



Introduction

Mental health is one of many topics in Global Health. In order to have a stable well-being and longevity, mental health must be examined as seriously as physical health. Each part of the world has different views on mental health, especially in Asia. Asia has a history of emotional well-being from documentation of events to cultural beliefs [1, 2, 3, 4]. Migration to another country, and societal expectations also shape Asian mental health. Unfortunately, the aforementioned factors bring forth high levels of stress. Most of the time, people portray mental health as a taboo discussion because it is associated with fear and abnormal behavior [5,6]. However, those who end up in a poor psychological state are not always at fault. This thesis examines history in Asia that affected mental health, culture bound syndromes exclusive to the continent, societal expectations, and stigmas that prevent individuals that prevent individuals from seeking help. Lastly, this thesis offers suggestions on how to improve psychological quality among the Asian community. Historic events, traditional and social lifestyles, and stigmas are all cross-cultural barriers in mental health that exist amongst the Asian community. Ignorance of these factors, however, will not lead to any progress, and they must be overcome to improve the quality of an individual's well-being.



<https://images.app.goo.gl/Ag28na3tNhTykBo19>

Abstract

Since the 16th century, the Asian community had their mental health impaired due to colonization and migration. This topic has been ongoing for years, yet it is an essential study because mental health is just as important as physical well-being. Asians are an ethnic group that refuses to discuss their mental health concerns due to stigmas, but concealment worsens symptoms to the point that it is too late to seek treatment. A systematic review of literature was conducted to examine the causal relationship between cross-cultural barriers and its impact on Asian mental health, from colonialism to present-day society. The results revealed that historic events still affect Asian populations to this day, Western health principles can apply to every culture for diagnoses and treatment, and many fear how loved ones will react to their abnormal state of mind. Evidence implies that lack of confidentiality and advance directives are issues that many organizations and groups around the world are either working on resolving or already developed methods. The findings throughout this thesis emphasize that cross-cultural barriers in mental health among Asians exist, but clients and supporters can break them together when they put forth the effort.

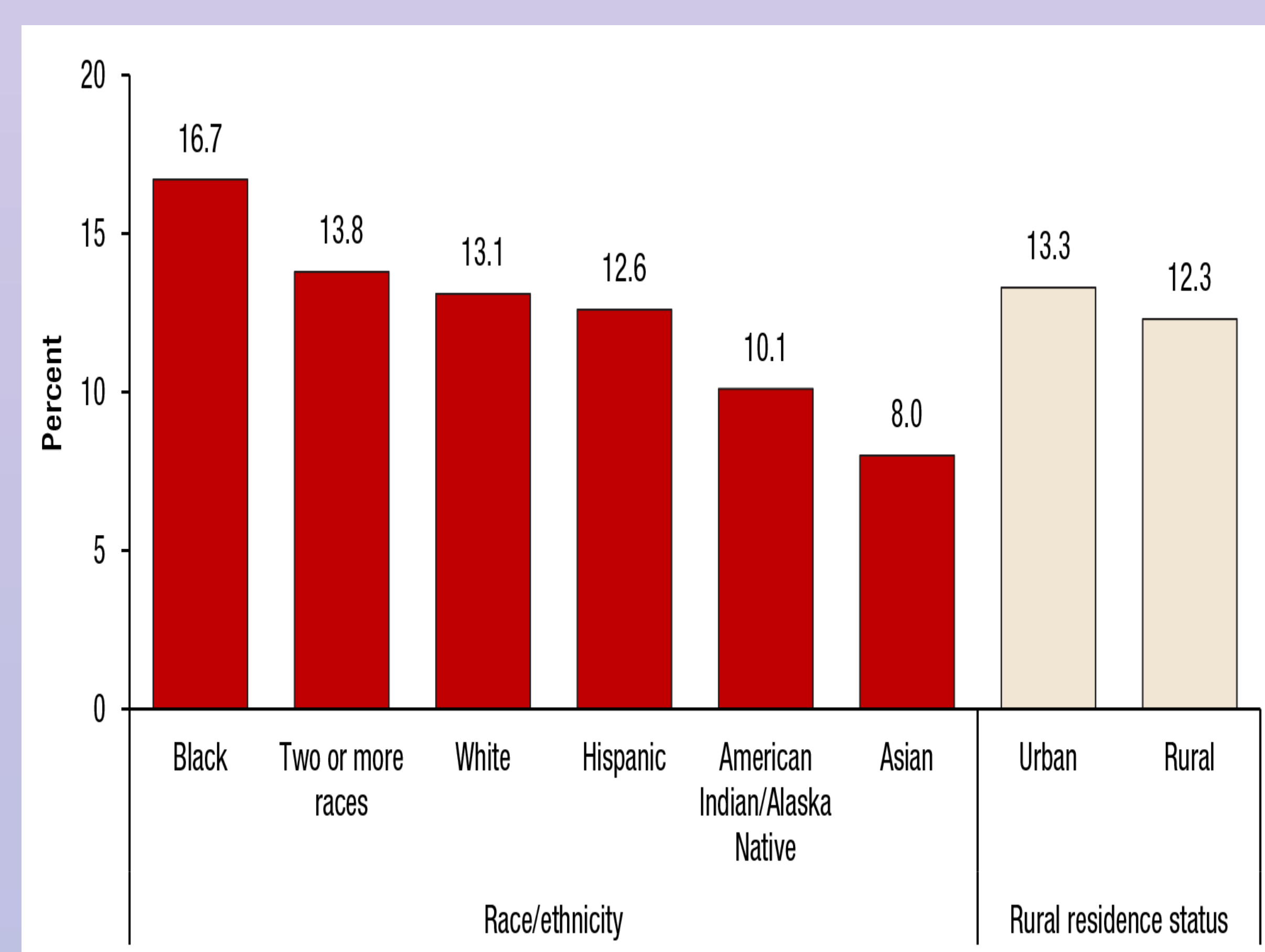


<https://images.app.goo.gl/aX6NvifbCun8Fbej9>

Materials and Methods

A systematic review of literature was conducted to examine the causal relationship between cross-cultural barriers and its impact on Asian mental health, from colonialism to present-day society.

Figure 1: Receipt of mental health services in an educational setting in the past year among adolescents aged 12 to 17, by race/ethnicity and rural residence status: 2014



https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/report_1973/ShortReport-1973.html

References

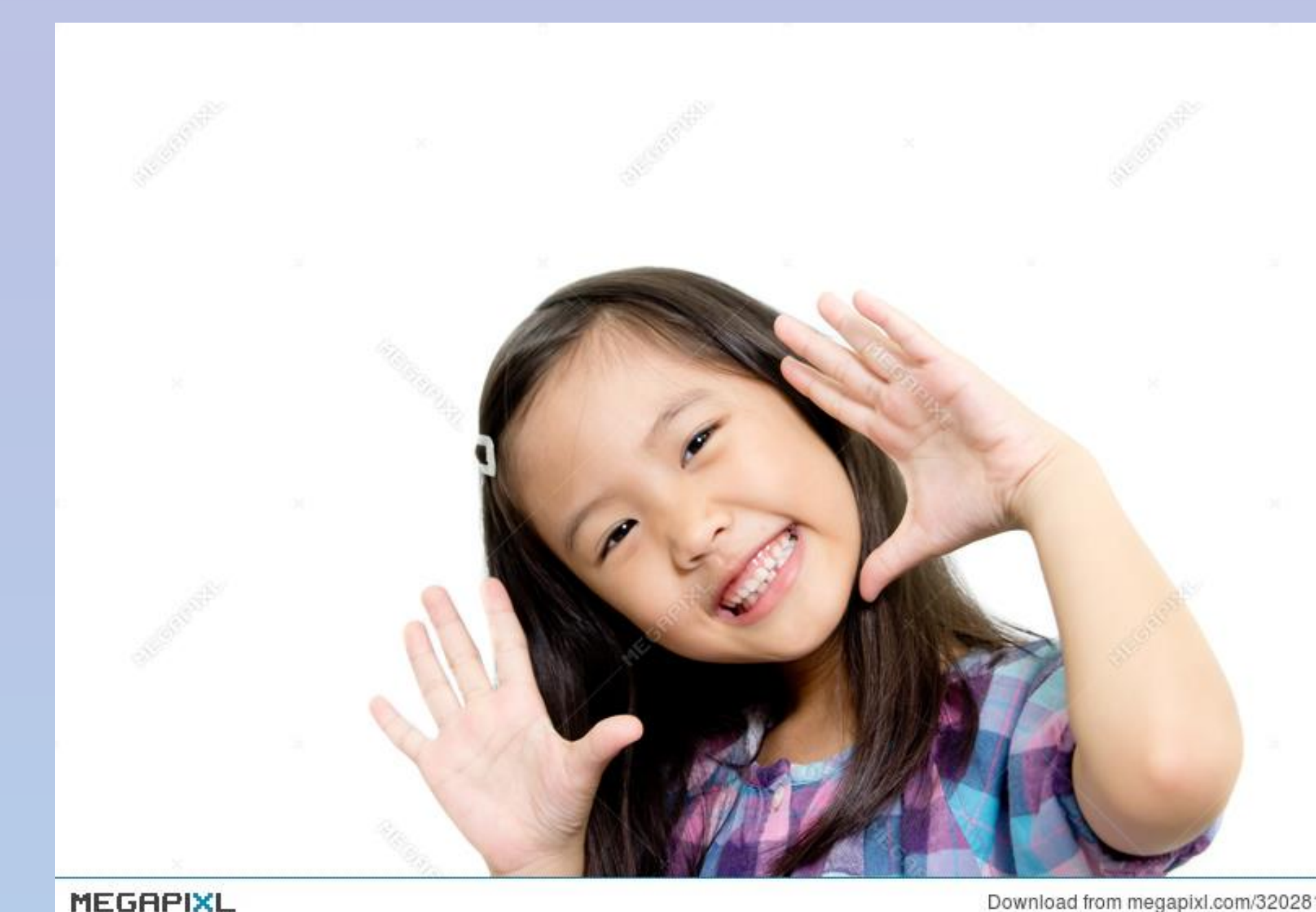
- Hufana, Alyssa, and Morgan Consoli, Melissa L. n.d. "I Push through and Stick with It": Exploring Resilience among Filipino American Adults - ProQuest." Accessed March 18, 2020. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/2331527834/46693A3165344F0EPO/1?accountid=14524>.
- Edington, Claire E. 2019. "Front Matter." In *Beyond the Asylum*, 1-vi. Mental Illness in French Colonial Vietnam. Cornell University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctvdmx138.1>.
- Kumar, Asha, and Nevid, Jeffrey S. n.d. "Acculturation, Enculturation, and Perceptions of Mental Disorders in Asian Indian Immigrants - ProQuest." Accessed March 18, 2020. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/614514602/4CFF3484EF584CADPQ/1?accountid=14524>.
- Yamada, Ann-Marie, and Anthony J. Marsella. "The Study of Culture and Psychopathology." *Handbook of Multicultural Mental Health*, 2013, pp. 3-23. doi:10.1016/b978-0-12-394420-7.00001-1.
- Kudva, Kundadak Ganes, et al. "Stigma in Mental Illness: Perspective from Eight Asian Nations." *Wiley Online Library*, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111), 10 Jan. 2020, onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/appy.12380.
- Lau, Ying Wen, et al. "Stigma Resistance and Its Association with Internalised Stigma and Psychosocial Outcomes among Psychiatric Outpatients." *Psychiatry Research*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, Nov. 2017. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28734239.
- Carlson, Eve Bernstein, and Rhonda Rosser-Hogan. 1993. "Mental Health Status of Cambodian Refugees Ten Years after Leaving Their Homes." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 63 (2): 223-31. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0079422>.
- Cantrell, Tania H. 2007. "Killing US Softly with Their Story: New York Times Coverage of the My Lai and El Mozote Militia." n.d.
- Kim, Jackie H. J., Donna K. Nagata, and Mark Akiyama. 2015. "Japanese American Reactions to World War II Incarceration R." n.d.
- Ma, Pei-Wen Winnie, et al. "Managing Family Conflict Over Career Decisions: The Experience of Asian Americans." *Journal of Career Development*, vol. 41, no. 6, Dec. 2014, pp. 487-506, doi:10.1177/0894845313512898.
- Mak, Kwok-Kei, et al. "Epidemiology of Internet Behaviors and Addiction Among Adolescents in Six Asian Countries." *Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., Publishers*, 18 Nov. 2014. www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/cyber.2014.0139.
- Yang, Fang et al. "Correlates of loneliness in older adults in Shanghai, China: does age matter?." *BMC geriatrics* vol. 18, 1 300. 4 Dec. 2018, doi:10.1186/s12877-018-0994-x
- Snodgrass, Jeffrey G. "Chapter 10 Festive Fighting and Forgiving: Ritual and Resilience among Indigenous Indian 'Conservation Refugees.'" *Global Mental Health: Anthropological Perspectives*, edited by Brandon A. Kohrt and Emily Mendenhall, Left Coast Press, Inc., 2015, pp. 173-190.
- Poremanski D, Alexander M, Fang T, et al. Psychiatric Advance Directives and their relevance to improving psychiatric care in Asian countries. *Asia-Pacific Psychiatry*. 2019;e12374. <https://doi.org/10.1111/appy.12374>
- Shah, Khalid, et al. "A Primary Care Programme to Improve Identification and Stepped-Care Support of Asians with Mental Health and Lifestyle Issues." *Journal of Primary Health Care*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2019, p. 39. doi:10.1071/hc18043.
- Park, Nan Sook, et al. "Willingness to Use Mental Health Counseling and Antidepressants in Older Korean Americans: The Role of Beliefs and Stigma about Depression." *Ethnicity & Health*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, Jan. 2018. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27764962.
- Adolescent Mental Health Service Use and Reasons for Using Services in Specialty, Educational, and General Medical Settings. www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/report_1973/ShortReport-1973.html.
- Chomnancoffee. "Stock Photo: Happy Asian Kid." *Search Results*, www.megapixl.com/happy-asian-kid-stock-photo-32028102.
- Google Image Result for <https://cdn.thinkinglink.me/api/image/7DceLjfyM5yaZX9oqTXFcE7JbZyn6cssUmHn51dNeNgzdHxRHHRIR2v7qUhwQYjhb1LWVbdjwvA5MLfevdUa/320/320/Scaledown>, images.app.goo.gl/R4UymnwUVVkiMNxx7.
- Google Image Result for https://sites.duke.edu/Neurodiversityandinclusion/Files/2017/03/IMG_9720-1024x683.jpg, images.app.goo.gl/aX6NvifbCun8Fbej9.
- Google Image Result for https://www.psychiatryadvisor.com/Wp-Content/Uploads/Sites/8/2020/01/Asian-woman_G_955079812.jpg, images.app.goo.gl/Ag28na3tNhTykBo19.
- Redirect Notice, images.app.goo.gl/8AMr54Xe7WRAWNe67.

Conclusion

Historical events, traditional and social lifestyles, and stigmas are all cross-cultural barriers that deter Asian mental health. Colonialism, wars, and migration all harmed Asian mental well-being throughout history [1, 2, 7, 8, 9]. Cultural customs and beliefs also led to unique mental disorders that were exclusive in some Asian countries [4]. Furthermore, in modern day society, every individual has a set of expectations to meet, depending on their age group. As a result of this, societal expectations pressure people, and it can impair their emotional well-being [10, 11, 12]. Not everyone within the Asian community will express what they feel based on the stigmas that mental health discussions are looked down upon [5, 6]. However, that does not mean that poor mental health should be ignored and dismissed. Both Eastern and Western cultures have and continue to find methods to improve an individual's mental well-being [1, 13, 14, 15, 16]. Mental illness will remain an ongoing issue in the Asian community, but the more that others are informed and make the choice to seek help, the greater it will improve the overall quality of life.



<https://images.app.goo.gl/8AMr54Xe7WRAWNe67>



<https://www.megapixl.com/happy-asian-kid-stock-photo-32028102>

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank Professor Paula Saravia for her wisdom and guidance throughout the Winter and Spring quarters of this Global Health Senior Capstone Seminar. She always helped us whenever we needed help with our thesis projects and accommodated any personal hardships we had during these difficult times with the Coronavirus. Secondly, I would like to thank the teaching assistant Ben Merrill for his help throughout my research topic. It was thanks to him that I figured out how to structure my thesis and clearly define my research topic, as it is now known as "Cross-Cultural Barriers in Asian Mental Health". Finally, I would like to thank the Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC). UPAC is the organization I volunteered with to complete my Global Health Field Experience. Not only did members of this organization treat me like family, but they developed my interest in mental health, and also made me realize what I want to pursue after I graduate, which is a career in case management.

Contact email: wgough@ucsd.edu