



THE EXPERIENCES AND NEEDS OF DISPLACED REFUGEE MEN: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Dan Le



ABSTRACT

In 2016 there were an estimated 17 million refugees and people in refugee-like situations worldwide. Refugees face a myriad of negative experiences and psychological issues including trauma, distress, and poor economic outcomes such as unemployment or inadequate housing. Psychology literature displays a fair amount of research on displaced individuals, but little on the experiences of externally displaced men to a country other than their nation of origin. This review reveals that outcomes of refugee and displaced men have to date been ignored, and increased research is warranted as they often experience negative outcomes before and after displacement. This literature review reports on outcomes of male-focused refugee studies regarding mental health, physical health, and economic factors.

Keywords: Refugee, displace, men, economic, physical, and psychological health implications

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated in 2019 that worldwide 41.3 million people were internally displaced (i.e. forced from their homes within their nation of origin), that 10 million people were without citizenship in any country, and that 1.7 million new claims of asylum were made in 2017 (“What is a Refugee?”, 2019). The organization’s most recent Statistical Yearbook (UNHCR, 2016) further reported that in 2016 there were over 17 million refugees and people in refugee-like situations. This international population included persons who left their homes as a result of war or natural disaster or for political or religious affiliation risks – many were at risk of repatriation as a result of their citizenship status. Despite these large numbers and the many humanitarian efforts to improve their lives, refugees continue to experience a myriad of negative outcomes ranging from social challenges in the form of discrimination (da Silva Rebelo, Fernández, & Achotegui, 2018), to psychological disturbances of trauma and distress (Davidson, Murray, & Schweitzer, 2008; Kivling-Bodén & Sundbom, 2002), and poor economic outcomes such as unemployment or inadequate support (Desmond, Gershenson, & Kiviat, 2015; Wright et al., 2016).

While the worldwide number of displaced individuals is extremely high, not all displaced persons are forced into displacement or are seeking asylum. Other examples of individuals not living in their home nations include those who voluntarily cross borders to seek improved economic or employment opportunities. For example, in June 2019 Pew Research reported that as of 2017 there were 10.5 million unauthorized individuals in the United States (Krogstad, Passel, & Cohn, 2019), many of whom crossed the U.S.-Mexico border. However, unauthorized individuals in the U.S. are not limited to Mexican origin as more than half (53%) were reported to arrive from other countries around the world. Other reports further indicated that immigrants into the U.S. from nations other than Mexico experienced abuse and isolation as LGBT identifiers (Alessi, Kahn, & Chatterji, 2016), lingering trauma after migration (Chu, Keller, & Rasmussen, 2013), and severe levels of depression (Cummings, Sull, Davis, & Worley, 2011).

Research indicates that many of these individuals experience a long list of hardships and negative outcomes including struggles with social services (Mallet, Calvo, & Waters, 2017), clinically significant distress from discrimination (Garcini et al., 2018), and biased incarceration (Valdez & Golash-Boza, 2017). While much political attention and humanitarian aid has been

given to refugees in recent years, several authors have argued that too little research has been conducted which reported on the outcomes of refugees and ways in which they might be helped (Lo, Patel, Shultz, Ezard, & Roberts, 2017; Reed, Fazel, Jones, Panter-Brick, & Stein, 2012). Because societies in destination countries may display hostile and mistrusting attitudes toward these individuals, refugees often experience negative effects on their well-being such as helplessness and frustration (da Silva Rebelo et al., 2018).

Clearly refugees and people in refugee-like situations face experiences that lead to personal, economic and social hardships on the individual and societal level. These topics have been addressed from humanitarian and policy-related perspectives, although the psychological impacts of displacement have been understudied. The matter becomes more acute when considering the lack of studies done to assess or to understand the experiences of specific subgroups of refugees and those in refugee-like situations. Specifically, very little attention has been given to the outcomes of men, relative to women and children, who have been displaced (Indra, 1999).

In part because of men's roles in military organizations or other political or social leadership positions, it should be expected that male refugees and asylum seekers experience displacement-related outcomes that are vastly different than those of displaced women and children (Griffiths, 2001). These men's loss of control over their relationships and finances, their loss of social support, and negotiating a new post-displacement identity places them in a precarious situation if proper interventions are not available. For example, Furman and colleagues (2013) contended that the lives of undocumented immigrant men in the United States are often filled with stress and chaos.

The need for a focus on the outcomes of displaced men is twofold. First, their pre- and post-displacement experiences are vastly different than those of women and children (Al-Roubaiy, Owen-Pugh, & Wheeler, 2013; Griffiths, 2001; Horn & Parekh, 2018). Second, to date too little research has been reported on their outcomes (Indra, 1999). This review delineates what has been published in peer-reviewed psychology literature on the impact of displacement and refugee-like status on men and suggests what remedies might be available. Herein I present a thorough search and review of the psychological literature published since 2000 which reported on the mental health, physical health, or economic outcomes of displaced men.

METHOD

In the psychology literature and in social discourse, ideals associated with *migration* have been understood to indicate an economic component of displacement, while *refugee* and *asylum-seeking* often imply displacement for political or war-related reasons (Khan, 2013). In the literature search described below, the term *refugee* was overwhelmingly used to describe individuals who relocated from their home nation to a new geographic location, whether internally or externally. Similarly, the term *displaced* was very often used to describe the act of relocating, including those seeking exile. As such, participants within this text are referred to as refugees who have been displaced for one reason or another. For specific terms used in each publication reviewed, readers are referred to its respective full-text document.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Because the purpose of the review was to identify and report on the outcomes of men who have left their home nation for a variety of reasons, inclusion criteria for potential review stipulated that study authors report on at least one outcome of interest within mental health, physical health, or economic resources and also report on externally displaced individuals (i.e. those displaced to a country or nation that was not their homeland). Studies which reported on the outcomes of internally displaced citizens (i.e. those who left their home or region but remained within the borders of their home nation) were excluded because such populations were expected to have much different experiences than externally displaced individuals including access to resources and support, remaining within their culture, and ability to return to their home after time.

Prior to beginning the literature search, it was determined that the psychology literature served as the most appropriate search source because publications within the field were expected most likely to report on individual or sample outcomes. Further, it was determined that the psychology literature was also most appropriate for identifying studies in which improvement of interventions and individual outcomes might be identified. To this end, the psychology-focused PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, and Academic Search Complete databases within the academic search engine EBSCOhost were used to select identify potential articles for full review.

Database search

The first step of the search process included adding the Boolean terms *refugee* or *asylum* or *undocument** or *illegal* into the search engine's search box. These terms were selected to represent the type of individuals about whom I wished to learn more. The second step included concurrently adding the Boolean terms *deport** or *repatriate** or *displace** or *exile** into a separate search box. These terms were selected to represent the action by which such individuals' experience might be described. By arranging the search terms in this manner and running the search for both Boolean search strings concurrently, returned results were expected to include articles which included at least one term from the first step in addition to at least one term from the second step. The use of an asterisk in the Boolean terms allowed for the databases also to return variations of the search terms such as *undocumented*, *deporting*, *displacement*, etc.

The database search parameters were set to search for at least one of the search terms from step one, and also at least one of the terms from step two. Search terms could be included anywhere within a publication including its title, abstract, full text or key words. Additional search parameters stipulated that articles were published in the year 2000 or later, that the full-text of the publication was available in the databases (to allow for full-text review), that articles described a research study in which participants provided some form of data (e.g. excluding editorials, special edition overviews, conference proceedings, etc.), and that the articles were written in English.

The initial search parameters described above returned a total of 412 articles for potential review, of which 37 were removed as duplicates by the EBSCOhost search engine. Citations for the remaining 375 publications were then downloaded in RIS files and imported into EndNote citation management software for archiving and writing purposes. Upon importing the references into the EndNote program, an additional six sources were removed by the program as duplicates, leaving a final sample of 369 articles.

Inter-Rater Agreement and Preliminary Coding

To achieve inter-rater agreement for article inclusion, an electronic random number generator was used to select 50 of the 369 articles to be reviewed by three independent reviewers (i.e. the author and two additional research professionals). At this stage, each reviewer independently read the title of the 50 articles and coded whether they believed it should be

included for further review (i.e. abstract review) based on the inclusion/exclusion criteria described. If an article were determined to qualify for inclusion at the title review stage, the reviewer coded it as such and continued to read the article's abstract, coding it again for inclusion or exclusion, based on the criteria described. Additional preliminary coding of articles at this preliminary stage included coding each source for information such as type of publication (e.g. research study, review), type of study (e.g. quantitative, qualitative), outcomes of interest (i.e. mental health, physical health economic), homeland, and nation of relocation.

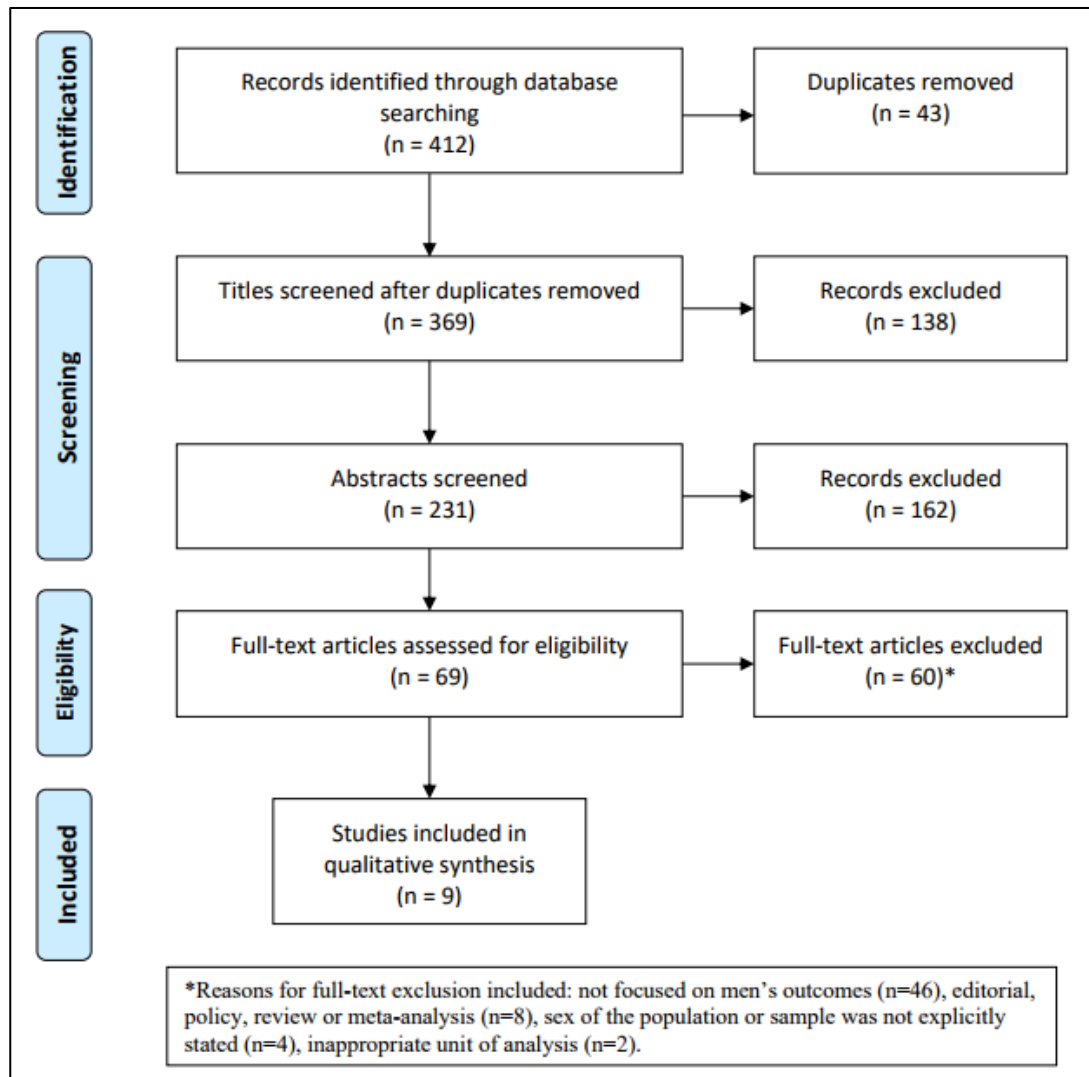
After all three reviewers coded the 50 randomly selected articles, they deliberated to discuss their individual results and any caveats for discrepancies when there was rater disagreement. This preliminary review resulted in 48% total agreement in which all three reviewers agreed that 24 of the 50 randomly selected articles should be included or excluded for abstract review. At the abstract review stage, a 46% total agreement was found in which all three reviewers agreed that 23 of the 50 articles should be included or excluded. This collective discussion of agreement, disagreement, and reasons for each decision allowed for clarification and refining of the coding among reviewers. After this discussion among the three reviewers, the author continued independently to review and fully code all 369 sources for potential final inclusion.

RESULTS

As shown in Figure 1 below, 138 articles were removed at the title review stage and an additional 162 were removed at the abstract review stage. The remaining 69 articles then underwent a final full-text review. Of these, a substantial number were removed because they did not focus on the outcomes of men. The reasons for remaining exclusions at this stage included inappropriate report type or non-study article, unclear sex of sample studied, and inappropriate unit of analysis. The final list of articles at this stage, and the focus of the present review, included nine articles.

Because the intention here was to report on outcomes of externally displaced male refugees, the lead coder also coded for outcomes within the three overarching areas of interest: mental health, physical health, and economic factors. Definitions used for each of the outcome categories are provided within their respective overview sections below.

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of final articles selected for qualitative synthesis



A total of nine articles were identified which met the search criteria. Publication years of the final sample ranged from 2003-2018. Homelands of displaced individuals studied reflected a rounded global presence including from the Middle East, Africa, and Central America. With the exception of Suerbaum's (2018) report, nations of destination were all high income countries including the United States, United Kingdom, Sweden and Germany. While not all authors reported reasons for which men in their studies were displaced, some reasons provided include seeking political asylum, forced displacement by their country of origin, fleeing war or violence, and seeking economic opportunity. Table 1 below depicts sample characteristics and topics for each study reviewed.

Table 1. Summary of participants and study topics of articles reviewed

Authors	Participant Homeland	Participant Destination	Reason for Displacement	Study Topic
Al-Roubaiy et al. (2013)	Iraq	Sweden	Exile*	Experiences of post-exile stress with implications for service help.
Furman et al. (2013)	Latin*	United States	Various	General risk factors associated with undocumented immigration to the United States.
Hermansson et al. (2003)	El Salvador Iran (Kurds)	Sweden	War; Forced Migration	Effect of potential future repatriation, reconstruction of identity.
Kahn (2013)	Afghanistan	United Kingdom	Not Specified	Experience of khapgan (feeling down) and experiences of unfulfilled promises.
Kluttig et al. (2009)	North Africa	Germany	Political Asylum	Cooperation in inpatient treatment and trauma therapy by way of narratives.
McKinnon (2008)	Sudan	United States	Civil War	Social- and self-identity after resettlement.
Muir & Gannon (2016)	Afghanistan Iraq	United Kingdom	Refugee*	Relationships of young adult refugees arriving as unaccompanied minors with their location of settlement.
Robertson et al. (2012)	Mexico	United States	Not Specified	Initiation of injection drug use by undocumented men after first migration.
Seurbaum (2018)	Syria	Egypt	Forced Displacement	Identity, ideals, and perceptions of masculinity.

Notes: Furman et al. described outcomes of displaced men but did not report on a research study. Its inclusion was determined because of its depth of information and specificity to the present review. *Specific Latin nation(s) not provided. *Specific reason for displacement not provided.

While the types of studies and ways in which data were collected were divergent within qualitative research methods, the use of quantitative methods were nearly nonexistent with the exception of Hermansson (2003) who employed a mixed method study. Table 2 below outlines outcome type, study type, sample size, and general findings for each article reviewed.

Table 2. Summary of studies and findings included in qualitative synthesis

Authors	Outcome Type	Data Collection and Outcome Type	Findings
Al-Roubaiy et al.	M, E	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis Interviews (n=10)	Feelings of disempowerment, discrimination, and marginalization from host society. Perceived valuable social support from fellow displaced individuals.
Furman et al.	M, P, E	Issue Summary	Attention to men's needs in social work and social science research is lacking.
Hermansson et al.	M, P	Mixed Method – Quantitative data collection and interviews (n=10 Salvadoran, 12 Iranian Kurds)	Many experienced reconstruction of identity regarding past guerilla involvement and transitioning to new host country. Potential repatriation impacted future plans.
Kahn	M, E	Case Study (n=1)	Past events permeate into future plans, and may be muddled to individuals. Displaced men are responsible for financial contribution to their distant families.

Authors	Outcome Type	Data Collection and Outcome Type	Findings
Kluttig et al.	M	Case Study (n=1)	Immobility is a source of distress. Trauma therapy and narrative vocalizing helped to improve PTSD symptoms. Challenges lead to feelings of helplessness.
McKinnon	M, E	Interviews (n=11) Focus Groups* Observations+	Displaced men may not identify with labels ascribed to them. Racism and discrimination were salient for participants. Displaced men express fear of law enforcement and desire more support from elders.
Muir & Gannon	E	Interviews (n=6)	In treatment, it is relevant to move beyond trauma to explore experiences. Communities and community centers can be a source of support. Displaced men felt comfortable at local community centers but judged and controlled by formal institutions.
Robertson et al.	P	Interviews (n=23) Surveys (n=309)	Initiation of drug injection in the U.S. predicted by consuming drugs prior to migrating, younger age, and being incarcerated in the U.S.
Suerbaum~	M	Ethnographic Interviews (n=61) Observations+ Informal Conversations+	Men's displacement led to loss of symbolic capital status and definitions of the self as it relates to traditional masculine roles and statuses.

Notes: *Number of focus groups not specified, each included approximately 5-7 participants. *Specific n not provided.
~Includes interviews of women, included for review because of its focus on men's outcomes. M=Mental Health, P=Physical Health, E=Economic.

Mental Health Outcomes

For the purpose of this review, mental health outcomes were defined as those which could potentially be diagnosed according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), or were perhaps more latent observations such as general negative affect and self-identity. The most salient mental health outcomes identified in the present review were trauma or extreme distress followed by personal-identity negotiation.

Trauma

Among the men they interviewed, Al-Roubaiy et al. (2013) reported on participants' perceptions of immense distress, which resulted from experiences with racism and oppressive attitudes in their host society. Further, most participants expressed distress levels which rivaled those experienced during pre-displacement war and political oppression. Regarding mental health outcomes, Hermansson et al. (2003) reported on participants' experiences with war and

its effect on trauma and its relationships with identity reconstruction. The authors also reported that for their sample the traumatic impact of war was not immediately clear although some experiences were perceived or described by participants as evidence of heroic acts. The perception that violent behaviors in war are heroic may be participants' attempts at framing the situation in a positive light, thereby reducing negative mental health outcomes.

Some authors criticized the PTSD diagnosis and treatment among displaced men. For example, Khan's (2013) account of trauma was provided by way of a case study which explored the everyday suffering of a single Afghan man displaced to the United Kingdom. The author expressed criticism of traditional assessment of PTSD which might pathologize common distress while studies of Afghan men's PTSD often minimize non-war related trauma or otherwise inappropriately assessed individual experiences. For example, symptoms associated with trauma often are inherently intertwined with global capitalism or homeland political and economic structures, which cause individual feelings of negative affect.

Kluttig et al. (2009) also offered alternative approaches to PTSD treatment among male refugees in their case study of a single 44-year-old refugee. Detailing their participant's success and failures with initial treatment for drug use and other issues, and their subsequent approach to treating his trauma, the authors concluded that treatment of trauma may be most effective when done separately from psychotherapeutic treatment. Conducting an interview study of young Iraqi and Afghan men displaced to the United Kingdom, Muir and Gannon (2016) reported on trauma relative to historical approaches, and also suggested alternative ways in which refugees and asylum seekers might be viewed. The authors contended that typical reports of trauma (e.g. PTSD) too often focus on individual-level experiences while neglecting the roles of larger-life events and post-displacement experiences. The authors concluded that their findings supported the relevance of including the relationships between social and environmental forces in addition to those of the body and mind. Al-Roubaiy (2013) further contended that a strength-based approach which focuses on empowerment and advocacy may be most relevant when assisting male refugees to overcome post-displacement stressors. In this way, the authors make the same contention that others have with identity, as presented below, in that strength-based approaches to intervention may be more prudent for these men's outcomes.

Identity

Relative to issues of identity, several authors reiterated the role of masculinity when discussing displaced men's identity, and Suerbaum (2018) identified that focusing on the masculinity of displaced men has only recently been acknowledged. From her qualitative study, the author noted that masculinity of displaced men should be understood as a transformative process, and that these men's responses to such change are often done reactively to unexpected or unpredictable change. Similarly, reports of emasculation were observed by Al-Roubaiy et al. (2013), highlighting that participants were required to renegotiate at least part of their personal identity as they strived to retain their Iraqi sense of male-self. Furman et al. (2013) further provided masculine identity discourse by way of the hegemonic masculine ideal within the culture of Latin men. As the authors explain, men in Latin cultures are expected (and strive) to perform specific gender-based roles such as financial provision of family leadership. However, when these men are not able to fulfill these roles as part of their post-displacement masculine identities, they may experience a sense of failure and exacerbated isolation. These examples of displaced men's struggles with identity through changing masculine ideals portray ways in which they suffer as a result of the displacement process.

However, not all issues of displaced men's identity revolved around masculinity, and not all were framed from a negative perspective. For example, the importance of identity was observed as an overarching theme by McKinnon (2008), who noted that shared memories and identities among participants perhaps aided in a sense of belonging. For participants in the study, this act of identity refinement included negotiating, along with other issues, what it meant for the men to be a "Lost Boy". Additionally, the author recommended that perceptions of these men's identities should include a more complex intersection of race and experiences. This broader understanding of identity is similar to that proposed by Hermansson and colleagues (2003), who concluded that refugee men's reconstruction of identity should be considered within a context greater than immediate and obvious individual characteristics. For participants in their study, the reconstruction of identity included coming to terms with past war experiences and cultural issues within their host society.

Collectively, a theme among authors who reported on concepts of identity is that displaced men may experience better outcomes when their native identity is acknowledged, and

when there are similar others around them with whom they can associate. Additionally, multiple authors reported on the importance of addressing and reporting on identity from multiple facets including past experience, varying cultures, and role expectations. In such a way, we may begin to view these men as strong survivors and providers, rather than as victims. That is, these positive approaches to issues of identity of displaced men may ultimately have a positive effect on their own self-identity.

Physical Health Outcomes

When reviewing and coding the literature, the reviewers defined physical health outcomes as those which inferred a negative impact or outcome on the physical body. Examples of physical health outcomes sought included diseases (e.g. heart disease, HIV), physical harm (e.g. war, crime), or abuse (including sex abuse).

Two studies reported on Latin men's physical health outcomes as a product of the displacement process. First, Furman and colleagues (2013) provided an account of physical risks experienced by undocumented Latino men during and after their displacement to the United States. In line with Latin men's desires to fulfill their masculine roles previously described, the authors contended that of all risks faced by displaced Latin men, the greatest risks are to their physical health. For example, many Latin men endanger their own lives by engaging in human smuggling, or experience dangerous workplace conditions to provide for and to lead their families as a part of their displacement process. Second, Robertson et al. (2012) also reported on the physical health of Latin men displaced into the United States. Despite the propensity of men in general, and for some groups of Latin men in particular, to abuse substances (Negi, 2011), theirs was the only study which addressed displaced men's substance use or abuse. Results from the mixed-methods study showed that being younger, being incarcerated in the United States, and having ever used drugs in Mexico prior to displacement were all positively associated with initiation of drug injection after migrating to the in the United States. Other positive associations with initiation of injection drugs included pre-migration unemployment, not relocating for economic opportunities, and not knowing someone in the U.S. at the time of first migration.

Accounts of physical outcomes were not limited to Latin men, or to physical outcomes experienced during the displacement process. Specifically, participants in the Hermansson et al.

(2003) study all experienced war injuries which were sustained prior to displacement. The authors reported that for all men in their study, war-related injuries resulted in termination of their guerilla military lives, forcing them to leave their homelands – an act which caused them to reassess their identity. Additionally, many of the men reported being exposed to substantial organized violence prior to relocation or had been imprisoned and abused, for which they recommend that more interdisciplinary research be conducted.

Furman et al. (2013) concluded that their exploration of displaced Latin men's experiences highlights a lack of attention to this population. As the authors argued, the needs of neither these men's wives/partners nor their children can be fully met until these risks and outcomes are attended to appropriately. Findings from the present review, in which only three studies reported on physical health outcomes of displaced men, confirm that much more research can be done to understand these men's experiences and to identify efficacious interventions.

Economic Outcomes

During the coding process, economic outcomes were defined as sources of support which included those of financial nature, employment or housing opportunities, and family or other social support. A variety of reports regarding economic outcomes in the form of receiving support from family, friends, and other social sources were identified. Furman and colleagues' (2013) report described economic necessity as a reason for many undocumented men leaving their homeland. As the authors described, pre-displacement economic crises faced by Latin men often leads to additional post-migration economic problems including poverty and inability to secure safe and satisfying work. Often, these individuals have positive impacts on the economic and labor markets of their country of destination while at the same time experiencing a loss of masculinity when they cannot be economic supporters and breadwinners for their families.

Similar to the Latin men described by Furman and colleagues, Khan's (2013) case study described that post-displacement economic opportunities were negatively affected by unfulfilled promises by host societies, leading to social and economic immobility. As it relates to trauma, the author further argued that PTSD symptoms are often prioritized as a result of war, when in fact negative economic ideologies may play a role in the trauma experience. As a result, attention to economic aspects which lead to trauma and depression is an area of promise for

professionals who service this group.

Non-financial economic outcomes were also identified in the literature. For example, Al-Roubaiy et al. (2013) reported that after displacement refugee men overwhelmingly recounted valuing social support from other Iraqis in exile, and that such support assisted with adapting to post-displacement life and maintaining a culture and heritage of their homeland. Similarly, Muir & Gannon (2016) described the positive influence of a community center in providing support in the form of advice and advocacy on issues such as immigration for Iraqi and Afghan men. For participants, the center provided economic outcomes in the form of social support from center staff, which was a foundation to their process of acculturation. The authors concluded that support systems such as community centers may be more accessible and more appropriate than clinical interventions. Yet contrary to these positive reports of social support, McKinnon (2008) reported that participants described a lack of support from local elders when attempting to negotiate adjustment and wellbeing, which caused their transition to be more difficult. These elders, who were estimated by one participant to outnumber refugees at the settlement, were perceived to be a source of wisdom and power yet did not share in decision-making among their community.

DISCUSSION

To my knowledge, this review is the first to outline the psychology research which reported on the experiences and outcomes of displaced male refugees. Overall, it is not surprising to learn that little research has been conducted in this area, as the outcomes and experiences of men in many areas have not adequately been addressed in the literature whether in the United States or abroad (Banik et al., 2019; Bottom, 2013; Britton, 2019). Given that men have many different experiences than women, and that their outcomes are often different even when experiencing similar situations, the need for more male-focused studies and subsequent remedies is urgent. However, it is perhaps encouraging that results from the present review show that several authors reported on multiple outcomes of interest within their reports. For example, Hermansson et al. wrote about the intersection of pre-displacement trauma, new identity formation, and physical injury sustained prior to displacement. Such examples give evidence that perhaps the most salient experiences of externally displaced male refugees (e.g. trauma, identity reformation, social support) are intertwined regardless of from where these men

originate and to where they are displaced.

Upon conclusion of this review, I have identified what I believe to be five prominent themes which require attention from researchers, social scientists, service providers, and other stakeholders.

Theme 1: Too little is known about male refugees

Within the general topic of refugees and people in refugee-like situations, the psychology literature appears to be fairly attentive to these populations, with appropriate attention given to global humanitarian issues and broad assessment of individuals from many nations. However, this review indicates that despite several calls for more research on understanding of refugee men's experiences and outcomes, there is a paucity of published material in the psychology literature (Furman et al., 2013; Indra, 1999). For example, of 103 articles for which gender was coded during this study's review process, 72 focused on both men and women, 13 focused specifically on women, and nine (8.7%, as reviewed herein) focused only on men—an average of less than one-half publication per year since 2000. Accordingly, of those 103 publications for which participant gender was identified, there were 1.4 times more publications dedicated to women compared to men.

Collectively, the publications reviewed here indicate that male refugees, regardless of their homeland, the country to which they were displaced, or the reasons for which they migrated, experience many issues for which more and better understanding is needed. These include appropriate intervention for trauma with attention to alternative treatment methods; support from family and other prominent social contacts; and understanding the individuals and their identity perceptions before and after their transitions. Further, the male refugee population deserves specific attention to issues related to their identity and roles as leaders and providers in their new lands as well as for the families that they leave behind (Khan, 2013), constructs which cannot be explored in studies which also include exploration of women and children (Al-Roubaiy et al., 2013). These experiences include injury due to war and violence, loss of masculinity and identity, and reduced effectiveness as provider (Hermansson et al., 2003).

Theme 2: Refugee men's outcomes are a worldwide concern

As mentioned, the articles reviewed herein represented a rounded report of countries of origin and destination. Regardless of the home nations from which participants were displaced and the new nation to which they immigrated, common outcomes were identified, as indicted by the several studies which recounted commonalities such as trauma, identity, and social support among displaced men. This commonality of experiences across cultures and experiences may provide some optimism that proven treatments could be efficacious across male-refugee sub-populations. However, because of the very limited number of studies identified herein and the low numbers of participants within them, I expect that much caution should be utilized when considering cultural, ethnic, and other individual factors when treating male refugees. Certainly, there is much room for additional work and reporting in the area of externally displaced men and their treatment.

Theme 3: Interventions other than those for trauma are limited

Over a decade ago Rosen et al. (2008) argued that because trauma (i.e. PTSD) diagnosis criteria widely overlap with diagnostic criteria of other mental disorders and may rely on generalized assumptions of several life situations, it is essential to broaden assessments to include other issues such as depression and anxiety. Within the present population of interest, Turrini et al. (2017) performed a review of published review papers and identified only 13 review articles which reported on the prevalence of common mental disorders among refugees and asylum seekers. The authors contended that much attention has been given to assessing, identifying or treating trauma while too little attention was given to other mental health outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and others. The present review endorses this lack of research attention in the refugee space, and further confirms that we know even less about displaced men's mental health outcomes. It should be noted that during the process of identifying articles for inclusion in the present review, multiple intervention-specific publications were identified (Opaas, Hartmann, Wentzel-Larsen, & Varvin, 2016; Ruf et al., 2010), yet these sources were excluded from review for reasons such as lack of data collection or non-qualifying samples of interest. If social work and other helping professionals are to offer positive interventions for the subgroup of externally displaced men, much more research and subsequent intervention methods are needed to better understand their experiences and needs.

Theme 4: Male refugees' loss of self lacks exploration

Although many refugee men are important contributors to labor forces and other social outcomes in their new countries, they have received unwarranted scrutiny as a result of local and national legislation based on their social positions, producing negative social attention to the groups as a whole (da Silva Rebelo et al., 2018; Furman et al., 2013). It is my intention to highlight the struggles of identity which externally displaced men experience in order to amplify conversations about the importance of these men's identities, including how their identities are formed and preserved. Perhaps more important here is that we call attention to social service, to helping professionals (such as counsellors or psychologists), and to helping agencies in understanding the knowledge gap in the literature and previous researchers' suggestions to improve interventions. Ultimately, if these professionals and organizations are able to improve the lives of refugee men, they may in turn improve the lives of their families and those who depend upon them.

Theme 5: Studies on male refugees lack empirical quantitative evidence

Another overarching concern identified was the lack of longitudinal and quantitative studies which reported on the outcomes of externally displaced men. As Hermansson (2003) argued, small sample sizes in quantitative research studies limit our ability effectively to draw conclusions which can be extended to larger populations. Yet despite this awareness, quantitative data and mixed-method studies are all but non-existent today, over a decade and a half later. Indeed, nearly all studies described herein included sample sizes of fewer than 25 participants. The helpful but narrow scope of case studies and interviews is not able to produce robust results which might identify or explain group differences between or among refugee populations. In consideration of generalizing results of quantitative and longitudinal studies across samples and populations of refugee men, I find comfort in knowing that, because they share many experiences, such generalization may not be as difficult to imagine as previously thought.

LIMITS AND CONCLUSION

Three methodological limitations must be acknowledged. First, the utilization of only three databases, each with a focus on the psychology literature, likely reduced the potential number of articles returned for review. While researchers and other professionals in other fields

such as law and political science have surely addressed the experiences of refugee men, my intention was to address research gaps and to synthesize coverage of the population for better understanding of their outcomes. Second, it is possible that the search terms and parameters limited the number of relevant studies which have been published. For example, while my inclusion criteria of having access to full articles within the databases may have restricted review of some studies, it was my intention to report on publications which were most easily available and accessible by others. Finally, limiting the coding of returned publications to those which only included a focus on men's outcomes may have excluded several reports of men's outcomes relative to women and children. I encourage further systematic reviews of the literature to also include studies which assessed all ages, sexes, and other demographic factors to continue building the body of literature for the increasing global refugee population.

To conclude, I believe there is as much reassurance from my findings as perhaps there is discouragement in the lack of published reports. There appears to be some consolidation to the experiences and needs of displaced male refugees. In as much as the focus of the present review was to highlight what is known (and not known) about these men's experiences and outcomes, I also acknowledge that strength-based interventions have been utilized and assessed among other subgroups of refugees including Southeast Asian refugees (Grigg-Saito, Och, Liang, Toof, & Silka, 2008) and the resilience of international adolescents (Stark et al., 2019). Effective future interventions may do well to incorporate findings from studies of other refugee subgroups in their pursuit to improve displaced men's outcomes.

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Author profile



Dan Le holds a Master's degree in Education and a secondary-level teaching credential in social sciences from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is currently assistant professor of English at Aichi Shukutoku University and a PhD student in sociology at Kanazawa University, Japan where he examines the role ICTs have on re-acculturation patterns among second generation return migrants upon return to their ancestral homeland.

Contact details: danle@ucla.edu

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