



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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Post-Migration Stressors and Mental Well-Being among African Refugees in Greater Cairo

Thesis

Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the
Master Degree in Psychiatric/Mental
Health Nursing

By

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قالوا

سبحانك لا علم لنا
إلا ما علمتنا إنك أنت
العليم العليم

صدق الله العظيم

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List of Abbreviations

Abb.	Full term
AMER	: <i>African and Middle East Refugee Assistance</i>
AUC	: <i>American University in Cairo</i>
CRMS	: <i>Center for Refugees and Migration</i>
EFRR	: <i>Egyptian Foundation of Refugee Rights</i>
EOHR	: <i>Egyptian Organization for Human Rights</i>
FMRS	: <i>Forced Migration and Refugee Studies Center</i>
GOE	: <i>Government of Egypt</i>
HRW	: <i>Human Rights Watch</i>
IASC	: <i>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</i>
IGOs	: <i>Inter-Governmental Organization</i>
IMC	: <i>International Medical Corps</i>
IMF	: <i>International Monetary Fund</i>
IOM	: <i>International Organization Migration</i>
IRCT	: <i>International Rehabilitation Council For Torture</i>
JRM	: <i>Joint Relief Ministries</i>
MH	: <i>Mental Health</i>
MHpss	: <i>Mental Health Psycho-social Support</i>
MOHP	: <i>Ministry of Health population</i>
MOU	: <i>Memorandum of understanding</i>
MSF	: <i>Medecins Sans Frontieres</i>
NGO's	: <i>Non-Governmental Organization</i>
NMB	: <i>Nursing and Midwifery Board</i>
OAU	: <i>Organization of African Unity</i>
PMLD	: <i>Post Migration Living Difficulties</i>

List of Abbreviations cont...

Abb.	Full term
<i>PSTIC</i>	<i>Psycho-Social Training Institute in Cairo</i>
<i>PTSD</i>	<i>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</i>
<i>RCHR</i>	<i>Refugee Centre for Human Rights</i>
<i>RNs</i>	<i>Refugees Health Nurses</i>
<i>RSD</i>	<i>Refugee Status Determination</i>
<i>SCI</i>	<i>Save The Children International</i>
<i>SDG</i>	<i>Sustainable Development goal</i>
<i>SOPS</i>	<i>Standard Operating Procedures</i>
<i>SPLM</i>	<i>Sudan people's Liberation Movement</i>
<i>SWB</i>	<i>Subjective Well-being</i>
<i>Tdh</i>	<i>Terre des Hommes</i>
<i>U.K</i>	<i>United Kingdom</i>
<i>U.S</i>	<i>United States</i>
<i>UN</i>	<i>The United Nation</i>
<i>UNDESA</i>	<i>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</i>
<i>UNFPA</i>	<i>United Nations Population Fund</i>
<i>UNHCR</i>	<i>United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees</i>
<i>UNICEF</i>	<i>UN Children's Fund</i>
<i>USA</i>	<i>United States</i>
<i>VOT</i>	<i>Victims of trafficking</i>
<i>WHO</i>	<i>World Health Organization</i>

Abstract

Background: Egypt hosts a considerable number of African refugees. They have several post-migration stressors that may affect their mental well-being. **The aim of the study:** is to assess post-migration stressors and mental well-being among African refugees in Greater Cairo. Descriptive exploratory design was used to achieve the aim of this study. **Setting:** Egyptian Red Crescent Hubs. **Subject:** A purposive sample of 360 African refugees. **Tools:** Data were collected using; first tool was to assess socio-demographic data; second tool was to assess post-migration stressors and third tool was to assess mental well-being. **Results:** The study results illustrate that most of the study samples 89.4% had moderate post-migration stressors and 10.6% of them had severe serious post-migration stressors, more than two –third of the studied samples had an average level of mental well-being and there is a highly statistically significant relation between sex, duration of stay in Egypt and nationality of studied sample and their post-migration stressors and there is highly statistically significant relation between post-migration stressors and mental well-being. **Conculsion:** Most of the African refugees in Egypt understudy had moderately serious post-migration stressors and most of these stressors were related to communication problems, discrimination, poverty, and poor access to treatment and more than two-thirds of them had an average level of mental well-being and only less than one-third of the studied sample had a low level of mental well-being and there was a highly statistically significant relation between post-migration stressors of the studied sample and their mental health well-being. **Recommendation:**

Utilizing this study finding in designing and implementing counseling program toward African refugees in Egypt to guide them how to overcome post-migration stressors and improve their mental well-being.

Keywords: Post Migration Stressors, African Refugees, Mental Wellbeing, Asylum Seeker

INTRODUCTION

Egypt has long been a destination and transit country for large numbers of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants from across Africa and the Middle East. Refugees and asylum-seekers live in an urban setting in Egypt and are largely concentrated in Greater Cairo, Alexandria, Damietta, and several towns in the North Coast (*Ismail, 2002*). The terms “refugee”, “asylum seeker” and migrants are used to describe people who are on the move, who have left their countries, and have crossed borders (*United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2009b*).

Refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict, or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country; an asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed. Every year, around one million people seek asylum. There is no formal legal definition of an international migrant; most experts agree that an international migrant is someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status (*UNHCR, 2015*).

Migration to another country can be a difficult undertaking for many immigrants, as it entails leaving behind familiar cultural norms and values, family members, and friends to begin a new life in a country that may have unfamiliar customs, social conditions, and language. Refugees often face several stressors upon arrival in the host country which they may not be fully prepared to manage (*Silove & Ekblad, 2002*).

Post-migration stressors associated with poorer mental and physical health outcomes among immigrants and refugees include 1) feelings of loss related to emigration from one's country of origin); 2) discrimination, racism, and xenophobia; 3) lack of receptivity or acceptance by members of the host country; 4) unemployment and economic concerns; 5) lack of recognition of skills or educational achievements; 6) difficulties accessing medical care and welfare services; 7) language acquisition difficulties; 8) fear of repatriation to the home country; 9) separation from and worry about family members; 10) lack of social and emotional support; 11) loneliness and homesickness (*Simich et al., 2006*).

In addition, these post migration-stressors are associated with, a wide range of emotional cognitive, physical, behavioral, and social problems. (1-Emotional problems include sadness, grief, fear, frustration, anxiety, anger, and despair. 2-cognitive problems, such as loss of control, helplessness, worry, ruminations, boredom, and hopelessness are all widely reported. 3-physical symptoms such as fatigue, problems sleeping, loss of appetite, and an explained physical complaint. 4-social and behavior problems, such as withdrawal, aggression, and interpersonal difficulties are also common) (*Hollified, 2002*).

Therefore, it's important to strengthen protection and provide psychosocial support for refugees in Egypt to reduce post-migration stressors and improve mental well-being. So the psychiatric mental health nurse should be understanding the different views on the normality of refugees who come from a different culture and should

be able to assess their mental health and provide psychosocial and mental health support for them in their own language, according to their own culture and traditions (*Blomstedt, 2007*).

Significance of the problem

The Middle East is an important place for refugees, hosting around 22% of world refugees and Egypt is one of the most important host countries in the Middle East hosting millions of refugees (*IOM, 2016; UNHCR, 2015*).

Currently, Egypt hosts a considerable number of refugees. According to the latest Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statistics, the number of UNHCR ‘persons of concern’ in Egypt includes approximately 24.503 Sudanese, 17.842 South Sudanese, 5.214 Ethiopians, and 12.882 Eritreans (*UNHCR, 2020*). Prevalence rates of psychological disturbances are considerably higher among refugees than none-refugees, in terms of the post-migration phase individuals who have suffered a dislocation from their home environment, often at risk for emotional and psychological trauma (*Haslam, 2005*).

Hence, it’s important to provide assistance for African refugees in Egypt in coping with their problems and improving their psychological wellbeing. therefore, this study aims to assess post-migration stressors and their impacts on psychological wellbeing in order to improve their mental health, hope that this study generates attention and motivation for further investigation in this topic.