**Challenges in recruiting vulnerable populations as source of knowledge in qualitative research: The case of immigrants caring for a family member with mental illness**

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The topic of the current lecture is the challenges in recruiting research participants as potential source of knowledge for investigating vulnerability populations in qualitative research. The research case that will be presented explored immigrants who caring for a family member with a severe mental illness - "a hard-to-reach group" due to intersectionality of immigrant status, ethno-cultural otherness/background, and mental health stigma. Therefore, in the current study which focused specifically on immigrant caregivers from the former Soviet Union (FSU) in Israel, an attempt was made to recruit the participants in two different ways: purposive and snowball samplings techniques. Despite this strategy many difficulties were discovered in recruitment process and data collection was delayed to a considerable extent. However, I would like to argue that a critical analysis of difficulties/challenges during the recruitment process has open a window for interactional and political knowledge about the study population. This kind of knowledge will be presented through examples with FSU caregivers who agreed to participate in the study and those who did not; and from a reflexive view of the researcher's position and his interaction with the participants. The knowledge elicited in the recruitment process could be discussed as an independent/sole data and as possible source of triangulation with the knowledge that was found in the research interviews.

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