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**The recovery experiences of Refugees from Middle Eastern backgrounds with
concussions.**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

In

Psychology

at Massey University, Albany,

New Zealand.

Ruba Zaytoun

2016

Abstract

With the growing number of Middle Eastern refugees in the world, there is a need for more culturally and refugee specific research to examine the ongoing and idiosyncratic nature of the stress and trauma refugees' experience. As a result of the arduous journeys refugees undergo, they become susceptible to a number of mental and physical illnesses, including Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) such as concussions. Little research so far has been dedicated to understanding Middle Eastern refugees' experiences of TBI and how understandings of this injury can impact on their journeys to recovery. In this small Australian, community-based, qualitative study six individuals from Middle Eastern refugee backgrounds, who have experienced a concussion in the past five years were interviewed. Participants included two females and four males, aged from mid 20s to early 60s. The interviews focused on participants' conceptualisation of concussions and their experience of recovery. Interview data was investigated through the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) lens. Six main themes emerged from interview data, these related to: *Coping, consequences of injury, professional relationships, conception of brain and brain injuries, refugee related experiences, and experiences of concussion*. All participants stressed the importance of family as a source of support in coping with consequences of injury. Faith in a higher power was highlighted as a core value in Arabic Middle Eastern cultures, common in most interviewee accounts. One source of distress in some participants was the worry that others will perceive them as having mental illness as a consequence of their concussion. Future research is encouraged to examine the stigma underlying mental illness in the Middle East, and the obstacles preventing people with similar backgrounds from seeking help.

Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people who made this project possible. First, I offer my heartfelt thanks to my supervisor, Dr Clifford van Ommen, whose support, feedback and guidance throughout this project were invaluable. Thank you for the generosity of your time, and for your encouragement to continuously improve throughout this project.

Second, my sincerest gratitude goes to the six participants who agreed to take part of this project. Thank you for your time, thank you for your bravery in sharing these painful experiences and memories with me. Without you this project would not have been possible. Your courage and generosity are truly inspirational, I hope that you continue to grow and prosper in Australia, surrounded by your loved ones.

Third, I would like to thank all the people from the St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church, who encouraged and guided me throughout the participant recruitment process. In particular I would like to thank Selve Haddad who took valuable time out of her busy schedule to support my research and was instrumental in gaining permission to recruit participants.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family and friends, Mom, Dad, Julia, and Eva whose patience and unwavering support motivated me to aim higher and push through any obstacles. Your belief in me got me to where I am today, thank you for putting up with all my late night coffee runs. Thank you for listening, when I needed someone to unload all the information I had floating in my head. Thank you for everything!

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