

CHINESE CANADIAN YOUTH AND THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH ANTI-ASIAN  
ATTITUDES DURING COVID-19

by

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## Abstract

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about anti-Asian attitudes around the world. There have been many documented discriminatory acts towards Asians online and in person. However, surveys given to Chinese Canadians have indicated that there is a very low reporting rate from youth under the age of 18 who indicate they are experiencing anti-Asian attitudes compared to youth and young adults over the age of 18. Chinese Canadian youth's experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic have largely been unexplored. It is important to give them the space to share their lived experiences and perceptions. Using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the methodological framework, the purpose of the study was to explore and understand Chinese Canadian youth's perceptions and experiences of anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. Six self-identified Chinese Canadian youth aged 16-17 from across the Lower Mainland of British Columbia participated in semi-structured interviews about their perceptions and experiences surrounding how anti-Asian attitudes are addressed at school and what type of support they receive. Following the step-by-step data analysis procedures described within the IPA methodology, three superordinate themes and 11 subordinate themes were identified. Participants expressed that they are indeed experiencing anti-Asian attitudes in multiple environments, and report that they feel unsupported with their mental health at school and in the community. However, from their perceived lack of support, they were able to create their own support systems. Findings are discussed within the context of the existing literature. Finally, future directions for research and school-based practices as reported by participants, and the implications for practitioners are discussed.

## **Lay Summary**

The purpose of the present study was to explore and understand the experiences of Chinese Canadian youth's experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. Interviews with six self-identified Chinese Canadian youth aged 16-17 who live in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. From these interviews, the participants described that they have experienced a dramatic increase in anti-Asian attitudes since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic both in-person and online. They also reported that their schools and communities were not supporting them, so they found ways to support themselves. Findings from the present study may provide school and community personnel with a better understanding and valuable insight into the lived experiences of Chinese Canadian youth. Their voices may help to inform and shape ways to provide culturally responsive care to these Chinese Canadian youth as well as create future action.

## **Preface**

This thesis is the original, unpublished, independent work of the author, H. Wong, under the supervision of his research supervisor, Dr. Laurie Ford. The graduate student was responsible for the data collection, and primarily responsible for the analysis and writing components of the present study. This research study involved human participants and was reviewed and approved by the University of British Columbia's Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) under certificate H21-02468.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

The outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 has affected many aspects of people's lives, but it has disproportionately affected the lives of people marginalized individuals (Marques de Miranda et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2020; Waddell et al., 2020). Chinese people across the world have been identified as a particularly vulnerable community due to the increasing amount of hate crimes and racism directed towards them since the onset of COVID-19. For example, in their report, Jeung and Nham (2020) indicated that in March of 2020, the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council received 1,497 reports of COVID-19 related discrimination in the United States. Conversely, in Canada, the websites [www.COVIDracism.ca](http://www.COVIDracism.ca) and [www.elimin8hate.org](http://www.elimin8hate.org) received more than 1150 reports of anti-Asian racism from March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, to February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Nicholson, 2021). In Vancouver specifically, the Vancouver Police Department stated that the amount of hate crimes against Asian Canadians doubled from 5 in March of 2020 to 11 in April of 2020. This is a dramatic increase from the 12 registered reports in 2019 (Lam, 2020). However, it is not solely hate crimes against Asians that has increased, but anti-Asian attitudes as well. Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) showed that the presence of the "Implicit Americanness Bias", or the belief that Caucasian people are inherently more "American" than Asian-American people, started to increase in March of 2020. They also note that this increase coincided with the increase of anti-Asian attitudes and rhetoric present in American conservative news outlets.

While anti-Asian attitudes and hate crimes related to COVID-19 are relatively new, anti-Asian attitudes in North America have been present since the 1800s. In Canada, the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885 ensured that every Chinese immigrant travelling to Canada was subject to a \$50 fine. This fee was later increased to \$100 in 1900 and \$500 in 1903 (Chan, 2017). This

immigration policy was motivated by the idea of a “yellow peril”, where an influx of immigrants from Asia were arriving in Canada to work as labourers. Around the same time in the United States, San Francisco residents referred to their local Chinatown as a “laboratory of infection” and Chinese immigrants as “lying and treacherous aliens” that had no regard for American public health (Trauner, 1978, p. 73). For over 100 years, anti-Asian attitudes have had an active role in both Canadian and American societies.

This history of scapegoating Asians for disease threats has led to the normalization of this phenomenon in North America today. The people who uphold anti-Asian attitudes see Asians as perpetual foreigners, who are never considered members of the majority group and are perceived as somehow connected to Asian countries no matter their generational status (Wu, 2002). Currently, this concept is being displayed in Canadian communities by blaming those of Asian descent as being somehow responsible for the outbreak of COVID-19 due to the origins of the virus in parallel to their ethnicity. Furthermore, Tessler et al. (2020) sheds light on how white supremacy values view white bodies with purity and innocence, while viewing non-white bodies as unclean, dangerous, and dirty. The normalized history of viewing Asians as perpetual foreigners and upholding racist Western values have combined to encourage and foster anti-Asian attitudes in North America.

The history of anti-Asian attitudes combined with the new stressors of COVID-19 related anti-Asian attitudes may have increasingly negative effects on the mental health and well-being of Asian individuals and communities. In their 2007 study, Gee et al. (2007) found that with Asian-Americans, self-reported racial discrimination was associated with greater odds of having any DSM-IV disorder within the past 12 months. These findings were significant even after controlling for SES, acculturative stress, and chronic physical conditions. Furthermore, Lozano

et al (2021) found that in a sample of 636 Asian American participants, depression symptoms increased more than two-fold, from 9% pre pandemic to 21% during the COVID-19 pandemic. These mentally taxing stressors of experiencing and coping with anti-Asian attitudes from the past and present, coupled with the everyday stressors of living through a global pandemic could compound to disproportionately have an adverse effect on Asian's mental health.

## **1.2 Rationale for the Present Study**

To date, there have been limited studies investigating the effect that anti-Asian attitudes related to COVID-19 are having on Asian communities, specifically Chinese Canadians. East Asian individuals accounted for 84% of all reported incidents of anti-Asian attitudes in Canada from 2019 to 2020 (Nicholson, 2021). Moreover, most of the current literature on this subject is focused on Asian-Americans, which fails to consider the unique sociocultural position of Asian-Canadians.

There are also currently only a handful of studies exploring Chinese-Canadian youth experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. In their report on anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization *Fight Covid Racism* noted that only 8% of the responses of discriminatory incidents, which they received during 2020, were from children 18 and under, while 43% of the responses were from young adults aged 19-35 (Kong et al., 2021). The contrast between the reporting of acts of discrimination between children under 18 and young adults from 19-35 has yet to be explained.

The limited studies available that explore Chinese youth's experiences with anti-Asian attitudes are largely quantitative in nature (Chen et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2020). While quantitative data may provide some descriptive information of Chinese youth's experiences, it fails to encapsulate the lived experiences of the individual, which gives a rich description of the



worldviews of the participants. Further research exploring Chinese Canadian youth's lived experiences with anti-Asian attitudes is needed to gather rich and contextualized information on their perceptions and its impact on their everyday experiences and wellbeing.

### **1.3 Definition of Key Terms**

**Anti-Asian attitudes.** Anti-Asian attitudes refer to any act of discrimination, prejudice, stigma, sentiment, or any kind of assault due to a person having Asian ethnicity (Dhanani & Franz, 2020).

**Chinese Canadian.** The term Chinese Canadian refers to any individual who self-identifies as having a Chinese background and either was born in or are currently living in Canada.

**Youth.** The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs defines youth as individuals who are between the ages of 15-24 (UNDESA, 2013). However, for the purposes of this study, the age range of the youth will be from 16-18. In Canada, youth can consent to minimal risk studies at age 16 (Health Canada-PHAC REB, 2021) and Asian-Canadian youth over 18 have more representation in surveys and studies looking at anti-Asian attitudes (Angus Reid Institute, 2021; Kong et al., 2021).

### **1.4 Chapter Summary**

The outbreak of COVID-19 has disproportionately affected Chinese Canadians, as they have experienced an influx of anti-Asian attitudes due to the pandemic. The scapegoating of Chinese Canadians is unfortunately not new and the immigration policies and attitudes towards Chinese Canadians in Canada's history set the stage for the mistreatment of Asian Canadians during COVID-19. Chinese Canadian youth are underrepresented in many surveys looking at the reporting of anti-Asian attitudes, and immediate action should be taken to see if they are

experiencing anti-Asian attitudes as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19 in Canada and around the world. One way to gather such information would be to learn about the experiences and perceptions of Chinese Canadian youth during the pandemic.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

### **2.1 Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the current literature pertaining to Chinese-youth's lived experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during and before COVID-19 in order to understand important factors that may be contributing to their perceptions. In this chapter, a brief overview of anti-Asian attitudes and the model minority status are included. Further, Anti-Asian attitudes due to COVID-19 and in Canada are also discussed. The effects that anti-Asian attitudes have on the mental health of Asian youth are then examined. The chapter concludes with a brief review of the literature regarding Chinese Canadian youth's experiences with anti-Asian attitudes due to COVID-19 and the potential implications that it may have on their wellbeing.

### **2.2 The Model Minority Myth**

As early as the 1800s, Asian immigrants were viewed as cheap and temporary labourers in North America and were being actively recruited to work dangerous jobs. Asian immigrants were attracted to North America in the hopes of starting a better life and to make money by finding gold on the West coast (Toupin, 1980). The treatment by the host societies, who were initially eager to recruit labourers, quickly became overwhelmingly negative. Soon, the United States and Canadian governments started to become unhappy with the number of Asian immigrants that had arrived in their countries and passed restrictive immigration laws that specifically targeted Asians. These included charging fees for immigration, restricting spouses and children from immigrating, and completely banning all immigration from Asian countries all together, which all are methods characterized by ethnocentrism, racism, xenophobia, and exclusion (Lee, 2007). In America, these laws were not repealed until 1965 with the Immigration

and Nationality Act, which encouraged Asian immigrants with higher levels of education to immigrate to America to help improve the economy. From 1966-1968 there was a reported influx of around 380,000 Immigrants from Asia, most being doctors, scholars, or professionals (Ling & Austin, 2015; Wong, 1986). With these professionals coming into North America, society began to play into the myth that Asians had overcome discrimination and successfully assimilated into America (Ramirez, 1986).

The model minority myth perpetuates the idea that people of Asian ethnicity achieve more universal success in their academic and occupational lives compared to people of other ethnicities (Museus, 2009). This ideology has led to many instances of anti-Asian attitudes both externally from others and internally towards the self (Benner & Kim, 2009; S.J. Lee, 1996; Shih, 2019; Yoo & Miller, 2015). The model minority myth, which depicts Asians as submissive and willing to assimilate, has also sparked a debate over whether or not Asians should be considered honorary whites (Gans, 2012). The label honorary white is the idea that Asians (especially Asian-American and Asian-Canadians), have overcome their oppression and discrimination. Additionally, they are described as hardworking, successful, and successfully assimilated into the society of the place they immigrated to (Alvarez et al., 2006; Shih, 2019). By having society adopt the honorary white label, the impression that racism is no longer a problem is perpetuated and it invalidates the experiences of Asians and people of colour (Shih, 2019). The colloquial label of honorary white has also led to the marginalization of Asians Americans and Canadians from issues regarding racism and diversity, as they are often dismissed as having no problems (Lee et al, 2021). Furthermore, the ideology of Asians being well adjusted to mainstream North American culture maintains the idea that they are also passive, problem free,

and psychologically and academically well adjusted, which ignores issues surrounding mental health (among others) for this community (Qin & Han, 2011).

As a product of the reinforcement of the model minority myth, Asians are often excluded from critical conversations about race and racism (Sue et al., 2021). The idea that they are free from the shackles of discrimination and racism often does not earn them a seat at the conversation table (Li & Nicholson, 2021). Stemming from the model minority myth lies a complex relationship with other BIPOC communities, especially the Black communities. These two communities have been positioned against each other under white supremacy and Asians have leveraged anti-Black beliefs in order to keep their status of honorary whites (Kim, 1999; Yellow-Horse et al., 2021). These beliefs are then reinforced within family systems and along with internalized racism, go on to further reinforce the perpetuation of the model minority myth (Young et al., 2021). The lack of conversations within Asian families about racial issues may consequently limit the development of Asian youth's awareness of their own critical consciousness as well. In their interviews with 35 Chinese American youth, Lee et al. (2022) highlighted that even despite the youth's best efforts to address racial issues with their parents, the conversations failed to contextualize anti-Asian racism in relation to other communities who have been marginalized in the past. Therefore, the separation of Asian communities from other BIPOC communities due to the model minority status may further alienate Asian communities due to anti-Black beliefs and internalized racism.

The model minority myth and the idea of honorary whites also gives way to the rise of the perpetual foreigner status whereby Asian-Canadians are viewed as foreign, no matter their generational status or how long they have been in Canada (Tessler, 2020). Therefore, even though they are viewed favourably in society and almost as complete citizens, they are still

considered foreign even if they were born in Canada or their parents immigrated to Canada. This may then set the stage for Asians to be targets of scapegoating, discrimination, and anti-Asian attitudes throughout their lives and particularly during various outbreaks of disease, especially the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **2.3 Anti-Asian Attitudes towards Youth**

Anti-Asian attitudes, which can include any act of discrimination, prejudice, stigma, or any kind of assault due to a person having Asian ethnicity, may have a wide variety of negative effects not only on victims socioemotional, but physical, and academic outcomes as well (Benner & Kim, 2009; Chia-Chen Chen et al., 2014; Ogbenna et al., 2021; Trent et al., 2019).

On a socioemotional level, anti-Asian attitudes may leave adolescents feeling socially isolated from their peers, parents, and society (Benner, 2019). In a qualitative study of 32 Chinese adolescents who recently immigrated to the United States, it was found that being on the receiving end of anti-Asian attitudes led to increased feelings of alienation from their peers at school and their parents at home (Yeh et al., 2008). These feelings of isolation from multiple environments in their lives may have detrimental effects on adolescents. In a four-year longitudinal study examining Asian American youth samples in the Midwest of the United States it was found that increased feelings of isolation due to anti-Asian attitudes have been connected to increased problem behaviours and higher levels of depressive symptoms (Choi et al., 2020).

Anti-Asian attitudes may also lead to a variety of negative physiological outcomes for adolescents. In their policy statement on the impact of racism on the health of children and youth, Trent et al. (2019) argue that racism is a social determinant of health and has significantly negative effects on victims and individuals who experience or receive anti-Asian attitudes. They also note that biologically, racism can trigger high levels of cortisol that arises with chronic

stress. Prolonged exposure to cortisol may then lead to a predisposition for a variety of chronic diseases. Furthermore, increased levels of discrimination were associated with lower sleep duration, which might also lead to a variety of health problems (Ogbenna et al., 2021).

Increased levels of anti-Asian attitudes in adolescence are also associated with lower levels of school engagement, lower levels of social engagement, and low performance in academic outcomes in middle school (Benner & Kim, 2009, Luthar et al., 2021; Park et al, 2021, Thompson et al., 2020). In a survey of over 700 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in Los Angeles, Hyunh and Fuligni (2010) found that increased adult and peer discrimination predicted lower GPAs even after controlling for differences in gender and ethnicity. Further, a systematic review conducted by Priest et al. (2013), found that among 121 studies, 76% of them had found positive associations between racial discrimination and negative mental health in children and youth. The evidence is clear that an increased amount of exposure to anti-Asian attitudes towards Asian youth is associated with a multitude of detrimental outcomes

#### **2.4 Anti-Asian Attitudes Due to COVID-19**

From the onset of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China in early 2020, anti-Asian attitudes, which were fuelled by the concepts of the model minority and the perpetual foreigner, started to increase dramatically (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Jeung & Nham, 2020; Le, 2020). From early in the pandemic, news media outlets, politicians, and even scientists associated the COVID-19 pandemic with China and Asian people in general. Early news reports had pictures of Asian people in masks, and many of the articles referred to COVID-19 as the “China Virus” or the “Wuhan Virus” which was also endorsed and utilized by the Trump administration (Tessler et al., 2020). Politicians and other elected officials also adopted this ideology, with one rural Kansas elected official stating that his community was perceived to be very safe because the

population did not have many Chinese people (Reny et al., 2020). Furthermore, shortly after the outbreak of COVID-19, the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, added a Chinese art piece to the cover of their May edition. This is one of many examples of implicitly associating the COVID-19 virus with Chinese culture and people (Le et al., 2020).

By having prominent political figures, government officials, news organizations, and academic journals focus on China as the origin of COVID-19, citizens and the consumers of medias are encouraged to scapegoat Asian people for causing the worldwide pandemic. Online memes and comments about Chinese people eating bats started to consume social media outlets as Asian people quickly became the victim of many jokes about COVID-19 (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Tessler et al., 2020). Unfortunately, these behaviours were encouraged and escalated to serious violence towards many Asians, not just Chinese people.

In a self-report survey study of 250 Asian-American families across the United States, Cheah et al. (2020) found that one in four parents and youth reported vicarious racial discrimination almost every day. Further, most respondents reported directly experiencing or witnessing racial discriminations against other Chinese or Asian-American individuals due to COVID-19 at least once. The parents and youth in the study perceived that Americans thought Chinese culture and people were a threat to the United States. Attacks against Chinese or Asian-Americans have escalated to the point where Asians have been shoved to the ground, punched in the face, spat on, hit with shovels, and even stabbed due to anti-Attitudes related to COVID-19 (Margain, 2022; Petri & Slotnik, 2021). The Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNC) reported that in Toronto, there was a 43% increase in hate crimes from 2020 to 2021 (Walker, 2022). Unfortunately, due to the increased violence, some Asian-Americans are



making efforts to hide their Asian identity and affirm their American identity so as to not be targeted for hate crimes (Tang, 2020). It is also likely that Asians are reluctant to report on their experience if they are subject to anti-Asian attitudes due to fear or concern about the legal process (Tessler, 2020). In fact, until April 2022, the Vancouver Police Department's website form only had hate crime report forms available in simplified and traditional Chinese, as they were assuming people who are subject to hate crimes are not comfortable speaking English and/or are Chinese when many other Asians are being subject to anti-Asian attitudes (Baylon & Cecco, 2021).

While these anti-Asian attitudes may seem situational due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Man (2020) argues that anti-Asian attitudes should not be seen as an episodic event in history, but rather a reflection on aspects racial capitalism. They note that in moments of crisis, when the capitalist mode of production that exploits labour and resources is disrupted, insecurities and anger are often expressed through violence that is directed at those who seem "alien". In other words, when COVID-19 disrupted the lives of millions of people, anger was directed at Asians, who are seen as perpetually foreign and somehow single-handedly responsible for the outbreak of COVID-19.

## **2.5 Asian Youth Mental Health**

Concerns with mental health among youth are increasing in North America, especially considering the impact that COVID-19 has had on youth's education, social lives, and personal lives (Priest et al., 2013; Waselewski et al., 2021). Wade et al. (2020) calls this "cumulative risk", as there are multiple co-occurring risk factors that can increase the likelihood of mental health difficulties. Furthermore, youth may have a hard time dealing with cumulative risk, as

adolescents have fewer or less sophisticated coping strategies to deal with stressors than adults do (Garnefski et al., 2002).

In addition to the cumulative risk factors experienced by youth during the COVID-19 pandemic, Asian youth have had to deal with racism, discrimination, and prejudice, which can take a huge toll on their mental health. Interviews conducted in New York urban high schools noted that Asian-American adolescents reported higher levels of peer discrimination compared to their African American and Latino peers (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Yusuf et al. (2021) reported that many marginalized or BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour) youth experience racial discrimination and victimization as early as the first decade of life. The everyday racial discrimination experienced by Asian youth, compounded with racism due to COVID-19 have had a detrimental effect on the mental health of Asian youth and have added another layer to their cumulative risk. For example, much of the recent research has linked higher experiences of COVID-19 discrimination in online and physical spaces with lower mental health outcomes in Asian youth (Lee & Waters, 2021; Lou et al, 2022; Lozano et al., 2021; Oh & Litam, 2021; Yang et al, 2020). In addition, the majority of Asian-American parents interviewed from around the United-States expressed that they avoided conversations about racial discrimination due to COVID-19 even though they were concerned for their children because they thought the topic was too complex for their children to understand (Wang et al., 2022).

In addition to experiencing higher levels of perceived discrimination, Asian youth are less likely to use mental health resources compared to other youth their age (Li & Seidman, 2010, Lipton, 2017). This is not a phenomenon strictly related to COVID-19 as Asian youth have traditionally underutilized mental health resources available to them through their school, colleges, or communities (Juang et al., 2009; Lipson et al, 2017). The literature posits that there

are a number of social and structural factors behind their lack of utilization of mental health resources. In their sample of 146 Asian-American college students, Kim (2007) found an inverse relationship between enculturation of Asian values and professional help seeking attitudes, suggesting that culture may be an important factor that could help explain Asians' underutilization of mental health resources. Wang et al. (2019) interviewed 55 Asian-American youth aged 11-19 years old and revealed that they perceive barriers towards seeking mental health services as: stigma due to culture, stigma due to peers, and negative perceptions of mental health providers. Adding on to those findings, in their semi-structured interviews with 24 Asian American adolescents, Liu et al. (2022) found culture specific risk factors for mental health and the lack of utilization of mental health resources including high academic pressure and an internalization of the model minority stereotype.

From a cumulative risk perspective, Asian youth are experiencing an alarming number of compounding factors during COVID-19 that can negatively affect their mental health. Not only have their social and academic lives been impacted greatly, but they may have also experienced or been victim to anti-Asian attitudes and be less likely to seek mental health providers when they are in need.

## **2.6 Asian Canadian Youth and Anti-Asian Attitudes Due to COVID-19**

Since the 1980s, Canada has embraced the idea of multiculturalism and acceptance. However, as Lee (2021) has described, multiculturalism has been politically constructed to serve white settler hegemony and dismiss issues of racism. Emphasizing Canada's model of multiculturalism and its framing of multicultural education perpetuates Canada's nationalist agenda of acculturating the marginalized into the settler colonial state (James & Howard, 2022). For example, when the COVID-19 pandemic started, the majority of the focus was on violence

against Asian-Americans without much focus on Asian-Canadians. This positioned Canada as somewhat of a benign nation and set them up to be *different* than the United States.

Consequently, this notion of multiculturalism has been utilized to silence debates on racism, further encouraging the idea of the model minority, and challenging who is considered truly “Canadian” (Lee, 2021). A literature review conducted by Williams et al. (2022) further suggests that despite Canada’s emphasis on multiculturalism, the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) population in Canada are in fact at risk for racial trauma due to prejudice and discrimination. Recently, this is especially true for Asian-Canadians, as Anti-Asian attitudes in Canada have increased dramatically. For example, in May of 2021, Vancouver, Canada was dubbed the anti-Asian hate crime capital of North America due to the 717% increase in anti-Asian hate crimes from 2019 to 2020 (Baylon & Cecco, 2021).

The impact of anti-Asian attitudes due to COVID-19 has been documented with Asian-American youth, but the literature is just emerging with Chinese Canadian youth. Even though research with Chinese Canadians is just recently garnering more attention, surveys are showing that Chinese Canadians have been one of the groups that has been affected the most by the pandemic in Canada. Chinese Canadian youth are also dealing with a number of risks that are hindering their well-being socially, emotional, and economically. Statistics Canada (2021) reported in their survey of 858,000 Canadians that since the onset of the pandemic, 15 to 24-year-olds accounted for 45% of net employment losses in the nation (377,000 out of 858,000). Research from the Angus Reid Institute (2021) reported that of almost 2000 Asian-Canadians surveyed, younger Asian-Canadians are most likely to be impacted by experiences with racism and hate. Further, 58% of the participants in the Angus Reid Institute survey responded they had experienced at least some form of anti-Asian attitudes, and more than one-in-four reported

exposure to these types of situations “all the time” or “often”. Finally, 86% of the participants responded that they have received poor or unfair treatment by any institutional organizations such as police, health care, or banks. This signals that the anti-Asian attitudes they are experiencing may be fuelled and the result of xenophobic institutional policies, but it is mainly being enacted by people in their communities online or in person. An example of this might be how in the 1960s and 1970s, Canada’s immigration process started to focus more of education, specialized work skills, and language abilities. This allowed the government to pick “high status” individuals in their eyes to become Canadian citizens, setting up the foundation for the model minority myth (Yu, 2012). The model minority myth coupled with the perpetual foreigner status all hidden behind the guise of Canadian multiculturalism may allow and encourage anti-Asian attitudes in Canada.

Given the detrimental cumulative risk factors affecting Chinese-Canadian youth, their experiences, in their words and voice, are an area worth exploring as the majority of the research so far on Asian-Canadian youth has focused on quantitative studies and surveys. Learning and hearing about their personal stories is essential for understanding how to address the needs of Asian youth and provide them with the proper support to help them thrive.

## **2.7 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter the review of the literature overviews the need to interview Chinese-Canadian youth to gather their experiences with anti-Asian attitudes related to the outbreak of COVID-19. The existing literature indicates that there are a number of cumulative risks factors to which Chinese Canadian youth are exposed. It is important to address the intersectionality of their challenges and experiences in order to understand if Chinese Canadian youth are experiencing anti-Asian attitudes and if so, how to best address it. Seeing as how the literature is

just emerging examining Chinese Canadian youth and anti-Asian attitudes, a qualitative approach in exploring these issues allows for more rich discussion and nuanced conversation about their experiences.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Overview**

Discussed in this chapter are the purpose and research question, the methodological framework of the study, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, and the epistemological and theoretical underpinning of the study. Participant recruitment, proposed participants, ethical considerations, data analysis procedures, and research quality are also reviewed.

### **3.2 Purpose and Research Question**

The purpose of the present study was to explore and understand Chinese Canadian youth's perceptions and experiences of anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. By exploring the experiences of Chinese Canadian youth, an aim of the study was to take a step forward in better understanding the experience of Chinese Canadian youth with anti-Asian attitudes. Their reports of these experiences were guided by the following research question: How do Chinese Canadian youth experience anti-Asian attitudes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic?

### **3.3 Epistemological, Theoretical, and Methodological Framework**

The goal of the study was to better understand the experiences of Chinese Canadian youth who have encountered anti-Asian attitudes as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak on their day-to-day lives. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith et al., 2009) was the theoretical and methodological framework employed in this study. IPA involves detailed examinations of the participant's life world and emphasizes the individual's personal perception or account of an event. In essence, IPA looks into how participants make sense of their world and allows researchers to make sense of the participants' discoveries (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Smith et al. (2009) describe IPA as a methodology that is friendly to new researchers in the qualitative research space. Since the researcher focused on more post-positivist research in his

prior research IPA was chosen as the methodological framework for this study. It was also chosen as it would help to focus in on the experiences of Chinese-Canadian Youth and see how they are, in their perspectives, experiencing anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In its underlying theory, IPA is comprised of three major influences. IPA draws on each of these theoretical approaches to inform its unique epistemological framework and research methodology (Shinebourne, 2011). The first major influence of IPA is *phenomenology*. Phenomenology is described as the philosophical approach to the study of experience (Smith et al., 2009). This concept was first developed by Husserl, who conceptualized phenomenology as the careful examination of human experience. He argued that by letting participants explore their own experiences, it would allow them to analyze it in depth and then the essential qualities of that experience would rise to the top. Indeed, phenomenologists, through rigorous examination of individual experiences, seek to capture the meaning or essences, of an experience or events (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). However, in order to achieve the ultimate goal of phenomenology, one needs to consider hermeneutics.

*Hermeneutics* is the second major influence of IPA and refers to the theory of interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). Heidegger took Husserl's idea of phenomenology and wanted to take it one step further. Heidegger believed that while phenomenology was concerned with bringing individual's experiences to the light, there should be an avenue to interpret the material and connect it with deeper meanings. IPA subscribes more closely to this philosophy, as interpretive is even in the name. In fact, Smith (2011) argues that IPA is actively involved in a *double hermeneutic*, where the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them. Consistent with this approach, in this study the



researcher was looking to not only gather the experiences of the participants, but to go one step further and analyze the participants' descriptions of their lived experiences.

The last major influence of IPA is *idiography* (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is dedicated to analyzing individual experiences and is not particularly interested in making broad, sweeping claims about generalized human behaviour. More specifically, in IPA efforts are made to understand how events, relationships, or experiences have been conceptualized from the perspective of the individual in these specific contexts. In order to achieve this, case analysis should be completed one by one with extreme detail, and then compared to other cases.

It is also important to note that since IPA is built on a foundation of western philosophical underpinnings, it inherently does not consider other cultures ways of knowing. Thus, it is important when utilizing this methodology to emphasize and prioritize the participant's lived experiences and voices of the marginalized. In this study, the participants drove the pacing and direction of the interviews, and all emphasized ways in which they want the authority figures in their lives to address the problems that they are facing. This is especially important as the research in the present study centres around the perceptions and experiences of Chinese Canadian youth who likely have many intersecting marginalized identities.

### **3.4 Role of the Researcher**

The researcher played an active role in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of each youth's lived experiences with anti-Asian attitudes. It was important to critically identify and reflect upon self-identities in order to be aware of the influences that they may have had on the research.

The researcher is a third generation Chinese Canadian from Vancouver, BC, Canada. He has been involved with various Asian communities around Vancouver and different groups of

youths in varying capacities. His personal interest in this topic is a result of experiencing and witnessing anti-Asian attitudes around the world and in Vancouver. Furthermore, his family immigrated from Guangzhou to Vancouver in 1889 and was subject to the Chinese Head Tax in British Columbia. These experiences have informed him of the current and historical psychological and physical impacts that anti-Asian attitudes can have on Asian populations, especially youth.

The researcher completed a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, and he is currently completing a master's degree in School and Applied Child Psychology. In his undergraduate degree, he took a special interest in developmental psychology and classes in the Department of Gender, Race, and Social Justice. The unique foundation of his undergraduate classes helped to motivate him to have my research related to human development and social justice. In his master's degree, he took classes on qualitative research methods to help him explore the research questions posed in this study.

The researcher's past experiences, both academic and professional, have shaped the lens in which he perceives how anti-Asian attitudes affect Chinese Canadian Youth. Having this background, it motivated him to do this research with Chinese Canadian youth who experienced racism, as they mentioned how important it was that someone in research was listening to them. During interviews, the researcher's experiences allowed him to connect with the participants on a deeper level and some even mentioned that they felt more comfortable talking in this interview because he understood personally what they had experienced. In the data analysis process, the researcher's identity and past experiences influenced the parts of the interviews he focused on the most and helped to conceptualize the themes for the study. Another aspect that informed his analysis was his sociopolitical awareness and critical consciousness. Being aware of oppressive

systems of power shapes the lens in which one views different issues and the questions they may ask research participants. Lastly, during the writing process his positionality impacted how he weaved together the overall message of the study.

### **3.5 Ethics Approval**

Prior to beginning the study, ethical approval from the Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) was obtained. Since the participants recruited for this study were 16-18 years old, informed consent was obtained from youth since they are of appropriate age to provide consent in Canada (i.e., 16-years-old). Informed consent was collected from the youth after the initial contact via email and prior to the interview. The informed consent included the purpose of the study, what would be asked of the participant, what would be done with their responses, and if they consented to audio and video being recorded. Background questions were also asked at the beginning of the interview (see Appendix A). After completing consent, participants were given the opportunity to remove themselves from the study and still receive full compensation (\$25 Amazon gift card) for their time, but none withdrew. Once the interviews were completed, the participants were be provided with local mental health resources to follow up with if need be due to the sensitive nature of the discussions in the study (Appendix B).

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

**3.6.1 Recruitment.** In order to recruit participants for this study, social media strategies (e.g., Twitter) were implemented. Recruitment ads were posted on the researcher's personal Twitter account in order to engage a wide reach. The tweet was "public", which means viewers were able to "retweet" the recruitment ad and sharing it with a wider audience. The recruitment ad (see Appendix C) was targeted towards Chinese Canadians on Twitter by using hashtags and

mentioning other accounts so that they were able to retweet. The recruitment ad also had a link to a webpage for the study (<https://blogs.ubc.ca/ubcasiancanadianexperiencesstudy>) which outlined the details of the study, eligibility criteria, the risks of the study, and how to voice interest for the study. Participants received a \$25 Amazon gift card of their choosing for participating in the study.

When recruited, participants were also asked if they knew any other Chinese Canadian youth in the lower mainland of British Columbia that might have been interested in participating in the study. The researcher also recruited participants through their own contacts (i.e., family and friends); sharing information about the study with people they know in the requested demographic who would then in turn contact the researcher if were interested in participating in the study. The inclusion criteria included youth aged 16-18, who lived in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, and self-identified as Chinese Canadian.

A disclaimer tweet was added underneath the recruitment ad to inform the users of the site of my intentions to recruit for my study through twitter, and by interacting (i.e., liking, retweeting, quote tweeting, or commenting), with the tweet, they would be publicly associated with the tweet. The study web page also had a section on the researcher's intent for recruitment, the purpose of the study, as well as any potential risks they may have experienced through interacting with the study.

**3.6.2 Participants.** According to Smith et al. (2009), IPA researchers should aim to find a homogenous sample that offers insight into the topic of investigation. In this case, the participants for the study were six self-identified Chinese Canadian youth, aged 16-17 currently located in the lower mainland of British Columbia.

When signing up on the study website, the participants were asked to complete a series of screening questions (Appendix D). If deemed eligible, a consent form (see Appendix E) was emailed to the participant in advance of the interview, and they were instructed to return it via email prior to the interview. This consent form was also reviewed with the participant at the beginning of the interview.

Six 16 to 17-year-old youth, two boys and four girls, who identify as Chinese Canadians and live in the lower mainland participated in the present study. Two participants identified as male, and four participants identified as female. Each participant spoke English proficiently in order to converse in the interview about their perceptions and experiences of anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. All participants attended secondary school in large urban areas of the lower mainland. Table 1 provides a description of the participants.

**Table 1**

*Participant Descriptions*

Name <sup>1</sup>	Gender	Age	Country of Origin	Years in Canada	Fluent Languages	Grade
Frank	Male	17	China	8	English and Mandarin	12
Rex	Male	17	China	17	English and Mandarin	12
Claire	Female	16	Taiwan	12	English and Mandarin	11
Sofia	Female	17	China	11	English and Mandarin	12
Lucy	Female	16	China	16	English, Mandarin, and Cantonese	11
Phoebe	Female	16	China	2	English and Mandarin	11

<sup>1</sup>*Pseudonyms were chosen by the researcher and used for confidentiality to protect participant identity. Participants introduced themselves with Western names, therefore the same style of name was chosen for them.*

**Frank.** Frank is a 17-year-old boy who, at the time of the interview, was just completing Grade 12 year and was moving onto university. He was heavily involved in competitive swimming in his community and has experienced anti-Asian attitudes mostly in online settings.

**Rex.** Also in Grade 12, Rex is a 17-year-old boy who has experienced anti-Asian attitudes in both online and in-person settings. He also expressed that he experienced it both with his family and individually.

**Claire.** With a strong interest in social justice, Claire, a 16-year-old Grade 11 student, has moved to four different schools in her time in Canada. She noted that she has experienced anti-Asian attitudes at every one of the schools she has attended and felt unsupported by her community and her school.

**Sofia.** A Grade 12 student who is 17 years old, Sophia is moving to the United States for university next year. She was also involved in her swimming community. She mostly has experienced anti-Asian attitudes online and has anxieties about the level of anti-Asian attitudes in the new city where she is moving to.

**Lucy.** Having lived in Canada her entire life, Lucy is a 16-year-old girl who recently completed Grade 11. She has experienced anti-Asian attitudes online and in person. She felt supported by her school environment, but not by her community or society.

**Phoebe.** Phoebe has moved between China and Canada multiple times in her life with her family. She is a 16-year-old girl who is in grade 11. Phoebe expressed that she had challenges with acculturation in Canada combined with anti-Asian attitudes due to COVID-19.

**3.6.3 Semi-structured Interviews.** After the initial contact, a meeting was set at a mutually agreeable time for an online semi-structured interview using the Zoom platform. The participants were asked to secure a private location before the interview began to ensure confidentiality. Informed consent was collected before the interview; however, the researcher also reviewed the consent form with the participants during the interview. The consent also included consent to record audio and video through the Zoom platform. Prior to starting the interview, participants were asked if they consent to their audio and video being recorded and transcribed. Participants also edited their name on zoom and turned their video off if they wished, however none did. All recordings and transcripts were password protected and encrypted and were stored on the university OneCloud. Smith et al. (2009) describes in-depth interviews as an important tool for qualitative research, as interviews aim to, “enter the participant’s lifeworld or allow the participant to recount their life experience” (pg. 190). For a semi-structured interview, a schedule was created to make sure the interview was relevant, open-ended, and adequately fit the allotted time frame. The researcher had an initial one-hour interview with the participants, followed by a 10-20 minute follow up interview for clarification and that expanded on their answers from the previous interview. The initial interview protocol for the study is provided in Appendix A.

### **3.7 Transcription**

Audio transcription from the interviews conducted on Zoom was provided by Zoom’s audio transcription feature. The transcriptions were password protected and encrypted and stored on the university’s OneDrive. Immediately after the interview, Transcriptions were reviewed in order to correct any transcription errors and finalize the transcription.

## 3.8 Data Analysis

### 3.8.1 Six Step Data Analysis Process

Data analysis was conducted according to the six step process for data analysis using IPA, as outlined in Smith et al. (2009). The data was analyzed using the qualitative data analysis tool NVivo (released in March 2020).

**Step 1. Reading and re-reading.** In this first step of analysis according to IPA, the researcher engrossed themselves in the data through reading through the transcript of the interview multiple times. This allowed the researcher to not only recount the topics that were discussed during the interview, but also note the emotions, tones, and rapport that was built as well. Each interview transcript was read multiple times in NVivo, including immediately after the interviews to properly capture the nuanced detail of each interview.

**Step 2. Initial noting.** In this second step, the researcher read through the transcript and noted down points of interest. The aim of this step was to arrive at the end of the transcript with a list of complex notes on the data located within the interview. Using the annotate function on NVivo, transcripts were marked with notes of interest and ideas about possible connections and superordinate themes.

**Step 3. Develop emergent themes.** In the third step, the researcher was quite familiar with the transcript of the interview. The analysis then moved on from looking at the transcript of the initial interview to looking at the notes obtained from Step 2. In these notes, emergent themes were identified by the researcher's interpretation. Building upon the annotations from the previous step, emergent themes were created by creating a code within relevant quotes. From there, various parent and child codes were created and labelled.



**Step 4. Searching for connections across emergent themes.** Once the emergent themes were identified from the interpretive notes, a development of a chart or a map was then created in order to look for connections among the themes. This was done on paper, as drawing out the emergent themes helped to visualize connections, similarities, and differences between each of them.

**Step 5. Moving to the next case.** Once getting up to Step 4 on one case, the researcher moved onto their other interviews and repeat steps 1 through 4 with them as well. Smith et al. (2009) noted that is important to let new themes emerge from each individual case and handle each case on their own terms, respecting their own individuality. During data analysis of this study, new themes arrived with analysis of each case. Once all the cases were analyzed, codes were rearranged and combined based on similarity through the codes feature of NVivo.

**Step 6. Looking for patterns across cases.** The final step involved examining all the cases and looking for connections or patterns across them. This involved reconfiguring and relabelling of themes as well as looking at how themes in some cases can help explain information in another case. The themes were re-examined to establish rigour by using the critical friend approach and verifying the themes with the research supervisor on the project, Dr. Laurie Ford.

### **3.9 Research Quality**

Yardley (2000) described four guiding principles to apply to the IPA methodology in order to assess proper research quality. These four guiding principles were followed closely throughout the study.

**3.9.1 Sensitivity to Context.** Sensitivity to context is something that becomes relevant in the early stages of the IPA approach. Sensitivity can be utilized in a variety of situations such as

analyzing the participants responses and consuming the relevant literature (Smith et al., 2019). In this study, the researcher demonstrated sensitivity to context by utilizing semi-structured interviews to allow the youth to describe their own experiences related to anti-Asian attitudes. This way, the youth shared what they were comfortable with divulging. Furthermore, the researcher also utilized basic empathy skills such as paraphrasing, modulating body language, and employing listening skills to make the participants more comfortable in their environments.

**3.9.2 Commitment and Rigour.** Both Yardley (2000) and Smith et al. (2009) postulate that in order to conduct an interview with an IPA framework properly, there must be a high level of commitment and rigour from the researcher to ensure that close attention is paid to each interview. In this study, the researcher exemplified commitment and rigour by giving each participant ample time, attention, and effort during the study. This was applied to all aspects of the study, from creating the interview questions to the data analysis and write up.

In order to attain commitment and rigour in this study, I engaged in in the following:

**3.9.2.1 Critical Friend.** The researcher used the technique of a “critical friend” to discuss, review, and check their transcripts and data analysis. The researcher met with another graduate student and who was familiar with IPA methodology to discuss the thought process behind their analytical thinking and how they deduced certain themes. He also met with his research supervisor to conduct the same process. The graduate student and supervisor read over the analysis and over-arching themes to see if the interpretation is supported from the interview transcripts. They also helped to examine relationships between superordinate themes and discussed them in detail. Disputes were handled through considering each other’s point of view of the interpretation of the data and looking at contextual clues in the transcripts.

**3.9.2.2 Member Checking.** The researcher used the technique of member checking to discuss the representation of the participants experiences in the data analysis. In order to ensure that the participants experiences were not being misrepresented in the study, the participant met with the researcher one week after the initial interview to review the data analysis process and the resulting superordinate and subordinate themes.

**3.9.4 Coherence and Transparency.** Smith et al. (2009) refer to transparency as how clearly the stages of the research process are described in the write up of the original study. The researcher strived for coherence and transparency by accurately outlining in detail the creation of the interview questions and keeping a written copy of the steps taken to create the study. In addition, coherence was assessed constantly throughout the study process in order to make sure that the research results make sense grouped together and to see if the themes are truly reflecting the experiences of the Chinese Canadian youth interviewed.

**3.9.5 Impact and Importance.** Yardley (2000) describes that the final broad principle is impact and importance. The findings of this study will contribute to the dearth of literature pertaining to Chinese-Canadian youth and also help parents, teachers, psychologists and even youths to take the first step to understand the experiences of Chinese-Canadian youth with anti-Asian attitudes related to COVID-19. The voices and lived experiences of Chinese-Canadian youth will be crucial when creating formal support systems in the future for them through school systems or through broader community efforts.

### **3.1.0 Summary**

The methodological framework and method of analysis that will be employed in this study is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA was used to explore how Chinese-Canadian youth describe their experiences with Anti-Asian attitudes resulting from the outbreak

of COVID-19. Data collection procedures such as recruitment, participant selection, and semi-structured interview procedures were discussed. A step-by-step review of the proposed data analysis method was also included. After, ethical guidelines and considerations were listed. Finally, concrete steps to ensure research quality were reviewed.

## Chapter 4: Results

### 4.1 Overview

In this chapter, the research findings that were created from this analysis are presented. Three superordinate themes and 11 emergent or subordinate themes were identified (see Table 2) in answering the study research question: How do Chinese Canadian youth experience anti-Asian attitudes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic? The superordinate themes emerging from this analysis have been conceptualized as individual aspects of Chinese Canadian's experiences of anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic, with their experiences relating to both their perceived support systems and lack of support.

**Table 2**

*Superordinate and subordinates identified through data analysis*

<b>Superordinate Themes</b>	<b>Subordinate Themes</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Experiencing Anti-Asian Attitudes	Increased anti-Asian attitudes	6
	Motivations behind racism	5
	Anti-Asian Attitudes Online	4
	Worrying about family	4
	Newcomer Youth's Perceptions of Anti-Asian Attitudes	3
Lack of School and Community Support	Absence of mental health support	5
	Lack of school support	5
	Decreased community support	6
Support Systems	Support through friends and family	6
	Resilience	5
	Ideas about improvement	4

### 4.2 Contextual Considerations

All interviews were conducted in year two of the COVID-19 pandemic. All of the participants were in Canada for 2 years or longer and were all fluent in English and Mandarin or Cantonese. Furthermore, all the youth in the study indicated that they had experienced some

form of anti-Asian attitude either explicitly or implicitly online or in person. All of the participants attended different high schools in the lower mainland area of Vancouver.

### **4.3 Experiencing Anti-Asian Attitudes**

The first superordinate theme represents the experience of Chinese Canadian youth being the victim of anti-Asian attitudes in their daily lives, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although all the participants reported experiencing anti-Asian attitudes in their lives somehow, some participants experienced explicit racism in person while others witnessed it either in the community or in online spaces.

Within this broad superordinate theme, five subordinate themes were identified: 1) increased anti-Asian attitudes, 2) motivations behind racism, 3) anti-Asian attitudes online, 4) worrying about family, and 5) newcomer youth's perceptions of anti-Asian attitudes

#### **4.3.1 Increased anti-Asian attitudes.**

When it comes to anti-Asian attitudes during to the COVID-19 pandemic, all participants reported that they perceived an increase in anti-Asian attitudes since the beginning of the pandemic in March of 2020. Claire spoke about her experiences with her peers when COVID-19 first started to spread and how she perceived that blatant anti-Asian attitudes became more commonplace:

Yeah, exactly, I remember like at the start of COVID. Some of my peers would stay away from me. And even some of my friends would say to me like, 'Oh, you're Chinese. So, you must have COVID'. Or some people would even say, like, 'go back to China, you started pandemic', or 'please stay away from me, you have COVID'. And then I would ask them, 'well, why do you think have COVID?' They're like, 'you're Chinese'.

But I'm like, 'I pretty much lived in Canada my whole life. I have no relation to this whatsoever'. But they're like, 'you're Chinese so you must have that'.

All the participants reported these attitudes were present at the beginning of the pandemic and they still hear comments in their day-to-day life. Rex spoke about how racism towards Chinese and other Asian people has become normalized due to the increased amount of anti-Asian attitudes:

Ah, yeah, I think so. I think after the pandemic, a lot of people felt that was more okay to be racist because a lot of people were being racist. [It] seems that people kind of hopped on and started being racist towards Asians. I think the COVID pandemic is kind of what like, spurred that? No, it's kind of allowed. It's kind of enabled people to be as racist as they want it to.

This normalization led many of the participants to become disheartened at the rate at which anti-Asian attitudes increased. Lucy and Sofia expressed anger and disappointment that events like acts of violence against Asians in the news were not being taken seriously enough. Claire reflected on this in the following way, "I guess Asians aren't taken seriously about the experiences that we've dealt with regarding racism, and just people thinking, I guess, believing the model minority myth. It's everywhere. It's like in schools and communities, just everyone just kind of believes it". Chinese Canadian youth undoubtedly faced an increase in anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was coupled with the sense that the anti-Asian attitudes were being normalized and the victims were not being taken seriously.

#### **4.3.2 Motivations behind racism**

Most participants described that as they were experiencing or witnessing other people experiencing anti-Asian attitudes, they tried to figure out the motivations of why people have

these feelings towards Asian people. Some participants tried to understand the perspectives of the perpetrators who were acting discriminatory or prejudicial. Phoebe explained her feelings in the following way, “Just broadly, in the sense of the pandemic, they're definitely trying to shift blame. Because when we don't understand something, or we fear something, we want something to blame.” Although Phoebe experienced racism as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, she still wanted to try and empathize with the perpetrator. Similarly, Claire reflected on how misinformation can shape people’s views on anti-Asian attitudes:

Well, at the very start of the pandemic, there was like, a lot of, I guess, fake news on the media and stuff going around social media. I remember lots of my peers were saying, ‘oh, I found this video of like a Chinese person eating a bat. And this is how COVID started’, just like a bunch of really weird random stuff that my peers were consuming, and they just likely believe it and even their parents believe these things to. Then they tell their children, and their children believe it. So just a lot of false news and random things going around the media at the start of COVID that's when the racist comments were worse for me because it will just kind of believe whatever they see and use it as a way to kind of shame me for who I am.

They both discussed the motivations of the perpetrators and how they have been socialized to normalize racism and anti-Asian attitudes. Not all of the participants attempted to understand the perspectives of the individuals demonstrating racist behaviours. Frank stated that, “I just think people will, like, be really, really racist towards you, because of where you came from. Even though you might not be Chinese. They're still against all Asians in general”. Overall, participants attempted to understand why people have to perpetuate anti-Asian attitudes.



### 4.3.3 Anti-Asian attitudes online

Participants discussed how they were not only experiencing anti-Asian attitudes in person and in their communities, but in online environments as well. These online hate comments negatively affected the emotional wellbeing of many of the participants. Sofia described it like this:

I feel like a little uncomfortable and like, annoyed. And especially if I see like, the comment has, like, a lot of likes, even if it's even if it's a joke. It's just like, seeing that, like some people actually support it. It's like, just makes me a little uncomfortable. And then think like, what's wrong with people and stuff like that?

For Sofia, seeing that people online were supporting racist and discriminatory comments was disheartening and made her uncomfortable. These comments get quite intense as well as Phoebe describes:

It's crazy because if you look at the comments on videos, they can get so hateful and xenophobic. Like they should get an award for using as many swear words in a sentence at once. I try not to take it too personally, but it is hard to believe that people can act like that online.

In her experiences, Phoebe noted that the extremely racist comments that she was witnessing online were shocking and she actively tried to distance herself from them in order to not take them personally. For Lucy, tried to avoid the internet comments all together, "So, I definitely don't want to like, go down the rabbit hole of the internet. Oh, my God, people are horrible. So, I definitely want to look on the good side instead and avoid the bad stuff." In sum, participants described how they saw hateful and racist comments online that perpetuated anti-Asian attitudes, and these comments had support from others online which affected them negatively. They

reported trying to distance themselves from these comments or avoid them all together in order to protect their mental health and wellbeing.

#### **4.3.4 Worrying about family**

With the increase in anti-Asian attitudes, some participants expressed concerns that their families were going to be the target of hate crimes related to COVID-19 discrimination. This was especially exacerbated after seeing the reports of older adults being attacked in various Chinatowns around North America. Frank expressed his feelings about this:

I mean, it just pisses me off. Yeah, cause like, really? My parents and my little sister, we got nothing. Yeah, it's like, my dad's going for groceries, and then gets punched. I just feel like there's no reason. Because I just feel like they're older. Yeah, they get punished. It might be more serious than like, I feel like if I get punished, I could recover and heal up. That also made me like super anxious for my grandparents.

When Frank's dad was a victim of an anti-Asian hate crime, it made him more fearful of what could happen to the rest of his family. This was especially true for the older adults in his family. He also expressed that he would be able to recover faster if he was the victim of a hate crime compared to members of his family. Similarly, Rex recounted an experience where he and his family were discriminated against due to being Chinese at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic:

So, one that really stuck with me was kind of prominent was when I went to the supermarket with my mom, my sister. And immediately we enter, people are giving us looks and stuff. And then, like these, white woman, kind of like came up to us. And they were like, oh, you need get out of here. Like, you know, you're not supposed to be here and stuff and you're breaking the rules or wherever. And then we're like, what are we

doing? We're just trying to shop this is like, nothing. And then, like, a worker came over, and he sided with them to kind of like, you know, it kind of triggered me. Obviously, I kind of went off, but, you know, like, my sister and my mom held me back.

Rex felt the need to protect his family from the perpetrators after one incident. Upon further reflection, Rex expressed feelings to similar to Frank in needing to protect his family and that he was more concerned for their wellbeing over his own:

Yeah, so by myself, I feel like, um, I don't know, whenever it comes to like family stuff, I always got to like, go family first, you know, I'm not gonna let anyone hurt my family. But for me, you know, I'm like, more okay with that more relaxed because I feel like I can hold my own. And I'm like, in that encounter, and like that specific situation, it was more so like a one on one just like a little, like petty argument. But when it was in the supermarket, it was like a whole bunch of people ganging up on one group of people, which is like, it was like crazy to me, I didn't think that like workers are even allowed to like, side with one side, you know, that doesn't even make sense to me. So that made me really, really mad.

Overall, participants described how they were more worried about their family members being the victims of discriminatory anti-Asian attacks than themselves. This was due in part to the fact that they perceived they could handle themselves better and recover faster physically compared to their family members that may be more vulnerable.

#### **4.3.5 Newcomer Youth's Perceptions of Anti-Asian Attitudes**

A couple of the participants reflected on how they had to deal with anti-Asian attitudes during their time coming to Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic. Phoebe described her

experiences moving from China to Canada and realizing that she or any other person of Asian descent may be the victim of anti-Asian attitudes:

I didn't realize, yeah, like thinking if I go out, this might happen to me just because they might not know me or know me well and [they] love to like, identify the fact I am Chinese. But like imagine like if a Korean person or a Japanese person went out and they're mistaken for Chinese and got caught in the crossfire. It's like, not a good feeling.

She then goes on to question why there is not more recognition of anti-Asian attitudes and racist behaviour in Canada:

How come everyone just talks about racism in the US and not racism in Canada? It's like, everyone just kind of assumes that Canada is like a, I guess, like you said, multicultural country. So, we're pretty accepting. But that's not really the case all the time?

In her experiences, Phoebe came to terms with part of the process of moving to Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic included being prepared to possible experience anti-Asian attitudes and wondered why anti-Asian attitudes in Canada do not get as much attention as they do in the United States. However, even though participants accepted the possibility of experiencing anti-Asian attitudes, Claire expressed that she perceives that she is more open to reach out for support in Canada:

I feel like here I'm definitely less afraid to reach out, because in China, it's a lot of fast paced. And if you get left behind it's like, oh, well. There's like, yeah, I don't see I don't see myself reaching out to the teachers there as much. Oh, so I barely even registered that we have like a principal. In fact, in China, like, like, apparently, I was like, I searched up my old elementary school on a whim once and apparently the principal changed. I was like, I didn't even know the last one.

Generally, participants who arrived in Canada more recently expressed that part of the process of coming to Canada was realizing they may be the victims of anti-Asian attitudes, but they feel more comfortable reaching out for help in British Columbia compared to their country of origin.

#### **4.4 Lack of School and Community Support**

All participants spoke about their experiences of perceived lack of support in their schools and communities for youth who experienced or witnessed anti-Asian attitudes. Participants noted that they would have liked to have turned to established supports systems for them, however they did not find them helpful at all. Overall, participants perceived their experiences with school and community support systems of limited help in a number of ways yielding three subordinate themes: (1) absence of mental health support; (2) lack of school support; and (3) lack of community support.

##### **4.4.1 Absence of mental health support**

Most participants spoke to the absence of mental health supports in their lives after the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Specifically, they did not want to go on social media due to the increasing amount of anti-Asian attitudes online, so they interacted less with their friends. Lucy described it in the following way:

Like after school went online, I actually started to talk to my friends less because I didn't want to go on social media. Like the before the pandemic, I would always text back right away and now like I miss messages all the time and sometimes I have to check every couple of months on my DMs to see if I missed anyone.

The combination of having the in-person school community taken away, lack of social connection, and experiencing anti-Asian attitudes online had a negative impact on Lucy's reported mental health. During her time with online school, she did not perceive emotional

support. Even when school returned to an in person modality in September of 2020, participants noted that there was a dearth of culturally responsive mental health supports. Claire described the situation at her school:

Like, the thing is, the counselors won't address your issues as racism. Just like for example, if I go to a counselor and be like 'I experienced this racist incident, and I'm stressed about it' they will just be like, 'I understand you're feeling this way. Would you like to have a talk with this person to talk it out?' It's like, no, I don't want to talk with someone who's just racist. I want you to do something about it. Like, they don't treat it as if you're experiencing something racist. They just treat it I guess, as a regular normal situation. They're just like, 'I understand how you're feeling. I hope you feel better. Do you want to write in your journal about this and hopefully get your thoughts out?'.

Claire found that when she expressed that she was experiencing mental health difficulties due to racism, the counsellor was unprepared to deal with her concerns in a culturally responsive way. Instead of addressing the racism, she perceived that the counsellor failed to understand her experiences as a Chinese Canadian and how this act of racism was affecting her. Overall, participants explained that in their experiences, they did not feel like their mental health was supported when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and anti-Asian attitudes started to increase in their communities.

#### **4.4.2 Lack of school support**

Similar to how participants perceived an absence of mental health supports, they also experienced a lack of general support against anti-Asian attitudes from school staff and peers. Claire described a time where she went to express concerns about racism at her school to teachers and school staff:

And then, like, this year, it was kind of when I had enough of the racism and I did go to the staff members at my school, but they kind of they were kind of they didn't really care or believe me. Because they like said things like, 'oh, well, Asians can't experience racism, because you aren't a minority group' or things like 'well your skin isn't darker, how could you even experience racism' or 'there are so many Asians at the school, you can't possibly experience it'. So, they would say things like that they were kind of in disbelief or pretending to be in disbelief of the experiences I've had.

Not only did Claire not report receiving support for her concerns about racism and anti-Asian attitudes from the school staff, but she shared that she felt that her experiences were also discounted and invalidated. Furthermore, she expressed experiencing racist behaviour from the school staff themselves. Likewise, when Rex sought academic supports from his school counsellor due to his struggles during COVID-19 with anti-Asian attitudes and online schooling, he found little support:

So, um, this year, I had a lot of struggles with school because like I was talking about earlier on, like, my foundations are kind of weak from COVID year, but wouldn't just blame it on that. It's just I feel like the courses are a lot harder, because of IB because its full diploma now, so I went in and like asking for help and stuff. All they can really say just like, oh, keep trying, you know, it happens everybody, you know, like, yeah, and I'm just like, okay. So, I [visited them] like, it's not like one time I went in either. It's like, I went in multiple times, like a number of occasions. It's just like the same NPC<sup>1</sup> response it seems. So yeah, it's just like, a little bit redundant. And then I feel like they're not

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<sup>1</sup>NPC refers to a 'Non-Playable Character' in a video game that is controlled by a computer.

really trying.

When he tried to access supports for his academics, he reported that he was met with repetitive answers that did not offer him support for his academics and emotional wellbeing. Altogether, participants shared that there was a lack of support at their schools for concerns related to anti-Asian attitudes.

#### **4.4.3 Decreased community support**

In tandem with their experiences of perceiving decreased support in schools, participants also reported that there was a decreased amount of support in their communities as well as society as a whole. During the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the months after, there were a variety of social justice movements that garnered varying levels of response from communities and societies (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Stop Asian Hate, Indian Farmers' Protest). Rex recounted his feelings towards the lack of support towards the Stop Asian Hate movement compared to other similar movements at the time:

I don't really get that excited or anything over because I kind of feel like they're just doing it for the sake of doing it rather than what they actually feel. Because when there was like, the George Floyd incident and all that, and like, no farmers, no food, everyone was like, so, so passionate about it. And it was like they do anything they can to help. For like, the Stop Asian hate movement. I don't even know like how long that lasted for when it began on or anything. Like, nobody changed their profile picture to the yellow or something like it didn't make any sense. And I don't know, I just feel like, in my experiences, nobody really ever talks about the racism that goes against Asians. It's just always overlooked on a lot.

Rex perceived that the normalized racism towards Asians led to less support for the Stop Asian



hate movement and he was surprised that society did not rally round the Asian community to provide public support. Lucy shared similar thoughts; however, she was not surprised that public support decreased drastically over time:

I definitely think that the Stop Asian Hate movement was bigger at the beginning of the pandemic, and I am kind of disappointed but not surprised that it has died down. I grew up in the age of social media, so I am used to trends so I kind of saw this one coming. But it does feel a bit sad that the most vocal supporters of the Stop Asian Hate movement are only the ones who are getting victimized by Asian hate.

While Lucy expected this to happen, she still reported being upset that only people who identified themselves as a part of the Asian community and were victimized were the biggest supporters of the Stop Asian Hate movement. She then went on to reflect on how society went on to pit different social justice movements against each other for attention:

With the Black Lives Matter movement, I think it definitely started the turning point of people starting to become more aware of racial issues. But it sucked that society perceived the two movements as almost competing for attention because I feel like people who are supporting the same thing, human rights, were arguing about who was being discriminated more. Like for example in this Netflix show *Ginny and Georgia*, there were two characters who were basically having an argument over who experienced more discrimination and that didn't sit right with me and a lot of people online.

Through conversations in the interview, Lucy examined how by separating the movements it led to decreased support and tension between communities even though they were both fighting for human rights. She ascertained that competing over who is being discriminated against more is unproductive to both movements and in her opinion, may have decreased support for the Stop

Asian Hate movement. Overall, the participants expressed disappointment that society did not support the Stop Asian Hate movement more and felt that action against anti-Asian attitudes were not being taken seriously enough by the larger community and society.

#### **4.5 Creating Own Support Systems**

Since many of the participants described that in their experiences, they did not believe they were being supported in their school or community environments, all of the participants spoke to how they found their own support through their own means. Within this Creating Own Support Systems theme, three subordinate themes were created out of analysis of participant interviews: (1) support through friends and family, (2) resilience, and (3) ideas about improvement.

##### **4.4.1 Support through friends and family**

The first place that participants reported turning to for support after experiencing or witnessing anti-Asian attitudes were their friends and family. Claire described that it was important to talk to people, especially friends, who have had similar experiences:

Yes. And we do talk to each other about it, which definitely, if it feels really good to have people who have had similar experiences to you, who can relate to you. It's just, I feel like it's so hard for you to find people have similar experiences, because I only know that these people have had similar experiences with me, because I'm friends with them. But let's say I don't have friends with people who have similar experiences, then, where can I find people to talk about these issues with?

Indeed, earlier she noted that talking to staff in her school who were unfamiliar with anti-Asian attitudes felt unhelpful. Whereas here she expresses finally feeling understood and heard about her experiences. However, she also expressed sadness that the reason that she relates to these

people is because they have both been victimized by anti-Asian attitudes and they were comfortable enough to disclose that with her. When talking to family for support, participants described that it sometimes is not as easy as talking to friends, but the conversations can still be helpful. Phoebe describes it like this:

Um, I don't think I would personally bring this up. But I definitely would my mom bring these things up. That's kind of just an invitation to open up discussion. And I do get into like, a pretty long conversations with her about like, various things, whether it's serious or not. But yeah, I'd usually leave [conversations about racism] for my parents to bring up to me, because it's like, it's like sometimes I bring things up, but they're also like, not interested. But if they bring it up then like, if I want to talk about it, then I like we're both interested in it. And this like, go for a while. Yeah, this is like other than that, I don't really know what to bring up with my parents. The like, few conversations we do had, I do feel like it's pretty fun. And pretty educational on both ends.

While Phoebe does not usually have conversations about anti-Asian attitudes with her parents, she reported that she still turns to them for support when they bring the topic up. Overall, participants expressed that they turned first to their friends for support after witnessing or experiencing anti-Asian attitudes, then to their parents. They sought these support systems after they identified what parts of their established systems were not working for them.

#### **4.4.2 Resilience**

The participants identified that another way that they were able to support themselves was through their own resilience. Specifically, becoming a strong advocate and speaking out about anti-Asian attitudes was of high importance to some of the participants and it gave them a chance to share their lived experiences. Furthermore, they reported that their advocacy work

strengthened their resilience after experiencing anti-Asian attitudes. Claire described her motivations behind advocating against anti-Asian attitudes:

Standing up for myself and knowing not to stay quiet about these things. So, I talk about these things with whoever will listen to me, which is also part of the reason why I'm like here right now, because I really care about this. I'm very happy you're here. I mean, even if you weren't going to give me a \$25 gift card, I would probably still come. I just, I, I'm taking every opportunity I'm given to talk about this. Because usually nobody wants to hear about this. So, if someone is willing to listen to me talk about my experience of racism, I'll definitely take it. So, for me, it's just speaking out and not feeling the need to stay quiet when I'm facing these things.

For Claire, one of the most important reasons behind her advocacy work was raising awareness. She recognized that in her school and community environments, many people did not care to listen to her talk about anti-Asian attitudes. In her experiences, speaking out and not feeling the need to stay quiet empowers her to raise more awareness about anti-Asian attitudes happening in their communities. Similarly, Lucy shared similar motivations behind her advocacy work but reflected on how she was in a unique position to advocate for others:

I am in a place where I can advocate, I have good English skills, and I can stick up for people who are not in the same position as me. I want to use my privilege to bring more awareness to the Stop Asian Hate movement. And also, to help people around me that might be discriminated against”

Upon reflection, Lucy not only identified her current position of privilege, but she recognized how she was able to use that to advocate for others who are not in her position. She then went on to describe how she wanted to use her privilege to raise awareness regarding anti-Asian

attitudes and prevent further perpetuation. In sum, the participants exhibited traits of strong resilience by using their experiences to raise awareness and advocate for others. This in turn helped to shape the participant's attitudes towards the anti-Asian attitudes they experienced which they reported helps them process these experiences.

#### **4.4.3 Ideas about improvement**

Lastly, participants supported themselves by channelling their experiences of feeling unsupported into ideas about what schools and communities can do moving forward to support Chinese Canadian youth who are experiencing anti-Asian attitudes. Phoebe shared how representation matters for her in environments:

To me, having POC (people of colour) teachers understanding and having representation makes me feel the most supported. Like, I feel like if I ever experienced any racism at school, they would just understand me more. And it's kind of corny but having the non POC teachers state to everyone that they are allies would create a more supportive environment.

She expressed that in her experiences, she perceives her environments to be the most supportive if there are not only POC teachers but also non-POC teachers showing their active support for the community. She articulated that in order to feel supported, she wants her school staff to understand what she is going through and experiencing. To aid with this idea of helping educate others and raising awareness, Lucy tried to create a club in her school:

Actually, some of my friends and I were talking about ways that we can raise awareness about the Stop Asian Hate movement, and we went to go talk to the vice principle who handles most of the student affairs at the school. I think we want to start a club so that we

can like not bully people who are being racist but educate people on how to support Asians and help them learn about our culture.

As Lucy describes, this club is not designed to police racism in their school, but rather educate the school community on issues pertaining to Asian people including anti-Asian attitudes.

Furthermore, they wanted to foster an appreciation for their culture. Lucy also expanded on the idea of embedding more content on Asian-Canadians into their education:

My sister actually now teaches Explorations 11, and she has a whole unit on the gentrification and restoration of Chinatown in Vancouver. I think it's really important that we have this type of representation in our curriculum, and I am really happy that BC has flexible curriculum that allows for this. That would be a big improvement in my opinion.

As Lucy described, having representation inserted into their education and curriculum helps to raise awareness and bring understanding to the unique position that Asian-Canadians are in. She goes on to explain how these ideas are very feasible as the mechanisms of curriculum design in certain classes allow for that flexibility when choosing topics. In addition to having clubs focusing on Asian Canadians and topics pertaining to Asian-Canadian issues integrated into their education, Claire emphasized that making more culturally appropriate resources accessible to Asian Canadian youth is very important:

Um, I guess just more easily assessable resources like, hey, like, I know, you mentioned that you have like a list of resources, you'll send me afterwards. But like, let's say you didn't send them to me, because I wasn't part of this interview, don't wear, like these resources. So, like, I actually spent quite a while searching the internet for different resources, but I still can only find a limited number. So, it's just where can I find the

support and resources I need when I'm facing these issues. So, making them more easily accessible, whether putting it in schools, or in community centers, or places where I can easily find it and see it without having to spend a long time searching for it.

Participants were given a list of culturally specific mental health resources after the interviews for this study, however she emphasized that she had difficulty finding these resources on her own which underscores the inaccessibility of these resources. To summarize this superordinate theme, participants had a variety of ideas on how to best support Chinese Canadian youth in multiple settings, and they were able to utilize their own experiences to generate these ideas.

#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter the broad themes and subordinates that were identified during the analysis of six Chinese Canadian youth's interviews regarding their experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic are summarized. From these interviews with the participants, three important areas emerged that represented their perceptions and experiences with anti-Asian attitudes: *Experiencing Anti-Asian Attitudes*, *Lack of School and Community Support*, and *Creating Own Support Systems*. In the following chapter these findings will be discussed in the context of the current literature regarding Chinese Canadian youth and their experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Strengths and limitations of the current study as well as directions for future research are also discussed.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

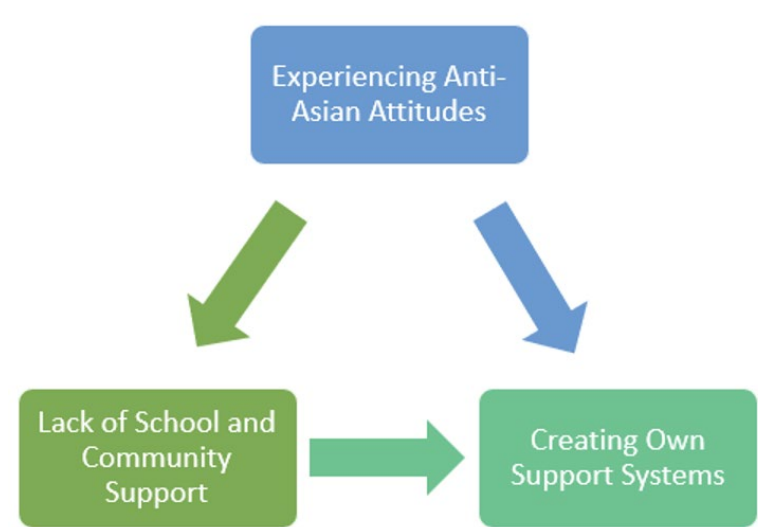
The purpose of the present study was to explore and understand Chinese Canadian youth's perceptions and experiences of anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. Six interviews with 16–17-year-old Chinese Canadian youth were conducted and analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Following the step-by-step process of data analysis outlined by Smith et al. (2009), three superordinate and 11 subordinate themes were identified. Limitations and strengths of the study, implications for School and Applied Child Psychology, and considerations for future research are also discussed.

### 5.2 Discussion of Findings

**5.2.1 Relationships Between Superordinate Themes.** As seen in Figure 1., through the analysis of the data, the following relationships emerged between the three superordinate themes. Experiencing anti-Asian attitudes informed both lack of school and community support and how they create their own support systems. Furthermore, the youth were able to create their own support systems by identifying what their school and community lacked in terms of support.

**Figure 1**

*Relationships Between Superordinate Themes*





**5.2.2 Experiencing Anti-Asian Attitudes.** Participants in this study discussed a dramatic increase in the number of anti-Asian attitudes they experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. Similar results were also found by the organization Project 1907 (2022) in their report overviewing the number of reported experiences of anti-Asian attitudes in Canada in 2021. They found that compared to the number of reports in 2020, the total amount of reported experiences of anti-Asian attitudes in 2021 increased by 47% and the number of reports made by children and adolescents under the age of 18 increased by 286%. Project 1907 also indicated that British Columbia had the largest number of reported experiences with anti-Asian attitudes in 2021, which gives more context to the participants' experiences in this study. Participants reported that due to this increase of anti-Asian attitudes they were experiencing, they perceived these actions becoming more normalized and in turn, they were not being taken seriously. Consistent with these findings, Wang and Santos (2022) found in an analysis of open-ended responses from 193 self-identified Asian Americans that they perceived anti-Asian attitudes were not being taken seriously by society during the COVID-19 pandemic and that there is a need to support efforts that enhance the awareness of anti-Asian racism.

Participants also highlighted that they were not only experiencing anti-Asian attitudes in person, but they experienced them in online spaces as well. Participants reported seeing intense hate comments and expressed disappointment that these comments not only were allowed on social media platforms, but they had lots of support in the form of "likes" on the comments. Kim and Kesari (2021) describe in their analysis of over 30 million tweets from January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 that after a tweet from Former President of the United States, Donald Trump, in March of 2020 connecting China and the COVID-19 pandemic together, the tendency for twitter users to share misinformation and hate speech was amplified. This increased exposure to anti-

Asian attitudes in online spaces as reported by the participants in the present study and in the literature can have negative implications for the mental health of the user (Bresnahan et al., 2022; Litam and Oh, 2021; Pan et al., 2021). Compounding on the fear of experiencing anti-Asian attitudes again in the future, participants perceived a high level of stress and worry when thinking about their loved ones potentially being the victim of anti-Asian attitudes. This fear of victimization has been shown to be common in Asians and Pacific Islanders during the COVID-19 pandemic (Lantz & Wegner, 2022). Some participants reported not being able to focus on other things in their lives because they were worrying about victimization. These experiences reported by the participants showcases the cumulative risk that the Chinese youth are subject to when experiencing anti-Asian attitudes and the effects it has on their mental health and wellbeing (Lee & Waters, 2021; Lou et al, 2022; Lozano et al., 2021; Wegner et al., 2022; Yang et al, 2020).

Despite witnessing and experiences anti-Asian attitudes in multiple spaces, many participants still tried to understand why people perpetuated these behaviours. They described how they perceived misinformation to be a factor behind why people would hold anti-Asian attitudes. When they were experiencing anti-Asian attitudes, abusers often endorsed racist stereotypes that were associated with misinformation. Indeed, Wright and Duong (2021) demonstrated evidence of this concept where in a sample of 100 male and female college students, the inability to identify misinformation was associated with increased prejudicial attitudes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, political media outlets were responsible for the dissemination of this misinformation and many stories. This was especially true on conservative media outlets in the United States, who pinned Asians as responsible for the COVID-19

pandemic (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020, Jeung & Nham, 2020; Le, 2020; Tessler et al., 2020; Zhang & Trifiro, 2022).

Two participants who self-identified as newcomer youth also reported that they were surprised with the presence of anti-Asian attitudes in Canada, as they perceived Canada as more welcoming of newcomers because of its advertised multiculturalism. Canada does posit itself to be a multicultural and accepting nation, however Canadian BIPOC individuals still experience racism frequently (James & Howard, 2022; Lee 2021). Other newcomer youth also reported experiencing racism when coming to Canada, like the participants in this study (Kaufmann, 2021; Parada et al., 2021). However, the participants noted that they were more comfortable reaching out for help with their mental health in Canada compared to their host countries, as there was less perceived stigma of seeking mental health support in Canada.

**5.2.3 Lack of School and Community Support.** Participants described in detail how they did not perceive support by their designated support systems in school and in their community when they experienced anti-Asian attitudes. More specifically at school, they perceived that the mental health support they were receiving from their school counsellors and support staff was not culturally responsive or particularly helpful in helping to address how anti-Asian attitudes were affecting their wellbeing. Claire described that she found that the options she were given were unhelpful because it did not target the root of the problem. Most participants described how they would prefer not to engage with their school based mental health services in the future due to their prior experiences. Research has shown that this is a trend for Asian youth across North America, as they have a general distrust with their school-based support services (Juang et al., 2009; Li & Seidman, 2010; Lipson et al., 2017; Lipton, 2017; Liu et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2019).

This underutilization of school based mental health resources comes from a variety of perceived knowledge, practical, and attitudinal barriers by Asian youth (Wang et al., 2020). Similarly in the present study, participants discussed how when school was running online, it was difficult to access mental health services after they had experienced anti-Asian attitudes. One participant described how they felt socially isolated from their friends and stopped responding to them due to their declining mental health. Vaillancourt et al. (2021) ascertains that during online schooling, social isolation was a concern for administrators and prioritizing social emotional learning opportunities would have helped to protect the students' mental health. Overall, participants reported feeling unsupported by their school based mental health services and chose not to utilize them in the future. This may have furthered the distrust they had about the effectiveness of these mental health resources.

Participants in the present study also shared how they were disappointed in the lack of support that the general community and society had for the Stop Asian Hate movement. The timing of this movement coincided with the Black Lives Matter movement and participants reported feeling upset that the two movements felt like they were pitted against each other, when they were fighting for similar causes. The division between these two movements also proved to be difficult, as under white supremacy the Asian and Black communities have traditionally been pitted against each other due to the model minority myth (Ho, 2020; Liu, 2022; Yellow Horse et al., 2021).

There has been a pervasiveness of anti-Blackness within Asian family systems due to the model minority myth and they may have affected how young people form their own social analysis (Lee, 2022). Furthermore, the long history of North America conceptualizing Asians as part of a "yellow peril" may have contributed to the lack of support for the Stop Asian Hate

movement in the general public. Part of the “yellow peril” stereotype labels Asians as being “unhygienic” in their cleaning and eating habits, and often are blamed for certain diseases (Li & Nicholson, 2021). This was reported by many of the participants as they witnessed both people in person and online associate the start of the COVID-19 pandemic with Chinese people eating exotic animals like bats. Articles, images, and videos of other Asian people that are not Chinese eating insects, mice, or other animals, which are uncommon in China, frequently circulated on the internet and on social media sites (Palmer, 2020; Zhang, 2020). This misinformation on the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic placed unfair blame on Chinese people and heavily influenced the negative public opinion on the Stop Asian Hate movement.

**5.2.4 Creating Own Support Systems.** Participants discussed that since they did not perceive having the emotional and mental health support they needed from their schools or communities, they were able to create their own support systems through a variety of avenues. Many participants reported turning first to family and friends, as they were able to relate the most to their experiences especially if they had experienced anti-Asian attitudes themselves. They perceived as most understood by their family and friends, and they were the most comfortable approaching them with these topics. This was not an uncommon phenomenon, as many other Asian adolescents across North America also had more positive levels of peer and family relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wray-Lake et al., 2022). Furthermore, a sense of belonging through friends and family can serve as a protective factor for youth from the stress of anti-Asian attitudes and psychosocial adjustment during COVID-19 (Exner-Cortens et al., 2022; Hussong et al., 2021; Romm et al., 2021). Sharing with friends and family about experiencing anti-Asian attitudes seemed to be the most common support system that was

utilized by the participants in this study, as they expressed multiple times that in their experiences, school and community mental health services were not effective.

Another way that participants in this study were able to create their own support systems was by utilizing their own resiliency. Resiliency amongst Asians during the COVID-19 pandemic may empower them to raise awareness and protect them against the effects of anti-Asian attitudes (Cheng et al., 2021). Experiencing anti-Asian attitudes was also associated with fostering activism both online and offline with Asian Americans (Lee et al, 2022). Participants in the present study were advocates in their communities in many ways. Lucy described how she examined her own positionality and realized that she can use her position of privilege to speak up about issues related to anti-Asian attitudes. Similarly, Claire realized that to help her cope with these experiences of anti-Asian attitudes that she has, it is important for her to speak up about these issues and not to stay quiet. By understanding their social identities, these youth are also coming to terms with their own ethnic-racial identities which can help to find commonalities across groups, act as a protective resource for marginalized youth, and aid in recognizing and disrupting marginalization (Rivas-Drake et al., 2021).

The last way that participants created their own support systems was to suggest ideas for improvement in the educational curriculum and available resources at their schools. Many participants reported not feeling represented in their curriculums at school and believed that embedding more issues related to Asian heritage and culture would help to raise awareness against anti-Asian attitudes. Lucy talked in detail about how she wanted to start a club at her school to raise awareness about Asian culture because there was such a lack of it at her school. She gave ideas on how to incorporate Asian-Canadian issues into curricula, like talking about the gentrification of Chinatown in Vancouver. Centring and uplifting student voices in matters that

directly affect them in schools is of crucial importance, as they deserve an opportunity to have a say and challenge the notion of who has the authority to speak up (Simmons et al., 2015). Students are key stakeholders in school systems, and in many other areas pertaining to the schooling environment, student voices have been incorporated into the conversations with success (Bourke & MacDonald, 2016; Newland et al., 2019; Ryan et al., 2020). Participants also had ideas about making more resources available for Chinese Canadian youth who experience anti-Asian attitudes. Some described how they found it hard to find resources online for themselves. Either the resources were not financially viable for her, or she was not eligible for them. Similarly, Liu et al. (2020) found that in their semi-structured interviews with 24 Asian American adolescents, promoting mental health awareness and resources was one of the many suggestions that the participants had to improve mental health challenges and literacy at their schools.

### **5.3 Limitations and Strengths of the Present Study.**

**5.3.1 Limitations.** There are several limitations of the current study. One limitation is the sampling methods used to recruit participants. While not all participants were recruited in this way, some participants were recruited through friends and family. It is possible that the youth involved in the current study were more invested in this topic compared to youth who did not find anti-Asian attitudes to be as present in their lives. Compared to youth who chose not to participate, youth involved in the present study through these recruitment methods may have different perceptions and experiences regarding anti-Asian attitudes.

A second limitation in this study is related to only recruiting participants who live in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. All the participants attended relatively large secondary schools and lived in densely populated areas of the Lower Mainland. Furthermore, since many of

the youth helped to recruit participants for the study, it is likely that they all were within the same community area. Theoretical sampling could have been utilized to recruit participants from varying areas within the lower mainland of British Columbia. While recruiting in this area was a result of convenience and homogeneous sampling following the IPA methodology, youth in more rural or remote parts of British Columbia may have different perceptions and experiences of anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A third limitation with the present study is the age of the participants. While a decision was made to include Chinese Canadian youth above the age of 16 and below the age of 18 was based on the age for consent for minimal risk studies, younger adolescents may have also provided valuable perceptions and experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ways in which adolescents perceive and experience anti-Asian attitudes is still relevant, and students should feel supported in their environments no matter what their age is.

A fourth limitation relates to the rigidness that IPA has to Western ideologies. The theoretical underpinnings of IPA come from the philosophical backgrounds of white, Westernized ideals and these lenses are being used to interpret the voices of minorities. While IPA is a methodology that emphasized the lived experience of the individual, future research should work towards utilizing methodologies that do not have such a rigid background in Western philosophical views.

**5.3.2 Strengths.** Despite these limitations, this study also had several strengths. First, this study contributed to dearth in the literature looking at the lived experiences of Chinese Canadian youth who had experienced anti-Asian attitudes during the Covid-19 pandemic. To date, research has mainly focused on young adults and older adults' experiences through quantitative study



designs, however they may not encapsulate the rich and contextualized data of people's lived experiences.

A second strength of this study was the use of IPA. IPA aims to elicit individuals' detailed experiences and the meaning behind these experiences. It is concerned with the exploration of the phenomenon through the individual's subjective perspective. It also seeks to find the meaning and interpretation of these experiences. By using IPA in this study, the researcher was able to explore and interpret how Chinese Canadian youth were experiencing anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher captured these rich accounts of the youth's experiences and perceptions. IPA allowed the participant to take control of the direction of the interview and discuss what they found to be most important in understanding their experiences and making meaning out of it. Furthermore, embedded into the study were various ways of establishing rigour, which helped to ensure the study's credibility, confirmability, and dependability. While there were limitations to using IPA in this study, overall, it was an appropriate methodology for the purpose of this research.

Lastly, this study was important because it uplifted and centered the voices of Chinese Canadian youth who were able to not only tell us about what they experience but give strong suggestions on how to actively make spaces more supportive for them. As key stakeholders, allowing adolescents to share their thoughts, perceptions, and experiences by directly involving them is key. This study was also unique in that it allowed students to broaden the scope of the conversation by detailing the ways in which their schools or communities were supporting or not supporting them.

#### **5.4 Implications for School and Applied Child Psychology**

The findings and themes that emerged through the interviews with Chinese Canadian youth concerning how they are experiencing anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic has important implications for school psychologists. Participants described in detail how specifically in school settings, they did not feel supported or understood by the school counsellors and mental health professionals. Furthermore, they reported being hesitant to engage with school based mental health services in the future. However, participants provided helpful feedback and suggestions for making the school environment a more welcoming place for Chinese Canadian youth. The findings concerning why the youth were not utilizing school based mental health services and the suggestions they have going forward provides valuable information about what students want and what they are looking for moving forward. School psychologists, school counsellors, administrators, and educators can possibly apply this information when creating resources for Chinese youth at their school who are seeking support.

Another important implication for school psychologists, and for all people who work with marginalized youth, is the need to raise awareness and have conversations about issues related to marginalized youth. In this case, participants wished that more staff in their school were educated on issues related to Chinese Canadian youth and were more vocal allies that could be sympathetic to their struggles. A major component of being an ally is identifying your own positionality and looking at how aspects of your identity form your opinions. This is a step that school psychologists, and educators in general should partake in when working with marginalized youth. The findings in this study highlight the critical need to raise awareness on the effects of anti-Asian attitudes. In their role, school psychologists can work collaboratively with administrators and school staff to implement class or school wide programs and initiatives

that can raise awareness. Even beyond the students, school psychologists can also educate teachers and other school staff about anti-Asian attitudes.

The last implication that this study has for future school psychologists is in regard to their training. The participant's experiences that were examined in this study underscore the need to have diverse learning objectives related to social justice and diversity embedded into school psychology training programs. It is not enough to only have students partake in practicums that work with diverse communities, these experiences need to also have a curriculum that matches to the skills they need. While anti-Asian attitudes are the most pertinent topic for the implications of this study, these issues do not exist in a vacuum and specific communities should not be individually studied in classes. Therefore, teaching skills that can be applied many situations when working with diverse populations, such as actively participating in decolonization, can be a starting place for training programs to emphasize on in their curriculums and practicums.

### **5.6 Considerations for Future Research.**

As support for Chinese Canadian youth experiencing anti-Asian attitudes, as well as raising awareness about anti-Asian attitudes were identified as a need. Piloting or implementing programs to provide culturally competent mental health support and awareness campaigns in schools or communities across the Lower Mainland and evaluating their effectiveness is an area of future research that should be explored. The voices of Chinese Canadian youth should be included in the creation and implementation of these programs as well.

Another direction for future research in this area may be to examine the perceptions and experiences of Chinese Canadian youth in different areas of British Columbia. The experiences of youth who live in the Lower Mainland may be different from the experiences of youth who

live in smaller communities throughout British Columbia. In contrast, future research in this area may corroborate or extend the current findings of the present study.

Future research with Chinese-Canadian communities should also explore how intersectional identities and power dynamics interplay with their experiences of anti-Asian attitudes. Different aspects of identity (socioeconomic status, newcomer status, sexual identity, gender identity etc.) enrich people's lives and affects how they perceive different experiences. Future studies should choose specific epistemologies and methodologies to aid in uplifting these different aspects of participants identity and use them to frame how they experience anti-Asian attitudes.

Lastly, the findings from this study emphasize the need for more exploratory research looking at Chinese Canadian youth and their experiences with anti-Asian attitudes. There has been emerging literature on the effect of anti-Asian attitudes on adult populations over the age of 18, however less is known about the effects on youth and adolescents under the age of 18. One possible development for this research is the development of a measure that can be used with high school and elementary school students that can accurately and reliable gather useful information that can be used to inform school staff about how Chinese Canadian youth are experiencing anti-Asian attitudes.

### **5.7 Concluding Remarks.**

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand Chinese Canadian youth's perceptions and experiences of anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. Through interviews with six self-identified Chinese Canadian youth, three superordinate themes emerged. Participants discussed their experiences with anti-Asian attitudes, how they perceived to have a lack of support from their school and their community, and how they created their own support systems.

Participants also conveyed the need to have more issues related to anti-Asian attitudes in their school curriculum and to raise more awareness about anti-Asian attitudes. More research is warranted, however, to further explore how different populations of Chinese Canadian youth experience anti-Asian attitudes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This study contributed to the existing literature on anti-Asian attitudes and helped to elevate the voices of the participants to express how they were experiencing anti-Asian attitudes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings from this study can should be considered among school psychologists and other school-based staff to identify ways in which their schools can support the wellbeing of Chinese Canadians and raise awareness about anti-Asian attitudes.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Initial Interview Guide**

#### **Preface**

The interview protocol below provides participants the opportunity to expand on their experiences during COVID-19 and elaborate further if needed. The questions are broad, open-ended and are intended to guide conversations with participants. There is no set order to the questions and questions can be switch around based on the topic of the conversation, or they might not be asked if it has been covered in natural, organic conversation.

#### **Introduction**

Hello and thank you so much for taking time out of your day to participate in this interview. As you may be aware already from our previous conversations, this study, which is run by the UBC Children, Communities and Families lab, is aiming to look at the experiences of Asian-Canadian youth with anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have a list of questions here, but they are more of a guide as we can let the conversation flow naturally. Also, I wanted to emphasize that since the topic of our conversations today will include sensitive topics, you can stop the interview at any time and take a break or end the interview if you choose. You will still be compensated for your time even if you do not complete the full interview.

#### **Questions**

1. Tell me about your experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. What parts of your life changed when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March of 2020?
3. What do you think of when you hear the term anti-Asian attitudes?
4. During the COVID-19 pandemic, what have your perceptions and experiences been regarding anti-Asian attitudes?

5. How do your friends and family act when hearing about anti-Asian attitudes in their community and/or in the media?
6. How does hearing about anti-Asian attitudes in the news and on social media make you feel?
7. If you were to experience, or have experienced, anti-Asian attitudes, where would you go for support?
  - a. Why would you go to the person or resource first?
8. From your perspective, what are some ways that adults, teachers, or other support systems in your life could best support you after experiencing anti-Asian attitudes?
9. What, if any, resources are there to help you, your family, or your peers deal with anti-Asian attitudes through platforms such as social media or your school?
10. What changes would you like to see in your current work/school environments to address anti-Asian attitudes?
11. Is there anything else that you would like me to know about your experiences with anti-Asian attitudes?

## Appendix B: Support Resource List

### **Crisis Help Across Canada – Association for Suicide Prevention**

<https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/>

Call 1.833.456.4566

Text ‘Start’ to 45645

### **The Colour Project (Launches February 2020)**

<https://www.thecolourproject.ca/>

One-on-one anonymous text-based, stigmatization-free, peer-based support for individuals struggling with mental illness.

### **SUCCESS Chinese Helpline**

<https://www.successbc.ca/eng/services/family-youth/counselling-service/>

Provides support to Chinese Canadians who experience difficulties due to language and cultural barriers, and fear of social stigma. while demonstrating cultural sensitivity towards diverse values and beliefs.

Cantonese Helpline 604-270-8233

Mandarin HelpLine 604-270-8222

### **Asian Mental Health Collective – Advancing Asian Mental Health**

An interview series that features individuals and organizations that are trying to pave the way for Asian mental health issues.

<https://www.asianmhc.org/advancing-asian-mental-health>

### **The University of British Columbia (UBC) Scarfe Free Counselling Clinic**

A free counselling clinic based at the Psychological Services and Counselling Training Centre (PSCTC) at UBC. They mainly operate from September to April.

<https://ecps.educ.ubc.ca/counselling-centres/scarfe-free-counselling-clinic/>

Version 1 (10/19/2021)

## **Appendix C: Recruitment Ad**

### **Tweet 1: Recruitment Ad for Twitter**

Are you between the ages of 16-18, identify as [#ChineseCanadian](#), and have experienced anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic? Take part in two Zoom chats for my research at UBC and receive a \$25 gift card for participating!

Learn more here: <https://tinyurl.com/XXXXXXX>

### **Tweet 2: Disclaimer Tweet**

Disclaimer: By interacting with this tweet, you will be publicly identified with this tweet and the study. The Principal Investigator for this study can be reached at [XXXXXX@XXXXX](#) or at XXX-XXX-XXXX

### **Appendix D: Screening Questions**

1. What city do you currently live in?
2. How old are you?
3. Do you currently identify as Chinese-Canadian?
4. Our study is looking at Chinese-Canadian youth's experiences with anti-Asian attitudes, would you want to participate in a 1-hour interview and a 30 minute follow up interview?

\*These questions will be a part of the initial contact form on the study website

(<https://blogs.ubc.ca/xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>)\*



## Appendix E: Consent Form

### CHINESE CANADIAN YOUTH AND THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH ANTI-ASIAN ATTITUDES DURING COVID-19

#### Consent for Involvement

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**Principal Investigator:** Laurie Ford, PhD, Department of Educational & Counselling Psychology & Special Education, (xxx) xxx-xxxx, [xxx@xxx.xx](mailto:xxx@xxx.xx)

**Co-Investigators:** Harris Wong, M.A. Student, Department of Educational & Counselling Psychology & Special Education, (xxx) xxx-xxxx, [xxx@xxx.xx](mailto:xxx@xxx.xx)

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Dear Participant,

Please read the following letter carefully. This is a request for you to take part in the study that we are doing. If after reading this letter, you would like to take part, please sign one copy, and email it to the researcher at [xxx@xxx.xx](mailto:xxx@xxx.xx). Keep the other copy for your records. This study is a master's thesis study for the student co-investigator, Mr. Harris Wong.

#### Who is funding this study?

This project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

#### Why are we doing this study?

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about scapegoating and anti-Asian attitudes around the world. There have been many documented discriminatory acts towards Asians online and in person. The goal of this research is to capture the experiences of Chinese Canadian youth with anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19. By collecting the voices of Chinese Canadian youth, we anticipate that this research will lead to a greater understanding of how to best support Chinese Canadian youth in educational and community contexts.

#### Who can participate in this study?

You are being invited to take part in this research study because you have self-identified as Chinese Canadian and have expressed interest in participating.

#### What is involved in this study?

Taking part in the study means that you:

- Self-identify as Chinese Canadian
- Are between the ages of 16-18 years old
- Have experienced some form(s) of anti-Asian attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Are comfortable with conversational English

### *Time Commitment*

- Taking part in the study means that you are willing to complete different parts of this study: a brief questionnaire and two interviews.
- The interviews will take place at a mutually convenient time
- You will be asked to meet with the researcher for the online interviews using the Zoom platform, which is a video-conferencing service. The first interview will be 60 minutes long and the second interview will be 30 minutes long.
- Access to the Zoom platform requires a stable internet connection, a digital device capable of video conferencing, and a private space to conduct the interviews.

### *Questionnaire and Interviews*

- With permission, the videos will be video and audio recorded for research purposes. If you are not comfortable with any question, you may skip the question.
- You may turn your camera off and change your display name on Zoom.
- You are welcome to ask questions at any point during the study, and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

### **Project Outcomes:**

- Although the project outcomes will be determined by the research findings, possible research products will include journal articles, a report, conference proceedings, a brief for educators and plain language summaries. Data from the project may also be re-analysed at a later point if they connect with the researchers' future projects.
- Once results are made available, you will not be able to withdraw your contributions. Your name and identifiers will be removed when results are made publicly available. This research is conducted to fulfill the requirements of a Master of Arts, which will form part of a written graduate thesis. The results of the study will be available on the study website (<https://tinyurl.com/UBCChineseCanadianStudy>) in graphical format once completed.

### **Are there any risks to the research?**

The interview will address your experiences with anti-Asian attitudes during COVID-19, or with difficult experiences involving racism, discrimination, and/or bullying. If it raises issues or feelings that you would like support in dealing with, the researcher can refer you to a counsellor, or to other resources in the community. You can terminate the interview at any time, and you do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. You can also withdraw your participation in the project at any time.

### **Confidentiality:**

All electronic copies of documents and recordings will be identified only by code number and kept on the local hard drives of team members' computers – all of which are password

protected, encrypted, and hosted on secure servers. You will not be identified by name in either the recording or the interview transcript. **Participants will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study.**

### **Why should you take part in this study?**

There are no explicit benefits to you by taking part in this study. However, the interview will provide you with the opportunity to voice your opinion on your experiences and will hopefully lead to research that can help educators and parents to support Chinese-Canadian youth. If you are interested in learning about the results of this study, please provide your contact details at the bottom of this form. We will be in touch at the end of the project to provide a copy of the report and information on when we will be presenting the results if you are interested.

### **Remuneration/Compensation:**

In order to acknowledge the time you have taken to be involved in this project, each participant will receive an honorarium in the form of a \$25 Amazon gift card.

### **Contact for information about the study:**

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact Harris Wong (xxx) xxx-xxxx, [xxx@xxx.xx](mailto:xxx@xxx.xx) or Dr. Laurie Ford (xxx) xxx-xxxx, [xxx@xxx.xx](mailto:xxx@xxx.xx).

### **Contact for concerns or complaints about the study:**

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant, and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail to [RSIL@ors.ubc.ca](mailto:RSIL@ors.ubc.ca) or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

**CHINESE-CANADIAN YOUTH AND THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH ANTI-ASIAN ATTITUDES DURING COVID-19**  
**Consent to Participate in this Research Project**

Taking part in this project is voluntary and you may refuse to take part or withdraw from the study at any time. Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in this research project. When you sign below it also means that you have received a copy of this consent form (pages 1, 2, 3, & 4) for your own records.

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**I. Willingness for your involvement in the study**

Please check:

Yes, I agree that I **am willing** to take part in interviews and complete a questionnaire.

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your signature (please sign)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your name (please print your name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Phone or Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Appendix F: Demographic Questions

1. What gender do you identify as?
2. What is your family's country of origin?
3. How long have you been in Canada?
4. What language(s) are you fluent in?
  - English
  - French
  - Mandarin
  - Other:
5. What is the language that you speak most commonly at home?
  - English
  - French
  - Mandarin
  - Other: