

## A Study of the Depression Status of Asian American Adolescents

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**Abstract :** Depression is one of the most common mental disorders in the United States, and past studies have shown a concerning increase in the rates of depression in youth populations over time. Furthermore, depression is an especially important issue for Asian Americans because of the anti-Asian violence taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic. While Asian American adolescents are reluctant to seek help for mental health issues, past research has found a prevalence of depressive symptoms in them that have yet to be fully investigated. There have been studies conducted to understand and observe the impacts of multifarious factors influencing the mental well-being of Asian American adolescents; however, they have been generally limited to qualitative investigation, and very few have attempted to quantitatively evaluate the relationship between depression levels and a comprehensive list of factors for those levels at the same time. To better quantify these relationships, this project investigated the prevalence of depression in Asian American teenagers mainly from the Greater Philadelphia Region, aged 12 to 19, and, with an anonymous survey, asked participants 48 multiple-choice questions pertaining to demographic information, daily behaviors, school life, family life, depression levels (quantified by the PHQ-9 assessment), school and family support against depression. Each multiple-choice question was assigned as a factor and variable for statistical and dominance analysis to determine the most influential factors on depression levels of Asian American adolescents. The results were validated via Bootstrap analysis and t-tests. While certain influential factors identified in this survey are consistent with the literature, such as parent-child relationship and peer pressure, several dominant factors were relatively overlooked in the past. These factors include the parents' relationship with each other, the satisfaction with body image, sex identity, support from the family and support from the school. More than 25% of participants desired more support from their families and schools in handling depression issues. This study implied that it is beneficial for Asian American parents and adolescents to take programs on parents' relationships with each other, parent-child communication, mental health, and sexual identity. A culturally inclusive school environment and more accessible mental health services would be helpful for Asian American adolescents to combat depression. This survey-based study paved the way for further investigation of effective approaches for helping Asian American adolescents against depression.

**Keywords :** Asian American adolescents, depression, dominance analysis, t-test, bootstrap analysis

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