

Global Mental Health Research Group meeting

Activities in the wider world in the
area of migration

Introduction

- Intercultural Research conference
- Some recent activities
 - Immigration policy in Ghana
 - The SRCDD-EADP meeting in Hydra
- Refugees and mental health

Intercultural relations research conference (IAIR-2015)

- Conference theme: Capitalizing on the potential of cultural diversity
 - Background to the conference
- Presidential lecture
- 2 invited keynote presentations
- 3 award winning presentations
 - Life time achievement
 - Early career award
 - Best dissertation

IAIR-2015: Sessions

- 4 invited symposia
- 8 symposia
- 80 individual papers
- 50 posters

- Fellows' day workshop











Recent activities: Immigration policy in Ghana



Psychological aspects of immigration

- Who migrates and the motives
- The psychological consequences
- Psychological acculturation
 - What changes
 - How changes take place
 - How well do people adapt to the changes
- Children and families
 - The acculturation gap

SRCD-EADP-EARA Hydra meeting

- **Explaining Positive Adaptation of Immigrant Youth across Cultures**
- Funded: Society for Research in Child Development
 - *International Affairs Committee &*
 - *Racial and Ethnic Issues Committee*
- in collaboration with
- *European Association of Developmental Psychology &*
- *European Association for Research on Adolescence*

MISSION STATEMENT
POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF IMMIGRANT YOUTH: WHY BOTHER?

**Formulated in Hydra, Greece,
September 19th, 2015
at the Experts' Meeting on Immigrant Youth Adaptation and Well-being**

The meeting was funded by and organized on behalf of the
Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)
(International Affairs & Racial and Ethnic Issues Committees)
in collaboration with the
European Association for Developmental Psychology (EADP)
and the
European Association for Research on Adolescence (EARA)

Mission statement working group (presented in alphabetical order):

Positive Development of Immigrant Youth: Why Bother?

It is in the best interest of Europe and other receiving countries to have successful adaptation of their immigrant populations. The current refugee influx renders this a particularly timely and pressing issue. However, the successful adaptation of immigrants is also all the more important in light of increasing life expectancies and decreasing birth rates in receiving societies. As a result, nonimmigrant senior citizens'

- retirement pensions partly depend on the economic contribution of immigrants. In this context, immigrants are expected to become in the next decades an important force in the economies of receiving societies and also to contribute to the care and support of the aging nonimmigrant, as well as immigrant, populations (Hernandez, 2012). International research suggests that well-informed policies and practices are necessary for the successful incorporation of immigrants.

This evidence shows

- Children's positive adaptations and well being provide the foundation for healthy and productive adult lives (Motti-Stefanidi, Berry, Chrysochoou, Sam, & Phinney, 2012; UNICEF, 2013). Investing in childcare and education, prevention, and intervention comes with multiple economic and social returns, including more labor participation and reduction of crime (Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Lundberg & Wuermli, 2012).



This evidence shows

- Providing immigrant families with economic opportunities and reducing barriers to obtain adequate employment equip parents to raise well-adjusted and productive citizens (ref.) It has been shown that immigrants in many countries pay more in taxes over their life course than they receive from the social benefits (Dustmann & Frattini, 2013).

The evidence shows that...

- However, countries differ in their policies toward immigrants (Helbling, 2013; Huddleston, Niessen, Chaoimh, & White, 2011). These are important for the successful adaptation of immigrant youth (Filindra, Blanding, & Garcia Coll, 2011). Immigrant youth do better in countries with more integration oriented policies; assimilation policies can be counter-productive (Yağmur & Van de Vijver, 2012).

The evidence shows that...

- Immigrant youth adopting the host cultures and languages while maintaining the heritage culture and language, do better and contribute more to society (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2013).

The evidence shows that...

- Discrimination, racism and exclusion have deleterious effects for positive youth development (Marks, Ejesi, McCullough, & Garcia Coll, 2015) and social cohesion, and are risk factors for radicalization (Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014; ref.). In contrast, feelings of belonging and being accepted by the receiving society, strengthen youths' ties to the host society (Amina's ref.; Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2006; Motti-Stefanidi, Pavlopoulos, Obradović, & Masten, 2008).

We therefore recommend that policies and practices in receiving countries concerning immigrants should:

- **Be informed** by research and interventions that have been shown to have beneficial results.
- Promote **non-segregated welcoming environments** and opportunities for intercultural communication and collaboration at all ages.
- Provide **economic opportunities** to ensure that immigrant families do well and contribute to the country.

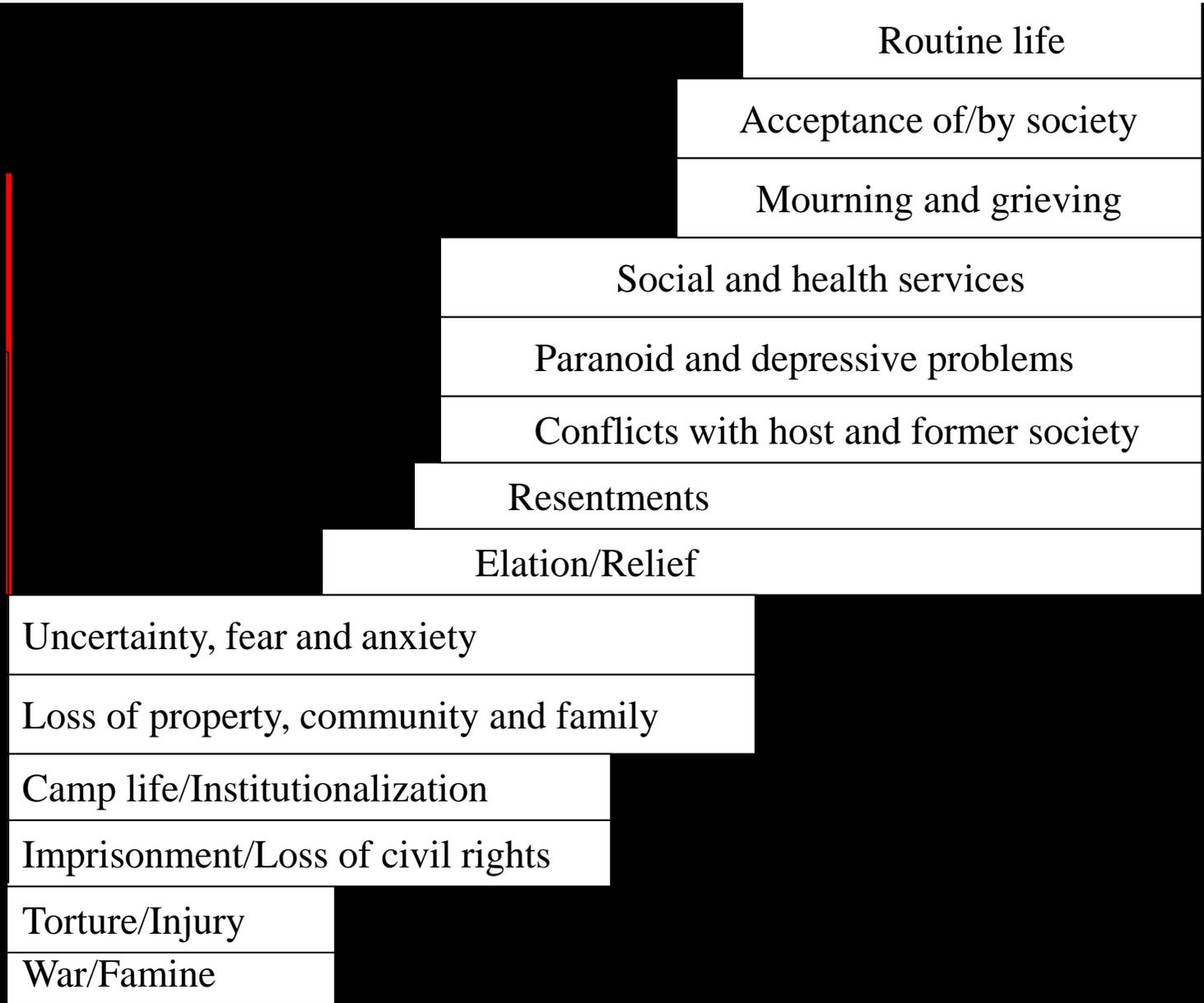
We therefore recommend that policies and practices in receiving countries concerning immigrants should:

- Provide **early childcare and education, prevention, and intervention** to ensure that immigrant youth have the basis for successful integration.
- **Create public campaigns** that show the contribution of immigrants to the host countries as well as respect to the diversity and needs of various ethnic groups.
- **Incorporate these considerations** as part of choosing **where** to resettle refugees in addition to the availability of spaces.

Refugee issue

- Refugees should not be seen as simply a group of people fleeing from persecution and difficulties
- A phase or a period with three clear phases
 - Pre-departure; Flight; settlement/adaptation and re-partriation
- Each phase has its own challenges and difficulties

Events and experiences



Pre-departure Flight First Asylum Claimant Settlement Adaptation Repatriation



Pre-flight

- A series of traumatic events, including ethnic, racial, political and religious conflicts which can result in serious psychological and social problems

Pre-flight

- For the individual this can include
 - persecution, imprisonment, deliberate ,torture, rape, and war
 - result in loss of income, lack of food, limit access to social and health services, epidemic
- These events together may result in Post traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Flight

- Flight from one's home and known social surroundings can be a serious emotion and cognitive uprooting
- A refugee's flight \Rightarrow a kind of unfinished business, when one has to depart in haste and secretly
- the traumatic experiences are still close by, the danger of being arrested, deprivation, hunger, injuries etc

First asylum

- Relief and excitement
- camp environment, incarceration and possible deportation
- registration, and possible refugee status

First asylum

- extensive and long lasting interrogation, cross-examination, etc + the danger of being disqualified
- bitterness, recurring of angst, and uncertainties
- delayed psychological arrival
- dependence and learned helplessness

Claimant + Settlement

- Refugee status
 - granted asylum with attendant possibility for settlement
 - long waiting period with only a temporary residence permit

Settlement

- civil and social rights granted
- the host country's responsibility
- Resettlement policies
- After the Door has been opened
 - Unemployment
 - separation from family
 - dispersal policy

Adaptation

- The majority of the people adapted well
- Few people have psychological problems
- when do adaptation difficulties come?
- The danger of “learned helplessness”

Repatriation

- New uprooting
- breaking up recently established social bonds
- bitterness towards ones “perpetrators” and persecutors

Repatriation

- reconciliation problems, patriotism
- return “culture shock”
- Reminiscence of past trauma (PTSD)
- Mourning and grieving the past

- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION**

When cultures meet: adaptation

- Assimilation, acculturation and interculturalisation
- Interculturalisation: the set of processes by which individuals and groups interact when they identify themselves as culturally distinct (Clanet, 1990).
- Assimilation and acculturation: two different traditions

Terms and concepts

- Acculturation
- Assimilation
- Integration
- Multiculturalism