

*Importance of Food  
Insecurity, Resilience,  
Acculturation and Social  
Capital for Mental Health  
of Newcomer Youth  
Refugees and Immigrants  
During COVID-19*

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University of Windsor's *Research Ethics Board (REB#20-140)*

# *Research Question*

How the degree of newcomer acculturation, food insecurity, resilience, and social connections affect mental health problems among newcomer immigrant and refugee youth in a mid-sized city during the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Methodology

The data for this study is based on a sample of youth immigrants and refugees in Windsor, Ontario

YMCA Youth clients were surveyed by telephone, mostly in Arabic, between July 2020 and November 2020, which resulted in 244 completed surveys (36.2% response rate).

Majority are refugees (74.4%), from Syria (50.8%) and Iraq (15.7%)

# Measurement

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**Mental health** : is measured by eight questions about how often they felt *sadness, stressed, confused, isolated, helpless, nervous, hopeless, or depressed* during the COVID-19

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**Food insecurity**, as a proxy of economic vulnerability, is measured by three questions asking respondents if they *worried that their family would run out of food, would not get a balanced meal, or would not have enough food for everyone*

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**Resilience** is measured by eight Likert-scale statements about respondents' *ability to adapt to change, deal with whatever comes, cope in a stressful situation, achieve goals, not give up when things look hopeless, focus clearly when under pressure, lead in problem solving, and not be discouraged by failure.*

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**Social Capital** is measured by *number of sibling and family cohesiveness* which is measured by *family get along, is supportive, and feeling of togetherness.*

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**Acculturation** is measured by *length of residency in Canada in years.*

Table 2. Percentage Mental Health Problems Among Refugee and Immigrant Youth								
	Sadness	Stressed	Confused	Isolated	Helpless	Nervous	Hopeless	Depressed
Does not describe me	7.8	15.6	19.3	25.8	36.9	25	37.3	42.6
Describes me Somewhat and moderately well	45.5	47.5	42.2	35.7	40.5	40.5	39.3	36.4
Describes me very well and extremely well	46.8	36.9	38.6	38.6	23.3	34.5	23.3	21.1
Community Health Survey (2017-18) : Youth (15-24) Born in Canada "statement applies to me well and extremely"						4	12.8	5.7
Community Health Survey (2017-18) : Immigrants Youth (15-24 age group)					0	0		0
Legger Poll Week 44 of Covid-19 (Immigrant Youth 17-24) "felt more nervous since Covid-19"							33.4	

Table 3. Unstandardized and Standardized Regression Coefficients of Mental Health Problems and Predictors

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		
	B	Sig.	B	Sig.	B	Sig.	B	Beta	Sig.
(Constant)	17.282	***	24.514	***	33.233	***	25.311		***
Female	1.721		1.453		0.943		1.337	0.085	
Age	0.300	*	0.289	*	0.301	*	0.251	0.111	
Length in Canada	0.736	**	0.663	**	0.658	**	0.555	0.147	*
Family Cohesiveness			-0.338		-0.063		0.181	0.046	
Number of Sibling			-0.452		-0.385		-0.532	-0.127	*
Resiliency					-0.396	***	-0.369	-0.214	***
Food Insecurity							1.085	0.342	***
F	6.980	***	5.237	***	6.708	***	11.507		***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.080		0.099		0.145		0.254		
N	244		244		244		244		
* P <.05, ** P < .01, *** P < .001									

## Standardized Beta Coefficients

