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Saahas & Alliant Collaboration

This poster describes our ongoing research & mentoring collaboration between faculty members of Alliant International University, team members of Saahas for Cause & Saahas Youth members.

About Saahas for Cause

Saahas is a non-profit that works to improve the Quality of life of South Asian (SA) immigrants in Southern CA.

- This research was initiated by Saahas as part of the Stop the Hate grant obtained from CDSS. This is an effort to convert social and behavioral observations into research.
- A key role of Saahas was to bring together SA youth and faculty members to collaborate on this project.
- The study is housed within Saahas and the research meetings are scheduled and run by Saahas team.

About Saahas Youth Mentees

Saahas youth members represent the 2nd generation SA immigrants. Their role in this research project is:

- To gain opportunity to learn about qualitative study from experts.
- To bring the youth's perspective into the research.
- To recruit peer participants for the study and to disseminate the findings in their peer groups

About Alliant

Alliant International University is a CA based private university.

- Faculty members engaged in this study are South Asian in origin and have expertise in working with this population.
- Their role in the project was to lead the team in writing the IRB, conduct trainings in qualitative methodology.
- Once data is collected, they will lead the team in the data analysis process, reporting and disseminating the findings of the study.



Participants will receive a \$30 gift card for completing the In-person or virtual interview

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| <p>TO BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18+ years of age • Currently residing in USA • South Asian* American • Have experienced bias or discrimination <p><small>*South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives</small></p> | <p>IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY, OR HAVE QUESTIONS CONTACT:</p> <p>Payal Sawhney info@saahasforcause.org</p> <p>Approved by Alliant International University Institutional Review Board</p> |
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About the Research Study:

- Gaps in the literature – There is lack of research on hate crimes experienced specifically within the South Asian diaspora.

- Purpose of Study- Understand the experiences of bias and hate incidents against South Asians using qualitative storytelling methodology.
- Participants- 20-30 people of South Asian origin above 18 years of age, who have experienced bias or discrimination.
- Data Collection Methodology - In-depth one on one interviews.
- Current status of the Study: Completed IRB process, In the process of Recruiting and collecting data.

Benefits of the Collaboration

- Exchange of expertise- content expertise (Academia) & community access & network (Community Agency & Youth).
- Access to expertise related to research process (Academia).
- Application of academic research to community needs.
- Contributing rich data on hate incidents/ crime against the South Asian community to literature.
- Validation and normalization of community experiences through culturally sensitive scholarly knowledge.
- Deeper understanding of cultural nuances and applications of empathy in daily interactions.
- Improved cross-generational understanding.

Challenges of the Collaboration

- Scheduling conflicts due to the long-term commitment requirement of the research.
- Fluctuating membership of the research team due to scheduling & availability.

- Navigating differing needs of each of the stakeholders (academia, community agency, funding organization & youth).
- Youth's lack of relatability with first generation stories due to different cultural upbringing.

Take-Aways from the Experience:

- Importance of collaboration – Need for academia to engage with the community by utilizing their scholarly knowledge and expertise to support hands-on grass-roots efforts of community organizations.
- Bringing clinical training and skills to the development of mental health projects and services offered to the community.
- Engaging with the community across life-span and mentoring of youth in the community.
- Enriched experience and learning new research methodologies.
- Enhanced opportunities for sharing our experiences around bias.

Next Steps:

- Data collection through qualitative interviews.
- Continued research, mentoring, and training with the research team.
- Using the research findings to further community programming.
- Disseminating the results of the study via publication and conference presentations.