
The Syrian Adolescent Refugee in Jordan



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Adolescents are vulnerable to severe psychological, emotional, and physical impacts due to war and refugee status. In 2018, I conducted a survey of 205 Syrian refugee youth (104 females and 101 males) in a refugee camp in Jordan. The purpose of the study was to investigate their psychological functioning, self-esteem, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as their social and family functioning. The following instruments were used: the Brief Symptoms Inventory (BSI); Rosenberg Self-Esteem (SE), the McMaster Family Device (FAD); the PTSD Scale; and Social Functioning. In contrast to previous studies on political violence in the Arab world, female respondents had lower levels of psychological symptoms and PTSD and higher levels of social functioning. Three culturally situated factors are explored: boys' higher prevalence outside of the home; the lower protective factor of familial socioeconomic status; and the protective factor of educational attainment. The conclusion calls for interventions and policies to consider these gendered differences, and for further research to assess these interventions.