

Understanding Asian American College Students' Suicidal Behavior: Qualitative Study

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Abstract—The purpose of this study is to examine Asian American college students' perception of suicide and culture-bound risk factors associated with suicidal behaviors. By analyzing five focus groups of 28 Asian American college students, this study identifies their dual perspectives on suicide and a range of culture-bound risk factors such as loneliness and sticking out feelings, parent's higher academic pressure, inter-generational acculturation disparity and burden for living up to model minority image. The findings of this study suggest that Asian American college students' suicidal behavior needs to be understood from their Asian cultural attributes such as collectivistic values for honoring family reputations and racial discrimination besides individual student's mental illnesses including depression. Based on this finding, this study recommends culturally competent suicide prevention programs for both college campus and Asian American ethnic communities.

Index Terms—Asian American college students, culture-bound risk factors, perception, suicidal behavior.

I. INTRODUCTION

In contrast to the public perception of Asian Americans as model minority immigrants depicted as mentally healthy, academically excellent, and economically better off, Asian American young adults are more vulnerable to suicide than their counterparts in any other ethnic groups.

Suicide is the first leading cause of death for Asian Americans, ages 15-24, while it is the third leading cause of death for all races in the same age group [1], [2]. In addition, the suicide rate of Asian Americans in this age group has increased by 40%, from 12.0 per 100,000 individuals in 2013 to 16.8 per 100,000 individuals in 2019 [3]. When broken down by gender and race, Asian American women, ages 15-24, are the highest suicide risk ethnic group across all U.S. women in that age group. Specifically, 23% of deaths among Asian American women in this age group are by suicide, while it is 14% among white and 6% among black women of the same age group [2].

Not only do Asian American young adults have the highest suicide rate, but this population also has relatively higher suicidal ideation and attempt than any other ethnic groups [4]. Consistent with suicide trends in the overall population, college-aged Asian American young adults are most at-risk for suicide. For example, among college students, Asian American college students were 1.6 times more likely to consider a suicide attempt than white students [5]. According

to the report of Cornell University, 61% (13 out of 21) on-campus suicides between 1996 and 2006 were Asian American students [6].

The higher suicide rate of Asian American young adults contrasts with the lower suicide rate of overall Asian Americans, which is 6.4 per 100,000 people in comparing with 13.5 per 100,000 of the overall American population in 2020 [7]. The contradictory suicide rate between all ages of Asian Americans and young adult Asian Americans implies that young adults might be susceptible to certain risk factors different from those characterizing other ages and racial groups, such as acculturation process, developmental stage, immigration status, family and peer relationship, and socio-cultural environments [8], [9]. However, little is known about unique risk factors associated with Asian American young adult's suicidal behaviors because previous studies have not distinguished age differences among Asian American populations and consequently generalized the identified risk factors across all age groups [10], [11].

In order to examine significantly higher suicidal behaviors among Asian American young adults, it is essential to explore how they perceive suicidal death and risk factors from their own viewpoints because their perceptions might not be congruent with those in other age groups in Asian American population. Moreover, their perceptions of suicidal behaviors might be influenced by their cultural and racial socialization experiences that are different from those of general white American young adults. For example, in Western culture, the question commonly associated with suicide is "Why did suicide happen?" because individualistic Western culture perceives suicide as the individual's personal choice. However, in collectivistic Asian culture, it is often asked "Who caused this death?" because suicide is perceived within an interpersonal context [12]. Another reason for exploring Asian American young adults' perspectives is lack of a qualitative suicide study. Most existing studies about Asian American's suicide are primarily to measure their vulnerability or identify risks factors by using a quantitative method. However, a quantitative study may produce inconsistent risk factors or prevalence of suicide because each quantitative study is different in terms of measurement scales, wordings, questionnaire formats, and survey administration [8], [13]. Hence, in complementing the limitation of quantitative study, qualitative research which incorporates participants' perceptions of suicide and their lived experiences is recommended for exploring specific cultural differences on suicide [8], [13], [14].

In light of the needs for filling the gap in the literature, this study aims to examine Asian American young adult cultural meaning of suicide and culturally relevant risk factors by using a focus group methodology. Exploring cultural

Manuscript received March 13, 2022; revised June 23, 2022.

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perspective on suicide and culture-bound risk factors from an insider's point-of-view will provide mental health professionals with insights in developing an age-appropriate and culturally competent suicide prevention program.

II. METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this study, 28 Asian American undergraduate college students (male=13, female=15) were recruited from eight colleges in the Chicago metropolitan area after obtaining an Institutional Review Board from an author's university. Focus group methodology was selected for this study because it explores a predefined topic, offers the opportunity to collect information-rich data including participant's non-verbal responses delivered from group interactions, and discovers issues that individuals in a one-to-one interview may not raise [15]. All participants took part in the five focus groups and each focus group was held either in students' university settings or local ethnic community organizations. Considering the reluctance of self-disclosure in Asian culture, however, this study paid extra attention in recruiting participants because Asian Americans tend to discuss topics only suitable within the context of their cultural values or are silent if a vocal participant dominates the conversation. To reduce some of these foreseen limitations, this study recruited voluntary college students who expressed their interest in both the topic of this study and the nature of focus group interview. In addition, during a focus group interview, all participants were asked to take turns in sharing their own views, and confidentiality of shared information was emphasized.

Each focus group consisted of a mixed ethnic group of Asian American college students and was facilitated by an Asian American researcher in an effort to reduce any racial or cultural gap between the participants and the facilitator. Each focus group lasted one and a half hours using structured open-end questions presented in Table 1. Although structured questions focused on participants' perception of suicidal behavior, each question was broad enough to express the widest possible range of participant's perspectives. The focus group interview began with a general discussion on death and moved onto the topic of suicide in order to reduce the participant's emotional stress associated with discussing a sensitive topic. At the end of the focus group, participants were rewarded with a \$30 gift card as well as refreshments. All focus groups were recorded by both camcorder and voice recorder for quality assurance. Recorded materials were immediately transcribed by a trained, graduate-level student researcher, and then, all transcriptions were cross-checked by a second graduate-level student researcher to minimize errors.

TABLE I: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

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| 1. What does death mean to you in a general sense? |
| 2. How do you perceive the meanings of suicide in your (or your parents') Asian culture? |
| 3. What are the risk factors causing suicide of Asian American college students? |

This study employed an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach because this method allows the researcher to examine perceptions, responses, and feelings of

those people who have experienced or lived through a particular phenomenon, such as suicide [16]. An IPA approach is typically conducted through a use of in-depth interviews of small samples of participants (i.e., from a single case to eight to 10 participants) because it attempts to explore a participant's lived experience of a particular phenomenon, as opposed to an attempt to generalize an objective statement of the event itself [17]-[19]. At the same time, in order to make sense of the participant's lived experiences, IPA requires the researcher's emic and etic perspectives by putting himself in the shoes of the participants. The author and two graduate-level student researchers of this study were Asian immigrants who were able to understand the participant's "underlying true dynamics of the experience" while interpreting data obtained by IPA approach [20]. Author and two researchers re-read all transcripts several times independently and analyzed each transcript line by line to elicit main themes, patterns and connections across participants' responses. Through an open and inductive coding process, each researcher's reflections on the transcripts were shared to ensure that the researcher's interpretations of participants' lived experience were data derived. In each coding stage, emerging codes were compared and discussed to resolve any discrepancies, vagueness, and disagreement. Whenever there were differences in identifying main themes and meaningful phrases, deliberation between researchers was held to re-categorize themes that represent participant's responses the most, intending to direct researcher's attention rather than claiming the definite results. As the analysis developed, the researchers categorized the emerging codes, and subsequently looked for sub-themes and overarching themes. Some sub-themes eventually were grouped into three main themes along with three sub-themes.

III. RESULTS

A. Participants

The age of participants ranged from 18 to 24 years old, with an average age of 20.6 for male and 21.8 for female students. The ethnicity of participants were 13 Chinese (46% of total; male=6, female=6), 4 Asian Indians (14% of total; male=2, female=3), 4 Filipinos (14% of total; male=1, female=3), 5 Koreans (18% of total; male=2, female=3), 1 Pakistani female, and 1 Vietnamese male. Sixty percent (n=17) of participants identified themselves as Christians, 32% of them as Buddhists (n=9), 8% of them as other religion such as Muslim or Hindi (n=2). Out of 28 participants, 7 students were born outside of the U.S. However, all these students immigrated to the U.S. prior to elementary school and were educated in the U.S. Average years of living in the U.S. was 18.6 years for all participants (male=17.3 years, female=20.0 years). Regarding languages primarily spoken at home, 21 students (75%) spoke their parent's native languages at home, while 2 students spoke only English at home and 5 students spoke a mixture of English and their parent's native languages at their homes.

B. Exposure to Suicide

Nine out of 28 participants (32.1%) indicated they had

been exposed to suicide in their lifetime. Out of these 9 participants, 7 participants were directly exposed to suicide of their family members or friends, while 2 students disclosed having attempted or seriously considered suicide in the past. In particular, one Filipino female student revealed her self-cutting behavior during high school, and one Korean male student reported serious suicidal ideation because he was continuously “being bullied” throughout junior high and high school.

C. Theme 1. Double Perspectives on Suicide

Overall, most participants perceived suicide with negative descriptors such as “shock,” “embarrassed,” “shamed,” “angry,” “upset” and “bad.” In addition, they identified suicide as a taboo subject and stigma because “talking” or “even thinking about” suicide “brings it to reality” like a “bad omen.” Some students stated that suicide “embarrasses their family” and “makes their parents feel as though they failed in raising their children.” If suicide happened, Asian American families tend to “make up their own story” or to “pretend it is an accident” in order to maintain their family’s reputation and honor. Consequently, students’ expression of suicidal ideation was often either “ignored” or “taken as a joke” by family members.

Parents would probably not want to talk about it because it would bring shame to them. Bring up the topic of suicide makes parents think they have done something wrong. Maybe they think they haven’t raised their kids to be good people (Chinese male).

Several participants perceived suicide as a “selfish” and “irresponsible” behavior because a person who committed suicide “only cared about own pain and suffering” rather than considering the consequences for surviving family and friends. They blamed the victims of suicide because suicide will “break a family apart,” “devalue filial piety,” and “destroy immigrant parents’ American dreams.” Thus, they felt “more empathy” towards surviving family members as well as experiencing a “guilty” feeling of “not preventing” their suicide.

In contrast to negative perception of suicide and blaming the victim, some participants recognized suicide as an honorable, acceptable, and religious behavior, “if it is for a certain cause for a greater good, like the Japanese Samurai who stab themselves to keep their Samurai honor.” Other participants also agreed that suicide has a positive aspect because it can be sacrificial either for keeping family from a dishonorable situation or for pursuing religious faith.

[If] you are a corporate executive, you have done something shameful, like a corporate crime. Then, if you don’t kill yourself, you bring that shame to your family. But, if you kill yourself, you are trying to remove yourself from the family. That act of suicide is not a selfish behavior, but sacrifice because you are doing it for your family, not for yourself (Chinese male).

D. Theme 2: Culturally Relevant Risk Factors at Multifaceted Levels

Regarding risk factors of suicide, participants identified a range of risk factors at multifaceted system levels such as individual, family, peer, and socio-cultural levels. Although

each risk factor was not exclusive to a certain system level, the identified risk factors are listed below.

1) Loneliness and sticking out in white society

Most participants acknowledged that “depression,” “loneliness,” and “isolation” were significant risk factors associated with individual’s personal characteristics. They perceived that lonely or being left out feelings tended to generate more depressed feelings, which eventually led to suicide.

Being left out from a group of friends, [whom] you thought that they were your true friends but later on you find that they weren’t. That’s the reason of people being more depressed and then broken down. More depressed, and more anti-social will lead you to avoid people, [and then] will play a factor to suicide (Korean male).

Although most participants associated loneliness with an absence of close friends, some of them expressed that their lonely feelings directly resulted from their ethnic minority status and racial discrimination because they felt “out-casted” and “sticking-out” feelings in a white dominant society.

When you are growing up as an Asian girl or boy, you’re not like the other [White] American kids in your neighborhood and you kind of feel out-casted sometimes. That could be one of the factors that make you to want to commit suicide, because you are placed in a big high school, and you kind of stick out and you kind of feel lonely (Filipino female).

2) Pressure for academic success

Majority of participants overwhelmingly agreed that “pressure for academic success” and “high expectations” from their parents as well as from extended family members were the most prevalent risk factors. Although academic success may be stressful for all college students across ethnic groups, Asian American college students had more psychological stress because their parents wanted to get vicarious appreciation and rewards from their children’s academic success as a way of promoting family reputation and honor. In addition, most participants were told by their parents that the parents had immigrated to the U.S. for their children’s better educational opportunities and had given up a comfortable life in their native countries. Hence, most participants experienced emotional burden and an obligation to pay back their parent’s sacrifice by achieving academic success and securing a prestigious job.

Academic pressure on Asian American college students was not only from their parents but also from their extended family members. Participants expressed that their uncles and aunts frequently asked “So, are you going to be a doctor or a lawyer?” and compared their academic achievement with their own children’s or someone else’s in their community. In addition, many participants stated that their parents “always compared them with other [smarter] children” because their parents had unrealistically higher expectation to their children. As a result, participants felt “extra pressure,” “failed,” “blamed themselves for disappointing their parents,” and/or “feared losing parent’s love” if they were not able to meet their parents’ and relatives’ high expectations for academic successes.

We have a big responsibility coming from our parents because we are living out our parents' hopes and dreams because there is a lot that they have sacrificed. So there's a lot of extra pressure, because every mistake we make is not just for ourselves, but it's for our family (Asian Indian female).

We don't want to let our parents down or disappoint them in anyway. So we try our best and we kind of kick ourselves if we can't reach that certain goal, or reach their expectations (Korean male).

My friend wanted to commit suicide because she felt love from her father [is] conditional. She has to achieve more to make him to love her and she said that she was fearful that she would disappoint him. I think that's a very big pressure (Chinese female).

Asian parents always compare you to other people. You might be the best at something, but they're always going to compare you to someone smarter. So, that expectation level is always higher and you're never really good enough (Pakistani female).

3) Inter-generational acculturation disparity

Most participants described that their immigrant parents were single-mindedly pushing their children to "study more," "keep traditional gender roles," "obey parents," and "prohibit dating," without putting an effort towards learning American cultures or understanding their children's developmental needs.

There are some families that are super strict in gender role. My grandparents have my life planned out for me. I have to get married by this age, and I have to have grandkids for them at this age, so before they're dead they [should have] seen their great grandkids (Korean Female).

There's just purity complex [in Asian women].... There's just the idea like "marriage, marriage, marriage" and "[do] what your husband will want from you". I think the pressure from parents on girls and boys and dating, it's something that shouldn't be such a big deal (Asian Indian Female).

Some participants reported that those parents who were highly acculturated or have lived in the U.S. for a longer period of time seemed "more open to their children's choice of career and dating" and "put less pressure on their children's academic success." In other words, participants perceived that if both parents and children are highly acculturated, they felt less conflict with their parents even though their behaviors were contrary to their parent's traditional values.

Those who are born in the US have more American culture and their parents are more understanding of American culture. If they are recent immigrants and their kids want to go with the American culture more, then there's a struggle (Korean female).

In addition, Asian American parents "forced them to bottle up their emotions" and "did not allow them to vent their negative emotions" because assertive and verbally expressive children are considered to be rebellious and disrespectful children in the parent's Asian culture. Although

most participants understand their parent's cultural values, they felt that their parents were less empathetic and less capable in "helping their emotional crisis or daily problems." Asian American parents' lack of communication and seemingly indifferent response to their children's emotional crisis made participants to feel helpless and neglected, and ultimately suicidal.

I had cousins that were suicidal and I think it's because Asian parents aren't as emotionally open with their children. They force them to bottle up their emotions. And because of that, it leads to self-mutilation, [and suicide] (Filipino female).

E. Theme 3. Pressure of living up to model minority image While some participants identified "poverty," "financial difficulty" and "living in a poor community" as risk factors in socio-cultural level, majority of them agreed that the model minority image was the most significant risk factor in this level. Like non-Asian American college students, Asian American college students struggled with diverse personal issues such as dating, career selection, and financial difficulties in addition to academic stress. However, most participants felt extra stress to live up to the model minority image from both their own ethnic communities and the dominant society. If they could not outperform other students in certain academic subjects (e.g., math, science) or deviated from Asian cultural norms (e.g., homosexuality), they felt "10 times harder pressure" and, as a result, considered suicide as a last resort. Furthermore, they indicated that the model minority image in the public media served as a social barrier when they sought professional help for their emotional crisis or mental illness.

If you have grown up in a white community, people think "Oh you're smart, you're Asian, you play a violin, or piano" and all other super child thing. If you don't meet that specific stereotype, then you feel almost out of the loop or not as good as you possibly can be. And that put almost more pressure. If you can't meet that [stereotype], you feel like you can't achieve anything, and that might lead you to be depressed or whatever negative emotion you are going to have (Filipino Female).

IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to explore Asian American college students' cultural perspectives on suicide and culture-bound risk factors at multifaceted levels. From a series of five focus group interviews with 28 participants, this study found that Asian American college students have a dual perspective toward suicide. They viewed suicide not only as a shameful and bad behavior which destroys family harmony, but also as an honorable and acceptable behavior which promotes good cause or restores family reputation from dishonorable events. Perceiving suicide as an acceptable and honorable behavior is a unique finding of this study because this viewpoint is associated with honor suicide eminent in Asian cultures. In contrast to extremely lower rate of honor suicide in the U.S., honor suicide still permeates in many Asian cultures because loss of honor is accompanied by feelings of shame, failure

and guilt which may influence a person to commit suicide as a way of atoning for public disgrace or expressing one's deep sense of shame [21]. Thus, valuing honor or saving family reputation may play an important suicidal risk factor and create a unique individual vulnerability in some Asian American college students. Further, a participant's positive perception of suicide as a means of saving family reputation or honor indicated their entrenched Asian cultural values even though most participants were born in the U.S. and grew up with American culture. Taking these findings together demonstrate that Asian American students perceived suicide as a socio-cultural behavior compounded by collectivistic Asian cultural value (e.g., keeping family reputation and honor) rather than as an individualized personal behavior associated with mental health problems (e.g., depression, loneliness). This finding is consistent with previous studies identifying that Asian Americans viewed suicide from the context of inter-dependent relationships imbedded in Asian's collectivistic cultural value [10]-[12], [22], [23]. Thus, to prevent suicide and suicidal ideation of Asian American young adults living in the U.S., it is useful to fully understand how their suicidal ideation is compounded with Asian's collectivistic cultural value and to identify possible causes of suicide, including honor suicide, in the context of inter-dependent relationship. Second, this study revealed that Asian American college student's academic pressure for success is one of the most frequently shared risk factors in all focus groups. In Asian American culture, academic success is considered as a way of promoting the family's (including extended family) reputation rather than a way of appraising an individual's personal achievement. When collectivistic values are tied to academic success, Asian American college students seemed to get stressed out by triple academic pressures: from themselves, from intact and extended family members, and from the model minority image in a dominant society. Association of children's academic success with family reputation might be a catalyst for Asian American college students who are more acculturated to individualistic Western culture to experience intergenerational conflicts which, then, could lead to increased risk of suicide.

In addition to academic pressure from parents, most Asian American college students felt obligated to repay their parents' socio-economic sacrifices through their academic success and prestigious careers. Hence, Asian American college students tended to blame themselves as non-filial, undutiful and/or disobedient children if they were not able to meet their parents' high expectation of promoting their family reputation. Self-blame or feelings of failure in an Asian American college student usually resulted in depression and loneliness, which consequently increased their vulnerability to suicide [9], [23].

Understanding Asian American college student's suicide risks from triple academic pressures provides an insight in recognizing how model minority image is negatively compounded with suicide vulnerability. Model minority image is prevalent not only in the dominant society, but also in Asian American ethnic communities and adversely impacts their emotional distress and self-esteem [24], [25]. Hence, Asian American college students who showed poor academic achievement felt outcasted from their own ethnic communities because model minority image reinforced

collectivistic values of ethnic harmony and unity, just like when family harmony and reputation were valued over an individual's uniqueness. As a result, more individualistically oriented Asian American college students experience a greater pressure to live up to the model minority image, lesser levels of acceptance from both their ethnic community and dominant society, and consequently, more vulnerability to suicide. The negative impact of model minority image on suicide is consistent with previous Asian American suicide research [10]. Leong and his colleagues identified that although depression was the universal risk factor of suicide across racial groups, certain factors compounded by Asian culture increased the likelihood for Asian American youth's depression. For example, intense academic pressure to live up to the model minority image coupled with low self-esteem increased the risk of depression and psychological turmoil among Asian American youth and consequently contributed to higher suicide risk [10].

Another compounding suicidal risk factor associated with model minority image is racism and microaggression against Asian Americans. Most participants attributed model minority image for causing emotional distress of conforming to the public's positive stereotype toward Asians whereby Asian American college students take care of their problems by themselves without assistance from others. Consequently, they often feel excluded from receiving educational and psychological support and services from college. In addition, some participants reported racial microaggression because they were viewed as perpetual foreigners and less American, than Latino, Black and White counterparts. This experience makes them feel as if they "stick out" and "not belong to a group" and increases suicidal risk through thwarted belongingness.

Third, the finding of this study further expands the impact of intergenerational acculturation disparity on suicidal behaviors. In general, individual's acculturation level was directly related to suicidal risk among Asian Americans: the less acculturated Asian Americans were more vulnerable to suicide than those who were more acculturated to individualistic American culture [10], [27], [28]. However, the current study revealed that Asian American college student's suicidal risk was influenced by not only the individual's lower acculturation level but also the acculturation disparity between parents and children. As intergenerational acculturation disparity often exists in most immigrant families across races, Asian American college students of this study seemed to take their parents' poor acculturation levels as a serious risk factor for suicide.

Asian American college students tend to acculturate to the American society at a faster rate than their parents, and this tendency creates intergenerational conflict because it threatens the traditional hierarchical relationships between parents and children. For example, many Asian American children assume the role of "cultural broker" as an interpreter or representative of their family due to their English proficiency even though they may not be capable of engaging in such activities [22]. Taking on a parental figure role or cultural broker is contrary to traditional role of children in Asian culture and, thus, generates intergenerational conflicts because of the reversal roles between parents and children. As a result, it seems that more acculturated Asian American

college students who take on a parental figure role on behalf of their less acculturated parents might have more intergenerational conflicts than students who do not need to represent their parents when dealing in diverse family matters.

Another compounding impact of intergenerational acculturation disparity on suicide may be associated with traditional parenting styles in Asian culture, although it may vary depending on individual parent's flexibility or rigidity in interacting with his/her children [14]. In Asian culture, many parents have learned to suppress their emotions and intimate physical contacts with their children, while children are taught to obey their parents absolutely without expressing their emotions [26]. As a result, Asian American college students tend to perceive their parents as authoritarian, restrictive and indifferent people who are incapable of helping their acculturation struggles or emotional crisis. In light of this perception, Asian American college students seem to keep a distance from their parents even though they may need parental support. Keeping such distance seems to elevate intergenerational acculturation disparity which boosts the intergenerational conflict due to lack of communication with their parents. The increased intergenerational conflict, in turn, seems to generate a vicious cycle of broadening the intergenerational acculturation disparity, thus, heightens suicide vulnerability.

V. CONCLUSION

While conducting five focus group interviews, the current study identified unique cultural perceptions of Asian American college students toward suicide, in addition to exploring culturally relevant risk factors and their impacts on suicide. Recognizing Asian American college students' unique culture-bound risk factors within their socio-cultural context may enhance culturally competent suicide prevention programs and future studies. First, Asian American college students of the current study often spoke as one unified cultural group and many of their statements resonated across sub-ethnic cultures although they had various sub-ethnic backgrounds. For example, many participants used the proverbial "we", instead of stating "I", when describing cultural aspects of suicidal behaviors. Second, unlike the general recognition of Asian American's reluctance on self-disclosure, all 28 participants openly and freely discussed the topic of suicide in their focus groups. Particularly, some participants even revealed their personal experiences of a suicide attempt, although this subject was not in the structured questions. It seemed that they shared their personal experiences openly with other participants whom they have just met because of their Asian heritages and similarities in acculturation process. Also, the focus group itself seemed to provide the participants with an opportunity to vent their emotions with each other within a safe and confidential environment. These findings may be useful in creating a culturally competent suicide prevention program, such as organizing a psycho-education program only for Asian American college students. Third, most Asian American college students recognized the need of "talking publicly" about suicide because it was a "real problem" and "is not going away," even though they perceived suicide as a taboo subject in their culture. Recognition of suicide as a real

problem in the Asian American community may indicate the urgent need for a suicide prevention program for their ethnic group.

Despite the valuable findings of the current study, generalization of these findings to overall Asian American young adults can be limited because Asian American culture is not homogenous but diverse, with varying languages, religions, and immigration histories as well as perception of suicide. Hence, a future study should distinguish sub-ethnic differences of suicidal behaviors within diverse Asian American ethnic groups. Another limitation of generalizing the findings of this study is related to the characteristics of the sample. Since all participants of the current study were college students, the findings of this study may not apply to non-college or overall Asian American young adult's suicidal behaviors. For example, triple academic pressures might bear closer correlation with college student's suicide risk than that of non-college peers or working young adults. Lastly, a future study should combine qualitative and quantitative methods in order to empirically understand culturally compounding impacts of identified risk factors from this study. Despite these limitations, the findings of this study reveal Asian American young adults' voices in addressing risk factors of suicide and give crucial insights to developing age-appropriate and culturally competent suicide prevention program.

CONFRILCT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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