

Guruge, S. & Collins, E. (2007). *Working With Immigrant Women: Issues & Strategies for Mental Health Professionals*. Ontario: Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (335 pages).

Reviewed by Isabel Crowhurst, University of London, UK.

Working with Immigrant Women, edited by Sepali Guruge and Enid Collins, explores issues related to the mental health and illness of immigrant women in Canada, and the health care system in place to respond to their needs. The book comprises a variety of contributions, many of which are written by people who immigrated to Canada and who occupy various positions in health care. It provides a comprehensive exploration of the many factors that affect immigrant women's mental health.

The key goal of the book is to shed light on the complex experiences of women immigrants to Canada and the urgent need to develop and improve a health care system that effectively addresses the needs of these women as consumers of mental health care. The book critically exposes and discusses the systemic and cultural barriers that often result in limited health care provision to immigrant women. However, it never fails to emphasise the agency, resilience, and strengths of women, thus "demonstrating how they are active participants in shaping their mental health and in responding to mental illness" (p. xiii).

One of the strengths of the book is its readability. The clear and engaging style of the contributions makes them easily accessible not just to mental health care practitioners and experts, but also to anyone who is interested in, for example, gender and migration, policy responses to immigrants, and the theory and practice of the institutionalization of the multicultural model.

The book is divided into six parts. The first provides an overview of immigration trends and patterns in Canada. Supported by a number of up-to-date tables from the Canadian Department of Citizenship and Immigration, this part also highlights the persistence of a gendered model of the 'migrant and *his* dependant' which, to this day, continues to inform, more or less explicitly, immigration policies and immigration studies. In the theoretical perspectives section, the authors present a number of critical-theory approaches that have been or should be taken into account in the formulation of health care responses to immigrant women. Both sections provide the reader with enough background to gain an informed understanding of the "current realities for migrant women" that are presented in parts three, four, and five. In these three sections the authors address some of the challenges and concerns faced by various groups of immigrant women, including newcomer "girls," Sudanese immigrant and refugee women, Caribbean immigrant women and children, and black, lesbian, and bisexual women. Among the issues covered are the social determinants of depression, the relevance of spirituality in immigrant women's lives and its integration in mental health care, post-partum depression, intimate partner violence among immigrant women, and the diverse typology of support services provided by agencies in Canada. I particularly appreciated the chapter on language barriers to mental health services, its discussion of the benefits of cultural interpretation, and of the limitation of current public policies on language barriers in mental health care.

Almost all these chapters are structured following a similar order. They include an initial overview of the literature produced around each topic addressed, a reflection on the theoretical framework adopted, a core discussion of the case, and a concluding section which usually, and usefully, incorporates some suggested strategies for an improvement in the provision of health services. Indeed, the complexity of the issues covered by each of these contributions cannot possibly be exhausted in a short chapter, and the bibliographies added at the end provide another valuable resource. Also important is the last section of the book, where recommendations are made for future direction in research, education, practice, and policy, with a view to improving mental health care for immigrant women.

That the book covers so vast a range of issues is another of its strengths. The editors do not claim to have dealt with all of these in an exhaustive manner, and in fact some of the gaps are outlined at the very beginning—for example, the lack of contributions on homelessness and

substance use among immigrant women. However, the mere fact of having one single book outlining many of the issues that affect immigrant women's health allows one to have a clearer understanding of the often overlooked complexity of this particular aspect of immigration, and of the challenges to improving the health care system that deals with it.

While the editors suggest that the book is primarily aimed at being a resource for health care professionals and people in the field of mental health, it could also be successfully adopted as a resource for those operating in the fields of immigration, globalization and the post-colonial world, diversity and citizenship, and multiculturalism—and indeed not only for researchers, scholars, policy-makers and others whose work is based in and focuses on Canada. The case studies that are discussed in the book provide important reflections and lessons to be taken into account well beyond the geographical boundaries of Canada, in both 'old' and 'new' migration countries and contexts across the globe.

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S. Guruge, E. Collins, and A. Bender, "Working with immigrant women: guidelines for mental health professionals," 2008, http://www.metropolis.net/pdfs/immi_health/Immigrant%20Mental%20Health%20-%20pgs114-124.pdf. S. Guruge and E. Collins, "Emerging trends in Canadian immigration and challenges for new comers," in *Working with Immigrant Women: Issues and Strategies for Mental Health Professionals*, S. Guruge and E. Collins, Eds., pp. 3-15, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto, Canada, 2008. View at Google Scholar. I. Hyman, "Immigration and health: reviewing evidence of the healthy immigrant effect Working with Immigrant Women: Guidelines for Mental Health Professionals. Sepali Guruge, Enid Collins and Amy Bender. Canadian Issues is published by *Thèmes canadiens est publié par*. President / Présidente Minelle Mahtani, University of Toronto. According to WHO (2007) without mental health there is no health. This state of wellbeing arises from interactions between the individual and his or her environment (Khanlou, 2003). The health and mental wellbeing of migrant populations is influenced by complex and interrelated factors.