

CORONAVIRUS STIGMATIZATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AMONG ETHNORACIAL MINORITY GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES

COVID-19 WORK IN PROGRESS CONFERENCE

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Stephen W. Pan, PhD

Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

Gordon C. Shen, PhD

Department of Management, Policy and Community Health, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

Chuncheng Liu, PhD(c)

Department of Sociology, University of California San Diego

Jenny H. Hsi, DrPH

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Harvard University

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Disease stigmatization and Asians in the United States

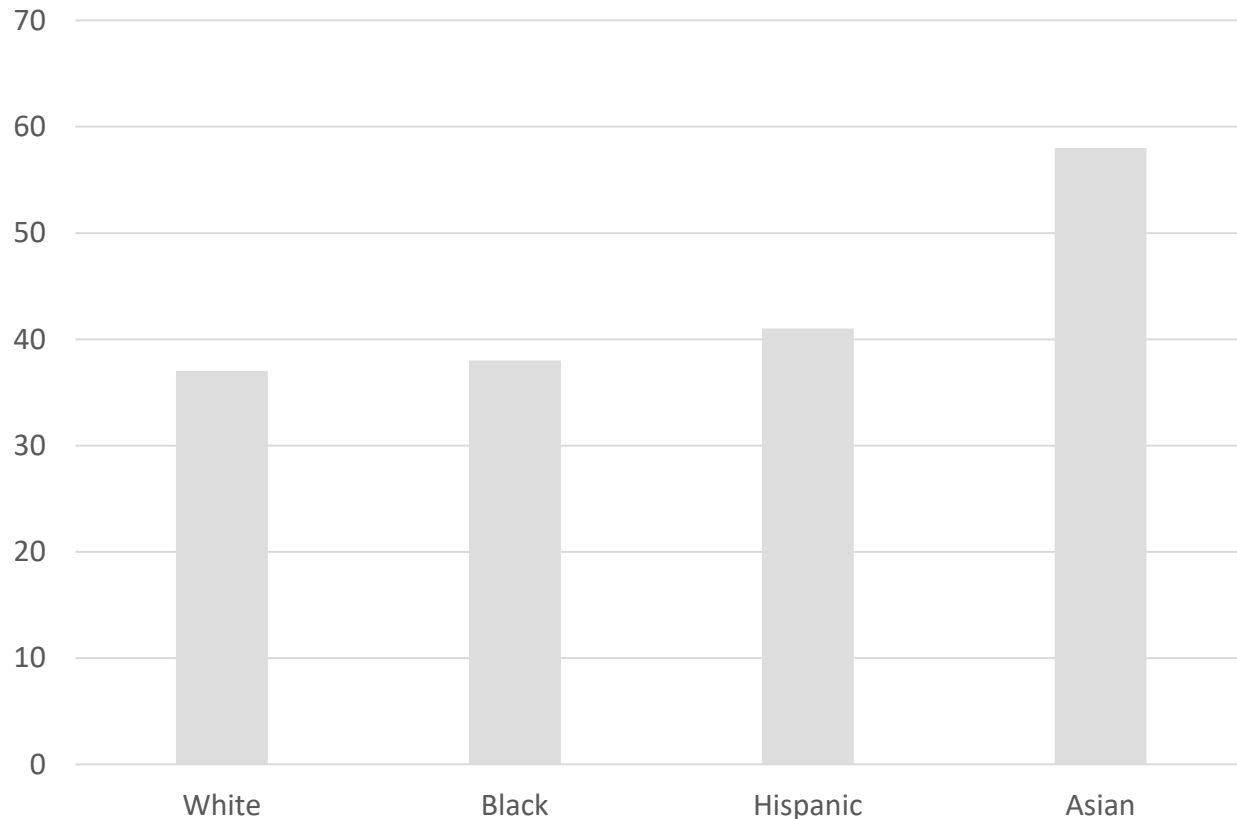
- History of individuals of Asian descent in North America being stigmatized in association with infectious disease epidemics originating from Asia
- Examples
 - Bubonic plague outbreak in San Francisco, 1900s
 - SARS in Toronto, 2003-2004



Gabriel Bertram Bellinghausen creator QS:P170,Q45315483

([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Honolulu_Chinatown_Fire_of_1900_\(40\)_photograph_by_Brother_Bertram.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Honolulu_Chinatown_Fire_of_1900_(40)_photograph_by_Brother_Bertram.jpg)), „Honolulu Chinatown Fire of 1900 (40), photograph by Brother Bertram“, marked as public domain, more details on Wikimedia Commons: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Template:PD-old>

Rising anti-China and anti-Asian sentiments following COVID-19 pandemic



“Percent saying it is more common for people to express racist or racially insensitive view about _____ in our society compared to before the coronavirus outbreak.” (Pew research center, 2020)

Stigmatization and psychological distress

- Stigma: an 'attribute that is deeply discrediting' such that it reduces someone 'from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one'. (Goffman, 2009)
- Exposure to enacted and perceived stigma can elevate stress and psychological distress. (Hatzenbuehler, Phelan, and Link 2013)
- SARS stigmatization associated with greater psychological distress. (Lee et al. 2005)

Coronavirus stigmatization and social identity threat among US-born Asians

- US-born Asians often mistakenly assumed to be foreign or 'less American' (Cheryan 2005; Ong et al. 2013; D. W. Sue et al. 2009)
- Coronavirus stigmatization may be perceived as a threat to the American social identity of US-born Asians
- American identity threat by US-born Asian Americans have been associated with poorer psychological well-being. (Ong et al. 2013)

Hypotheses

(H1) Asians are at greater risk of coronavirus stigmatization compared to non-Hispanic Whites

(H2) Coronavirus stigmatization is associated with psychological distress

(H3) Effect of coronavirus stigma on psychological distress is stronger for US-born Asians compared to non-Hispanic Whites

Methods

Data source

- Understanding America Survey
- Nationally representative sample of adults ≥ 18 years old
- Sampling weights
- March 10-31, 2020
- 225 (3.25%) excluded due to missing covariate and/or outcome variables
- Analytic sample size: 6707

Psychological distress

- PHQ-4 (Kroenke, 2009)
- Range: 0-12
- Psychological distress defined as score ≥ 6 (moderate or severe)

Coronavirus stigma experience

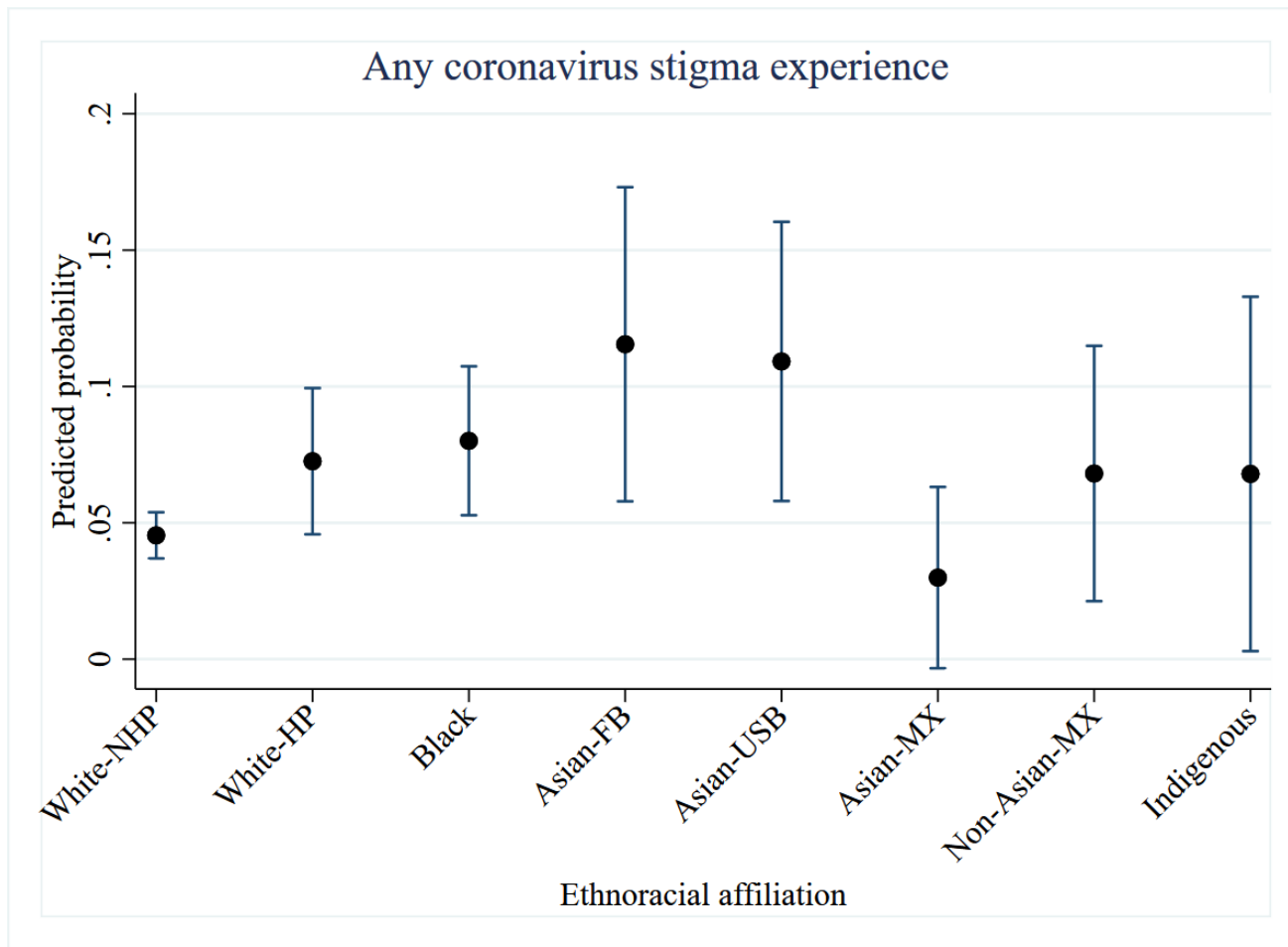
- Whether or not participants had ever experienced the following because someone thought they had the coronavirus:
 - (1) Treated with less courtesy and respect;
 - (2) received poorer service at restaurants or stores;
 - (3) caused other people to be afraid of the participant; and
 - (4) received threats or harassment. For each question, participants indicated 'yes', 'no', or 'unsure'.

Methods

Statistical analysis

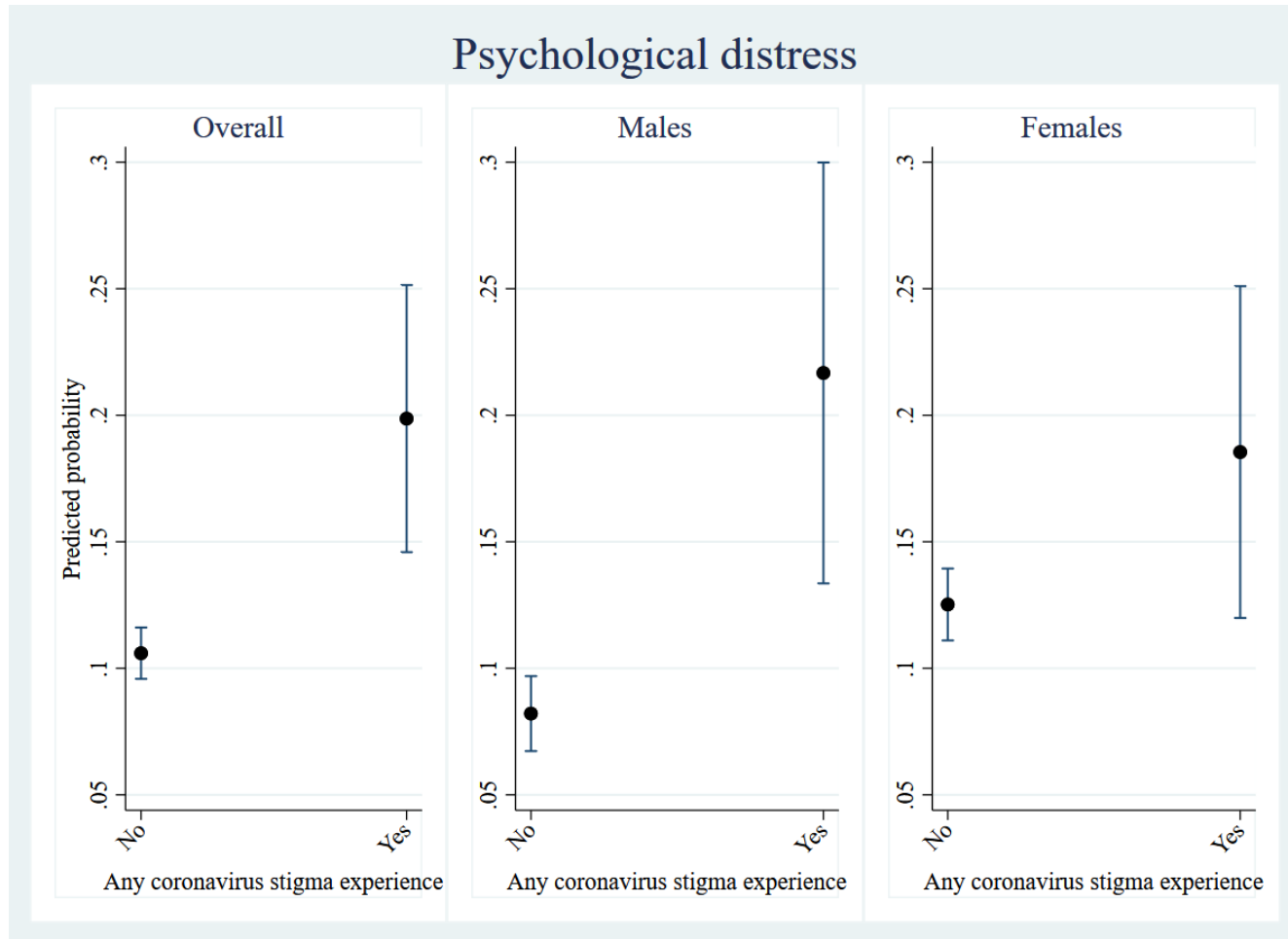
- Logistic regression
- Margins and adjrr Stata package
- Control variables
 - Age
 - Sex
 - Educational attainment
 - Annual household income
 - State of residency
 - Use of face mask within the past seven days
 - Coughing symptoms within the past seven days
 - Estimated probability of running out of money in the next three months
 - Being ordered by doctors or authorities to stay away from other people in order to avoid infecting them
 - SARS-CoV-2 diagnosis
 - Other people thinking that the respondent had the coronavirus

STANDARDIZED PREDICTED PROBABILITIES AND 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVALS OF CORONAVIRUS STIGMA EXPERIENCE BY ETHNORACIAL AFFILIATION IN THE UNITED STATES (N=6707)



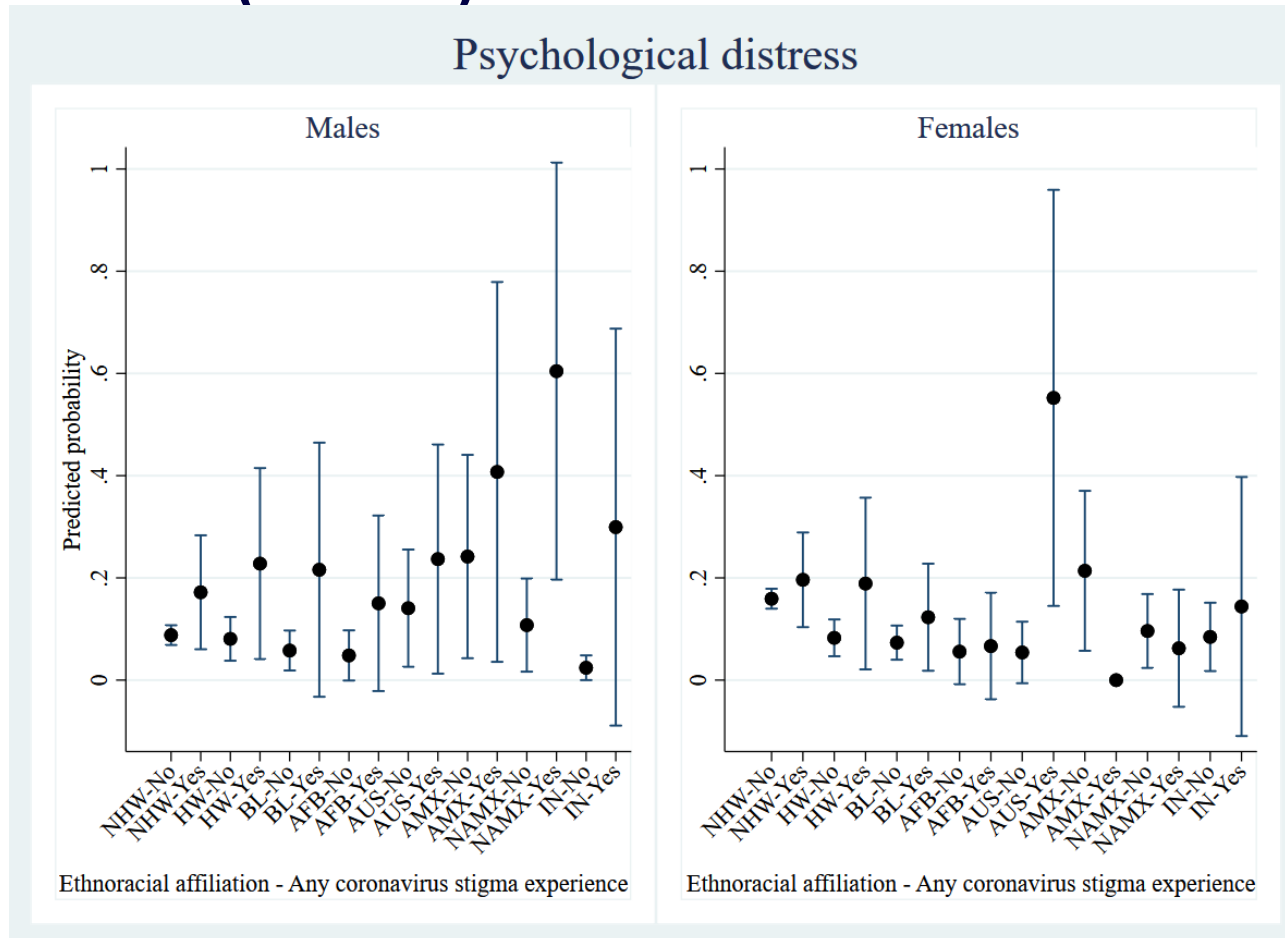
Predicted probabilities controlling for age, gender, education, income, state of residency, use of face mask, coughing symptoms, coronavirus diagnosis, being ordered to stay away from others, belief that others think you have coronavirus, and concern about running out of money in the next 3 months; NHP=Non-Hispanic; HP=Hispanic; FB=foreign-born; USB=US born; MX=mixed race

STANDARDIZED PREDICTED PROBABILITIES AND 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVALS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS BY SEX AND ANY CORONAVIRUS STIGMA EXPERIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES (N=6707)



Predicted probabilities controlling for age, ethnoracial status, gender, education, income, state of residency, use of face mask, and coughing symptoms, coronavirus diagnosis, being ordered to stay away from others, belief that others think you have coronavirus, and concern about running out of money in the next 3 months.

STANDARDIZED PREDICTED PROBABILITIES AND 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVALS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS BY SEX AND ANY CORONAVIRUS STIGMA EXPERIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES (N=6707)



Predicted probabilities controlling for age, ethnocultural status, gender, education, income, state of residency, use of face mask, and coughing symptoms, coronavirus diagnosis, being ordered to stay away from others, belief that others think you have coronavirus, and concern about running out of money in the next 3 months. NHW=Non-Hispanic White; AFB=Asian foreign-born; AUS=Asian US born

Limitations

- No data on specific ethnic heritage of Asians
- Age of migration data not available
- Exclusion of minors
- Potential language bias (survey in English and Spanish)

CONCLUSION

Asians in the United States are at greater risk of coronavirus stigmatization compared to non-Hispanic Whites.

Coronavirus stigmatization is associated with psychological distress, particularly among Asian females born in the United States.

Blacks and Hispanics appear to be at elevated risk of experiencing coronavirus stigmatization.

Enhanced monitoring and intervention measures are needed to prevent and mitigate the adverse mental health effects of coronavirus-associated stigmatization among ethnoracial minority groups in the US.

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