SOCIAL SUPPORT AS A PROTECTIVE FACTOR FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN ROMANIAN IMMIGRANTS: EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS OF THE DUKE-UNC

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Introduction: Social support is an important variable involved in the process of health/disease. In the particular case of immigrants, social support is also related to the success of their life project and the integration in the society that received them.

Objective: Although Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Questionnaire is one of the most used with immigrants (e.g. National Health Survey), it has never been adapted to this population. In this research, Duke-UNC was adapted to Romanian immigrants living in Spain, in order to analyze the relationship between social support and mental health. Aim: Verify the factorial structure and the psychometric properties and analyze the relationship between social support and mental health. Method: We administered Duke-UNC and GHQ-12 to a sample of Romanian immigrants (N = 116, mean age = 33.26; SD = 11.04), and conducted an exploratory factor analysis. Results: In the case of Duke-UNC, the results showed a structure of one factor that accounts for 51.46% of the variance. Cronbach's alpha value was .90. A significant negative correlation was found between the social support and the mental health (r = -0.34, p < .000). This shows that people who have more social support also enjoy better health state.

Conclusion: This study demonstrates that Duke-UNC is a practical instrument that can be used to assess Romanian immigrants'social support. This variable has to be taken into account when therapeutic interventions and health programs are created for immigrants because of its relationship with mental health.