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THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS EXPERIENCES, COPING WITH DISCRIMINATION STRATEGIES, AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG ASIAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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BY
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Abstract

Research on Asian American college students' experiences with racial ethnic microaggressions and their coping strategies is scant. The present study examined how Asian American college students (N = 222) experienced racial ethnic microaggressions, identified engagement or disengagement strategies for coping with discrimination, and if the coping strategies affect students' psychological well-being. Along with providing demographic information, participants completed three instruments, the Racial Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS: Nadal, 2011), the Coping with Discrimination Scale (CDS: Wei, Alvarez, Hu, Russell, & Bonett, 2010), and the Scales of Psychological Well-Being (SPWB: Ryff, 1989). Participants also provided responses to two open-ended questions about how the experiences of Racial Ethnic Microaggressions affected their college and their daily life experiences.

Descriptive statistics showed the following; first, Asian American college students in this study reported experiencing racial microaggressions in the Invalidation subscale most frequently. Open-ended responses revealed five themes: Exoticization/Similarity, Targeting by Professors, Model Minority Myth, Social Isolation, and Self-Censorship. Second, participants utilized more engagement coping strategies specifically within the education/advocacy subscale when faced with racial ethnic microaggressions. Third, in general, participants felt better about their development as a person (personal growth) rather than about their ability to manage their surrounding environment (environmental mastery).

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses showed that when students experience racial microaggressions, specifically within the Invalidation subscale, they make more us

of engagement coping strategies. Moreover, the use of disengagement coping strategies was a significant predictor of Asian American college students' psychological well-being. Implications of the findings along with the limitations of the study are discussed. Recommendations for future research are also presented.

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Finally, I would like to thank the Asian American college students who took the time to participate in my dissertation. I appreciate your time and effort. As an Asian American college student myself, I want to ensure that our experiences and voices are brought to the forefront and I hope that I did our community proud.

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Chapter One:

Introduction

Research has increasingly demonstrated that microaggressions influence and shape the unique experiences of college students of color (Johnson & Arbona, 2006; Nadal, Wong, Griffin, Davidoff, & Sriken, 2014; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Sue & Constantine, 2007; Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016; Yosso, Smith, & Ceja, 2009). Many students of color experience the negative effects of microaggressions and may have difficulty adjusting to their campus environments, particularly at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Pierce and colleagues (1978) first conceptualized the term racial microaggressions in order to describe contemporary forms of racism against African Americans. They defined racial microaggressions as "subtle, stunning, often automatic, and nonverbal exchanges which are 'put downs' of African Americans by offenders" (p. 66). While all ethnic and racial minority groups are subject to race-based microaggressions, research suggests that different groups may experience racism differently (Huber & Solorzano, 2014; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Sue et al., 2007). Therefore, some expressions of racism may be more notable to Asian Americans than to other racial minority groups and others expressions may not generally apply to Asian Americans (Sue & Sue, 2008).

Racial microaggressions, which often contribute to a negative racial climate on campus, are viewed as a significant source of stress for college Students of Color (Johnson & Arbona, 2006; Nadal, Wong, Griffin, Davidoff, & Sriken, 2014; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Sue & Constantine, 2007; Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016; Wei, Ku, & Liao, 2011; Yosso, Smith, & Ceja, 2009). Rankin and Reason (2005) conducted a

study and found that Students of Color perceived their campuses as being more racist and less accepting than White students. Other studies have found that students of color regularly experienced racial microaggressions from faculty, staff, and other students (Nadal, Wong, Griffin, Davidoff, & Sriken, 2014; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Sue & Constantine, 2007; Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016; Watkins, LaBarrie, & Appio, 2010). Palmer and Maramba (2015) conducted interviews with Latinx American and Asian American students at a Historically Black College (HBC) and found that they were often ridiculed, stared at, and encountered insensitive events, which caused them to feel unwelcomed at the institution. Moreover, Asian American students reported that their peers assumed that they were intelligent in math and science, which is a stereotype of this community.

Asian American college students experienced considerable amounts of discrimination or microaggressions that could affect their college experiences (Liu & Suyemoto, 2016; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007). Research studies have shown that the psychological well-being of Asian Americans may be adversely influenced by racism. For example, Lee (2003) reported that for Asian American college students, discrimination was negatively related to psychological well-being and positively related to distress. Similarly, Chih (1994) found that students who witnessed a racially motivated incident of battery reported feelings of helplessness, depression, psychosomatic symptoms, and a loss of face. Sue et al. (2007) proposed a theoretical taxonomy of racial microaggressions, subtle forms of racial bias and discrimination experienced by members of marginalized groups. In its wider form, the taxonomy includes three broad classifications: microassaults, which are explicit racial derogations,

such as referring to an Asian American as a "Jap" or "Chink"; microinvalidations, which are actions that nullify the experiential reality of racial minorities, such as regarding Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners; and microinsults, which are subtle behaviors or communication styles that minimize an individual's racial heritage.

Brondolo et al. (2009) found evidence supporting the assumption that the severity of psychological reactions to racism was at least partially influenced by how well an individual copes. Accordingly, one could understand these common behavioral responses to racial microaggressions as representing different ways of coping with experiences with varying levels of effectiveness. Given how racial microaggressions are serious and not often dealt with in Asian American college students, it is important to discuss stress and coping with racial microaggressions among this group (Liu & Suyemoto, 2016).

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) definition of coping is "constantly amending thinking and behaviors to handle specific demands that are considered as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person" (p. 141). Traditionally, coping researchers have based their work on theories using an individualistic perspective or research that focused primarily on White Americans (Bjorck, Cuthbertson, Thurman, & Lee, 2001). Findings from coping research suggest that individuals who employ engagement coping are making attempts to manage the stressful environment which is associated with positive psychological outcomes, while individuals who employ disengagement coping tend to remove themselves mentally, emotionally, and physically away from the stressors and is believed to be associated with poor mental health (Hernández, Carranza, & Almeida, 2010; Nadal, Griffin, Wong, Hamit, & Rasmus, 2014; Nadal, Wong, Sriken, Griffin, &

Fujii-Doe, 2015; Sanchez, Adams, Arango, & Flannigan, 2018). With the increased population of Asian American college students, researchers should address individualistic and collectivistic ways of coping as well as situation-specific and habitual styles of coping when studying racial microaggressions and its psychological impact. The existing studies on coping with perceived racism suggested that it is important to recognize the role of coping in dealing with racial microaggressions (Iwamoto & Liu, 2011; Liang, Alvarez, Juang, & Liang, 2007; Sanchez, Adams, Arango, & Flannigan, 2018).

Although the Asian American literature on the link between racial microaggressions and mental health is growing, there is a lack of examination on the specific coping strategies. In response to this gap, there has been a call to examine the coping strategies of racial microaggressions and the psychological well-being of Asian Americans (Museus & Park, 2015; Nadal et al., 2015). Moreover, most studies look at the impact of racial microaggressions and coping strategies on negative student outcomes such as stress, depression, and substance abuse (Ong, Cerrada, Lee, & Williams, 2017; Nadal, Wong, Srikien, Griffin, & Fujki-Doe, 2015; Nadal, Wong, Griffin, Davidoff, & Sriken, 2014). It is rare to examine the impact of racial microaggressions, coping strategies on positive student outcomes such as happiness, satisfaction and quality of life. If the goal is to promote student well-being, it is necessary for researchers to directly examine positive outcomes rather than to indirectly examine the lack of negative outcomes (Chang et al., 2019; Vela, Smith, Whittenberg, Guardiola, & Savage, 2018). Therefore, this study is seeking to identify the racial microaggressions experiences, highlight the coping strategies, and determine their impact on the psychological well-being of Asian American college students.

Research Questions

The purpose of the study is to investigate Asian American college students' experiences with microaggressions in relation to their coping strategies and psychological well-being. The first three questions are more descriptive to fill the gap in literature on the specific experience of the Asian American college students. Then, the next two questions examine the relationships among racial microaggressions, coping strategies and psychological well-being of Asian American college students.

The following research questions are examined:

RQ1: What types of racial microaggressions do Asian American college students experience?

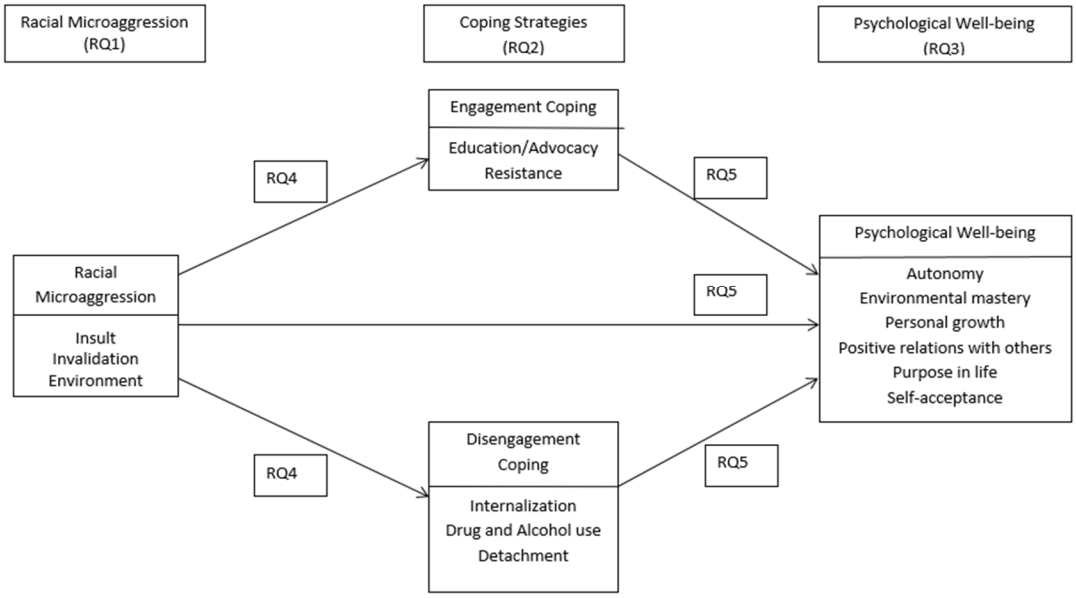
RQ2: What types of coping strategies do Asian American college students employ when they experience racial microaggressions?

RQ3: To what extent do Asian American college students feel about themselves and their psychological well-being?

RQ4: How, and to what extent, are the racial microaggressions experiences of Asian American college students related to their use of coping strategies?

RQ5: How do the experiences of racial microaggressions and coping strategies predict Asian American college students' psychological well-being?

Conceptual Model
College Students' Psychological Well-Being Model



Importance of the Study

The findings of this study would be of interest to education policy makers and higher education administration and leadership team as they review, revise, and develop policies related to the recruitment, hiring, training, and professional development of new faculty, staff, and student members of higher education institutions.

Organization of the Study

This study contains five chapters. Following an overview of the problem addressed in Chapter One, a review of the literature addressing the history and underlying theories of racial microaggressions experiences, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian Americans is presented in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three, the methodology section, then outlines the sample, instruments, and procedures employed throughout this research. Chapter Four presents the findings of the study organized by research questions. Finally, in Chapter Five, the findings are considered in light of the

results with implications for the policies and techniques for current practice, as well as suggestions for future research.

Chapter Two:

Literature Review

This review of the literature is organized into four sections. First, information about Asian American students in higher education along with experiences of racism is covered. Second, information regarding racial microaggressions focusing on Asian Americans is examined. Third, the role of coping strategies specifically against discrimination and its importance in students' cognitive and psychological outcomes is discussed. Fourth, content on psychological well-being is explored.

Asian American College Students

The DENCES (Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics) (2018) stated that approximately 63% of Asian Americans enrolled in college. On average, Asian Americans have attained more education than any other ethnic group in the United States. In 2017, 63.2% of Asian Americans between 17 and 25 years of age had earned a college degree or higher, while 62% of White Americans, 38% of African Americans, and 45.8% of Hispanic Americans in the same group achieved this educational level (Tate, 2017). However, the rate of educational achievement differs within the Asian American population. For example, 53% of Chinese Americans aged 25 to 64 have attained four or more years of college education while 48% of Filipinos and 72% of Asian Pacific Islander and Desi Americans hold a Bachelor's degree or higher (Ramakrishnan & Ahmad, 2014).

Research on Asian American experiences with racism in higher education is limited. However, there is a small and growing body of literature that sheds some light that Asian American students in postsecondary education do experience racism (Chih,

1994; Cress & Ikeda, 2003; Hwang & Goto, 2006; Museus & Park, 2015). For example, Asian Americans are significantly less likely to be satisfied with their campus racial climate than their White peers (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000). The literature also indicates that the lower levels of satisfaction with campus racial climate is be a result of many harsh realities of for our Students of Color. Museus (2013) offered three important information regarding Asian Americans' experiences with racial harassment. First, Asian Americans often report experiencing racial harassment at their higher education institution. Second, while small and limited, there is evidence that Asian American students experience racial segregation and isolation in extracurricular activities and classrooms on their campus. Third, Asian Americans students experience a great deal of pressure to assimilate into the cultures of predominantly White institutions (PWIs). Moreover, at PWIs, Asian Americans feel pressure to fit into the cultures of their college campuses to belong and succeed. Taken together, this research suggests that racism influences the lives of Asian American students. Yet, the data and reports of the racism experienced by Asian Americans in college are somewhat challenging to find.

Scholarship regarding Asian Americans in postsecondary education has historically been complicated by inclusion and exclusion. After all, many Asian American students pursue college degrees and enroll in U.S. colleges and universities. In this sense, Asian Americans are a visible population in higher education nationally, and a highly visible group at certain colleges and universities. At the same time, however, Asian American students have often been excluded in higher education research, policy, and practice. Researchers have written in great details about these exclusions (Museus, 2013; Museus & King, 2009; Museus & Park, 2015; Suzuki, 2002). In the field of higher

education, Asian American students can go through their entire academic journey and not see themselves or their communities reflected in the curriculum (Museus, 2013; Museus & Park, 2015), result is in that Asian Americans are the most misunderstood population in higher education. Moreover, many federal agencies do not include Asian Americans for opportunities, resources, and discussions that are focused on underserved populations of color. Additionally, Asian American students find themselves excluded from scholarship opportunities reserved for people of color (Ching & Agbayani, 2012; Museus, 2013). Furthermore, Asian American students are often made to feel like they do not belong in support service areas, like a tutoring center, because they are assumed to be genetically intelligent in academia and should not need help. They are also ignored by postsecondary educators who assume that they do not need the support. Taking it a step further, given the continued rapid growth of the Asian American population and the unfortunate reality that this community does face barriers and challenges, the continued practice of exclusion of Asian Americans from postsecondary research, policy, and practice should be questioned and investigated.

Racial Microaggressions

Clark and his colleagues (1999) define racism as "the beliefs, attitudes, institutional arrangements, and acts that tend to disparage individuals or groups because of phenotypic characteristics or group affiliation" (p. 805). Jones (1997) provides a similar yet more simple definition as ethnic discrimination and further defines racism as an unfair treatment because of one's racial identity, where "discrimination" refers to the unjust treatment of different categories of people specifically on the grounds of race, age, or gender. Throughout the years, researchers have observed that racism in the U.S. has

been shifted from overt acts and messages to subtle expressions (Burns, 2014; Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002; Fisher, Moore, Simmons, & Allen, 2017; Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder, 2008). These subtle messages have been relabeled as modern racism (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Pearson, 2017; Nelson, 2006), which lives in well-intentioned individuals who are not consciously aware that their beliefs, attitudes, and actions are often discriminatory. Most esearchers prefer the term racial microaggressions to describe the subtle messages (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007; Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, & Esquilin, 2007; Sue, & Holder, 2008; Sue, & Constantine, 2007). From the lens of the perpetrator, these subtle messages may appear minute and trivial; however, they have serious cumulative negative effects on the person or groups who receive these messages.

According to Pierce and his colleagues (1978), racial microaggressions are defined as "subtle, stunning, often automatic, and nonverbal exchanges which are 'put downs' of blacks by offenders" (p. 66). Racial microaggressions can leave a lasting impact on students of color. The unintentional slights of racial microaggressions follow people of color around in academic settings from the mispronunciation of one's name to the assumption that one may not belong in a major due to the color of one's skin (Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016). PWIs in the United States were not created with racial equity in mind; nonetheless, in today's pluralistic world, equity in experience should be a focal point (Minikel-Lococque, 2013). Sue et al. (2007) identified different types of racial microaggressions based on intentionality of the behaviors: microinsults, microinvalidations, and microassaults. Microinsults are "behaviors/verbal remarks or comments that convey rudeness, insensitivity and demean a persons' racial heritage or

identity" (p. 278). For example, an academic advisor's noticeable surprise that an Asian student is struggling in a math class is a microinsult because the academic advisor is assuming that mental abilities are an attribute of race. More often than not, perpetrators of such microaggressions are unaware of their actions, because they are often prompted by unconscious thoughts about race such as implicit bias.

Questions like "Where were you born?" or "Where are you from?" can be microaggressions because it assumes that a person of color is not a United States citizen. Color-blind remarks, such as "When I look at you, I don't see color" are refusals to acknowledge a person's race. According to Sue et al. (2007) these statements are examples of microinvalidations, which are "verbal comments or behaviors that exclude, negate or nullify the psychological thoughts, feeling or experiential reality of a person of color" (p. 278). The rejection that racism or White privilege exists (or the insistence that a perceived racial microaggressions is nonexistent) invalidates the experiences of a person of color. Like microinsults, racial microinvalidations may also be unconscious.

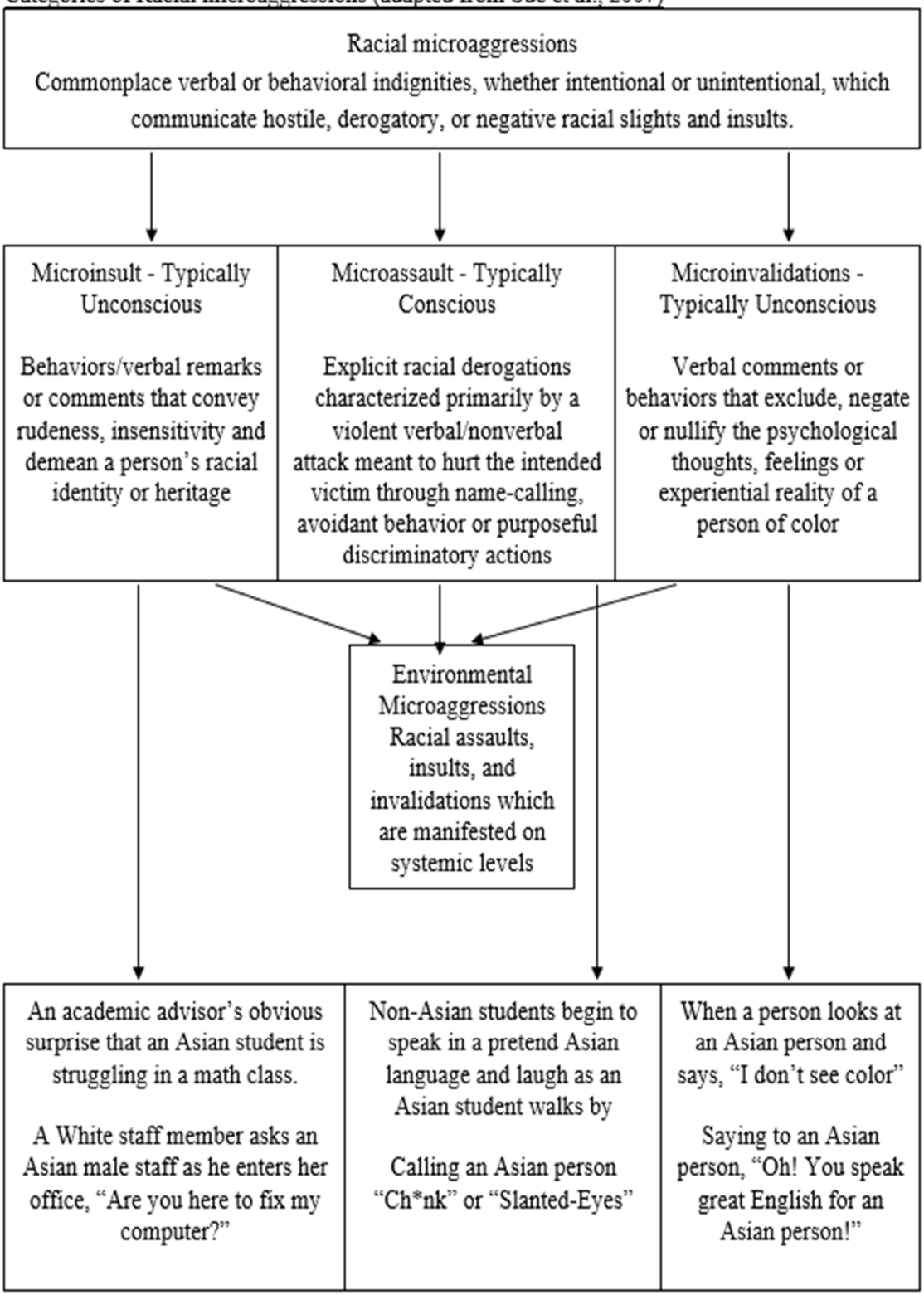
In a more obvious category, using the words or phrases such as "Ch*nk", "slanted eyes", "I'm confident that the person who is driving way under the speed limit is Asian", and/or other explicit racial descriptions, as well as actions of purposeful discrimination are racial microassaults. Sue et al. (2007) state "microassaults are explicit racial derogations characterized primarily by a violent verbal or nonverbal messages meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior or purposeful discriminatory actions" (p. 278). Another example of this is demonstrated when non-Asian students begin to mimic an Asian accent and laugh as an Asian student walks by. Another popular, yet disturbing example, occurred when a local news station in Oakland,

California, covered the story of a plane crash of Asiana Airlines. The news station reported the names of the captains of the pilots as “Sum Ting Wong”, “Wi Tu Lo”, “Ho Lee Fuk”, and “Bang Ding Ow.” The news station later confirmed that this work was done by a summer intern (National Post, 2013). Sue (2010) explains that microassaults are the most similar to traditional racism. He also states that because of the unpopularity of overt racism, microassaults are most likely to occur under certain conditions, to some degree of anonymity.

In addition to microaggressions committed by a specific person, people can also experience environmental microaggressions, which is something in the physical or social context that communicates a negative message to members of marginalized groups (Sue et al., 2007). Some examples are academic buildings that are named after white upper middle class, heterosexual men, lack of visual representations in university publications, or within the curriculum. The result of this is that students of color, specifically Asian American college students, see few “successful” people who look like them, leaving them with less access to role models and mentors of their race. Figure 1 visually presents the three large classes of microaggressions, the characteristics under each category, and the examples.

Figure 1

Categories of Racial microaggressions (adapted from Sue et al., 2007)



According to Sue (2010), perpetrators of microaggressions are most often well-meaning individuals who are unaware of subtle and hidden messages conveyed to a "socially devalued group" (p. 3). Because of the perpetrators of microaggressions are often people who see themselves as fair or just individuals, it can be challenging for them to accept how their behaviors convey attitudes or beliefs are oppressive. This presents the idea of implicit bias where the interactions can be difficult for individuals who have been the recipients of microaggressions to name the actions and advocate for themselves (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002; Greenwalkd, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Naming the microaggressions can be the first step in challenging and stopping this type of behavior (Huber & Solorzano, 2015).

Just as when dealing with traditional forms of racism such as the belief that one's race is more superior over the other, microaggressions have a large influence on the psyche and can cause physical and psychological distress. In many cases this contributes to why people of color have feelings of anger, hostility and/or distress when encountering microaggressions (Burns, 2014; Sue et al., 2003). For many college students, microaggressions become exhausting to deal with on a day-to-day basis, which leaves a sense of irritation, resentment, and isolation (McCabe, 2009; Solorzano et al., 2000, Vaccaro & Kamba-Kelsay, 2016). Students have also reported that racial microaggressions had negatively affected their academic performance which resulted in withdrawal from a course, switching their major, taking a leave of absence or transferring to a different institution (Hawrood, et al., 2015; Linder et al., 2015; Solorzano et al., 2000). Forrest-Bank and Jenson (2015) conducted a study with Asian, Latinx, and Black college students and found that Latinx and Asian participants scored highest on the

Exoticization and Assumptions of Similarity subscale, whereas Black students scored highest on the Assumptions of Inferiority subscale. Moreover, Black students experienced more Environmental Microaggressions as they noted that they were less likely to witness positive attributes in different forms of media than other participants. Latinx and Black students experienced the same rates of Assumptions of Inferiority and Microinvalidations. Above all, racial microaggressions cause individuals to feel unimportant, disrespected, disengaged, underrated, which consequently causes individuals to withdraw which disrupts their true potential (Chavez, Ornelas, Lyles, & Williams, 2015; Concepcion, Kohatsu, & Yeh, 2013; Iwamoto & Lio, 2010).

Allen (1992) states that students' success is determined by how they perceive their college environment. Most often students reported feeling invisible and isolated (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000), tokenized in class discussion (Harwood et al., 2015; Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016), dismissed by faculty, and racially invalidated in the classroom (Linder et al., 2015). This has made the college experience challenging when students experience racial microaggressions in the academic space. Moreover, Suarez-Orozco and her colleagues (2015) found that students experienced racial microaggressions by their instructors. In order to combat and confront racial microaggressions in the classroom, one strategy is to directly respond to the perpetrator as soon as it occur, however, the response and action may be low if the perpetrator happens to be the instructor (Boysen, 2012).

Kim, Kendall, and Cheon (2017) conducted a quantitative study with 156 Asian American college students. They discovered that the students who experienced racial microaggressions on a daily basis reported a sense of cultural mistrust of the dominant

culture (I.E., white faculty, staff, and peers), which negatively affected their well-being. Nadal, Pituc, Johnston, and Esparrago (2010) found that Asian American college students experiences with racial microaggressions, overt racism, and systemic racism often led to feelings of marginalization and disconnection from their institutions. Moreover, students also reported feeling isolated and misunderstood of their ethnicity. In a qualitative study, Yeo, Mendenhall, Harwood, and Huntt (2019) reported that Asian American college students frequently were often being mistaken for international students and hearing or experiencing hostile remarks and racial slurs. Students also articulated that they were ridiculed and harassed based on their physical features or the way they spoke.

Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, and Torino (2007) addressed the inaccurate assumptions that Asian Americans experience very little racism, an assumption that is rooted in the idea of the model minority myth. Maramba and Museus (2012) and Museus and Maramba (2011) showed how the model minority myth leads to racial stereotyping and the inaccurate assumptions about Asian Americans. The researchers challenge these assumptions by reviewing the academic struggles of Filipino American college students. Yoo and Castro (2011) provided additional information about how racism effects the academic drive of Asian American college students. For example, in a quantitative study, Yoo and Castro found that perceived racism affected Asian Americans differently than it had those who were international; whereas perceived racism increased the academic motivation of Asian Americans, it had the opposite effect on international students.

Le (2015) penned an article detailing her disbelief in a political science faculty member from Duke University. The faculty member stated that,

> "I am a professor at Duke University. Every Asian student has a very simple old American first name that symbolizes their desire for integration. Virtually every

> black has a strange new name that symbolizes their lack of desire for integration. The amount of Asian-white dating is enormous and so surely will be the intermarriage. Black-white dating is almost nonexistent because of the ostracism by blacks of anyone who dates a white. It was appropriate that a Chinese design won the competition for the Martin Luther King state. King helped them overcome. The blacks followed Malcolm X."

The faculty's comment preserves the dangerous and all too common stereotype of the Asian community: "model minority." The model minority myth (MMM) is probably the most common stereotype about Asian Americans. The myth describes Asian Americans as high-achieving, hardworking, and smart individuals (Museus, 2013; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Suzuki, 2002). This stereotype is pernicious, shaping perceptions of Asian Americans throughout society.

The term "model minority" was created in *The New York Times* by sociologist William Petersen (1966) to describe Asian Americans as ethnic minorities who achieved success in the United States. The article depicts Asian Americans as the symbol of the American success story of dedication and hard work, and it also alluded that other minority groups such as blacks and Latinos could also rise above the challenges of racism in order to be successful. In essence, the myth was used to justify and maintain the racial order (Museus, 2013).

Furthermore, some Asian American ethnic groups encounter sharp economic, educational, and occupational inequalities. For example, while some ethnic groups such as Asian Indian and Taiwanese have considerably higher levels of educational achievement than the overall population in the United States, the Hmong, Cambodian, and Laotian populations have lower levels of educational achievement than the national average (Museus & Yi, 2015). Moreover, poverty rates for Southeast Asian Americans

(e.g., Cambodian, Laotian, Hmong, and Vietnamese) blur the national average poverty rate (Museus, 2013).

What seems to be relatively tiny on the surface, the model minority myth is a problem for many reasons. Firstly, the myth depicts Asian Americans as successful minorities, which perpetuates the color-blind ideology according to which racial barriers would not play a significant role in the lives of people of color (Museus, 2013). Secondly, because the model minority stereotype hides significant discrepancies within the racial group, it adds to the illusion that Asian Americans are problem-free, denying the obstacles and challenges Asian Americans encounter. It maintains assumptions that they do not require resources and support, and often makes them invisible in research, policy, and practice (Museus & Kiang, 2009; Museus & Park, 2015). For example, policies of affirmative action directed at tackling discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity have excluded Asian Americans because of their inaccurate perceived notions of success. Thirdly, the myth establishes Asian Americans as honorary whites who are not as good as individuals in the racial majority but superior to other minority groups. In doing so, the model minority stereotype creates a division between racial minority groups (Matsuda, 1990).

Another common stereotype associated with the model minority myth is the assumption that Asian American students show higher academic achievement because they possess the knowledge and skills to succeed (Yeh, 2002). The reports from The National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (CARE, 2008) showed that educational professionals from various educational settings

believe that Asian American students will be academically successful without support. Faculty members often have the model minority myth implanted in their views of Asian American students and do not recognize that this population also are faced with similar issues of other minority groups. Moreover, Asian Americans may experience extra pressure and anxiety to meet the expectations of this stereotype from their society, family, teachers, and peers. Because the model minority myth assumes that Asian Americans do not need assistance and can overcome any challenges and obstacles, they may have difficulties asking for help when needed, and minimize or possibly even ignore their needs.

Coping

It is imperative and important to examine and analyze how individuals cope with racial microaggressions given the negative mental and physical outcomes. Research indicates that racism adversely impacts Asian Americans' mental health (Alvarez & Juang, 2010; Nadal, Wong, Sriken, Griffin, & Fujii-Doe, 2015; Ong, Cerrada, Lee, & Williams, 2017; Palmer, & Maramba, 2015; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007). According to Eisenbger, Fabes, and Guthrie (1997), coping responses are seen as a strategy to control one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts. Coping strategies have been shown to offset the effects of perceived negative events by offering a method of overcoming stressful life events (Clark et al., 1999). Coping is described in the literature as efforts used to manage, reduce, or tolerate the demands of situations that are perceived as stressful (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Research shows that effective use of coping skills may mediate or reduce the risk of harmful mental outcomes in college students

(Kim, Kendall, & Webb, 2015; MacCan, Fogarty, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2011; Sanchez, Adams, Arango, & Flannigan, 2018).

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), most general coping strategies are oriented toward directly confronting the problem and strategies that entail an effort to balance the emotional distress caused by the stressor. For example, when individuals encounter a stressful situation such as prejudice and discrimination, they go through multiple stages of response. First, they go through a primary appraisal stage where individuals assess the situation and determine if the conditions present a challenge or threat. Second, individuals will then proceed through a secondary appraisal stage where they assess whether they have the necessary resources to cope with the situation and diminish the challenge or threat. The individuals then can pursue coping responses that are aimed at reducing the challenge or threat.

Research suggests that racial minorities often use multiple coping strategies when faced with racial discrimination with different psychological outcomes (Harrell, 2000; Samuel, Morton, Violet, Feng, & Joanna, 1999; Utsey, Ponterotto, Reynolds, & Cancelli, 2000). Miller and Kaiser (2001) conducted a study and found that individuals cope with stress that is associated with racial discrimination in different ways, such as confronting the discrimination to minimizing or complete avoidance. While a broad definition of coping can be useful, it often hides the various types of coping. For example, Alvarez and Juang (2010) used multiple mediation models of coping to showcase the complexity, targets, and effects of specific coping strategies when responding to stressors such as discrimination. Compas et al. (2001) stated that individuals are equipped with a behavioral system to respond to stressors commonly known as the fight (engagement) or

flight (disengagement) response. In other words, how an individual chooses to respond to the stressor depends on the specific person if they possess the resources to manage the stress.

Engagement coping is a process where individuals attempt to actively manage the stressful event (Tobin, Holroyd, & Reynolds, 1984) through Education/Advocacy and Resistance. Education/Advocacy refers to individuals who may rely on their ability to grow and learn from racial microaggressions and dedicate themselves to educating within and outside their community to become better prepared to deal with racial microaggressions. Resistance refers to challenging or confronting individuals for their discriminatory behavior.

On the other hand, disengagement coping a process where individuals attempt to position themselves mentally, emotionally, and physically away from stressors (Tobin, Holroyd, & Reynolds, 1984) through Drug and Alcohol Use, Internalization, and Detachment. Drug and Alcohol Use refer to individual who use alcohol and drugs. Internalization refers to the tendency to attribute the cause of responsibility of racial microaggressions incident to oneself. Detachment refers to individuals who select to not interact or think about dealing with racial microaggressions.

Multiple studies support the distinction between college students' use of engagement and disengagement coping (Dickter & Newton, 2013; Liang, Alvarez, Juang, & Liang, 2007; Sanchez, Smith, and Adams, 2018; Szymanksi & Lewis 2016; Yoo & Lee, 2005). Dickter and Newton (2013) asked 98 college students to recall two racist comments they had recently heard that had been made about any social group. They

were specifically asked to include information about who made the comment (friend, family member, or a stranger), the setting of the incident (classroom, dining hall, residence hall), and their reaction to the comment. The results showed that the majority of the participants indicated no verbal reaction (a disengagement coping strategy); however, a handful of participants utilized engagement coping strategy by confronting the perpetrator.

Sanchez, Smith, and Adams (2018) conducted a quantitative study with 211 Latina college students examining the links between perceived discrimination and coping strategies (engagement vs. disengagement) and mental health. They found that perceived discrimination and engagement coping strategies was partially mediated. Moreover, perceived discrimination and the use of disengagement strategies were negatively linked to mental health.

In a similar study, Szymanksi and Lewis (2016) conducted a study with 212 African American college women. They found that the use of engagement coping strategies resulted in a positive outcome for mental health. Not surprisingly, the use of disengagement coping strategies yielded negative outcomes for mental health.

Liang et al. (2007) found that Asian Americans utilized engagement strategies such as support seeking when they encountered racism-related stress. Kuo (1995) conducted a study with four different Asian American groups to explore the way they all cope with discrimination. The study employed two styles of coping: problem focused (engagement) and emotion focused (disengagement). Results showed that the majority of the participants utilized more disengagement coping strategies. More specifically,

Filipino Americans used problem focused coping styles more than Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Americans. In contrast, Yoo and Lee's (2005) study with Asian American college students utilized a similar engagement form of coping strategy called *approach type*, which contained three common forms: social support seeking, cognitive restructuring, and problem solving. They further defined each of the types as "engaging in actions directed at obtaining emotional support from others" (p. 498) (social support seeking), cognitive strategies that "change the meaning of the stressful situation and the attempt to view the stressor from a new and positive perspective" (p. 498) (cognitive restructuring), and "engaging in actions directed at analyzing and solving problems" (p. 498) (problem solving). Their study found that individuals who utilized this approach type of coping strategy buffered the effects of racial discrimination.

Noh and his colleagues (1999) recommended researchers to continue to investigate the many subtle forms of racial microaggressions in order to specifically determine the coping style and strategies of racial minorities. Mossakowski (2003) asked if there were specific coping styles that are more healthful and beneficial for ethnic minorities. The researcher's answer is that there is no general consensus in the discrimination literature.

Ultimately, as the population of Asian American college students is increasing, results from this study may help identify which forms of coping strategies are most effective at promoting positive psychological well-being.

Psychological Well-Being

According to Diener (1984), social researchers have been interested in studying the psychological well-being of individuals; however, the focus has been more on human unhappiness and suffering rather than the causes and consequences of positive functioning and feeling well. The term "mental health" has a negative bias, associating health with the absence of illness rather than the presence of wellness. There have been disputes that this concept completely ignores the human capabilities to overcome obstacles and the need to develop (Ryff & Singer, 1996). Much of the historical view of mental health is founded on concepts that have little theoretical rationale, therefore, neglecting the important aspects of positive functioning.

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) published an article introducing the field of positive psychology. The authors observed that the field of social sciences had been operating from a deficit-based perspective, where the researchers and practitioners had been primarily concerned with what goes wrong in human affairs and how to remedy problems and mitigate the dysfunction. They recommend a shift from the "preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life" (p. 5) to a more balanced perspective that includes improving understanding of how to build positive qualities. In his 1998 presidential address to the members of the American Psychological Association, Martin Seligman challenged applied psychologists to return to their roots focusing on curing mental illness and making the lives of people more productive and fulfilling. Since then, positive psychology frameworks and principles are being studied, tested, and applied in a range of social and cultural contexts (Donaldson et al., 2015). Further, the positive lens

on human affairs is emerging as a changing and evolving structure to drive positive social change in addressing with a cloud of social challenges (Golden-Biddle & Dutton, 2012).

Greater well-being offers endless benefits to individuals and the societies in which they live. Psychological well-being is about lives going well. It is a combination of feeling good and functioning effectively. The experiencing of painful emotions is a normal part of life and being able to manage these negative emotions is important for long-term well-being. Kok, Catalino, and Fredrickson (2008) explain that experiencing positive emotions, which is a backup for well-being, has been demonstrated to enhance attention, generate more frequent and flexible ideas, and boost one's creative problem-solving skills. Houben, Noortgate, and Kuppens (2015) define psychological well-being as a "construct that involves either or both the presence of positive indicators of psychological adjustment such as positive emotions, happiness, high self-esteem, or life satisfaction" (p. 901).

According to Seligman (2006),

> People who make permanent and universal explanations for good events as well as temporary and specific explanations for bad events, bounce back from troubles briskly and get on a roll easily when they succeed once. People who make temporary and specific explanations for success, and permanent and universal explanations for setbacks, tend to collapse under pressure - both for a long time and across situations - and rarely get on a roll (p. 91).

Similarly, Schwartz and his colleagues (2013) also identified distinct constructs of psychological well-being as "feeling competent, that one is able to meet the demands offered by one's social environment (e.g., school or work), self-determined decision making, satisfying interpersonal relationships, purpose in life, and self-acceptance" (p.

302). In addition to identifying the constructs making up psychological well-being, research across many disciplines has been devoted to understanding variables and the relationships between these variables, such as ethnicity or race and religion that influence the level of psychological well-being individuals experience (Gulacti, 2014). Some examples include, but are not limited to, religion (Saleem & Saleem, 2017; Ghoshal & Mehrotra, 2017), medicine (Hill, Sin, Turiano, Burrow, & Almeida, 2018), and ethnic identities (Burrow, Stanley, Sumner, & Hill, 2014; Hurd, & Sellers, 2013; Sheldon, Oliver, & Balaghi, 2015). Nonetheless, despite the evidence of the benefits of positive education, higher education is frequently left out of discussions involving the implementation of well-being skills (Norrish, Williams, O'Connor, & Robinson, 2013). The researcher aimed to address this gap by utilizing Ryff's (1989) instrument on psychological well-being specifically with Asian Americans college students. Moreover, the *Asian American Journal of Psychology* had put out a call for papers to focus on Asian Americans and positive psychology which is much needed in order for us to learn more about whether and how positive psychology may apply to Asian Americans (as cited in Kiang & Ip, 2017). Researchers contend that looking at life satisfaction as a whole along with focusing on various domains such as self-esteem and social support are some of the first methodological needs to look into the structure of psychological well-being (Diener & Lucas, 1999; Ryff & Singer, 2013).

Ryff's (1989) concept of psychological well-being is drawn from the works of psychologists such as: Erikson's (1959) psychosocial stage model, Roger's (1961) view of the fully functioning person, Maslow's (1968) concept of self-actualization, Jung's

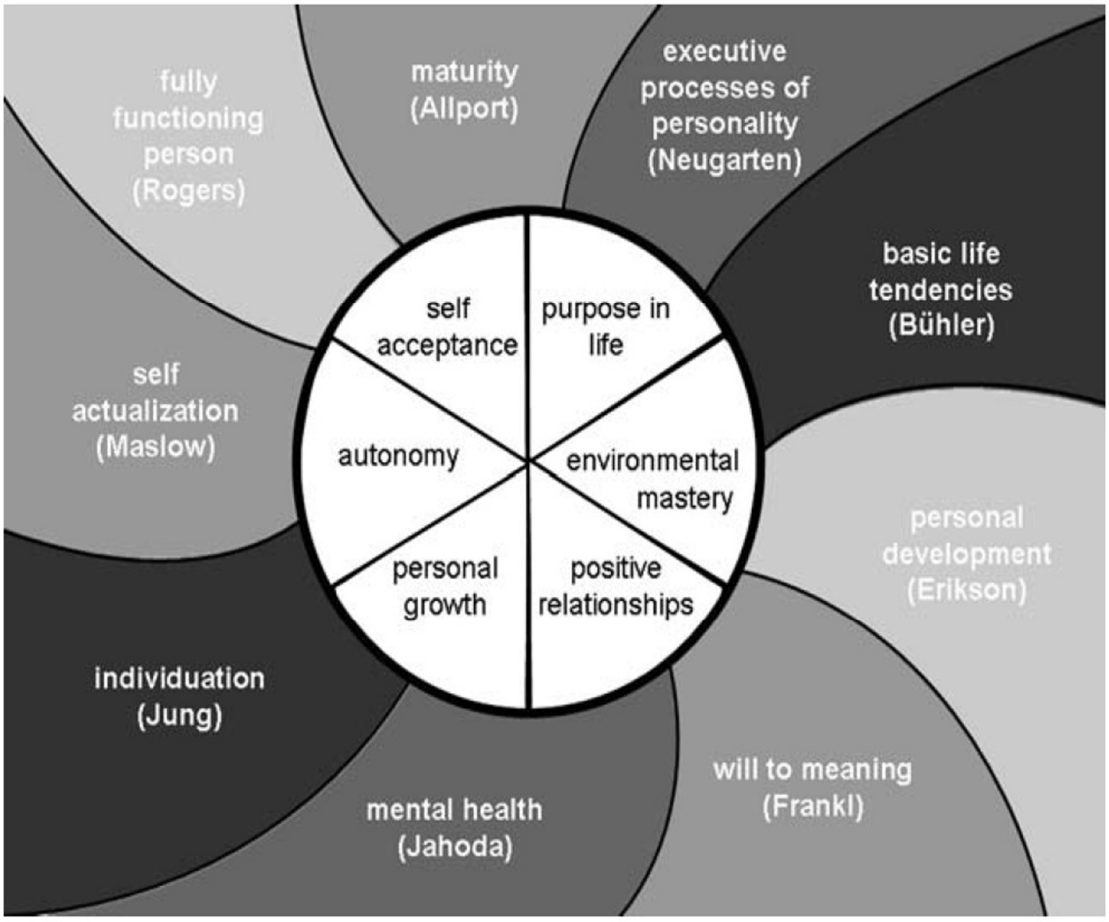
(1933) formulation of individuation, Neugarten's (1969) description of personality change, Johoda's (1958) positive criteria of mental health that was generated to replace the definition of well-being as the absence of illness, Allport's (1964) concept of maturity, and Buhler's (1935) basic life tendencies that work towards the fulfillment of life. Ryff then incorporated these themes to form a new definition of psychological well-being. Ryff expressed concerns about the lack of valid measures for the psychological well-being construct, highlighting that most of the generated well-being criteria were diverse and extensive and appeared cumbersome about how individuals should function. This resulted in Ryff combining all of the different perspectives in a diverse grouping of psychological well-being into six dimensions of positive feelings, thus creating a model of positive psychological functioning based on the multiple literatures on life-span development, personal growth, and mental health. The six dimensions are as follows: self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, and purpose in life.

According to Ryff (1989), *self-acceptance* involves possessing a positive attitude about oneself. Thompson and Waltz (2008) also found that people who scored high in measures of self-acceptance tend to have positive self-esteem. *Autonomy* refers to the ways that an individual is self-directed and independent. People who are autonomous rely on internal personal standards or morals and resist looking for approval from others. Psychologists who study life-span development refer to autonomy as looking inward and gaining freedom from everyday pressures. This can be relevant to Asian Americans as they develop in the Western society that highlights such values. *Environmental Mastery*

involves possessing a skill to effectively regulate behavior and negotiate the everyday life (Ryff, 1989; Jahoda, 1958). It is believed to be important for an individual's ability to be in control of one's physical and mental environment. The environmental mastery dimension is similar to other dimensions which focused on control (Ryff & Singer, 2008). It is the researcher's opinion that Asian Americans effectively manage multiple cultural contexts. *Personal Growth* requires an individual to be open to new life experiences and ideas and to continually strive to expand self-knowledge and self-efficacy (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Developing one's potential is an ever-changing process. Life-span theorists such as Maslow (1968) and Rogers (1961) confirmed the need to continue to grow and improve which is essential to mental health. *Positive Relations with Others* is the characterization of positive relations with others by the presence of warm, trusting relationships and the capacity to feel affection and empathy for others which shows a sign of maturity (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Singer, 2008; Maslow, 1968; Allport. 1961; Jahoda, 1958). A study conducted by Stamp et al. (2015) found that having a positive relationship with others was a strong predictor in positive psychological well-being. In order to achieve P*urpose in Life* people need to be committed to personal goals and values that infuse their life with significance and direction (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Singer, 2008; Allport, 1961; Jahoda, 1958). In order for individuals to grow and mature, there is a need to define a sense of purpose in life from a more positive light. Figure 2 visually presents the six dimensions. According to Ryff (1989), well-being is not comprised simply of positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction; however, well-being is best thought of as a multidimensional construct made

of life attitudes. This is culturally relevant attitude towards family obligations, which is commonly expected and socialized among Asian Americans. Altogether, the individual subscales of well-being can be seen as both directly relevant, as well as uniquely embedded in the specific cultural contexts in which Asian Americans develop.

Figure 2
Carol Ryff's Model of Psychological Well-Being



Asian American college students are disproportionately underrepresented in all areas of wellness literature and especially in the psychological well-being literature (Cheng & Chen, 2005; Kishida et al., 2004). In order to further demonstrate the use of psychological well-being, more research is needed on how the definition and

conceptualization of psychological well-being fits for racially diverse groups (Constantine & Sue, 2006). The current study addressed this need by exploring the relationships among psychological well-being and Asian American college students, which is a group who has been continually underrepresented in research on psychological well-being.

Moreover, research on the factor structure of Ryff's model has also been primarily with White individuals (Christopher, 1999). This gap remains even though there has been a call in the literature for continued evaluation of the factor structure of Ryff's (1989) model in diverse groups (Lindfors, Berntsson, & Lundberg, 2006). The current study also addresses this gap in the literature by testing the factor structure of Ryff's psychological well-being with Asian American college students.

Overall, due to the nature of racial microaggressions and the negative impacts on psychological well-being on Asian American college students, more research is warranted to identify coping strategies that are linked to better psychological outcomes. The six dimensions are ideal for investigating how experiences with racial microaggressions and coping with discrimination influence the psychological well-being of Asian American college students.

Summary

This chapter examined the relevant literature on three constructs of interests: racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and psychological well-being of Asian American college students. Different types of racial microaggressions (microinsult, microinvalidation, and microassaults, Sue et al., 2007) and coping strategies (engagement and disengagement - Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) were identified and their relationships

with mental health (Alvarez & Juang, 2010; Noh & Kaspar; 2003; Noh, Beiser, Kaspar, Hou, & Rummens, 1999). In addition to the traditional deficit model of mental health, this chapter included literature on psychological well-being, a positive framework (Ryff, 1989; Schwartz et al., 2013; Houben, Noortgate, & Kuppens 2015). Moreover, studies have shown racial microaggressions have a negative impact (Nadal, Wong, Srikien, Griffin, & Fujki-Doe, 2015; Nadal, Wong, Griffin, Davidoff, & Sriken, 2014; Ong, Cerrada, Lee, & Williams, 2017). This study is looking to fill the gap in the literature where the primary focus are Asian American college students and their racial experience on campus, their use of coping strategies against discrimination, and the impact of these experiences on both the positive and negative aspects of psychological well-being.

Chapter Three:

Methodology

Chapter three presents the study's participants, variables and instruments, data sources and collection procedures, and analyses of each research question. Justification for the selected design and analytic procedures follow the design summary. The chapter closes with a discussion of the implications of the study's findings.

Participants

This study took place at a public four-year institution in the northeastern part of the United States. The Fall 2017 enrollment included 15,092 undergraduate students in which 493 undergraduate students self-identified as Asian. According to the institution's common data set (2018), the definition of Asian or Pacific Islander is "a person having origins in any of the original peoples in the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or Pacific Islands. This includes people from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, American Samoa, India, and Vietnam" (p. 28). Ethnic minority undergraduate representation at this institution continues to be low with Black or African Americans constituting 5.4%, Latinx Americans constituting 10%, Asian American constituting 3.3%, and Native Americans accounting for less than 1%.

This study utilized a convenience, non-random sampling of Asian American undergraduate students (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). The researcher ran a query in the university's student database system. Students who applied to the institution had an option on their application to disclose their race/ethnicity. According to G-Power statistical software, a minimum of 147 participants were needed for the study to have a medium size effect with the power of .8 (Cohen, 1992). The study yielded 222 students,

which represented the eight degree granting colleges and one academic college, with a range of 5 to 52 participants in each college. The majority of the students who participated in the survey were from the College of Arts and Sciences followed by the College of Pharmacy. Sixty percent of the participants identified as woman. According to the Fall 2017 data set, 55% of the Asian American population comprised of women and 45% comprised of men. Participants were evenly divided across class year with slightly smaller number of students in second year. (Table 1).

Table 1
Total Sample Demographics Including Frequencies and Percentages

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Total N = 222		
Academic College		
Arts and Sciences	52	23.4
Business	23	10.4
Education and Professional Studies	7	3.2
Engineering	27	12.2
Environment and Life Sciences	29	13.1
Health Sciences	26	11.7
Nursing	7	3.2
Pharmacy	46	20.7
University College for Academic Success	5	2.3
Sex		
Woman	132	59.5
Man	66	29.7
Prefer Not to Disclose	24	10.8
Class Level		
First-Year	54	24.3
Second-Year	34	15.3
Third-Year	49	22.1
Fourth-Year	48	21.6
Fifth-Year or More	37	16.7

Variables and Instruments

Racial microaggressions. Racial microaggressions, subtle forms of racial bias and discrimination, are measured with The Racial Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS, Nadal, 2011), a 45-item scale that uses dichotomous answers (Yes or No). Participants answered if they experienced racial microaggressions within the last year (see Appendix B). The scale uses six subscales: (1) Assumptions of Inferiority; (2) Second-Class Citizen/Assumption of Criminality; (3) Microinvalidations; (4) Exoticization/Assumptions of Similarity; (5) Environmental Microaggressions; and (6) Workplace and School Microaggressions.

The Assumptions of Inferiority subscale measures the thoughts and feelings of people of color who are assumed to be poor, possess substandard positions, or are less educated. Sample items from this subscale are "Someone acted surprised at my scholastic or professional success because of my race" or "Someone assumed that I held a lower paying job because of my race."

The Second-Class Citizen /Assumptions of Criminality subscale measures the experiences of people of color who received substandard service compared to White individuals, and are also stereotyped to be criminals. Sample items from this subscale are "I received substandard service in stores compared to customers of other racial groups" or "Someone clenched her/his purse or wallet upon seeing me because of my race."

The Microinvalidations subscale measures the experience of people of color whose identity or lived experiences has been denied. Sample items from this subscale are "Someone of a different racial group has stated that there is no difference between the two of us" or "Someone told me that people should not think about race anymore."

The Exoticization/Assumptions of Similarity subscale measures the experiences of people of color whose identity or physical characteristics have been sexualized, being treated the same as others of the same race, and the assumption that all of the people of the same background have the same thoughts, ideas, and values. Sample items from this subscale are "Someone objectified one of my physical features because of my race" or "Someone assumed that I speak similar languages to other people in my race."

The Environmental Microaggressions subscale measures the perception of negative messages from the absence of people from one's racial background in school or work settings. Sample items from this subscale are "I read popular books or magazines in which a majority of contributions featured people from my racial group" or "I observed people of my race in prominent positions at my workplace or school."

Finally, the Workplace and School Microaggressions subscale measures the negative experiences and perceptions from the professional and academic environment. Sample items from this subscale are "An employer or co-worker was unfriendly or unwelcoming toward me because of my race" or "An employer or co-worker treated me differently than White co-workers."

The REMS was chosen for the reliability and validity with diverse ethnic minority populations including Asian American college students. The Cronbach's alpha for the overall model is .91 and reliability for the subscales all range from .78 to .87. Construct validity was established via exploratory component analyses (n = 442) and confirmatory factor analysis (n = 218) produced the six-factor structure (Nadal, 2011).

Not only was the REMS chosen for the validity and reliability with diverse ethnic minority populations including Asian American college students, but it was also one of

the most popular used measures on racial microaggressions. Positively worded items were recoded to create the scales so that all of the items were in the same direction with high numbers indicating more microaggressions experience.

Although Nadal (2011) conducted factor and reliability analyses for the REMS, it is necessary to conduct these analyses with the achieved sample. The following presents results from factor and reliability analyses from the achieved sample. These analyses were conducted to determine if the data empirically support the theoretical constructs of racial microaggressions.

Several analyses of all 45 items related to racial microaggressions were run using the principal component extraction with varimax rotation. Eigenvalue greater than 1 rule, which is a popular criterion for factor extraction was applied first, resulted in 11 factors. There were several factors with only one item loaded and the factor structure was not easily interpretable. Based on Nadal's (2011) original work, six-factor model was tested next. There were many items double loaded on multiple factors and the empirical data did not provide support for the six-factor model. The models with different factors were examined and the three-factor model was chosen as it provides the most stable and interpretable factor structure (Appendix L). Two items were double loaded on two factors. Along with the reliability analysis, it was decided to drop these two items from further analyses.

The first factor with 21 items indicated more explicit forms of racial microaggressions, namely "insult," which is mostly the combination of Assumptions of Inferiority; Second Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality; and Workplace and School Microaggressions from the original 6 scales. Examples of items include

"someone clenched her/his purse or wallet upon seeing me because of my race" and "someone assumed that I would physically hurt them because of my race." The second factor with 15 items denoted more implicit forms of racial microaggressions, "invalidation." This factor includes, Microinvalidation and Exoticization/Assumptions of Similarity from the original scales. Examples include "someone told me that s/he was colorblind," and "someone of a different racial group has stated that there is no difference between the two of us." The third factor with seven items describes "environmental microaggressions." This factor matches closely with Nadal's Environmental Microaggressions subscale. Reliability analyses revealed that in total, the 43 racial ethnic microaggressions survey items had a Cronbach's alpha of .90. All factors were highly to moderately reliable with Cronbach's alpha ranged between .70 and .92 with 'insult' being the highest (.92) and 'environment' being the lowest (.70).

Coping strategies. Coping strategies are specific efforts that individuals employ to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimize stressful events. The Coping With Discrimination Scale (CDS) (Wei, Alvarez, Hu, Russell, & Bonett, 2010) is a 25-item scale that asks participants to respond to the items using six response options (1 = never like me, 2 = a little like me, 3 = sometimes like me, 4 = often like me, 5 = usually like me, and 6 = always like me) (see Appendix C). The scale measures coping with discrimination using five subscales: (1) Education/Advocacy; (2) Internalization; (3) Drug and Alcohol Use; (4) Resistance; and (5) Detachment.

The Education/Advocacy subscale measures efforts to deal with discrimination through education or advocacy efforts at the individual or societal level. Sample items

include “I try to educate people so that they are aware of discrimination” or “I educate myself to be better prepared to deal with discrimination.”

The Internalization subscale measures the tendency to attribute the cause or the responsibility of the discrimination event to oneself. Sample items include “I wonder if I did something to provoke this incident” or “I believe I may have triggered the incident.” This subscale contains one negatively worded item (“I do not think that I caused this event to happen”) for participants to choose if they feel that they did not think they caused an event to happen.

The Drug and Alcohol Use subscale measures the use of alcohol and drug to cope with discrimination. Sample items include “I try to stop thinking about it by taking alcohol or drugs” or “I use drugs or alcohol to take my mind off things.” There are two negatively worded items (“I do not use alcohol or drugs to help me deal with it” and “I do not use drugs or alcohol to help me forget about discrimination”), which allow participants to select if they do not use alcohol or drugs to cope with discrimination.

The Resistance subscale indicates challenging or confronting the individuals who are committing discriminatory acts. Sample items include “I directly challenge the person who offended me” or “I respond by attacking others’ ignorant beliefs.” Similar to the Internalization and Drug and Alcohol Use subscales, the Resistance subscale contains one negatively worded item (“I do not directly challenge the person”), which allow participants to select if they do not challenge nor confront individuals who commit discriminatory acts.

The Detachment subscale measures the process of distancing oneself from social support and not having any idea of how to deal with discrimination. Sample items

include “It is hard for me to seek emotional support from other people” or “I do not have anyone to turn to for support.” Validation studies on CDS show the 5-factor model fits the data well with both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (factorial validity) across multiple groups based on ethnicity and gender (measurement invariance) (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Incremental validity was established by examining the relationships between CDS and outcomes such as depression, life satisfaction, self-esteem and ethnic identity. The six response options are appropriate for meeting the need of the respondents to discriminate meaningfully at various levels of the construct without offering a neutral option which would not provide limited information on the coping with discrimination strategies. Other researchers explored two types of coping strategies when managing or tolerating stressors in response to discrimination: engagement and disengagement (Tobin, Holroyd, & Reynolds, 1984; Brougam, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009). Individuals who adopt engagement coping attempts to actively manage the stressful situation or event through education/advocacy (proactive) and resistance (reactive). Alternatively, disengagement coping is referred to as attempts to remove or orient mentally, emotionally, and physically away from stressors through the use of drugs and alcohol, internalization, and detachment.

All five subscales of CDS have strong reliability (Appendix N): Cronbach’s alpha range from .72 to .90 (Fraenkel, Wallen, Hyun, 2012). Negatively worded items were recoded to create total scales. Exploratory factor analyses with the principal component extraction and varimax rotation were explored on 25 items related to coping with discrimination strategies (CDS). It showed distinct 5 factors aligned with original scales developed by Wei, Alvarez, Ku, Russell, and Bonett (2010): Education/Advocacy, Drug

and Alcohol Use, Internalization, Detachment and Resistance. Each factor included 5 items. A 5-factor model made sense conceptually with the greater interpretability that explained 62% of the total variance. In the following analyses, two CDS scales were used combining the five factors into Engagement and Disengagement coping strategies. Engagement coping strategies include more active coping strategies such as Education/Advocacy and Resistance, whereas disengagement coping strategies include more passive strategies such as drug and alcohol use, internalization, or detachment.

Reliability analyses revealed that in total, the 25 coping with discrimination survey items had a Cronbach's alpha of .79. All factors had acceptable reliability with Cronbach's alpha ranged between .77 and .87 with 'education/advocacy' being the highest (.87) and 'resistance' being the lowest (.77). Moreover, engagement and disengagement subscales had acceptable reliability with Cronbach's alpha at both .83.

Psychological Well-being. The Scales of Psychological Well Being (SPWB) (Ryff, 1989) is a self-report inventory that measures varying aspects of an individual's psychological well-being (PWB). Several shortened versions of the SPWB have been developed from the original 120-item parent scale. This study employed the shortened 54-item (9 items per scale) version for ease of administration. The scale using six responses on a likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree somewhat, 3 = disagree slightly, 4 = agree slightly, 5 = agree somewhat, and 6 = strongly agree). This measure consists of six dimensions of PWB: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (see Appendix D). The items on each scale are positively or negatively scored. Higher scores represent self-determinedness and independence (autonomy); a sense of mastery and competence in

managing the environment (environmental mastery); feeling of continued development (personal growth); warm, satisfying relationships with others (positive relations with others); goals in life and a sense of directedness (purpose in life); and positive attitude toward the self (self-acceptance). Lower scores suggest lower levels of PWB.

The Autonomy subscale is intended to measure an individual's sense of self-determination, where the individual is either guided by an internal locus of control or the desire to please others. A sample positive item is "I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people." A sample negative item is "Sometimes I change the way I act or think to be more like those around me." The Environmental Mastery subscale is a measure of the ability to manage life and the surrounding context to fit one's needs. A sample positive item is "In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live." A sample of a negative item is "The demands of everyday life often get me down." The Personal Growth subscale is a measure of an individual's sense of continued growth and development as a person. A sample positive item is "In general, I feel that I continue to learn more about myself as time goes by." A sample negative item is "I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons." The Positive Relations with Others subscale measures the ability to have warm, satisfying, trusting, and reciprocal interpersonal relationships with others in one's life. A sample positive item is "Most people see me as loving and affectionate." A sample negative item is "Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me." The Purpose in Life subscale is intended to measure an individual's beliefs about life as purposeful and meaningful. A sample positive item is "I feel good when I think of what I've done in the past and what I hope to do in the future." Finally, the Self-

Acceptance subscale measures the ability to accept one's self and past, and to hold positive attitudes about these aspects. A sample positive item is "When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out." A sample negative item is "I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have." The six response options are appropriate for meeting the need of the respondents to discriminate meaningfully at various levels of the construct without offering a neutral option which would not provide limited information on the coping with discrimination strategies.

In order to see the empirical factor structures of SPWB, exploratory factor analyses with principal component extraction and varimax rotation were used. Eigenvalue greater than 1 criteria produced 13 factors that were not easily interpretable. When the six-factor model was examined, factor structures were not closely aligned with the original six factors. Although factor analyses did not provide empirical support for the original six factors, reliability analyses showed that all items except 3 in their respective scale help enhance the reliability of the scales. As SPWB is well used in the literature with original 6 scales, the researcher decided to use the original six scales with three items excluded: one item from the environmental mastery, one from personal growth, and one from purpose in life scales.

Reliability analyses then revealed that in total, the 51 psychological well-being survey items had a Cronbach's alpha of .95. All scales are highly reliable with Cronbach's alpha ranging between .82 and .95 with self-acceptance being the highest (.89) and autonomy, environmental mastery, and personal growth being the lowest (.82).

Data Sources and Collection Procedures

After the researcher obtained permission to use three surveys and the proposal was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher ran a query in the institution's student database to obtain the list of students who identify as Asian/Asian Pacific Islander. The researcher sent an email (Appendix E) with the survey link to the group of students with all the relevant information for informed consent. Students had the option to enter into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card. Once the student clicked on the survey link, they were directed to a welcome page. Participants needed to agree in order to gain access to the survey. A reminder email (Appendix F) was sent to the students with the survey link seven days after the initial email. The researcher reached out to student organizations that identify as an Asian organization via email (Appendix G) asking to recruit members to participate in the survey. The researcher enlisted the assistance of the Assistant Deans from the Degree Granting Colleges to help recruit participants for the study. The survey instruments were administered online using a software system called Qualtrics, which enables users to deploy and collect online data. Researchers are able to utilize Qualtrics to quickly collect information from large populations such as a lecture-size class or organization.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: What types of racial microaggressions do Asian American college students experience?

Descriptive statistics were used to answer this research question. Specifically, the means and standard deviations of the scores and subscales on the REMS were used to describe the experience of racial microaggressions. Responses on the open-ended questions were also collected for more in-depth analysis of the specific experiences of

racial microaggressions. The most common approach to analyzing open-ended responses is to look for patterns that can be sorted in categories or themes (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015).

In addition to REMS data, to address the first research question regarding the types of racial microaggressions Asian American college students experience, responses to two open-ended questions were analyzed using common practices in the qualitative analysis literature (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). Two levels of coding were used. In the first step, the researcher read through all of the responses to generate codes. Each of the responses were read for a second time, to best place each response into specific codes. A new code was created if a response did not fit into an existing one. After all responses were placed into codes, the responses were read a third time to ensure that the codes that had been created captured the essence of the participants' responses. In the second step, the researcher utilized open-codes and combined them into themes that represent the responses. A qualitative software program was not utilized in the current study.

Research Question 2: What types of coping strategies do Asian American college students use when they experience racial microaggressions?

Descriptive statistics were also used to answer this research question. Specifically, the means and standard deviations of the scores and subscales on the CDS was used to describe the use of coping strategies.

Research Question 3: To what extent do Asian American college students feel about themselves and their psychological well-being?

Descriptive statistics was employed to answer this research question. Specifically, the means and standard deviations of the scores on the PWB scales were used to describe their psychological well-being.

Research Question 4: How, and to what extent, are the racial microaggressions experiences of Asian American college students related to their use of coping strategies?

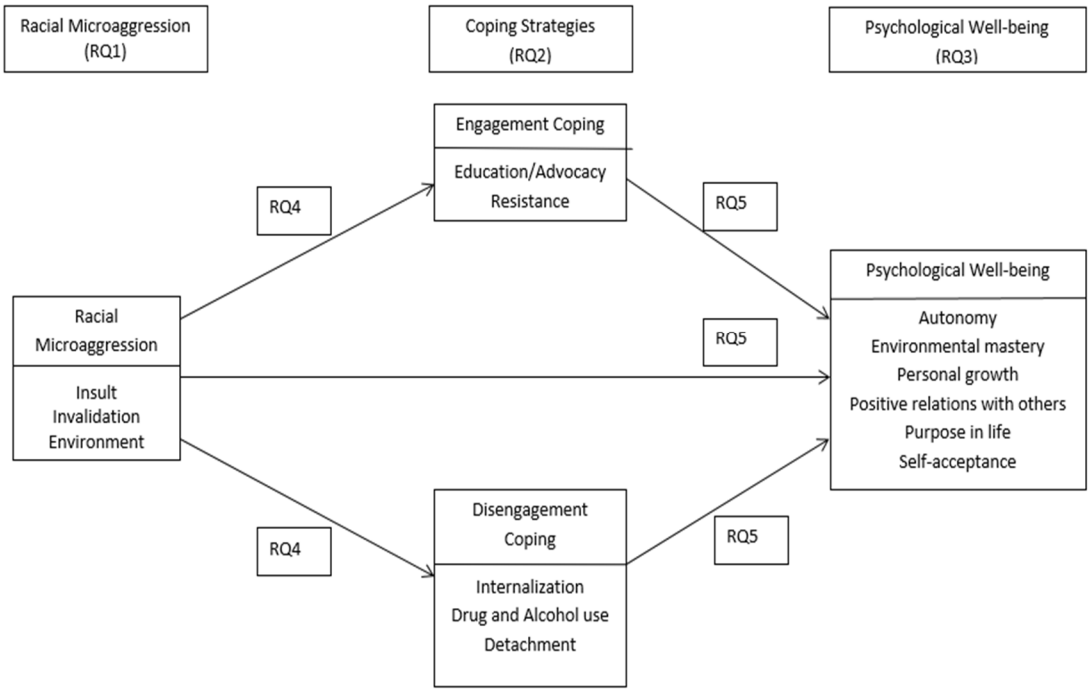
In order to determine the potential relationships between racial microaggressions and coping strategies, a multiple linear regression analysis was utilized to examine any variance in the dependent variable (coping strategies), as explained by each of the independent variables of microaggressions. In the first block, demographic variables such as sex and class year were used as controls. Racial microaggressions experiences were entered in the second block to examine the variance in the dependent variable (coping strategies). For each block entered, changes in R-squared were examined.

Research Question 5: How do the experiences of racial microaggressions and coping strategies predict Asian American college students' psychological well-being?

To explore the mediating effects of coping strategies in explaining the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological well-being, a multiple linear regression analysis was employed. In the first block, demographic variables such as sex and class year were used as controls. Racial microaggressions experiences were entered in the second block followed by coping with discrimination to examine the variance in the dependent variable (psychological well-being). For each block entered, changes in R-square were examined.

Based on these research questions, the following hypothesis was tested to aid in the investigation of racial microaggressions experiences, use of coping with

discrimination strategies, and psychological well-being among Asian American college students.



Chapter Four:

Results

Chapter four presents the study's analyses and findings organized by research question. Research question one investigates the types of racial microaggressions Asian American college students experience using descriptive statistics such as means, and standard deviations. Open-ended responses were also collected. Research question two investigates the types of coping strategies Asian American college students use when they experience racial microaggressions using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations. Research question three investigates the extent of what Asian American college students feel about themselves and their psychological well-being using descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations. Research question four investigates the extent to which racial microaggressions experiences of Asian American college students are related to their use of coping strategies through the use of multiple linear regression. Finally, research question five investigates the prediction of racial microaggressions experiences and use of coping strategies relate to Asian American college students' psychological well-being using hierarchical linear regression. Chapter four closes with a summary of the findings.

Research Question 1: What types of racial microaggressions do Asian American college students experience?

Among the 45 racial ethnic microaggressions measures, there were seven items that the participants experienced the most often; *someone assumed that I spoke another language other than English* (M=1.79, SD=.41); *someone asked me to teach them words*

in my "native language" (M=1.78, SD=.42); *someone told me that all people in my racial group look alike* (M=1.76, SD=.43); *someone assumed that I speak similar languages to other people in my race* (M= 1.74, SD=.44); *someone assumed that I ate foods associated with my race/culture every day* (M=1.71, SD=.45); *someone told me that all people in my racial group are all the same* (M=1.59, SD=.49); *someone objectified one of my physical features because of my race* (M=1.52, SD=.50). Each item on the REMS is rated on a dichotomous scale (*1 = I did not experience this event in the past year, or 2 = I experienced this event at least once in the past year*).

Table 2
Racial Ethnic Microaggressions
Means and Standard Deviations

Item	*M*	*SD*
Invalidation	**1.51**	**.27**
Someone assumed that I spoke another language other than English	1.79	.411
Someone asked me to teach them words in my "native language"	1.78	.415
Someone told me that all people in my racial group look alike	1.76	.427
Someone assumed that I speak similar languages to other people in my race	1.74	.439
Someone assumed that I ate foods associated with my race/culture every day	1.71	.454
Someone told me that all people in my racial group are all the same	1.59	.493
Someone objectified one of my physical features because of my race	1.52	.501
Someone told me that they do not see race	1.41	.493
Someone told me that they "don't see color"	1.40	.492
Someone of a different racial group has stated that there is no difference between the two of us	1.37	.485
I was told that people of color do not experience racism anymore	1.36	.481
Someone told me that people should not think about race anymore	1.36	.481
I was told that I should not complain about race	1.33	.471
Someone wanted to date me only because of my race	1.32	.467
Someone told me that s/he was colorblind	1.25	.434
Environment	**1.35**	**.29**
I read popular books or magazines in which a majority of contributions featured people from my racial group[1]	1.17	.38
I observed that people of my race were the CEOs of major corporations[1]	1.27	.45

I observed that someone of my race is a government official in my state[1]	1.30	.46
I observed people of my race portrayed positively in magazines[1]	1.40	.49
I observed people of my race in prominent positions at my workplace or school[1]	1.42	.50
I observed people of my race portrayed positively on television[1]	1.44	.50
I observed people of my race portrayed positively in movies[1]	1.52	.50
Insult	**1.17**	**.23**
Someone assumed that I grew up in a particular neighborhood because of my race	1.38	.486
I received substandard service in stores compared to customers of other racial groups	1.36	.481
I was ignored at school because of my race	1.29	.454
An employer or co-worker treated me differently than White co-workers	1.28	.449
Someone told me that I was "articulate" after s/he assumed I wouldn't be	1.26	.438
My opinion was overlooked in a group discussion because of my race	1.23	.423
Someone assumed that my work would be inferior to people of other racial groups	1.23	.423
Someone avoided eye contact with me because of my race	1.19	.394
An employer or co-worker was unfriendly or unwelcoming toward me because of my race	1.19	.393
Someone's body language showed they were scared of me because of my race	1.18	.383
Someone acted surprised at my scholastic or professional success because of my race	1.15	.355
Someone avoided sitting next to me in a public space (e.g., restaurants, movie theatres, subway, buses) because of my race	1.15	.354
Someone assumed that I was poor because of my race	1.14	.349
I was told that I complain about my race too much	1.14	.348
Someone assumed that I would physically hurt them because of my race	1.12	.321
Someone assumed that I would have a lower education because of my race	1.10	.306
Someone assumed that I held a lower paying job because of my race	1.10	.298
Someone assumed that I would not be intelligent because of my race	1.07	.262
Someone avoided walking near me on the street because of my race	1.07	.261
Someone clenched her/his purse or wallet upon seeing me because of my race	1.07	.261
Someone assumed that I was not educated because of my race	1.06	.229

Notes:
[1] Item was reverse coded for the scale

The results in table 2 show that Asian American college students experienced "invalidation" most frequently and "insult" least frequently. To be more specific, within

the last year, Asian American college students most frequently experienced racial microaggressions related to the Exoticization/Assumptions of Similarity subscale which is a less explicit form of racial microaggressions such as an assumption that people of color from the same background share the same culture and values, so therefore their experiences are exoticized and negated (the first 6 items on Table 5). Most of the participants have not experienced racial microaggressions related to the Assumption of Inferiority and Criminality scales, a more explicit form of racial microaggressions (the last 7 items in Table 2 with mean of 1.1). This is interesting as it shows that Asian Americans' experiences of racial microaggressions are vastly different than their African American/Black and Latinx counterparts (Araújo & Borrell, 2006; Forrest-Bank & Jenson, 2015; Forrest-Bank, Jenson, & Trecartin, 2015, Gupta, Szymanksi, & Leong, 2011). For example, studies show that Latinx and African American/Black groups reported higher levels of criminality stereotypes. Moreover, the Latinx and African American/Black populations are faced with stereotypic images that create challenges in both academics and in the workplace (Forrest-Bank & Jenson, 2015; Forrest-Bank, Jenson, & Trecartin, 2015). This may reflect the model minority myth for Asian Americans as they are not generally viewed as criminal or inferior.

Qualitative Analysis

The first open-ended question participants answered was "How have racial microaggressions affected your college experience so far? Please provide examples." The second open-ended question participants answered was "How has experiencing racial microaggressions affected your everyday life? Please provide examples." Within these open-ended questions, five themes emerged: Exoticization/Similarity, Targeting by

Professors, Model Minority Myth, Social Isolation, and Self-Censorship. As the questions were related to the effects of racial microaggressions on their lives, some of the themes were related to their experiences of racial microaggressions while others were related to their use of coping skills and their psychological well-being. For continuity purposes, all five themes are reported here although the themes related to coping and well-being are discussed later again. Before presenting the themes, a couple of items should be addressed. Some themes overlap with themes. While this may compromise an in-depth analysis, the researcher decided to present the information in this manner to offer a more holistic perspective of Asian American college students' racial realities. Finally, the list of themes should not be considered to be an exhaustive list of the ways in which Asian American college students experience racial microaggressions in higher education. This is meant to showcase the ways that our participants described racial microaggressions in shaping their college and daily life experiences.

Exoticization/Similarity: "I'm Not Your Sexual Conquest"/ "I Am Not Even Korean"

The first theme is Exoticization/Similarity where participants reported experiencing being viewed as sexual objects and being grouped with other Asian students from a different background. The students discussed experiencing acts of sexual objectification by their peers and how these interactions contributed to a sense of frustration. One participant reported that they are often viewed as a "kink." Another participant disclosed that "As an Asian female, I feel like I'm a sexual object by my guy friends. It's really uncomfortable. I tell them to stop but they all laugh and tell me to own it." A third participant stated that "I'm always seen as a sexual object or conquest to my

guy friends. It's really annoying." A fourth participant shared that "Also the number of guys that have tried to date me because Asians are 'exotic' is gross." A fifth participant explained that "On dating apps before I met my boyfriend, from time to time I would get messages saying, 'They've always wanted an Asian' or thought I was beautiful because of my race." Moreover, participants also divulged experiencing being grouped with other Asian ethnicities to which they do not belong. One participant recounted their experience of being mistaken for another student:

> During my freshman year, I lived in a residence hall which also houses a special program for a specific population of students. Those students within that program also live here. Everyone just assumed that I was in it when I wasn't. So throughout the year and still continuing people are mistaking me for someone else in that program.

In addition to linking direct experiences of mistaken identity, participants also described the need to sometimes specify their ethnicity. For example, this participant shared how she would need to self-disclose her nationality:

> Instead of being called by my name, I was labeled as the "Asian girl" among my group of friends and others. When someone asked me what my nationality is, I would always have to say "South Korean" because I would always get asked if I'm North Korean.

This student's comment clarifies for us how experiencing the assumption of being similar to other Asian ethnic groups by her peers can shape Asian American college students' experiences. She went on to state that even institution staff members assumed she was part of a specific ethnic group, "I have had advisers that assumed I was studying abroad in Korea when in fact, I was studying abroad in Europe and was not even Korean!"

Participants' comments suggest that they are often the target of being viewed as sexual objects or seen as being part of a specific group that they do not belong. These responses confirm the REMS results where the highest frequencies of racial

microaggressions experiences were within the Exoticization/Assumptions of Similarity subscale (Nadal, 2011).

Targeted by Professors: "My Professor Use My Race as the Butt of His Jokes"

The second theme centers around participants' racial microaggressions experiences with faculty members in academic spaces. For example, a student talked about a particular faculty member who asked them to serve as the spokesperson for their culture or say something in Chinese even though the class discussion did not warrant such an example:

> I've been picked out in classes to talk for my entire race by professors. Particularly in one of my communication classes we were talking about cultural differences in caring for elderly and my professor asked if my family followed a different way for caring for grandparents. I've also been asked in class to say something in Chinese by my professors when it has nothing to do about what we are doing in class.

A similar experience was shared by a different participant where they were asked a question and the participant felt like they were the spokesperson of their country:

> Students or professors asking "Where are you from?" without realizing the connotation behind it. A professor asking me questions related to China in class as if I were a representation of an entire country I have never ever lived in.

The following quote showcased a professor who utilized this participant's race as an insult and humor in their class. "I did have a professor who every class would use my race as the butt of his jokes and blatantly insult me and my race in front of the whole class." Jokes and humor have been used to display dominance under the disguise of being funny (Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016). A final quote came from a participant who shared a professor's surprise when the participant was having challenges in their courses: "A college professor said in front of everyone that I shouldn't be struggling in any of my classes because I'm built to be smart. Not sure what that even means."

Several participants shared their experiences in the classroom where the perpetrator of racial microaggressions came from a faculty member. Ultimately, these experiences were associated with the participants' race. Some participants were asked to be the spokesperson for their race/country while others experience oppression through the form of humor and jokes. The last participant illustrated a very common microaggression experienced by Asian American college students, which is that they should be academically successful, one of the characteristics of the Model Minority Myth (MMM).

Model Minority Myth (MMM): "The Expectations to Succeed are Much Higher"

The third theme is the Model Minority Myth (MMM). The MMM is probably the most common stereotype about Asian Americans. The myth describes Asian Americans as a high-achieving, hardworking, and smart individuals (Museus, 2013; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Suzuki, 2002). This stereotype is prevalent, shaping perceptions of Asian Americans throughout society. Participants indicated the MMM was related to assumptions that Asian Americans are genetically predisposed to perform well academically. The following responses are from students who discussed how the model minority experience shaped the academic expectations:

> "Other students assumed I am smarter and should be responsible for more work."
>
> "Maybe it's just me, but I feel like my teachers have higher expectations of me as an Asian student than my White friends who are in the same class as me."
>
> "The kids in my class all want to study with me because I always get good grades on the exam. I feel like I'm their personal tutor."
>
> "Some assumed I was good at math and science because of my race and should have a better grade."

Beyond the classroom, a participant shared their experience with applying for scholarships or internships:

> I notice it especially when I'm applying for scholarships, jobs, etc. people assume that I will get it because they will place a race card for me so I can provide diversity for groups instead of looking at my skills and character.

A different student shared their feelings if they do not meet the model minority myth of being intelligent: "People don't usually say negative stuff to me. It's more of in the opposite direction, like people assume I must be so smart because I'm Asian, and when I'm not, it makes me feel bad about myself." A different participant exhibited a similar response to the effects of not fitting into the myth:

> I found racial microaggressions to have an impact on my everyday life. I am more aware of my surroundings and always felt that I was lacking in certain areas. However, when faced with some microaggressions, such as "Asians are good at math," I felt more pressured by society. Although I truly enjoyed math, a little part of me always felt like I was never good enough.

Hence, although the MMM may appear as positive and harmless, it is clear that the responses from these participants' comments highlight the negative consequences.

Social Isolation: "Making Friends is Difficult"

The fourth theme is social isolation where participants discussed experiencing disconnected from their peers. This theme manifested into two forms: classroom experiences and experiencing challenges of making friends beyond academic spaces. First, a couple of participants disclosed the challenges of being one of the few or the only one in their classes:

> It made me feel left out and isolated. In many of my classes I am the only Asian American, there are a handful of white and minority students but rarely Asian students. This has made me feel left out and even in group work, I felt like my opinion was not validated or heard, it felt like I was ignored.

Another student shared a similar statement, “I am almost always the only Asian in my classes it makes it hard to talk to people at first.” Other participants shared their classroom experiences with their peers:

> “My classmates sit separately in class by race. It felt unwelcoming.”
>
> “I get ignored a lot by classmates and college students when walking to class. Many of them very unfriendly.”
>
> “It affects the way I interact with others. For example, it's unlikely for me to initiate conversations with others whether it be in class or on campus unless I'm spoken to first.”

Participants also described their challenges of making friends beyond academic spaces:

> “It makes socializing harder because people dehumanize you and sometimes just see you as something intriguing they’ve never experienced before.”
>
> “It makes me uncomfortable when I hang out with certain people. I've realized people are disgusted when they learn about different cultural norms, especially white people.”
>
> “I'm not as eager to socialize because I do not fit the typical, party-girl look.”

In sum, participants often feel isolated and uncomfortable in and outside of academic environments. This challenge was evident for most of our participants. While this may not be specific to racial microaggressions, this is however, a consequence of that experience, which is related to students’ psychological well-being.

Self-Censorship: “I Don’t Speak Out as Much as I Should to Avoid Conflict”

The final theme is self-censorship where participants elect to silence themselves when faced with emotional challenges, fear of feeling separated from their peers, or

standing out from the crowd. One student explained her need to hold back from sharing a personal story for the fear of potentially experiencing microaggressions in the classroom:

> I feel that I need to hold myself back in class and interactions so that I can avoid microaggressions. For example, I will not talk about personal anecdotes if I feel it may set me apart from the class demographic.

Another student simply stated, "I don't speak out as much as I should to avoid conflict." One particular participant went as far as to dressing like the dominant culture just so they can blend in without any judgement from their peers:

> For example, I dress differently. Firstly, because I have a specific style sometimes, but secondly because I don't want people to look at the way I dress and the way I look and be like 'Oh that person is from Asia'. I don't want what I wear to stand out and I want to be able to fit in with other people and know that I won't be judged for something I wear.

This quote shows the lengths that this student will go to avoid being evaluated by their peers or standing out for the wrong reasons because of stereotyping. A different student recounted their experience by indicating how they felt when they had to avoid being in their room or having race related discussions because of the fear of being silenced:

> Realizing that I was experiencing racial microaggressions had made my everyday life miserable. It had affected me so much that I was not able to stay in my room comfortably and would always have to avoid it. Plus, I would always avoid discussions of culture or race because of the fear of being silenced or being put on the spot to answer questions since I would be the only minority in the discussion. Having to live with those that are not understanding and aware racially was extremely tiring and the racial microaggressions that came with it made my year here is very depressing.

This powerful quote shows that students choose to preserve their energy by avoiding having the conversation with their peers. According to Kelly and Gayles (2010), speaking for their race or serving as the educator can be emotionally taxing. Beyond the academic space, a participant shared their experience with the need to avoid social situations so that they do not have to deal with microaggressions:

> I am also visibly uncomfortable when I have to be the center of attention, because I know that my race is the elephant in the room, since I am usually the only person of color, and I have an accent. I try to be invisible and avoid social situations most of the time, so that I don't have to deal with microaggressions or anything else that brings unwanted attention to me.

This student's statement shows common tactics and strategies most people of color use just to avoid experiencing any racial microaggressions from their peers. The following participant showcased their feelings about applying to professional positions:

> I personally am nervous to apply for certain jobs due to stereotypes with my ethnicity. I also don't prefer openly answering the question of what I am simply because I feel like it's usually responded with a head tilt or eyebrow raise.

This person below illustrates an example of the ways they use self-censorship as a result of experiencing racial microaggressions at their workplace.

> I have experienced racial microaggressions before at work. From those situations, I have felt self-conscious about some of the things I do. There were times when I would not eat my meals that I brought from home in a public setting just so I don't have to answer any questions.

In short, the burden of educating their peers or serving as the spokesperson for their race has been well documented as emotionally triggering (Fox, 2009; Museus & Park, 2015; Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016). As evident from above, students elect to remain silent or avoid social situations altogether to protect themselves.

In sum, from the qualitative data on open-ended questions, participants described their experience of being viewed as sexual objects and being grouped with other Asian students from different ethnic backgrounds. They also indicated their experience of MMM as it often places pressure on them, and if they do not meet the expectations, they feel bad about themselves. One interesting theme is on the microaggressions from the faculty where faculty use a participant's race as a form of humor in front of the class. Another interesting theme is the participants' use of self-censorship in academic and

professional environments to preserve and protect themselves from experiencing additional racial microaggressions or unwanted attention.

Research Question 2: What types of coping strategies do Asian American college students use when they experience racial microaggressions?

Participants rated on average the items on CDS (Coping with Discrimination Scale) as "sometimes like me" (mean of 2.81). Among the 25 coping with discrimination items, *I do not use alcohol or drugs to help me deal with it* has been stated the most often (M=4.7, SD=1.89) and *I use drugs or alcohol to numb my feelings* the least often (M=1.33, SD=.877). Each item on the CDS is rated on a 6-point scale (*1 = Never Like Me; 2 = A Little Like Me; 3 = Sometimes Like Me; 4 = Often Like Me; 5 = Usually Like Me; 6 = Always Like Me*).

Table 3
Coping with Discrimination
Means and Standard Deviations

Item	*M*	*SD*
Engagement	2.83	.92
I educate myself to be better prepared to deal with discrimination	3.54	1.50
I try to educate people so that they are aware of discrimination	3.31	1.47
I educate others about the negative impact of discrimination	3.05	1.48
I help people to be better prepared to deal with discrimination	2.83	1.46
I try to stop discrimination at the societal level	2.75	1.44
I do not directly challenge the person [1]	3.60	1.67
I directly challenge the person who offended me	2.29	1.35
I try not to fight with the person who offended me[1]	3.73	1.71
I respond by attacking others' ignorant beliefs	1.97	1.25
I get into an argument with the person	1.95	1.18
Disengagement	2.46	.81
I do not talk with others about my feelings	3.41	1.55
It is hard for me to seek emotional support from other people	3.15	1.70
I wonder if I did something wrong	2.88	1.64
I wonder if I did something to offend others	2.76	1.62
I do not think that I caused this event to happen[1]	3.27	1.77

I have no idea what to do	2.72	1.59
I have stopped trying to do anything	2.59	1.53
I wonder if I did something to provoke this incident	2.54	1.42
I believe I may have triggered the incident	2.21	1.23
I do not have anyone to turn to for support	2.01	1.23
I try to stop thinking about it by taking alcohol or drugs	1.55	1.14
I use drugs or alcohol to take my mind off things	1.51	1.05
I use drugs or alcohol to numb my feelings	1.33	.877
I do not use alcohol or drugs to help me deal with it[1]	4.7	1.89
I do not use drugs or alcohol to help me forget about discrimination[1]	4.71	1.90

Notes:
[1] Item was reverse coded for scale

The results in table 3 show that within the last year, Asian American college students utilized more engagement coping strategies when dealing with racial microaggressions specifically within the Education/Advocacy subscale where the individuals will educate the perpetrator of racial microaggressions (the first 3 items on Engagement in Table 6 rated as "sometimes to often like me" on average). One explanation could be that the increased exposure and a heightened awareness of racial microaggressions could lead Asian American college students to confront and educate their peers. A successful attempt at educating and advocating for not only themselves but also for their peers is rewarding. On the contrary, students also reported sometimes using several disengagement strategies on "Detachment": "I do not talk with others about my feelings," "It is hard for me to seek emotional support from other people," "I have no idea what to do," and "I have stopped trying to do anything." They also reported they sometimes used disengagement strategies on "internalization": "I wonder if I did something wrong," "I wonder if I did something to offend others," and "I wonder if I did something to provoke this incident." This is closely tied with the theme of self-

censorship from the open-ended questions. It appears that many students tried to detach themselves or blame themselves for the microaggressions they experienced.

Research Question 3: To what extent do Asian American college students feel about themselves and their psychological well-being?

Each item on the PWB is rated on a 6-point scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree Somewhat; 3 = Disagree Slightly; 4 = Agree Slightly; 5 = Agree Somewhat; 6 = Strongly Agree*). Among the 54 psychological well-being items, *I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world* has been stated the most often (M = 5.12, SD = .98) and *I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life* has been stated the least often (M = 2.32, SD = 1.38).

Table 4
Psychological Well-Being
Means and Standard Deviations

Item	*M*	*SD*
Personal Growth	**4.55**	**.85**
I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world	5.12	.978
For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth	5.05	1.13
I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.	4.70	1.25
I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.[1]	2.40	1.40
I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.[1]	2.56	1.39
I don't want to try new ways of doing things--my life is fine the way it is.[1]	2.66	1.22
There is truth to the saying you can't teach an old dog new tricks.[1]	2.74	1.44
When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.[1]	2.84	1.65
I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.[1]	3.03	1.29
I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.[1]	3.48	1.40
Positive Relations With Others	**4.11**	**.92**

I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends.	4.88	1.26
I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.	4.81	1.14
People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	4.75	1.11
Most people see me as loving and affectionate.	4.42	1.28
I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.[1]	2.74	1.40
I don't have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.[1]	2.93	1.59
Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.[1]	3.39	1.56
I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.[1]	3.62	1.71
It seems to me that most other people have more friends than I do.[1]	4.21	1.53
Purpose in Life	**4.05**	**.98**
I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.	4.55	1.20
I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself.	4.38	1.20
Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.	3.78	1.52
I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.[1]	2.32	1.38
I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.[1]	2.84	1.42
My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.[1]	2.98	1.33
I used to set goals for myself, but that now seems like a waste of time.[1]	3.02	1.54
I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.[1]	3.15	1.58
I tend to focus on the present, because the future nearly always brings me problems.[1]	3.34	1.53
Self-Acceptance	**3.91**	**1.05**
I made some mistakes in the past, but I feel that all in all everything has worked out for the best.	4.52	1.23
I like most aspects of my personality.	4.51	1.33
The past had its ups and downs, but in general, I wouldn't want to change it.	4.25	1.47
When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.	4.18	1.46
In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.	3.97	1.44
When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.	3.43	1.46
In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.[1]	3.10	1.63
My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.[1]	3.78	1.42
I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.[1]	3.82	1.50
Autonomy	**3.87**	**.88**
Being happy with myself is more important to me than having others approve of me.	4.81	1.29

I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.	4.50	1.21
I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.	4.33	1.32
I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people	3.91	1.47
My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.	3.71	1.39
I often change my mind about decisions if my friends or family disagree.[1]	3.34	1.42
It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.[1]	3.37	1.48
I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.[1]	3.58	1.33
I tend to worry about what other people think of me.[1]	4.12	1.52
Environmental Mastery	**3.66**	**.92**
I generally do a good job of taking care of my personal finances and affairs.	4.28	1.23
In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.	4.19	1.25
I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.	4.12	1.21
I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.	3.96	1.42
I am good at juggling my time so that I can fit everything in that needs to get done.	3.85	1.39
I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.[1]	3.32	1.59
The demands of everyday life often get me down.[1]	3.58	1.49
I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.[1]	4.53	1.43

Notes:
[1] Item was reverse coded

The results in table 4 show that Asian American college students experience more well-being in the Personal Growth subscale (M = 4.55; Agree Slightly), which specifically looks at the sense of continued growth and development as a person. On the other hand, Asian American college students reported to experiencing the least well-being in the Environmental Mastery subscale (M = 3.66; Disagree Slightly), which measures the individual's ability to conduct life and the surrounding setting to fit one's needs. What is interesting about the last two items in the Environmental Mastery subscale, "the demands of everyday life often get me down" and "I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities", is that they are related to the MMM. As previously discussed, Asian

American college students are often identified as academically successful and individuals who have "made it in society." The two items confirm the participants' experiences about the stressors of being Asian American and the pressure to confirm society's (the environment) expectations of being successful.

Research Question 4: How, and to what extent, are the racial microaggressions experiences of Asian American college students are related to their use of coping strategies?

The relationships between these variables were explored using hierarchical multiple regression analyses to determine if demographic variables (sex, class) and racial microaggressions (insult, invalid, and environment) were predictive of the students' use of coping strategies. This question answers whether different types of racial microaggressions experiences lead to different coping strategies after controlling for student demographic characteristics.

Table 5
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Coping with Discrimination (Engagement)

	Model 1			Model 2		
Variable	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Block 1						
Sex	-.20	.11	-.16	-.29	.10	-.22
Class	.01	.06	.02	-.01	.05	.01
Block 2						
Insult				.65	.39	-.16
Invalidation				1.34	.32	.39***
Environment				.32	.24	.10
R^2			.03			.28***

Sex (0=F, 1=M)

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 6
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Coping with Discrimination (Disengagement)

	Model 1			Model 2		
Variable	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Block 1						
Sex	.06	.09	.05	-.03	.10	-.02
Class	-.13	.05	-.19*	-.12	.05	-.19*
Block 2						
Insult				1.07	.39	.29**
Invalid				-.13	.32	-.04
Environment				.18	.24	.06
R^2			.04			.11*

Sex: 0 - F, 1 - M
Class: 1 - First Year, 2 - Second Year, 3 - Third Year, 4 - Fourth Year, 5 - Fifth Year or More
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Tables 5 and 6 show the multiple regression analyses. The results in Table 5 revealed that demographic variables alone did not explain much of the variances in engagement coping strategies (see model 1): only 3%. None of the demographic variables was a significant predictor of the use of engagement coping strategies. When the block of variables on racial microaggressions was entered, it explained a significant portion of variance (28%). Among the three microaggressions experiences, invalidation was the only significant predictor of the use of engagement coping strategies (β = .39, p<.001). That is when students experience more microaggressions in the invalidation subscale, they use more of engagement strategies.

The results in Table 6 indicated that across two models, academic class year is a significant predictor of the use of disengagement coping strategies. This suggests that participants in their later years of college utilize less of disengagement coping strategies. When racial microaggressions variables were added in the second block, both blocks explained a significant portion of variance in disengagement strategies (11%). Moreover, class ($\beta = -.19$, $p<.05$) and insult ($\beta = .29$, $p<.01$) respectively, were significant predictors of the use of disengagement coping strategies. This indicates that the more insult students experience, the more they use disengagement coping strategies. This is interesting in that Asian American college students use engagement strategies when they encounter less explicit forms of microaggressions such as invalidation, however, they employ disengagement strategies when they experience more explicit forms of microaggressions, which is not an ideal approach to deal with racial stresses.

Research Question 5: How do the experiences of racial microaggressions and coping strategies predict Asian American college students' psychological well-being?

This question addresses, through the use of hierarchical multiple regression with bootstrapping, the effects of racial microaggressions experiences and coping strategies students use on their psychological well-being after the demographic characteristics are accounted for. In this analysis, each of the six subscales (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance) served as the dependent variables.

Table 7
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (Autonomy)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3

Variable	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE
Block 1									
Sex	-.10	-.12	.10	-.04	-.01	.10	-.03	.00	.10
Class	.05	.00	.06	.05	.00	.06	-.01	.00	.06
Block 2									
Insult				-.77*	-.01	.39	-.47	.00	.41
Invalidation				.59	.01	.38	.45	.01	.35
Environment				-.12	.00	.29	-.09	.01	.27
Block 3									
Engagement							.06	.01	.10
Disengagement							-.42**	.00	.12
R^2	.01			.04			.19***		

Sex: 0 - F, 1 - M
Class: 1 - First Year, 2 - Second Year, 3 - Third Year, 4 - Fourth Year, 5 - Fifth Year or More
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 7 show the results of hierarchical multiple regression analysis on the Autonomy subscale. Autonomy is related to an individual's sense of self-determination, where the individual is either guided by an internal locus of control or the desire to please others. Two demographic variables explained only 1% of the variance in Autonomy and none of them was a significant predictor. When the three racial microaggressions variables were added, it explained an additional 3% of the variance. Insult had a significant and negative relationship with Autonomy at .05 level, meaning the more students experienced insult, the lower their ratings of Autonomy. However, when the two variables on coping strategies were added at the last block, the final model (model 3) explained an additional 15% of the variance in Autonomy. Interestingly, insult lost its significance once engagement and disengagement coping strategies were included. Among the five

predictors, disengagement was the only significant predictor at the .01 level. That is, students who used more disengagement coping strategies reported significantly lower levels of well-being in autonomy. It appears that the negative effect of insult was included under the effect of disengagement when two variables were entered simultaneously.

Table 8
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (Environmental Mastery)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
Variable	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE
Block 1									
Sex	-.07	-.02	.11	.00	-.02	.13	.05	-.01	.11
Class	.12	.00	.06	.12	.00	.06	.05	.00	.06
Block 2									
Insult				-.71	-.02	.45	-.44	.00	.42
Invalidation				.26	.00	.36	-.06	-.01	.33
Environment				-.72*	.01	.32	-.72**	.00	.27
Block 3									
Engagement							.18	.00	.11
Disengagement							-.45**	.00	.10
R^2	.03			.09*			.28***		

Sex: 0 - F, 1 - M
Class: 1 - First Year, 2 - Second Year, 3 - Third Year, 4 - Fourth Year, 5 - Fifth Year or More
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

The hierarchical multiple regression table revealed that the demographic variables, which only explained 3% of the variance, did not contribute to Model 1 of the Environmental Mastery subscale. Environmental Mastery measures the ability of an

individual to manage life and the surrounding context to fit one's needs. Introducing the racial ethnic microaggressions variables to Model 2 explained an additional variance 6% in Environmental Mastery. The Environment variable had a significant and negative relationship with Environmental Mastery at .05 level, which means that students who experienced less environmental microaggressions, reported having lower ratings for environmental mastery. Nonetheless, adding the two coping with discrimination variables to the last model (Model 3) explained an additional 19% variance in environmental mastery. Interestingly, also in Model 3, environmental microaggressions variable became significant at the .01 level. Among the five predictors, both environment and disengagement were significant predictors at the .01 level. Additionally, environment microaggressions still has negative effects on Environmental Mastery over the effects of the two coping strategies. To explain more clearly, Asian American college students who experience environmental microaggressions and used more of the disengagement coping strategies reported lower level of well-being in Environmental Mastery.

Table 9
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (Personal Growth)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
Variable	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE
Block 1									
Sex	-.29**	-.03	.12	-.22	-.33	.13	-.20	-.03	.13
Class	.01	.00	.06	.01	.00	.06	-.02	.00	.06
Block 2									
Insult				-.86*	.01	.41	-.78	.02	.41
Invalidation				.58	-.03	.37	.42	-.02	.37

Environment		-.30	-.01	.27	-.31	-.01	.26
Block 3							
Engagement					.10	.00	.09
Disengagement					-.17	.00	.10
R^2	.07*	.11			.14		

Sex: 0 - F, 1 - M
Class: 1 - First Year, 2 - Second Year, 3 - Third Year, 4 - Fourth Year, 5 - Fifth Year or More
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 9 shows the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis on the Personal Growth subscale. Personal Growth measures an individual's sense of continued growth and development as a person. Two demographics significantly explained 7% of the variance in Personal Growth and sex was a significant predictor at .01. This suggests that participants who identify as women reported higher well-being in the Personal Growth subscale. When the three racial ethnic microaggressions variables were introduced to the second model, it only explained an additional 4%. Insult had a significant and negative relationship with personal growth at .05 level, meaning that the more Asian American college students experienced insult, the lower their ratings of personal growth. Adding Coping with Discrimination variables explained an additional 3% of variation in personal growth but it was not significant. When all variables were entered in Model 3, significant effects on gender and insult disappeared which means that gender and insult do not have significant effects on personal growth over and above the effects on the coping strategies.

Table 10
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (Positive Relations with Others)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3

Variable	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE
Block 1									
Sex	-.21*	-.03	.10	-.09	-.03	.12	-.08	-.02	.10
Class	.17*	.00	.07	.17*	.00	.06	.10	.00	.06
Block 2									
Insult				-1.42**	.01	.38	-1.02**	.01	.37
Invalidation				.64	-.02	.33	.54	-.02	.33
Environment				-.43	-.01	.27	-.37	-.01	.24
Block 3									
Engagement							.02	.00	.10
Disengagement							-.50**	.00	.10
R^2	.08**			.17**			.35***		

Sex: 0 - F, 1 - M
Class: 1 - First Year, 2 - Second Year, 3 - Third Year, 4 - Fourth Year, 5 - Fifth Year or More
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Positive Relations with Others subscale measures the ability to have warm, satisfying, trusting and reciprocal interpersonal with others in one's life. Model 1 with demographic variables only explained 8% of the variance (p<.01) and both sex and class were significant predictors at .05, meaning that women reported having a higher sense of well-being with Positive Relations with Others. In contrast, academic class year had a positive relationship with Positive Relations with Others, which indicates that as students move on up in their college level, they report to have better positive relationships. The addition of the three racial ethnic microaggressions variables to Model 2 explained an additional 9%, which was significant. Insult had a significant and negative relationship with Positive Relations with Others at the .01 level with or without coping with discrimination variables, which means that the more students experience insult, the lower their ratings of

Positive Relations with Others. Academic class year still remained as a significant predictor in the second model. When adding coping with discrimination variables, academic class year lost its significance. The addition of the coping with discrimination strategies significantly explained an additional 18% of variation. Also, disengagement was significant at the .01 level, which means that Asian American college students who utilized more disengagement coping strategies reported significantly lower levels of well-being in Positive Relations with Others.

Table 11
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (Purpose in Life)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
Variable	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE
Block 1									
Sex	-.26*	-.03	.13	-.18	-.04	.15	-.14	-.03	.14
Class	.07	.00	.07	.07	.00	.07	.02	.00	.07
Block 2									
Insult				-.89*	.01	.42	-.66	.03	.44
Invalidation				.71	-.02	.38	.44	-.04	.36
Environment				-.71*	-.01	.30	-.71*	.00	.29
Block 3									
Engagement							.15	.01	.10
Disengagement							-.40**	-.01	.11
R^2	.05*			.12*			.25***		

Sex: 0 - F, 1 - M
Class: 1 - First Year, 2 - Second Year, 3 - Third Year, 4 - Fourth Year, 5 - Fifth Year or More
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 11 shows the results of the hierarchical multiple regression for the Purpose in Life subscale. Purpose in Life measures an individual's beliefs about life as purposeful and

meaningful. In Model 1, two demographic variables significantly explained 5% of the variance in Purpose in Life, and sex was a significant predictor at .05, meaning that women reported having a higher rating with Purpose in Life. When the three racial microaggressions variables were added into the second model, it significantly explained an additional 7% of the variance. Insult had a significant and negative relationship with Purpose in Life at .05, level meaning the more students experience insult, the lower their ratings of Purpose in Life. On the other hand, the addition of the two coping variables in the third model significantly explained an additional 13% of variance in Purpose in Life at .001. Similar to the Autonomy subscale, insult lost its significance once the two coping strategies were added into the third model. The Environment variable remained a significant predictor in the third model, which means that students who had a negative experience within the environment reported to have lower ratings in the Purpose in Life. The disengagement variable was a significant predictor at the .01 level, meaning that Asian American college students who employed this specific coping strategies reported lower levels of well-being in Purpose in Life. It is interesting to see the environment microaggressions stayed as a significant predictor of Purpose in Life well-being after coping strategy variables were added. It clearly shows that Asian American college students tend to rate their well-being in Purpose in Life low when the environment does not have prominent people from their racial background represented in school or work settings, which is a great example of an environmental microaggression.

Table 12
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (Self-Acceptance)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3

Variable	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE	B	Bias	SE
Block 1									
Sex	-.13	-.03	.14	-.06	-.03	.16	-.03	-.02	.13
Class	.09	.00	.07	.09	.00	.07	.01	.00	.07
Block 2									
Insult				-.79	-.02	.46	-.43	-.01	.49
Invalidation				.52	.00	.45	.24	-.02	.42
Environment				-.59	-.01	.32	-.57	.00	.29
Block 3									
Engagement							.14	.01	.13
Disengagement							-.54**	.00	.12
R^2	.02			.06			.24***		

Sex: 0 - F, 1 - M
Class: 1 - First Year, 2 - Second Year, 3 - Third Year, 4 - Fourth Year, 5 - Fifth Year or More
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 12 shows the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis on the Self-Acceptance subscale. Self-Acceptance measures the ability to accept one's self and past, and to hold positive attitudes about these aspects. Demographic variables explained 2% of the variance in self-acceptance and none of them were a significant predictor. When the three racial ethnic microaggressions variables were included, it explained an additional 4%. The second model was not significant. Adding the two coping with discrimination variables into the third model significantly explained an additional 18% of the variance. Among the five predictors, disengagement was the only significant predictor at the .01 level. This explains that Asian American college students who used more of disengagement coping strategies reported significantly lower levels of well-being in Self-Acceptance.

Across six dependent variables, one predictor emerged as a significant predictor of students' psychological well-being: disengagement coping strategies. That is, students who used more disengagement coping strategies reported lower levels of well-being in Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance. In fact, disengagement coping strategies still had a negative relationship with Personal Growth, but that did not reach the significant level.

Summary

Chapter four presented the analyses and findings related to the five research questions included in this study. First, Asian American college students experience invalidation racial microaggressions most frequently; utilized more engagement coping strategies specifically within the education/advocacy when faced with racial microaggressions. In general, participants feel better about their development as a person (Personal Growth) rather than about their ability to manage their surrounding environment (Environmental Mastery). Second, when students experience racial microaggressions specifically within invalidation, they use more engagement coping strategies. Moreover, class level and insult racial microaggressions did show that students would use disengagement coping strategies. Finally, the use of disengagement coping strategies was a significant predictor of Asian American college students' psychological well-being.

The next chapter explores these findings and relates them to the existing literature regarding the benefits and limitations of racial microaggressions experiences, coping with discrimination strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college

students. The limitations, implications, and future research suggestions are also presented.

Chapter Five:

Conclusion

The purpose of the research was to understand the racial microaggressions experiences, coping with discrimination strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students. Students were surveyed to identify: the frequencies of racial microaggressions experiences, the strategies of coping with discrimination, and their psychological well-being; the relationships between the racial microaggressions experiences relating to the usage of coping strategies; and if the experiences of racial microaggressions and usage of coping strategies predict the psychological well-being of Asian American college students. Understanding the relationship between these variables with this specific population may enable higher education professionals to successfully assist Asian American college students through their experiences of racial microaggressions. The chapter starts with a summary of the major findings followed by a section discussing limitations. Finally, the implications for practice and recommendations for future research are presented.

Racial Microaggressions, Coping Strategies and Psychological Well-Being of Asian American College Students

Although the experiences of racial microaggressions have been shown to strongly predict Asian American college students' mental health (Huynh et al., 2011; Hwang & Goto, 2009; Pieterse et al., 2010; Wei et al., 2010), few studies have examined whether the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological well-being is significant in the lives of Asian American college students. Few studies have examined this specific phenomenon for specifically Asian American college students, and few

studies examined more positive outcomes of psychological well-being, which is different from the lack of negative outcomes.

In this study, Asian American college students reported experiencing frequent racial microaggressions that invalidate their own experiences compared to other microaggressions such as explicitly insulted or subtle microaggressions in the environment. This shows that Asian Americans' experiences of racial microaggressions are exceedingly different than their African American/Black and Latinx peers. African American/Black and Latinx groups have reported experiencing higher levels of criminality stereotypes (Araújo & Borrell, 2006; Forrest-Bank & Jenson, 2015; Forrest-Bank, Jenson, & Trecartin, 2015, Gupta, Szymanksi, & Leong, 2011). Moreover, they are faced with stereotypic images that experience challenges in both academics and in the workplace. This may reflect the MMM (Model Minority Myth) for Asian Americans as they are not generally viewed as criminal or inferior. Students also disclosed about the feeling of being pressured to succeed in their academics because of the MMM. Students also shared that they have been targeted by professors by being the spokesperson for their race. One of the other effects of racial microaggressions experienced by Asian American college students is social isolation. They often reported to feeling out of place and isolation from their peers. This is connected with students' psychological well-being, specifically with the Positive Relations with Others subscale. As students navigate this complex experience, they may experience the least well-being if they are constantly feeling alone and less socially connected with their peers. Lastly, they shared that coping mechanism they use to curb racial microaggressions which is the need to remain quiet or to self-censor. Research has shown that students of color primarily with African

American/Black and Latinx communities choose to undergo self-censorship for protection (Martinez Aleman, 2000; Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2016), and Asian American students appear to adopt the similar coping strategies of remaining quiet. The first theme of Exoticization/Assumptions of similarity support the frequency of racial microaggressions experienced by Asian American college students.

Within the last year, Asian American college students reported frequent use of engagement coping strategies such as educating their peers, engaging in advocacy efforts at the individual or societal level, and resisting discriminatory remarks when faced with racial microaggressions. Interestingly, students agree more with more general statements of educating themselves and others regarding racial microaggressions, however, to a much lesser degree with directly challenging (resistance subscale) the perpetrators of racial microaggressions. This finding is consistent with Lee et al's (2012) study that Asian Americans may be less inclined to directly respond to racial microaggressions. With disengagement strategies, Asian American college students used more of detachment or internalization which is connected to self-censorship. This population did not use drugs or alcohol as a coping strategy. This finding is similar to previous research (Nadal, Griffin, Wong, Hamit, & Rasmus, 2014; Sanchez, Adams, Arango, & Flannigan, 2018). Regarding Asian American college students' psychological well-being, results from the study showed that Asian American college students experience frequent attributes from the Personal Growth subscale. The least frequent well-being subscale experienced by this population is Environmental Mastery. Asian American college students feel quite satisfied with their relations with others, which is the second highest rated among psychological well-being and somewhat contradicts the social isolation

theme found earlier. This captures different aspects of their interaction with the environment. For example, Asian American college students may have felt social isolation when they were on campus encountering racial microaggressions whereas in general, they may feel quite content with relations with others. All in all, this shows that participants feel more positive within their own development rather than managing their environment.

Relationships between Racial Microaggressions Experiences and Coping with Discrimination

Findings from this study showed that Asian American college students adopt different coping strategies when faced with specific racial microaggressions. For example, Engagement coping, especially educating themselves and others about discrimination, was utilized when Asian American college students experienced invalidation microaggressions, whereas, disengagement coping strategies such as detachment and internalization were adopted when they experienced insult microaggressions. The findings are consistent with other studies that showed Asian American college students used both coping strategies when faced with racial microaggressions (Kuo, 1995; Yoo & Lee, 2005). Moreover, Sanchez, Adams, Arango, and Flannigan (2018) conducted a similar study with Asian American and Latinx American college students and found that racial microaggressions were significantly linked with an increase in engagement and disengagement coping strategies. Their study suggests that Asian American college students employed a variety of ways to cope with racial microaggressions such as confronting the insult to avoiding the microaggressions.

Relationships between Racial Microaggressions Experiences, Coping with Discrimination, and Psychological Well-Being

Across six dependent variables, one predictor emerged as a significant predictor of students' psychological well-being: disengagement coping strategies. That is, students who used more disengagement coping strategies reported significantly lower levels of well-being in all other areas except personal growth. Demographic variables such as sex and academic class year may interact with the microaggressions experiences or the use of coping strategies; however, once these variables were entered into the model, they tend to be insignificant factors. In addition, environmental microaggressions was a significant predictor over and above the effects of disengagement strategies for two of psychological well-being subscales: Environmental Mastery, where students are able to possess the skills to be in control of their environment and Purpose in Life in which students have personal goals and values that align with their life. Insult was a significant predictor for Positive Relations with Others which is an individual's ability to maintain warm and trusting relationships with peers. This clearly shows the racial insult was not frequently encountered by Asian American college students but when encountered, it negatively affects their psychological well-being, especially in establishing positive relations with others in campus environment. Moreover, not having prominent people from their racial background represented in school or work settings, an environmental microaggressions, has negative effects on their satisfaction with Environmental Mastery and Purpose in Life.

The existing body of literature about the relationships between sex, academic class level, coping with discrimination strategies, and positive psychological well-being

among Asian American college students is sparse. Consequently, there is very little evidence that supports a significant link between these variables specifically with this population. The present study is a step towards suggesting that the racial microaggressions experience and the use of different coping strategies are related to psychological well-being. Although there are many studies examining the relationships between microaggressions, and coping strategies with mental health (depression, stress) (Sanchez et al., 2018), there are few studies examining the relationship with positive outcomes such as psychological well-being. This study fills the gap in literature. In addition to these contributions to the literature, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the current study as well as identify next steps for both research and practice.

Limitations

There are several limitations with this study. First, this study employed a convenience, non-random sampling from one public institution of higher education in the northeast region of the United States; therefore, findings from this study may not be generalizable to all Asian American college students. It could be beneficial for future researchers to attempt to replicate this study using an Asian American college student sample that differs on the dimensions of geographical location and background characteristics. Second, due to the small number of students representing each degree-granting college (range 4 - 37 per degree granting college), it is not advised to generalize the research based on one specific degree granting college. It would have been interesting to view the results by major but the small n per degree granting college in this sample did not allow for such comparisons. Third, the sample of the current study

consisted only of traditional aged (18-24) college students and their experiences may differ from nontraditional aged college students. Fourth, because this study is quantitative, all relevant variables may not have been included, nor was there an in-depth understanding of the relationship. It would be beneficial if future studies examine the relationship qualitatively for a more holistic picture. Fifth, there may be some cultural bias the instruments, specifically the Scales of Psychological Well-Being. The was validated only with white participants. Careful consideration should be taken into account when interpreting results. Sixth, the study utilized a survey to gather information based on students' experiences of racial microaggressions, coping with discrimination, and their psychological well-being; therefore, it is based on self-reported measures. It cannot be determined how truthfully respondents answered the questions, or if social desirability affected the responses. That is, participants' responses may reflect what they perceive the researcher would like to be reported (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). However, maintaining the anonymity of the participants may have helped alleviate the possible problems. Finally, the survey asked participants to self-disclose their sex however the researcher presented gender categories. Moreover, sex categories were used throughout this research.

Implications for Practice

Based on the study findings, the following changes that could have a positive effect on the experience of our Asian American college student populations are recommended.

Asian American College Students' Coping Strategies

It may be beneficial for higher education administrators to explore both the advantages and disadvantages of various coping styles (Nadal, et al, 2014; Noh & Kasper, 2003; Sanchez, Adams, Arango, & Flannigan, 2018). Noh and Kasper (2003) indicated that the ability to cope in ways that are healthy is determined by different factors such as the nature of the stressor, culture, personal resources, and social environments. Accordingly, what may seem to be an effective coping strategy is dependent on the person. For example, Asian American college students may use disengagement coping such as detachment and not confront the faculty member who is the perpetrator because culturally that is a sign of disrespect. Houshmand et al. (2014) found that students of color engaged in a multi-step coping process when faced with racial microaggressions. The first step was looking at making sense of the situation and then responding accordingly to the racial microaggressions. Then they utilized various engagement and disengagement coping techniques such as challenging their peers or removing themselves from the racial microaggressions experiences. Other research studies found that Asian American college students who utilized engagement coping strategies were linked to less psychological distress. Therefore, higher education administrations is in a great position to assist Asian American college students in developing or honing engagement coping strategies that actively deal with racial microaggressions such as challenging and resisting the perpetrators. Moreover, Asian American college students should learn to not engage in internalizing the blame or detaching themselves from their feelings.

Creating an Inclusive Environment

In the present study, 71% of the participants stated that they have experienced racial microaggressions at least once in the past year. Approximately 14% of the participants indicated to experiencing twenty or more items on REMS. Because of this, the researcher recommends creating an environment that is inclusive of Asian Americans college students. In order to do this, there should be professional development opportunities to educate higher education professionals as outlined by Crandall and Garcia (2018) to create an inclusive campus climate. That is, include racially responsive training for administrators, faculty, staff and student leaders that explicitly addresses racial microaggressions; evaluate the degree of "inclusive excellence," or how well departments and their leaders infuse diversity, equity and educational quality programming, policy, and practice.

Asian American college students revealed that they were often the target of their professors, so it is important to establish that faculty and staff are educated and updated about Asian American college students so that they do not unknowingly contribute to the perpetuation of such racial microaggressions. Professional development opportunities can provide critical spaces for this type of education to take place. Once faculty and staff are aware of such racial microaggressions, they can make efforts to create a more culturally, inclusive, and sensitive environment for Asian American college students. Additionally, faculty and staff who receive such training and work in an academic setting should engage Asian Americans students in discussions about the pressures they might face.

While racial microaggressions are prevalent in colleges and universities, higher educational professionals have witnessed an increased understanding of what these

microaggressions look like and their implications for Asian American college students. Higher educational professionals should no longer merely work toward multiculturalism and inclusivity, but rather they must address the bigger systemic issues that allow racial microaggressions to flourish on campus. Moving toward disrupting the larger system of racial microaggressions will lead to greater inclusivity and equity. A single program or institutional policy by itself will not address the climate and culture of higher education institutions that incubate these types of microaggressions, but a number of targeted policies that improve the postsecondary experience for Asian American students are needed. Health is only a single component of possible outcomes in college, but it is important because there can be lifetime impacts.

Future Research

Although Asian Americans are a rapidly growing racial group in both the nation and higher education, there are still very few published studies on issues relating to Asian American college students (Museus, 2009). This lack of attention to Asian American college student research may reflect their invisibility in higher education research (Maramba & Museus, 2011). In this section I have four recommendations for future research: (1) intersectionality; (2) within-group differences; and (3) Specific REMS for Asian Americans.

Intersectionality

Crenshaw (1989) coined the term "intersectionality" as a way to discuss the oppression of African-American women. Now the term is widely used as a way to identify the forms of discrimination and how they are related to one another and take these relationships into account when working to promote social justice, inclusion, and

equity. This study examined the racial microaggressions; however, it did not measure any other forms of oppressions such as homophobia, ableism, classism, sexism, etc. that Asian American college students may have experienced. For example, Nadal and his colleagues (2015) found that Asian American women and men experience various forms of exoticization microaggressions, where Asian American women were portrayed as sexual objects, and Asian American men were viewed as soft and silenced. An understanding of intersectionality of race and gender on other forms of racial discrimination may be useful when thinking about creating a coping tool for assistance.

Within-Group Differences

This study looked at the overall Asian American population, and therefore, it did not consider within group differences. Further investigation within the ethnically diverse Asian American racial group such as Cambodian, Laotian, Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, Philipinx, Desi, Pakistani, Lebanese, Kuwait, Armenian, etc., regarding their experience with racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and psychological well-being should be conducted to see the within-group differences because few studies have looked at the unique experiences of these very diverse ethnic groups (Concepcion, Kohatsu, & Yeh, 2013).

Our international students further contribute to diversity, financial revenue, global knowledge and skill exchanges, and many other aspects of our U.S. college students. According to the Institute for International Education (2017), current enrollment rates rely on students from Asian countries such as China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Korea. Our international students are often perceived as monolithic entity with regards to nationality, class, status, and race within U.S. educational settings. It would be

interesting to study international Asian students experience more or different racial microaggressions than domestic Asian students.

The current study only employed traditional aged college students, whose experiences may differ from post traditional college students. Future studies should examine the choice and usage of coping strategies affect their psychological well-being with racial microaggressions experiences.

REMS (Racial Ethnic Microaggression Scales) Specifically for Asian Americans

The findings suggest that the experiences of microaggressions for Asian Americans are different from those of other groups. In order to capture racial microaggressions experiences of Asian American students specifically, a racial microaggressions instrument created specifically for Asian American college students to truly assess and predict their experience would be beneficial.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between racial microaggressions experiences, coping with discrimination, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students. More specifically, this study focused on analyzing the strength of racial microaggressions and coping with discrimination as a predictor of psychological well-being for Asian American college students. This particular study represents a first step toward understanding the hypothesized relationship in this unique population of college students. Much of the data reported on Asian American college students regarding positive mental health is scant. The ramifications of this invisibility are alarming if higher education professionals are seeking to find ways to

assist Asian American college students. The current study was conducted to shed light on the experiences of Asian American college students.

This study included data that were analyzed to assess for the strength of predictability using scores on the racial ethnic microaggressions experiences and coping with discrimination strategies to measure psychological well-being. The findings of this study suggested a trend that Asian American college students who reported the use of coping strategies tended to have higher levels of psychological well-being. While much further research is needed to validate these findings, it appears that Asian American college students' psychological well-being are positively impacted by their coping strategies. With an understanding that the relationships among racial microaggressions, coping with discrimination, and psychological well-being exists within this sample, interventions can be developed to assist Asian American college students in addressing their experiences of racial microaggressions and educate them how to cope. The researcher hope that the initial findings will serve as a catalyst on the various ways in which modern day racism, discrimination, impacts the lives of our Asian American college students.

Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire

Please indicate your sex: Woman or Man

Please indicate your ethnicity:

Please select your degree granting college:

Please indicate your class level (ex. SO, JR, or SR):

Appendix B

Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS), (Nadal, 2011)

Racial microaggressions are defined as "subtle insults (verbal or nonverbal, and/or visual) directed toward people of color, often automatically or unconsciously" (Solorzano et al., 2000; as cited in Sue et al, 2007, p. 273)

Instructions: Think about your experiences with your ethnicity. Please read each item and think of how many times this event has happened to you in the **PAST 12 months**.

1 = I did not experience this event.
2 = I experienced this event at least once in the past year.

Assumptions of Inferiority (□ = .89)

32 Someone assumed that I would have a lower education because of my race.
38 Someone assumed that I was poor because of my race.
21 Someone assumed that I was not educated because of my race.
17 Someone acted surprised at my scholastic or professional success because of my race.
9 Someone assumed that I would not be intelligent because of my race.
36 Someone assumed that I held a lower paying job because of my race.
5 Someone assumed that I grew up in a particular neighborhood because of my race.
22 Someone told me that I was "articulate" after s/he assumed I wouldn't be.

Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality (□ = .88)

6 Someone avoided walking near me on the street because of my race.
31 Someone clenched her/his purse or wallet upon seeing me because of my race.
8 Someone avoided sitting next to me in a public space (e.g., restaurants, movie theatres, subway, buses) because of my race.
40 Someone avoided eye contact with me because of my race.
2 Someone's body language showed they were scared of me, because of my race.
34 Someone assumed that I would physically hurt them because of my race.
11 I received substandard service in stores compared to customers of other racial groups.

Microinvalidations (□ = .89)

27 Someone told me that they "don't see color."
30 Someone told me that they do not see race.
39 Someone told me that people should not think about race anymore.
7 Someone told me that s/he was colorblind.
26 I was told that people of color do not experience racism anymore.
33 Someone of a different racial group has stated that there is no difference between the two of us.
4 I was told that I should not complain about race.

14 I was told that people of all racial group experiences the same obstacles.
10 I was told that I complain about my race too much.

Exoticization/Assumptions of Similarity (= .85)
3 Someone assumed that I spoke a language other than English.
29 Someone asked me to teach them words in my "native language."
45 Someone assumed that I speak similar languages to other people in my race.
35 Someone assumed that I ate foods associated with my race/culture every day.
42 Someone told me that all people in my racial group look alike.
23 Someone told me that all people in my racial group are all the same.
13 Someone wanted to date me only because of my race.
20 Someone did not believe me when I told them I was born in the U.S.
43 Someone objectified one of my physical features because of my race.

Environmental microaggressions (= .85)
37 I observed people of my race portrayed positively in movies.
24 I observed people of my race portrayed positively in magazines.
19 I observed people of my race portrayed positively on television.
28 I read popular books or magazines in which a majority of contributions featured people from my racial group.
18 I observed that people of my race were the CEOs of major corporations.
41 I observed that someone of my race is a government official in my state.
12 I observed people of my race in prominent positions at my workplace or school.

Workplace and School microaggressions (= .85)
25 An employer or co-worker was unfriendly or unwelcoming toward me because of my race.
15 My opinion was overlooked in a group discussion because of my race.
1 I was ignored at school because of my race.
16 Someone assumed that my work would be inferior to people of other racial groups.
44 An employer or co-worker treated me differently than White co-workers.

Open Ended Questions

How have racial microaggressions affected your college experience so far? Please provide examples.

How has experiencing racial microaggressions affected your everyday life? Please provide examples.

Appendix C

Coping with Discrimination Scale (CDS) (Wei, Alvarez, Ku, Russell, & Bonett, 2010)

The following items are coping strategies that people may use when faced with discrimination. Please use the following scale as honestly as possible to best describe how you cope with discrimination.

1 = Never like me	4 = Often like me
2 = A little like me	5 = Usually like me
3 = Sometimes like me	6 = Always like me

Education/Advocacy (= .90)

21 I educate others about the negative impact of discrimination.
16 I help people to be better prepared to deal with discrimination.
11 I try to stop discrimination at the societal level.
1 I try to educate people so that they are aware of discrimination.
6 I educate myself to be better prepared to deal with discrimination.

Internalization (= .82)

5 I wonder if I did something to provoke this incident.
10 I wonder if I did something to offend others.
15 I wonder if I did something wrong.
20 I believe I may have triggered the incident.
25 I do not think that I caused this event to happen.

Drug and Alcohol Use (= .72)

8 I use drugs or alcohol to take my mind off things.
18 I do not use alcohol or drugs to help me deal with it.
23 I use drugs or alcohol to numb my feelings.
13 I do not use drugs or alcohol to help me forget about discrimination.
3 I try to stop thinking about it by taking alcohol or drugs.

Resistance (= .76)

24 I directly challenge the person who offended me.
9 I get into an argument with the person.
4 I respond by attacking others' ignorant beliefs.
19 I try not to fight with the person who offended me.
14 I do not directly challenge the person.

Detachment (= .75)

12 It is hard for me to seek emotional support from other people.
2 I do not talk with others about my feelings.
17 I do not have anyone to turn to for support.
7 I have stopped trying to do anything.

22 I have no idea what to do.

Appendix D

The Scale of Psychological Well-Being (SPWB) (Ryff, 1989)

Directions: The following set of questions deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. Please use the following scale to answer as honestly as possible. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers.

1 = Strongly Disagree	4 = Agree Slightly
2 = Disagree Somewhat	5 = Agree Somewhat
3 = Disagree Slightly	6 = Strongly Agree

Autonomy (□ = .83)

7 I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.
13 My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.
19 I tend to worry about what other people think of me.
25 Being happy with myself is more important to me than having others approve of me.
31 I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.
49 I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.
55 It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.
61 I often change my mind about decisions if my friends or family disagree.
79 I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.

Environmental Mastery (□ = .86)

2 In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.
8 The demands of everyday life often get me down.
14 I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.
20 I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.
26 I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.
38 I generally do a good job of taking care of my personal finances and affairs.
50 I am good at juggling my time so that I can fit everything in that needs to get done.
74 I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.
80 I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.

Personal Growth (□ = .85)

3 I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.
21 I don't want to try new ways of doing things--my life is fine the way it is.
27 I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.
33 When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.

51 I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.
57 I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.
63 For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.
75 I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.
81 There is truth to the saying you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Positive Relations with Others (= .88)
4 Most people see me as loving and affectionate.
10 Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.
16 I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.
22 I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends.
34 I don't have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.
46 It seems to me that most other people have more friends than I do.
52 People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.
58 I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.
70 I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.

Purpose in Life (= .88)
11 I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.
17 I tend to focus on the present, because the future nearly always brings me problems.
29 My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.
35 I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.
41 I used to set goals for myself, but that now seems like a waste of time.
47 I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.
53 I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself.
59 Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.
65 I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.

Self-Acceptance (= .91)
6 When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.
12 In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.
18 I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.
30 I like most aspects of my personality.
36 I made some mistakes in the past, but I feel that all in all everything has worked out for the best
42 In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.
60 My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.
72 The past had its ups and downs, but in general, I wouldn't want to change it.
78 When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research study. We greatly appreciate it. If you wish to enter your name into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card, please enter your name and email address below.

Appendix E

Dear Student,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Richard Song and I am a doctoral student in the Education Program. I am inviting you to participate in a research. I am conducting a study on racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students, under the direction of Dr. Minsuk Shim.

The purpose of this research is to better understand the racial microaggressions experiences, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students.

Although there will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in this study, the researcher may learn about the experiences of racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being as a college student which has the potential to influence policies and practices on college campuses.

To participate in this study, the requirements are that you must be at least 18 years old and identify as Asian American.

Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes of your time at the location of your choice via a Qualtrics survey link. If you wish, at the end of the survey, you can enter your name and email address to be entered into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please click on the link below and read the information consent form. <link to survey>

Dr. Minsuk Shim (faculty supervisor and principle investigator: (401) 874- 4162) and Richard Song (doctoral researcher: (401) 874-4076) are the people mainly responsible for this study; if you have any questions or if you need additional information, please direct them to us.

Thank you for your consideration and if you should decide to participate, thank you for your contribution to this very important research.

This research has been approved by the University's Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,
Richard Song, M.S.
Ph.D. Candidate, Education

Appendix F

Dear Student,
You were recently invited to participate in an important research on racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students, under the direction of Dr. Minsuk Shim. Please consider adding your feedback on your experiences as an Asian American college student.

<Link to survey>

Simply click on this address to go directly to the survey. If the link does not work, please copy and paste the above URL into the address bar of your internet browser. As a reminder, at the end of the survey, you can enter your name and email address to be entered into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card.

The purpose of this research is to better understand the racial microaggressions experiences, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students.

Although there will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in this study, the researcher may learn about the experiences of racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being as a college student which has the potential to influence policies and practices on college campuses.

To participate in this study, the requirements are that you must be at least 18 years old and identify as Asian American.

Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes of your time at the location of your choice via a Qualtrics survey link. If you wish, at the end of the survey, you can enter your name and email address to be entered into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card.

Dr. Minsuk Shim (faculty supervisor and principle investigator: (401) 874- 4162) and Richard Song (doctoral researcher: (401) 874-4076) are the people mainly responsible for this study; if you have any questions or if you need additional information, please direct them to us.

Thank you for your consideration and if you should decide to participate, thank you for your contribution to this very important research.

This research has been approved by the University's Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,
Richard Song, M.S.
Ph.D. Candidate, Education

Appendix G

Dear Presidents,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Richard Song and I am a doctoral student in the Education Program. I am reaching out to see if I could take about 5 – 10 minutes of your meeting time to recruit you and your members to participate in a URI research. I am conducting a study on racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students, under the direction of Dr. Minsuk Shim.

The purpose of this research is to better understand the racial microaggressions experiences, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being of Asian American college students.

Although there will be no direct benefit for taking part in this study, the researcher may learn about the experiences of racial microaggressions, coping strategies, and the psychological well-being as a college student which has the potential to influence policies and practices on college campuses.

To participate in this study, the requirements are that participants must be at least 18 years old and identify as Asian American.

Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes of your time at the location of your choice via a Qualtrics survey link. At the end of the survey, participants can enter their name and email address to be entered into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card.

Dr. Minsuk Shim (faculty supervisor and principle investigator: (401) 874- 4162) and Richard Song (doctoral researcher: (401) 874-4076) are the people mainly responsible for this study; if you have any questions or if you need additional information, please direct them to us.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

This research has been approved by the University's Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,
Richard Song, M.S.
Ph.D. Candidate, Education

Appendix H

Consent Form for Research

Title of Study
The Relationships Between Racial microaggressions Experiences, Psychological Well-Being, and Coping Strategies Among Asian American College Students

Principle Investigators

Primary Investigator
Minsuk Shim, Ph.D.
Office: (401) 874-4162

Secondary Investigator
Richard Song
Office: (401) 441-3217

You are being asked to take part in a research study. The purpose of the research study is to investigate the racial microaggressions experiences, coping strategies, and psychological well-being of Asian American college students. Please read the following before agreeing to be in the study. If you agree to be in this study, it will take you approximately 20 minutes complete this survey. Questions will be asked about racial microaggressions experiences, coping strategies, and psychological well-being. There are no known risks or benefits. To compensate for your time and participation, at the end of the survey, you may enter into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card.

Your responses will be strictly anonymous. The responses may be used in a dissertation research paper.

The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study at any time without affecting your relationship with the investigators of this study. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely from the survey at any point during the process; additionally, you have the right to request that the researchers not use any of your responses.

You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact Dr. Minsuk Shim at 401-874-4162.

Additionally, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Also contact the IRB if you have questions, complaints or concerns which you do not feel you can discuss with the investigator. The IRB may be reached by phone at (401) 874-4328. You may also contact the Vice President for Research and Economic Development by phone at (401) 874-4576.

If you would like to keep a copy of this document for your records, please print or save this page now. You may also contact the researcher to request a copy.

By clicking below to be taken to the survey, you indicate that you have read and understood the above and volunteer to participate in this study.

BY CLICKING THE "NEXT" BUTTON, YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY.

Appendix I

Reliability of the Original Racial Microaggressions Subscales

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Assumptions of Inferiority	8	.89
Second Class Citizens & Assumptions of Criminality	7	.88
Microinvalidations	9	.89
Exoticization & Assumptions of Similarity	9	.85
Environmental Microaggressions	7	.85
Workplace & School Microaggressions	5	.85

Appendix J

Reliability of the Racial Microaggressions Subscales

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Insult	21	.92
Invalid	15	.88
Environment	7	.70

Appendix K

Factor Analysis of REMS (3 Factors)

	Component		
	1	2	3
Someone clenched his/her purse or wallet upon seeing me because of my race	.776	.055	.118
Someone avoided walking near me on the street because of my race	.762	-.011	.147
Someone assumed that I would physically hurt them because of my race	.733	.159	.040
Someone avoided sitting next to me in a public space (e.g., restaurants, movie theatres, subway, buses) because of my race	.694	.136	.022
Someone assumed that I was not educated because of my race	.688	-.047	.185
Someone avoided eye contact with me because of my race	.669	.245	-.129
I was told that I complain about my race too much	.650	.128	-.008
Someone assumed that I held a lower paying job because of my race	.640	-.022	-.028
An employer or co-worker treated me differently than White co-workers	.597	.310	-.122
Someone assumed that I would have a lower education because of my race	.594	-.036	.116
Someone assumed that I was poor because of my race	.587	.172	-.093
An employer or co-worker was unfriendly or unwelcoming toward me because of my race	.585	.296	-.082
Someone told me that I was “articulate” after s/he assumed I wouldn’t be	.579	.301	-.037
Someone’s body language showed they were scared of me because of my race	.574	.168	-.046
My opinion was overlooked in a group discussion because of my race	.550	.322	.056
I was ignored at school because of my race	.529	.336	-.057
Someone assumed that my work would be inferior to people of other racial groups	.525	.125	.093
I received substandard service in stores compared to customers of other racial groups	.510	.281	.106
Someone acted surprise at my scholastic or professional success because of my race	.488	.159	.148
Someone assumed that I would not be intelligent because of my race	.475	.147	.103
Someone assumed that I grew up in a particular neighborhood because of my race	.437	.399	-.053

Someone did not believe me when I told them I was born in the U.S.	.415	.389	-.004
I was told that people of all racial group experience the same obstacles	.399	.389	-.048
Someone told me that they "don't see color"	.166	.689	-.053
Someone assumed that I ate foods associated with my race/culture every day	.059	.687	.189
Someone assumed that I speak similar languages to other people in my race	.102	.660	.095
Someone told me that all people in my racial group look alike	-.090	.658	.280
Someone objectified one of my physical features because of my race	.118	.614	.095
Someone told me that all people in my racial group are all the same	.099	.601	.108
Someone told me that they do not see race	.336	.598	-.068
Someone asked me to teach them words in my "native language"	.020	.592	.136
Someone told me that s/he was colorblind	.254	.544	-.047
I was told that people of color do not experience racism anymore	.406	.483	-.206
Someone of a different racial group has stated that there is no difference between the two of us	.364	.479	-.054
I was told that I should not complain about race	.422	.455	-.039
Someone wanted to date me only because of my race	.243	.453	-.028
Someone told me that people should not think about race anymore	.416	.436	-.106
Someone assumed that I spoke another language other than English	.054	.373	.140
I observe people of my race portrayed positively in magazines	-.009	-.033	.711
I observe people of my race portrayed positively in movies	-.019	.074	.671
I observe people of my race portrayed positively in television	.094	.015	.643
I read popular books or magazines in which a majority of contributions featured people from my racial group	.118	.045	.547
I observed that people of my race were the CEOs of major corporations	.014	.041	.499
I observed that someone of my race is a government official in my state	.064	.102	.466
I observed people of my race in prominent positions at my workplace or school	-.049	.075	.456

Appendix L

Reliability Analyses of Coping with Discrimination

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
All Coping with Discrimination Items	15	.79
Education/Advocacy	5	.87
Drug & Alcohol Use	5	.81
Internalization	5	.84
Detachment	5	.76
Resistance	5	.77
Engagement	10	.83
Disengagement	15	.86

Appendix M

Reliability Analyses of the Scales of Psychological Well-Being

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
All Psychological Well-Being Survey Items	51	.95
Autonomy	9	.82
Environmental Mastery	8	.82
Personal Growth	8	.82
Positive Relations with Others	9	.83
Purpose in Life	8	.84
Self-Acceptance	9	.89

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