

Migratory stress and mental health (pp. 419-432)

Karmele Salaberria Irizar and Analía del Valle Sánchez Haro

University of Basque Country (Spain)

The migration process involves dealing with multiple stress situations that affect many areas of life. Stress can extend for years and is intense and relevant. The main resource of migrants is their physical and mental health, which may be damaged in the process of migratory adaptation. In this study, the level of symptoms and self-esteem of 65 immigrants resident in Guipuzcoa attending a psychological support program are presented. In addition, differences depending on the legal situation and the residence time were analyzed. The results show that migrants have high levels of migratory stress, clinical symptoms and low self-esteem. Irregular migrants have less family support, lower income and more migratory stress. People who have five or more years of residence feel less vulnerable but display higher levels of hostility. These results suggest the need to provide psychological support and counseling as a primary prevention.