Mental health and wellbeing of ethnic migrant women and girls in Aotearoa New Zealand: a scoping review

ABSTRACT

Aim: To identify and synthesise the literature on mental health and wellbeing of Asian and MELAA (Middle Eastern, Latin American and African) women and girls in Aotearoa New Zealand (New Zealand).

Methods: We searched American Psychological Association (APA) PsycInfo, CINAHL, Embase (Ovid) and MEDLINE (Ovid) for studies published in English up to July 2023 investigating the mental health and wellbeing of Asian and MELAA women and girls living in New Zealand. Studies including other participants were eligible if they provided disaggregated data for Asian and MELAA women/girls in New Zealand. We extracted data on study characteristics and all relevant findings related to their mental wellbeing.

Results: Twenty-four studies provided data on approximately 15,000 Asian and MELAA women and girls aged over 12 years. The studies had heterogeneous population groups and outcomes. Three exclusively focussed on Asian women. Most studies (n=17) did not provide disaggregated data for Asian and MELAA women and girls in relation to all relevant outcomes reported. Investigated outcomes included prevalence data and symptoms of mental health conditions and mental wellbeing (n=18) and associations of socio-demographic factors with mental health (n=9).

Conclusion: The limited peer-reviewed data underpin the lack of evidence-based policy planning. Future research focussed on Asian and MELAA women and girls is needed to enhance their wellbeing and achieve equitable health outcomes.