



Racial Stereotypes and Asian American Youth Paradox

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Abstract

Asian Americans are simultaneously stereotyped as a perpetual foreigner and a model minority. This cross-sectional study of 308 Filipino American youth (mean age 18 years; 47% emerging adult; 72% U.S.-born; 57% female) and 340 Korean American youth (mean age 18 years; 39% emerging adult; 59% U.S.-born; 49% female) is the first to investigate both the direct and interactive effects of these seemingly opposite stereotypes on internalizing and externalizing outcomes, and how these relations differ by ethnicity, age group (adolescence vs. emerging adulthood), and nativity (foreign-born vs. U.S.-born). The results confirm that the perpetual foreigner stereotype predicts more internalizing problems, whereas aspects of the model minority stereotype (i.e., achievement orientation and unrestricted mobility) had different effects by ethnicity. Those who deeply internalize the model minority stereotype were found to be particularly vulnerable. Furthermore, the interactive effects of these stereotypes were more prominent during emerging adulthood than in adolescence, regardless of ethnicity. These nuanced and complex mechanisms need to be thoroughly understood in order to develop appropriate and effective public health or school interventions that can support Asian American young people in dealing with the harmful effects of racial stereotypes.

Keywords Perpetual foreigner stereotype · Model minority stereotype · Filipino American · Korean American · Youth development

Introduction

The immigrant population in the United States tripled in size between 1970 and 2018 and constitutes nearly 14% of the U.S. population (Budiman, 2020). Asian Americans are the fastest growing segment of this demographic group and are projected to become the largest U.S. immigrant group by 2065 (Cohn, 2015). Despite the historical presence of Asians in the United States and their rapid population increase, two racial stereotypes about them have persisted and endured. On the one hand, Asian Americans are cast as

the “perpetual foreigner”, not recognized as Americans regardless of their place of birth or years of living in the United States (Lee et al., 2016). On the other hand, Asian Americans are seen as the “model minority”—hardworking and achievement oriented (Yoo et al., 2010). To date, however, it is unclear how these two racial stereotypes, with both negative and positive connotations, concurrently and interactively influence the development of Asian American young people. Furthermore, most studies have not differentiated among Asian American subgroups, despite their significant differences, and have not adequately considered age and nativity in understanding these relations. This study brings together the previously distinct lines of research on the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the model minority stereotype, examining their combined effects among Filipino American and Korean American young people and considering differences by age and nativity.

Racial Stereotypes and the Asian American Youth Paradox

Understanding how these different racial stereotypes influence youth development is particularly crucial among Asian American populations. Young Asian Americans

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show a mixed pattern of developmental outcomes, termed the “Asian American youth paradox” (Choi et al., 2020). Specifically, Asian American young people overall report lower levels of externalizing problems (e.g., antisocial behaviors; Gershoff et al., 2012) but report more internalizing problems (e.g., suicidal thoughts; Liu et al., 2019). Internalizing and externalizing problems often coexist and tend to share underlying mechanisms or causes (Moilanen et al., 2010), but young Asian Americans defy this pattern—hence the paradox. In addition, specific ethnic groups show notable differences. For example, Filipino American youth reported higher levels of externalizing problems than Korean American youth (Choi, 2008), whereas both groups had high rates of internalizing problems (Choi et al. 2020). It is plausible that the perpetual foreigner stereotype increases internalizing problems (Lee et al., 2016), while the model minority stereotype prevents from externalizing problem behaviors and psychological struggles (Gupta et al., 2011). Yet, little is known about how these racial stereotypes may contribute to the mixed outcomes among young Asian Americans. The interplay of the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the model minority stereotype may be key to understanding this paradox.

Conceptual Framework

This study uses racial triangulation theory (Kim, 1999) and the integrated conceptual framework for the development of Asian American children and youth (Mistry et al., 2016) to investigate the relations between racial stereotypes and the internalizing and externalizing behaviors of Filipino American and Korean American young people of different age groups and nativity. According to racial triangulation theory (Kim, 1999), Asian Americans are simultaneously valorized as model minority figures and ostracized as “forever” foreigners. The theory posits that this process of stereotyping Asian Americans in these opposing ways maintains White power and privilege by situating Asian Americans in the middle between Blacks and Whites. The integrated conceptual framework (Mistry et al., 2016) adds that this sociopolitical environment is pervasive and has a direct negative impact on Asian American youth development. Indeed, a study found that teachers who treated Asian American students as a model minority in class resented other racial minority students, which led to Asian American students disproportionately becoming a victim of peer harassment (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). However, the integrated conceptual framework (Mistry et al., 2016) also suggests that the effects of these racial experiences on youth development may depend on whether individuals internalize or resist prescribed racial stereotypes and may also depend on other demographic factors that can influence the Asian American experience, such as ethnicity, age, and nativity.

Filipino Americans and Korean Americans were selected as the study populations because of their divergent racialized experiences. South Korea has been a close ally of the United States since the Korean War, whereas the Philippines was colonized by the United States (1898–1946), with relatively recent memories of colonial exploitation resulting in ongoing negative psychological implications for Filipinos (e.g., colonial mentality; David & Okazaki, 2006). In the United States, Korean Americans have been subjected to the two opposing racial stereotypes discussed above (Kim, 1999). In contrast, with a high rate of English proficiency resulting from the U.S. colonization, frequently Spanish-sounding last names due to three hundred years of Spanish colonization, and darker skin tones, Filipino Americans are often mistaken for Latinx people and may share racialized experiences similar to those of Latinx Americans (Ocampo, 2016). However, less is known about how these varying racialized experiences of Filipino American and Korean American youth may differently influence their internalizing and externalizing outcomes.

Using cross-sectional data, this study focuses on Filipino American and Korean American youth in the transitional period of late adolescence and emerging adulthood. Emerging adulthood is a developmental period spanning from the late teens through the twenties (Arnett, 2006). Unlike adolescents, emerging adults may enjoy relative independence from familial expectations/obligations and actively explore their identity as a college student, worker, and/or romantic partner. Additionally, in this period racial minorities deepen their racial, ethnic, and panethnic identities as they encounter more opportunities to interact with diverse racial/ethnic groups at colleges and workplaces. Risks are significantly elevated during emerging adulthood. For example, several major mental illnesses (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder) have their onset during emerging adulthood (Baldwin et al., 2005). It is also when young adults may engage in risk behaviors. That is, active exploration, a main trait of this developmental period, can increase urges for intense and novel experiences, such as using substance use, drunk-driving, or engaging in unprotected sex (Arnett, 2006). For Asian Americans, this challenging period could be further complicated by racial marginalization. However, few studies, if any, have systematically investigated how the racial experiences of Asian Americans, especially with respect to the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the model minority stereotype, may uniquely influence the development of Asian American adolescents and emerging adults.

Racial Stereotypes and Youth Development

The perpetual foreigner stereotype refers to an assumption that Asian Americans must be foreigners, regardless of their

birthplace, citizenship status, or length of residence in the United States (Lee et al., 2016). A common example of this stereotype that Asian Americans often encounter is being asked about their nationality (e.g., “where are you *really* from?”) or being complimented for their English, when it is their native language. The perpetual foreigner stereotype has shown to predict increases in depressive symptoms (Wong et al., 2012) and negative affect (Ong et al., 2013) and decreases in positive affect (Ong et al., 2013), hope, and life satisfaction (Huynh et al., 2011) among Asian Americans. While there is scarce literature on the relations between the perpetual foreigner stereotype and externalizing behaviors, a handful of studies found negative associations of this stereotype with education-related outcomes. For instance, the link between parental experiences of racial discrimination and children’s negative attitudes toward education was mediated by the parent-reported perpetual foreigner stereotype (Benner & Kim, 2009).

The model minority stereotype portrays Asian Americans as an exemplar racial minority group who have achieved their academic, economic, and social success through hard work and good ethics (Yoo et al., 2010). Empirical studies have found mixed effects of this supposedly positive stereotype. For example, in a study of Asian American adults ($M_{AGE} = 30$, range: 18–70 years), endorsing the model minority stereotype predicted psychological distress and negative attitudes toward help-seeking (Gupta et al., 2011). In contrast, a study of Asian American high school students showed a critical and positive role of the model minority stereotype on adolescents’ educational aspirations as well as on psychological adjustment, such as positive relationships with others (Thompson & Kiang, 2010).

Adding further nuance, two aspects of the model minority stereotype (i.e., achievement orientation and unrestricted mobility) were identified to demonstrate a much more complex picture (Yoo et al., 2010). Achievement orientation is the stereotype of Asian Americans as hard-working and achievement oriented, while the mobility aspect is the stereotype of Asian Americans being successful due to the lack of socioeconomic and structural barriers facing them. In a study of college students, the achievement orientation was significantly correlated with performance difficulty, and the mobility aspect was correlated with general and somatic distress (Yoo et al., 2010). However, another study found that Asian American students who believed that Asian Americans succeed because they work hard (achievement orientation) were more likely to experience stress from academic expectations, while a belief in Asian Americans having unrestricted mobility reduced such stress (Yoo et al., 2015).

It is essential to examine these racial stereotypes concurrently to overcome the limitation of isolated analyses

in previous studies. The inconsistent findings in the existing literature may be partially explained by the fact that each of these predominant but conflicting stereotypes cannot be accurately examined without accounting for the other. Moreover, it is equally significant to examine how these racial stereotypes interactively predict youth development. The use of interaction terms has been proposed as a way to investigate this question (Dawson & Richter, 2006). Specifically, by modeling two-way (or three-way) product terms in the statistical analysis (e.g., perpetual foreigner stereotype \times achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype), one can simultaneously account for variant levels of each stereotype. This level of complexity and specificity would more closely approximate the actual racial experiences of Asian Americans, in which they straddle stereotypes that may be opposing and in conflict.

Racial Stereotypes and Moderators

The mixed findings in the role of racial stereotypes among Asian Americans may also be attributable to within-group diversity. That is, young Asian Americans differ in nativity and ethnicity, live in different settings (e.g., schools with high or low numbers of Asian peers), and vary in their racial experiences. Indeed, a few studies show how the impact of racial stereotypes may vary by these factors. For example, in a study of Asian American and Latinx American college students, the perpetual foreigner stereotype was negatively associated with life satisfaction and self-esteem and positively related to depressive symptoms, but only among U.S.-born students and not among foreign-born students (Armenta et al., 2013). Another study found that school racial composition moderated the effect of the model minority stereotype (Atkin et al., 2018). That is, Asian American students attending predominantly Asian schools reported a lower rate of the model minority stereotype than their counterparts in predominantly non-Asian schools did. In addition, the mobility aspect of the stereotype predicted more depressive symptoms and anxiety among those in predominantly Asian schools, but less stress among those in predominantly non-Asian schools. Moreover, the model minority stereotype may be beneficial to those experiencing racial discrimination. Specifically, the model minority stereotype mitigated the negative impact of racial discrimination on academic performance and school valuing but not on positive relationships with others and self-esteem (Kiang et al., 2016).

Likewise, different ethnic groups may experience racial stereotypes differently. For example, for Filipino Americans, who may not typically be regarded as a model minority (Nadal, 2008), internalizing the seemingly positive characteristics of the model minority stereotype may benefit

them (Kiang et al., 2016). Conversely, Korean Americans, as part of the East Asian American community, already have higher expectations from others as well as for themselves (Ochoa, 2013). Therefore, internalizing the achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype, which emphasizes individual efforts to achieve success, may put additional pressure on them (Yoo et al., 2015). However, internalizing the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype, the notion that Asian Americans will not face unfair treatment based on their racial background, may ease their stresses related to expectations of their high achievement (Yoo et al., 2015).

Current Study

Using a large-scale community sample of Filipino American and Korean American youth, this study examined how the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the model minority stereotype jointly predict internalizing and externalizing outcomes, how they interact with one another to predict the outcomes, and, further, how these relations may be moderated by age groups and nativity. It was hypothesized that the perpetual foreigner stereotype would predict more internalizing and externalizing problems among both ethnic groups. The model minority stereotype (both achievement and mobility aspects) was hypothesized to affect the two ethnic groups differently, beneficial mainly for Filipino Americans. For Korean Americans, the achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype was expected to predict higher rates of internalizing and externalizing problems, while the mobility aspect of that stereotype would predict less problems. It was also predicted that both aspects of the model minority stereotype would mitigate the harmful effects of the perpetual foreigner stereotype among Filipino Americans. For Korean Americans, it was predicted that the achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype would worsen the negative effects of the perpetual foreigner stereotype, whereas the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype would buffer the negative effects of the perpetual foreigner stereotype. Given the lack of existing empirical studies or incongruent findings on the topic, the study hypotheses on moderations by age groups and nativity are largely exploratory. Nonetheless, it was expected that the interaction effects of the stereotypes would be stronger among emerging adults than among adolescents since their life experience, including their experience of racial discrimination, is broader. It was also expected that the interaction effects would be stronger among the U.S.-born than among the foreign-born, mainly due to the prominent effect of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on the U.S.-born.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

The data come from the Midwest Longitudinal Study of Asian American Families (MLSAAF) project, an ongoing four-wave longitudinal survey of Filipino American and Korean American families living in the Chicago metropolitan area. The fourth wave of data collection was underway when this paper was submitted. This study used the youth data from Wave 3 in 2018 ($n = 308$ Filipino American youth and $n = 340$ Korean American youth), when both racial stereotype measures were first available. At Wave 3, the average age of the child participants was 18.22 years ($SD = 1.84$) for Filipino American participants and 17.91 years ($SD = 1.89$) for Korean American participants; 47% of the Filipino American participants and 39% of the Korean American participants were emerging adults (defined here as age 18 and above or high school graduates). In this wave, 72% of the Filipino American participants and 59% of the Korean American participants were U.S.-born, and gender distribution was about equal (57% of the Filipino American participants and 49% of the Korean American participants identified as female; see Table 1 for more information). At the baseline, study participants were recruited from four major counties (Cook, Lake, DuPage, and Will) in the Chicago area via multiple sources, including phone books, public and private schools, ethnic churches and temples, ethnic grocery stores, and ethnic community organizations. The questionnaires were available in both paper-and-pencil and online survey formats and rendered in English, Korean, and Tagalog (see Choi et al., 2018 for details about the recruitment procedures).

Measures

Positive and negative affect

Nineteen items from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988) were used to measure the level of participants' positive affect (e.g., proud, interested, and inspired) and negative affect (e.g., guilty, hostile, and irritable). Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = *very slightly or not at all*, 5 = *extremely*). In this study, the alpha reliability coefficient (α) for positive affect was 0.87 for Filipino Americans and 0.86 for Korean Americans, and α for negative affect was 0.87 for both ethnic groups.

Depressive symptoms

Depressive symptoms were measured by 14 items from the Children's Depression Inventory (Angold et al., 1995) and the Seattle Personality Questionnaire for Children (Kusche et al.,

Table 1 Descriptive statistics for study variables

	Age group						Nativity						Total								
	Adolescents			Emerging Adults			Foreign-born			U.S.-born			Within ethnic group diff.			Within ethnic group diff.			Total		
	FA	KA	FA	FA	KA	KA	FA	KA	KA	FA	KA	KA	FA	KA	KA	FA	KA	KA	FA	KA	
Demographics																					
Sample sizes	162 (52.60%)	207 (60.88%)	146 (47.40%)	133 (39.12%)	n.a.	n.a.	81 (26.30%)	136 (40.00%)	223 (72.40%)	201 (59.12%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	308 (100%)	340 (100%)					
Emerging adult	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	39 (48.15%)	64 (47.06%)	106 (47.53%)*	67 (33.33%)*	*	*	*	*	146 (47.40%)*	133 (39.12%)*					
Nativity	117 (72.22%)+	134 (64.73%)+	106 (72.60%)*	67 (50.38%)*	*	*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	223 (72.40%)*	201 (59.12%)*					
Gender	85 (52.47%)	97 (46.86%)	91 (62.33%)	70 (52.63%)			48 (59.26%)	72 (52.94%)	128 (57.40%)*	95 (47.26%)*	**	**	**	**	176 (57.14%)*	167 (49.12%)*					
Family SES	2.98 (0.72)	2.88 (0.76)	3.05 (0.69)*	2.63 (0.82)	**	**	2.81 (0.71)	2.69 (0.78)	3.09 (0.69)*	2.84 (0.80)	**	**	**	**	3.01 (0.70)*	2.79 (0.79)					
Racial Stereotypes																					
Foreigner	2.23 (0.85)*	2.54 (0.81)	2.31 (0.86)*	2.82 (0.85)	**	**	2.61 (0.91)*	2.91 (0.78)	2.15 (0.80)*	2.47 (0.83)	***	***	***	***	2.26 (0.85)*	2.65 (0.84)					
Achievement	3.44 (0.80)	3.48 (0.73)	3.34 (0.73)	3.40 (0.70)			3.36 (0.82)	3.38 (0.69)	3.39 (0.75)	3.49 (0.75)					3.39 (0.77)	3.45 (0.72)					
Mobility	2.88 (0.73)*	2.72 (0.76)	2.83 (0.74)*	2.61 (0.76)			2.94 (0.77)*	2.64 (0.68)	2.83 (0.72)+	2.69 (0.81)					2.86 (0.73)**	2.67 (0.76)					
Outcomes																					
Positive affect	3.80 (0.57)*	3.52 (0.57)	3.6 (0.71)*	3.31 (0.72)	**	**	3.73 (0.67)*	3.44 (0.64)	3.70 (0.64)*	3.44 (0.64)					3.70 (0.65)*	3.44 (0.64)					
Negative affect	2.66 (0.71)	2.76 (0.65)	2.31 (0.73)*	2.53 (0.80)	***	***	2.59 (0.75)	2.63 (0.68)	2.45 (0.74)*	2.69 (0.75)					2.50 (0.74)**	2.67 (0.72)					
Depressive symptoms	2.13 (0.82)	2.13 (0.83)	2.07 (0.82)+	2.23 (0.87)			2.21 (0.89)	2.07 (0.78)	2.06 (0.80)*	2.22 (0.86)					2.10 (0.82)	2.17 (0.84)					
Suicidal thoughts	25 (15.43%)	32 (15.46%)	24 (16.44%)	23 (17.29%)			13 (16.05%)	22 (16.18%)	36 (16.14%)	33 (16.42%)					49 (15.91%)	55 (16.18%)					
Nonsuicidal self-injury	31 (19.14%)	33 (15.94%)	34 (23.29%)+	20 (15.04%)			16 (19.75%)	17 (12.50%)	49 (21.97%)+	35 (17.41%)+					65 (21.10%)+	53 (15.59%)					
Minor assault	13 (8.02%)	16 (7.73%)	14 (9.59%)	9 (6.77%)			6 (7.41%)	6 (4.41%)	21 (9.42%)	18 (8.96%)					27 (8.77%)	25 (7.35%)					
Felony assault	23 (14.20%)	20 (9.66%)	11 (7.53%)	8 (6.02%)	+	+	4 (4.94%)	12 (8.82%)	29 (13.00%)+	16 (7.96%)	*	*	*	34 (11.04%)	28 (8.24%)						
Delinquency	26 (16.05%)	22 (10.63%)	17 (11.64%)	13 (9.77%)			9 (11.11%)	10 (7.35%)	34 (15.25%)	25 (12.44%)					43 (13.96%)	35 (10.29%)					
Illegal substance use	13 (8.02%)	11 (5.31%)	20 (13.70%)	15 (11.28%)		*	7 (8.64%)	9 (6.62%)	26 (11.66%)	17 (8.46%)					33 (10.71%)	26 (7.65%)					

FA = Filipino Americans; KA = Korean Americans; Emerging adult (0 = adolescent, 1 = emerging adult); Nativity (0 = foreign-born, 1 = U.S.-born); Gender (0 = male; 1 = female); SES = socioeconomic status; Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisks within each category of age and nativity indicate significant difference across ethnic group within each category. Asterisks under “Within ethnic group difference” category indicate significant difference across age group and nativity within ethnic group. Asterisks under “Total” category indicate significant overall ethnic group difference across study variables. Missing cases were included in calculating the sample percentage for categorical variables

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

1988). Participants were asked to rate their feelings for the last two weeks on an ordinal Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = *almost never*, 5 = *almost always*). Examples of items included “I didn’t enjoy anything at all” and “I was very restless” ($\alpha = 0.93$ for Filipino Americans and 0.94 for Korean Americans).

Suicidal thoughts

To measure suicidal thoughts, participants were asked whether they had ever seriously thought about committing suicide during the past 12 months. The item was based on a dichotomous scale (0 = *No*, 1 = *Yes*).

Nonsuicidal self-injury

To measure nonsuicidal self-injury, the following question was asked: “Have you ever harmed or hurt yourself (e.g., self-injury such as scratching, cutting, burning, or hitting body parts, hair-pulling or drug overdose without intention to kill yourself)?” The item was rated on a dichotomous scale (0 = *No*, 1 = *Yes*).

Antisocial behavior

A list of 13 antisocial behaviors generated from symptoms of conduct disorders (Choi et al., 2020) was used to assess whether participants had engaged in minor assault, felony assault, and delinquency in the past 12 months: (1) Minor assault was measured by asking participants whether they “bullied, threatened or intimidated others”; (2) Felony assault was measured by five items, such as “I hurt someone badly enough to need bandages or care from a doctor or nurse”; (3) Delinquent behavior was assessed with seven items, such as “I have stolen while confronting a victim (e.g., mugging, purse snatching, extortion, armed robbery).” Response options were *No* (0) and *Yes* (1). The variable was constructed to equal 0 for none and 1 for any antisocial behavior within each category.

Illegal substance use

Participants were asked whether they currently used any illegal substances (e.g., marijuana, cocaine/crack, inhalants such as glue or solvents) and other drugs such as LSD, PCP, ecstasy, mushrooms, speed, ice, heroin, or pills without a doctor’s prescription. The question was rated on a dichotomous scale (0 = *No*, 1 = *Yes*).

Perpetual foreigner stereotype

The 13-item Awareness of the Perpetual Foreigner Stereotype scale (Huyhn et al., 2011) was used to measure survey

participants’ level of awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype. All response options were on a five-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much*). Examples of the items included “I do not fit what people have in mind when they think of a typical American” and “My ethnic heritage sometimes disqualifies me as American” ($\alpha = 0.93$ for Filipino Americans and 0.92 for Korean Americans).

Model minority stereotype

The 15-item Internalization of the Model Minority Myth Measure (Yoo et al., 2010) assessed survey participants’ level of internalization of the model minority stereotype, which consists of two subconstructs: achievement and mobility. Response options were on an ordinal Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Examples of the 10 items measuring the achievement aspect of the stereotype included “In comparison to other racial minorities (e.g., African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans), Asian Americans generally perform better on standardized exams (e.g., SATs) because of their values in academic achievement” and “Asian Americans make more money because they work harder.” The five items assessing the mobility aspect of the stereotype included “Asian Americans are less likely to face barriers at work” and “It is easier for Asian Americans to climb the corporate ladder.” The two-subconstruct structure of the measure was previously validated with Asian American college students (Yoo et al., 2010). In this study, α for the achievement aspect was 0.93 and α for the mobility aspect was 0.83 for both groups.

Control variables

Several demographic variables include age group (0, adolescent; 1, emerging adult, as defined previously), nativity (0, foreign-born; 1, U.S.-born), gender (0, male; 1, female), and youth perception of family socioeconomic status (1 = *lower class* to 5 = *upper class*).

Analysis Plan

Descriptive analyses examined the general characteristics of the participants and differences in study variables across ethnicity, age group, and nativity. In addition, bivariate correlations among the main study variables were examined within each ethnic group.

The study employed hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses. Using *STATA* v. 16.1, linear regression was estimated for continuous outcomes and logistic regression for binary outcomes. The models were hierarchically built for testing. The direct effect model included demographic control variables and racial stereotypes

(perpetual foreigner stereotype [*foreigner*], achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype [*achievement*], and mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype [*mobility*]). In the two-way interaction model, two-way interaction terms (*foreigner* × *achievement*, *foreigner* × *mobility*, and *achievement* × *mobility*) were added to the direct effect model. In the three-way interaction model, three three-way interaction terms—(1) *foreigner* × *achievement* × age group, (2) *foreigner* × *mobility* × age group, and (3) *achievement* × *mobility* × age group—were added to the two-way interaction model. This three-way interaction model was then repeated using nativity in place of age group.

Prior to analysis, continuous variables were centered to their means to facilitate interpretation of the study findings. To examine the relative contributions of each of the interaction terms to the model, a likelihood ratio (LR) test was conducted. If the LR test comparing lower models to higher models was significant at the 0.1 level, the slopes of the interaction terms significant at the 0.05 level were plotted to visualize the relations, using a method proposed by Dawson and Richter (2006). The rates of missing data for the study variables ranged from 0 to 1.95% for Filipino Americans and from 0 to 1.18% for Korean Americans, which were well below the statistical benchmark of 5% or less in missing responses for making valid statistical inferences (Kline, 2010). Furthermore, the analyses with and without multiple-imputed datasets showed no meaningful differences in the study results. Accordingly, the analyses without imputed datasets are reported here for simplicity. No evidence of multicollinearity was identified among study variables, as variance inflation factors were significantly below 10.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The differences in the study variables across and within ethnic groups by age group and nativity are reported in Table 1, and bivariate correlations are reported in Table 2. Independent-samples *t*-test across ethnic groups indicated that awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype was significantly higher among Korean Americans than among Filipino Americans, whereas internalization of the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype was significantly higher among Filipino Americans than among Korean Americans. For Korean Americans, awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype was significantly higher among emerging adults than among adolescents. In both ethnic groups, awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype was significantly higher among the foreign-born than among the U.S.-born. Filipino Americans reported significantly higher

Table 2 Correlations between study variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Emerging adult	—															
2. Nativity	-0.01	—														
3. Gender	0.09	-0.02	—													
4. Family SES	0.05	0.17**	0.00	—												
5. Foreigner	0.05	-0.24***	0.10	-0.08	—											
6. Achievement	-0.07	0.02	-0.04	-0.01	0.10	—										
7. Mobility	-0.03	-0.07	-0.15**	0.10	-0.10	0.39***	—									
8. Positive affect	-0.15**	-0.02	-0.04	-0.04	-0.05	0.10	0.06	—								
9. Negative affect	-0.24***	-0.08	0.16**	-0.09	0.21***	-0.02	-0.00	-0.21***	—							
10. Depressive symptoms	-0.04	-0.08	0.21***	-0.08	0.31***	-0.04	-0.09	-0.36***	0.67***	—						
11. Suicidal thoughts	0.01	0.01	0.09	-0.07	0.15*	-0.09	-0.07	-0.26***	0.31***	0.45***	—					
12. Nonsuicidal self-injury	0.05	0.03	0.27***	-0.01	0.10	0.00	-0.01	-0.21***	0.21***	0.32***	0.40***	—				
13. Minor assault	0.03	0.03	-0.01	0.04	-0.07	-0.03	-0.08	0.04	0.06	0.13*	0.05	0.04	—			
14. Felony assault	-0.11	0.11*	-0.11	-0.01	-0.06	0.00	0.05	-0.03	0.09	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.15**	—		
15. Delinquency	-0.06	0.05	-0.09	0.03	0.05	0.09	0.08	-0.04	0.11*	0.18**	0.10	0.04	0.24***	0.34***	—	
16. Illegal substance use	0.09	0.04	-0.00	-0.05	-0.12*	0.01	0.06	0.01	-0.05	0.08	-0.04	0.08	0.15**	0.18**	0.31***	—

Correlations below the diagonal are for Filipino Americans; those above the diagonal are for Korean Americans. Emerging adult (0 = adolescent, 1 = emerging adult); Nativity (0 = foreign-born, 1 = U.S.-born); Gender (0 = male, 1 = female); SES = socioeconomic status; Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

positive affect and lower negative affect than Korean Americans. In both ethnic groups, adolescents showed significantly higher positive affect and lower negative affect than emerging adults did.

Direct Effects Models

While accounting for control variables, the perpetual foreigner stereotype, the achievement aspect, and the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype were regressed together on each dependent variable. The findings are summarized in Tables 3 and 4, respectively, for each group. As expected, awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype predicted more internalizing problems (e.g., negative affect, depressive symptoms, and suicidal thoughts) among both ethnic groups. Regarding externalizing problems, the perpetual foreigner stereotype was associated with less illegal substance use among Filipino Americans. However, neither the achievement aspect nor the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype was significantly related to any of the outcomes in the direct effect model.

Two-Way Interaction Models

A significant interaction effect was found between the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype on negative affect and depressive symptoms among Korean Americans. A follow-up slope test showed that the harmful effect of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on negative affect and depressive symptoms was significant only for Korean Americans who reported lower (1 *SD* below the mean) rates of internalization of the mobility aspect (negative affect: $b = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$, Fig. 1; depressive symptoms: $b = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$, Fig. 2).

As for interaction effects between the achievement aspect and the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype, significant interaction effects were found on both internalizing (negative affect and depressive symptoms) and externalizing (nonsuicidal self-injury and illegal substance use) problems for Korean Americans (Table 4). First, a follow-up slope test revealed that greater internalization of the achievement aspect was associated with negative affect for those who also highly (1 *SD* above the mean) internalized the mobility aspect. However, none of the slopes was statistically significant at the 0.05 level (Fig. 3). Likewise, internalization of the achievement aspect predicted more depressive symptoms for those who also highly (1 *SD* above the mean) internalized the mobility aspect ($b = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$; Fig. 4). Lastly, the protective effect of internalization of the achievement aspect on nonsuicidal self-injury and illegal substance use was significant only for those who also highly (1 *SD* above the mean) internalized the mobility aspect (nonsuicidal

self-injury: $b = -0.10$, $p < 0.05$, Fig. 5; illegal substance use: $b = -0.10$, $p < 0.05$; Fig. 6).

Three-Way Interaction Models

For Filipino Americans, significant three-way interactions (*foreigner* × *mobility* × *age group*) were found for internalizing outcomes, including positive affect and depressive symptoms. First, a follow-up slope test indicated that for emerging adults, the harmful impact of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on positive affect and depressive symptoms was significant only for those less likely to internalize (1 *SD* below the mean) the mobility aspect (positive affect: $b = -0.17$, $p < 0.05$; Fig. 7; depressive symptoms: $b = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$; Fig. 8). However, for adolescents, the relations between the perpetual foreigner stereotype and both positive affect and depressive symptoms did not significantly differ by rates of internalization of the mobility aspect. For Korean Americans, significant three-way interactions (*foreigner* × *achievement* × *age group*) were found for internalizing problems, including negative affect and depressive symptoms. Specifically, among Korean American emerging adults, awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype was associated with more negative affect and depressive symptoms for those who highly (1 *SD* above the mean) internalized the achievement aspect (negative affect: $b = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$, Fig. 9; depressive symptoms: $b = 0.56$, $p < 0.001$, Fig. 10). However, for adolescents, these relations did not significantly vary by the level of internalization of the achievement aspect. Although significant three-way interactions (*achievement* × *mobility* × *age group*) were also found for suicidal thoughts, a follow-up slope test indicated that none of the slopes was significant at the 0.05 level.

Regarding nativity, no significant three-way interaction effects were found among Filipino Americans. Conversely, for Korean Americans, a significant three-way interaction (*achievement* × *mobility* × *nativity*) was found for nonsuicidal self-injury. Among the foreign-born, the protective effect of the achievement aspect on nonsuicidal self-injury was significant for those who highly (1 *SD* above the mean) internalized the mobility aspect ($b = -0.10$, $p < 0.05$; Fig. 11). However, for the U.S.-born, the relation between the achievement aspect and nonsuicidal self-injury was not significant regardless of the level of internalization of the mobility aspect.

Alternate Models

Additional analyses were conducted to examine whether the tested two-way interaction effects (e.g., *foreigner* × *achievement*) were sensitive to the effect of the remaining stereotype (e.g., *mobility*) that was not included in the two-way interaction models. For both ethnic groups, none of the three-way interaction terms (*foreigner* × *achievement* × *mobility*) was

Table 3 Regression results for Filipino Americans

Behavioral Outcomes	Positive Affect <i>b</i> (<i>SE</i>)	Negative Affect <i>b</i> (<i>SE</i>)	Depressive Symptoms <i>b</i> (<i>SE</i>)	Suicidal Thoughts <i>OR</i>	Nonsuicidal Self- Injury <i>OR</i>	Illegal Substance Use <i>OR</i>
Model 1						
Emerging adult	−0.19 (0.07)*	−0.38 (0.08)***	−0.11 (0.09)	0.89	1.04	1.98 ⁺
Nativity	−0.03 (0.09)	−0.05 (0.10)	−0.01 (0.11)	1.38	1.36	1.24
Gender	−0.04 (0.08)	0.26 (0.08)**	0.31 (0.09)**	1.51	4.74***	1.05
Family socioeconomic status	−0.02 (0.05)	−0.06 (0.06)	−0.06 (0.07)	0.76	0.93	0.68
Foreigner	−0.06 (0.05)	0.21 (0.05)***	0.31 (0.06)***	1.71**	1.35 ⁺	0.60*
Achievement	0.08 (0.05)	−0.07 (0.06)	−0.07 (0.06)	0.69 ⁺	0.95	1.02
Mobility	0.01 (0.06)	0.07 (0.06)	−0.00 (0.07)	1.09	1.21	1.27
Model 2A (Two-Way)						
Foreigner × Achievement	0.00 (0.06)	0.01 (0.06)	0.03 (0.07)	1.05	0.49**	1.16
Foreigner × Mobility	−0.01 (0.06)	−0.03 (0.07)	−0.06 (0.07)	1.09	1.75*	0.78
Achievement × Mobility	−0.01 (0.05)	−0.00 (0.05)	−0.03 (0.06)	0.79	0.85	0.72
Foreigner × Emerging adult	−0.07 (0.09)	0.07 (0.10)	0.02 (0.11)	1.47	0.89	1.08
Achievement × Emerging adult	−0.07 (0.11)	−0.10 (0.12)	0.10 (0.13)	1.67	0.72	0.53
Mobility × Emerging adult	−0.12 (0.11)	0.01 (0.12)	−0.04 (0.14)	0.62	0.84	3.80*
Model 2B (Two-Way)						
Foreigner × Achievement	0.01 (0.06)	−0.01 (0.06)	0.03 (0.07)	1.10	0.49**	1.07
Foreigner × Mobility	−0.01 (0.06)	−0.04 (0.07)	−0.07 (0.08)	1.05	1.73 ⁺	0.84
Achievement × Mobility	−0.01 (0.05)	−0.00 (0.05)	−0.03 (0.06)	0.79	0.86	0.69
Foreigner × Nativity	−0.08 (0.10)	0.01 (0.11)	−0.08 (0.12)	0.95	1.06	1.11
Achievement × Nativity	0.13 (0.13)	−0.10 (0.14)	−0.17 (0.15)	0.91	1.02	0.59
Mobility × Nativity	−0.04 (0.14)	−0.04 (0.15)	0.06 (0.16)	1.37	0.82	0.34
Model 3A (Three-Way [Emerging Adult])						
Foreigner × Achievement	0.08 (0.12)	0.07 (0.13)	0.08 (0.14)	0.55	0.41	2.56
Foreigner × Mobility	0.29 (0.12)*	−0.22 (0.13) ⁺	−0.47 (0.15)**	0.79	2.05	0.81
Achievement × Mobility	0.11 (0.10)	−0.01 (0.11)	0.04 (0.12)	0.98	0.76	3.04
Model 3B (Three-Way [Nativity])						
Foreigner × Achievement	0.10 (0.13)	−0.07 (0.14)	−0.13 (0.16)	1.35	0.40	12.06
Foreigner × Mobility	−0.06 (0.15)	0.06 (0.16)	−0.04 (0.17)	0.77	1.31	0.67
Achievement × Mobility	0.05 (0.10)	−0.10 (0.11)	−0.20 (0.12)	0.43 ⁺	0.53	12.92
<i>R</i> ² (Model 1/Model 2A)	0.04/0.05	0.16/0.16	0.15/0.16	0.05/0.07	0.09/0.12	0.05/0.08
<i>R</i> ² (Model 1/Model 2B)	0.04/0.05	0.16/0.16	0.15/0.16	0.05/0.06	0.09/0.12	0.05/0.07
<i>R</i> ² (Model 2A/Model 3A)	0.05/0.09**	0.16/0.17	0.16/ 0.20**	0.07/0.08	0.12/0.13	0.08/0.10
<i>R</i> ² (Model 2B/Model 3B)	0.05/0.05	0.16/0.17	0.16/0.18	0.06/0.08	0.12/0.13	0.07/0.10

Emerging adult (0 = adolescent; 1 = emerging adult); Nativity (0 = foreign-born; 1 = U.S.-born); Gender (0 = male; 1 = female); Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. The findings from Model 1, Model 2A/Model 2B, and Model 3A/Model 3B are combined in such a way that the top of the column shows coefficients from Model 1 and the bottom of the column shows interaction coefficients from Model 2A/Model 2B and Model 3A/Model 3B. *R*² for binary outcomes are adjusted *R*² (pseudo *R*²). Regression results for minor assault, felony assault, and delinquency were not reported because no significant direct, two-way, or three-way interaction effects with Foreigner, Achievement, and Mobility were found

⁺*p* < 0.1, **p* < 0.05, ***p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

significant, except for nonsuicidal self-injury among Filipino Americans. However, a follow-up test showed that none of the slopes was significant, suggesting no meaningful interpretation.

Discussion

Racial stereotypes are harmful to members of racial minority groups, especially those who are coming of age.

Table 4 Regression results for Korean Americans

Behavioral Outcomes	Positive Affect <i>b (SE)</i>	Negative Affect <i>b (SE)</i>	Depressive Symptoms <i>b (SE)</i>	Suicidal Thoughts <i>OR</i>	Nonsuicidal Self-Injury <i>OR</i>	Illegal Substance Use <i>OR</i>
Model 1						
Emerging adult	-0.15 (0.07)*	-0.35 (0.08)***	-0.04 (0.09)	0.86	0.72	2.29 ⁺
Nativity	-0.12 (0.07) ⁺	0.16 (0.08)*	0.33 (0.09)***	1.29	1.76 ⁺	1.65
Female	-0.09 (0.07)	0.13 (0.07) ⁺	0.31 (0.08)***	2.63**	2.02*	0.57
Family socioeconomic status	0.15 (0.04)***	-0.08 (0.05) ⁺	-0.14 (0.05)**	0.87	1.00	1.07
Foreigner	-0.14 (0.04)**	0.27 (0.05)***	0.34 (0.05)***	1.53*	1.47 ⁺	1.40
Achievement	0.06 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)	0.09 (0.06)	0.93	0.95	0.61
Mobility	-0.03 (0.05)	0.00 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.06)	0.81	0.91	1.02
Model 2A (Two-Way)						
Foreigner × Achievement	0.06 (0.05)	0.09 (0.06)	0.06 (0.07)	0.99	1.52	1.76
Foreigner × Mobility	-0.10 (0.05) ⁺	-0.09 (0.06)	-0.18 (0.07)**	0.97	1.31	1.02
Achievement × Mobility	0.02 (0.04)	0.09 (0.05) ⁺	0.10 (0.06) ⁺	0.80	0.46**	0.40*
Foreigner × Emerging adult	0.02 (0.09)	0.15 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.10)	0.52	0.87	1.39
Achievement × Emerging adult	-0.20 (0.11) ⁺	-0.01 (0.11)	0.07 (0.13)	0.65	0.40 ⁺	0.17*
Mobility × Emerging adult	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.03 (0.11)	0.03 (0.12)	0.58	0.44 ⁺	0.69
Model 2B (Two-Way)						
Foreigner × Achievement	0.02 (0.05)	0.11 (0.06) ⁺	0.07 (0.06)	0.88	1.31	1.29
Foreigner × Mobility	-0.09 (0.05)	-0.12 (0.06)*	-0.19 (0.07)**	1.03	1.22	0.96
Achievement × Mobility	0.02 (0.04)	0.11 (0.05)*	0.11 (0.05)*	0.82	0.53*	0.40*
Foreigner × Nativity	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.00 (0.10)	0.15 (0.11)	1.32	0.60	1.15
Achievement × Nativity	-0.06 (0.10)	0.06 (0.11)	-0.07 (0.13)	0.30*	1.03	0.16*
Mobility × Nativity	0.26 (0.10)*	-0.21 (0.11) ⁺	-0.32 (0.13)*	1.30	1.51	0.74
Model 3A (Three-Way [Emerging Adult])						
Foreigner × Achievement	-0.06 (0.12)	0.43 (0.12)***	0.45 (0.14)**	2.57 ⁺	0.81	1.86
Foreigner × Mobility	0.09 (0.11)	-0.08 (0.12)	0.13 (0.13)	0.73	0.53	2.26
Achievement × Mobility	0.01 (0.10)	0.13 (0.11)	0.15 (0.12)	3.26*	1.73	0.66
Model 3B (Three-Way [Nativity])						
Foreigner × Achievement	0.13 (0.11)	0.10 (0.12)	-0.20 (0.13)	0.62	0.68	0.83
Foreigner × Mobility	-0.09 (0.12)	0.06 (0.13)	0.01 (0.15)	0.52	0.36	0.79
Achievement × Mobility	-0.06 (0.10)	0.05 (0.11)	0.16 (0.12)	2.18	7.54**	5.78*
<i>R</i> ² (Model 1/Model 2A)	0.10/0.13 ⁺	0.16/0.19 ⁺	0.20/0.23 ⁺	0.06/0.08	0.04/0.09*	0.06/0.13 ⁺
<i>R</i> ² (Model 1/Model 2B)	0.10/0.14*	0.16/0.19*	0.20/0.25**	0.06/0.09	0.04/0.08	0.06/0.13 ⁺
<i>R</i> ² (Model 2 A/Model 3A)	0.13/0.13	0.19/0.22**	0.23/0.26**	0.08/0.11 ⁺	0.09/0.10	0.13/0.14
<i>R</i> ² (Model 2B/Model 3B)	0.14/0.15	0.19/0.19	0.25/0.26	0.09/0.10	0.08/0.11*	0.13/0.15

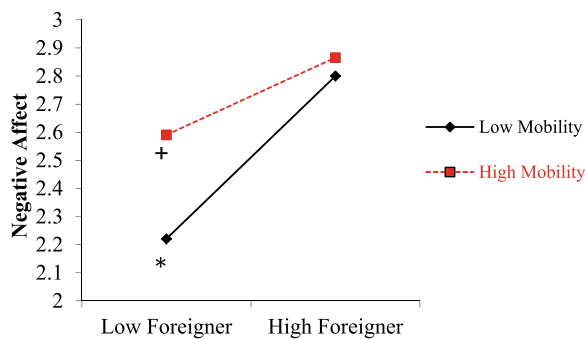
Emerging adult (0 = adolescent; 1 = emerging adult); Nativity (0 = foreign-born; 1 = U.S.-born); Gender (0 = male; 1 = female); Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. The findings from Model 1, Model 2A/Model 2B, and Model 3A/Model 3B are combined in such a way that the top of the column shows coefficients from Model 1 and the bottom of the column shows interaction coefficients from Model 2A/Model 2B and Model 3A/Model 3B. *R*² for binary outcomes are adjusted *R*² (pseudo *R*²). Regression results for minor assault, felony assault, and delinquency were not reported because no significant direct, two-way, or three-way interaction effects with Foreigner, Achievement, and Mobility were found

⁺*p* < 0.1, **p* < 0.05, ***p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

Asian Americans are subjected to two predominant yet opposite racial stereotypes that have hampered developmental potentials of young Asian Americans. The perpetual foreigner stereotype is exclusionary and othering, and even

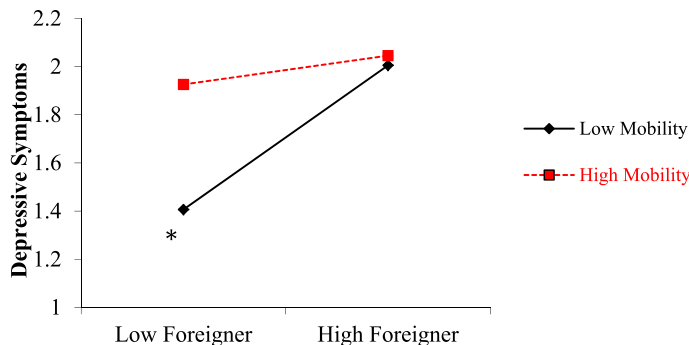
the supposedly positive model minority stereotype is dehumanizing as it punishes those who deviate from the stereotype and the narrow definition of success. Previous studies have investigated either the perpetual foreigner

Fig. 1 Two-way interaction effect between foreigner and mobility on negative affect among Korean Americans



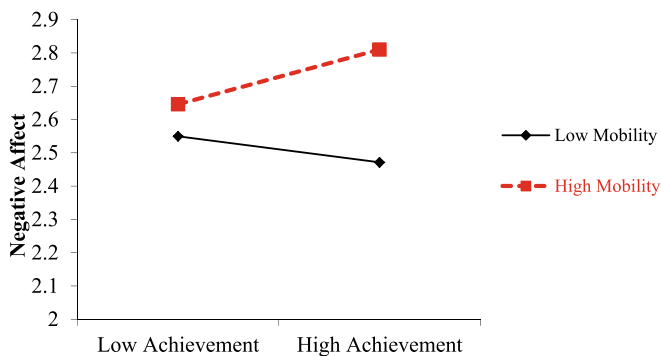
Note. Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Plus (+) and asterisk (*) indicate significance of the slope. ⁺ $p < .1$, ^{*} $p < .05$.

Fig. 2 Two-way interaction effect between foreigner and mobility on depressive symptoms among Korean Americans



Note. Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope. ^{*} $p < .05$.

Fig. 3 Two-way interaction effect between achievement and mobility on negative affect among Korean Americans

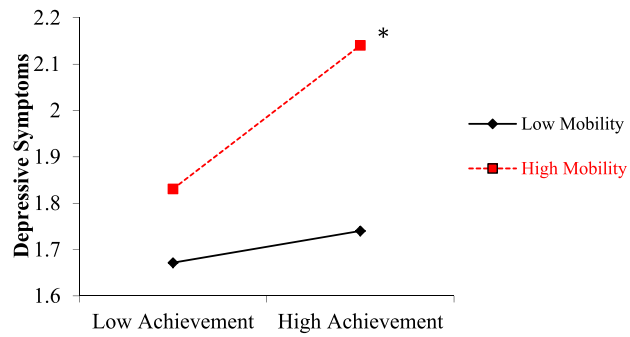


Note. Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype.

stereotype or the model minority stereotype as a single topic and have not adequately accounted for crucial moderators, possibly contributing to inconsistent findings. To fill these gaps, this study explicitly examined how two racial stereotypes interact in a way that may explain the Asian American youth paradox, a uniquely paradoxical pattern of development among Asian American youth. In addition, this study examined how these relations differ by age group (adolescence vs. young adulthood) and place of birth (U.S.-

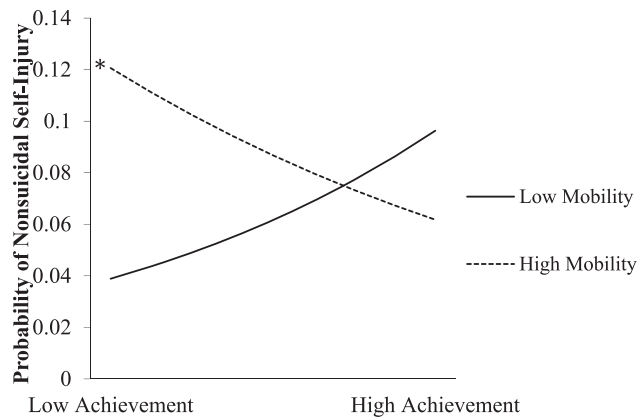
born vs. foreign-born). The study findings reaffirmed the harmful effect of the perpetual foreigner stereotype that increases internalizing problems and a complex role of the model minority stereotype that is often moderated by its subtype and ethnicity. Furthermore, this study showed that the collective effects of racial stereotypes were more salient among emerging adults than among adolescents, highlighting the need to address changing contexts in the developmental process.

Fig. 4 Two-way interaction effect between achievement and mobility on depressive symptoms among Korean Americans



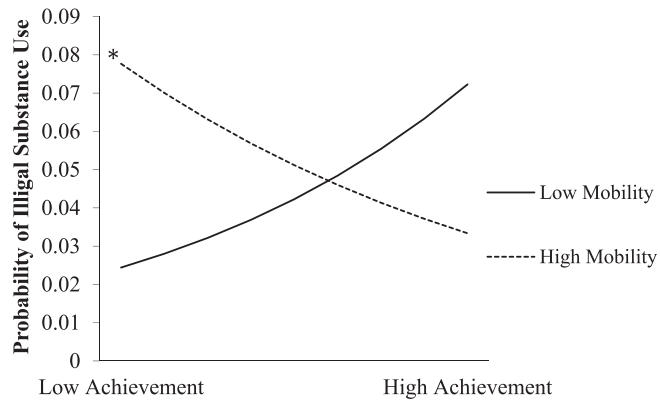
Note. Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope. * $p < .05$.

Fig. 5 Two-way interaction effect between achievement and mobility on nonsuicidal self-injury among Korean Americans



Note. Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope. * $p < .05$.

Fig. 6 Two-way interaction effect between achievement and mobility on illegal substance use among Korean Americans



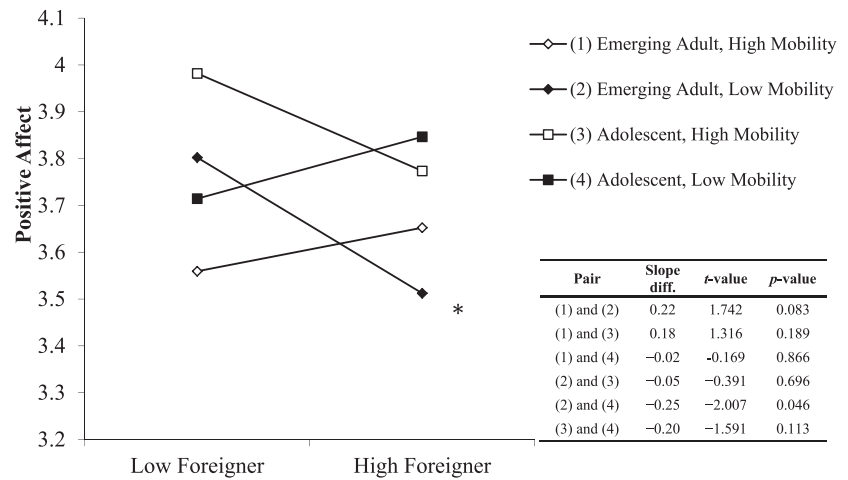
Note. Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope. * $p < .05$.

Racial Stereotypes and Developmental Outcomes

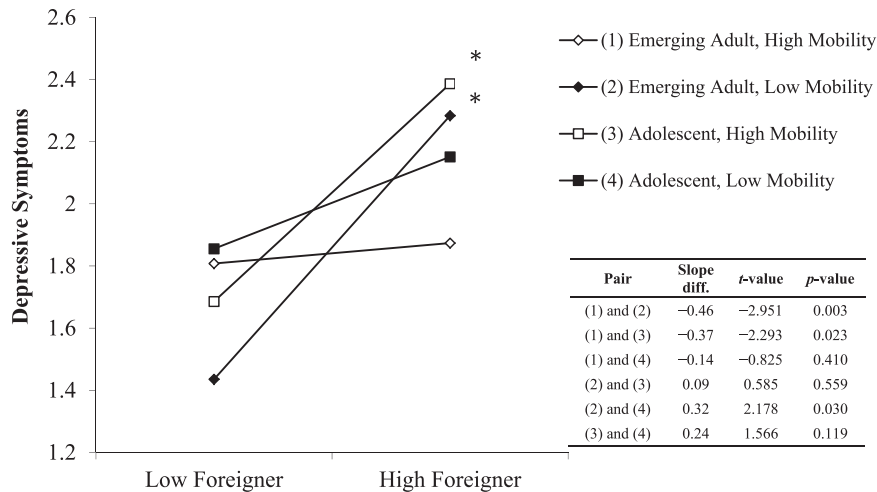
As expected, this study consistently found a negative effect of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on internalizing

outcomes for both ethnic groups, confirming earlier research findings (Lee et al., 2016). Contrary to the study hypothesis, awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype predicted fewer externalizing problems (i.e., illegal

Fig. 7 Three-way interaction effect between foreigner, mobility, and age group on positive affect among Filipino Americans



Note. Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope. * $p < .05$.



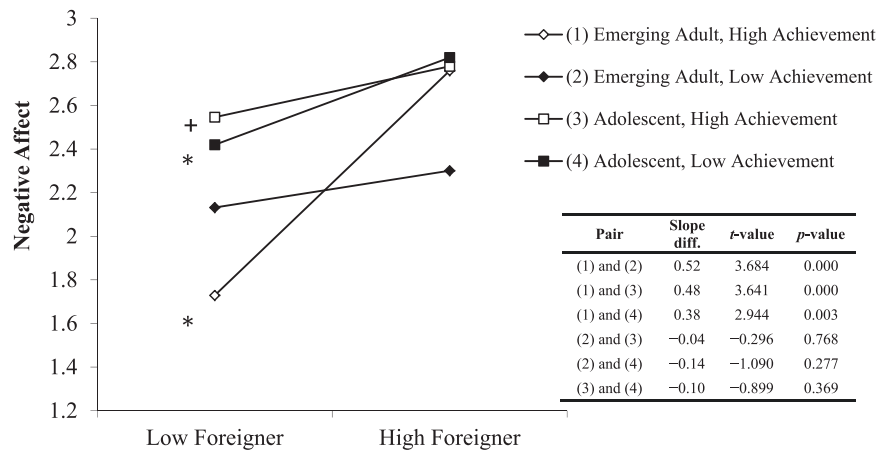
Note. Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope. * $p < .05$.

Fig. 8 Three-way interaction effect between foreigner, mobility, and age group on depressive symptoms among Filipino Americans

substance use) among Filipino Americans. Little or no existing research has examined the effects of youth’s awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on externalizing outcomes. This unexpected finding may be considered in relation to nativity. In both ethnic groups, awareness of this stereotype was significantly higher among the foreign-born than among the U.S.-born. The foreign-born overall report lower levels of externalizing problems than the U.S.-born (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005). The study also showed that while reporting a significantly higher awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype (2.61 vs. 2.15, $p < 0.001$), foreign-born Filipino American youth reported a lower rate of felony assault ($n = 4$; 4.94%

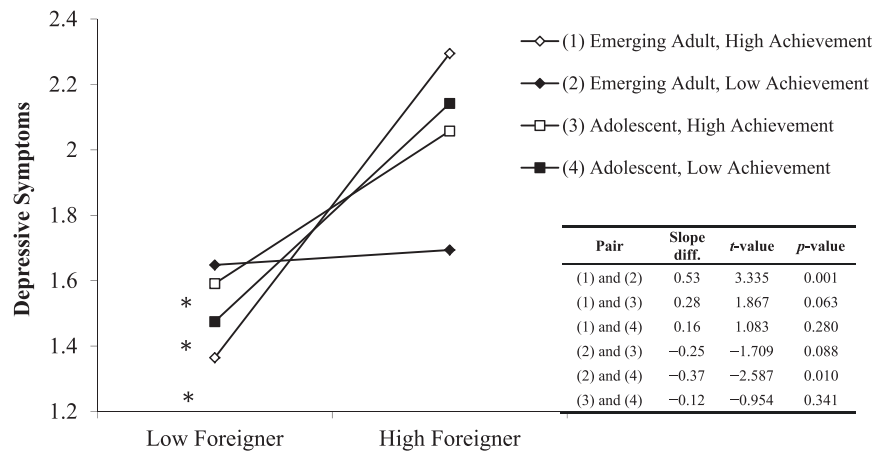
vs. $n = 29$; 13%, $p < 0.05$) and illegal substance use ($n = 7$; 8.64% vs. $n = 26$; 11.66%, *n.s.*) than U.S.-born Filipino American youth. In addition, nativity is likely one of the major determinants of peer networks (McPherson et al., 2001), and their characteristics are a crucial influence on external behaviors (Choi et al., 2020). The differences in peer and social networks shaped by nativity may be related to the level of awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype and externalizing outcomes. For example, foreign-born Filipino American youth may have a keener awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype and hang out with foreign-born peers who tend to behave better. It is also plausible that recent Filipino immigrants may have

Fig. 9 Three-way interaction effect between foreigner, achievement, and age group on negative affect among Korean Americans



Note. Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype. Plus (+) and asterisk (*) indicate significance of the slope.
⁺ $p < .1$, * $p < .05$.

Fig. 10 Three-way interaction effect between foreigner, achievement, and age group on depressive symptoms among Korean Americans



Note. Foreigner = perpetual foreigner stereotype; Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope.
^{*} $p < .05$.

been discouraged from substance use by a draconian anti-drug policy in the Philippines (Gutierrez, 2016). The actual mechanisms that link the perpetual foreigner stereotype to externalizing behaviors, including peer network characteristics, are worthy of future research, which can also investigate why this pattern is not found among Korean Americans, who in fact have a larger proportion of foreign-born.

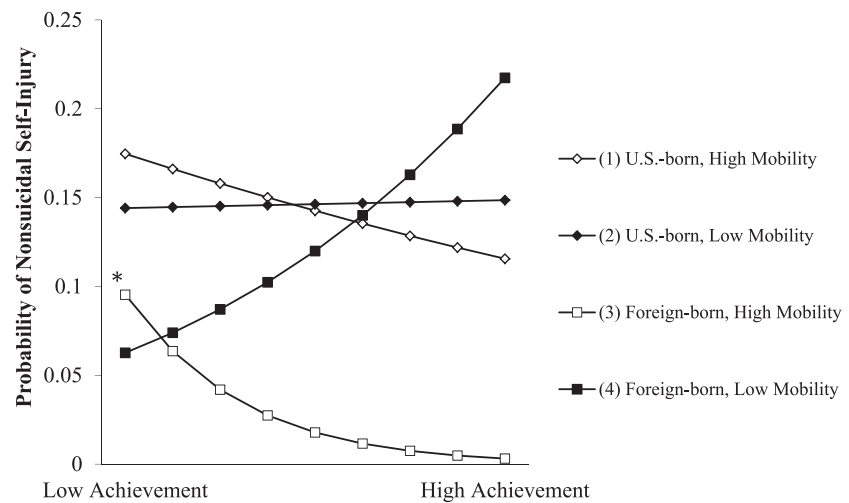
The study hypotheses regarding the direct effects of the model minority stereotype were not supported. That is, neither the achievement aspect nor the mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype had significant relations with any of the outcomes. This inconsistency in the direct effects of the model minority stereotype, previously found in the literature (Gupta et al. 2011; Thompson & Kiang, 2010), may be due to a lack of consideration of the additional interaction effects between racial stereotypes or

the influence of other crucial moderators in these relations, discussed later.

Interactive Effects Among Racial Stereotypes

The model minority stereotype, when interacting with the perpetual foreigner stereotype, had significant effects on internalizing and externalizing outcomes, but only among Korean Americans. Specifically, for Korean Americans, the hypothesized exacerbating effect of the achievement aspect was not found in the relation between the perpetual foreigner stereotype and any of the outcomes, but the mobility aspect buffered the detrimental effect of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on internalizing problems, in accordance with existing empirical findings (Yoo et al., 2015). Unexpectedly, for Korean Americans, interaction effects were found for the two aspects of the model minority stereotype

Fig. 11 Three-way interaction effect between achievement, mobility, and nativity on nonsuicidal self-injury among Korean Americans



Note. Achievement = achievement aspect of the model minority stereotype; Mobility = mobility aspect of the model minority stereotype. Asterisk (*) indicates significance of the slope. * $p < .05$.

in both negative and positive directions. Specifically, when Korean Americans highly internalized both aspects, they exhibited more internalizing problems (i.e., negative affect and depressive symptoms) but lower levels of externalizing problems (i.e., nonsuicidal self-injury and illegal substance use). Furthermore, the protective effect of the mobility aspect found in this study, although consistent with previous literature (Yoo et al., 2015), disappeared when the achievement aspect was accounted for as part of an interaction term. Korean Americans who internalized *both* aspects of the model minority stereotype (which we will refer to as “hyper-internalization of the model minority stereotype”) might be more strongly influenced by the stereotype than those who internalized only one aspect of it or none. Hyper-internalizing individuals could be more prone to unreasonably high expectations for themselves. As a result, if they underperform, they may view themselves as failures and feel distressed. Even if they perform well, they may still feel not good enough and distressed. They would feel pressured to live up to the model minority myth and/or compare themselves with other Asian Americans whom they believe are more successful (Louie, 2006). Hyper-internalization of the model minority stereotype could in fact help explain the Asian American youth paradox (i.e., why Asian American youth can both exhibit good behaviors and feel emotional distress). A study found that the relation between the internalized model minority stereotype and psychological distress was stronger for Asian American adolescents with lower academic performance than for those with higher academic performance (Yoo et al., 2015). Taken together, underperforming Asian Americans who have deeply internalized the model minority myth, both the achievement orientation and the unrestricted mobility aspect, would be particularly vulnerable. Secondly, the

findings suggest a protective effect of the hyper-internalization of the model minority stereotype on externalizing problems. This means that when Korean Americans hyper-internalize the model minority stereotype, they are more likely to behave as members of a “model minority”. The findings are consistent with prior research (Gupta et al., 2011) showing that people who internalize the model minority stereotype are less likely to externalize their inner struggles in order to live up to their model minority status.

Moderators

As suggested by the integrated conceptual framework (Mistry et al., 2016), this study considered participants’ age group and nativity in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of the mechanisms underlying the relations between racial stereotypes and youth outcomes. Contrary to the expectation, no protective effects of the model minority stereotype were found in the two-way interaction model for Filipino Americans. After accounting for age group in the three-way interaction model, however, a protective effect of the mobility aspect was found in the relations between the perpetual foreigner stereotype and internalizing outcomes among emerging adults. Thus, the harmful effect of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on internalizing outcomes can be mitigated by believing in unrestricted mobility but only among Filipino American emerging adults. For Korean Americans, a protective effect of the mobility aspect, but not a negative effect of the achievement aspect, was identified in the link between the perpetual foreigner stereotype and internalizing problems in the two-way interaction model. When the study accounted for the age group, the results additionally uncovered that the harmful effects of the perpetual foreigner stereotype on internalizing outcomes

were exacerbated by the achievement aspect, especially among emerging adults.

These specific findings for emerging adults are worth further discussion. Emerging adulthood is a period of frequent change and exploration (Arnett, 2006). Through the process of exploring various social settings and social interactions, emerging adults may be more likely to confront the features of a racialized society than their adolescent counterparts would be. Asian Americans in high school are often told that they should have the good qualities of Asians and that they should expect to enjoy fair opportunities in accordance with the model minority stereotype (Ochoa, 2013). But, upon entering college or the workplace, they may encounter marginalization in White-dominated campus settings or workplaces, where just being a good student or working hard is insufficient for them to achieve the same level of success that their White counterparts could achieve with equivalent levels of effort and qualification (see Ng et al., 2007 for review). As a result, the concurrent effects of the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the model minority stereotype, either exacerbating or mitigating, may become more salient during emerging adulthood, as the current study shows.

The study also shows that the effect of hyper-internalization of the model minority stereotype in suppressing the externalizing problem of nonsuicidal self-injury identified in the two-way interaction model was significant only among foreign-born Korean Americans. This finding is in contrast with the study expectation that the interaction effects between racial stereotypes would be more pronounced among the U.S.-born than among the foreign-born. A study found that the additive vulnerability of the U.S.-born in the face of the perpetual foreigner stereotype (Armenta et al., 2013) may be due to their focus on psychological adjustment. Thus, it may be that with respect to externalizing behaviors, racial stereotypes may have a stronger influence on the foreign-born than on the U.S.-born, similar to the pattern of results found in the direct effect model with the perpetual foreigner stereotype. No prior studies of Asian Americans have investigated how the interaction effects of racial stereotypes on externalizing behaviors differ by nativity. It is possible that because of their immigrant status, the foreign-born may be more likely to be susceptible to social pressure to behave well and fulfill the model minority stereotype, especially by avoiding externalizing problems. Future study needs to explore whether this is the case.

The “protective” effect of racial stereotypes should be carefully considered. That is, can internalized racism be truly protective and beneficial to members of racial minority groups? Certain elements of the stereotypes can be immediately beneficial for youth outcomes; for example, the belief that Asian Americans do not face racial

discrimination and thus enjoy unrestricted mobility may ease psychological anxiety (Yoo et al., 2015). However, it is likely harmful in the long run because when individuals who have internalized this stereotype face discrimination, they will be unprepared and more distressed. In addition, racial stereotypes are intentional political products to perpetuate White supremacy and/or a reflection of long-standing xenophobia (Kim, 1999). Internalization of those stereotypes would mean assimilation toward White supremacy or White racism, which cannot be protective, as this study has demonstrated how hyper-internalization of the dominant stereotype leads to paradoxical and unhealthy adjustments among young Asian Americans.

Limitations and Implications

The study findings have some limitations. First, the study uses cross-sectional data, so the conclusions are based on correlations. Second, although it aims to explain the complex character of the racialization process of Asian Americans by considering the concurrent effects of the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the model minority stereotype, it does not consider other important factors that may influence the findings, such as racialized gender stereotypes. Specifically, Asian American males and females are stereotyped either as lacking masculinity (Liu et al., 2018) or as being hyper-feminine (Keum et al., 2018). It is important to examine the intersection of gender and race because racialized experiences of Asian American youth can be specific to gender. Wave 4 of the MLSAAF survey includes gender-specific racial stereotypes, which will enable investigation of the multiple aspects of racial stereotypes. Lastly, this study is with Filipino Americans and Korean Americans living in the Chicago metropolitan area. Although both subgroups account for a large proportion of Asian Americans in the greater Chicago metropolitan area, they do not represent all Asian Americans. Given the diversity of Asian American subgroups in their immigration history and racial experiences in the United States, more ethnic groups’ racial struggles, resilience, and resistance need to be examined and compared in future studies.

Despite these limitations, this study has several important theoretical and clinical implications. First, it examines the subtle and multidimensional challenges faced by Asian Americans due to their unique racial position in U.S. society, rather than focusing on one form of racial discrimination alone. The study also provides evidence that these multidimensional challenges may have differential effects across Asian American ethnic groups, age groups, and nativity. Findings from this study also help in understanding the possible etiology of internalizing and externalizing outcomes among Asian American young people and elucidating how seemingly opposite racial stereotypes

together explain the Asian American youth paradox. This study shows the concurrent effects of racial stereotypes as predicting more internalizing and less externalizing behaviors. This pattern is a cause for concern, given that problem behaviors tend to co-occur with a shared etiology (Moilanen et al., 2010). For example, youth struggling from internalizing psychological distress as a result of discriminatory experiences would be more likely to exhibit externalizing behaviors and vice versa. Although externalizing behaviors are not in themselves positive outcomes, they have their purposes. People externalize their behaviors in part to express their inner struggles to family members, close friends, and other important figures in their lives, thus seeking to gain attention and support in times of difficulties (Nock, 2008). However, because of the internalized model minority stereotype, Asian American young people are often reluctant to reach out for help (Gupta et al., 2011). In fact, studies have shown that Asian Americans are the least likely among various racial groups to use mental health services (Liu et al., 2019). In addition, externalizing behaviors, such as nonsuicidal self-injuring behavior, can have soothing effects on young people with internalizing psychological problems by temporarily relieving their inner distress (Laye-Gindhu & Schonert-Reichl, 2005). Because of their triangulated racial positionality (Kim, 1999), however, Asian American young people often struggle from internalizing psychological problems, unable to externalize their inner distress.

Moreover, during the period of emerging adulthood, young adults enter into numerous contexts (e.g., workplace, school, recreation) and relationships (e.g., romantic, peer, coworker) simultaneously, likely exposing them to racism at multiple levels (Volpe et al., 2020). Racialized experiences at individual, cultural, and institutional levels can affect emerging adults in different ways. For example, among Black young adults, only institutional race-related stress was associated with anxiety (Lee et al., 2015), while individual- and cultural-level racism was associated with high-risk drinking behaviors (Pittman et al., 2017). Thus, addressing the psychological toll of racism for Asian American emerging adults will likely require considering the complexity of these varied effects of racism by level. Integrating individual, cultural, and institutional experiences into anti-racism efforts may be particularly important as Asian American emerging adults learn to navigate their racial positions in multiple contexts.

The important practical implication of the present study is that school staff, as well as front-line clinicians, should be informed about the differential impacts on Asian American young people of the two racial stereotypes by ethnic background, age group, and nativity status. Existing literature has identified school staff (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004) and clinicians (Guo et al., 2014) as potential sources of

perpetuation of the unique racial position of Asian Americans, in their furthering of stereotypes of Asian American students vis-à-vis other racial minority students. School personnel may well do this without acknowledging the negative effects of stereotyping on Asian American young people. This study shows that even the seemingly positive stereotype of being hardworking and achievement oriented, together with the perpetual foreigner stereotype, can negatively impact the development of Asian American young people in different ways, depending on their ethnicity, age group, and nativity. The findings of this study can be used to better inform school staff and other front-line clinicians of the negative consequences of stereotyping Asian American young people, and thus help them better serve this population.

Conclusion

The Asian American youth paradox of having few external problems but high mental distress seems to stem from the interaction of multiple racial stereotypes and to affect Asian American young people differently across demographic backgrounds. This study is the first to unpack the etiology of the Asian American youth paradox by exploring the concurrent effects of the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the model minority stereotype and their interaction with age and nativity on Filipino Americans and Korean Americans. Awareness of the perpetual foreigner stereotype extensively predicted internalizing behaviors for both ethnic groups. For Filipino Americans, the perpetual foreigner stereotype also predicted fewer externalizing behaviors, thus partially explaining the paradox. For Korean Americans, both aspects of the model minority stereotype together predicted more internalizing behaviors but fewer externalizing behaviors, also explaining the paradox. Importantly, believing in unrestricted mobility was protective against internalizing problems for youth of both ethnic groups who were highly aware of the perpetual foreigner stereotype. Furthermore, for both of these Asian American ethnic groups, the significant interaction effects between these racial stereotypes became more prominent during emerging adulthood than during adolescence. Although the findings warrant further investigation with longitudinal data, this study suggests the importance of awareness among school staff and clinicians about how racial stereotypes can have different impacts on Asian American young people depending on their characteristics.

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Authors' contributions M.P. conceived the study, performed the statistical analysis, interpreted the data, and drafted the original manuscript; Y.C. provided the dataset, edited the final draft, and provided feedback throughout the study; H.C.Y. edited the final draft and provided feedback throughout the study; M.Y. participated in interpretation of results and edited the final draft; D.T. contributed to the funding acquisition, participated in interpretation of results, and edited the final draft. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Data Sharing Declaration The datasets analyzed in the current study are not publicly available but can be available from Y.C. if certain conditions are met.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest The authors declare no competing interests.

Ethical Approval This study was conducted in compliance with ethical standards. All procedures of the study including data collection and analyses were approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Chicago to ensure the proper protection of human subjects, including confidentiality of the data.

Informed Consent sident wages war on drugs consent and assent process.

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