

Are there differences between immigrant and no immigrant population in Psychiatric Emergencies?

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Introduction

Immigration has become one of the most important political and social issues in the world. In our country is a new social phenomena which started ten years ago. Catalonia is the Spanish Autonomous Community with the highest number of immigrants and the city of Barcelona concentrates a high number of these immigrants. In the area of influence of our hospital are counted for 35% of immigrants living in the city

Objective

To study retrospectively the immigrant population who were visited in the Psychiatric Emergency Service of a General Teaching Hospital during one year and to compare with the autochthonous population

Methods

We study retrospectively all visits in the Psychiatric Emergencies of a General Hospital during a year (n=2785). We analyzed data from a routine computerized protocol which include: socio-demographical data, reason for consultation, syndromic diagnosis (based in DSM-IV), the total score of the Spanish version of Severity Psychiatric Illness Scale (SPI) (Bulbena et al., 1997) and derivation.

Results

19.6% of psychiatric emergencies were from immigrant patients. There are significant differences between both groups in most of the items studied like sex, social problems, psychiatric background (see [Table 1](#)) and also in syndromic diagnosis ([Graphic 1](#)) and others like age and total score in SPI. There are no differences in comorbidity with substance use disorders (19.6% vs 21%).

Graphic 1. Syndromic Diagnosis

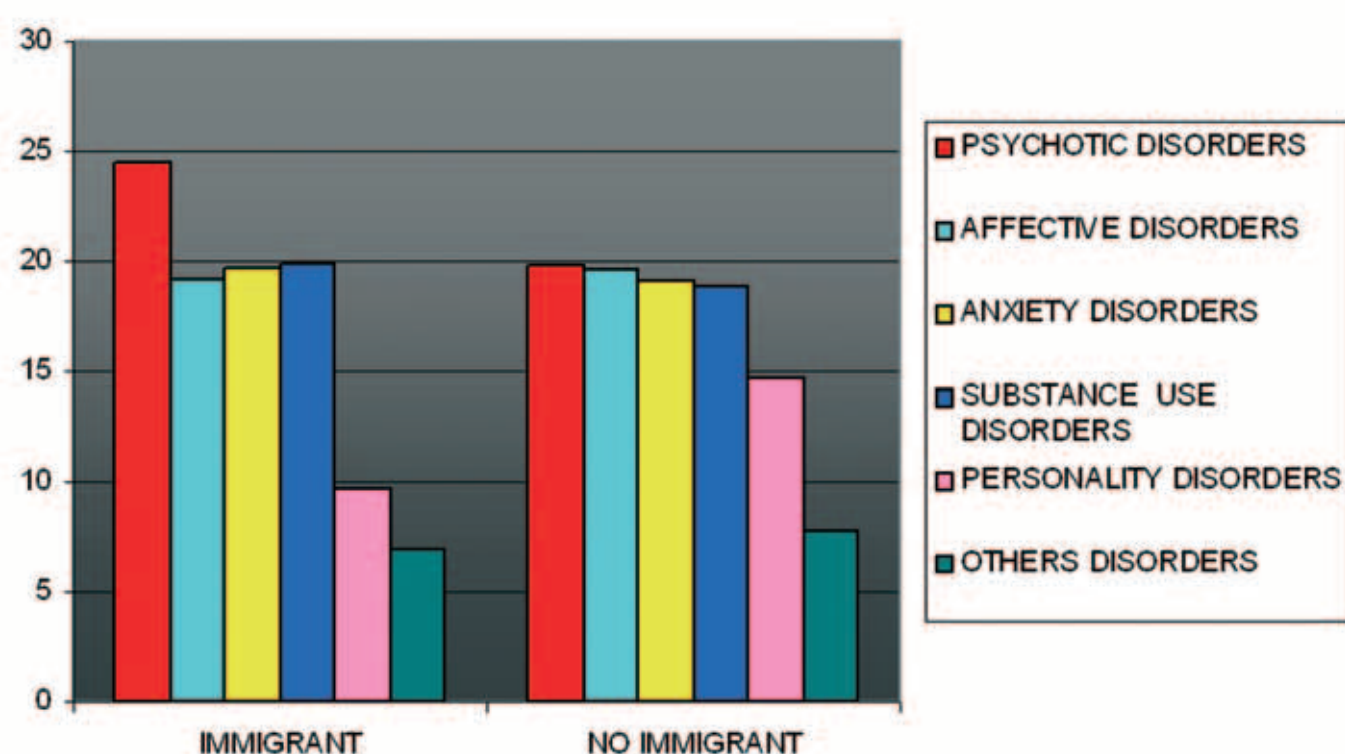


Table 1

	IMMIGRANT	NO IMMIGRANT	P
SEX (%MEN)	56.9	49.1	*
SOCIAL PROBLEMS	40.6	24.2	*
PSYCHIATRIC BACKGROUND	61	75.9	*
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER	19.6	21	

P<0.005