

It is worth mentioning that private hospitals are obliged by law to refer all cases of suicide attempt to one of the 3 main governmental general hospitals indicated above. This ensured that all patients needing admission for the treatment of a suicide attempt in greater Abu Dhabi were included in this study.

All screened patients were included in the study and missing data were identified. The study was approved by the ethical and research committee of Sheikh Khalifa Medical City.

Generally, frequencies were estimated in this study. However, the chi-squared test was used for testing relationships between the prevalence of suicide attempts and age and ethnicity. We used SPSS, version 21, for the analysis.

## Results

### Demographic and other characteristics

The age of the attempters ranged between 13 and 77 years, average 28.7 years, with 59.6% in the 16–30 years age group. Females were more likely to be in the 16–30 years age group ( $P = 0.028$ ), while Emirati nationals were more likely to be in the 31–65 years age group ( $P = 0.02$ ). Females comprised 59.6% of the attempters, with a female to male ratio of 1.5:1.

We found that 34.6% of the attempters were Emirati nationals, 26.6% were Arab non-nationals and 25.3% were from the Indian subcontinent (Table 1). Religion was also noted: 76.1% of the attempters were Muslim and 5.5% were Christian.

There was no information on profession for around 20% of the attempters, however students were strongly represented (Table 1), and, as expected, these students belonged to the 16–30 years age group.

Single people comprised 43.4% of the attempters, whereas 44.8% were married (Table 1). No attempters were recorded as being in polygamous marriages.

As mentioned above, 80% of the Abu Dhabi population consists of non-nationals. Newly arrived migrants are always suspected to be under extra stress. It is, therefore, expected that they should be at higher risk of attempting suicide; however, our study showed that only around 12% of the suicide attempters were resident in the country for less than 6 months (Table 1), which might not support that hypothesis.

### Number of attempts

The total number of attempts recorded over the 4 years of the study was 364. They were approximately evenly distributed over the 4 years, with an average annual incidence of 6 per 100 000 population. There were no significant variations that can be correlated with the month or season of the year.

As the incidence of attempting suicide is generally estimated as 10–20 times the incidence of completed suicide (9,10), the annual incidence of completed suicide

**Table 1 Demographics characteristics of suicide attempters (n = 364) in Abu Dhabi, 2011–2014**

Characteristic	No.	%	% of population
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
National	126	34.6	20
Non-national Arab	97	26.6	15
Indian subcontinent	92	25.3	47
Asian	15	4.1	10
African	24	6.6	2
Western	9	2.5	5
Other	1	0.3	3
<b>Religion</b>			
Muslim	277	76.1	NA
Christian	20	5.5	NA
Other	67	12.4	NA
<b>Education</b>			
Illiterate	6	1.6	
1st to 8th grade	46	12.6	
9th to 12th grade	100	27.5	
Higher	90	24.7	
No information	122	33.5	
<b>Profession</b>			
No information	74	20.3	
Student	69	19.0	
Professional	61	16.8	
Labourer	58	15.9	
Unemployed	52	14.3	
Domestic helper	36	9.9	
Housewife	9	2.5	
Other	5	1.4	
<b>Marital status</b>			
Married	179	44.8	
Single	158	43.4	
Divorced	21	5.8	
Widowed	6	1.6	
<b>Length of stay in Abu Dhabi (months)</b>			
0–1	15	4.1	
2–6	29	8.0	
> 6	220	60.4	
NA	100	27.5	

NA = data not available.

(using our figures) can be estimated to be 0.3 per 100 000 population.

### Psychiatric diagnosis

We used the ICD-10 criteria for the diagnosis (8): 40.6% of the attempters were diagnosed as having either acute stress reaction or adjustment disorder (Table 2), which highlights the strong relationship between stress and