



Prairie Centre Regional Workshop

Workshop Presentation Abstract

The Health of Alberta Immigrant Women at Midlife

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PURPOSE: To describe health as experienced by midlife Alberta women and to identify patterns and variations in these descriptions according to status characteristics.

DESIGN: A qualitative design using a phenomenological approach was used to gain an understanding of immigrant women's experiences of health. Data were gathered using semi-structured interviews. Interviews were transcribed. Content analysis was used to explore themes and the connections between them.

RESULTS: 42 women from Edmonton and Calgary participated in the study. Most were currently or previously married, had children, were in working and lower middle-class SES in Alberta, and 55% were employed. Their homelands were diverse and included all continents except Australia. Women defined health holistically, but spoke mostly of their physical health. Emergent themes include isolation, loneliness, abuse and the importance of spirituality and religion as well as social support as health resources. Women's experiences were strongly influenced by cultural, religious and SES differences. Health was generally seen in relation to family health, and transition often formed a general context for their lives.

DISCUSSION: Further analysis is needed to explore these emergent themes, and the effects they have on the health of Alberta immigrant women at midlife.