

## Deliberate Self-Harm in Psychiatric Outpatients Aged 14-35 Years in Singapore

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** The main aim of the study was to identify the prevalence of deliberate self-harm (DSH) in a sample of youth outpatients attending the state psychiatric hospital in Singapore and to identify the sociodemographic and psychological/clinical risk factors associated with DSH. The secondary aim of the study was to examine if different forms of DSH had distinguishing risk factors. **Materials and Methods:** A total of 400 outpatients at the Institute of Mental Health completed a self-report survey comprising sociodemographic questions, the Functional Assessment of Self-Mutilation, Childhood Trauma Questionnaire, Parental Bonding Instrument and the Patient Health Questionnaire Depression Scale. Logistic regression models were used to test the associations. **Results:** The overall prevalence of DSH in our clinical population was 58.8%. Cutting/carving (25.4%) and hitting (20.4%) were the most common forms of DSH in the past 12 months. DSH acts were performed primarily for emotion regulation purposes. The risk factors for DSH in general were younger age group, female gender, abuse history and higher depression scores. Gender and age group were the factors that were differentially associated with cutting and hitting one's self. **Conclusion:** There was a high prevalence of DSH in the psychiatric outpatient population. The risk factors identified in this study are consistent with those of international studies which point to their stability across cultures.

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Key words: Abuse, Asian, Cutting, Depression, Prevalence, Risk factors, Youth

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