Ethnicity as a Predictor for Suicidal Behavior and its Moderation by Gender

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Introduction

Suicide rates in the U.S. have risen by 35.2% in two decades, with young adults at heightened risk. College students, despite their vulnerability, are less likely to seek treatment, making it critical to understand suicide risk factors.

Minority status influences mental health, yet racial aggregation obscures key ethnic differences. South Asian students may face cultural stigma and unique gendered pressures, impacting their mental health and suicide risk differently than Asians broadly.

Gender can moderate suicide risk differently across ethnicities, making it essential to examine how they perform comparatively.

Research Goal

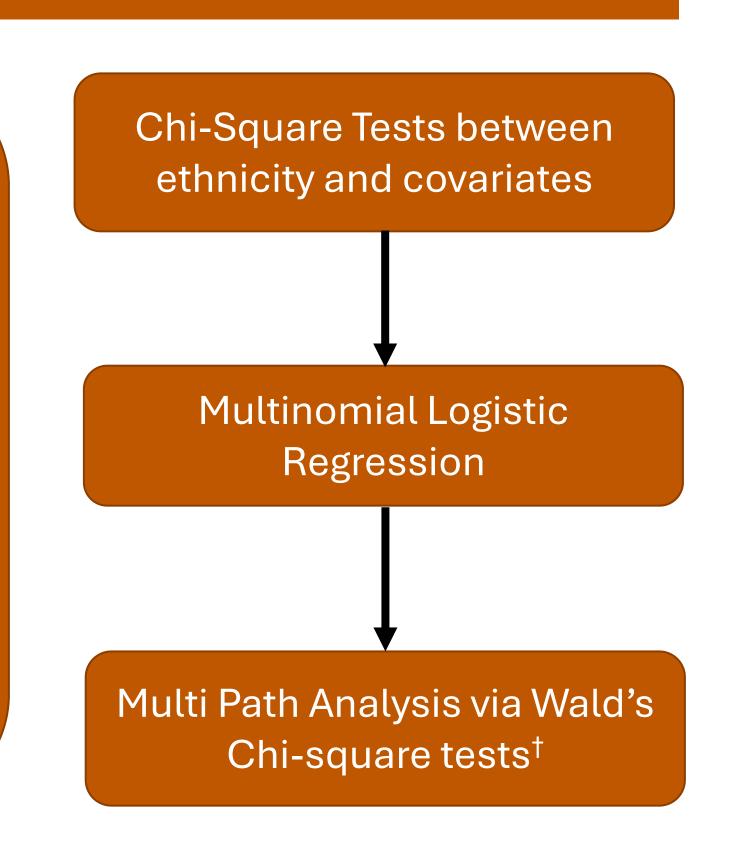
This study examines suicide risk among South Asian (SA) students, Asian students of Non-South Asian origin (NSA), and Non-Hispanic White (NHW) students across ethnic and gender groups. It also investigates whether South Asian women face higher suicide risk than men and explores gender moderation effects, expecting greater disparities among SA due to distinct sociocultural factors.

Methods



Outcome Variable
Suicide Risk assessed with
Suicide Behavior
Questionnaire-Revised (SBQR).
Scores of 7–18 indicate positive

for suicide risk.



[†]Wald's test evaluates whether gender differences in suicide risk are statistically significant across ethnicities (i.e., gender by ethnicity interactions).

Results

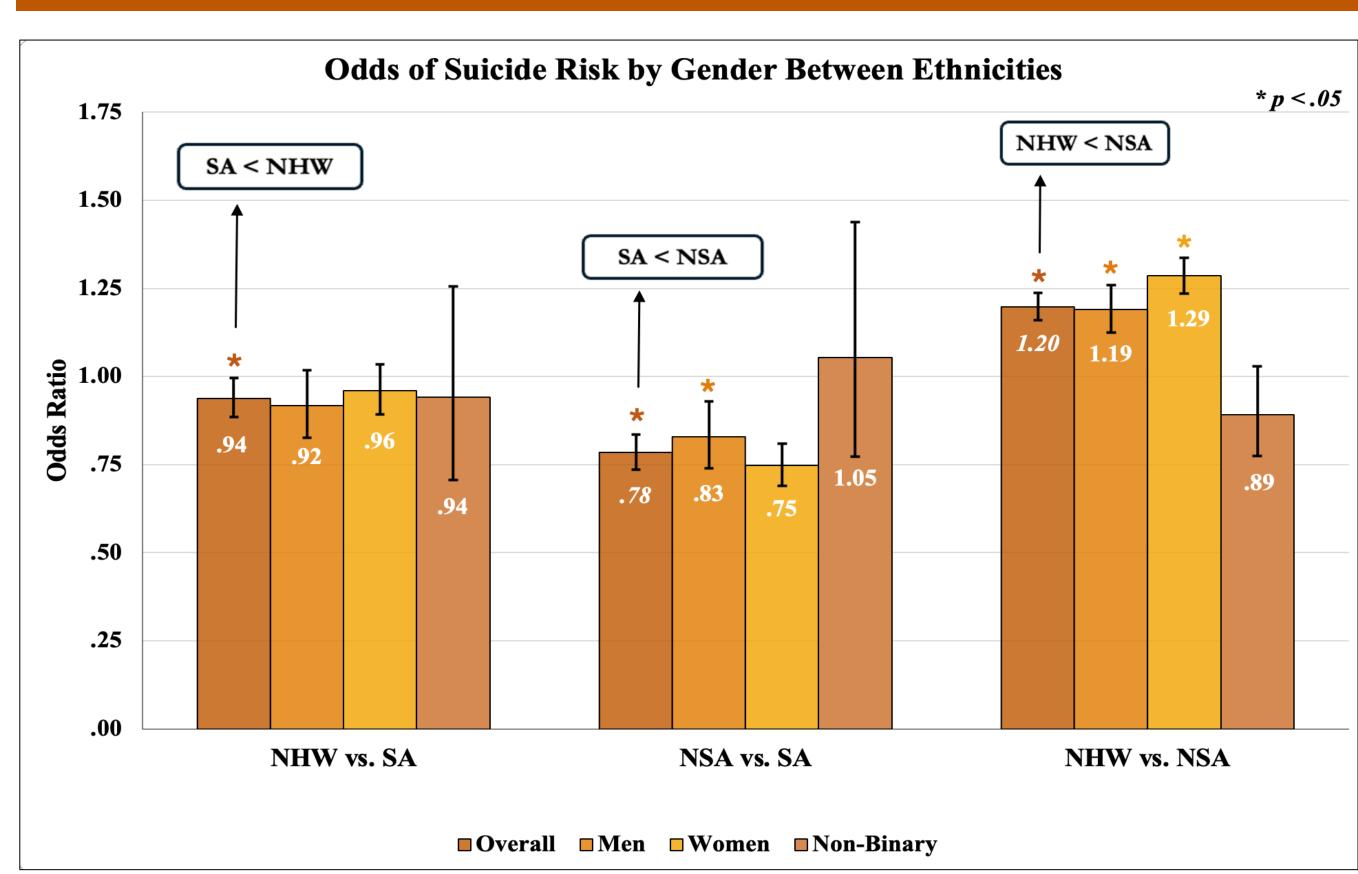


Figure 1. Odds ratio comparing suicide risk between ethnicities. Differences between ethnicities in risk are further stratified by gender.

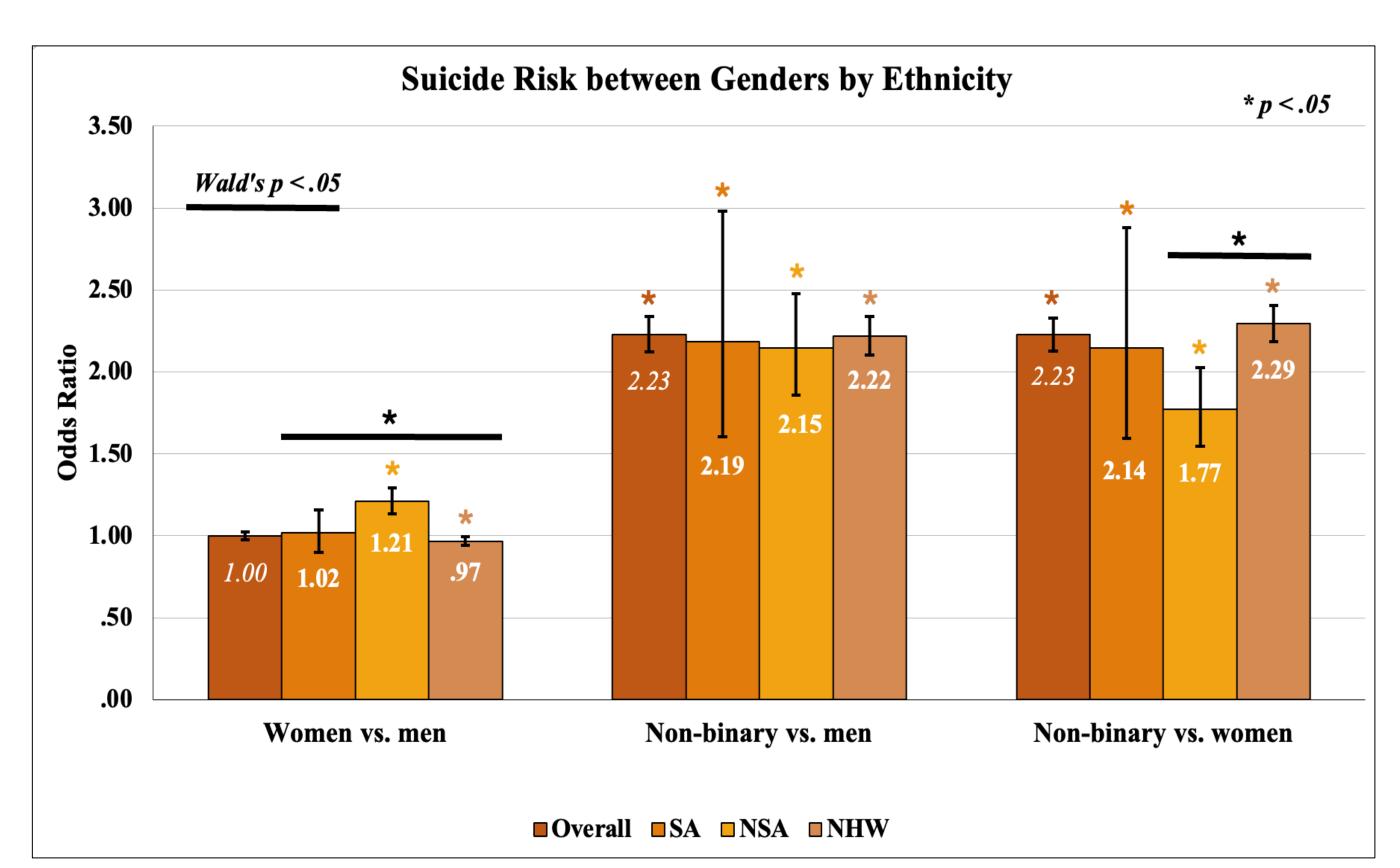


Figure 2. Relative odds ratio of suicide risk between genders by ethnicity demonstrating comparative risk informed by gender moderation.

Women x Men	SA vs. NSA 8.53* (p = 0.0035)	NSA vs. NHW 82.56* (p = 0.00)	SA vs. NHW 4.09* (p = 0.043)				
				Non-Binary	0.02	0.40	0.07
				x Men	(p = 0.8943)	(p = 0.5290)	(p = 0.7907)
Non-Binary	2.33	30.83*	1.91				
x Women	(p = 0.1271)	(p = 0.00)	(p = 0.1674)				

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Conclusion

This study found that South Asian (SA) college students had lower suicide risk than Non-Hispanic White (NHW) students and significantly differed from Asian students of Non-South Asian (NSA) origin, who exhibited the highest risk among the three.

Gender moderated suicide risk for NHW and NSA students, but not for SA students, suggesting that gender differences in suicide risk operate differentially among Asian subgroups.

Among South Asian students, non-binary individuals showed higher suicide risk than both SA women and men. Interestingly, relative suicide risk among non-binary students vs. women was less extreme among NSA students compared to the other ethnic groups. NHW non-binary students consistently had the highest risk, suggesting a stronger moderating effect of non-binary identity in this ethnic group.

These findings highlight the importance of disaggregating Asian subgroups, as South Asian students show unique patterns in suicide risk that are not captured when Asian groups are combined.

Acknowledgement

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Title of the Research Project

Descriptor of Project

Name, Department, School, Email

Introduction

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Conclusion

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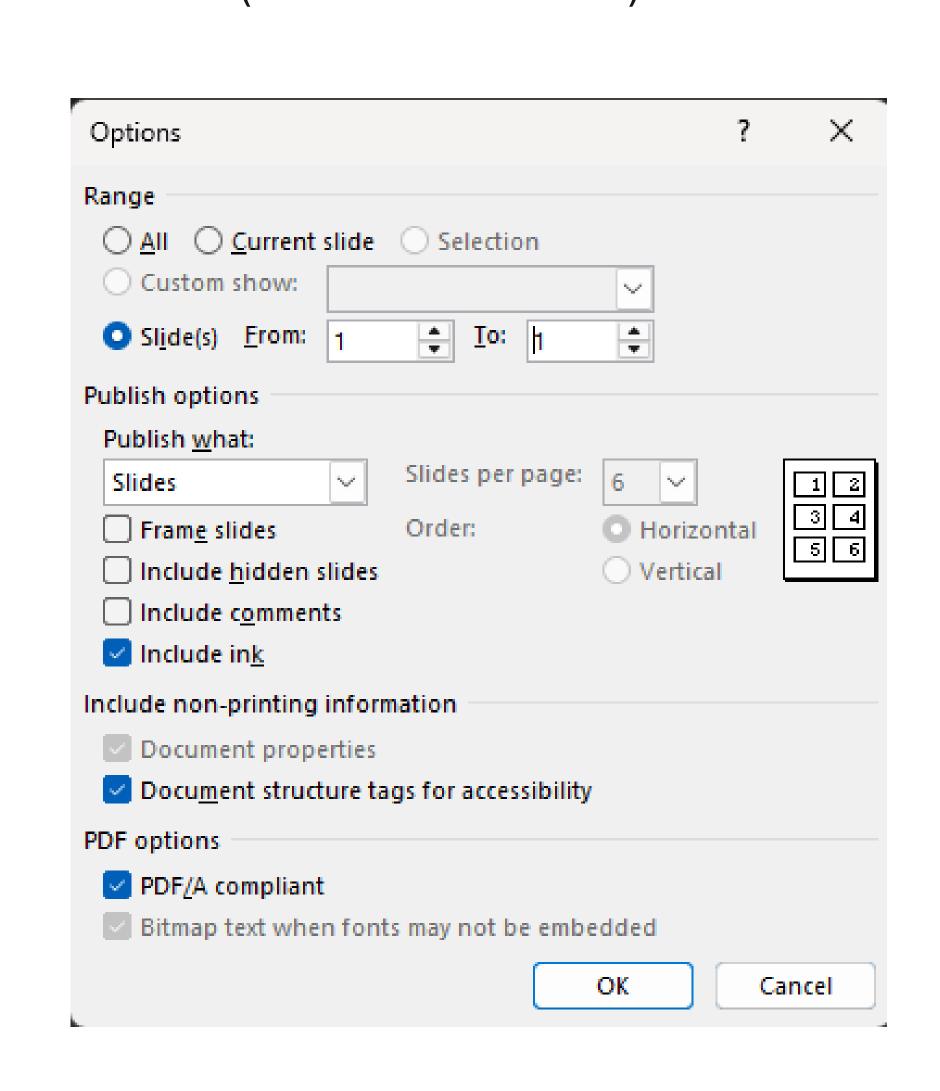
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