chapter opens with results on the political participation of Chinese Americans in this study, focusing on voter registration and voting turnout. An examination of views and opinions related to problems facing the U.S. and U.S.-China relations follows. This chapter concludes by highlighting respondent responses regarding how U.S.-China relations impacted their daily lives.

Key Findings

- Eight in ten Chinese American citizens were registered voters, and 88% of registered voters voted in the 2020 presidential election.
- Racism, gun control, the economy, and crime were identified as the top four problems facing the U.S.
- There was a high level of anxiety about relations between the U.S. and China, especially among more educated respondents. About four in five Chinese Americans viewed U.S.-China relations as negative.
- Eight in ten Chinese Americans agreed that the U.S. should build a collaborative economic relationship with China. The economy and trade were identified as the two top areas for mutual benefit from U.S.-China collaboration efforts.
- Respondents most frequently mentioned "family" and "people" when describing the impact of U.S.-China relations on their daily lives.

Political Participation

Chinese Americans in this study were active political participants with high rates of voter registration and voting turnout.

The overwhelming majority (83%) of Chinese American citizens reported that they were registered to vote, as shown in Figure 3.1. Eight percent were eligible to vote but not registered, 1% were ineligible and not registered to vote, and 7% didn't respond to the voter registration status question.

Among Chinese Americans citizens registered to vote, Figure 3.2 shows that nearly nine in ten (88%) reported having voted in the 2020 presidential election. Only 7% registered voters did not turn out to vote, 2% reported not remembering if they turned out, and 2% did not respond to the question. The survey data underscores the importance of engaging the Chinese American community as a powerful and active voting bloc.

High rates of political participation

Voter Registration Status
- Registered
- Not registered, ineligible
- Not registered, eligible
- Other/don't know
- Didn't respond
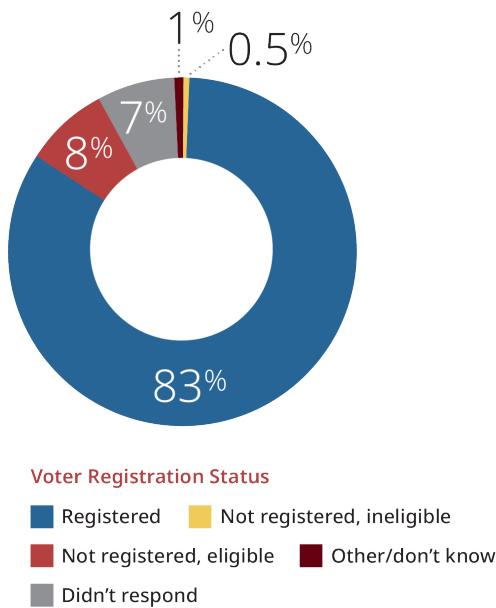
Figure 3.1 Voter Registration Status

2020 Presidential Election Turnout
- Voted
- Didn't vote
- Didn't know/remember
- Didn't respond
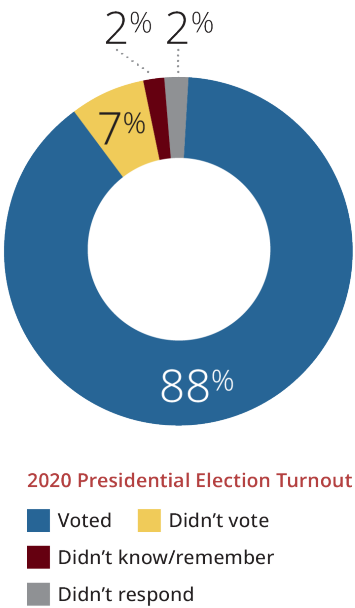
Figure 3.2 2020 Presidential Election Turnout

Important problems facing the U.S.

Chinese Americans identified racism, gun control, the economy, and crime as the most important problems facing the U.S.

When asked to identify the most important problems facing the U.S. today, Chinese Americans in this study named racism (13% of responses); gun control (12%); the economy, jobs, and inflation (12%); and crime (12%) as the top four problems, as shown in Figure 3.3. Other important problems mentioned include income inequality (9%), the government or political system (8%), the environment and climate change (7%), health care (5%), education (5%), and abortion rights (5%), housing (4%), foreign policy (3%), immigration (3%), and terrorism and national security (2%).

Racism, gun control, the economy, and crime identified as most important problems facing the U.S.
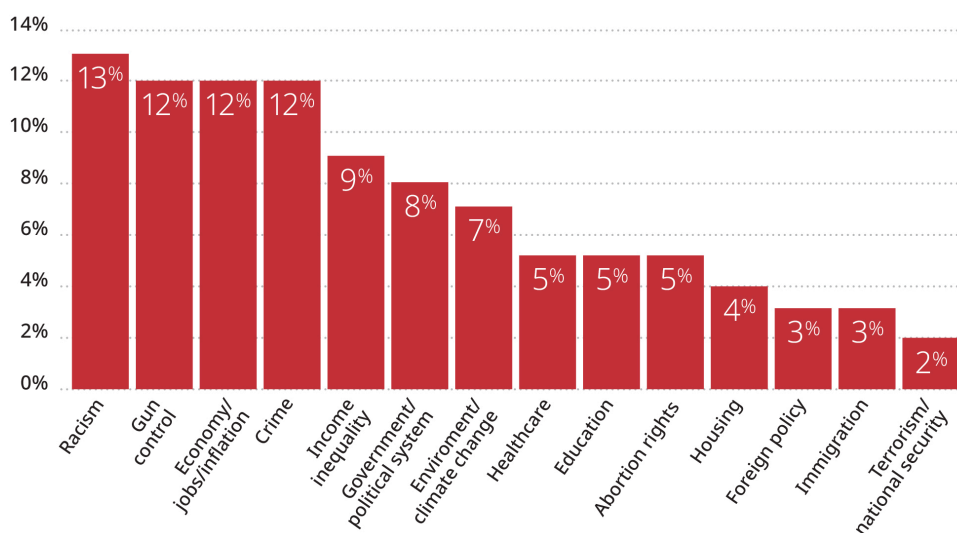
Figure 3.3 Most Important Problems Facing the U.S.

Among citizens registered to vote, partisans differed on the problems they deemed the most important. As shown in Figure 3.4, Democrats named racism (14%), gun control (12%), and income inequality (12%) as the top three problems facing the U.S. today, while Republicans viewed crime (18%), the economy, jobs, and inflation (18%), and the government or political system (11%) as the most important issues. Independents identified crime (14%), the economy, jobs, and inflation (13%), and gun control (13%) as top three problems identified.

Partisans prioritized distinct sets of problems facing the U.S.
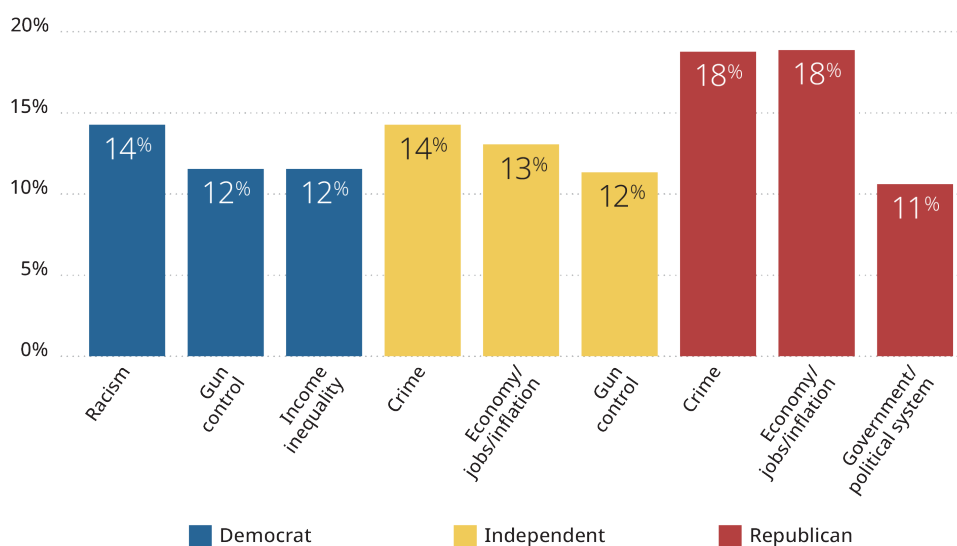
Figure 3.4 Most Important Problems Facing the U.S., by Partisan Identity

Views about U.S.-China Relations

The vast majority reported high anxiety about U.S.-China relations, especially among more educated groups.

We asked respondents how they view the current relationship between the U.S. and China. Nearly nine in ten respondents considered the relationship to be negative, including 40% who said it was very negative and 49% who said it was somewhat negative, while only about one in ten saw it as positive (11%), as shown in Figure 3.5. The concern about the U.S.-China relations was more severe among the more educated groups. Ninety-five percent of the respondents with more than a Bachelor's degree viewed U.S.-China relations as negative, as compared to 75% among those without a high school diploma. This pattern is likely a result of higher political news consumption among more educated groups (Persson, 2015) alongside increasingly negative news media coverage from both countries toward each other (Ha & Willnat, 2022; Zeng et al., 2022).

High anxiety about U.S.-China relations, especially among more educated groups
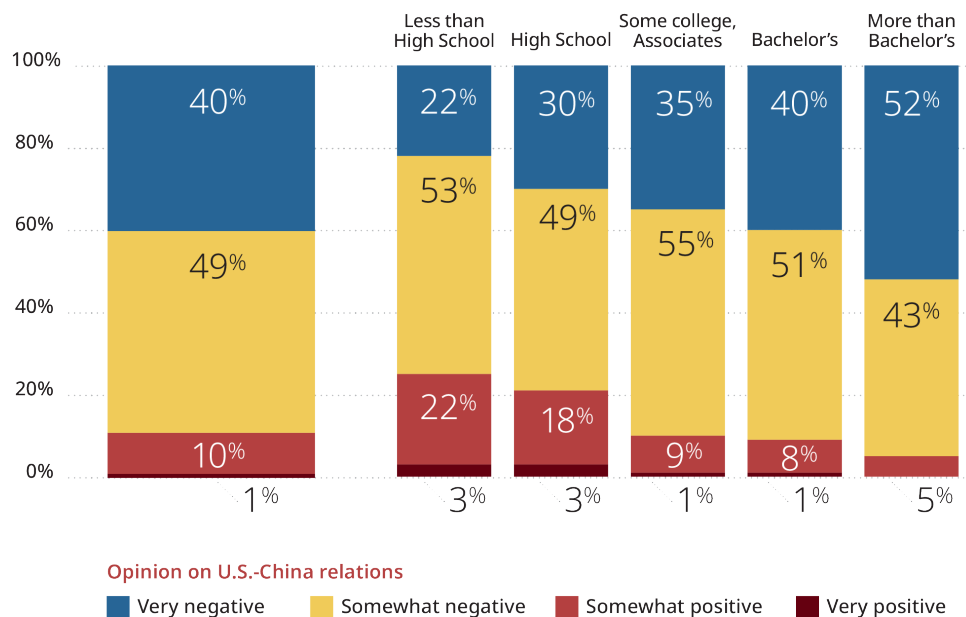
Figure 3.5 Opinion on U.S.-China Relations, Overall and by Education

U.S. Economic Policy toward China

Chinese Americans in this study expressed strong support for building a collaborative relationship with China on economic policies.

We asked respondents what they considered to be more important when thinking about the U.S. economic policy toward China. Figure 3.6 shows that about four in five (82%) preferred the U.S. to build a collaborative relationship with China on economic issues to simultaneously advance the interests of both countries, while 15% preferred the U.S. to get tougher with China on economic issues to advance or protect the interests of the U.S. There was strong bipartisan support for economic collaboration between the two countries: 83% of Democrats, 80% of independents, and 70% of Republicans preferred building a collaborative relationship with China rather than getting tougher with China on economic issues.

Strong support for building collaborative relationship with China on economic policies across partisan groups
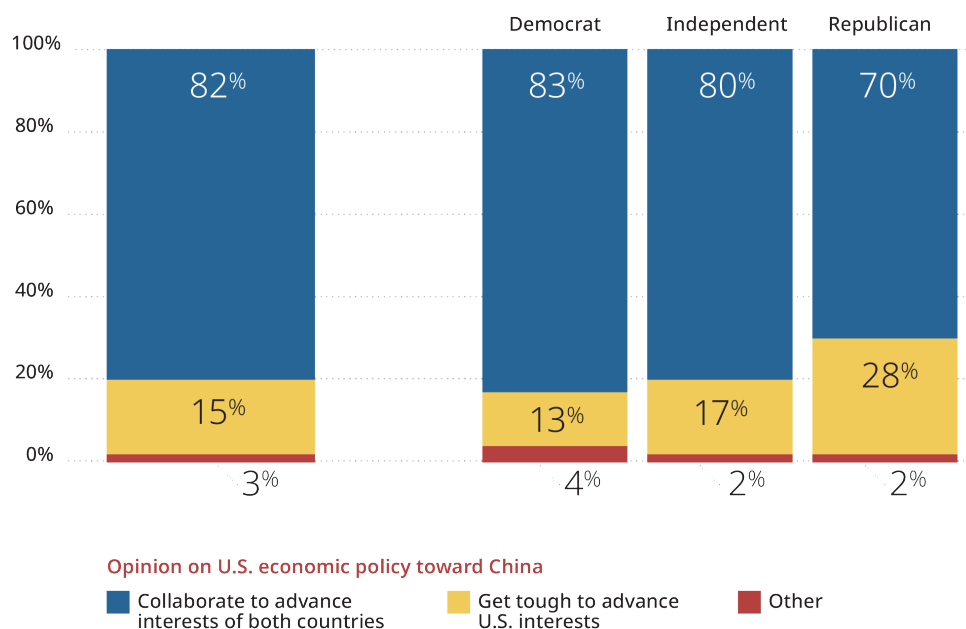
Figure 3.6 Opinion on U.S. Economic Policy Toward China, Overall and by Partisan Identity

Top Areas for U.S.-China Collaboration

A quarter of survey participants identified the economy and trade as top areas for mutual benefit from U.S.-China collaboration.

Aligning with the strong support for collaborative economic policies between the U.S. and China, one in four responses identified the economy and trade as a top area where the two countries would benefit the most from working together, as shown in see Figure 3.7. The next most selected areas for U.S-China collaboration were technological and scientific innovation (14%) and environment and climate change (14%), followed by global security (12%), human rights issues (9%), cultural exchange (8%), education (6%), public health (5%), and nuclear non-proliferation (5%).

Economy & trade identified as top areas for mutual benefit from U.S.-China collaboration
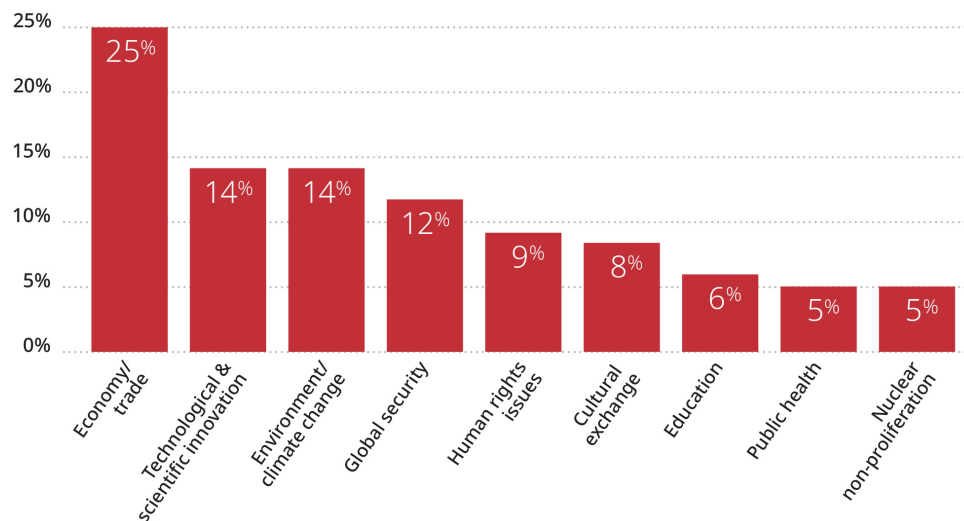
Figure 3.7 Areas for U.S.-China Collaboration

As shown in Figure 3.8, Chinese Americans of different partisan identities were largely in agreement that the economy and trade were the top areas for mutual benefit from U.S.-China collaboration with 22% of Democrats, 29% of Republicans, and 24% of Independents expressing so. All three partisan groups also included technological and scientific innovation among their top three areas for mutual benefit (14%, 14%, and 15%, respectively).

Partisans largely in agreement on top areas for U.S.-China collaboration
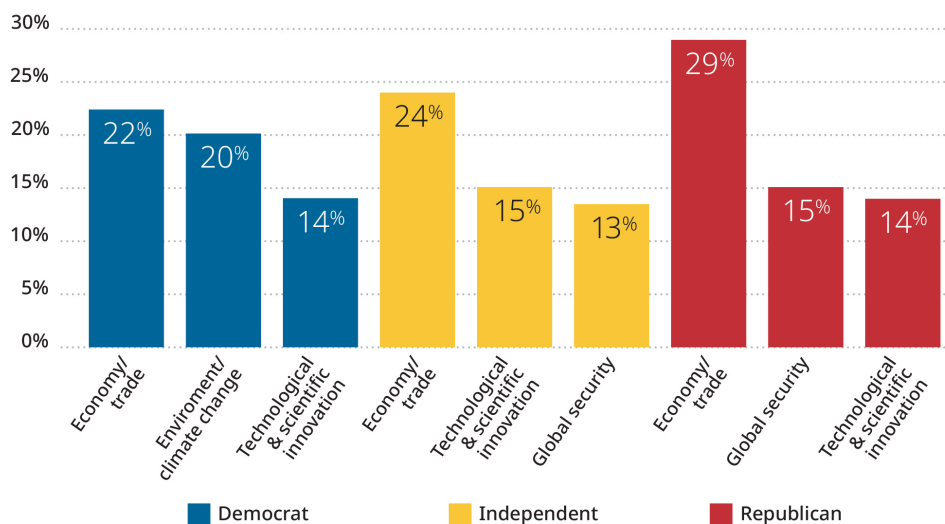
Figure 3.8 Areas for U.S.-China Collaboration by Partisan Identity

Impacts of U.S.-China Relations on Daily Lives

The survey included the following open-ended question related to impacts of U.S.-China relations on the daily lives of respondents:

> *Relations between countries can impact the daily lives of people through foreign and domestic policies as well as political and media discourse. As a Chinese American, how have U.S.-China relations impacted your daily life and/or the lives of your family and community?*

Entering their responses in the text box that followed this question, 2,469 respondents (38% of the sample) shared narratives about how tensions between the U.S. and China have profoundly impacted their daily lives, families, and communities. These responses illustrate their anxiety about U.S.-China relations and call for policies and actions that would alleviate tensions and improve bilateral relations. The word cloud in Figure 3.9 shows the 50 most frequently used words from these responses. The larger its font size, the more frequently the word was mentioned. Three foci emerge from the word cloud. First, U.S.-China relations had profound impacts on the lives and social networks of the respondents, as evident by the most frequently mentioned words "people", "family", and "community." Second, respondents expressed concern about the tensions in U.S.-China relations, as reflected by the frequently mentioned words "media", "hate", and "negative." Third, respondents were also concerned about the sources for and implications of such tensions, as suggested by the frequently mentioned words "government", "Taiwan", and "Hong Kong."

Most common words used to describe impact of U.S.-China relations on daily life include: people, family, media, hate, negative, community, government, Taiwan, and Hong Kong

Figure 3.9 Most Common Words Used to Describe the Impact of U.S.-China Relations on Daily Life

Respondents provided detailed narratives regarding how tensions in U.S.-China relations have impacted their daily lives. The effects of the tensions in U.S.-China relations on Chinese Americans are pervasive and profound, clustering around two broad themes: unfair treatment and difficulties in work and daily life, and the heavy mental health burden generated. The selection of quotes below illustrates the range and depth of these effects.

Tensions in U.S.-China Relations have Led to Unfair Treatments and Difficulties in Work and Life for Chinese Americans

Hiding of ethnic identity
- "In recent years we dare not to wear any traditional Chinese clothes."
- "People I meet sometimes try to make me condemn my own heritage because of 'ties to China' through my family."
- "Sometimes I'm afraid to tell people I am Chinese American or feel fear when [I] go to some specific places."

Social dilemma and avoidance
- "It's tougher to talk to my parents about differing opinions about China, and I'm very much more nervous and hesitant to discuss my own views of China with American colleagues."
- "I often face blame and feel guilt and discomfort now every time I hear about US-China political topics and do not even feel safe discussing them with others."
- "I do not share my life with people other than very close family members in China due to rising anti-U.S. sentiments in China."

Workplace discrimination and alienation
- "I felt isolated at work when the work we did was related to US-China relations. The team would generally exclude me from such discussions."
- "[I'm] afraid of political prosecution so I stopped collaborating my research effort with Chinese researchers/institutes."
- "In corporate settings, white or non-Asian colleagues are emboldened to say anti-China statements that are or very close to racist/microaggressive statements. Like – 'Ew, that product is from China... nobody is gonna like that.' 'We can't trust the Chinese.'"

Travel restrictions and implications for family abroad
- "For years, I led a study-abroad [group] to South China. But the questioning I got from the US for the past decade, and now, watching the China Initiative impact so many Chinese American scholars has made me not want to participate nor visit China so actively."
- "I have family in China... My cousin was not able to accompany her daughter to college this fall for her freshman year. She may not be able to visit her daughter this year, and her daughter may not be able to go home."
- "I wanted to have better relations because I want to feel safe to travel to my birthplace and my mother's birthplace without fear of not coming home back to the States."

Contemplation and Decision to Leave the U.S.
- "I feel more isolated and unable to connect as deeply with many people around me. The increasing disparity between what America claims to value and the reality of its priorities via budgets/policies grows more and more intolerable, and has motivated me to start the process to move abroad. This will also allow me to be closer to my family in Taiwan."
- "I wish to get a job and leave this country ASAP."
- "I've contemplated emigrating out of the [U.S.] if Trump becomes President again."

Tensions in U.S.-China Relations have Placed a Heavy Mental Burden on Chinese Americans

Fear for personal safety
- "The current negative [U.S.]-China relations do make me think more carefully about the mental and physical safety of me and my family. I'm definitely more aware of my surroundings and may avoid going to certain area[s] where I feel people have a more negative view of Asian Americans."
- "...Uneducated fear of non-Asians believing that Chinese don't belong in the U.S. regardless if we were born here, resulting [in] verbal assaults [like] 'go back to China' and the fear that this could escalate to physical assault or targeting of home or places where Chinese congregate."
- "Living in an urban area, I am more careful of my surroundings because of violence towards people who look like me. I worry for my parents even more so because they are elderly. I avoid traveling to places where there is anti-immigrant sentiment even though I am not an immigrant."

Fear of exclusion and punishment
- "The recent political changes have made me fear about being punished by the government due to our Chinese origin and relation with family members and colleagues in China."
- "It's made me worry about my future. China-bashing is bipartisan and I worry that if we got into a military dispute with China I could have my rights taken away, and perhaps even end up in an internment camp in my old age."
- "I carry my passport, my birth certificate and my marriage license even in the US when I am traveling for an extended period of time. I do this because increasingly people question whether I am an American citizen and I am very aware of our history of interning Japanese Americans in WWII."

Fear of war
- "A big stressor in my life is the worry that war would break out in the near future between [the U.S.] and China."
- "I worry that war over Taiwan could start at any moment."
- "I've been fearful of the future and think often about what would happen to my family and my community if we were ever to enter a war with China."

Summary

Results in this chapter show that Chinese Americans in this study were politically active, supported improving relations with China through economic policies that advance the interests of both countries, and were profoundly and poignantly affected by tensions between the U.S. and China. The overwhelming majority of Chinese American citizens in this study were registered to vote, and nearly nine in ten registered voters turned out to vote in the 2020 presidential election. Respondents identified racism, crime, gun control, and the economy as the most important problems facing the U.S. Most thought the U.S. should build a collaborative relationship with China on economic issues rather than get tougher. Most respondents had high anxiety about the current state of U.S.-China relations. Many shared lived experiences about how tensions in U.S.-China relations have negatively impacted their lives and the lives of their families and communities, including unfair treatment and difficulties in work and life as well as the heavy mental burden that they had to carry as a consequence.

Chapter 4: Disadvantages and Needs

This chapter presents our findings on household income distribution, assistance receipt, and a variety of health and economic disadvantages and needs among Chinese Americans. The analysis begins with the economic situation of Chinese Americans, including household income distribution and assistance receipt. An examination of the health of Chinese Americans through disability status, health disadvantages, health insurance status, and subjective well-being follows. The chapter concludes by presenting findings on disadvantages and hardships among Chinese Americans and discussing what policies and services are needed to address these challenges.

Key Findings

- A wide household income distribution existed among Chinese Americans surveyed, with one-tenth in low income.
- Nearly a quarter received some form of assistance, with public assistance being the most common form of assistance.
- One in four Chinese Americans had at least one form of health disadvantage, including reporting either fair or poor physical or mental health, or having one or more types of disabilities. Health disadvantages were more prevalent among households with low incomes and those with limited English proficiency.
- Nearly one in four Chinese Americans were at moderate or severe risk of mental illness based on self-reported psychological distress. Nearly one in three reported low-to-moderate life satisfaction.
- Nearly a quarter faced some form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship, including delayed medical care, difficulty paying for food or bills, or lack of health insurance coverage in the past 12 months.

Economic Situation

There is a large disparity in household income among Chinese Americans.

Figure 4.1 displays the distribution of annual household income among Chinese Americans in this study. Roughly one in ten reported an annual household income below $15,000.[5] Seventeen percent reported a household income between $15,000-$49,999; 36% reported between $50,000 and $149,999; 18% reported between $150,000 and $249,999; and 13% reported their household income to be more than $250,000. The data reveals a wide distribution of household income among Chinese Americans, indicating a large disparity in economic resources within the community.

Wide household income distribution, with one tenth in low income
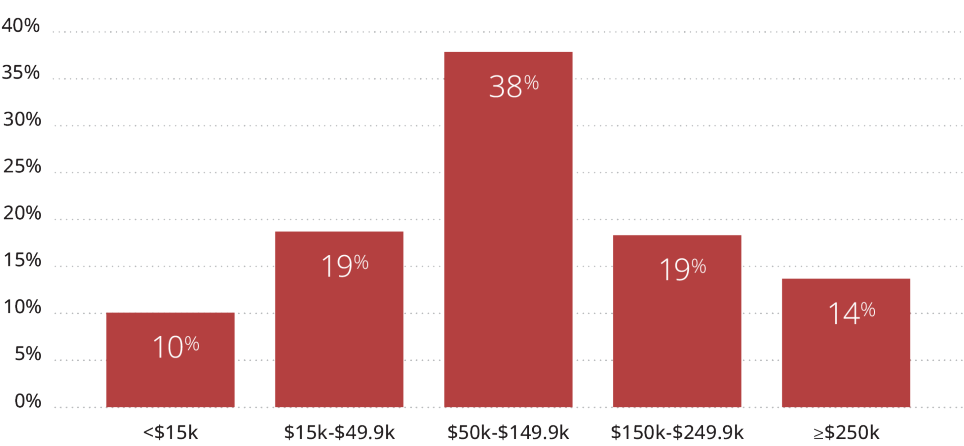
Note: Household incomes are not adjusted for household size.

Figure 4.1 Distribution of Household Income

Approximately one in four Chinese Americans in this study received assistance, with public assistance as the most common type.

Figure 4.2 presents the proportion of Chinese Americans who received assistance and a breakdown by type of assistance. Nearly a quarter (23%) of Chinese Americans in this study reported receiving at least one type of public or private assistance. Nearly half of those who reported receiving assistance received public assistance (11%), including welfare payments and in-kind benefits such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Other types of assistance received included work-related assistance (2%), private assistance (2%), private assistance (2%), veterans' benefits (1%), public housing (1%), or other assistance (2%). Four percent of respondents received more than one type of these assistances.

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[5] In 2022, the federal poverty line was $13,590 for a one person household and $18,310 for a two person household (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation [ASPSE], 2022).

Nearly a quarter received some form of assistance; public assistance most common

Public assistance only — 11%
Work-related assistance only — 2%
Private assistance only — 2%
Veterans benefits only — 1%
Public housing only — 1%
Other — 2%
More than one type of assistance — 4%
One or more types of assistance — 23%

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25%
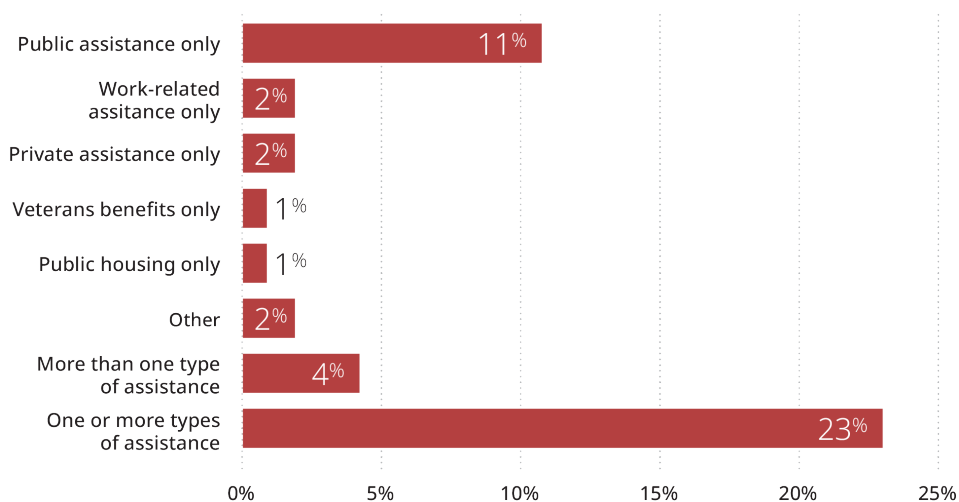
Figure 4.2 Assistance Receipt by Type

Health Conditions

One in ten Chinese Americans had at least one disability.

About one in ten (9%) Chinese Americans surveyed indicated having one or more disabilities, including physical, developmental, and mental disabilities. Figure 4.3 shows that 4% had a physical disability only, 2% had a developmental disability only, 1% had a mental disability only, and 1% reported having more than one type of disability. Additionally, 4% of the respondents refused to share their disability status, possibly due to concerns about stigma associated with disability in the Chinese American community.

About one in ten had at least one disability

Physical disability only — 4%
Developmental disability only — 2%
Mental disability only — 1%
More than one type of disability — 1%
Refused — 4%
One or more disabilities — 9%

0% 1% 2% 3% 4% 5% 6% 7% 8% 9% 10%
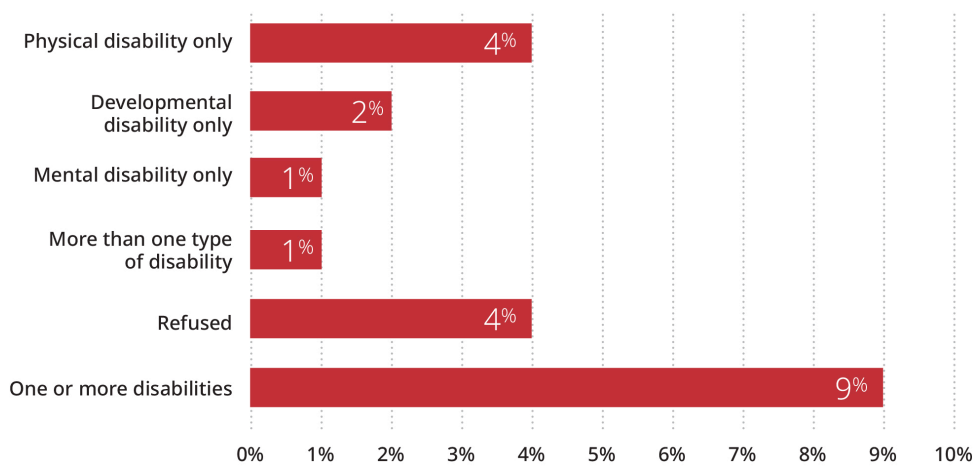
Figure 4.3 Disabilities

The majority of Chinese Americans had some form of health insurance coverage; employer-sponsored health insurance was the most common.

Figure 4.4 presents the health insurance coverage among Chinese Americans in this study, with more than half (53%) having employer-sponsored health insurance. Medicare and Medicaid coverage were the next largest health insurance types, at 9% and 12%, respectively, and 1% had military health insurance. One-tenth of the respondents reported having more than one type of health insurance coverage. Lastly, 3% had no health insurance coverage or did not know if they had coverage.

Majority of health insurance coverage was employer sponsored
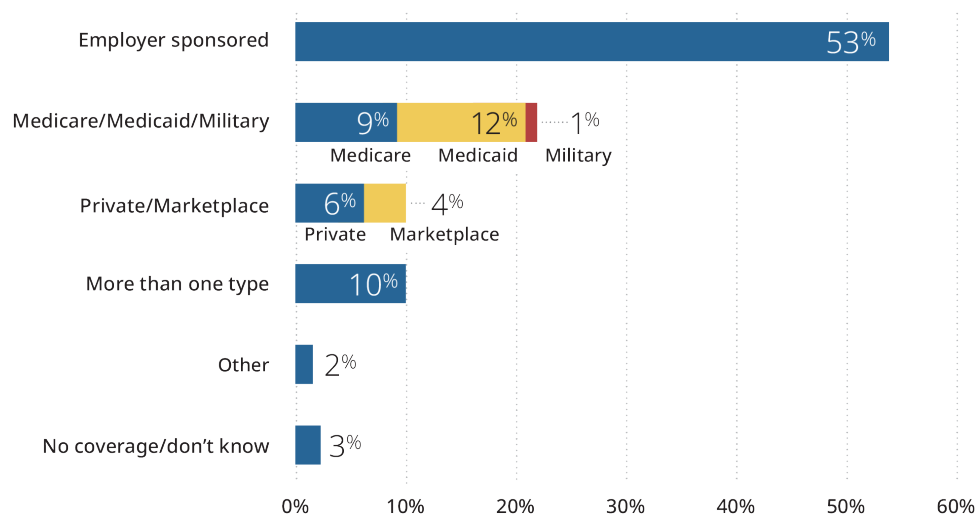
Figure 4.4 Health Insurance Status

A quarter of Chinese Americans were at severe or moderate risk of mental illness or had low-to-moderate life satisfaction.

To understand the subjective well-being of Chinese Americans, we first asked respondents how often in the last 30 days they felt nervous, hopeless, restless, depressed, worthless, and that everything was an effort as a measure of psychological distress. Respondents select from the following options: "0, none of the time," "1, a little of the time," "2, some of the time," "3, most of the time," and "4, all of the time." The scores are summed and categorized into groups of low, moderate, and severe risk of mental illness.[6] Figure 4.5 shows that 8% of the respondents were at severe risk of mental illness, 16% were at moderate risk of mental illness, and 76% were at low risk of mental illness. In total, approximately a quarter of Chinese Americans in this study were at severe or moderate risk of mental illness and potentially in need of timely and quality mental health services.

We also asked respondents about their life satisfaction as another measure of subjective well-being. Respondents were asked, "on a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 means the best possible life overall and 0 means the worst possible life overall, how would you rate your life in the past 12 months?" The average life satisfaction score was 7.3 out of 10 among Chinese Americans in this study. Figure 4.7 reveals that 4% of the respondents reported low life satisfaction, 25% reported moderate life satisfaction, and 71% reported high life satisfaction.[7] The results on mental illness risk and life satisfaction align closely, with about one in four Chinese Americans in this study having low-to-moderate risk of mental illness or life satisfaction, highlighting the need for mental health services and other supports.

A quarter had severe-to-moderate psychological distress or low-to-moderate life satisfaction
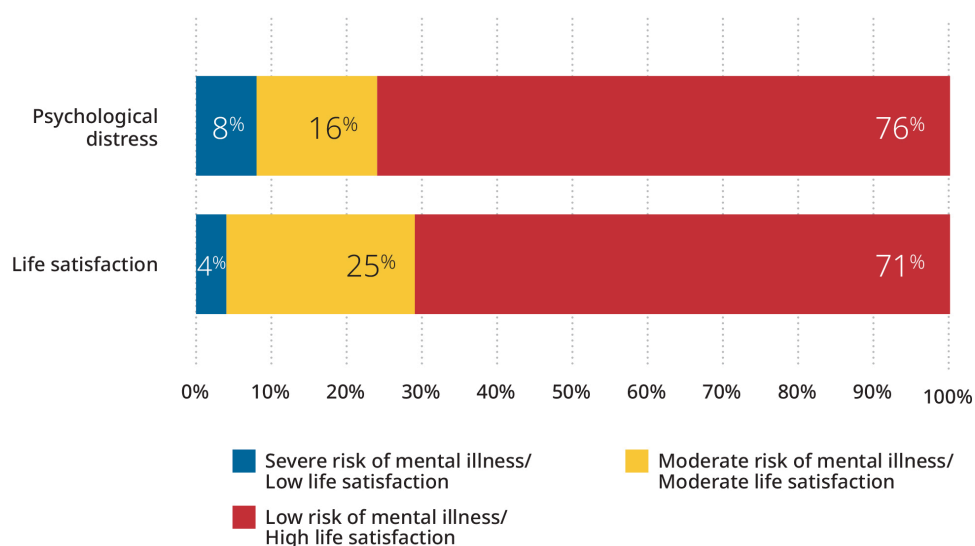
Figure 4.5 Mental Illness and Life Satisfaction

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[7] 0-3 = low life satisfaction; 4-6 = moderate life satisfaction; 7-10 = high life satisfaction. No existing study used a three-group categorization for this measure. We constructed these categories so that the ratings were classified into three groups of roughly equal intervals.

Disadvantages and Hardships

Nearly a quarter of Chinese Americans reported at least one form of health disadvantage.

We asked the respondents to rate their physical and mental health as 'excellent', 'very good', 'good', 'fair', or 'poor'. Health disadvantage constitutes three measures that include self-rated 'fair' or 'poor' physical health, 'fair' or 'poor' mental health, or having a disability. Figure 4.6 reveals that nearly a quarter (24%) of Chinese Americans in this study reported having at least one form of health disadvantage.

Nearly a quarter had at least one form of health disadvantage
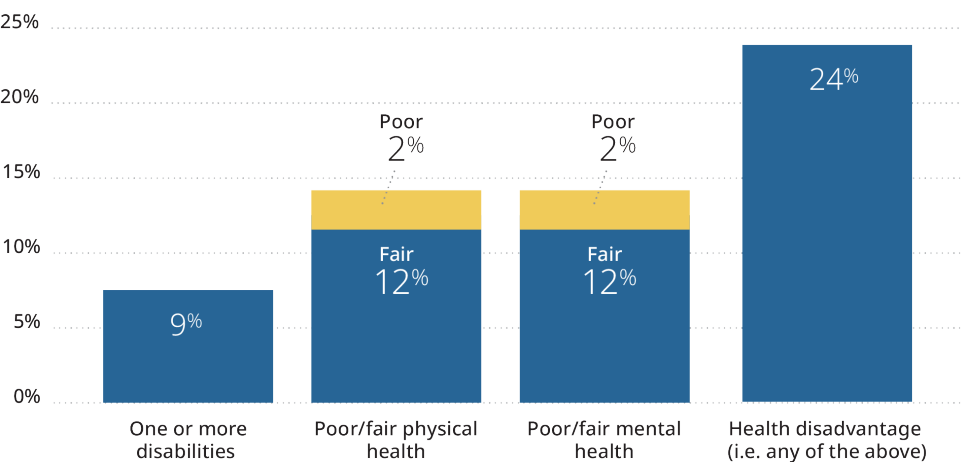
Figure 4.6 Health Disadvantage

Health disadvantages were much more prevalent among lower income groups. As shown in Figure 4.7, among respondents with a household income below $15,000, nearly half had at least one form of health disadvantage. This rate declined as the household income level increased, with about one in eight respondents (12%) in households making more than $250,000 per year having at least one form of health disadvantage.

Health disadvantages much more prevalent among low-income households
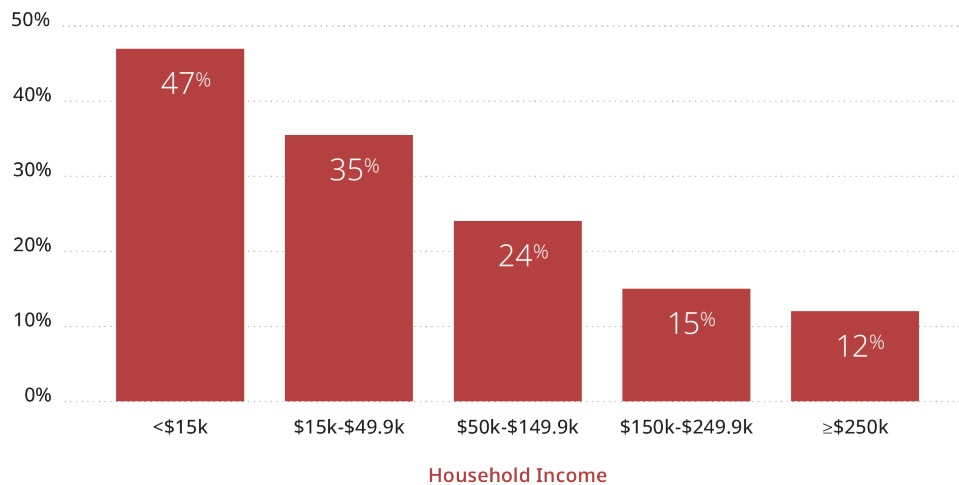
Household Income

Figure 4.7 Health Disadvantage by Household Income

Health disadvantage was also more prevalent among those with low English proficiency. As English proficiency improved, the rate of health disadvantage decreased. Figure 4.8 shows that 18% had at least one form of health disadvantage among those who reported speaking English very well, as compared to nearly two in three (65%) among those who reported not speaking English at all.

Those with low English proficiency had more health disadvantages

English Proficiency
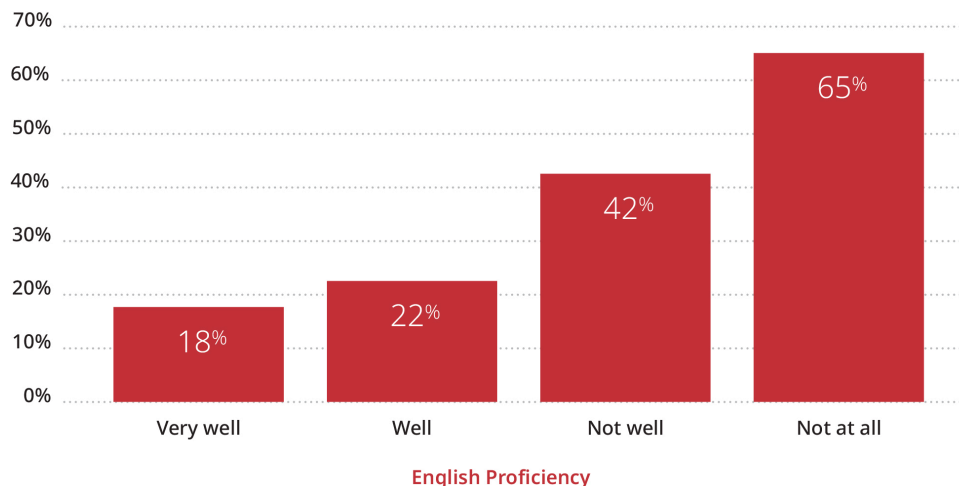
Figure 4.8 Health Disadvantage by English Proficiency

These results reveal large disparities in health disadvantage within the Chinese American community. Those with fewer economic resources and lower English proficiency were more vulnerable to health disadvantages than those with more resources and were more English proficient. These findings point to the need for targeted health policies and services to support disadvantaged Chinese Americans.

A quarter of Chinese Americans in this study reported a form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship.

Next we turn to examine medical disadvantage and economic hardship. This study uses a set of four indicators to better understand the medical and economic needs of the Chinese American population, including having no health insurance coverage or not knowing if one has health insurance, having difficulty paying bills, having difficulty paying for food, and delayed or did not get the medical care they need.

As shown in Figure 4.9, about one in four Chinese Americans in this study faced at least one form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship. These included 3% who did not have health insurance coverage or didn't know if they had it; 5% who had difficulty paying bills sometimes or often (i.e., running out of money to pay household bills often or sometimes in the last 12 months); 8% who had difficulty paying for food (i.e., running out of food or worried if they had enough money to buy more in the last 12 months); 14% who delayed or did not receive medical care that they needed in the last 12 months. When asked why they delayed or did not receive needed medical care, respondents' most frequently mentioned reasons included not getting around to it (24%), a delay or conflict related to the COVID-19 pandemic (22%), and delay or conflict related to health insurance (16%).

Nearly a quarter faced some form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship
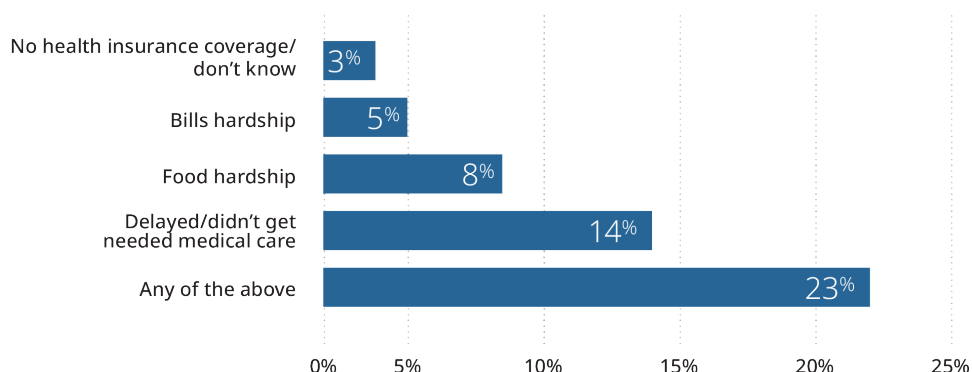
Figure 4.9 Medical Disadvantage and Economic Hardship

Chinese American households with lower household income had higher rates of medical disadvantage and economic hardship than those with higher household income. As shown in Figure 4.10, about one-third of households with incomes below $50,000 reported experiencing at least one form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship, whereas the prevalence of medical disadvantage and economic hardship decreased to 15% among households whose incomes were equal to or above $250,000.

Low-income households had more medical disadvantages and economic hardships
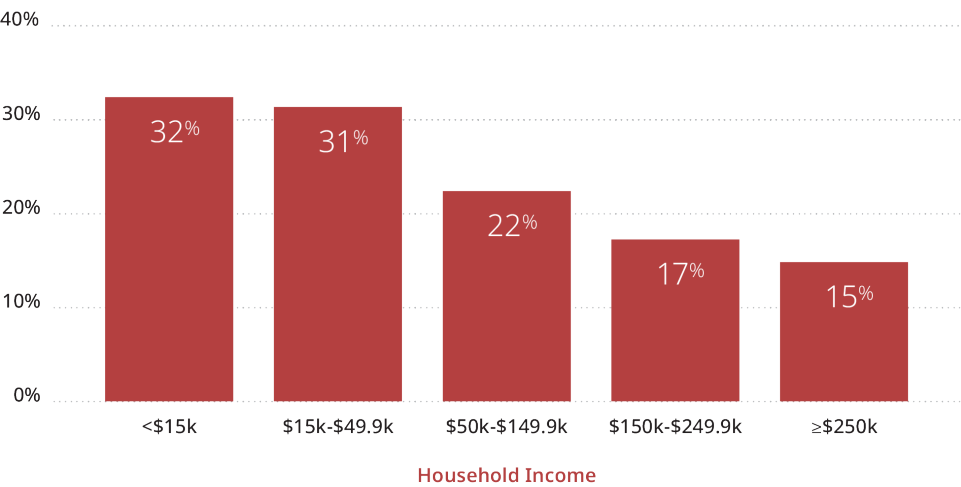
Figure 4.10 Medical Disadvantage and Economic Hardship, By Household Income

Chinese Americans who were less English proficient also had higher rates of medical disadvantage and economic hardship than those who were more English proficient. As shown in Figure 4.11, about one in five among those who reported speaking English very well or well experienced at least one form of medical disadvantage or economic hardship, as compared to one in three among those who reported not speaking English well or not speaking English at all. This disparity highlights the important role of language accessibility in the ability of Chinese Americans to meet their medical and economic needs.

Those with low English proficiency had more medical disadvantages and economic hardships
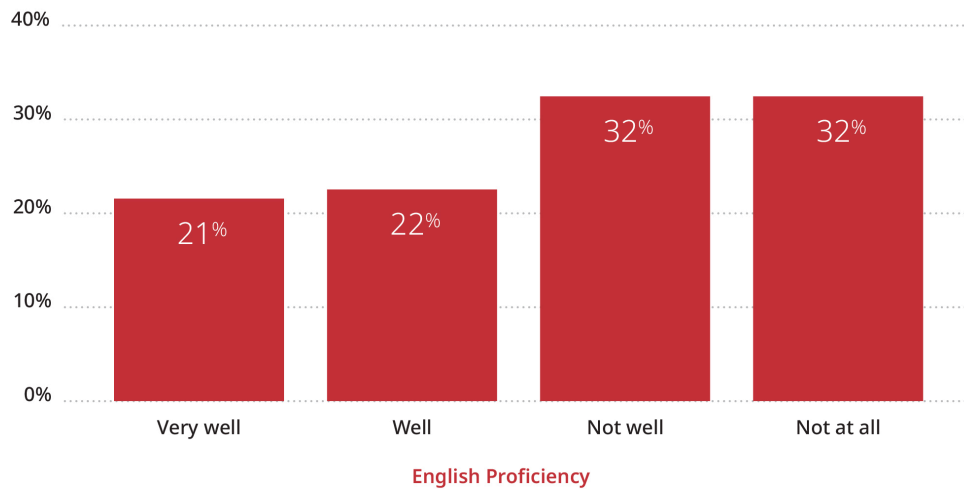
Figure 4.11 Medical Disadvantage and Economic Hardship, By English Proficiency

Summary

Chinese Americans are often stereotyped as the "model minority," which fuels the perception that they are more prosperous and successful and face fewer challenges than other non-White racial and ethnic groups. However, this myth overlooks the vastly diverse experiences of Chinese Americans and fails to shed light on the wide disparities that exist within the community, as well as their disadvantages and needs. Results in this chapter powerfully showcase the disparities in economic resources and health conditions as well as the presence of medical disadvantages and economic hardships. These results highlight the need to provide policy responses and services that address these disadvantages and needs, especially with enhanced accessibility for those with limited English proficiency.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The first and largest project of its kind, the State of Chinese Americans Survey collected data from nearly 6,500 participants from across the United States and provided much-needed evidence on the cultural identity, racial discrimination experiences, political engagement, and health and economic well-being of the rapidly growing Chinese American population. This study found that, first, Chinese Americans are diverse with regard to birthplace, place of upbringing, language spoken at home, and English proficiency. While the overwhelming majority of Chinese Americans see themselves as accepted in American society and culturally blended between American and Chinese cultures, they are also often marginalized and have experienced discrimination in their daily lives. Second, Chinese Americans are active political participants. The overwhelming majority of Chinese American citizens vote. They are concerned about issues facing American society and want better relations and more collaboration between the U.S. and China. Third, Chinese Americans are not homogenous. While often stereotyped as a "model minority," which fuels the perception that Chinese Americans are more prosperous and face fewer challenges than other racial groups, many in fact face disadvantages or hardships in health and economics and need better support from policies and services.

These findings provide important implications for promoting greater equity and inclusion of Chinese Americans. Chinese Americans possess rich and diverse sets of experiences and varying needs. The diversity of Chinese Americans calls for proactive research and education in order to design equitable and inclusive policies, programs, and services. Chinese Americans are active political participants, and the importance of including their voices and perspectives in political discourse and decision-making should be emphasized. The findings also highlight significant marginalization and hardship in the Chinese American community as a whole, despite individual differences among respondents. As such, policymakers must understand how intersecting identities and experiences shape the status and well-being of Chinese Americans.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the State of Chinese Americans Survey, we offer the following recommendations for policy, program, and practice:

To promote greater equity and inclusion of Chinese Americans, our first recommendation is to incorporate or expand Asian American history lessons across all levels of education, from K-12 to higher education, to help Americans understand the diverse accomplishments, contributions, and challenges of Chinese and Asian American populations. In recent years, Illinois, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Florida have enacted new laws requiring the teaching of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) history in schools, and 14 additional states and the District of Columbia established AAPI curriculum requirements through other means (Kerr et al., 2022). A complete American history curriculum includes the rich traditions, accomplishments, and challenges of the diverse Chinese and broader AAPI communities. Improving public discourse requires that all Americans–likely through their K-12 education–learn about the lived experiences of Americans of Asian descent.

Second, we recommend allocating or increasing funding for programs and services that directly affect Chinese Americans. Language access is fundamental to providing Chinese Americans with low English proficiency with equal access to services and opportunities. Language barriers negatively affect the daily lives of Chinese and Asian Americans, particularly those who recently immigrated to the U.S. A lack of language access excludes people from receiving necessary and adequate medical care, accessing legal services, obtaining education and training, and finding employment opportunities (Ngo-Metzger et al., 2007; Noe-Bustamante et al., 2022; Pandey et al., 2021; Truong, 2022). To ensure a high quality of services, it is imperative that language access providers partner with community members and organizations and regularly solicit and incorporate their feedback. We also recommend allocating or increasing funding for community programs and organizations that bring support services and initiatives directly to Chinese Americans.

Third, we recommend law enforcement and prosecuting agencies to establish clear guidelines on addressing and responding to reports of anti-Asian hate and discrimination. Existing research and anecdotal experiences, from this study and a multitude of others, highlight instances of authorities avoiding the discussion of race, not naming anti-Asian hate, or blaming individuals for hate crimes without addressing the influence of systemic racism (Hong & Bromwich, 2021; Lee & Arroyo, 2022). As shown by our findings as well as those reported to Stop AAPI Hate (2022), most incidents experienced by Chinese or other Americans were not physical violence (16% in our report and 17% in Stop AAPI Hate report) but instead verbal, behavioral, gesture, or written harassment (54% in our report and 67% in Stop AAPI Hate report). Such incidents are under-covered in media and public discourse, but they significantly affect the daily lives of Chinese and Asian Americans in schools and workplaces (Chen & Wen, 2021; Kim et al., 2022). Authorities and organizations must ensure clear and culturally-informed protocols for various types of anti-Asian hate and discrimination, in order to promote the safety and wellness of those affected by incidents as well as to seek accountability for the reported incidents.

Further, we recommend law enforcement and prosecuting agencies to undertake efforts to reduce unfair treatment and biases against individuals of Asian descent within the U.S. legal system. Policies should require demonstrated cultural competency by the officers and adequate access to language assistance and legal counsel. Research by Committee of 100 found that individuals of Asian descent prosecuted for economic espionage were three times more likely than individuals with Western surnames to be wrongfully accused of spying against the U.S. government.

Fourth, we recommend corporations, government entities, civil organizations, and academic institutions to research and evaluate the effectiveness of their diversity, equity, and inclusion programs to assess if they sufficiently take into consideration the unique challenge AAPI employees may encounter. In particular, they should examine how the model minority stereotype may be creating biases that deter AAPI employees' opportunities to advance to leadership positions with long-term implications (Huang, 2021; Lin et al., 2005; Milkman et al., 2012; Tinkler et al., 2019).

Fifth, we recommend commissioning art and uplifting diverse creative voices to share stories and lived experiences of Chinese and Asian Americans to educate the public and build community. Art has been an integral part of coping and response against anti-Asian hate in recent years. Asian American Federation, a nonprofit organization based in New York City, created a series of posters that tell stories of 10 Asian American trailblazers and the cities that they call home, which include New York City, Houston, Seattle, San Diego, and St. Louis (Wang, 2021). The Thai Indonesian American artist Amanda Phingbodhipakkiya created the "I Still Believe in Our City" campaign during her public art residency

with the New York City Commission on Human Rights (NYCCHR). It included a series of iconic images of Asian Americans and powerful messages that were first launched in neighborhoods experiencing anti-Asian bias and hate incidents to raise awareness and call for change. From social media to public art installations, art created by Chinese and Asian American artists across the country in response to the rise in anti-Asian hate helped voice the pain and call for action. It is imperative that the continuing efforts in support of Chinese and Asian American communities incorporate the power of art to build greater understanding, awareness, and alliance.

crease levels of political engagement and reduce the negative impact of contentious political rhetoric and strained U.S.-China relations on the lives of Chinese Americans, our first recommendation is to increase get-out-the-vote efforts and political mobilization of Chinese Americans. Asian Americans have historically participated less in politics than other racial groups, and in part, this is due to the fact that political parties and activists are less like to mobilize registered Asian American voters than other groups that are registered to vote (Barreto, 2018; Garcia-Castañon et al., 2019; Wong, 2022). Despite the already high rates of political participation among Chinese Americans revealed in our findings, every voice matters and every vote counts. We especially recommend that mobilization occurs at the grassroots level to increase political participation of groups whose voices tend to be less heard and who tend to turn out at lower rates: those that are younger, have less income, are less educated, and are less proficient in English (Brady et al., 1995; Ramakrishnan & Espenshade, 2001; Wong et al., 2011).

Second, we need to actively speak up against usage of inflammatory and derogatory language in discussions of U.S.-China relations, which has many direct negative effects on the lives of Chinese Americans. Our findings powerfully reveal a potential strong link between biased and hateful rhetoric concerning China, U.S.-China relations, the COVID-19 pandemic, and a wide spectrum of negative outcomes experienced by Chinese Americans, particularly heightened racial discrimination experiences and related mental burdens. Other work corroborates our findings on outcomes ranging from negative physical and mental health to declining business revenue (Bresnahan et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2023; Ta Park et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2021). Such effects are likely to grow and become more pervasive over time unless all Americans work collectively to eliminate language that is discriminatory against individuals of Chinese and other Asian descent.

Third, we recommend establishing and increasing opportunities for more in-depth and meaningful conversations about political and civic engagement issues among Chinese Americans. This work should extend across different racial or ethnic groups to enhance mutual understanding, promote alliance building, and build upon the long-standing work of other communities. Asian Americans share the struggles associated with marginalization and racial discrimination that other non-White racial groups experience. With increased awareness of anti-Asian racial discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic, recent survey data show that Asian Americans express strong support for civil rights advancement and equal opportunities for marginalized groups, a necessary condition for future joint efforts and alliance building.

To meet the health and economic needs of Chinese Americans, our first recommendation is to provide health and economic services in various languages and dialects to support Chinese Americans with limited English proficiency to reduce their barriers to receiving services. Findings from this study and many other studies have revealed that Chinese Americans experience large disparities in health conditions and financial hardship, despite model minority stereotypes that falsely present Chinese

and Asian Americans to do well in areas such as academics, professional careers, and business (Islam et al., 2022). Our findings in particular found Chinese Americans with low English proficiency had higher proportions of health and medical disadvantages and economic hardships. Limited English proficiency compounds the obstacles that Chinese Americans face to achieve good health and financial stability, such as the ability to communicate with their healthcare and other service providers. Services and programs that offer multilingual support, such as interpretation and translation services, can help members of the diverse Chinese American community reduce their barriers to accessing public assistance services and meet their needs. Although some cities with large Chinese populations have enhanced their language support, gaps in nationwide efforts still remain to support Chinese Americans in all regions and states.

Second, we recommend further facilitating discussions of disadvantage and hardship among the Chinese American population and advocating for culturally informed policies and services to reduce stigma around and increase access to receiving services. By raising awareness of the disadvantages and hardships in the Chinese American community, we can dismantle model minority stereotypes and increase service provision for Chinese Americans that are underserved. Chinese and Asian Americans have been underrepresented in the social safety net and receive fewer assistance from government programs throughout history (King, 2022; Tran, 2018). Efforts from all domains, including community practice, policymaking, and research are needed to further understand and address the inequities that Chinese Americans face. Reducing stigma around receiving services may increase public assistance take-up among Chinese Americans, and thus alleviate disadvantages and hardships in the Chinese American community.

Lastly, we recommend increasing the number of bilingual and culturally informed Chinese and Asian American mental health and social work professionals. Working with service providers of similar racial, cultural, and language backgrounds can improve the experiences of and reduce barriers for Chinese Americans receiving services. This can be achieved by establishing funding and scholarships to encourage more Chinese and Asian Americans to enter the mental health and social work field. In addition, providing Chinese language classes and training to service providers who are not Chinese American but work with Chinese clients can support this goal of improving services for the Chinese American population.

Responding to anti-Asian hate

A multitude of nationwide and regional organizations offer resources and services in response to anti-Asian discrimination and hate. Below is a short list of organizations that provide informational literature, Asian American history education, platforms for reporting hate incidents, and mental health services for anyone in need as well as those interested in supporting Chinese and Asian American communities.

Nationwide Resources

Organizations	Resources
Asian Americans Advancing Justice	Informational literature; advocacy
Asian American/Asian Research Foundation	Informational literature
The Asian American Education Project	Asian American history education
The Asian American Foundation	Research; advocacy
Asian Mental Health Collaborative	Informational literature; mental health services
Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies	Informational literature; incident report
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates	Informational literature; incident report
Stand Against Hatred	Incident report
Stop AAPI Hate	Incident report

Regional Organizations

Region	City
Northeast	
Asian American Federation	New York, NY
Chinese-American Planning Council	New York, NY
New York City Commission on Human Rights	New York, NY
Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center	Boston, MA
Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation	Philadelphia, PA
Midwest	
Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community	Chicago, IL
National Action Center at the Chinese American Service League	Chicago, IL
Southeast	
Center for Pan Asian Community Services	Atlanta, GA
West	
Chinatown Community Development Center	San Francisco, CA
Self Help for the Elderly	San Francisco, CA
Chinatown Service Center	Los Angeles, CA
University of California Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA
National Action Center at Asian Health Services	Oakland, CA
Chinese Information and Service Center	Seattle, WA

Appendix A:
The State of Chinese Americans Survey Methodology

Overview

Chinese Americans are one of the fastest growing population groups in the United States, yet they have historically been underrepresented in politics and policy and underserved in healthcare, education, and social services. The State of Chinese Americans Survey seeks to enhance the representation and well-being of Chinese Americans by collecting updated and comprehensive data on the diverse and multifaceted backgrounds, experiences, and needs of the population, and to inform timely and responsive policies, programs, and services.

The nationwide survey was conducted online from October to December 2022 in English, simplified Chinese, and traditional Chinese, and invited participation from anyone of age 18 or older who self-identified as of Chinese ethnic origin and living in the United States. To achieve the survey goals, we constructed a survey questionnaire that covered a wide range of topics that are important for understanding the characteristics, experiences, and views of the Chinese American population. Study participants were recruited through community outreach in partnership with more than 100 organizations throughout the country. After data collection was completed, statistical weights were created so that the weighted sample distribution matches the known population distribution of several key demographic variables. The final sample included 6,481 respondents across regions and various demographic and socioeconomic subgroups.

The goal of this Appendix is to document, share, and reflect upon the survey methodology used for the State of Chinese Americans Survey 2022. Below, we first introduce how the survey instrument was constructed, pilot tested, and refined before the survey launch. We then describe the sampling and recruitment strategy and the data collection process. The next section explains our statistical weighting approach. Finally, we discuss the strengths, limitations, and future research opportunities of the State of Chinese Americans Survey.

Survey instrument

The State of Chinese Americans Survey questionnaire included 77 questions across six modules on a wide range of topics pertaining to the Chinese American population. The modules included demographics, racial and cultural background, health, economic activities and hardships, social engagement, and political engagement. Two open-ended questions in the survey asked respondents to describe their experiences with racial discrimination and coping mechanisms, and the impact of U.S.-China relations in their daily lives.

At the start of the survey design, we reviewed the relevant literature and collected a group of reference surveys to build a comprehensive pool of questions and response categories, from which we drew and adapted for each module in the State of Chinese Americans Survey. Once the survey draft was completed, multilingual research team members translated the survey from English to simplified and traditional Chinese. We paid particular attention to ensure that the translations were not only accurate but the terminology used was colloquial and familiar to Chinese American community members. To polish the survey instrument and assess revisions needed before the survey launch, we then

conducted a pilot study to obtain community members' feedback and assess their comfort level with the content, length, format, design, and language of the survey questionnaire. We used a mixed methods approach combining a test online survey and a series of in-person and virtual focus groups. Focus groups were moderated by lead researchers and involved the participants taking the survey in their preferred language one module at a time, after which the participants offered real-time feedback in English and Mandarin. Pilot study participants were recruited in partnership with four community organizations located in various regions throughout the U.S. Post-pilot revisions of the survey were informed not only by pilot study findings but also by feedback from the advisory group members and an additional literature review for decisions that warranted further deliberation. Overall, the final revisions resulted in a reduced survey length and a more focused survey scope.

Sampling, recruitment, and data collection

The State of Chinese Americans Survey's sampling and recruitment strategy prioritized a selection of key demographic characteristics to recruit diverse subgroups of Chinese Americans. After setting the initial sample size of 5,000 Chinese Americans, we used the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates to generate target sample sizes for key demographic subgroups (i.e., by gender, age group, education level, English proficiency, and region) according to their proportions in the ACS data among Chinese Americans. Our goal was to meet or surpass the target sample size for each of these subgroups. Part way through the fielding process, we decided it was necessary to increase the target sample size by 2,000 to a total target sample size of 7,000 to boost the sizes of selected groups with under-representation (i.e., those with high school education or less, between ages 18-24, with limited English proficiency, and in selected regions). Survey respondents received no incentives for their participation.

Our project relied on a community-based snowball sampling strategy, whereby the research team partnered with over 100 community, advocacy, professional, and development organizations nationwide that have members and audiences of the target population to distribute the survey via email, social media, announcements at meetings, and posting of physical flyers. Organizations that agreed to distribute the survey were provided with English, simplified Chinese, and traditional Chinese translations of the outreach material. Organizations also encouraged community members to share the survey with Chinese Americans in their personal and professional networks.

Our outreach strategy paid special attention to geographical areas where Chinese Americans are underrepresented. The regional distribution of the organizations was largely even across the U.S. to ensure coverage of Chinese American population centers in the Northeast and West Coast, as well as allow for oversampling of individuals in areas with lower Chinese American populations: namely the South and the Midwest. To oversample the harder-to-reach individuals, roughly one-third of the organizations specialized in community engagement, resource provision, and housing. The remaining two-thirds were affiliated with advocacy, commerce, culture, religion, and various professions. In addition, we conducted targeted social media and in-person recruitment in multiple spoken and written languages to increase participation from harder-to-reach and underrepresented subgroups. Throughout the data collection process, we conducted weekly monitoring of the distribution of the sample demographics to ensure that the sample remained as representative as possible.

Statistical weighting

After data collection was completed, we employed the post-stratification raking method to create statistical weights so that the weighted sample distribution matches the known population distribution of several key demographic variables based on data from the 2020 ACS 5-year estimates. Post-stratification raking is a method for creating sample weights and is commonly used in survey research to adjust for nonresponse and sampling biases. The process of raking, also known as iterative proportional fitting (IPF), involves iteratively adjusting the weights of survey respondents until they match the known population totals on these characteristics. Advantages of the raking method include flexibility in adjusting weights for any number of characteristics simultaneously, increased precision of survey estimates by reducing bias due to sample selection and nonresponse, and consistency with the total population values of the adjusted characteristics. The raking method also has limitations, such as dependence on accurate population totals, which is addressed in this study by using the ACS 5-year estimates, instead of those in just one year, as the population totals for calibration.

The variables used in this study for calculating weights include gender, age, education level, English proficiency, citizenship, income level, and region. After applying the weights created using a post-stratification raking method, the distribution of these variables in our sample is identical to those of the ACS 5-year estimates. To further gauge the effectiveness of the weights and the precision of our sample statistics, we choose a few other variables from the ACS 5-year estimates as benchmarks, including employment status, marital status, whether having children in the household, and household size. After applying the weights, our sample distribution is identical to the population distribution of the key demographic variables used for creating the weights and approximates the population distribution of the variables used for benchmarking (see Appendix Table 1).

Distribution of selected demographic variables in population and The State of Chinese Americans Survey sample (%)

	Population*	Sample	
		Unweighted	Weighted
Variables used for creating weights			
Age			
18-24	12	5	12
25-34	22	12	22
35-49	27	23	27
50-64	24	27	24
65+	15	34	15
Gender**			
Woman	54	58	54
Man	46	39	46
Other	1	2	1
Education			
Less than high school	12	4	12
High school	14	4	14
Some college/associate's	18	8	18
Bachelor's	29	30	29
Beyond bachelor's	27	53	27
English proficiency			
Speaks English only	24	34	24
Very well/well	55	57	55
Not well	21	9	21
U.S. citizenship			
U.S.-born citizen	28	46	28
Foreign-born citizen	42	42	42
Non-citizen	30	13	30
Region			
Northeast	26	30	26
Midwest	9	8	9
South	16	12	16
West	49	50	49
Household Income			
Less than $35,000	19	19	19
$35,000 to $99,999	30	22	30
$100,000 to $149,999	18	16	18
$150,000 to $249,999	19	21	19
More than $249,999	14	22	14
Variables used for benchmarking			
Marital status			
Married	60	71	66
Widowed	4	4	2
Divorced	5	6	4
Separated	1	1	0
Never married	31	19	27
Employment status			
Employed	64	64	70
Unemployed	3	4	5
Not in labor force	33	32	25
Any children in household	33	27	36
Household size			
1 member	18	21	17
2 members	34	39	29
3 members	21	17	21
4 members	17	16	20
5 or more members	11	8	13

Notes: Percentages may sum to less or more than 100 due to rounding errors.

 * Data for the population are based on the 2016-2020 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for adults self-identified as of Chinese race in the U.S. with internet access.

** ACS only included two sex categories: female and male. To ensure the inclusivity of the gender variable, we adopted the distribution of the gender variable from the New York City Longitudinal Survey of Wellbeing Study for the population, which include 53.5% women, 45.5% men, and 1% "other". In the State of Chinese Americans Survey data, any respondents who chose "woman" only or chose both "woman" and "transgender" are coded as women (i.e., cis- and transgender women); any respondents who chose "man" only or chose both "man" and "transgender" are coded as men (i.e., cis- and transgender men); and any respondents who chose "transgender" only, "gender non-conforming/non-binary" only, or any of their combinations or other identities (e.g., prefer not to say, other gender) are coded as the "other" category.

Strengths, limitations, and future research opportunities

To our knowledge, the State of Chinese Americans Survey is the first and largest survey of its kind and offers a broad and multidimensional snapshot of the Chinese American population. The survey's accessibility in three languages—English, simplified Chinese, and traditional Chinese—improved its accessibility and the likelihood of capturing a wide range of experiences and views in the population. Our pilot study involved online testing and a series of focus groups to solicit feedback from Chinese Americans representing diverse demographic characteristics, which helped improve the survey design. The State of Chinese Americans Survey is, in essence, the fruitful product of a collaborative initiative among researchers, community organizations, and community members.

Despite the strengths of the State of Chinese Americans Survey, it is not without limitations. While our survey captures a diverse Chinese American sample, it is not nationally representative as it does not use a probability sampling method. Additionally, the online modality of the survey may have hindered the participation of Chinese Americans with limited technological access and literacy. The lack of incentives may also have discouraged selected prospective respondents from participating in the survey. Moreover, as a result of focusing on obtaining a current snapshot and baseline data, some specific topics or issues were not included. Lastly, the broad national survey scope may have missed some regionally and locally relevant topics as well.

The novel and pioneering nature of the State of Chinese Americans Survey suggests a multitude of opportunities for future research. First, given that our survey adopted existing questions from other reference surveys, the findings can be compared with those of prominent national surveys and other established surveys on Asian and Chinese Americans. Second, the inclusion of the two open-ended questions helped us collect qualitative data that supplement the primarily quantitative data and gain a rich and nuanced understanding of the Chinese American community. Lastly, this first wave of our survey focused on building a set of baseline questions for future waves. This approach provides opportunities for a longitudinal study and options for special modules that explore a range of topics in more depth.

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Premier Partners

1990 Institute, Alliance for Families with Developmental Needs, Asian American Donors Program, Asian American Government Executives Network, AsAmNews, Asian American Women Artists Association, BeChinatown, Biing-Huei Su, The Carter Center, Chicago Chinese Forum, The China Project, Chinese American Association of Greater Chicago, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – Boston, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – Portland, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – Seattle, Chinese American Citizens Alliance National, Chinese American Museum DC, Chinese American Pioneer Heritage Committee, Chinese American Women in Action, Chinese Heritage Foundation, Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc., Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, Columbia Business School, Community Youth Center of San Francisco, Deloitte, Friends of Children with Special Needs, George H. W. Bush Foundation for U.S.-China Relations, Henry Tom, Institute for China-America Studies, Kaiming Head Start, Museum of Chinese in America, OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates National, OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates San Diego, Overseas Student Service Corp., Southern California Chinese Lawyers Association, UCI Chinese Alumni Chapter, UCSF Asian Health Initiative, United States Heartland China Association, The U.S.-China Perception Monitor, World Journal, Wu Yee Children's Services.

Affiliate Partners

1882 Foundation, Alliance of MN Chinese Organizations, API Council, Asia Society, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, Asian Columbia Alumni Association, Asian American Business Development Center, Asian American Unity Coalition, Asian Pacific American Libraries Association, Asian Real Estate Association of America, Asian Women for Health, Asians Fighting Injustice, Association of Asian American Investment Managers, Association of Chinese American Scientists and Engineers, Brooklyn Public Library, CAAM Chinese Dance Theater, Cal Alumni Association, Carlsbad Chinese-American Club, Chinatown Partnership, Chinese Adoptee Alliance, Chinese American Association for Autistic Community, Chinese American Association of Lexington, Chinese American Association of Minnesota, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – Houston, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – Las Vegas, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – Oakland, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – San Antonio, Chinese American Citizens Alliance – San Francisco, Chinese American Community Health Services, Chinese American History Group, Chinese American WWII Veterans, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association NY, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association Georgia, Chinese Health Initiative of San Mateo County, Chinese Historical Society of America, Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, Colorado Asian Pacific United, Crossings TV, DC Talk Story, Global China Connection, Greater Austin Asian Chamber, Hope Chinese School, Hua Yuan Science and Technology Association, KTSF 26 News, MinKwon Center for Community Action, Monte Jade West, NAPABA, New York Chinese Cultural Center, New Jersey Chinese-American Chamber of Commerce, Shaolin Hung Mei Kung Fu, South Coast Chinese Cultural Association, South Cove Community Health Center, The Asian American Foundation (TAAF), University of Minnesota China Center, Upper Manhattan Asian American Alliance, US-China Business Council, US-China Peoples Friendship Association–Minnesota Chapter, Utah Chinese Association, Veterans for Peace, You May US.

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