

Coughing While Asian: Expectations & Experiences of Anti-Asian Discrimination During COVID-19

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Overview

- Fears or the anticipation of discrimination is understudied
- Fears may be prevalent and shape people's daily experiences and identity development
- Fears are (1) biologically rooted, (2) strategically used by the powerful to disarm and oppress, and (3) is invisible unlike other forms of discrimination.

Research Aims

- To highlight Asian-Americans' lived experiences of discrimination under COVID
- We posit that fear of discrimination is a mechanism with implications for how Asian Americans move through the world.

Methods

Procedures

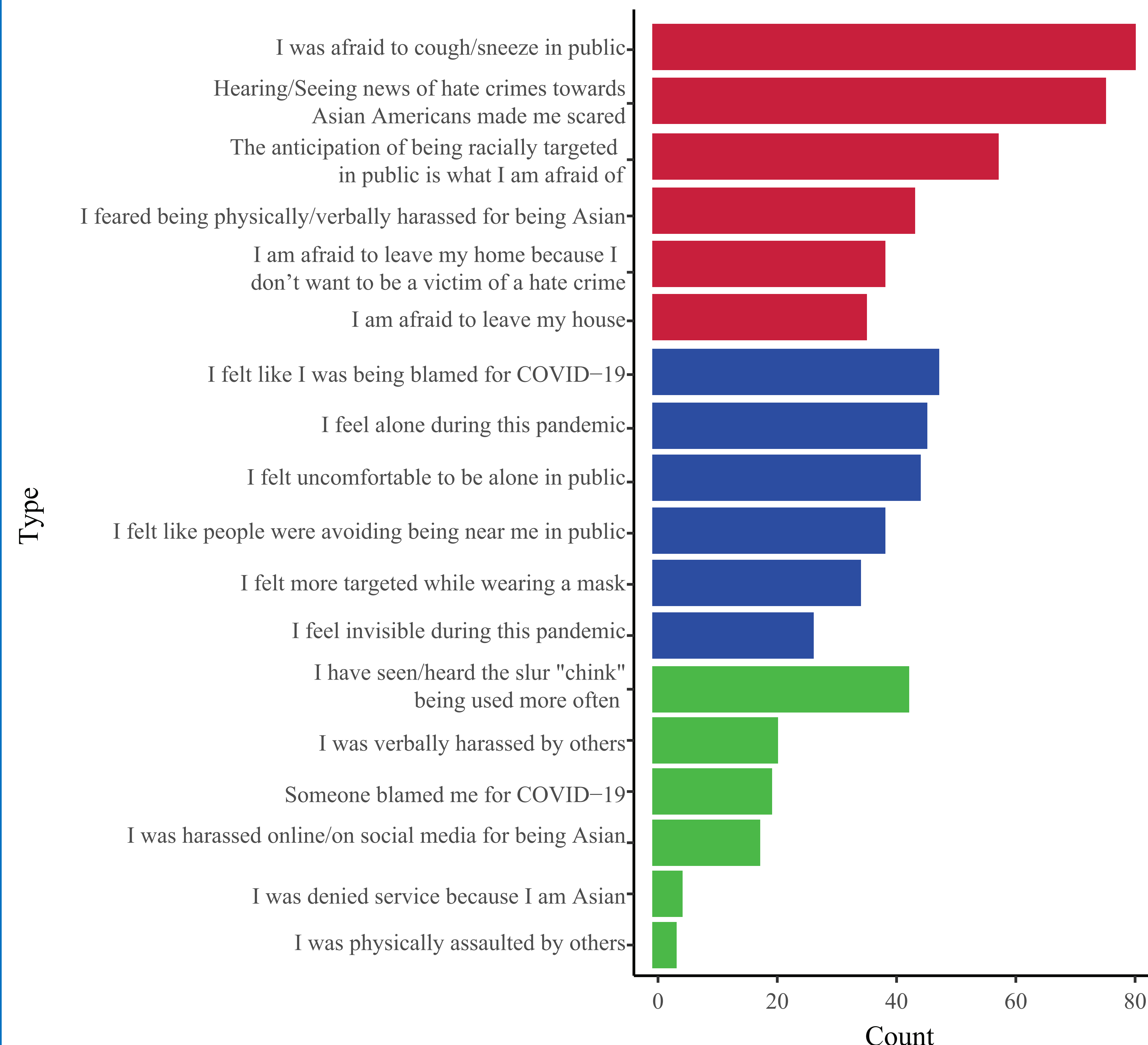
- Participants were 116 East and South-East Asian Americans across the United States
- Participants took a survey online via Qualtrics and answered questions from the Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian American College Students (SABR-A2), Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a self-created measure called the Experiences, Fears, and Feelings related to COVID-19 Scale

Analyses

- Participants responded to open-ended questions measuring perceptions of safety, spaces of comfort, and treatment during COVID-19
- Open-ended questions were coded into numerical data suitable for conducting statistical analyses and coded for themes based on overlapping content.
- Regression & mediation analyses will be conducted

Results

Frequency of Fears



Participants reported a variety of fears pertaining to their everyday life being Asian-American during COVID-19: highest fears are "I was afraid to cough/sneeze in public" and "Hearing/Seeing news of hate crimes towards Asian Americans made me scared"

Qualitative Results

Treatment during COVID

- 41% of participants reported feeling people were treating them differently during quarantine
 - 59% reported being treated suspiciously/avoided and 33% reported verbal harassment
 - 67% reported their perpetrators as white
- 51% reported nothing made them feel better

Perceptions of Neighborhood Safety

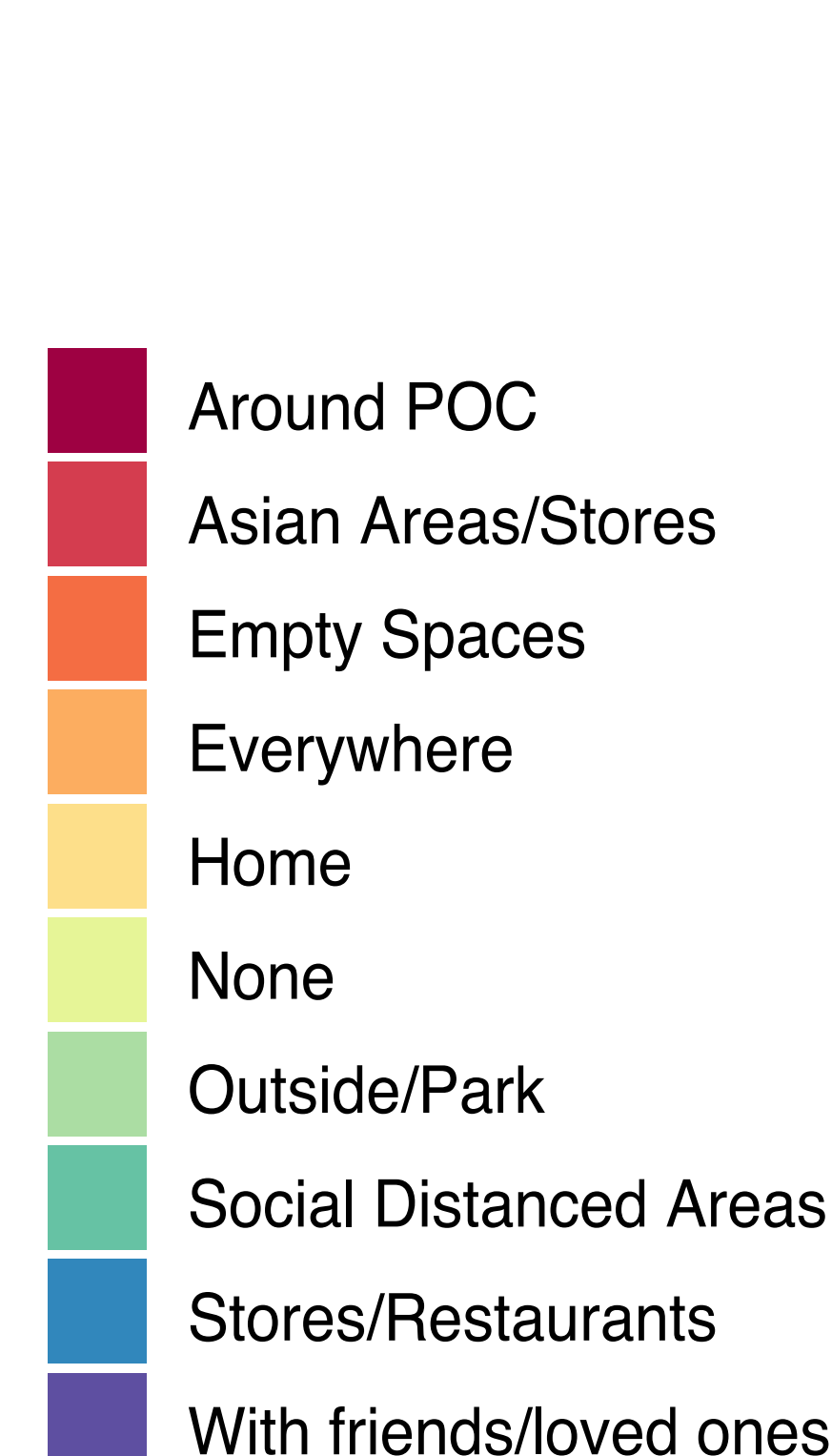
- 82% reported feeling safe in their own neighborhood
 - 36% reported familiarity of the neighbors
 - 31% reported having no fear of discrimination or feeling safe
- Of the 18% that felt unsafe
 - 48% reported having a fear of discrimination
 - 19% reported lack of trust

Discussion

- Asian Americans don't have to experience a racially influenced attack to be fearful of what will happen to them in everyday life
- Fears are meaningful because it can have detrimental effects on mental health for Asian Americans
- To respond to this anticipated increase in mental health problems, we call on:
 - National, state, and local agencies to ensure investments in culturally appropriate mental health services
 - Community-based outreach and preventive measures as solutions, not increased policing
- Future studies should examine the relation between fear of discrimination, anxiety and identity development as a buffer.

Participants felt most safe at home, followed by Asian dominated areas (e.g. stores, Chinatown)

Spaces of Comfort



When asked what the difference was between these spaces, 37% of participants reported it being due to having a private space and 21% reported fear/experience of discrimination

Participants felt least safe at stores/restaurants, public spaces, non-Asian stores,

Spaces of Discomfort

