

RATES OF ATTEMPTED SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM IN DANISH WOMEN OF ASIAN ETHNIC ORIGIN

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Research conducted in the United Kingdom on attempted suicide and self-harm has revealed a disproportionately high rate of parasuicidal behaviour amongst young women of Asian ethnic origin. Merrill & Owens (1986) amongst others, found a higher rate of suicidal behaviour amongst Asian women than amongst White women, but also than amongst men of Asian ethnic origin. Therefore, both a gender and an ethnicity bias are revealed, whereby the intersection of minority ethnic identity and gender role may constitute a particular propensity for self-harming behaviour in Asian women.

The aim of the current study is to explore whether a similar trend may be observed in Denmark, this being a more homogenous and less multi-ethnic society than the British case. The present study thus examines whether the specific location of Asian women in a majority White society, notably impacts their rate of self-harm in comparison with the White female population, as well as with women belonging to other ethnic minority groups.

Additionally, the Danish Centre of Suicidological Research has found Vietnamese refugees and Pakistani migrants to be the most successful of minority groups established in Denmark. Therefore, an intergroup-comparison of (attempted) suicide rates provides insight into the specificity of gender and ethnic identity, to the frequency of suicidal behaviour. The current study will focus particularly on women of Asian heritage, aged between 10-39 years. The data is collated from the National Patient Register; the National Register of Causes of Death, and the National Register of First and Second Generation Migrants.