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Abstract- Asian Americans represent the fastest- growing, best-educated, and highest-income demographic in the United States. The successful status of Asians Americans is reflected in the fact that they are collectively associated with a "model minority" stereotype that characterizes them in terms of traits such as their being academically-oriented, high-achieving, studious, law-abiding and hard-working. Yet despite the apparent success of Asians Americans as a whole and the positive stereotypes associated with this minority, compared to other women of color, Asian women are significantly less likely to hold leadership positions.This study attempts to understand the reason for this gap.

Using a grounded theory methodology, this study explores the live experiences of 16 Asian American female middle managersin order to understand the influence of ethnicity and gender on their leadership experiences and career opportunities. The study's results reveal that the participants had complex and conflicting experiences that resulted in both opportunities and challenges.Participants sometimes benefited from the positive associations of their Asian ethnicity with qualities such as intelligence and diligence, and sometimes they face the demerits of being Asians, that reinforce a view of them being passive and lacking in leadership skills. Research also reveals the impact of gender identity over the career of working women.

Keywords: *asian-american, asian women, ethnicity, gender, leadership.*

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The Influence of Ethnicity and Gender on the Leadership Experiences of Female Asian-American Managers

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The study also shows that because of being women and those too from a minority, the Asian working women face difficulties in becoming part of local culture. That is, there exists an insider culture within corporate America that up-holds the importance of male-oriented leadership qualities and that does not allow Asian-American females to become a part of it.

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I. Introduction

The history of Asian immigration to the United States yields many insights about the nature of American society and its attitudes towards ethnic minorities. The Asian-American working women still face discrimination based on gender and ethnicity. The present study makes a contribution to the field by applying the analytical framework of previous studies on African American women (and other ethnic and gender groups) to Asian American women, and thereby makes an attempt to include them within the existing stream of scholarship on ethnicity, gender, and leadership.At the same time, since the study has adopted a grounded theory approach, an important objective is to generate an explanation or theory from the data collected.

a) Statement of the Problem

Inadequate representation of Asian American women in managerial positions (where they can learn and exercise leadership skills) and their exclusion from workplace diversity programs is problematic not only for scholars and policymakers but also for employers in the United States.

b) Rationale for Study

This study proposes to investigate three phenomena of interest as given below.

The influence of ethnicity on the leadership experiences of female Asian American managers, manifested through the "model minority" stereotype

The influence of gender on the leadership experiences of female Asian American managers

The influence of the interplay of ethnicity (through the influence of the "model minority" stereotype) and gender on the leadership experiences of female Asian American managers

c) Research Questions

How do female Asian American managers working for *Fortune 1000* firms in the United States experience and describe the influence of ethnicity and gender on their leadership experiences and career opportunities?

How do female Asian American managers experience and describe the influence of the "model minority" stereotype generally applied to Asian Americans?

How do female Asian American managers perceive the influence of their gender on their leadership experiences and career opportunities?

How does the interplay of ethnicity (operating through the "model minority" stereotype") and gender shape female Asian American managers' leadership experiences and career opportunities?

d) Significance of the Study

Asian American women are underrepresented in leadership roles in corporate America, in the feminist movement and they are even underrepresented in the

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research work. The present study is significant because it represents an effort to apply the analytical framework of previous studies on African American and Hispanic American women to Asian American women specifically, and to include them within the stream of scholarship on ethnicity, gender, and leadership. The researcher hopes that the study will open up novel areas of knowledge about Asian American women and it will serve the field of organization theory and management.

II. Literature Review

Before the 1960s, Asian immigrants were often stereotyped as "aliens," "outsiders," and "inassimilable foreigners" who could never integrate well into American life (Kawai 2005). They represented a cultural, economic, military, and political threat often referred to as the "yellow peril" and the fears arose from East Asia's large population, the potential economic and military power of China and imperial Japan. On the other end of the spectrum, the "model minority" stereotype came to be applied to Asian Americans beginning in the 1960s as a way to favorably distinguish their economic and educational success from the perceived backwardness and economic stagnation of African Americans (Kawai 2005).

Studies have shown the Asian Americans as "intelligent", "industrious", and "self-disciplined" compared to other ethnic groups (Yim, 1989 as cited in Taylor and Stern, 1997). Taylor and Stern (1997) opine that this positive stereotyping might be one factor that explains the paucity of research on Asian Americans – in comparison with African Americans and Hispanic Americans. In fact, the genesis of the *model minority* stereotype can be found in magazine articles which were then adopted by other media such as television advertising, primetime television series, and even Hollywood films (Zhang, 2010) and won praise from then-President Ronald Reagan (Kobayashi, 1999).

Taylor and Stern (1997) reviewing the findings of previous studies, noted that Asian Americans were depicted in the *print media* as "technically competent, hard-working, self-disciplined, serious, and well-assimilated". However, Li (2014) notes that the "model minority" myth is not exclusively positive – on the contrary, it racializes Asian Americans as "passive, lacking social skills, apolitical, submissive, and lacking the aggressiveness required for high-ranking managerial positions". Asian American women actually face abovementioned negative stereotypes combined with the *Dragon Girl* stereotype and feel smothered by them. To illustrate this, Li (2014) gives the example of the character of Tracy Tzu from the film *Year of the Dragon* (1985). Although Tracy Tzu is an upwardly mobile female professional, she is depicted as a passive and submissive woman who finally gets abused byworking-class police detective.

This perception of Asian-American working woman puts them at risk of sexual harassment. Li (2014) outlines several cases where Asian American women were subject to racialized sexual harassment. Roshan ravan (2009) opines that since the "model minority" view is an idealized construction that relies on denying the reality of discrimination, it prevents Asian American women from being considered women of color and deprives them of their honor. This analysis supports Ngan-Ling Chow's (2000) finding that Asian American women are underrepresented in the feminist movement.

In the late 1980s, it was estimated that 53.3% of the Asian American population in the United States was engaged in managerial or professional positions (Kern, 1988, as cited by Taylor & Stern, 1997). However, there was no data available about Asian-American working women, until Yamanaka and McClelland (1994) used a sample of 39,701 Asian women and found out that they worked more hours in comparison with non-Hispanic white women. Kim and Zhao (2014) proved that Asian American women are more likely to be unemployed and less likely to achieve managerial positions.

Eng and Layne's (2007) study reveals that while female Asian-American engineers had similar education levels compared to others, they were less sure about their abilities, they cited gender and racial discrimination as a real barrier, they were less satisfied with support facilities and advancement opportunities and less satisfied in respect of the confidence that their supervisors showed in them. The evidence shows that Asian American women not being promoted to managerial roles because of views that Asian Americans, particularly women, are "introverted" and "inarticulate" Eng and Layne's (2007).

Asian-American women face discrimination for not only being Asian, but also for being women. Tang (1997) refers to this as the "double penalty" thesis where women of color are dually disadvantaged for being women as well as ethnic minorities. The researcher also shows Asian American women occupy only "marginal positions" in management. Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) describe the challenges faced by women in respect of leadership opportunities; they mention that because leadership is associated with manly traits e.g. dominance and strength, women are ignore.

Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) note that women of color must navigate "gendered racism," wherein the woman of color must decide if the prejudice she faces is due to her ethnicity, gender, or some other aspect of her identity, and formulate a response accordingly. In 2002, the Asian Pacific American Women's Leadership Institute's (APAWLI) study "Leadership challenges and opportunities: An Asian American and Pacific Islander Woman's Lens" revealed found that in corporate America, fewer than 0.5% of the

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positions on corporate boards and corporate office officer ranks were held by Asian American women.

"Glass Ceiling" is a phenomenon that refers to an invisible block that prevents ethnic minorities and women from reaching the top positions with organizations "regardless of their qualifications or achievements" (as cited in Cotter et al., 2001, p. 656). a majority of respondents in the Catalyst Research Center's (2003) seminal study on Asian American women in business indicated that mentors were needed to aid in professional development and thus evade the *glass ceiling*. However, Batra's (2001) findings show that mentoring helps men more than women.

III. Research Methodology

This study is an attempt to understand the leadership experiences of female Asian American managers working in corporate America from their own perspectives. Since the study focuses on their lived experiences and seeks to elicit a depth of rich, detailed information from participants, a qualitative approach is appropriate (Creswell, 2007).

a) Research Design

The choice of grounded theory has also been carefully considered. The study adopts a grounded theory approach to methodology to investigate the influence of ethnicity and gender on the leadership experiences of female Asian American managers in corporate America. To explore these issues, the study uses a classic grounded theory research design, consisting of analyzing data from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a sample of female Asian American managers working with *Fortune 1000* firms in the United States.

b) Target & Sample Population

The research population for the study consists of female Asian American managers working in the United States for *Fortune 1000* firms at mid-level management positions. The sample population was defined to in cludefemale Asian American managers working for *Fortune 1000* firms, who are resident in the southwestern United States. Sample size turned out to be 16.

c) Sampling Technique

Due to the absence from the public domain of any contact information for mid-level managers working at private firms, the present study relied on a snowball sampling technique, using the researcher's personal and professional contacts as well as third-party organizations.

d) Data Collection & Data Analysis

The following instruments of data collection were used in this study:

i. *Demographic questionnaire*

The demographic questionnaire constructed for the proposed study is presented in Appendix D. The demographic questionnaire consists of both screening and substantivequestions. This data has been used to undertake a separate quantitative analysis of sample frame and sample characteristics.. The points of analysis for the sample frame and the sample were: age, level of educational attainment, tenure of managerial experience, and job function/designation. Microsoft Excel analytical tools were used for this analysis.

ii. *Semi-structured interview guide*

The semi-structured interview guide was the principal data collection instrument constructed for the study – please see Appendix Efor the guide as initially formulated.The member-checked transcripts with annotations and supplementary information were used for analysis. The "Import" feature of the QSR NVivo 9 qualitative research software allows a one-step import of transcripts, and a code was assigned to each transcript upon import.

iii. *Researcher's notes and memos*

Researcher notes and memos are important to establish the trustworthiness of the study (Charmaz, 2006) please see Appendix Ffor the notes that were taken after each interview.). The recording of the researcher's ideas in a systematic manner is known as memoing, and is undertaken during both data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2006). For the memoing stage of this study, the two diaries referred to in the preceding section (the reflexive journal and the researcher's notes) were analyzed and notes and ideas expressed therein were mapped to specific transcripts, notes, and categories within NVivo

Reflexive journal

A reflexive journal helps acknowledge and "bracket" biases and beliefs while undertaking research(Tufford & Newman, 2012).Appendix Gpresents the researcher's reflexive journal.

IV. Findings & Recommendations

The findings and the recommendations that arise from this research are following:

a) Findings

i. *Complicated influence of identity on career trajectory*

The majority of the participants agreed that the influence of their identity over their career is complicated. While some of them enjoy the benefits of being Asian-American women, some argue that it is the very reason why they are not at key positions.

ii. *Ambivalence about the model minority stereotype*

Likewise, the views of the participants about model minority stereo type, are also complex and

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uncertain. While some of them believe that model minority stereotype is actually positive, many consider it a false-representation of the Asian-American ethnic minority.

iii. *Complicated views about Asian culture*

Participants expressed the fact that Asian culture generally, and parenting culture within Asian families specifically, in fact, reinforce and support the development of a number of personality traits that conform to the model minority stereotype including conformity, obedience, hard work, discipline, and humility.

iv. *Complicated feelings about self-identified personal characteristics*

Many of the participants expressed the fact that the model minority stereotype was grounded in reality and reinforced by Asian culture. However, other participants noted that, to a certain extent, their behavior did not always conform to the racial and gender stereotypes about Asian women.

v. *Opportunities and challenges of being Asian in the workplace*

In many cases, the participants noted that perceptions of Asian Americans in the workplace conformed to the model minority stereotype, yet they expressed frustration with what they perceived as the view that Asian are essentially obedient work horses who lack the assertiveness and soft skills to be genuine leaders.

vi. *Opportunities and challenges experienced by women and minorities working in corporate America*

Many participants emphasized that, like American society more generally, corporate America is changing and becoming more diverse and that there are greater opportunities for women and minorities. However some participants also highlighted the fact that women in their organizations, and in corporate America more generally, still face the *glass ceiling*

vii. *Complicated personal experiences in the workplace*

Some participants emphasized that they were able to seize opportunities for self-actualization, personal empowerment, and career growth "by leveraging their Asian culture." However, some others talked about the subtle cultural disconnect between them and their colleagues that created barriers around socializing, and how cultural differences do not lead just to barriers in socializing with colleagues, but alsodifficulty conforming to the norms of American corporate culture.

b) Recommendations

Organizations can continue to support the career development of Asian women through mentoring programs since they help against the *glass ceiling* phenomenon.

Organizations can continue to support the career development of Asian women through developing policies and procedures in the hiring and internal development process that ensure equal opportunities for qualified minorities.

Organizations can continue to support the career development of Asian women through setting goals and objectives that ensure there is a pipeline of qualified internal candidates to fill leadership positions as they become available.

Most important, is to ensure that as the positions become available the candidates are prepared for the role and not set up for failure. This can be alleviated by starting at the internship level with Asian women coming into the organization.

Organizations should develop a culture of ethnic diversity and pay optimum attention to it.

V. Limitations & Ethical Considerations

The use of snowball sampling means that not all members of the research population had an equal chance of selection in the sample. However, as this is a qualitative study on an under-researched population, it was necessary to yield an authentic sample. Further, since the study used snowball sampling to construct the sample frame, researcher made sure that personal contacts are strictly limited to disseminating the Call for Participants, any interested individual should use a personal, rather than company, email address or phone to contact the researcher and she refrains from discussing the names or other identifying details of prospective participants.

The scope of this study was limited to Asian American female middle managers working in *Fortune 1000* companies. It did not include Asian American women working for small, medium and family-owned enterprises, academic or governmental institutions or those employed as independent contractors. This study relied on qualitative data obtained through in depth, face-to-face interviews using open-ended questions and the collection and analysis of the data was carried out solely by the researcher. To ensure the security of important data the researcher has ensured that participant responses to the demographic questionnaire and interview recordings and transcripts have been appropriately anonymized and kept confidential.

VI. Conclusion

This study explored the lived experiences of Asian American female middle managers working in *Fortune 1000* with a view to understanding the influence of ethnicity and gender on their leadership experiences and career opportunities. The study's results revealed

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that the participants had complex and conflicting experiences that resulted in both opportunities and challenges. One of the principal findings of this study was the existence of an insider culture within corporate America that upholds the importance of male-orientated personality traits and leadership qualities and that is often cemented through an enthusiasm for sports and drinking activities.

Since, as many participants emphasized, American corporate culture encourages outgoing personality traits, the view that Asians are passive had the potential to put them at a disadvantage and limit their career potential. Participants noted that gender could have a similarly limiting effect on career potential.. As the participants revealed, both women and minorities may have difficulties conforming to the norms and values of this culture, or they may be subjected to a negative double standard if they attempt to do so. Thus, they may be unable to penetrate insider culture, effectively coming against a glass ceiling as they attempt to move beyond middle management. In advancing these findings, this study strongly supports the existing research and it sheds further light on how the phenomenon of the glass ceiling operates with organizations.

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Appendix A: Call for Participants for THE Study

Call for Research Participants

My name is Alesia Nichols, and I am a doctoral student at Capella University. I am working on a study on female Asian American managers in corporate America. The purpose of the study is to understand how ethnicity and gender influence the leadership experiences and career opportunities of female Asian American managers, especially those working for *Fortune 1000* firms. My larger aim is to generate a theory or model that can explain how gender intersects with ethnicity to affect the professional lives of female Asian American managers. This study has been approved by the Capella IRB: {number} dated {date}.

I am requesting interested individuals to volunteer for the study. To be part of the study, you should meet the following criteria:

Identify as Asian American of Chinese, Japanese, or Korean ethnicity
Identify as female
Be employed for a *Fortune 1000* organization, or a large firm
Live in the United States
Have at least five cumulative years of managerial experience. Experience does not have to be consecutive.

Not be known to me in a personal or professional capacity, or be an employee, vendor, contractor or consultant for my most recent employer General Electric

If you would like to consider participation in this study, please email me. You will be requested to complete a short demographic questionnaire to determine your eligibility for participation based on the criteria outlined for the study (some of which are listed above). If you are unsure if you meet any of the study criteria, please email me for clarification.

Your participation in the study will consist EITHER of one 60 to 90-minute interview conducted face-to-face or through Skype video conferencing OR one 45-minute telephone interview which may be followed by a brief follow-up call. I will explain the terms of your participation and your rights as participant during the informed consent process undertaken prior to the interview; at that point, I will request you to sign a consent form.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please use personal, rather than work, email to get in touch. This is to protect your anonymity and the confidentially of your communication concerning your participation in the study.

Please get in touch with me directly rather than through the referring individual or organization. To protect your anonymity, it is important that you not disclose to anyone (except close family and friends you trust) that you are considering participation in this study.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in participating in the study, please do not contact me about them or give me their contact details. Please send this Call for Research Participants to them and advise them that they should get in touch with me directly if they are interested in participation.

This is a volunteer activity and there is no payment offered for participation.

In accordance with federal law and Capella University guidelines, all information about you will be maintained securely and confidentially. Your anonymity will be assured at all times leading up to, during, and after

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your participation in the study. You will be given an opportunity to review and approve the interview transcript to ensure that your views and experiences have been accurately represented

Appendix B: List of Third-Party Organizations Contacted

Name of Organization	Web URL
Asian American Journalists Association	www.aaja.org
Leadership Association for Asian Pacifics	http://www.leap.org/
National Association of Asian American Professionals *(national group as well as regional chapters)*	http://www.naaap.org/ http://www.naaap.org/Chapters/OurChapters.aspx
National Association of Asian MBAs	http://www.ascendnaamba.org/
Corporate Asian American Employee Network	http://www.caaen.org/home
Center for Asian Pacific American Women	http://www.apawomen.org/
Asian Women in Business	http://awib.org/index.cfm?nodeid=1
Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers	http://www.saseconnect.org/
Association of Asian American Yale Alumni	http://aaaya.org/
Harvard Asian American Alumni	http://www.haaaa.net/
University of Illinois Asian American Alumni Network	http://www.uiaaan.org/
Asian American Alumni Association of Princeton	http://www.a4princeton.org/
Asian American Alumni of Vanderbilt University	http://www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/asian-american-alumni.php
Asian American Alumni Alliance (Brown Alumni Association)	https://alumni.brown.edu/orgs/a4/
University of Pennsylvania Asian Alumni Network	http://www.upaan.org/
Berkeley Asian American Pacific Islander Alumni	http://alumni.berkeley.edu/community/alumni-chapters/cultural/asian-berkeley-asian-american-pacific-islander-alumni
Berkeley Asian American Pacific Islander Alumni	http://alumni.berkeley.edu/community/alumni-chapters/cultural/asian-berkeley-asian-american-pacific-islander-alumni
Asian and Asian Pacific American Alumni Network at the University of Virginia	http://aig.alumni.virginia.edu/aapaan/
Stanford Asian Pacific American Alumni Club	http://www.sapaac.org/
Indiana University Asian Alumni Association	http://alumni.indiana.edu/affiliates/asian/about/index.html
University of Southern California Asian Pacific Alumni Association	http://alumnigroups.usc.edu/apaa/
Tufts Asian American Alumni Association	http://tuftsalumni.org/connect-with-alumni/shared-interest-groups/asian-american-alumni-association/
Association of Asian American Investment Managers	http://www.aaaim.org/index.php

Appendix C: Email to Prospective Research Participants

Dear {Name},

Thank you for getting in touch with me and expressing an interest in participating in my study on female Asian American managers in corporate America. The purpose of the study is to understand how ethnicity and gender influence the leadership experiences and career opportunities of female Asian American managers working in corporate America. My larger aim is to generate a theory or model that can explain how gender intersects with ethnicity to affect the professional lives of female Asian American managers. This study has been approved by the Capella IRB.

In order to determine your eligibility for the study, please complete the following short demographic questionnaire here:

Your responses on the demographic questionnaire will help me determine if you meet the inclusion criteria for the study. If you respond to this questionnaire, you will be placed in a participant pool from which the researcher may select you and invite your participation in the study described above. The decision to invite your participation based on the questionnaire responses rests with the researcher. Additionally, choosing to respond to this

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questionnaire does not place any obligation on you to participate in the study, even if you are shortlisted by the researcher.

If you are shortlisted for participation, the researcher will explain the terms of your participation, the risks involved, and your rights as a participant – at this point, she will request that you sign a consent form. Participation in this study will consist of an in-depth interview with the researcher, either directly face-to-face or through Skype video conferencing (60 to 90 minutes), or through the telephone (45 minutes initially with a possible short follow-up call). The interview will be scheduled at your convenience so as not to disrupt your schedule.

If you are invited to participate in the study by the researcher and you accept the invitation, the following measures will be taken to protect you and ensure the integrity of the study data:

You will be given the opportunity to review the interview transcript and make modifications for accuracy and completeness. At that point, you may even add notes and comments to illustrate your perspective better.

Any identifying information you provide to the researcher, such as name, contact details, or employer name, will be kept strictly confidential and will not be disclosed except to the researcher, her dissertation supervisor, and members of the dissertation committee.

Each research participant will be assigned a unique code; all information pertaining to a participant will be tagged using this code only. Your identity will be withheld from any written reports or publications arising from the study, and study data will be anonymized suitably to protect your confidentiality.

Although the level of risk arising from participation in the study is characterized as "Minimal" according to federal guidelines, there are still some risks to participation. These will be explained during the informed consent process once you accept the researcher's invitation to participate in the study.

You have the right to end your participation in the study at any time without penalty and without assigning any reason.

The researcher does not anticipate any harm coming to you from completing this questionnaire. The same level of protection afforded to study data will also be afforded to all questionnaire responses. Your questionnaire responses may be used in the data analysis or as part of the study findings even if you are not shortlisted for participation in the study. You may terminate your participation in the questionnaire at any time. You have the right to request, at any time even after submitting the questionnaire, that your name be withdrawn from consideration for participation in the study.

Appendix D: Demographic Screening Questionnaire

Pre-Questionnaire Screen

Thank you for your interest in my doctoral study at Capella University. The purpose of the study is to understand how ethnicity and gender influence the leadership experiences and career opportunities of female Asian American managers in corporate America. The study will focus on the lived experiences and perspectives of those that are selected to participate; the larger aim is to generate a theory or model that can explain how gender intersects with ethnicity to affect the professional lives of female Asian American managers. In order to determine if you are eligible to participate in the study, the researcher requests that you complete a short demographic questionnaire.

Please Note: If you respond to this questionnaire, you will be placed in a participant pool from which the researcher may select you and invite your participation in the study described above. The decision to invite your participation based on the questionnaire responses rests with the researcher. Additionally, choosing to respond to this questionnaire does not place any obligation on you to participate in the study, even if you are shortlisted by the researcher. If you are shortlisted for participation, the researcher will explain the terms of your participation, the risks involved, and your rights as a participant – at this point, she will request that you sign a consent form. Participation in this study will consist of an in-depth interview with the researcher, either directly face-to-face or through Skype video conferencing (60 to 90 minutes), or through the telephone (45 minutes initially with a possible short follow-up call). The interview will be scheduled at your convenience so as not to disrupt your schedule.

If you are invited to participate in the study by the researcher and you accept the invitation, the following measures will be taken to protect you and ensure the integrity of the study data:

You will be given the opportunity to review the interview transcript and make modifications for accuracy and completeness. At that point, you may even add notes and comments to illustrate your perspective better.

Any identifying information you provide to the researcher, such as name, contact details, or employer name, will be kept strictly confidential and will not be disclosed except to the researcher, her dissertation supervisor, and members of the dissertation committee.

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Each research participant will be assigned a unique code; all information pertaining to a participant will be tagged using this code only. Your identity will be withheld from any written reports or publications arising from the study, and study data will be anonymized suitably to protect your confidentiality.

Although the level of risk arising from participation in the study is characterized as "Minimal" according to federal guidelines, there are still some risks to participation. These will be explained during the informed consent process once you accept the researcher's invitation to participate in the study.

You have the right to end your participation in the study at any time without penalty and without assigning any reason.

The researcher does not anticipate any harm coming to you from completing this questionnaire. The same level of protection afforded to study data will also be afforded to all questionnaire responses. Your questionnaire responses may be used in the data analysis or as part of the study findings even if you are not shortlisted for participation in the study. You may terminate your participation in the questionnaire at any time by clicking on the "Opt Out" button. Should you have any questions at any time (even after you have submitted the questionnaire) or should you wish to withdraw your name from consideration after submission of the questionnaire, please contact me at {email ID} or {phone}. You have the right to request, at any time, that your name be withdrawn from consideration for participation in the study.

Demographic Questionnaire

Please choose the most appropriate response to the following questions or enter a response in the space provided. In case of open-ended questions, please be as descriptive as possible.

Are you personally acquainted with the researcher Alesia Nichols?
Yes
No
Do you identify as male or female?
Male
Female
Both or Neither
What is your present status in the United States?
Citizen or National
Permanent resident (holder of a Green Card)
Holder of an immigrant visa (IV) or non-immigrant visa (NIV)
Other
I do not currently live in the United States
Do you self-identify as an Asian American of Chinese, Japanese or Korean ethnicity?
Yes, I self-identify as an Asian American of Chinese ethnicity
Yes, I self-identify as an Asian American of Japanese ethnicity
Yes, I self-identify as an Asian American of Korean ethnicity
I self-identify as an Asian American but my ethnicity is other than Chinese, Japanese, and Korean
No, I do not self-identify as an Asian American
What is your employment status?
Permanent, full-time Employee
Permanent, part-time Employee
Temporary Employee (whether part-time or full-time)
Independent Contractor
Consultant
Director
Other
Please state the name of your principal employer: _____
Do you currently work with General Electric in any capacity – employee, contractor, vendor, or otherwise?
Yes
No
I'm not sure
Are you currently a member of your employing organization's Board of Directors, a major shareholder with voting rights, owner, promoter or do you have a close family relationship with such individuals?
Yes
No
I'm not sure

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Please state your principal place of residence: _____
What is your present job title? _____
In your present job, do you have individual or joint responsibility for project execution?
Yes
No
I'm not sure
In your present job, do you have individual or joint supervisory responsibility over other employees?
Yes, but with fewer than three direct reports
Yes, with at least three direct reports
No
I'm not sure
In your present job, do you have the authority to take recruitment, promotion, and termination decisions for direct or indirect reports?
Yes
No
I don't know

How many full years of management experience (at all levels, including entry-level management) do you have within the United States? Exclude any management experience gained overseas.
Less than five years
Five to ten years
Ten to fifteen years
More than fifteen years
Briefly provide an overview of your career in a management or leadership role: _____
Briefly describe your experience as an Asian American manager in corporate America. Does your ethnicity affect your experiences? _____
Briefly describe your experience as a female manager in corporate America. Does your gender affect your experiences? _____
Has there been an incident in your career as manager where ethnic identity or gender has affected either your actions or those of others? Please outline the incident(s) very briefly: _____
In your work as a manager, have others (colleagues, managers, and subordinates) ever made reference to your ethnic identity or gender? _____
Are you willing to participate in a 60 to 90 minute face-to-face or Skype video conferencing interview, or a shorter telephonic interview, to talk about your experiences as a female Asian American manager in corporate America?
Yes
No

If you answered Yes to the previous question, please provide your name, a personal email address, a personal phone number (landline or mobile), and indicate the best time of day to get in touch with you outside of work. Given the nature of the study, please DO NOT provide work contact details: _____
Please click on the 'submit' button to submit your responses. Your data will be transmitted over an encrypted server and will be held securely in accordance with Capella University's information security policies.

Post-Questionnaire Screen

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. The researcher will review your responses and determine if you meet all the inclusion criteria for participation in the study. In case you are shortlisted to receive an invitation to participate, the researcher will contact you using the details you have provided in the questionnaire. Once contact is established, the researcher will review the nature and purpose of the study and discuss the terms of your participation, including your rights as a research participant. You will be requested to sign a consent form for participation in the study at that time. You are under no obligation to participate as a consequence of having completed the questionnaire – the decision to participate is your own. Once the consent procedure is completed, the researcher will schedule an interview at a date and time that is convenient to you, and will send a follow-up email to confirm the details.

In case you do not hear from the researcher, this means that you have not been shortlisted for participation in the study. However, the responses you have provided in the questionnaire may be used in the data analysis or study findings. In either case, all your data will be held securely and confidentially.
In case you have any questions, please feel free to contact the researcher as follows.

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Appendix E: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Introductory statements

Thank you for agreeing to speak to me today. I appreciate you agreeing to participate in this study on the influence of ethnicity and gender on the leadership experiences of female Asian American managers. This interview is expected to last for 60 – 90 minutes.

I want to confirm that I have received a signed consent form from you for your participation in this study. I would like to remind you that you are free to withdraw your consent at any time and stop the interview. You do not need to continue if you feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview.

{Review the signed informed consent form with the participant} Let us go over your informed consent form in more detail…

You will receive a copy of your signed consent form within 48 hours after the conclusion of the interview, for your records.

{Explain the purpose of the study in using non-technical terms}

Do you have any questions before we start the interview? In case you want to ask any questions during the course of the interview, please feel free to stop me and ask.

Opening checklist

All introductory statements above have been made
Signed informed consent form has been reviewed
The purpose of the study has been discussed
All participant queries have been addressed

Questions

Interviewer notes: The numbered questions correspond to the main constructs under investigation in the study. The sub-questions below each numbered question can be used as leads and probes when deemed necessary by the interviewer to seek more information about the participant's experiences.

How does your identity as an Asian American affect you in the workplace? Do you think it affects your work as a manager?
Can you tell me about any specific incidents or examples?
How do you feel about your Asian American identity?
Do you approach a work-related matter differently because you're Asian American? Can you give me an example?
Do you avoid certain kinds of things because of your Asian American cultural background?

Have you ever felt that because you are an Asian American, your colleagues, managers, and others you have worked with have made certain assumptions about you or treated you in a certain way, whether positively or negatively?
Do you have any specific examples or incidents in mind?
Why do you think they made those assumptions or treated you differently?
Did you react to their behavior? If so, how did you react?
Did their conduct affect your own work in any way?
Have you heard of the term "model minority"? Do you think it affects your work as a manager?
Do you think it affects the way your colleagues, managers, and others in the workplace interact with you?
Do you have any specific examples or incidents in mind?
What do you feel about being a member of an ethnic group called a "model minority"?
Do you think it is a positive thing or does it place a burden on you to behave a certain way?
How does your identity as a woman affect you in the workplace?
Do you think it affects your work as a manager? Can you recall any specific incidents or events?
Do you bring your perspective as a woman to bear upon your work? Can you recall any specific examples of when you did that?
Are there activities or behaviors that you are more likely to engage in, because you are a woman? Can you explain?
Are there activities or behaviors that you are less likely to engage in, because you are a woman? Can you explain?
Have you ever felt that because you are a woman, your colleagues, managers, and others you have worked with have made certain assumptions or treated you in a certain way, whether positively or negatively?
Do you have any specific examples or incidents in mind?
Why do you think they made those assumptions or treated you differently?
Did you react to their behavior? If so, how did you react?
Did their conduct affect your own work in any way?

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Do you think your identity as a woman has affected your career path, progression and any managerial or leadership opportunities available in your organization?
Do you have any specific examples or incidents in mind?
How did these incidents or examples make you feel?
Do you think your career trajectory would have been different in any way if you were a man?
Does your organization encourage female managers to be leaders?
Do you think that a white man in your position would be treated differently by colleagues, managers, and others in the workplace?
Why do you believe this? Have you observed any incidents of different treatment?
Do you think an Asian American man *[emphasize the word 'man']* in your position would also be treated differently?
Do you think that being both a woman and an Asian American affect the way you are perceived by others? Does this result in different treatment?
Do you think your career path and progression would have been different if you had been a man?
Why do you believe this? Have you observed any incidents where different opportunities were available to men and women?
Do you think an Asian American man *[emphasize the word 'Asian American']* would also have a different career path and progression?
Do you think that being both a woman and an Asian American have affected your career progression?
Would you like to tell me anything else about your experiences as a manager before we close this interview?

Closing checklist
Thank the participant for her time.
Inform the participant about member checking i.e. that they will receive a written transcript of the interview via email for review, modification, and comments. Explain the purpose of the member checking process.
Inform the participant that she can withdraw from the study at any time, even after the transcript of the interview has been prepared.

Special Situation: Participant Distress
If the participant starts to sob, cry, or otherwise display visible and strong emotion during the interview, the researcher will STOP the interview and follow these steps:
Speak in a soothing tone of voice and ask if everything is alright. Ask if the participant wishes to take a drink of water or visit the restroom.
If the distress continues after this, ask the participation if she would prefer to:

Continue after a brief pause Stop the interview for the day and resume at a later date End her participation in the interview altogether

Option 1: Take a 15 to 30 minute break and leave the room to allow the participant to recover in private. Alternatively, the participant may be gently requested to step outside and get some fresh air. Turn the audio recording function off when taking a break. Resume once the participant has indicated that she is comfortable continuing. Record the duration of the pause and your impressions of the participant's demeanor during the episode.

Option 2: Stop the interview. Ask the participant if she would prefer that you remain with her for some time or leave the immediate vicinity to allow the participant to recover in private. Follow the participant's wishes. Once the participant is composed, take your leave and inform the participant that you will call or email to reschedule the interview. Thank the participant for her time and apologize for the distress caused.

Option 3: Stop the interview. Ask the participant if she would prefer that you remain with her for some time or leave the immediate vicinity to allow the participant to recover in private. Follow the participant's wishes. Once the participant is composed, take your leave and inform the participant that you her participation in the study has been terminated at her request. Thank the participant for her time and apologize for the distress caused.
For all three options, before leaving, inform the participant that she should seek counseling in case she thinks it necessary to cope with the distress caused.
In all three cases, record your observations of the participant's demeanor during and after the episode, and also note down your impressions of any specific question/comment that may have caused distress to the participant. In other words, document the adverse event in your notes.
Report the adverse event to Capella's Human Research Protection Program (HRPP), in accordance with 45 CFR 46.103(b)(5).

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Appendix F: Post-Interview Notes

Post Interview Notes
Participant 1 Buys into the MM stereotype and thinks that Asians, particularly Asian women, work hard. She emphasizes that diversity is really important to the company that she works for and she has noticed a big demographic change in her workplace (it used to be 90 % men in top positions but now it is only 50%). I wonder if her experiences would have been different if she had children?
Participant 2 Good interview and rapport. I handled the interview professionally. Not too leading with my questions. Highlights: she describes herself as feeling very American. She feels that, as a minority, she has to represent Asians in a positive light. She feels that her upbringing has emphasized respect and family and so her life experiences may be different as a result. She feels that the model minority stereotype is true, to a certain extent, but that are many Asians that don't fit the stereotype. They are just less visible. She is in a male dominated role but noted that in more junior roles there is gender parity. She notes that things are changing as corporate culture changes. Initiatives are resulting in more women in leadership roles
Participant 3 Good interview. KT expressed that it was a good experience at the end. She described growing up in a not very diverse middle class and mostly white neighborhood. Doesn't feel that she has been affected by racism. In her understanding of the model minority stereotype there is a lot of emphasis on Asian people being quiet and polite. She suggests that the stereotype is not unfounded as far as her personal upbringing is concerned but that it is damaging because it places so much emphasis on being high achieving.
Participant 4 She emphasized that she is very outgoing and that, in her opinion, there are two types of Asian women -- one type that are very shy and passive, the other type that are very aggressive and outgoing. She is the outgoing type. Believes that the MM stereotype is reinforced by super strict Asian parents pushing their kids to get top marks and that Asian parents are very concerned with their children's success. She sees her opportunities as being much more limited by gender than by race. She thinks that without quotas and external pressures that women's career paths would be much more limited. She very much feels that the upper echelons of corporate America are a man's world -- particularly a white man's world and that there is a definite glass ceiling.
Participant 5 Participant emphasizes that her Asian culture has been a huge part of her life and that she grew up in predominantly Asian environment in NY. She feels more comfortable around people who are ethnically similar to her and has mostly surrounded herself with other Asians. She seems to buy into some aspects of the MM stereotype and noted that, as a result of her culture, she tends to be more polite and soft spoken, and more careful about how she expresses herself. She notes that she is naturally shy, so that informs her behavior in the workplace as well. That said, she also feels very American. She thinks that the MM stereotype can be very harmful if you don't live up to the high expectations. She noted that she has "leveraged her culture" to advance professionally by applying for scholarships and internships for minorities.
Participant 6 Grew up feeling conflicted about her identity as an AA but has since embraced it. She is very familiar with the MM stereotype and raised it early in our conversation before I even introduced it. She has encountered the MM from her colleagues who noted that she was "feisty" rather than passive, though the colleague didn't bring race blatantly into. However, she immediately knew what he was getting at. She has mentored young Asian woman in order to help them become more assertive as a lack of being assertive can limit their career trajectory. She has a very sophisticated understanding of the stereotype, which she argues can create a positive impression but only up to a point because Asians are seen as lacking the more subtle skills and innovative / creative spirit required to reach the

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higher levels of management. She also emphasized that for people who are more familiar with Asians as friends and colleagues the myth doesn't hold that much sway.

Participant 7

Participant emphasized that her personality has been influenced by Asian culture and her upbringing. Raised in a humble household and told not to be a bragger, keep your head down and do what is asked of you. This philosophy has merged into her work life. She is naturally an introverted individual who prefers to be seen and not heard which she recognizes may impact her career opportunities. She has been mentored and given advice about voicing her opinions more openly. It's not who she is however, her personality is just more introverted. That does not mean she is not good at what she does, it just means she doesn't feel the need for constant recognition, actually, she tends to shy away from it. She is comfortable in her own space. Her aspirations are to do exceptional work, rather than try to make up the next rung of the corporate ladder. She says that is ok with where she is and with the person she has become.

Participant 8

She expressed quite a bit of frustration about her work environment, which is predominantly female -- there is a lot of cattiness and backstabbing so her reflections on how her gender informs her work experiences were largely negative because of that -- not because she is experiencing discrimination but because of an unhealthy office culture, which she herself defined in gendered terms. She would like the opportunity to work in an environment where more men are in her department. Feels that would equalize the culture a bit and where there would be much more focus on the quality of the work and less on inconsequential, silly banter about things that are not work related. Looks forward to working in a merit based environment where you are judged by the work you do. Has a competitive nature. Not concerned with gender, concerned with proving her value to the organization. Although, she comes from a humble background, she has taken just the opposite approach. She has adopted the American approach and wants to move up the ladder and tries to exhibit the behavioral traits to get you there.

Participant 9

Great interview. Excellent rapport. Perhaps I was too leading at times. Will be more restrained next time. Highlights: One of very few women in her team (only 10% women). Sees herself as a woman in a man's world. Buys into the "model minority" stereotype. Hard to balance expectations of women's behavior (must quiet and polite) with demands to be forceful and put yourself out there. Believes women are looked down upon if they cross the gender lines.

Participant 10

Sees the model minority as a positive thing. She has conformed to it and doesn't see it as a myth. She doesn't see it as being so prevalent where she is currently working in the southern US and stated that it is more of West Coast thing. She stated that the Asians she has worked with are harder working. She feels that being a woman has positively helped her career as her current company was specifically recruiting a woman for her current position. She feels that it helped her career progression more generally because she rose through the ranks at a time when there was concern about getting more women into managerial positions.

Participant 11

Participant is relatively young -- late 20s and has no children so that has not been an obstacle to her career path. Although she went to grad school and has worked in the States for over five years, her English is not perfect. She may have had a bit of difficulty understanding some of the questions, especially around the model minority stereotype but I was able to explain it to her so I am confident she understood it in the in the end. She was not familiar with the model minority stereotype but stated that it didn't bother her. "I am OK with it." She appears not have suffered from discrimination as her organization is diverse and her colleagues are accommodating of any difficulties she has around language. She feels that maybe she has experienced some positive discrimination in that her company was actively looking to recruit minorities. She feels that she has not experienced gender discrimination and that American legislation provides protection against discrimination whereas in China the situation is different. She does not feel that Americanized and feels that there is a cultural barrier between her and some of her colleagues. She is OK with that and does not see that as discrimination or as being actively excluded. She recognizes that she just has different values and interests than many of her colleagues do.

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Participant 12
Feels that she does not conform to the passive stereotype but that maybe being Asian held her back in terms of promotions but that is more a result of a cultural barrier due to there being cultural distance between herself and the top managers. She feels that some of the attitudes she has encountered are typical of the industry that she works in, which tends to be a very male dominated one. She also emphasizes that when she immigrated to the US in the 1990s, China was just beginning to open up, and perceptions of it were that it was a poor, developing country. In terms of the MM stereotype, she feels that the impression of Asians as hard working comes out of their experiences as immigrants, as having to make an extra effort to succeed, and that Western people immigrating to Asia would have to make a similar effort. She also noted that she has experienced tensions working with other Asian minorities
Participant 13
She is very aware of the model minority stereotype. She thinks that it has positive benefits insofar as people see Asians as being smart, hardworking and analytical. The flip side of the stereotype is that, for all the hard work, there is also the impression that Asians are passive. In her opinion this is especially problematic for Asian women as they are seen as not being able to lead because they lack boldness and charisma so their movement up the ladder is blocked. She feels like she has benefitted from the minority affinity groups at her current employer but that she doesn't see Asians in top-level positions but she understands that and points out that people hire people who they are comfortable and familiar with and who are like them. So, it really is a kind of cultural barrier to get into upper echelons. In her industry, marketing, gender is not an issue. She also noted the "catty" dynamic that exists among women and how that can be problematic but that there are more opportunities for bonding with women and personalizing relationships.
Participant 14
She has worked primarily in large and diverse organizations which are very international in their focus. Her viewpoint is really colored by her experiences in Korea and the fact that the culture there is much more competitive and demanding than in the US and much more sexist. She emphasized that Korean corporate culture is not inclusive or diverse. She feels she has many more opportunities in the US and does not want to return to Korea. She feels that she personally conforms to the model minority stereotype but that it is not that representative of the Asian Americans she has met. For example, she worked in a department with 5 other Asians, three of them were hard workers, but two were lazy. In her current position, there are many women in her department and there are also women who occupy important roles in the corporate hierarchy. She doesn't feel that her race or gender have negatively impacted her in any way. She feels that she has been evaluated solely on her individual merits. She noted that one point at which women face obstacles in their career trajectories is when they have children.
Participant 15
This interview was OK. Language comprehension was a bit of a strain. L seemed to have difficulty understanding the difference between what she observes as a general impression (e.g. women are held back in their careers because of domestic responsibilities) and her own personal experiences. She didn't really demonstrate much familiarity with model minority stereotype and in responding to the question just focused on some issues she has had with her performance reviews because of language barriers. Like Z (participant 6) she indicated that she didn't experience anything resembling direct discrimination but that sometimes cultural barriers were hard to overcome. She also indicated that colleagues in her company and her direct superior try to be accommodating her by speaking more slowly or giving her the opportunity to ask follow-up questions.
Participant 16
Moved to the US for university and has excellent English. Her work is in marketing and she is familiar with the MM stereotype. She emphasized that she has poor quantitative skills and that people sometimes teased her during her MBA because of it, expecting that she, as an Asian in business studies, would have strong math skills. Despite not being born or raised in the US, she really seemed to understand the whole MM concept and offered a lengthy explanation of why she thinks the stereotype developed from the fact that Asians have done so well in American society in terms of wealth accumulation and education. Thinks that men advance to higher leadership roles because of their success with casual bonding with each other. She feels that, as a result, they have earned their success. Relatively new to this level of management. Does not feel comfortable with small talk or around the cooler chatter. She feels somewhat like a fish out of water in that she doesn't get a lot of American cultural references. She does not go out of her way to mix and mingle and is ok with that. She thinks that she will get by on merit, "do a good job and you get promoted." She has not yet learned how to navigate the politics that exist in organizations. She does not have a mentor and has not tried to get one

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Appendix G: Reflexive Journal Samples

September 22, 2014 8:15 pm -- entry made following interview with participant 6

This was my first interview but I felt at ease having gone through the training with my mentor and having conducted a number of interviews as a human resources person and having read scholarly literature on how to conduct interviews for qualitative studies. I felt very comfortable speaking with this particular participant because she has a Human Resources background, albeit from a legal perspective. She's manages HR legal groups and I found that as I was questioning her that she had a lot of insights into the situation of not just Asian women, but other minority women. I didn't make comments about my own experiences but listening to her it seemed as if she could understand my experiences. That said, I felt myself wanting to engage with her more because I had a sense that she could understand my own experiences. BUT this research is NOT about my experiences.

I think I've seen things, been subject to certain behaviors, and have had things said about me as a minority that were reflected in some of her comments. Because I have only had discussions around being African-American in corporate America with other African-American women in corporate America what I realized in this interview is that despite our differences in terms of ethnicity, we have commonalities in our circumstances other than being women. For example she gave some examples of instances that I was totally able to relate to even though I am not Asian-American, examples like not being privy to certain information because you are a white male and you aren't in the insiders' circle. In other words you're excluded in some cases because you don't look like they do and you don't act like they do.

So I think I came out of this interview with the realization that while we are different ethnicities and our communities have different histories, some of the circumstances under which we try to navigate corporate America and some of the behaviors that are directed toward us are very much the same.

So even though I am trying not to have a bias, as I do these interviews, I see that I clearly did have one in thinking that my circumstances as an African-American minority would be so incredibly different from that of an Asian American woman. What I realize today is that while in some cases that maybe true, there are other situations in which it is not true. In fact, I found far more similarities than I did differences and it's got me thinking now, to be sure, about how I need to let participant responses guide the interview as they should. I cannot let my biases based on my own experiences influence this process because it could prove detrimental. I thought this was a very good interview and eye-opening for me. It was very similar to answers I might have given if I were the participant.

October 21, 2014 8pm -- entry made following interview with participant 1

I started with this interview by making the participant feel comfortable, I let her know that if at any point she wanted to stop the interview or the questions were too overwhelming she could. I think that set the tone for what I consider to be a very good interview. I was very much the professional that I was intending to be. I found easy to relate to this participant because the industry that she works is an industry that I had formerly worked in. So, as I asked her the questions I could actually understand the language that she was using, having been in that industry, and so it made it easier to talk and to have more of what seemed like dialogue rather than a scripted interview, although I was able to get all of my questions asked and answered.

As an Asian American minority in corporate America her responses were somewhat different to what I, as an African American woman, would have answered but that was clearly because of our lived experiences are so different. For example, because of her extremely strong analytical skills, she has found that there is a very high level of respect that is given to her. If I were doing a comparison of me as an African-American woman, my experiences have been just the opposite, in that, because I am African-American, there is the perception that I'm not really capable of strategic thinking. It was interesting and without forming an opinion on where this will all lead after I include my interviews, there was a sense of insecurity that I suddenly felt in myself after completing this interview.

October 16, 2015 8:15 pm -- entry made after reviewing several transcripts

I'm beginning to notice a pattern and the analysis has not even begun! It's interesting to me, and I clearly see how it could happen. What I see is that there are a lot of contradictions in the participants' responses. I asked one question in the interview and received a response but, as I read through the same interview, another question I may have asked has a completely contradictory answer, though it was clearly related to a previous question. I'm noticing this not just with one participate, but actually several participants. What this indicates it just how complex and difficult answering some of these questions is and how complicated the experiences of participants actually are. Thinking about these contradictory answers tells me that there is complexity in this process and that what I am asking is very, very personal and very individual and that participants' experiences varies over time. The fact that these complexities are emerging is the strength of qualitative research. I didn't really get this sense as I was doing the interviews but as I review the transcripts it is something that stands out quite vividly. This is why I am going

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through the transcripts one by one, over, and over. These discrepancies are clear, loud and bold and must be thoroughly considered in the final analysis.

Each response represents a life lived. It is not something that I take lightly at all. Participants let me peak into their experiences and I can only hope that the outcome is something that is read and potentially taken into consideration as more minority women enter corporate America. I have such passion for sharing these and other experiences of women, men and those in positions of authority that can make changes happen at higher levels in organizations. It is very much necessary.

October 30, 2015 5 pm--entry made towards end of the transcription process

Having a reflexive journal allows me to put into words what I feel at a moment in time or over a period of time and it's interesting to go back and reflect on what you were thinking on at that. In time. These transcripts have given me pause and really almost validated the feelings that I were having at the time as I read some of the responses from the participants and then go back and read what I was feeling at a particular time in my professional career there are so many similarities it's daunting. In some part of journal in my personal life about my personal and professional endeavors has allowed me to understand the experiences emotions feelings and actually made me connect to my subjects in a distant yet personal way. I am ultimate professional when it comes to doing interviews and yet with these particular interviews having never done this type of interviewing it made me an even better I am ultimate professional when it comes to doing interviews and yet with these particular interviews having never done this type of interviewing it made me an even better interviewer. I feel as if the participants have been honest and forthright in their answers and I sense that in part, that's because they wanted to share their lived experiences... they wanted to let me know that there are these barriers that exist and that the more we can share this information the more likely it is we can do something about it. I honestly believe their responses were genuine and authentic. I think about the times I've been asked questions similar to those that I post to the participants whether it was for a survey or just in discussion and nothing comes to mind more than speaking your truth and so I think that that's exactly what I got from the participants in their responses to my interview questions. I think they spoke their truth. It's very liberating.

Sometimes as I review the transcripts, I wonder if my self-reflection could somehow seep into my analysis and, if so, how I could avoid it from impacting my data analysis? Can it impact or have an effect on the data analysis? By acting in the role researcher in a study that I am not a participant in but that relates to my own experience, will bias creep into my analysis. Not if I strictly adhere to the methodology and stay keenly aware that I am analyzing my participants' responses and not my own.

November 23, 2015-5:00 pm -- entry made part-way through the data analysis process

I'm halfway through my first attempt at analyzing the transcripts and am really starting to master the NVivo software environment. I was feeling very frustrated at the beginning and felt like there was a steep learning curve but now I realize that the software is making the data analysis process SO much easier. I'm already beginning to see larger patterns in the data emerge, which I think is being facilitated by how easy it is to visualize and organize the emerging nodes in the NVivo environment. I'm now using the memoing feature within NVivo to keep track of my thoughts about the data and to record my impressions and bracket out my biases -- it's a great tool. Here's an example of a memo I wrote earlier today:

It is interesting but I'm seeing the issue of culture emerge as one of the predominant themes. As an African American, I tend to think more in terms of barriers around race and ethnicity but the participants are instead bringing up issues pertaining to cultural differences between themselves and their colleagues. For example, participants who weren't brought up in the US might discuss how their lack of familiarity with American popular culture makes it difficult for them to relate to their colleagues. Participants more generally are bringing up the issue of Asian culture promoting different values (e.g. deference and reserve) than American culture, which can be problematic in terms of moving up the corporate ladder. This is a huge theme! What's also interesting is that many of the participants seem to be fairly level headed, I would say almost accepting of these cultural differences and the effect they may have on their career progression. Is that because, as some of them acknowledge, Asian culture can be chauvinistic? A number of them have stated that, in their experience, Asian people such as their parents or even themselves view Asian culture as superior. Does this awareness of the fact that non-European cultures can be chauvinistic lead to a greater acceptance of the fact that many cultures can be closed and difficult for outsiders to penetrate? This all very complex and nuanced stuff. I wonder how I will express it in my data analysis write up."

December 3rd, 2015 8pm -- entry made upon completion of data analysis

Having now completed the analysis of the material I find myself somewhat conflicted. The minority model stereotype, true or untrue has in some cases been a benefit to participants and in other cases a detriment to them.

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They have used it to their advantage when they were able and in other cases have found themselves not being considered for position as a result the perception that they are too passive or lacking in soft skills.

I'm also troubled by the fact that, as an African-American minority, I really never had an opportunity to "leverage my identity" as one participant put it. African Americans don't enjoy the "privilege" of being treated like the nerdy counterparts of white Americans. Let's face it, the MM stereotype is a type of privilege --the participants, as ambivalent as they were about the stereotype, did feel that their identity and the stereotypes around it were positive. And let's face it, the African American stereotype doesn't have much of a positive aspect, especially in corporate America. Being good at basketball and "having rhythm" isn't going to get you very far in the board room -- certainly not as far as the perception that you have strong quantitative skills and that you can get the job done no matter what. Sadly, the view of African Americans reflects the social reality of inequality and the fact that African Americans remain disenfranchised and are not considered for opportunities. And it has lasting effects. It has emotional effects, it has social economical effects, it has long-term effects on the African-American family. It has a long term effects on the relationships between African American men and women in relationships. It has the effect of marginalizing what African-American culture can contribute to corporate America. It has lasting effects that will live on for years to come.

Appendix H: Informed Consent Form

Study Title: The Influence of Ethnicity and Gender on the Leadership Experiences of Female Asian American Managers

Researcher: Alesia Nichols

Email Address and Telephone Number:

Research Supervisor:

Email Address:

You are invited to be part of a research study. The researcher is a doctoral learner at Capella University in the School of School of Business and Technology. The information in this form is provided to help you decide if you want to participate. The form describes what you will have to do during the study and the risks and benefits of the study.

If you have any questions about or do not understand something in this form, you should ask the researcher. Do not sign this form unless the researcher has answered your questions and you decide that you want to be part of this study.

What Is This Study About?

The researcher wants to learn about the leadership experiences and career opportunities of female Asian American managers working in corporate America. The study will consider how stereotypes of Asian Americans as "model minorities" may influence the perceptions of individual Asian American women in leadership roles and the leadership opportunities available to them. It will also consider how Asian American women perceive their gender as influencing their leadership experiences and career opportunities. The study will focus on the lived experiences and perspectives of the participants themselves; the larger aim is to generate a theory or model that can explain how gender intersects with ethnicity to affect the professional lives of female Asian American managers.

Why Am I Being Asked To Be In The Study?

You are invited to be in the study because you are:
a woman
an Asian American of Chinese, Japanese, or Korean ancestry
a US citizen or permanent resident
a full-time employee
a mid-level manager with at least five years of managerial experience gained within the United States (according to the criteria chosen for this study)
not related or known to the researcher prior to this study
If you do not meet the description above, you are not able to be in the study.

How Many People Will Be In This Study?

About 20 participants will be in this study.

Who Is Paying For This Study?

The researcher is not receiving funds to conduct this study.

Will It Cost Anything To Be In This Study?

You do not have to pay to be in the study.

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How Long Will I Be in the Study?

If you decide to be in this study, your participation will last about 60 to 90 minutes. The researcher will schedule an interview with you either face-to-face, through Skype video conferencing, or over the telephone. If a face-to-face interview is schedule, the researcher will determine a time and location which is acceptable to you. In case of a telephone interview, a short follow-up call may be scheduled to clarify your responses.

What Will Happen During This Study?

If you decide to be in this study and if you sign this form, you will do the following things:
give personal information about yourself, such as your name, gender, occupation, and education level.
answer questions during an interview about your experiences as a female Asian American manager, and your perceptions of the influence of ethnicity and gender on these experiences. Your participation will consist EITHER of a 60 to 90-minute interview conducted face-to-face or through Skype video conferencing OR a 45-minute telephone interview and a short follow-up call.
While you are in the study, you will be expected to:
Follow the instructions you are given.
Tell the researcher if you want to stop being in the study at any time.

Will I Be Recorded?

The researcher will digitally audio-record your interview. The recordings will be transcribed and transcripts will be prepared from the recording. You will be given an opportunity to review the transcripts for accuracy. The researcher will use the digital audio recordings and transcripts for the data analysis component of the study. The researcher will subject the transcript to qualitative data analysis procedure to see which themes emerge from the experiences you recount.

The researcher will only use the recordings of you for the purposes you read about in this form. They will not use the recordings for any other reasons without your permission unless you sign another consent form. The recordings will be kept for seven years and they will be kept confidential. The recordings will be destroyed after seven years.

Will Being In This Study Help Me?

Being in this study will not help you. Information from this study might help researchers help others in the future.

Are There Risks To Me If I Am In This Study?

No study is completely risk-free.

Since this study uses a sampling technique which relies on distributing the call to research participants widely, it is possible that your employer may be aware of the existence of the study. Since this study addresses sensitive workplace topics, an employer might be unhappy or otherwise react in a negative manner if it learnt that an employee had participated in the study. However, it is extremely unlikely that your employer would become aware of your participation in the study. All reasonable measures have been taken to ensure that your participation remains anonymous and any data you provide remains confidential.

As part of the study you may experience an emotional reaction during the interviewing process while recounting a distressing experience in the workplace. If this happens, the researcher will ask if you want to continue the interview after a brief pause, stop the interview and resume at a later date, or end your participation altogether. It is your right to stop the interview at any time.
You may stop being in the study at any time if you become uncomfortable or distressed.

Will I Get Paid?

You will not receive anything for being in the study.

Do I Have To Be In This Study?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can decide not to be in the study and you can change your mind about being in the study at any time. There will be no penalty to you. If you want to stop being in the study, tell the researcher.
The researcher can remove you from the study at any time. This could happen if:
The researcher believes it is best for you to stop being in the study.
You do not follow directions about the study.
You no longer meet the inclusion criteria to participate.

Who Will Use And Share Information About My Being In This Study?

Any information you provide in this study that could identify you such as your name, age, or other personal information will be kept confidential. Each participant will be assigned a code and all study data will be identified by

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code only rather than by using names or other identifying information. The Master List of codes will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office. Only the researcher, her research supervisor, and members of the dissertation committee may request access to the Master List of codes. In any written reports or publications, no one will be able to identify you.

The researcher will keep the information you provide in a secure folder on a password-protected computer (for electronic data) and in the researcher's home office and only the researcher, research supervisor, and members of the dissertation committee will be able to review this information.

Your interview with the researcher will be recorded and transcribed either by the researcher or by a professional transcription service. In case a professional transcription service is used to transcribe interview audio, the transcriptionist will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. This agreement will also outline how any participant data is handled, stored, and destroyed. The audio recordings will only be accessible to the researcher, the research supervisor, members of the dissertation committee, and the professional transcriptionist.

Who Can I Talk To About This Study?

You can ask questions about the study at any time. You can call the researcher if you have any concerns or complaints. You should call the researcher at the phone number listed on page 1 of this form if you have questions about the study procedures, study costs (if any), study payment (if any), or if you get hurt or sick during the study.
The Capella Research Integrity Office (RIO) has been established to protect the rights and welfare of human research participants. Please contact us at 1-888-227-3552, extension 4716, for any of the following reasons:
You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
You wish to discuss problems or concerns.
You have suggestions to improve the participant experience.
You do not feel comfortable talking with the researcher.
You may contact the RIO without giving us your name. We may need to reveal information you provide in order to follow up if you report a problem or concern.

Do You Want To Be In This Study?

I have read this form, and I have been able to ask questions about this study. The researcher has talked with me about this study. The researcher has answered all my questions. I voluntarily agree to be in this study. I agree to allow the use and sharing of my study-related records as described above.
By signing this form, I have not given up any of my legal rights as a research participant. I will get a signed copy of this consent form for my records.
Printed Name of Participant
Signature of Participant Date

I attest that the participant named above had enough time to consider this information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.
Printed Name of Researcher
Signature of Researcher Date

Do You Wish To Be Audiotaped In This Study?

I voluntarily agree to let the researcher audiotapeme for this study using digital audio recording. I agree to allow the use of my recordings as described in this form.
Printed Name of Participant
Signature of Participant Date
Capella IRB Approval

Appendix I: Codes Identified During Opening Coding

Number	Nodes	Sources	References
1	affirmative action	6	10
2	American corporate culture rewards extroverted, assertive and expressive people	9	24
3	American corporate culture supports diversity	13	33
4	American society can be homogenous	9	10
5	American society can be narrow minded	3	4
6	American society promotes diversity	4	5
7	as a manager, I don't want to hire minorities or Asians	1	2
8	Asian corporate culture can be chauvinistic	5	8
9	Asian culture encourages conformity, obedience, hard work, discipline,	9	15

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Number	Nodes	Sources	References
	and humility		
10	Asian culture is superior	5	7
12	Asian culture more competitive	1	2
13	Asian dominated profession	2	3
14	Asian identity is important to me	2	2
15	Asian men at the bottom of the social hierarchy	3	3
16	Asian men seen as passive	3	3
17	Asian parents demand more	4	8
18	Asian women can be assertive	4	5
19	Asian women not assertive	5	7
20	Asians not assertive	2	3
21	Asians work hard	6	7
22	being a minority a barrier to advancement	2	3
23	being a woman has had a negative impact on my career	6	11
24	being a woman has had a positive impact on my career	6	9
25	being a woman has not impacted my career	2	2
26	being an Asian woman has had a negative impact on my career	4	6
27	being an Asian woman has had a positive impact on my career	6	6
28	being an Asian woman has not impacted my career	6	9
29	being Asian has had a negative impact on my career	5	5
30	being Asian has had a positive influence on my career	8	9
31	being Asian has not impacted my career	11	17
32	being young is a factor	4	6
33	cultural disconnect	12	28
34	cultural expectations	6	9
35	culturally isolated	8	11
36	demographic change	3	4
37	depends on organization or context	3	5
38	difficult conforming to American corporate culture	7	15
39	difficulty of penetrating insider culture	5	6
40	difficult to lead men	2	2
41	don't want to advance	2	2
42	double edged sword	4	9
43	double standards	4	7
44	easier to relate to other women	1	1
45	feel like I don't belong	3	3
46	female corporate culture	8	10
47	female dominated corporate environment	4	7
48	female organizational culture can be dysfunctional	3	4
49	females are not assertive enough	5	5
50	females can be leaders in my organization	6	9
51	gender discrimination	1	1
52	gender expectations of minority managers	3	4
53	geographical differences in diversity	5	6
54	glass ceiling	6	16
55	having children impacts a woman's career trajectory	9	13
56	I conform to the mm stereotype	5	7
57	I don't conform to gender or racial stereotypes	4	4
58	I don't put people into boxes	2	2
59	I feel more American than Asian	4	4
60	I feel more Asian than American	3	3
61	I have leveraged my Asian identity through advocacy	5	5
62	I work hard	8	9
63	I work in male dominated role or industry	5	9
64	I'm petite	3	3
65	I'm ambitious	1	2
66	I'm assertive	5	5
67	I'm emotionally aware	4	6

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Number	Nodes	Sources	References
68	I'm more comfortable being around Asians	4	4
69	I'm not confrontational	2	3
70	I'm not good at math	2	2
71	I'm proud to be Asian	5	8
72	I'm reserved and don't speak up as much as my American colleagues	7	12
73	I'm respectful	3	3
74	I'm smart	3	3
75	I'm trying to be more assertive	8	10
76	influence of sports in socializing	5	7
77	influence of upbringing	10	19
78	language barrier	7	12
79	male corporate culture barrier	10	20
80	men get paid more	3	3
81	model minority stereotype damaging	5	11
82	model minority stereotype is a myth	5	8
83	model minority stereotype is positive	3	4
84	model minority stereotype is problematic	6	6
85	model minority stereotype is valid	8	10
86	model minority stereotype isn't relevant	6	6
87	model minority stereotype linked to passivity	4	5
88	more gender than race	5	9
89	more race than gender	2	3
90	more women being hired	5	6
91	my behavior represents Asians	3	5
92	need to conform American corporate culture	8	10
93	not treated differently	13	23
94	people expect more from Asians	5	5
95	people have positive perception of Asians	4	6
96	people make assumptions about me because I'm Asian	5	8
97	people tried to take advantage of me	5	8
98	perception Asians are not assertive enough	5	6
99	perception that Asians are obedient work horses	6	10
100	perception that Asians are smart	5	5
101	perception that Asians can't be leaders	2	5
102	perception that Asians have strong analytical skills	6	6
103	perception that Asians work hard	4	5
104	socializing can be a barrier	7	9
105	supported by colleagues	4	5
106	supported by superiors	5	6
107	treated differently	3	6
108	white men dominate leadership roles	3	3

Appendix J: Breakdown of Parent and Child Nodes

Complicated influence of identity on career trajectory
being a minority a barrier to advancement
being a woman has had a negative impact on my career
being a woman has had a positive impact on my career
being a woman has not impacted my career
being an Asian woman has had a negative impact on my career
being an Asian woman has had a positive impact on my career
being an Asian woman has not impacted my career
being Asian has had a negative impact on my career
being Asian has had a positive influence on my career
being Asian has not impacted my career
being young is a factor

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glass ceiling
having children impacts a woman's career trajectory
more gender than race
more race than gender

Ambivalence about the model minority stereotype
double edged sword
model minority stereotype damaging
model minority stereotype is a myth
model minority stereotype is positive
model minority stereotype is problematic
model minority stereotype is valid
model minority stereotype isn't relevant
model minority stereotype linked to passivity

Complicated views about Asian culture
Asian corporate culture can be chauvinistic
Asian culture encourages conformity, obedience, hard work, discipline, and humility
Asian culture is superior
Asian culture more competitivez
Asian dominated profession
Asian identity is important to me
Asian men at the bottom of the social hierarchy
Asian men seen as passive
Asian parents demand more
Asian women can be assertive
Asian women not assertive
Asians not assertive
Asians work hard

Complicated views about self-identified characteristics
don't want to advance
easier to relate to other women
I conform to the model minority stereotype
I don't conform to gender or racial stereotypes
I don't put people into boxes
I feel more American than Asian
I feel more Asian than American
model minority stereotype is positive
model minority stereotype is problematic
model minority stereotype is valid
model minority stereotype isn't relevant
model minority stereotype linked to passivity

Complicated views about Asian culture
Asian corporate culture can be chauvinistic
Asian culture encourages conformity, obedience, hard work, discipline, and humility
Asian culture is superior
Asian culture more competitive
Asian dominated profession
Asian identity is important to me
Asian men at the bottom of the social hierarchy
Asian men seen as passive

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Asian parents demand more
Asian women can be assertive
Asian women not assertive
Asians not assertive
Asians work hard

Complicated views about self-identified characteristics
don't want to advance
easier to relate to other women
I conform to the model minority stereotype
I don't conform to gender or racial stereotypes
I don't put people into boxes
I feel more American than Asian
I feel more Asian than American
I'm ambitious
I'm assertive
I'm emotionally aware
I'm more comfortable being around Asians
I'm not confrontational
I'm not good at math
I'm proud to be Asian
I'm reserved and don't speak up as much as my American colleagues
I'm respectful
I'm smart
I'm trying to be more assertive
influence of upbringing
my behavior represents Asians

Opportunities and challenges of being Asian in the workplace
Asian men at the bottom of the social hierarchy
Asian men seen as passive
people expect more from Asians
people have a positive perception of Asians
perception Asians are not assertive enough
perception that Asians are obedient work horses
perception that Asians are smart
perception that Asians can't be leaders
perception that Asians have strong analytical skills
perception that Asians work hard

Opportunities and challenges experienced by women and minorities working in corporate America.
affirmative action
American corporate culture rewards extroverted, assertive and expressive people
American corporate culture supports diversity
American society can be homogenous
American society can be narrow minded
demographic change
depends on organization or context
double standards
female corporate culture
female dominated corporate environment
female organizational culture can be dysfunctional
females are not assertive enough

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females are not assertive enough
females can be leaders in my organization
gender discrimination
gender expectations of minority managers
male corporate culture barrier
men get paid more
more women being hired
white men dominate leadership roles

Complicated personal experiences in the workplace
cultural disconnect
cultural expectations
culturally isolated
difficult conforming to American corporate culture
difficulty of penetrating insider culture
difficult to lead men
feel like I don't belong
I have leveraged my Asian identity through advocacy
influence of sports in socializing
language barrier
not treated differently
people make assumptions about me because I'm Asian
people tried to take advantage of me
socializing can be a barrier
supported by colleagues
supported by superiors
treated differently

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