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ABSTRACT

Using three generational cohorts, this paper compares the effects of generational status on earnings among seven Asian ethnic groups: Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, and multi-race. Data from the 2014, 2016, and 2018 *Current Population Survey* were used to investigate income differences between first, second, and third and higher generations of Asian Americans. Total personal incomes of a sample of 16,521 individuals were analyzed. The findings showed that only Chinese, Filipino, and Korean individuals demonstrate income differences between first and second generations, where those who are second generation have higher incomes on the average than those who are first generation. Education has the strongest effect on income for all ethnic groups. In addition, results indicate that Asian women have lower personal incomes than Asian men on average. Among older respondents, all but one of the six Asian ethnic groups have higher personal incomes than those of younger respondents. The straight-line assimilation theory is partially confirmed by the first and second generations of Chinese, Filipino, and Korean. The study also indicates that the paths towards economic assimilation vary for different Asian ethnic groups.

Intergenerational Differences in Income Among Asian Americans

The 2017 American Community Survey shows that more than 20 million Asian Americans were living in the US, comprising about 5 percent of the total population. The Asian American population has increased by nearly four times in the past four decades. Given this increasing trend, we can speculate that the population of Asian Americans will continue to grow in the future. Chinese Americans constitute the largest proportion of Asian Americans, followed by Indians, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Korean Americans. Immigration to the U.S. accelerated in the late 1960s as the landmark Immigration Act in 1965 encouraged reuniting immigrant families and attracted skilled labor. More than 50 years later, the numbers of second and higher generation immigrants continue to grow rapidly – many of whom are now middle-aged people with many years of experience in their careers or young adults who recently completed school. Numerous studies agree that today's second generation of Asian Americans have higher levels of educational attainment, occupational achievement, and economic status compared to their parents (Oh and Min 2011; Zhong and Xiong 2005; Barringer, Takeuchi, and Xenos 1990; Min and Jang 2015; Xie and Goyette 2003).

However, fewer studies explore the third and higher generations whose ancestors immigrated after the 1960s, because those generations have only recently graduated from college and entered their careers and do not comprise a large enough representative sample to study. In addition, many studies adopted "Asians" as a one-size-fits-all ethnic category, no matter their origins and cultures, or time spent in the US. Although the outstanding economic performance of Asian Americans is a well-documented phenomenon (Farley and Alba 2002; Haller, Portes, and Lynch 2011; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, and Haller 2005), few studies have in-depth research about the generational and ethnic differentiation among Asian American subgroups. This paper seeks to answer the following research question: How do the intergenerational differences influence the incomes of different ethnic groups of Asian Americans?

Because of their well-acknowledged success regarding their upward social mobility, Asian Americans are often portrayed by the general media as the "model minority." However,

this label over-generalizes Asian Americans, given their large and diverse population of over 20 million. When differences in their generational experiences in term of family immigration history, socioeconomic status, and variance in residential areas are considered, people who have achieved economic success within this heterogeneous group likely have differing social experiences, and their success should be influenced by different factors（Portes and Zhou 1993). Therefore, in this study, I will focus on the six largest Asian ethnic groups—Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese, as well as multi-race.

Different theories attempt to describe the assimilation patterns of Asian Americans. The classical assimilation theory (Gans 1973) portrays a straight-line rise in socioeconomic status and educational attainment for immigrants and their descendants through the process of assimilation. However, modern perspectives on immigrant assimilation suggest a more complex relationship between immigrant generations and economic outcomes that depends on the immigrants' backgrounds. Portes and Zhou (1993) introduced the theory of segmented assimilation, in which results of assimilation vary across immigrant nationalities. In contrast to the classical assimilation theory, segmented assimilation theory points out that the process of adaptation is determined by unique contexts of exit and reception. Exit refers to the pre-migration resources such as "money, knowledge, and skills, social class status of the immigrants in their homelands, and means of migration" (Zhou and Xiong 2005:1123). Reception refers to the social environment of the receiving country, in terms of "the system of racial stratification, government policies, labor market conditions, public attitudes, and the strength and viability of ethnic communities in the United States" (Zhou and Xiong 2005:1123). Asian immigrants in America originate from more than 20 countries, each with distinct languages, religions, cultural heritage, and human capital resources. These differences generate different contexts of exit and reception during assimilation into the host society. The children of immigrants, born and raised in the U.S., are inevitably influenced by their parents' experiences before immigration and after arrival. This paper seeks to apply the segmented assimilation theory by comparing different generations of

Asian Americans from seven different ethnic groups and their income to therefore understand various paths towards socio-economic mobility for different groups of Asian Americans.

To deconstruct and analyze the influence of the generation of Asian American immigrants on income, I will separate generation into three categories: first generation immigrants, second generation, children of immigrants, and third and higher grandchildren of immigrants generations. However, the process of assimilation contains various aspects such as language, education, and socioeconomic status. However, in this study, I specifically choose income as one of the most important indicators of one's *socioeconomic assimilation* (Neidert and Farley 1985). Given that the straight-line assimilation theory predicts upward economic mobility, I hypothesize that the second generation of Asian Americans has higher income than the first generation of Asian Americans. The segmented assimilation theory states that the second generation has both original cultural heritage and experience in the host country, as well as expectations from their first-generation parents, whereas third and higher generations have fewer attachments to Asian-unique identity and culture with longer time in the US, I hypothesize that the third and higher generations of Asian Americans have lower income than the second generation of Asian Americans.

ASSIMILATION THEORY

With greater experience in the United States, immigrants increase their knowledge, skills, and capacities in ways that are congruent with higher socioeconomic attainment. Therefore, sociologists try to outline the pattern of experience during the assimilation. The classical straight-line assimilation theory is derived from the early twentieth century European immigrants. It argues that immigrants' socioeconomic attainment will tend to increase with the greater level of assimilation and time spent in the United States (Gans 1973; Zhou 1997). Such linear mobility posits an eventual convergence with the majority groups' cultural and economic characteristics as the end point of the assimilation process. However, European immigrants are primarily white, and the effects of race are not considered in the classical theories. Since the 1990s, sociologists

have had more discussions about the assimilation patterns of immigrants with non-white racial status (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

Contrary to the universality of the classical assimilation theory that generalized all immigrants, Portes and Zhou (1993) introduced the segmented assimilation theory which argues that paths to assimilation are not uniform but rather diverse across various ethnic groups. Segmented assimilation theory postulates a multiplicity of outcomes depending on each immigrant group's socioeconomic status and modes of incorporation (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou and Portes 1993). In other words, different minority groups experience different life outcomes depending on factors such as the history of the first generation, speed of acculturation, economic and cultural barriers, and strength of family and community ties. Portes and Zhou (1993) describe three possible paths of assimilation. The first is essentially what is predicted by classical assimilation theory, which argues that the increasing acculturation and integration will eventually lead children of immigrants into the American mainstream as well as the middle class. The second is acculturation and assimilation into the urban underclass, leading to poverty and downward mobility. The third, "selective acculturation" (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:54), is the deliberate preservation of the immigrant community's culture and values, accompanied by economic integration and upward mobility (Rumbaut 1994; Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997).

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) further expand segmented assimilation theory by specifying the factors that influence these disparate outcomes. They identify human capital, modes of incorporation into the host society, and family structure as the relevant background factors that shape the experience of the first generation. "Human capital" refers explicitly to parental socioeconomic capital, including parents' education and income. The term "modes of incorporation" indicates state definitions of immigrant groups, eligibility for welfare, and the degree of discrimination and antipathy towards immigrant groups (Waters et al. 2010). In summary, varying political and cultural reactions to immigrants shape their individual experiences. Family structure refers to the marital status of parents and the number of family

members. All these three factors, in turn, affect the relationship between the type of acculturation experienced by immigrant parents and the kind experienced by their children.

This paper utilizes the Current Population Survey (CPS) (Flood et al. 2018), which is ideal because it includes information on the generation and ethnicity of groups of Asian Americans beginning from 2013, to examine the relationships between these assimilation factors and economic mobility and to further test the segmented assimilation theory within Asian subgroups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generations are essential for understanding the process of assimilation. Since the definitions of different generations vary among sociologists, I present how the previous studies treated generational cohorts in this section. Then I review the results from previous studies of Asian American assimilation patterns. Through understanding segmented assimilation theory and related results, I identify some influential factors in income such as educational and occupational choices.

Generations

Generational cohort dynamics and their socio-environmental contexts before immigration are crucial in understanding Asian immigrants' experience after immigration. Rumbaut (2004) reached the conclusion that when "the characteristics of the third and higher generations are examined, we find clear and consistent differences" (Rumbaut 2004:697), showing that it is meaningful for studies to take different generational and ethnic groups into account. Scholars (Oh and Min 2011; Kim and Kulkarni 2009; Min and Jang 2015; Tao 2018) used different criteria to distinguish generations of immigrants according to their nativity (of self and parents) and in age and life stage at arrival. For example, Rumbaut (2004) gave a detailed classification of generation where he separated the foreign-born who migrated before age 18 into three groups based on the life stage in which migration occurred: (1) the 1.75 generation (ages 0-5), (2) the 1.5 generation (6-12), and (3) the 1.25 generation (13-17). The second generation technically refers to the U.S.-born and U.S.-socialized children of foreign-born parents.

Most sociologists focus on the second generation and below because there is not enough time for the new immigrants after 1965 to have produced third and higher generations and because of the lack of datasets which provide information on parental nativity, which is essential data for separating the third and higher generations. Rumbaut (2004) noted that the study of the second generation and the intergenerational mobility of immigrant-origin groups in the United States was severely undercut after 1970 when the U.S. Census Bureau removed the question on parental nativity from the long-form questionnaire. Fortunately, since 1994, the Current Population Survey conducted by the Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics introduced the questions on the respondents' and their parents' places of birth.

Segmented Assimilation Theory

The segmented assimilation theory is frequently cited and supported by scholars of immigration (Haller et al. 2011; Oh and Min 2011; Porters and Rumbaut 2005; Farley and Alba 2002; Porteset al. 2005; Zhong and Xiong 2005). Studies show that Asian Americans have demonstrated more advantages in educational attainment, economic status, and occupational prestige compared to other minority and immigrant groups (Farley and Alba 2002; Haller et al. 2011). Some studies further examine Asian immigrants from different countries and validate the accounts of segmented assimilation theory applicable to Asian subgroups (Oh and Min 2011; Zhong and Xiong 2005). Oh and Min (2011) studied generation and earning patterns among Chinese, Filipino, and Korean Americans in New York. They found a moderate second-generation disadvantage in the Filipino sample only in which the U.S.-born Filipino second generation earn less than their first and 1.5 generation counterparts. Zhou and Xiong (2005) considered educational achievement as the indicator of assimilation, second-generation Vietnamese show remarkable educational attainment and are moving closer to their Chinese counterparts despite their initially lower family SES and refugee status, while second-generation Filipinos lag quite far behind their Chinese counterparts despite their higher family SES.

Educational and Occupational Choices Among Asian Americans

One's income is highly dependent on the educational attainment and job types. Many studies analyze Asian Americans' outstanding academic achievements. (Rumbaut 2004; Oh and Min 2011; Sakamoto, Goyette, and Kim 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2005). One aspect of highlighted by segmented assimilation is the high educational attainment of second-generation Asian American children. Xie and Goyette (2004) report that 53 percent of recent cohorts of native-born Asian Americans complete college, compared with 30 percent among whites. Asian American youth tend to choose occupations with high average earnings/education compared to their white counterparts after the study controls for socioeconomic background and academic performance (Xie and Goyette 2003). And as a consequence, education becomes a useful channel for better occupational prestige and higher incomes for most Asian Americans (Barringer et al. 1990; Min and Jang 2015).

Min and Jang (2015) find that Asian immigrants, including both men and women from Indian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, and Vietnamese groups, have substantially higher levels of representation than native-born whites in the STEM and health-care occupations, which is associated with both high status and high salaries. They further found that children of immigrants from India, China and Vietnam demonstrated significant reductions in concentration in the STEM fields, but the children of immigrants from other Asian groups have slightly higher levels of concentration in them than their first generation counterparts. Additionally, Greenman (2013) finds that native-generation Asians do not have the same educational advantages as first and second generations. Since education is an important indicator for Asians to enter occupations with high incomes, the decline in educational attainments across generations may negatively affect the levels of income among second and third and higher generations of Asian Americans.

The previous studies emphasized Asian immigrants' assimilation patterns in education and occupational choices. Few studies examined the socioeconomic assimilation of different Asian ethnic groups. Therefore, in this study, I adopted annual income as the indicator of socioeconomic assimilation in order to further test the segmented assimilation theory with Asian Americans from different ethnic groups.

RESEARCH METHODS

I used the data from the *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series* (IPUMS), which is the world's largest individual-level population database. I used the 2014, 2016, and 2018 Current Population Survey (Flood et al. 2018) because it is uniquely suited to the purposes of my study. The CPS is administered by the Census Bureau using a probability selected sample of about 60,000 occupied households. Although it is a monthly survey, the sample is not drawn every month anew. The March survey has the most comprehensive questions and the biggest sample sizes compared to the other months. Because some housing units will be interviewed in two consecutive years, I chose the samples that are separated by two years to avoid repeating data. Additionally, since 2013, the CPS began to record Asian Subgroups which include categories: Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and others. Therefore, I adopted the March samples in 2014, 2016, and 2018, and they translate to a sample of 565,127 respondents. My unit of analysis is individuals. Three years of data were combined to provide more reliable information for Asian ethnic groups and for comparative studies by national origins and by generational cohorts. The response rate in 2014 was 79.46 percent. The response rate in 2016 was 71.7 percent. The response rate in 2018 is not available yet. For further information on how the data were collected, see the 2014, 2016, and 2018 Current Population Survey, available online at https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/methodology.html (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2018).

For the purpose of this study, I created a subset of the CPS data which only included Asian and multi-racial respondents who identify themselves as being of Asian descent. The Asian category includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and multi-race. The multi-race category includes White-Asian, Black-Asian, American Indian-Asian, White-Black-Asian, White-American Indian-Asian, White-Black-American Indian-Asian, and Black-American Indian Asian. I restricted the analysis to the adults from age 25 to 64, which is considered as the range of ages for full-time workers. Thus, my subset for this study is 16,521 individuals.

Independent Variable

Since my research question requires the identification of generational differences, the CPS is an ideal dataset to assess my research question. Beginning in 1994, the CPS started asking about the birthplaces of both parents. The variable "nativity" in the CPS classifies each person as native-born or foreign-born and further specifies whether the parents of a native-born person were native-born or foreign-born. I excluded the cases with the response "unknown". Therefore, we can identify the first, second, and third and higher generations of immigrants through their parents' birthplaces. Since only parents' and respondents' birthplaces are available, we cannot distinguish the third generation from fourth and higher generations.

Generation cohorts often differ according to the research designs among scholars. Rumbaut (2004) classifies foreign-born including who migrated before age 18 into three groups based on the age at arrival such as (1) the 1.75 generation (arrived ages 0-5), (2) the 1.5 generation (arrived 6-12), and (3) the 1.25 generation (arrived 13-17). In this study, 1.75, 1.5 and 2 generations were grouped together because they all have the majority of their education in the United States; 1 and 1.25 generations are grouped together because they likely have greater attachment to the culture of their original country. I used the variables "survey year", respondent's age, and the year of immigration to calculate the arrival age. In this study, the first, second, and third and higher generations are defined as follows: The first generation consists of individuals who were born outside the country and came to the United States after age 12. The second generation consists of people who were born outside the country but came to the United States before age 12 along with those who were born in the US with at least one parent born outside the country. The third and higher generations are defined as consisting of people who were born in the US whose parents were also born in this country. I created dummy variables for the three generations. The variable first generation was coded as 1 for respondents who are first generation, and 0 for respondents who are not first generation. The same dummy variable was also created for the second and third and higher generations.

Dependent Variable

My dependent variable is the total personal income. In CPS, the total personal income indicates each respondent's total pre-tax personal income or losses from all sources for the previous calendar year. For the purpose of the study, I excluded the missing data of income from the dataset.

Control Variables

My control variables are sex, age, years of education, Asian subgroups which include Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and multi-race designations, and cities which include New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Honolulu. Sex is coded as 0 for men and 1 for women. For age, it provides each respondent's age at their last birthday. As mentioned above, I only included respondents from 25-64.

Years of education indicates respondents' educational attainment, as measured by the highest year of school or degree completed. The categories include: none, grades 1, 2, 3 or 4, grades 5 or 6, grades 7 or 8, grades 9 through 11, 12th grade with no diploma, high school diploma or equivalent, some college but no degree, Associate's degree with occupational/vocational program, Associate's degree with academic program, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Professional school degree, and Doctorate degree. I recoded the variable education as: no schooling as 0, grades 1, 2, 3 or 4 as 2.5, grades 5 or 6 as 5.5, grades 7 or 8 as 7.5, grade 9 through 11 as 9 to 11, respectively. Both 12th grade with no diploma and high school diploma or equivalent were coded 12. Some college but no degree was coded 13. Both Associate's degree with occupational/vocational program and associate's degree with academic program were coded 14. Bachelor's degree was coded 16. Both Master's degree and Professional school degree were coded 18. And Doctorate degree was coded 20. I excluded the missing and unknown cases from the dataset.

For Asian subgroups, I kept the six countries in the original variable Asian which are Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese. I excluded the category "other Asian" and missing data. I added one more category, multi-race, deriving from the variable race. The multi-race category includes respondents who identify themselves as White-Asian, Black-

Asian, American Indian-Asian, White-Black-Asian, White-American Indian-Asian, White-Black-American Indian-Asian, and Black-American Indian Asian. I recreated the variable Asian subgroups in which I coded Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and multi-race as 1 to 7 respectively.

The location of the respondent is included because of the various living costs in different places. The original variable metropolitan area has all counties centering on a substantial urban area. I chose four most popular cities where Asian Americans live—New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Honolulu. I created a dummy variable for the four cities. The variable New York City was coded as 1 for respondents who live in it, and 0 for respondents who do not. Similar dummy variables were created for the other three cities.

FINDINGS

Univariate

Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation of all the variables. Both Table 1 and Figure 1 shows the distribution of the independent variable, generation. About 63 percent of respondents are first generation, 26 percent of respondents are second generation, and 11 percent of respondents are third and higher generations.

Insert Table 1 about here

Insert Figure 1 about here

Table 1 indicates that the average personal income of the sample is $56,562 with the standard deviation of $79,650. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the dependent variable, respondent's total personal income, in intervals of $20,000. The distribution is heavily skewed to the right. The largest categories for the total personal income of respondents are $1 to $20,000 and $20,001 to $40,000 both with about 20 percent. About 11 percent of respondents who have income less than 0, while about 3 percent of respondents have income more than $200,000.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Figure 3 shows the distribution of the control variable, age of the respondents. It is relatively evenly distributed. More specifically, according to Table 1, the average age of

respondents is about 43 years. The standard deviation is about 11 years of age, meaning that approximately two-thirds of the sample are between 32 and 54 years of age.

Insert Figure 3 about here

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the control variable, respondent's sex. Both Figure 4 and Table 1 indicate that about 46 percent of respondent are men, while 54 percent are women.

Insert Figure 4 about here

Figure 5 shows the distribution of the control variable, respondent's ethnicity. Both Figure 5 and Table 1 indicate that about 23 percent of respondent are Chinese, about 22 percent are Indian, about 20 percent are Filipino, about 11 percent are Vietnamese, about 9 percent are Korean, about 9 percent are Japanese, and about 6 percent are multi-race.

Insert Figure 5 about here

Figure 6 shows the distribution of the control variable, respondent's level of educational attainment. About 3 percent of respondents have schooling equal or less than 8 years. About 19 percent of respondents have completed grade 12. Another approximately 33 percent of respondents have a college degree. About 20 percent have a master or professional school degree, while about 5 percent receive a doctorate degree. The frequency distribution of the educational attainment is slightly skewed to the left, indicating that a greater percentage of respondents have completed at least college. More specifically, according to Table 1, the average number of respondent's educational attainment is about 15 years. The standard deviation is about 3 years, which means that approximately two-thirds of the respondents have 12 and 18 years of education.

Insert Figure 6 about here

Figure 7 shows the distribution of the control variable, the respondent's city. Both Figure 7 and Table 1 indicate that about 7 percent of respondents live in San Francisco, about 9 live in New York, about 10 percent live in Los Angeles, about 11 percent live in Honolulu, and about 63 percent live in other areas.

Insert Figure 7 about here

Bivariate

Table 2 shows the correlation between income and all other variables. There is a multicollinearity problem between the variables first and second generation. In order to solve this problem, I choose the second generation as my reference group in the regression.

Income. There is a negative, very weak, and statistically significant relationship between first generation and total personal income, meaning that first generation have less total personal income on average. There is a positive, very weak, and statistically significant relationship between second generation and total personal income, meaning that second generation have more total personal income. There is no statistically significant relationship between third and higher generations and total personal income.

There is a positive, very weak, and statistically significant relationship between age and total personal income, meaning that the older the respondents, the more likely they will have higher total personal income. There is a negative, weak, and statistically significant relationship between gender and total personal income, meaning that women have less total personal income on average. There is a positive, weak to moderate, and statistically significant relationship between education and total personal income, meaning that the more years education the respondents have, the more likely they will have higher total personal income.

For seven ethnic groups, only the variables Indian, Filipino, and Vietnamese have statistically significant relationships with personal income. There is a weak and positive correlation between Indian and total personal income, meaning that Indians are more likely to have higher personal income. There is a negative and very weak relationship both between Filipino and total personal income and Vietnamese and total personal income, meaning that Filipinos and Vietnamese are less likely to have higher personal income.

For four cities, only living in San Francisco and Honolulu have statistically significant correlations with total personal income. There is a very weak and positive correlation between living in San Francisco and total personal income, meaning that people who live in San Francisco are more likely to have higher personal income. There is a weak and negative

correlation between living in Honolulu and total personal income, meaning that people who live in Honolulu are less likely to have higher personal income.

Generations. The variables first, second, and third and higher generations are negatively correlated to each other, meaning that respondents who are one of the generations cannot be either of the other two generations. There are statistically significant relationships between age and the three generations. There is a weak and positive relationship between first generation and age, meaning that first generation are older on average. There is a weak and negative relationship between second generation and age, meaning that second generation are younger on average. There is a very weak and positive relationship between third and higher generations and age, meaning that people who are third and higher generations are older on average. For the relationships between three generations and gender, first and second generation are both statistically significantly correlated with gender, while third and higher generations do not. First generation and gender have a very weak and positive correlation, meaning that first generation are more likely to be women, whereas second generation and gender has a very weak and negative correlation, meaning that second generation are less likely to be women. For the relationships between three generations and education, there are all statistically significant. First generation and third and higher generations very weakly and negatively correlated with education, meaning that people who are first or third and higher generations are less likely to have more years of education.

Three generations are statistically significantly and weakly correlate Indians. There is a positive relationship between first generation and Indian but negative relationships between Indian and second generation and Indian and third and higher generations, meaning that Indians are more likely to be first generation and less likely to be second generation or third and higher generations. Only first and third and higher generations statistically significantly correlated with Chinese. There is a very weak and positive relationship between first generation and Chinese, whereas there is a very weak and negative relationship between third generations, meaning that Chinese are more like to be first generation and less likely to be third and higher generations. For

both Filipino and Korean, they are only statistically significantly correlate between second and third and higher generations. Both Filipino and Korean are negatively and very weakly correlated between first generation, meaning that Filipinos or Koreans are less likely to be first generation. However, both Filipino and Korean are positively and very weakly correlated between third and higher generations, meaning that Filipinos or Koreans are more likely to be third and higher generations. Three generations are statistically significantly correlated with Japanese. There is a negative and weak relationship between first generation and Japanese, a negative and very weak relationship between second generation and Japanese, and a positive and moderate relationship between third and higher generations and Japanese, meaning that Japanese are less likely to be first or second generation but more likely to be third and higher generations. Three generations are statistically significantly correlated with Vietnamese. There are positive and very weak relationship between first generation and Vietnamese and second generation and Vietnamese, while there is a negative and very weak relationship between third and higher generations and Vietnamese, meaning that Vietnamese are more likely to be first or second generation but less likely to be third and higher generations. Three generations are statistically significantly correlated with multi-race. There are negative and weak relationship between first generation and multi-race, while there are negative and weak relationships between second generation and multi-race and third and higher generations and multi-racial, meaning that those who are multi-racial are less likely to be first generation but more likely to be second or third and higher generations.

First generation is only statistically significantly correlated with New York and Honolulu. There is a positive and very weak correlation between first generation and New York, meaning that those who are first generation are more likely to live in New York City. There is a negative and weak relationship between first generation and Honolulu, meaning that those who are first generation are more likely to live in Honolulu. For second generation, there are statistically significantly relationships between it and Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Honolulu but no statistically significantly relationship between it and New York. There are positive and very

weak correlations between second generation and three cities, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Honolulu, meaning that those who are second generation are more likely to live in Los Angeles, San Francisco, or Honolulu. For third and higher generations, there are statistically significantly relationships between it and all four cities. There are negative and very weak correlations between third and higher generations and three cities, New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, meaning that those who are third and higher generations are more likely to live in New York, Los Angeles, or San Francisco. There is a positive and weak to moderate relationship between third and higher generations and Honolulu, meaning that third and higher generations are more likely to live in Honolulu.

Demographic. There is no relationship between age and gender. There is a negative, weak, and statistically significant relationship between age and education, meaning that the older the respondents, the more years of education they are more likely to have. There is a negative, very weak, and statistically significant relationship between gender and education, meaning that women have less years of education on average.

Ethnic groups. All seven ethnic groups, Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and multi-race are negatively correlate to each other, meaning that respondents who are one of the ethnic groups cannot be any of the other six groups. Indian, Filipino, Japanese, Vietnamese, and multi-race are correlated with age statistically significantly, whereas Chinese and Korean do not have statistically significant correlations with age. Both Indian and Multi-race are correlated with age weakly and negatively, meaning that respondents who are Indian or Multi-race are younger on average. Filipino, Japanese, and Vietnamese are correlates with age weakly and positively, meaning that Filipinos, Japanese, or Vietnamese are older on average.

In terms of gender, only Indian and Filipino are correlated with gender statistically significantly, whereas Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and multi-race do not have statistically significant correlations with gender. Indian is correlated with gender very weakly and negatively, meaning that Indians are more likely to be men. Filipino is correlated with gender very weakly and positively, meaning that Filipinos are more likely to be women.

In terms of education, Indian, Chinese, Filipino, and Vietnamese are correlated with education statistically significantly, whereas Japanese, Korean, and multi-race do not have statistically significant correlations with education. There is a weak and positive relationship between Indian and education, meaning that Indians are have more years of education on average. There is a very weak and positive relationship between Chinese and education, meaning that Chinese have more years of education on average. Both Filipino and Vietnamese are correlated with education weakly and negatively, meaning Filipinos and Vietnamese have less years of education on average.

For four cities, Indian have statistically significant relationships with all four cities variables. There is a positive and weak relationship between Indian and New York City, whereas there are negative and weak relationships between Indian and the rest three cities, meaning that Indians are more like to live in the New York City and less likely to live in the rest three cities. Chinese have statistically significant relationships with all four cities variables. There are positive and weak relationships between Chinese and three cities, New York City, Log Angeles, and San Francisco, whereas there is a negative and weak relationship between Chinese and Honolulu, meaning that Chinese are more likely to live in the New York City, Log Angeles, or San Francisco and less likely to live in Honolulu. Filipino is only statistically significantly correlated with two cities, New York City and Honolulu. There is a negative and very weak relationship between Filipino and New York City, while there is a positive and weak relationship between Filipino and Honolulu, meaning that Filipinos are more likely to live in Honolulu and less likely to live in New York City. Japanese have statistically significant relationships with three cities, New York City, San Francisco, and Honolulu. There is a positive and weak relationship between Japanese and Honolulu, whereas there are negative and weak relationships between New York City and San Francisco, meaning that Japanese are more likely to live in the Honolulu and less likely to live in New York City or San Francisco. Korean have statistically significant relationships with three cities, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Honolulu. There is a positive and very weak relationship between Korean and Log Angeles, whereas there are

negative and very weak relationship between Korean and two other cities, meaning that Koreans are more likely to live in Los Angeles and less likely to live in San Francisco or Honolulu. Vietnamese have statistically significant relationships with all four cities variables. There are negative and very weak relationships between Vietnamese and three cities, New York City, San Francisco, and Honolulu, whereas there is a positive and weak relationship between Vietnamese and Log Angeles, meaning that Vietnamese are more likely to live in Los Angeles and less likely to live in the rest three cities. Multi-race has statistically significant relationships with all four cities. There are negative and very weak relationships between Multi-race and three cities, New York City, Log Angeles, and San Francisco, whereas there is a positive and weak relationship between multi-race and Honolulu, meaning that respondents who are multi-racial are more like to live in Honolulu and less likely to live in the rest three cities.

Cities. All four cities, New York City, Log Angeles, San Francisco, and Honolulu, are negatively and statistically significantly correlate to each other, meaning that respondents who live in one city cannot be live in any of the other three cities. There are positive, very weak, and statistically significant relationships between age and Los Angeles and age and Honolulu, meaning that respondents who live in the Los Angeles or Honolulu are younger on average. There is no relationship between all four cities and gender. There is only a negative, very weak, and statistically significant relationship between education and Honolulu, meaning that respondents who live in Honolulu have less years of education on average. There is no relationship between education and the rest three cities.

Insert Table 2 about here

Table 3 presents the mean personal income varying by both generations and by the seven Asian ethnic groups. Indians have the highest mean income (about $ 73,000), whereas Vietnamese have the lowest mean income (about $42,000). Analysis of variance reveals that there are statistically significant differences between first and second generation on income for Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese, meaning that for all four groups, the second generation makes significant improvements on income from the first generation. The other three

groups, Indian, Japanese, and multi-race, do not have statistically significant income differences between first and second generations. Additionally, for all seven Asian ethnic groups, there is no statistically significant difference on income between second and third and higher generations.

Insert Table 3 about here

Regression

Table 4 presents multivariate regression analyses of total personal income on all variables for each Asian ethnic group. The R^2 for the seven models varies from .092 to .195. The model works best for multi-race. About 20 percent of the variation in total personal income of multi-racial respondents can be explained by the other independent and control variables ($R^2 =$.195), followed by Indian ($R^2 =$.153) and Chinese ($R^2 =$.149). The regression equations are statistically significant for all seven models.

Being first generation is only statistically significant for Chinese, Filipino, and Korean. The negative effects suggest that the first generation of Koreans ($\beta = $-.138), Chinese ($\beta =$-.098), and Filipinos ($\beta = $-.056) have less personal income than their second generation counterparts. Being third and higher generations is not statistically significant for any ethnic group, meaning that there is no difference between the second and third and higher generations on total personal income. Age has a positive, statistically significant effect on all ethnic groups except for Vietnamese, meaning that for Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, and respondents who are multi-racial, older people have more total personal income. Age has the biggest effect on personal income for multi-race ($\beta = $.169) and the least effect for Filipino ($\beta = $.094). Gender has a negative and statistically significant effect on all ethnic groups, meaning that women have less total personal income than men for all ethnic groups. Gender has the biggest effect on personal income for Indians ($\beta = $-.259) and the smallest effect for Filipinos ($\beta = $-.087). Education has a positive and statistically significant effect on all ethnic groups, meaning that respondents with more years of education have more total personal income for all ethnic groups. Education has the biggest effect on multi-race ($\beta = $.348) and the smallest effect on Indians ($\beta = $.257). All four cities have no statistically significant effect on total personal income except for

Koreans in San Francisco. For Indians, gender has the biggest effect on total personal income followed by education. For the other six Asian ethnic groups, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and multi-race, education has the biggest effect on their personal income.

The regression results partially support the hypothesis. The first hypothesis that the second generation of Asian Americans has a higher income than the first generation of Asian Americans, only holds for Chinese, Filipino, and Korean. In contrast it was rejected for the other four ethnic groups, Indian, Vietnamese, Japanese, and multi-race. The second hypothesis that the third and higher generations of Asian Americans have lower income than the second generation is rejected. There is no difference between second and third and higher generations in income.

Insert Table 3 about here

DISCUSSION

In this study, I sought to answer the question of how the intergenerational differences influence the incomes of different ethnic groups of Asian Americans. The bivariate results (see table 2) indicate that the first generation has a lower income on average and the second generation has a higher income on average. However, there is no difference between the incomes of second generation and third and higher generations. Table 3 indicates that significant income differences between first and second generations only exist for Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese. The multivariate results (see table 4) are partially consistent with the bivariate results. The multivariate results show that only Chinese, Filipinos, and Koreans earn higher personal income for the second generation in comparison with the first generation. There is no such difference in income between two generations for the other four Asian ethnic groups (Indian, Japanese, Vietnamese, and multi-race), which implies that the introduction of the control variable has revealed intervening relationships. Nativity intervenes the relationship between generations and income. The multivariate results partially agree with Oh and Min's (2011) research: the second generation of Chinese and Koreans have greater advantages in income than their first-generation counterparts. However, these findings are inconsistent with the findings of Oh and Min (2011) regarding Filipinos, where they found that there is a moderate second-

generation disadvantage for them. The multivariate results show that the second generation of Filipinos has a higher income than their first-generation counterparts. Such a second-generation disadvantage does not exist in this study. However, Filipinos have the least improvement in income from the first to the second generation (about $7,800), compared to Chinese (about $18,000) and Koreans (about $20,000). Although Chinese, Koreans, and Filipinos have some economic improvement, the amounts vary between groups. Both table 2 and table 4 suggest that there is no difference in income between second and third and higher generations among Chinese, Koreans, and Filipinos, implying that the economic advancement among Asian immigrants for all ethnic groups possibly ends at the second generation. However, table 3 shows that Indians have relatively high income since the first generation, implying that the concept of economic assimilation does not apply to them given their middle/upper class status in each generation.

The control variables have an intervening relationship, suggesting that other driving forces behind income such as education and gender could be influential factors. Specifically, the introduction of the education variable intervenes in income. Education has the most substantial effect in income for all ethnic groups. This result is consistent with the previous studies (Barringer et al. 1990; Min and Jang 2015) which state that education becomes a useful channel for higher incomes for most Asian Americans. The second most important indicator is gender. On average, women earn less than their male counterparts. The gap in income between women and men is most significant for Indian women, followed by multi-racial, and Japanese women. Filipino women have the smallest gap in income in relation to their male counterparts. Gender discrimination in job markets exists for all Asian ethnic groups, but varies between groups.

By investigating the association between generation and income and whether these associations vary among the Asian ethnic groups, these analyses have allowed me to evaluate the first path described by the segmented assimilation theory: the straight-line assimilation. It inspired the first hypothesis: the second generation of Asian Americans have higher incomes than the first generation counterparts. The increasing acculturation and integration will eventually lead children of immigrants into the American mainstream, as well as into the middle

class. In this study, only the outcomes of Chinese, Koreans, and Filipinos confirm this theory, whereas the outcomes of the other four groups—Indian, Japanese, Vietnamese, and multi-race—do not. It is possible that Indians had higher socioeconomic backgrounds when they immigrated, considering many of them are specialists in technology. For Japanese immigrants, most of the Japanese Americans are third and higher generations. There are few first and second generation members for researchers to examine. Vietnamese are recent immigrants who came after the end of the war in Vietnam. It is possible that the second generation is not large enough yet to demonstrate assimilation patterns in income. For people who are multi-racial, the assimilation patterns would be more complicated, considering that interracial marriage itself is a sign of assimilation.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the intergenerational differences in income among seven Asian ethnic groups. I used a cumulative data file of the Current Population survey (CPS) from 2014, 2016, and 2018. The subset of this data file, which only included Asian and multi-racial respondents who identify themselves as being of Asian descent, has 16,521 respondents who are from 25 to 64 years old. The Asian category includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and multi-race immigrants. The regression analyses revealed varying results of generation on personal income. After controlling for other determining factors affecting income, including age, gender, education, and location, I found that there is upward economic mobility among three ethnic groups—Chinese, Filipino, and Korean—which partially confirms the first hypothesis. Nonetheless, the second hypothesis has been rejected, since the multivariate results suggest that there is no income difference between second and third and higher generations. The result reinforces the conclusion that immigrants' paths to assimilation are not uniform but rather vary across different ethnic groups. Although the second generations of Chinese, Filipinos, and Koreans have made improvements in income, the improvements between first and second generations vary, where Filipinos have made the least and Korean have made the most. Given various first-generational experiences prior to immigration and after

arrival, such as cultural heritage and how accepting the host country is, first generation immigrants and their descendants of different ethnic groups would not experience the same path towards socioeconomic mobility.

The income differences among the seven Asian ethnic groups also reflect the past US immigration policies. The adaptation pathways for each Asian ethnic group differ from their historical reasons for immigration. For example, first-generation Indians immigrated as technology specialists with high-paying jobs, and their children are also able to reproduce their parents' economic status successfully through completing higher education and majoring in similar high-paying subjects as their parents did. However, first-generation Vietnamese immigrated as refugees, and therefore had hardships to navigate in in the US a new life after the war. Second-generation Vietnamese bear heavy expectations from their parents and work hard to improve their socioeconomic status. These all might be unique to the US, given its particular historical relationships to immigration. Given the current Trump Administration's focus tightening policy on immigration numbers and requiring more advanced talents for people who seek to immigrate. The first-generation immigrants from such countries as China and Korea may be higher-skilled than previous immigrants. In that case, such first-generation disadvantage for certain groups such as Chinese and Koreans will disappear.

Limitations and Future Research

For the categories of generational cohorts, I combined the 1.5 generation and second generation together for the operationalization of the study. For further detailed examination of the assimilation process, they should be separated to better understand each step of the assimilation process. Because of the limited information provided by the dataset, I had to combine the third and higher generations together. It is possible that there are differences in income between the second and third generation, however, the results may have disappeared because of the grouping of third and higher generations.

Regarding the control variables, the four variables of metropolitan cities—New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Honolulu—are not statistically significant. Considering

that the cost of living is substantially higher in those four cities, I expected to see income differences. However, the regression results do not confirm that. It is possible that I do not have large enough samples in each category in order to uncover statistically significant results. For future research, closer examinations can be conducted into Asian Americans in these four cities, given that large populations of Asian Americans in them.

I only included six Asian ethnic groups in my study because those are all of the countries of origins provided by CPS. However, Asian Americans come from more than 20 countries. Therefore, for future studies, individuals from more countries should be studied to fully understand the experience of Asian Americans. I had a multi-race category to include those multi-racial people who share Asian descent. The regression demonstrates that among all seven ethnic groups, education and age have the biggest effects on income for people who are multi-racial. Does this mean that parents who choose interracial marriage would emphasize education more than those who are not? Thus, future research could take a closer look at the experience of people who are multiracial and parents who choose interracial marriage.

Lastly, to more thoroughly examine the segmented assimilation theory, more background information on immigrants should be included, such as parents' social-economic status, bilingual ability, the level of ethnic concentration, etc. If future researchers consider all of these elements thoroughly, they would have a better understanding of the assimilation process of immigrants.

Despite these limitations, this study shows that personal income and economic assimilation patterns vary from different Asian ethnic groups. As we seek to more fully understand Asian immigrant adaptation, we should keep these findings in mind.

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Table 1. Means and Standard Deviation for Variables (*N* = 16,521)

	Mean	SD
Income	56628.34	79197.681
Generation		
First	0.63	0.482
Second	0.26	0.436
Third	0.11	0.314
Age	43.20	11.166
Women	0.54	0.498
Education	14.99	2.984
Asian Subgroups		
Indian	0.22	0.417
Chinese	0.23	0.421
Filipino	0.20	0.401
Japanese	0.09	0.286
Korean	0.09	0.288
Vietnamese	0.11	0.309
Multi-race	0.06	0.229
Cities		
New York	0.09	0.286
Los Angeles	0.10	0.302
San Francisco	0.06	0.246
Honolulu	0.11	0.313

Table 2. Correlations (r) between Income and Other Thirteen Variables (Listwise deletion, two-tailed test, N = 16,521)

	First	Second	Third	Age	Women	Education	Indian	Chinese	Filipino	Japanese	Korean	Vietnamese	Multi-race	New York	Los Angeles	San Francisco	Honolulu
Income	-.045*	.047*	.003	.025*	-.197*	.300*	.005	.005	-.067*	.004	-.011	-.063*	-.002	.011	-.019	.035*	-.039*
First		-.770*	-.464*	.202*	.056*	-.019	.213*	.065*	-.005	-.213*	-.022	.045*	-.268*	.058*	-.009	-.011	-.201*
Second			-.207*	-.261*	-.056*	.046*	-.126*	-.013	.039*	-.057*	.070*	.017	.145*	-.006	.029*	.036*	-.028*
Third				.053*	-.008	-.035*	-.153*	-.082*	-.046*	.405*	-.065*	-.093*	.210*	-.081*	-.026*	-.032*	.347*
Age					.022	-.190*	-.154*	.022	.066*	.100*	.017	.041*	-.076*	.007	.039*	.012	.109*
Women						-.046*	-.056*	.005	.031*	.012	.024	.005	-.014	-.008	.008	-.015	-.001
Education							.233*	.035*	-.132*	.008	.022	-.204*	-.019	.009	-.016	-.001	-.109*
Indian								-.294*	-.270*	-.169*	-.171*	-.187*	-.130*	.107*	-.122*	-.028*	-.187*
Chinese									-.275*	-.172*	-.173*	-.189*	-.132*	.098*	.025*	.127*	-.084*
Filipino										-.158*	-.159*	-.174*	-.122*	-.084*	.018	-.003	.147*
Japanese											-.100*	-.109*	-.076*	-.048*	-.006	-.047*	.293*
Korean												-.110*	-.077*	.012	.073*	-.049*	-.043*
Vietnamese													-.084*	-.092*	.071*	-.030*	-.086*
Multi-race														-.059*	-.034*	-.015*	.043*
New York															-.105*	-.083*	-.110*
Los Angeles																-.088*	-.118*
San Francisco																	-.093*

* p < .001

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Table 3. Mean Personal Income for Generations by Asian Ethnic Groups

	First	Second	Third	(N)	Total
Indian	72073.96	78267.53	76096.90	(3713)	73116.95
Chinese	51770.86**	69624.81**	69684.67	(3800)	57300.03
Filipino	43596.36*	51323.16*	46996.40	(3329)	46114.73
Japanese	50854.39	61885.58	59992.28	(1481)	57532.17
Korean	46138.41**	66632.86**	55584.03	(1511)	53811.59
Vietnamese	37953.59**	53393.61**	40127.98	(1771)	42291.95
Multi-race	53542.04	61893.01	48986.70	(916)	56117.84

* $p < .01$; ** $p < .001$

Table 4. Regression of Personal Income on All Variables by Asian Ethnic Groups ($N = 16{,}521$)

	Indian	Chinese	Filipino	Japanese	Korean	Vietnamese	Multi-race
	β	β	β	β	β	β	β
First	-.048	-.098*	-.077*	-.056	-.138*	-.026	-.060
Third	-.005	.011	-.007	-.003	-.024	.005	-.084
Age	.132*	.127*	.094*	.085*	.120*	.049	.169*
Women	-.259*	-.143*	-.087*	-.214*	-.197*	-.122*	-.230*
Education	.257*	.332*	.270*	.258*	.268*	.290*	.348*
New York	-.022	.011	.043	-.015	.009	-.020	.013
Los Angeles	-.017	-.048	-.004	.022	-.014	.052	.042
San Francisco	.024	.033	.009	.042	.086*	-.003	.050
Honolulu	-.001	-.040	-.010	-.025	.004	-.027	.067
R^2	.153	.149	.092	.122	.142	.109	.195
df	(9,3703)	(9,3790)	(9,3319)	(9,1471)	(9,1501)	(9,1761)	(9,906)
F	74.545*	73.489*	37.402*	22.614*	27.541*	24.011*	24.317*
N	3713	3800	3329	1481	1511	1771	916

* $p < .001$
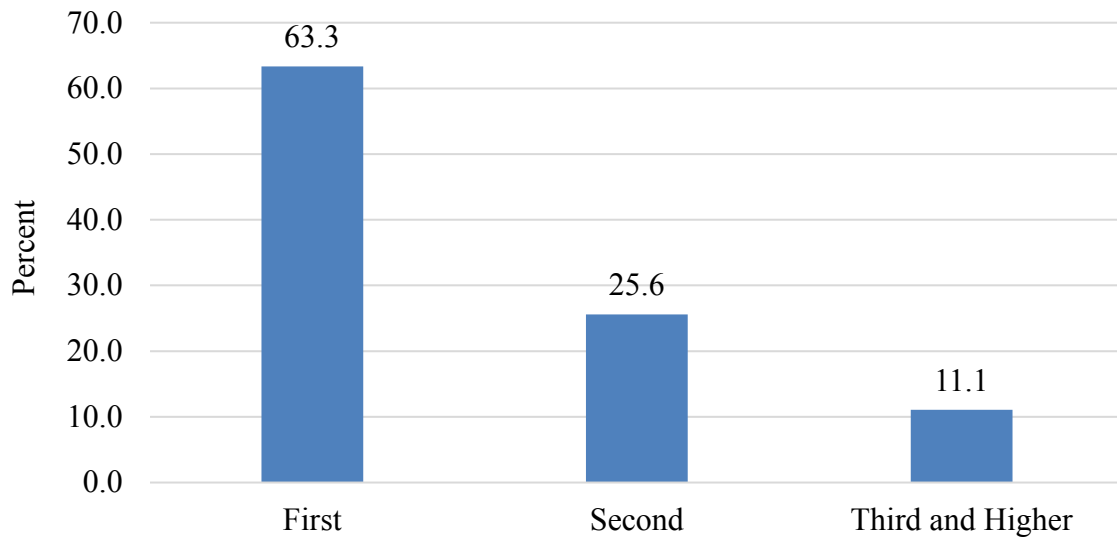
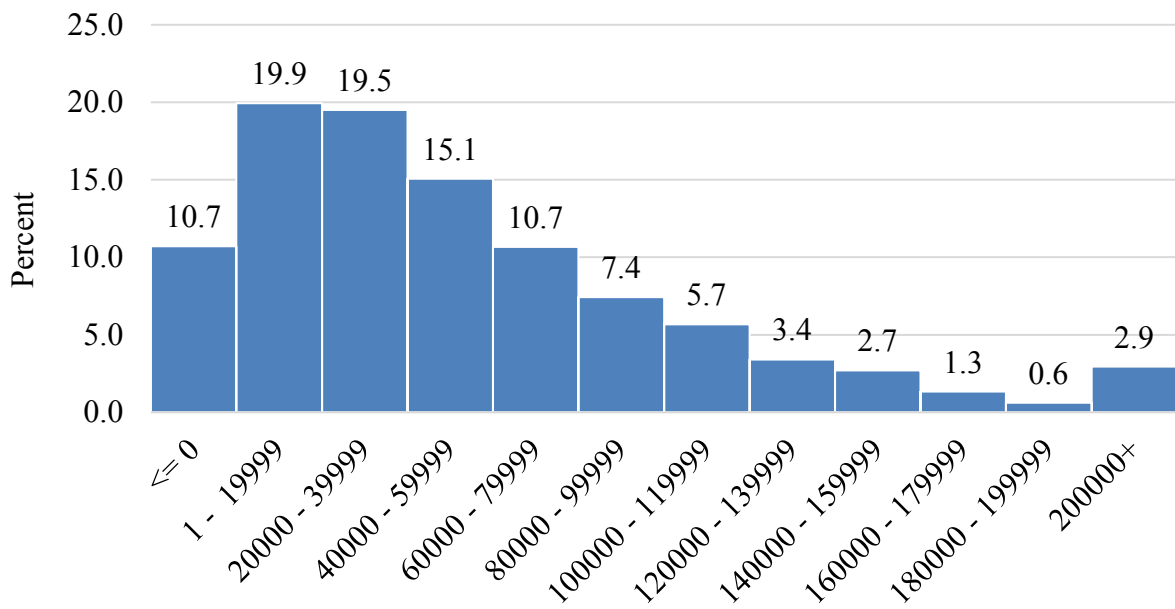Figure 1. Bar Graph of Respondent's Generation

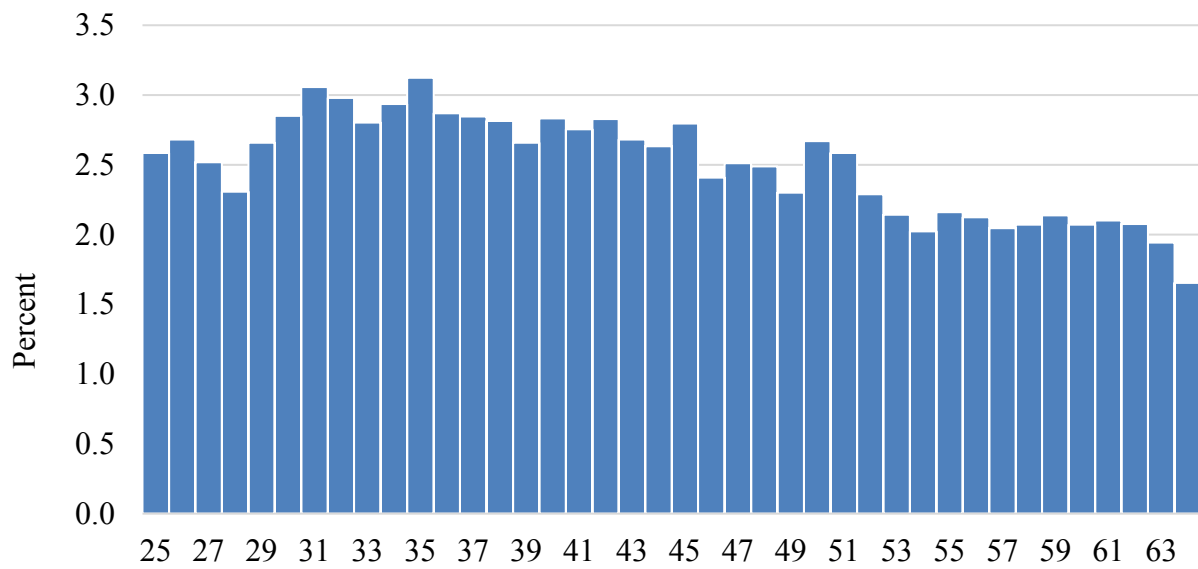Figure 2. Histogram of Respendent's Income

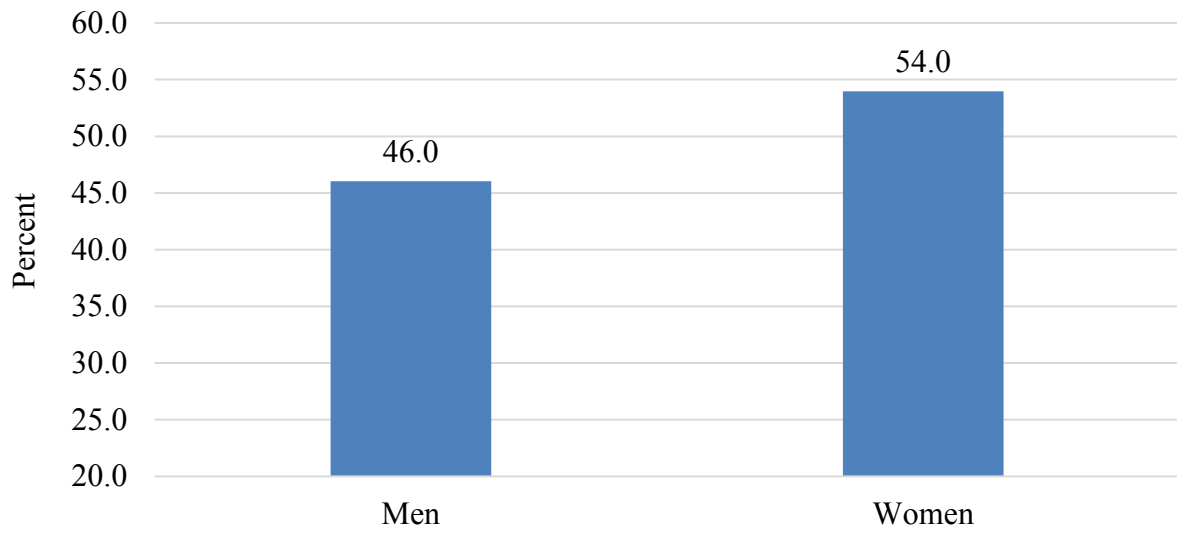Figure 3. Histogram of Respondent's Age
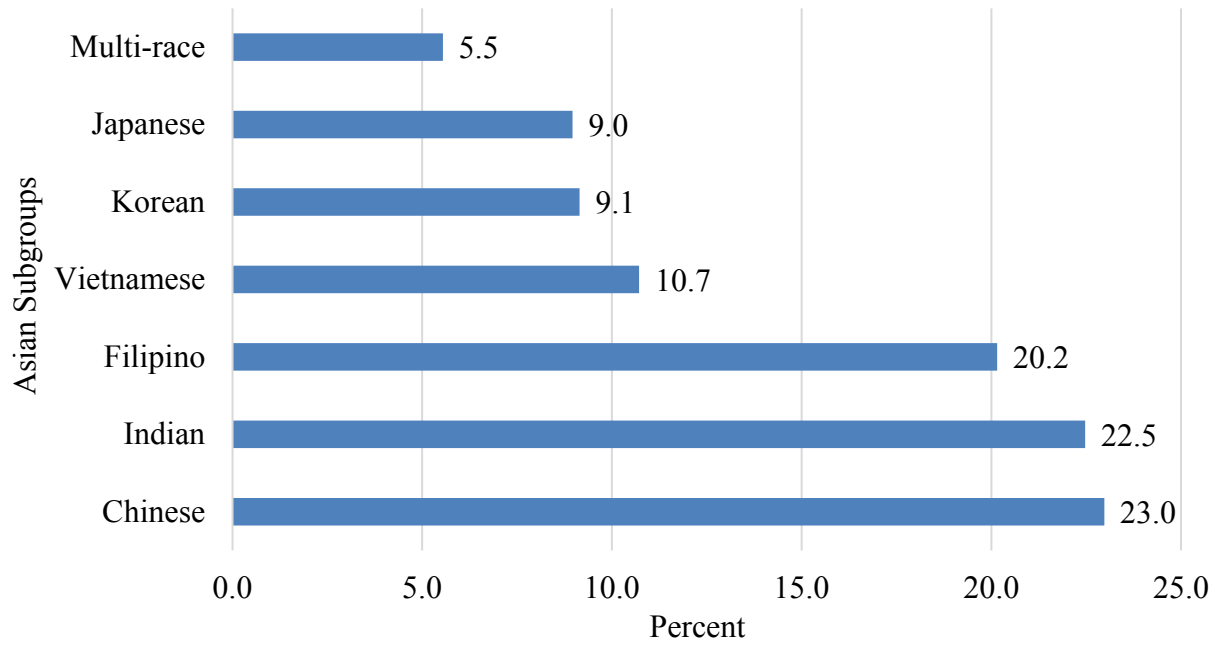
Figure 4. Bar Graph of Respondent's Sex

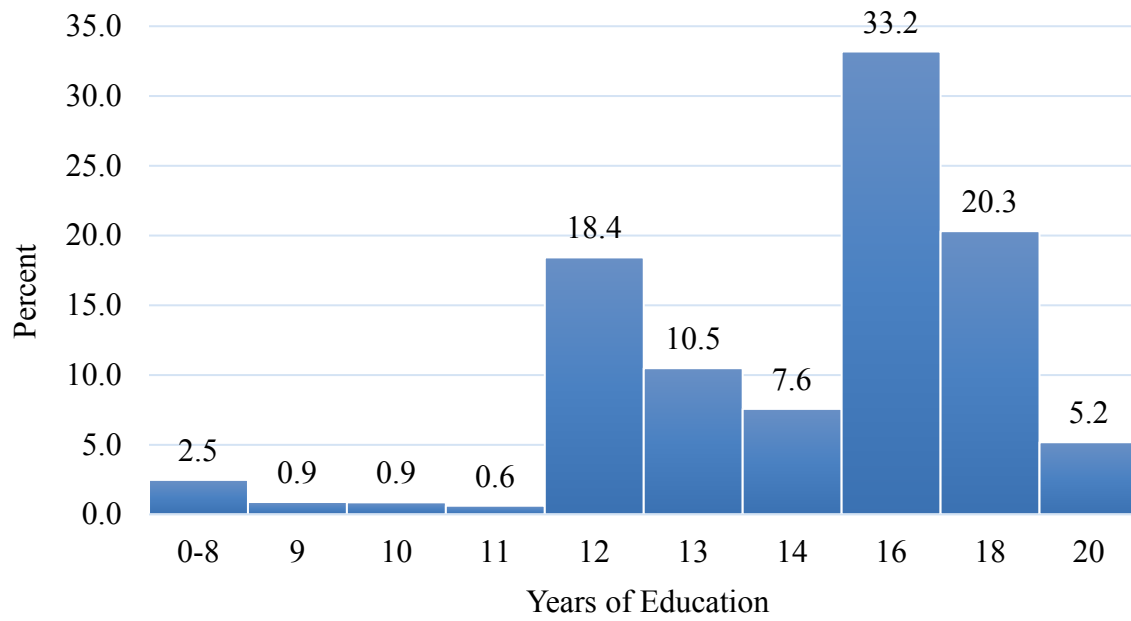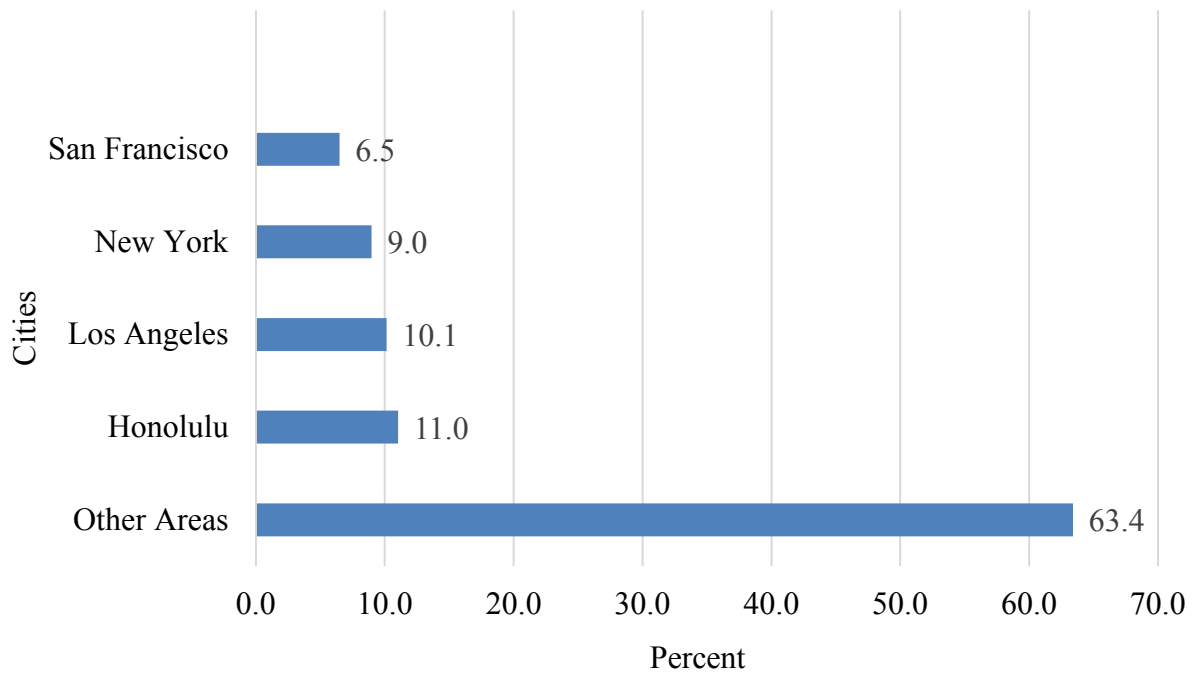Figure 5. Bar Graph of Respondent's Ethnic Group

Figure 6. Histogram of Respondent's Education

Figure 7. Bar Graph of Respondent's City