

Symposium | Cross-Cultural Adaptation of Foreigners : [Symposium 107] Mental health and well-being of foreign nationals: Future prospects seen from a comparison of community activities in Japan and the United States

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[Symposium 107] Mental health and well-being of foreign nationals: Future prospects seen from a comparison of community activities in Japan and the United States

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[SY-107-03] Immigrant Generation and Mental Health Service Utilization Among Asian American Communities in California

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Background. Asian Americans are among the least likely to access mental health services. Later generations of Asian Americans experience worse mental health outcomes than their first-generation immigrant counterparts. The 1.5 generation, who immigrate before adulthood, are thought to face unique acculturation stressors due to being caught between two cultures. Prior research often overlooked generational factors in mental health service utilization. This study aims to fill the gap by exploring mental health help-seeking among first, 1.5, and second-or-higher (2nd+) generation Asian Americans.

Methods. We analyzed baseline data collected between March and June 2024 during enrollment in “INFORMED-Living Well”, a text messaging intervention with optional lay health educators’ outreach designed to promote mental health care decision-making among Asian American adults in California (n=613). Multivariable logistic regressions were used to assess associations between immigrant generation and six forms of mental health help-seeking in the last year: talking to family/friends, looking up information, seeking spiritual help, consulting a mental health professional, seeing their family doctor, or doing nothing. Analyses were adjusted for sociodemographic characteristics, language, living situation, service awareness, service need, well-being, social support, and discrimination.

Results. Compared to 2nd+ generation immigrants, first-generation immigrants had significantly higher odds of seeking spiritual help (aOR=3.18, CI=1.15-8.80) and seeing a mental health professional (aOR=3.95; CI=1.02-15.31), and lower odds of doing nothing (aOR=0.25; CI=0.08-0.82). The 1.5 generation respondents had higher odds of seeing their family doctor (aOR=3.22; CI=1.13-9.16). No generational differences were found for talking to family/close friends or looking up information.

Conclusion. Second+ generation Asian Americans were less likely to utilize formal and spiritual mental health support and more likely to forgo help altogether. These findings

highlight the importance of generational factors in addition to language and cultural contexts in developing targeted interventions and policies to improve mental health outcomes and service accessibility for Asian immigrants.