

Daughters of the Pandemic

Assessing the Long-Term Impacts of COVID-19
on South Asian Girls & Women in Peel

A Partnership Project Between PCHS X Laadliyan

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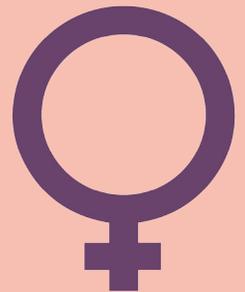


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[Read Our Preliminary Report Here](#)

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Daughters of the Pandemic project was twofold. Firstly, we assessed the long-term implications of COVID-19 on South Asian girls and women in the Peel Region through four community conversations. Secondly, in addressing the gaps in current resources, we hope to establish effective and culturally responsive support post-pandemic by specifically addressing the main concerns of South Asian girls and women.

Key Findings

In analyzing the four community conversations that took place in Spring of 2021, four overarching themes were evident: increased roles and responsibilities, educational barriers, financial concerns, and mental and physical health concerns. Across all conversations, participants shared an increase in additional household duties throughout the pandemic between balancing numerous roles as South Asian girls and women. Educational barriers outlined transitions to online school platforms and inadequate school supports as contributing to poor learning experiences and difficulty maintaining engagement and motivation. Additionally, international students highlighted that financial struggles and poor living conditions negatively impacted their educational experiences during the pandemic.

Financial insecurity and overall employment concerns were present among all groups, as jobs were limited and oversaturated and navigating virtual work spaces while maintaining work-life balance was difficult. Several participants also had to deal with being laid off or with a reduction in shifts, which resulted in financial insecurity and hardships. International students in particular faced barriers in securing employment. Many international students in our study did not come from financially secure backgrounds and were often unable to afford high costs of living in Canada. Individuals that were adjusting to online work environments also expressed issues with a decrease in work performance and in maintaining a work-life balance.

Mental and physical health challenges were evident among all participants, as many experienced mental illness, social isolation, increased levels of stress, and decrease in physical activity. Furthermore, the 18-24 year old group and international students discussed how education and mental health were heavily intertwined as students had a lack of support and added stress to their lives with navigating online school. International students addressed the isolation they face with no support systems in Canada and highlighted the limited access to healthcare due to inadequate health insurance. Lastly, South Asian girls and women discussed the lack of culturally responsive sources when finding access to mental health resources.

Key Recommendations

Recommendations include the need for more community conversations that provide safe virtual spaces for South Asian girls and women to have discussions on topics such as coping with the pandemic, addressing gender-based violence, and substance abuse within the South Asian community. Participants also indicate the importance of creating toolkits which provide culturally responsive mental health supports and resources that utilize an intersectional framework within the Peel Region. Additionally, it is important that culturally responsive resources be expanded and offered with affordable options. Overall, there is also a need for financial support for individuals that were ineligible for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB).

Introduction

As the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine measures have impacted everyone in various ways, the needs and experiences of marginalized communities such as South Asian girls and women is largely unexplored. At Laadliyan, Celebrating & Empowering Daughters, we work closely with South Asian daughters through our programs and initiatives. As a result, we have gained direct insights into the impacts COVID-19 has had and will continue to have on them. In turn, it is integral that we conduct this research in order to understand the long-term implications of the pandemic on this demographic. We were fortunate to gain the support and partnership of Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) for this project. PCHS is a community based Health Service Provider working to improve the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities across Canada.

In order to direct a post-pandemic recovery which takes into account the lived experiences of South Asian girls and women, data specific to this community needs to be collected. The initial research we conducted through our [Preliminary Report](#) also highlighted the barriers and obstacles this demographic has faced, which was further confirmed through our research. During this pandemic, it is evident that South Asian girls and women have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. They have faced difficulties in managing virtual school and work with unpaid household duties, rising unemployment rates, and financial insecurity, all of which had negative impacts on their mental and physical health.

Methodology

In understanding the lived experiences of South Asian girls and women during COVID-19 in the Peel Region, Laadliyan conducted virtual community conversations with four demographic groups.

The four groups included South Asian daughters from different age groups: group one (18 to 24 year olds), group two (25 to 34 year olds), group three (35+ year olds), and group four (international students).

However, for our final report we merged group two and four to create a general 25+ year olds group due to overlapping themes. Overall, 41 participants were engaged either through the focus groups or through written discussion forms where they were able to share their thoughts. Participants were financially compensated for taking part and sharing their experiences through this project. Conversations were then transcribed and analyzed using a thematic analytic approach, which shed insight on household duties, educational barriers, financial concerns and health concerns.

Balancing Numerous Roles in South Asian Households

Throughout the four focus groups, South Asian girls and women shed light on how they have felt increased pressures during the pandemic to take on additional roles within their households, due to traditional ideas around gender norms. Many participants discussed that they are expected to tutor siblings/family members, take care of sick family members, and they recognized an increase in household duties during the pandemic.

In the 18-24 year old group, an emphasis was placed on South Asian daughters to assume domestic roles such as cooking and cleaning along with associated guilt if they were not able to help. For example, one daughter discussed her struggles with trying to achieve work-life balance during the pandemic. She indicated that the guilt of not being able to help around the house as much as compared to pre-pandemic is “slowly eating her alive.” Another prevalent theme was the difference in traditional gender roles between South Asian girls and women and boys and men. For example, many South Asian girls and women discussed the difficulty in leaving the house during the pandemic for activities as common as going on walks or taking time for themselves versus their male counterparts, many of whom had been given no additional responsibility during the pandemic.

Within the international students group, those who had family in Canada with them also experienced similar struggles with having to

spend more time doing household chores. A participant mentioned their work from home position led their family to believe they had increased availability to do household chores, making it difficult to complete work tasks and find personal time.

Furthermore, community conversations with 25+ year old South Asian women highlighted increasing tension in balancing responsibilities such as caretaking of numerous family members while maintaining employment. Additionally, they noted limited assistance in managing their roles across numerous domains as quarantine restricted access to external resources.

“My husband has dementia, so it can be a very hard experience on top of lockdown on him and all of us. We have PSWs come twice a day, and I don’t work from home. I’m in the healthcare field and only work a couple days out of the week to take care of my husband”- (25+ Participant)

Another participant discussed the challenges of living in a multi-generational family structure during the pandemic, as she experienced discrimination when providing her father with shelter: *“My father lives with addiction and was homeless during the pandemic last year so we moved him in with us. We had a neighbor call the cops on us and we were questioned as to why we had “so many people” in the house. There were 4 of us in total. [...] But I can see even they [organizations] need more support to be able to reach more folks and as a caregiver to an addict, there has been no support for me”*
- (25+ Participant)

Education Experiences of South Asian Girls and Women

Education was a major area of concern to South Asian girls and women within the 18-24 year old group, including international students, as many of them have experienced the ongoing struggles of navigating virtual school during COVID-19. This has resulted in inadequate learning outcomes, lack of motivation, difficulties with understanding course content due to professors that are largely absent, and issues with writing virtual exams due to shared living spaces.

Navigating Online School

The education system has been heavily affected as learning has faced many changes over the year with one of the greatest impacts being the introduction of virtual school.

There were many facets of change that community members faced with education such as, continuous adaptation to a different method of learning, isolation from peers and teaching faculty, quicker burnout and less motivation, lack of empathy/support from faculty and school counsellors, etc. Several South Asian international students and participants within the 18-24 year old group communicated that they are facing difficulties with focusing on their studies, due to having to adjust to an online platform with a lack of social interaction with educators. They mentioned that asynchronous learning was entirely different from what they experienced in-person, and they found the content was often different from what they were tested on. This resulted in additional stress as course outcomes were unclear.

"I feel like school is 24/7 like you don't know how to stop or even with work you're not going in person so it's too available since it's right on your desk in your room. It gets hard to know when to stop and to set time to do something for yourself"- (18-24 Participant)

Students across the focus groups also indicated that they faced additional hurdles due to shared spaces. They are often renting places with several roommates or living in multigenerational homes, and as a result they indicated noisy backgrounds were a prevalent concern:

"I gave every exam with my camera on. It was very difficult, like they want to know everything. They want to know what is inside the room, what is taped on the walls, they want us to show them everything. Then only we can write the exam, otherwise they give us a 0 grade. It was very hard because here we're living on a sharing basis right and not everyone is so understanding. Sometimes, if my roommate is not good with me, she will definitely create a problem during my test" - (International Student)

Poor internet connection was a large concern for many students. When questioned whether their landlords agreed to make adjustments to their internet plans, many students mentioned that they were asked to pay more if they needed better connection. As living expenses are already so high, students were unable to agree to this added expense.

Accessing School Supports

South Asian daughters within the 18-24 year old group also shared that they have experienced a lack of support with transitional stages in their lives such as, from highschool to university/college, higher education, or from school and the workforce. Subsequently, the loss of youth milestones and important coming of age events such as, prom, graduation and/or convocation has been difficult to accept.

Particular to international students, tuition fees are another hurdle faced by many, which we observed both through this conversation and through our [International Student Fund](#). Many students have reached out to us requesting aid with their fees, as they are unable to afford them. When we asked whether accommodations were provided by their schools, some students told us they were given an option to pay their fees in installments, but there was no decrease in overall fees. However, this was not the same across all schools, as others did not receive any option but to pay in full.



We requested for them to decrease fees because we were not accessing any of the electricity or we were not going to college but they said no. Said online is more expensive than in class. That makes no sense because how can it be more expensive? If we were going to the college we could access all the utilities of the college that are more expensive and online is not that expensive but they didn't agree with us. So, they said you can pay your fees in installments for two months.

- (International Student)

Financial Concerns of South Asian Girls and Women

Community conversations with South Asian girls and women indicated that financial insecurity, challenging workplace environments, and employment instability were the primary areas of concern. In particular, South Asian women highlighted job loss, limited employment opportunities and rapid online transitions to maintain current job positions as a challenge during the pandemic.

Financial Insecurity & Unemployment

Across all community conversations, participants discussed the extreme difficulties of finding employment within the current job market as positions are both limited and oversaturated. The discussion with the 18-24 year old group, highlighted that some South Asian girls and women felt an increased pressure to seek employment and help contribute to expenses such as tuition. This was due to the struggles their parents were facing with employment, specifically in certain industries that were severely affected by the pandemic, including but not limited to taxi driving and trucking, both of which are occupied predominantly by South Asians in Peel. They also discussed how the pandemic caused severe delays and difficulties in finding internships within their field of study, making it harder to gain experience and in turn, delaying their studies. South Asian girls and women discussed the difficulties in finding employment and also the struggle of transitioning to a new place of employment during a pandemic.



“Losing a job and knowing that obtaining one is very hard, especially if you want to help your parents who are also struggling”
- (18-24 Participant)



Within the 25+ group, some individuals faced insecurity within their employment as they were initially laid off and had a difficult time returning back to work. Others spoke about the impacts the pandemic had overall on employment opportunities, along with the reduction in shifts.

I would like to say due to the pandemic lots of people are having employment issues, lots lost employment, going through financial hardships. The other thing I mentioned, financial hardships are having a major impact on all families... Employment was cut down to half starting this year but starting last year I was working also. But, my husband has not been able to work since the whole year. And many other family members and family friends I know, their employment was cut down due to the pandemic. - (25+ Participant)

Additionally, South Asian international students indicated that they faced many difficulties in finding employment which led to financial insecurity. They indicated that the costs of living in Canada are difficult to afford along with their tuition.

“From my background my family is not so strong that they can financially support me, right. So, it is very hard for them to send me money to survive here so it was a very difficult time.”
- (International Student)

“Everybody knows how expensive it is to live here and the cost of living here so it was very hard for me to manage everything. I had no job, I had to pay my fees as well... actually I was totally...I can’t explain it but it was a very very difficult situation for me at that time. It was a very hard time for me.” - (International Student)

Those who had managed to secure employment still struggled due to a reduced number of shifts. This was especially true for those working in retail and grocery stores since fewer people were allowed to enter stores. They also experienced fear of contracting COVID-19 while having to commute and go to work in person. Further, most participants did not come from financially secure families so they were unable to ask for support from their families. As a result, their financial burdens increased as their Guaranteed Investment Certificate (GIC) accounts did not have enough funds for them to accommodate all of their expenses, especially their tuition fees. One participant also shared that her spouse had lost his contract from the company he worked at, and she has been unable to find work as well. It has been difficult for them to make ends meet since they also have young children.

*“From my background my family is not so strong that they can financially support me, right. So, it is very hard for them to send me money to survive here so it was a very difficult time.”
- (International Student)*

Several students were also not eligible for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), and this lack of support affected them heavily. Majority of students did not meet the main criteria of having earned \$5,000 in 2019 since the number of hours they can work while in school are limited. Many students also worked cash-based or precarious jobs where they did not earn a lot, exempting them from this benefit. Although the government allowed students to work more than 20 hours for essential services during the pandemic, they still faced difficulties in finding employment. The following quote outlines this experience:

“Yeah, priority was given to others. No doubt this was only for the students that they’re allowed to work more than 20 hours but no, at some places the priority was not given to us, the priority was given to others with PR status or citizens or the ones that have been working there for a long time”- (International Student)

Online Work Environments

Participants mentioned entering brand-new work environments was intimidating as they were unable to build strong relationships with colleagues, and virtual spaces were difficult to navigate which in some cases led to a decrease in productivity and overall work performance.

They also expressed that there were minimal resources available to help them in this transition, which resulted in troubles with maintaining work-life balance.

“I had to let go of certain commitments (e.g., volunteer roles) because I was always tired at the end of the day after work (zoom fatigue) and most of these commitments transitioned to online as well. I had to do it for my own well-being.” (25+ Participant)

Housing Instability Experienced by International Students

Due to financial insecurity, it was also difficult for many international students to afford rent. Most students shared that they did not receive any extensions on their rent, and that Laadliyan was the first organization that was able to support them with rent and groceries through our International Student Fund directed at South Asian female international students.

Through the focus groups, several students indicated that they are dealing with landlords who demonstrate a lack of empathy, which was in turn justified by claims of their own financial struggles as landlords. Most students mentioned they are required to make timely payments regardless of their personal circumstances, and in some cases they have been threatened with eviction if they are unable to pay in a timely fashion. A few participants shared that landlords increased the total monthly rent or even the number of renters in one dwelling in order to make more profit.

“This happened last month, my owner added two more people to stay in the living room and then increased the rent as well and when I asked I am going to leave because it was difficult to manage, he didn’t give me my rent for last month. That was so disappointing” - (International Student)

Addressing Health Concerns

Mental and physical health challenges were evident among all South Asian girls and women we spoke with, as many of them experienced social isolation, burnout, increased levels of stress, decrease in physical activity and a lack of personal time due to additional household duties throughout the pandemic. For some, the pandemic heightened and added to preexisting mental health challenges.

Mental Wellness and Physical Health

Social isolation was a prevalent challenge for the 18-24 year old group, as many South Asian girls and women expressed social isolation from school, friends, family which in turn, depleted many of their emotional/support systems during the pandemic. Education and mental health were very intertwined within the 18-24 year old group, as individuals discussed the lack of support and added stress to their lives with transitional phases such as, university/college acceptances while adjusting to a new form of learning, transitioning from school to the workplace, etc. A student in Grade 12 shared the lack of compassionate resources and supports during crucial moments in the lives of youth during the pandemic:

"We're the most alone we've ever been in our entire lives now when we probably need people the most at this point."
(18-24 Participant)

Similar mental health and wellness challenges were evident in the experiences of South Asian women within the 25+ year old group as well. They shared mental health complications such

as anxiety, fatigue, increased occurrences of negative self-thought, and feelings of fear, despair, and hopelessness. A participant in particular shared the development of an obsessive compulsive disorder:

"Covid has had a huge toll on my mental health with 2 toddlers and constant struggle between managing my small business and home. I've developed a condition called trichotillomania, also referred to as "hair-pulling disorder." - (25+ Participant)

Additionally, as quarantine changed numerous domains, participants highlighted experiences of social isolation and reclusion, as well as decreased levels of physical activity and sleep deprivation. Having to balance multiple roles and additional household duties also led to a lack of personal time, which impacted mental health as well. For instance, a participant discussed their experiences of social isolation in a multi-generational home contributing to decreased mental wellness:



"In my case one of the things that I felt impacted my mental health is I live with my in-laws and husband, I don't necessarily feel that my home environment is the most supportive or healthy for myself."
- (25+ Participant)

**“We’re the most alone we’ve ever been in our entire lives now when we probably need people the most at this point.”
- (18-24 Participant)**

Comparatively, solitary environments enabled a few South Asian women to address their mental health concerns and seek out appropriate resources. However, South Asian women also emphasized that there is a lack of culturally responsive resources which incorporate an intersectional framework, creating additional barriers in beginning their recovery. Participants shared their distress of systemic failures in addressing culturally specific and racialized experiences: *“Our people are on the front line, our people have less resources, our people have less access, our people have even less consideration and empathy when these things happen”*- (25+ Participant)

COVID-19 had several negative impacts on the mental and physical health of South Asian female international students as well. Similar to the other groups, the largest factor that led to a decline in mental health was social isolation. Not having support systems in Canada especially during the pandemic made it difficult to cope with their move to a foreign country. Those who are in intimate relationships, experienced difficulties in maintaining them due to long distance. One participant in particular mentioned her partner was her only support system in Canada but due to stay-at-home orders they were unable to meet each other for 3+ months.



“It was very difficult for me. Here I don’t have any family, I had no one with whom I could share my feelings. So it was a very hard time”
- (International Student)



“For me it was mentally stressful. No family, no friends, no job” - (International Student)

Isolation due to virtual school and work caused feelings of depression, frustration and lack of motivation which led to difficulties with completing tasks and an overall decline in physical health. Furthermore, students indicated that they have limited access to healthcare due to subpar health insurance which is difficult to access through their school. Many students suggested that they are discouraged from accessing healthcare services even if the need arises, since they have to pay before they can be reimbursed and due to the limited number of visits to the doctor that are covered.

“Most important factor causing me this issue was just sitting in the same room and doing the same thing everyday. I gained a lot of weight and this had caused me a feeling of loneliness which made me feel ill as well. I am always reluctant and hesitant to share my issues with others which always takes me aback. I did not have a talk with anybody regarding this” - (International Student)

“Sometimes I feel as if my progress has stopped and I will no longer be able to do anything in future with regard to my studies and work. I listen to Gurbani and some Sufi songs to keep myself calm and moving.” - (International Student)

Among all groups, a major obstacle was centered around having access to mental health and wellness resources via school, the workplace, medical practitioners, etc. The lack of privacy within the household to have access to mental health resources i.e. disclosing sensitive information during therapy sessions was an additional struggle individuals faced. The complexity of mental health requires increased engagement and conversations which the South Asian community is beginning to address.

Resilience Among South Asian Girls & Women

It is important to consider that resilience is not a sustainable solution. It was evident especially in the 25+ group, specifically among immigrant women that they had internalized a survival complex. Several participants in this group framed any negative experiences of COVID-19 in a positive light, or tried to explain that they are used to struggling so they have become accustomed to showing resilience. One participant in particular noted that:

"I am a person of adjustment, I can adjust myself to any situation accordingly. As you all know, we aren't born here, we are born in another country and we immigrated here- I immigrated in 1987 and of course life has been through many ups and downs, with life, family, jobs, opportunities, bringing kids up and you know taking care of elderly parents or siblings. But I'm a person that can adjust accordingly as situations come, and yes I understand we are all being affected by it and again to me it is, if this is the situation we have to deal with, what other choices do we have, I have adjusted accordingly."- (25+ Participant)

South Asian immigrant women in particular have often experienced many struggles due to difficulties with migrating, leaving behind their support systems, and due to a lack of culturally responsive services to help in their journeys. As a result, they have internalized a mentality of surviving against all odds.

Experiences of Grief and Loss During the Pandemic

In addition to mental health challenges, the experiences of losing a loved one severely impacted South Asian girls and women, which has specifically been challenging during the pandemic. Throughout the community conversations with South Asian women 25+ years old, they shared navigating grief with minimal support as a barrier in processing and healing from the death of family, friends, etc. The following participants highlight their challenges:

"During the pandemic my father was diagnosed with and ultimately passed away from cancer. If not for the restrictions we might have had more options to ask for help from friends, family but instead all of the burden was on myself and my mother."- (25+ Participant)

Additionally, a participant discussed COVID-19 restrictions impeding their ability to say goodbye or to have final moments during the end of someone's life.

"I actually have friends who lost their mom and they weren't even able to see her in person, they just had to say goodbye over a screen because the doctors said she probably wouldn't even be able to make it through the night. So definitely, very tough on family members as well because it takes a toll on you not even being able to say goodbye, and especially when they are passing away from such a nasty disease"
- (25+ Participant)

“I am a person of adjustment, I can adjust myself to any situation accordingly. As you all know, we aren’t born here, we are born in another country and we immigrated here- I immigrated in 1987 and of course life has been through many ups and downs, with life, family, jobs, opportunities, bringing kids up and you know taking care of elderly parents or siblings. But I’m a person that can adjust accordingly as situations come, and yes I understand we are all being affected by it and again to me it is, if this is the situation we have to deal with, what other choices do we have, I have adjusted accordingly.” - (25+ Participant)

Recommendations for Supports

1. Proposed Workshops

A common recommendation was to offer more workshops tailored to various topics to provide South Asian daughters with a safe space in which they can connect, share, learn and grow. Some ideas that were shared were:

- a. Additional mentorship programs such as Laadliyan's program, [Laadli to Laadli](#).
- b. Virtual library study sessions for students.
- c. More community conversations that provide virtual spaces for South Asian girls and women (advocacy based or spaces to vent and talk with one another).
- d. More outreach and awareness related work that amplifies available resources and supports within Peel Region for South Asian girls and women.
 - i) In order to create awareness, a proposed recommendation was a Zoom series on different concerns faced by this community with effective resources and services.
- e. Programs and workshops which address substance abuse and addiction in South Asian communities in Peel.
- f. Programs that provide coping mechanisms to deal with the pandemic.
 - i) Concrete solutions must be established to address healthy resiliency among South Asian girls and women.
- g. Safe spaces for South Asian girls and women that are affected by gender-based violence
 - i) Addressing stigma attached with seeking help, providing resources, and a support group.

1.1 Workshops Geared Towards International Students:

- a. Participants indicated a need for Conversation Cafes which would provide language classes or virtual conversation spaces in order to reduce the language barrier they face in Canada.
- b. A need for workshops on applying for permanent residency (PR), support for writing and editing resumes and cover letters, career counselling, support in applying for jobs, and employment readiness workshops.
- c. Need for a mentorship program to help develop networks in their individual fields in Canada, and to gain support in pursuing their interests.
- d. Participants also expressed interest in having weekly social meet-ups in order to talk about different topics and to build their social networks in order to reduce the impacts of isolation.

2. Mental Health Resources

Participants indicated the need for culturally responsive mental health resources which are affordable and accessible. Some ideas that were shared were:

- a. Access to publicly funded or affordable mental health services and healthcare workers that prescribe more than just pills to combat anxiety and depression.
- b. Access to culturally responsive mental and physical health resources and supports.
- c. Extensive toolkits that outline various mental health supports and resources available in Peel (e.g., documents that capture the range of services, availability, general contact information, etc.)

3. Government Support

Participants addressed the need for more government assistance that will provide them with financial support and reduce barriers to securing employment. Recommendations included:

- a. International students mentioned they wish the government would allow their parents to visit them in Canada since they need emotional support to get through the impacts the pandemic has had on their mental health.
- b. Need for financial resources for international students from the government with less restrictive eligibility requirements that are similar to CERB, so they can receive financial support.
- c. Funding for community organizations in order for them to create programs which provide more assistance in finding employment, and which would allow them to hire international students. This can be through more employment readiness workshops, internships and co-op placements, and volunteer programs that allow them to build their skillsets.
- d. Affordable or publicly funded culturally responsive mental health supports were also indicated as being an important resource that the government should provide.

4. Racialized Community Awareness/Educational Tools

Throughout the community conversations, participants discussed recommendations that addressed systemic problems targeting South Asian girls and women. Participants shared the following:

- a. Address the inadequacies of higher-level institutions in addressing systemic racism of South Asian girls and women, across various domains such as workplaces, government, etc. Recognition from higher level leaders of these racialized experiences and their implications.
- b. Incorporating intersectional understanding when reporting on the experiences of South Asian women, specifically in regard to multi-generational housing.

Conclusion

South Asian girls and women within the Peel Region have been heavily impacted by COVID-19, as seen through an intersectional lens of race, ethnicity, gender, and immigration status. Through this research project's four focus groups, South Asian girls and women shed light on the impacts the pandemic had on their roles and responsibilities, education, employment, and mental and physical health. Immigration status for international students created additional obstacles in obtaining employment and in meeting eligibility requirements for government financial assistance programs. Thus, it was discovered that international students require more accessibility to a wide range of supports and resources and workshops specific to their needs and concerns, ranging from topics of mental health, to managing finances, finding work, etc.

Overall, it is evident that there is a need for culturally responsive resources and services which address concerns unique to South Asian girls and women. In order to establish a post-pandemic recovery which takes into account the lived experiences of this population, it is imperative that this research be taken into consideration when funding is administered to local community organizations. Grassroots and non-profit organizations which cater to this marginalized population require sustainable funding in order to deliver programs around concerns that were addressed during our focus groups. It is further recommended that sector-wide cross-collaboration occur, in order to create extensive toolkits which contain a diverse set of resources and services for South Asian girls and women.

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