

Poor neighbourhood conditions and low belongingness to community is associated with poor mental health among immigrants

Tasneem Khan, Martin Cooke. "Poor neighbourhood conditions and low belongingness to community is associated with poor mental health among immigrants." *CRDCN research-policy snapshots*. Volume 3 Issue 2 July 2024

Context

Limited research exists about how neighbourhood or household characteristics might be related to mental health among immigrants in Canada. This study examined immigrants' exposure to potentially unfavourable aspects of their households and neighbourhoods and how these factors were associated with mental health.

Immigrants living in neighborhoods with higher situational vulnerability (e.g., higher proportions of people without high school diploma, more dwellings in need of repairs) were more likely to have poor self-rated mental health. Immigrants with a weak sense of belonging to their communities had four times higher odds of poor self-rated mental health than those with a stronger sense of belonging.

Key finding(s) from the research

This research finds that among immigrants in Canada, a weaker sense of belonging to local community is a strong predictor of poor mental health, whereas a strong sense of belonging to local community is protective of mental health.

Population(s) studied: Canadian-born and immigrants aged 18 and older

Research dataset(s) used: Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) 2015/16 linked to the Canadian Index of Multiple Deprivation (CIMD)

Policy implications for this research

The finding that a sense of belonging to the local community has strong protective benefits for the mental health of immigrants suggests that programs and social policies that foster the social integration of immigrants at the neighborhood and community level might be as important as economic integration in promoting well-being among immigrants.

Policy area(s) this research can inform: Environment; Health; Immigration and ethnocultural diversity; Population and demography

Read the full article

Khan, T., & Cooke, M. (2024). Household, neighborhood, and community contexts and the mental health of immigrants in Canada. In Hillman F. (Eds.), *Interdisciplinary migration research with a focus on new technologies and multiple crises: relating birds of passage to social policies* (pp.172–199). Technische Universität Berlin. <https://api-depositonce.tu-berlin.de/server/api/core/bitstreams/cd76cd38-f015-4bd2-b9b5-6c092856f367/content>.