

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Family Dysfunction and Parasuicide: An investigation into risk factors amongst Trinidadian East Indian Females

NAME: Rabindra Sinanan

A total of seventy one (71) female and their families were investigated. The experimental group (35 parasuicide attempters) and the control group (36 non-parasuicides) were matched for race, sex and age, and similar questionnaires were administered to the individuals and heads of households of the families in each group.

Questionnaires were chosen to elicit demographic data and to specifically search for dysfunction factors within families which may predispose to parasuicide. Chisquare analysis and Fischer Exact Probability were used to determine significance between interpersonal and intrapersonal findings.

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The families and individuals in the experimental group were found to be experiencing more dysfunction in their lives. Whereas hopelessness associated with major depression was not evident, feelings of helplessness and powerlessness to change their situations were significant.

Parental conflict, social isolation and verbal abuse surfaced as ongoing significant interpersonal stressors whereas the inability to express emotions (happiness, sadness) became evident as intrapersonal predictors of parasuicide.

Ms. Judith Pinkson - Head of Psychology, St. Ann's Hospital, Port of Spain.