**Migration and Schizophrenia: Current situation in Western World and in Israel**

**הגירה וסכיזופרניה: תמונת מצב בעולם המערבי ובישראל**

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Abstract

Epidemiological studies examining an association between migration and schizophrenia have important contribution for identifying the socio-environmental factors that involved in the outbreak of the disorder. The aim of this article is to present a review of theoretical and empirical literature on this subject and to discuss it comparing the findings in the Western countries and in Israel. The studies in Western Europe have shown that first and second generation immigrants were two to three times more at risk for schizophrenia and other non-affective psychoses than were native-born individuals. The risk was even higher among immigrants from developing countries with physical and cultural visible difference from the native-born population. The findings in non-European Western countries were less conclusive/consistent, and some studies showed a decreased incidence of schizophrenia among some migrants groups. Studies conducted in Israel found that the first-generation immigrants have higher risk of developing schizophrenia, but this risk decreased or did not exist in second-generation immigrants. Of all possible theoretical explanations, the social defeat/exclusion hypothesis can explain better the association between migration and schizophrenia among genetically vulnerable immigrants. Healthcare workers, including family physicians, psychiatrists, and social workers, should be aware of the consequences/implications of social adversities after migration for the increased risk of schizophrenia, especially among disadvantaged minority groups in Israel such as Ethiopian immigrants. Increasing social support and improving access to health services for immigrants and ethnic minorities are essential/necessary steps to reduce/minimize this phenomenon/pattern.

**Keyword:** immigration, schizophrenia, non-affective psychoses, social exclusion