

Mental health challenges in immigrants

Immigration is an essential topic of discussion in today's society, with millions of people migrating to new countries every year in search of better opportunities, safety, and security. However, immigration can be a traumatic experience for many individuals, leading to various mental health challenges. Mental health issues in immigrants are often overlooked or underdiagnosed, leading to negative consequences for individuals, families, and communities. One of the primary reasons for mental health challenges in immigrants is the experience of acculturation stress. Acculturation stress refers to the psychological and emotional challenges of adapting to a new culture, language, and lifestyle. Studies have shown that immigrants are at a higher risk of developing mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to acculturation stress (1). Research has shown that immigrants are more likely to develop mental health disorders than the general population. A study by Bhugra and Jones (2001) found that immigrants had a higher prevalence of mental health disorders than non-immigrants, with rates ranging from 11% to 28%. Furthermore, immigrants are less likely to seek help for their mental health problems for various reasons, including language barriers, cultural stigma, lack of knowledge about available resources, and fear of deportation (2). Moreover, immigration can be a traumatic experience, particularly for refugees and asylum seekers who flee war, persecution, and violence. The trauma of leaving behind their homes, families, and

friends and the challenges of adapting to a new culture can lead to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD(3). Language barriers and limited access to healthcare services can also exacerbate mental health issues in immigrants. Many immigrants struggle to communicate effectively with healthcare providers due to language barriers, leading to misdiagnosis and under-treatment of mental health problems (4). Moreover, limited access to mental health services in some countries can make it difficult for immigrants to seek help when needed. Addressing mental health challenges in immigrants requires a multi-faceted approach that includes individual and systemic interventions. Individual interventions should focus on increasing awareness about mental health issues and promoting help-seeking behaviors among immigrants. This can be done through community outreach programs, counseling services, and support groups. At the systemic level, policymakers and healthcare providers must work to address the root causes of mental health challenges in immigrants. This includes addressing language barriers, improving access to mental health services, and addressing the social determinants of health that contribute to mental health issues in immigrants (4).

In conclusion, mental health challenges in immigrants are a significant public health issue that requires urgent attention. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes both individual and systemic interventions. By

working together, we can ensure that immigrants receive the mental health support they need to thrive in their new communities.

References

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Received: 05 Apr 2023

Accepted: 10 Apr 2023