Examination of Predictive Factors of Depression among Asian American Adolescents: A Narrative Review

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Abstract : Background: Existent literature addressing Asian American children and adolescents reveals that this population is experiencing rates of depression comparable to those of European American and other ethnic minority youths. Within the last decade, increased attention has been given to Asian American adolescent mental health. Methods: 44 articles were extracted from Pubmed, PsycINFO, EMBASE, and Proquest CINAHL. Data were subject to thematic analyses and categorized into factors under individual, familial, and community levels. Results: Of all the individual factors, age and gender were the most supported in their relationship with depressive symptoms. Likewise, living situations, parent-child relations, peer relations, and broader environmental factors were strongly evidenced. The remaining psychosocial factors faced contrary evidence or were insubstantially addressed in the empirical literature. Discussion: The identified psychosocial factors within this study offer a starting point for future research to examine what factors should be included in formal or informal methods of screening/consultations. Clinicians should aim to understand the cultural influences specific to Asian American adolescents, particularly the central role that family relations may have on their depressive symptoms. Conclusion: Low awareness of culturally linked expressions of psychological distress can lead to misdiagnosis or under-diagnosis of depression in Asian American youth. Further evidence is needed to clarify the relationship of psychosocial factors linked to Asian American adolescent depressive symptoms.
Keywords : adolescent, Asian American, depression, psychosocial factors

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