

## **Abstract**

Homicide is an increasing public health concern and it is now recognised as a global health problem. There have been very few researches conducted in Hong Kong to study the psychiatric aspects of homicide. This study combines the statistical study of a large number of homicides with a detailed psychiatric description of mentally ill homicide offenders within the period of 1989 to 1993. About 8% of the total homicide perpetrators were found to be mentally ill. Female mentally ill offenders have a much higher proportion within the abnormal group of offenders compared with the psychiatrically normal group. The most common diagnosis in the male mentally ill offenders was schizophrenia, while the female offenders were more commonly suffering from depressive disorder. The majority of mentally ill homicide offenders killed someone known to them. They often had never received any psychiatric attention or had drifted out of ongoing psychiatric care. It is hoped that the present study will be useful in developing future studies targeting other risk factors and expanding our knowledge of the phenomenon of homicide.