

Mental Health of Central American Migrants while in-transit through Mexico

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Research Question: This study aims to explore the mental health status and needs of migrants in-route through Mexico as well as investigate risk and protective factors that affect their mental health

BACKGROUND

Over the past two decades there has been an exodus of migrants from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras fleeing violence and poverty and migrating to the United States in search for a better life (1). On their journey, these migrants cross through Mexico often to face physical and sexual violence, discrimination, shelter and food insecurity (2). These traumatic experiences negatively impact migrants' mental health which can lead to anxiety, depression, PTSD, and substance abuse. Most of these migrants lack health insurance and are poor and thus they face barriers in accessing to mental health services in Mexico. This study aims to explore the mental health status and needs of migrants in-route through Mexico as well as investigate risk and protective factors that affect their mental health.

OBJECTIVES

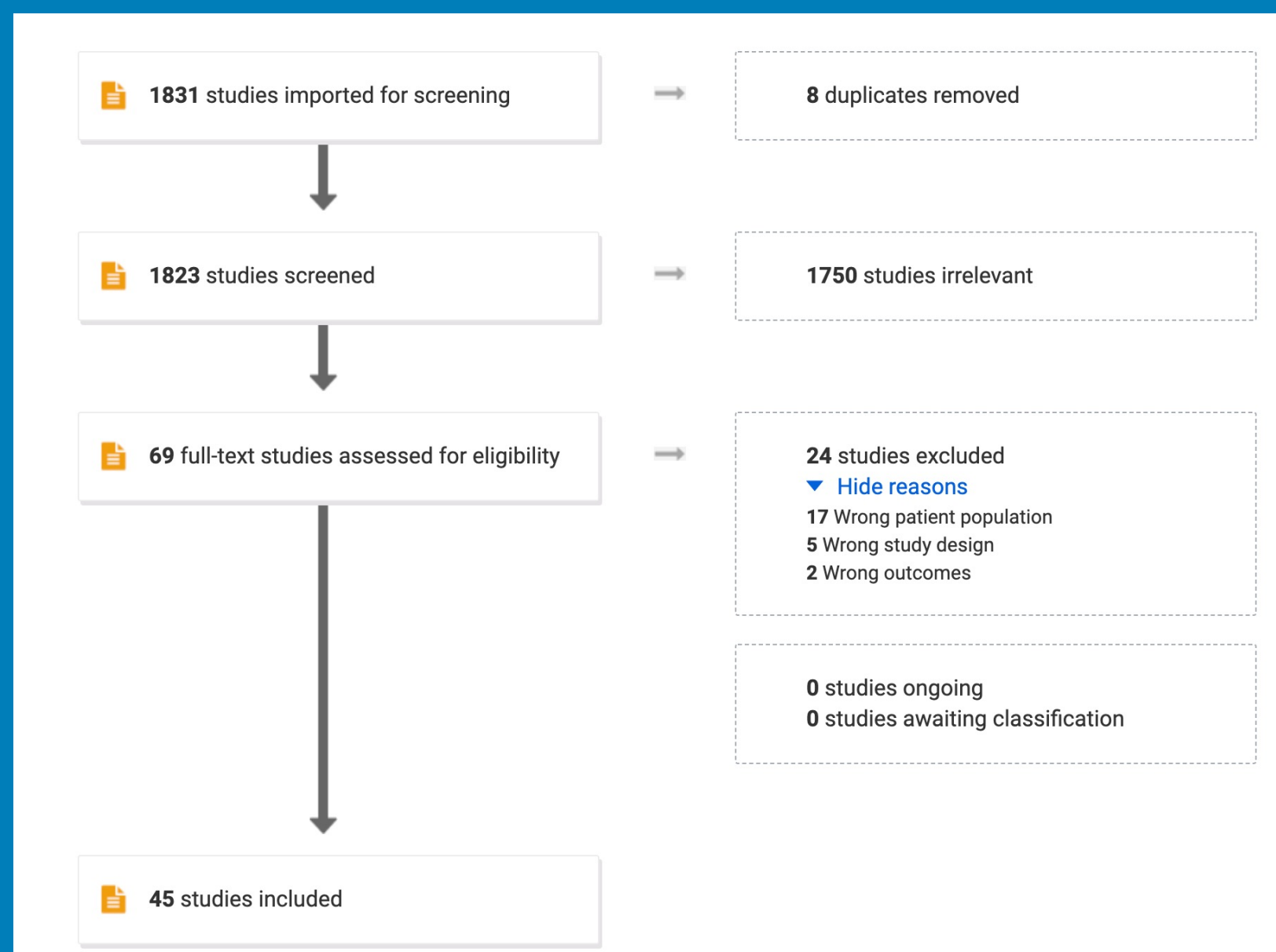
- To identify gaps in the literature regarding the mental health status and needs of migrants in-route through Mexico as well as investigate risk and protective factors that affect their mental health.
- Find resilience scales validated and reliable in Spanish for a quantitative survey that will be administered to 350 Central American migrants in Mexican shelters in order to identify mental health protective factors.
- Supplement a CONACyT/Columbia funded study – “Developing a methodology for estimating the Central American migrant population in Mexico and assessing migrants’ experiences and health and mental health status ” that aims to estimate the Central American migrant population in Mexico and evaluate their mental health needs

SEARCH STRATEGIES AND PRISMA TABLE

Search Strategies

3 categories: (population) + (geography) + (disease)

- Search Pubmed:
((migra* OR in-transit OR refugees OR asylum OR migrants[Mesh] OR immigrants[Mesh]) AND ("central america" OR "central american" OR guatemala OR honduras OR el salvador OR mexico)) AND ("mental health" OR stress OR psych* OR trauma OR mental illness[Mesh] OR violence[Mesh])
- Search PsycInfo:
("mental health" OR stress OR psych* OR trauma OR "posttraumatic stress disorder" OR DE "Mental Disorders" OR DE "Affective Disorders" OR DE "Anxiety Disorders" OR DE "Autism Spectrum Disorders" OR DE "Bipolar Disorder" OR DE "Borderline States" OR DE "Chronic Mental Illness" OR DE "Dissociative Disorders" OR DE "Eating Disorders" OR DE "Gender Dysphoria" OR DE "Mental Disorders due to General Medical Conditions" OR DE "Neurocognitive Disorders" OR DE "Neurodevelopmental Disorders" OR DE "Neurosis" OR DE "Paraphilias" OR DE "Personality Disorders" OR DE "Psychosis" OR DE "Serious Mental Illness" OR DE "Sleep Wake Disorders" OR DE "Somatoform Disorders" OR DE "Stress and Trauma Related Disorders" OR DE "Substance Related and Addictive Disorders" OR DE "Thought Disturbances" OR DE "Mental Status" OR DE "Mental Health Screening" OR DE "Trauma Screening") AND (migra* OR in-transit OR refugees OR asylum OR immigrants OR (DE "Immigration") OR (DE "Migrant Workers")) OR (DE "Refugees") AND "central america" OR "central american" OR guatemala OR honduras OR el salvador OR mexico
- Search SciELO:
(salud mental OR enfermedad mental OR estrés OR psic* OR depresión OR tept OR ansiedad OR trauma OR "trastorno de estrés postraumático") AND ("centro america" OR "centroamericano*" OR guatemala OR honduras OR el salvador OR mexico) AND (migra* OR en-transito OR refugiad* OR asilo OR inmigrante*)



METHODS & RESULTS

Resilience Scale - The literature was searched for the resilience scales with the best scoring psychometric properties (Windle et al., 2011). The Connor Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 10) was chosen to be included into the study’s quantitative survey. This scale is reliable and validated in Spanish.

Scoping Review – After search strategies were developed, 1831 abstracts were imported into Covidence from PubMed, SciELO, and PsycInfo and screened for relevance. From this collection, 62 full texts were assessed, and 49 articles were included into our scoping review which currently is still in progress. Next steps - thematic analysis of articles identified.

DISCUSSION

There are unprecedented numbers of Central American migrants in temporary shelters in Mexico awaiting American asylum court hearings. It is crucial for the Mexican government to know the mental health status and needs of these migrants to provide proper mental health resources. The resilience scale identified will complement a large survey that will be administered to 350 Central American migrants to identify protective factors. Once complete, the information from the scoping review will identify gaps in the literature regarding the mental health status and needs of migrants in-route through Mexico.

REFERENCES

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- Leyva-Flores, R., Infante, C., Gutierrez, J. P., Quintino-Perez, F., Gómez-Saldivar, M., & Torres-Robles, C. (2019). Migrants in transit through Mexico to the US: Experiences with violence and related factors, 2009-2015. *PloS one*, 14(8), e0220775. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0220775>