

Immigration and language barrier in a Community Mental Health Center

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Introduction

In the last years, specially in some geographical areas, migration and population movements have defined the profile of patients who are visited in the mental health centers. The increasing number of immigrant population in our area is reflected in a higher number of patients which use a different language from the one that health professionals use. This condition could result in an important difficulty in the relation established between the patient and the practitioners because of the language barrier, and accordingly, it could condition and influence the therapeutic process.

Objectives

The objective of this study is to analyze the differences in demographic and clinical profiles of the immigrant patients who come to the Community Mental Health Center in order to compare the results based on the presence or absence of language barrier.

Methods

We included a total of 59 patients in the CSM immigrants visited Santa Coloma de Gramenet between June'12 and December'12. This is an observational study where collected per protocol and retrospective sociodemographic, clinical and therapeutic management. Data were subjected to analysis using SPSS to assess their relationship and significance, the differences are discussed in terms of the presence or absence of language barrier.

Results

It shows the results of a total of 59 immigrant patients, with a mean age of 33.8 years. There is a frequency of 52.5% of men. 69.5% of patients did not have family support, having required 61% of these social work intervention, regardless of place of origin. The 55.9% had a psychiatric history before the first visit in CSM, the majority derived from ED (36.8%) or hospital discharge (28.1%).

Gender

	Frequency	Percentage
Female	31	52.5
Male	28	47.5

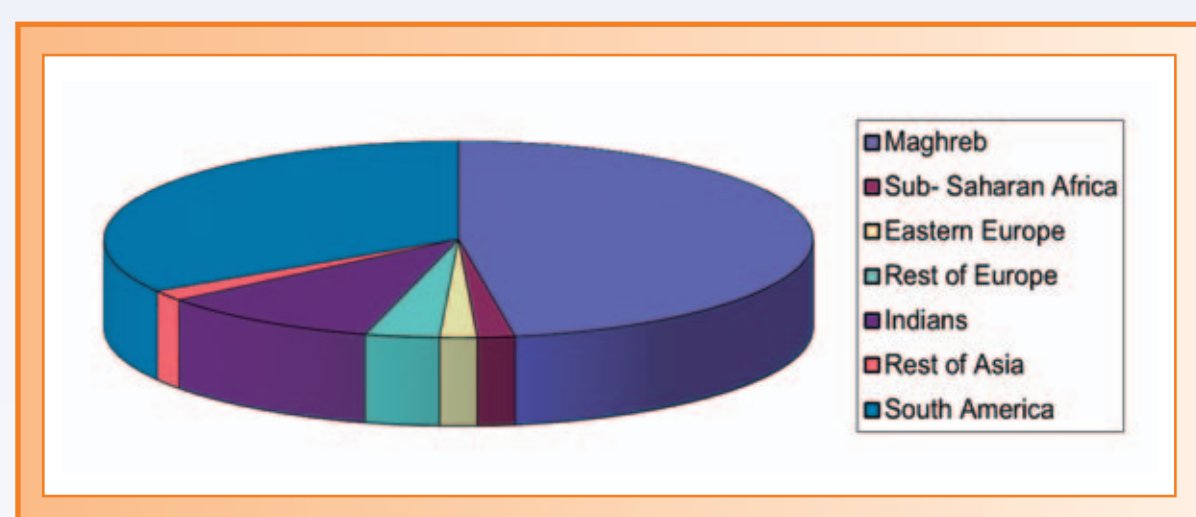
Comorbid substance use in immigrants depending on their origin:

		Dual		Total
		No	Yes	
Immigrants	Maghreb	18	10	28
	Sub-Saharan Africa	0	1	1
	Eastern Europe	1	0	1
	Rest of Europe	2	0	2
	Indians	4	2	6
	Rest of Asia	1	0	1
	South America	15	5	20
Total		41	18	59

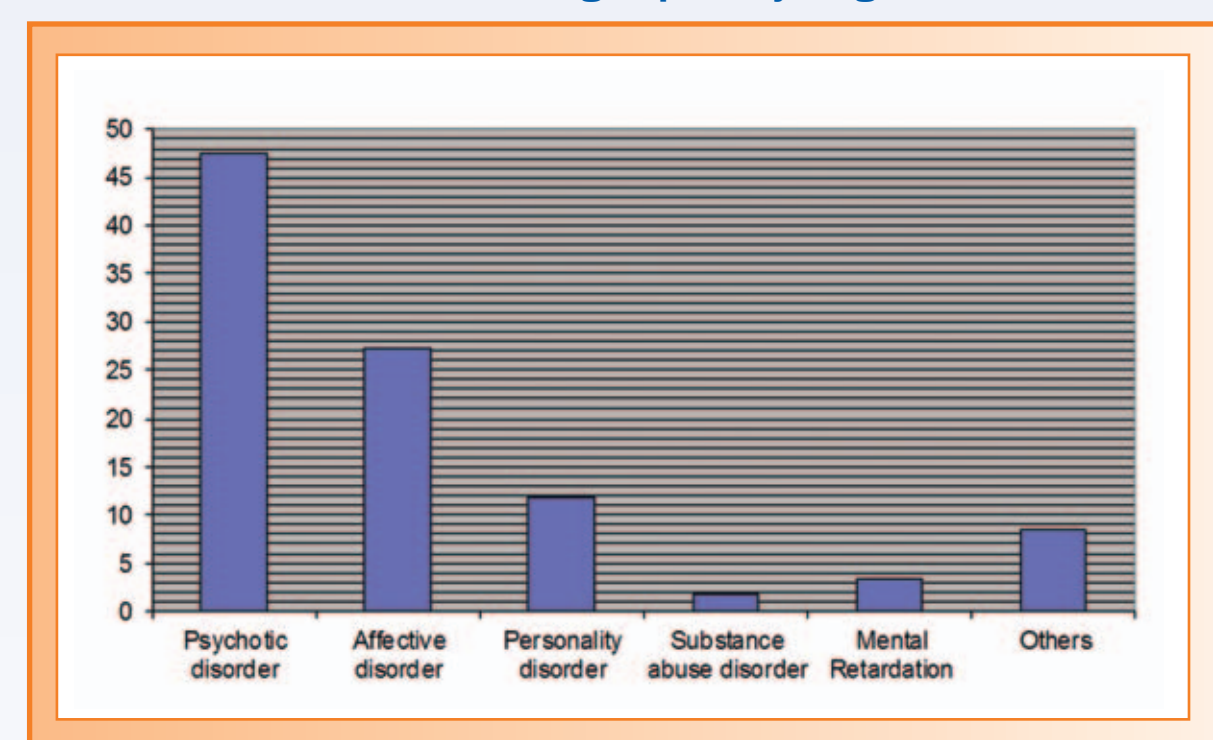
Idiomatic barrier depending on their origin:

		Idiomatic barrier		Total
		No	Yes	
Immigrants	Maghreb	15	13	28
	Sub-Saharan Africa	0	1	1
	Eastern Europe	1	0	1
	Rest of Europe	1	1	2
	Indians	2	4	6
	Rest of Asia	0	1	1
	Sout-America	20	0	20
Total		39	20	59

Frequency depending on the origin of immigrants



Patients according to primary diagnosis



The 76.27% of the patients received antipsychotic treatment, 13.55% of them required three or more antipsychotics, and 13.55% were with extended release antipsychotic treatment. We analyzed whether there was a relationship between these variables and the presence of language barriers, and the results were not significant ($p > 0.05$). It analyzes the variable background of turmoil and relationship is not significant in relation to the existence of a language barrier.

Conclusions

The profile of patients treated at the CSM immigrant Santa Coloma is a young man without family support and social problems, which most often is of North African origin.

There were no significant differences in clinical or therapeutic profiles depending on the origin of the patient. Nor are differences in the presence of agitation with restricted movement or the use of as many antipsychotics, in relation to the existence of a language barrier.

In our sample, the language barrier would not be a determining factor in patient management immigrant with mental health problems.

Bibliography

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