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THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA EXPOSURE CHARACTERISTICS ON POST-  
TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND PSYCHIATRIC CO-MORBIDITY AMONG  
SYRIAN REFUGEES

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of trauma exposure characteristics on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and psychiatric co-morbidity among Syrian refugees. One thousand one hundred and ninety-seven refugees residing in Turkey and Sweden participated in the research. They completed the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire and the General Health Questionnaire-28. Forty-three percent of refugees met the cutoff for PTSD. After adjusting for location of residence, witnessing horror and exposure to life threat and assault were significantly correlated with PTSD and psychiatric co-morbidity respectively. Death of, or life threat to family members or friends were significantly correlated with both distress outcomes. Refugees residing in Turkey had significantly higher levels of PTSD, psychiatric co-morbidity and trauma characteristics than those living in Sweden. To conclude, Syrian refugees who witnessed horror, life threat or had family or friends die, tended to have elevated psychological distress. Levels of distress

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