G3.4: Pre-migration persecution, post-migration stressors and resources, and post-migration mental health: A study of traumatized U.S. Arab immigrant women

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Abstract:
Introduction: Competing mental health theories alternatively identify pre-migration persecution and post-migration stressors and resources as having a greater impact on immigrant mental health. Ebert and Dyck (2004) argue traumatic events that involve persecution significantly damage the self, increasing the risk of PTSD and additional symptoms common to depression. However, Beiser (1999, 2006) has argued that post-migration stressors and resources have a greater impact on mental health than pre-migration stressors. This paper examines effect of pre-migration persecution, demographic characteristics, and post-migration stressors and resources on development of depression with or without PTSD in traumatized Arab immigrant women living in the United States.

Method(s): Arab immigrant women participants in a study of post immigration adaptation completed Arabic measures of depression and PTSD symptoms, trauma history, post-migration
stressors (immigration related stressors), social resources (social support) and demographic and migration characteristics during face-to-face interviews. A subgroup (n=504) reported severe traumatic events with 61% reporting persecution, and were grouped according to symptoms: depression (n=162); (b) depression and PTSD (n=134); (c) neither depression nor PTSD (n=209). Logistic regression analysis was used to identify factors uniquely contributing to risk of depression with or without PTSD in this subgroup.

**Results:** Pre-migration persecution was not related to the development of depression symptoms in the absence of PTSD symptoms (p=.11). However, pre-migration persecution and post-migration stressors and resources (education, social support) both were related to the development of depression and PTSD symptoms (p<.05). Social support was not related to the development of depression with PTSD symptoms as compared to depression symptoms alone (p=.35).

**Discussion & Conclusions:** Results support importance of pre-migration persecution and post-migration resources and stressors to immigrant mental health, but suggest that persecution may be more closely tied to development of PTSD symptoms and low levels of social support may be more closely tied to development of depression symptoms. Practice and research implications are discussed.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.
Spring 2008, ENRS -- theory and methods exclusive of data analysis were presented before; data analysis, results, and conclusion are different

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No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

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