

Postpartum Suicidal Ideation Among a Sample of Racially/Ethnically Diverse Women: Need for  
Socio-Cultural Competency in the Public Health Care System

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**Background:** Postpartum suicidal ideation is a major public health concern. Several states have passed legislation mandating their health care providers screen for depression symptoms, including suicidal ideation, during the perinatal period. However, few studies report the prevalence of postpartum suicidal ideation among women from racially/ethnically diverse backgrounds.

**Methods:** Between 2012 and 2016, a sample of 10,401 women completed the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Screen (EPDS) as part of standard postpartum care in a Midwestern delivery hospital. Suicidal ideation was captured using item 10 of the EPDS, which directly asks if the women had thoughts of self-harm. A depression registry was created, which collected all depression screens along with risk factors. Logistic regression models were used to measure the association between suicidal ideation and race/ethnicity.

**Results:** The overall prevalence of immediate postpartum suicidal ideation in this sample was 2.31%. Among racial and ethnic groups, the prevalence of suicidal ideation was 1.29% for White women, 3.48% for Black women, 1.76% for Hispanic/Latina women, and 8.25% for Asian American women. After adjusting for age and clinical risk factors, Asian American women remained 8.61 times as likely to report suicidal ideation compared to their Caucasian counterparts.

**Implications:** This study has unveiled a significantly high prevalence of immediate postpartum suicidal ideation among Asian American women. Literature suggests vast differences in cultural values between Eastern and Western societies and lack of training for medical providers in socio-cultural competence have contributed to this disproportionate result. Thus, education in socio-cultural competence for health care providers is encouraged in order to provide appropriate mental health support for mothers in need.

# Postpartum Suicidal Ideation Among a Sample of Racially/Ethnically Diverse Women: Need for Socio-Cultural Competency in the Public Health Care System

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## INTRODUCTION

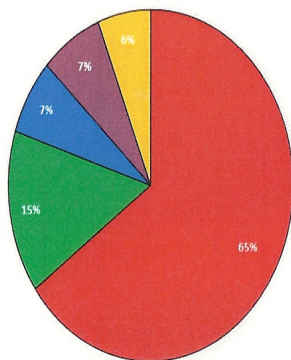
- Postpartum suicidal ideation (SI) is a major public health concern.
- Signs/symptoms of postpartum SI are easily overlooked.
- Few studies report the prevalence of postpartum SI among women from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.

## AIM

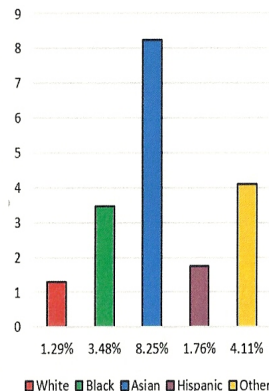
- To determine if lack of socio-cultural competence from medical providers affects perinatal mental health of minority women.



## TOTAL POPULATION



## SI PREVALENCE



## DISCUSSION

- Differences in cultural values has led to disparities in appropriate delivery of mental health care services.
- Studies indicate health care providers lack training in diverse social-cultural needs of women during the perinatal period.

## IMPLICATIONS

- This study unveiled a significantly high prevalence of immediate postpartum SI among minority women.
- Training for health care providers in social-cultural competence is strongly encouraged to provide appropriate mental health support for mothers in need.

## METHODS

- Sample population contained 10,401 women from racially/ethnically diverse backgrounds who gave birth between 2012-2016 in a Midwestern delivery hospital.
- Sample population completed Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Screen (EPDS).
- Suicidal ideation was captured using item 10 of the EPDS, which directly asks if the woman had thoughts of self-harm.
- Logistic regression models were used to measure the association between suicidal ideation and race/ethnicity.

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