

INCIDENCE OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN THE RURAL SOUTHERN ALBERTA IMMIGRANT POPULATION WITH A FOCUS ON BROOKS AND COUNTY OF NEWELL

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Collaboration among: Global Village, Dr. Kadima, and Medicine Hat College

GETTING STARTED – THE COLLABORATION

Global
Village

- Dr. Kadima arrives at the South Shore Clinic in Brooks
 - Noted seemingly high number of immigrant individuals potentially with PTSD
- Ahmed Kassem from Global Village and Dr. Kadima approached the college for interest in collaborative research
- Dr. Nicole Burnett, Donna Wood and Dr. Elizabeth Pennefather-O'Brien from Medicine Hat College Main Campus worked with Dr. Kadima and Ahmed Kassem on a proposal for research

THE STUDY

This research project focused on the incidence of (PTSD) in the rural immigrant population in Brooks and Newell County. The objectives included:

1. Describing the diversity of the immigrant population in rural southern Alberta
2. Assessing the prevalence, and severity, of PTSD among the immigrants/refugees in rural southern Alberta
3. Identifying the types of stressful experiences that may have contributed to the experience of PTSD by those immigrants/refugees

MEASURES

Demographics

- Gender, age, marital status
- Language
- Immigration Status
- Refugee Status

MEASURES

I. PTSD Checklist (PCL-5)

- Measures presence of PTSD symptoms outlined in the DSM-5
- 20 questions; rated on 4 point Likert scale, increasing in severity
- A score of 33+ indicates presence of PTSD symptoms (max score is 60)

Example Questions:

In the past month, how much were you bothered by:	Not at all (0)	A little bit (1)	Moderately (2)	Quite a bit (3)	Extremely (4)
Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?					
Feeling upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?					

MEASURES

2. Life Events Checklist (LEC-5)

- Given alongside the PCL-5
- Assesses frequency of exposure to traumatic events
- E.g., natural disaster, assault, accidents, combat, etc.

Example Questions:

Event:	Happened to me	Witnessed it	Learned about it	Part of my job	Doesn't apply
Physical Assault (e.g., being attacked, hit, slapped, kicked, beaten up)					
Captivity (e.g., being kidnapped, abducted, held hostage, prisoner of war)					

MEASURES

3. Culture Shock Questionnaire

- Assess issues frequently experienced when integrating into a new culture
- 7 questions; rated in severity from 0-2points
- Rating of 7+ indicates presence of culture shock (Max Score 14)

Example Questions:

Since you have moved to the Brooks regions	Most of the Time (2)	Occasionally (1)	Not at all (0)
Do you feel generally accepted by the local people?			
Feeling upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?			

PROCEDURE

- Proposal reviewed and approved by Medicine Hat College's Research Ethics Board in September 2017
- Received internal research grant of \$10,000.00 from Medicine Hat College
- Recruitment was through posters and word of mouth
- Data collected via face-to-face interviews in Brooks community spaces
 - Translators provided
 - Counsellors available on site

RESULTS: DEMOGRAPHICS

- $N = 189$ (110 males, 59 females); Refugees, $n = 113$
 - Data collected from 192 participants
 - 3 cases removed due to missing data
- PTSD, $n = 120$ cases
 - average PTSD score $M = 44.20$, $SD = 29.82$
- Culture Shock, $n = 100$
 - Average score $M = 7.04$, $SD = 3.04$

RESULTS: DEMOGRAPHICS

- 25 countries represented
 - PTSD incidence highest among those from:
 - Sudan
 - South Sudan
 - Somalia
 - Syria
 - Kenya
 - Ethiopia
 - Nigeria

RESULTS: PTSD

PTSD was present in significantly more men than women

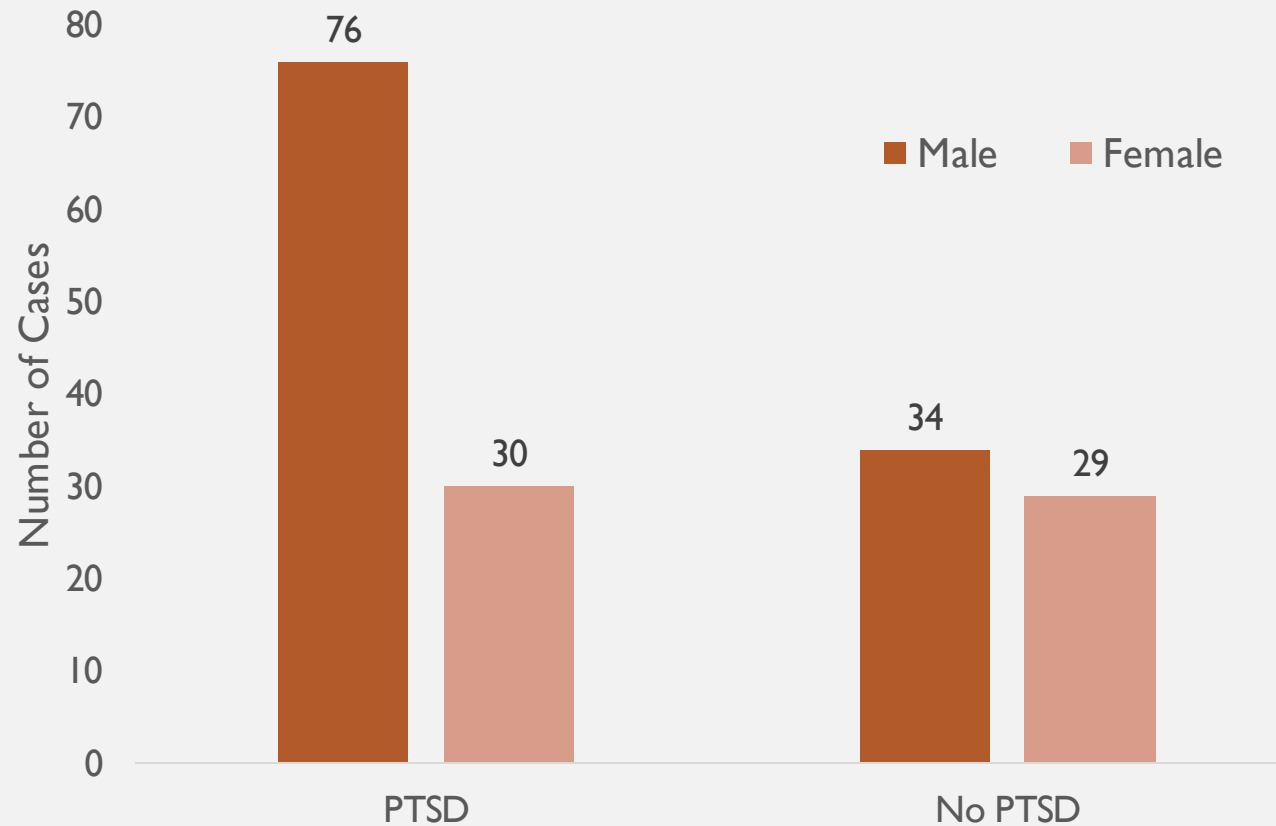


Figure 1: PTSD rates by gender. Presence of PTSD assessed by the PCL-5 Checklist

RESULTS: PTSD

PTSD was present in more Refugees vs. non-Refugees

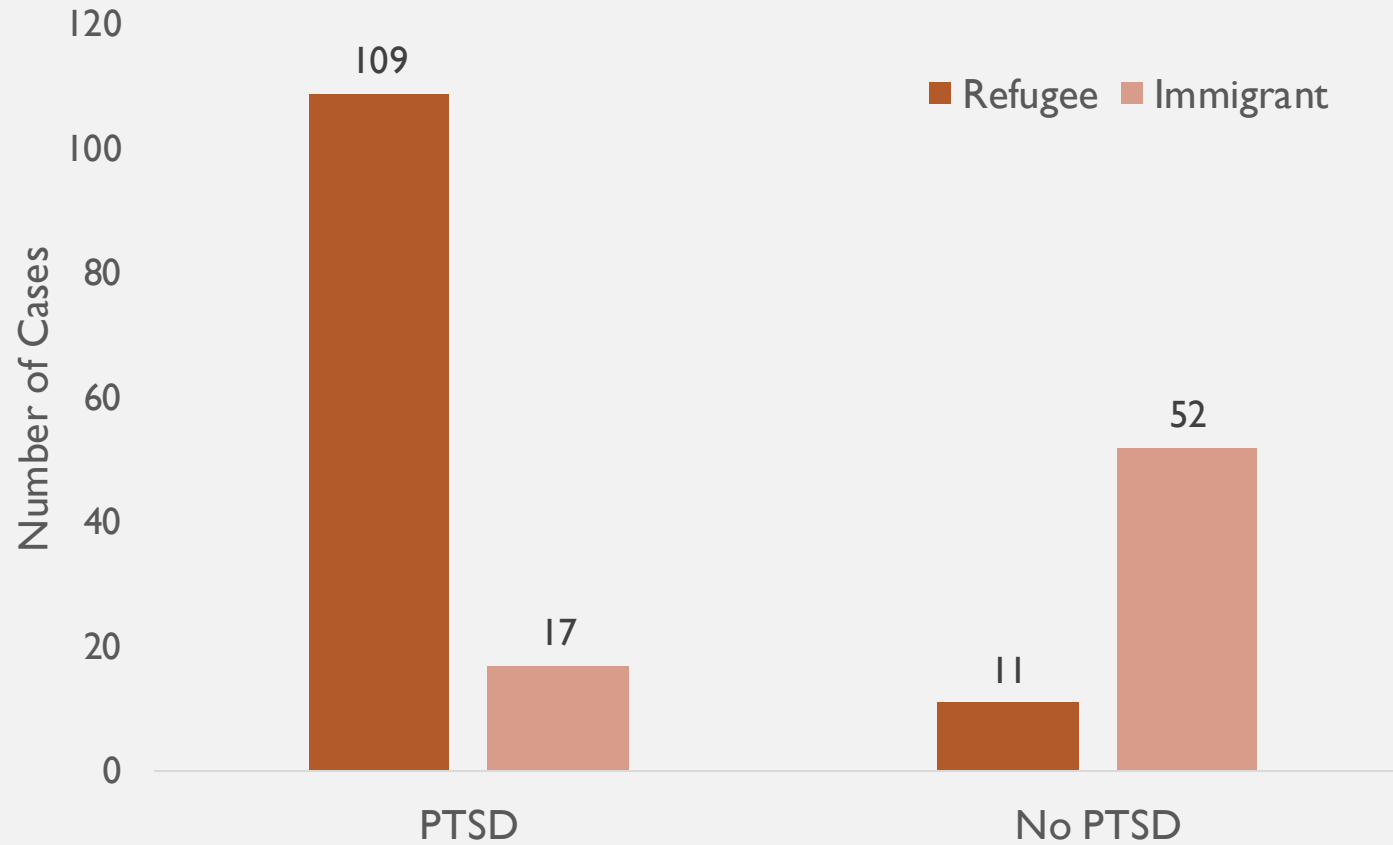


Figure 2: PTSD rates by Refugee Status. Presence of PTSD assessed by the PCL-5 Checklist

RESULTS: CULTURE SHOCK

Presence of Culture Shock is greater in those with PTSD

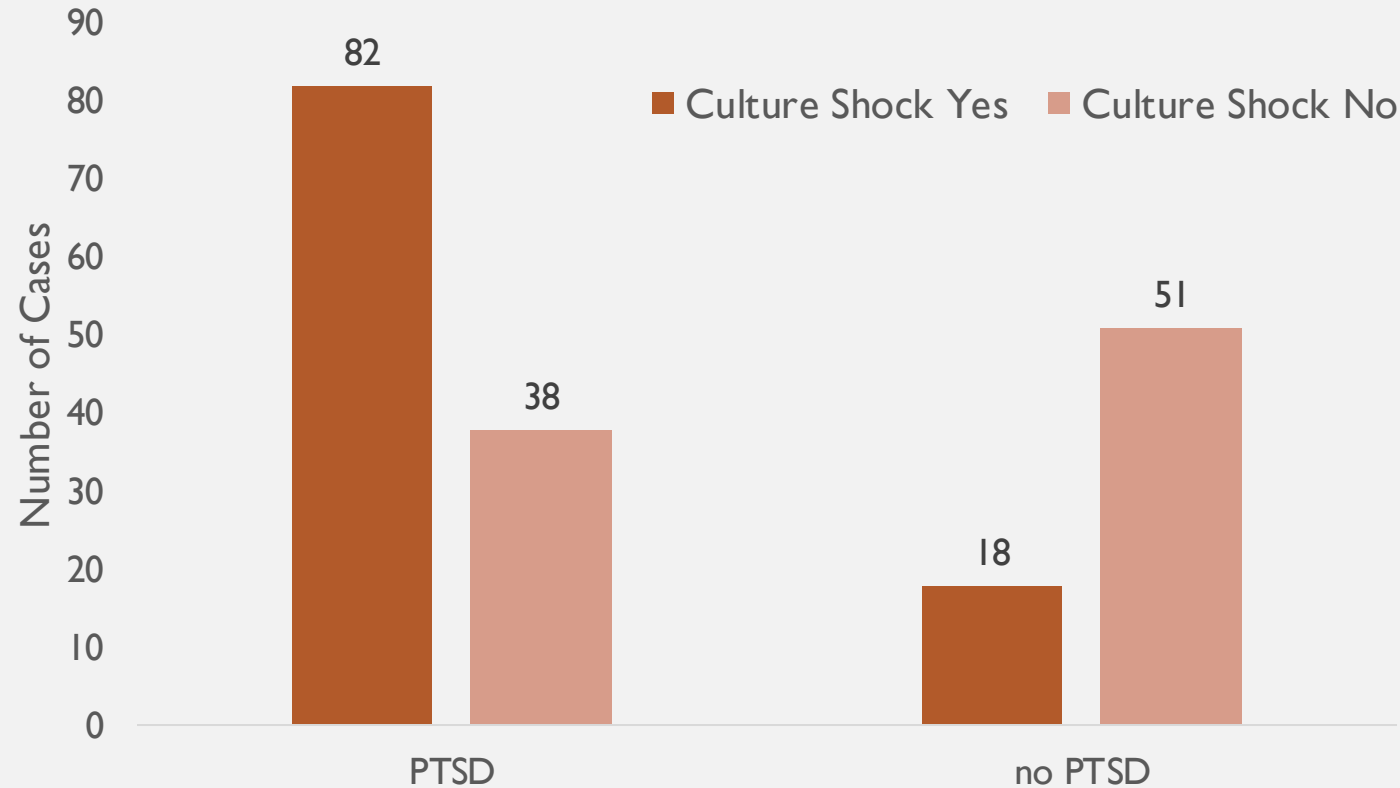


Figure 3: Total number of cases of Culture Shock by PTSD cases

RESULTS: CULTURE SHOCK

The presence of Culture Shock was greater among Refugees

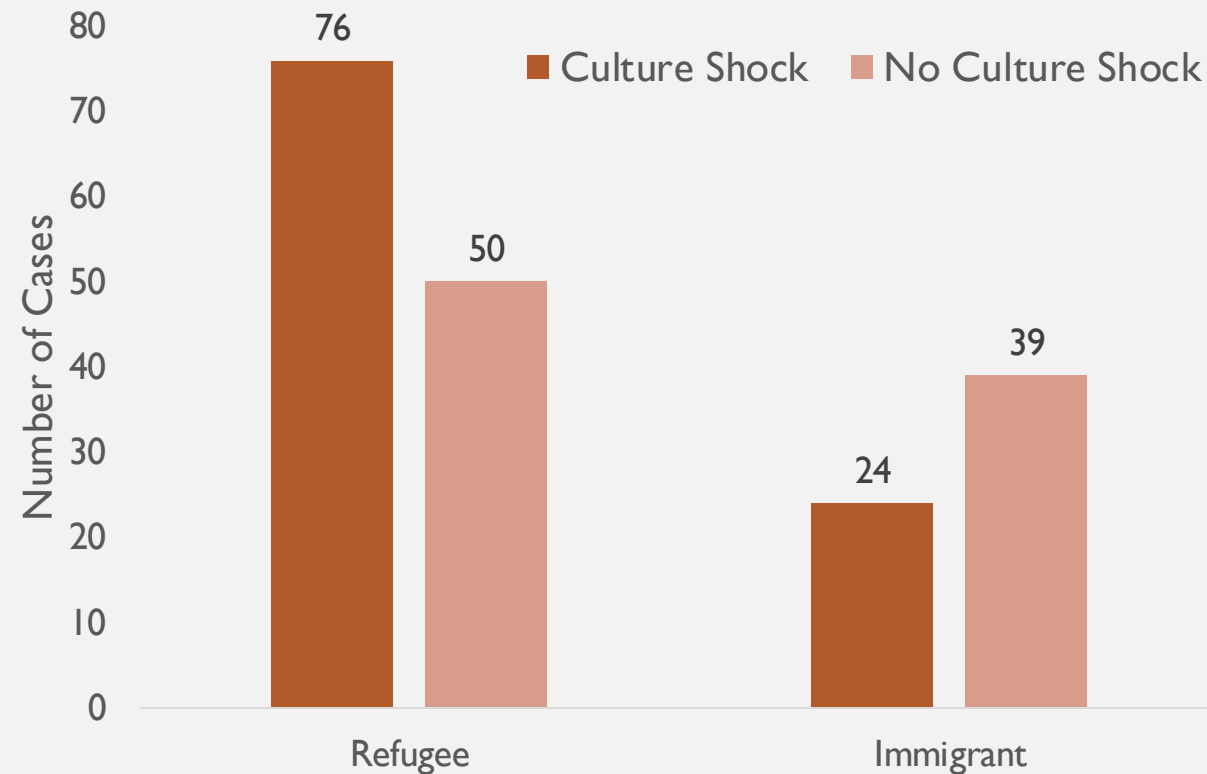


Figure 4: Incidence of Culture shock by Refugee Status

RESULTS: EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA

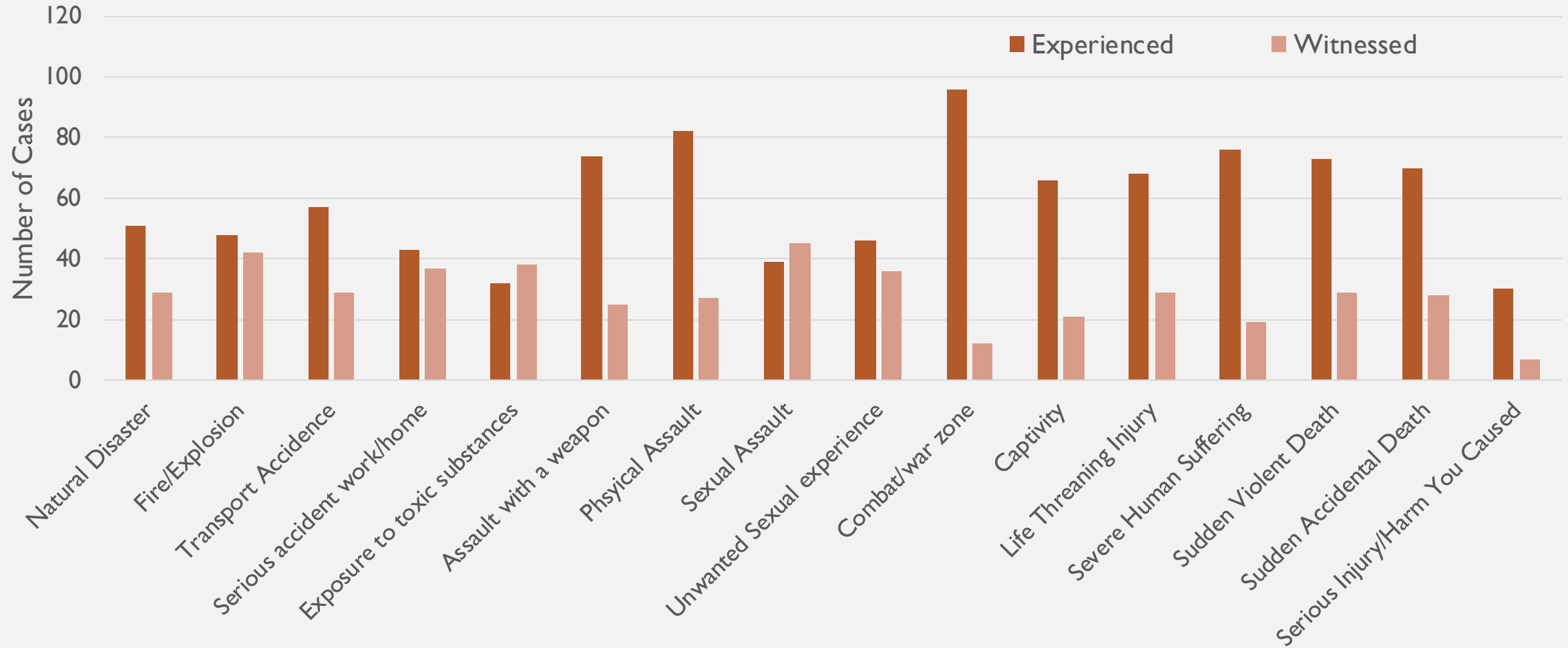
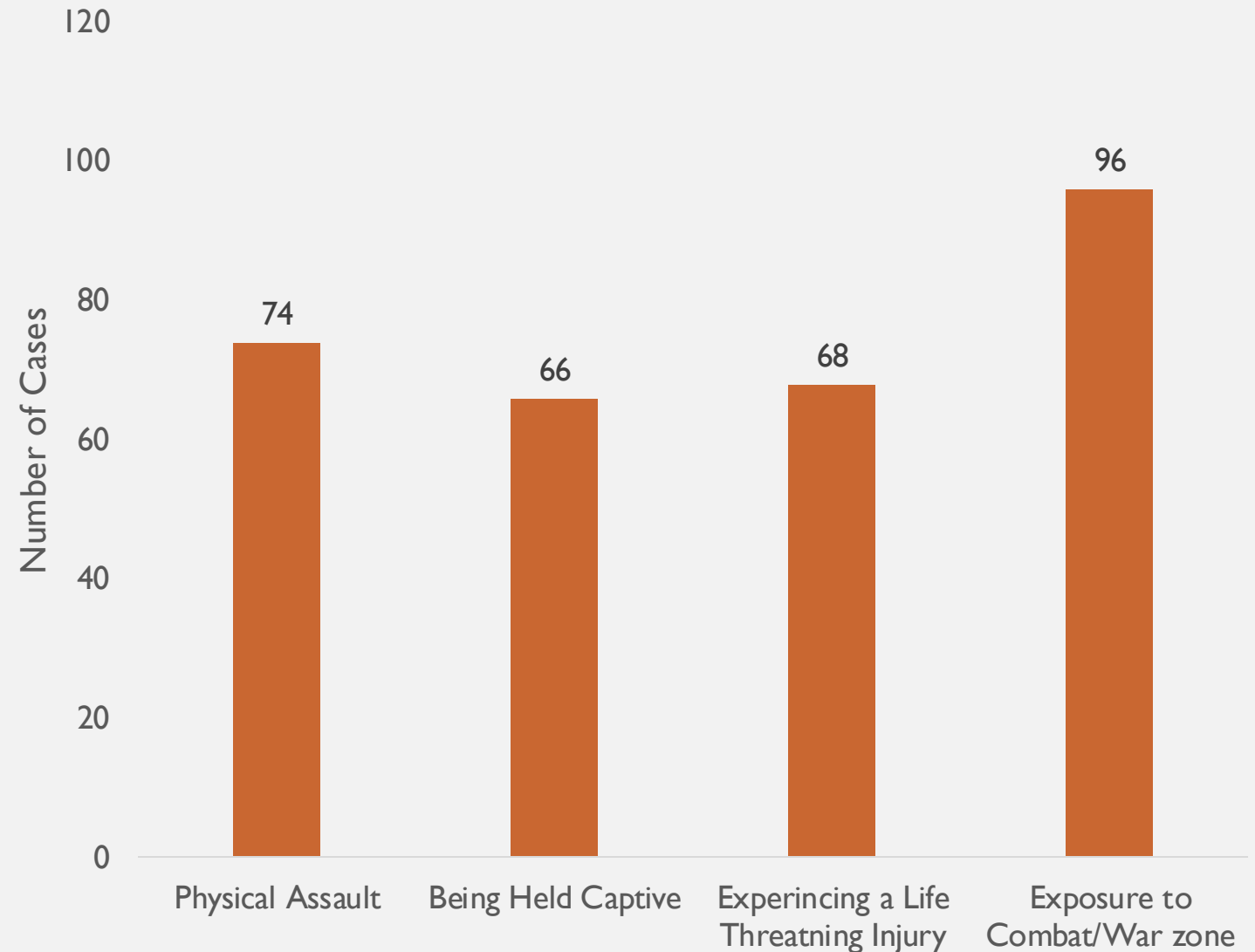


Figure 5: Incidence of Directly Experiencing, or, Witnessing a Traumatic Event as measured by the LEC-5 Checklist

RESULTS: EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA

- PTSD was significantly predicted by *experiencing* the following traumatic events:
 1. Physical assault
 2. Being held captive
 3. Life threatening injury
 4. Combat/war zone



CONCLUSIONS

- 63% of sample collected display PTSD symptoms
- 60% of sample collected are Refugees
- 53% of sample collected display symptoms of Culture Shock

37% of the City of Brooks population represents a visible minority

WHAT NEXT?

- Newcomers' Wellness Centre for immigrants
- Education both from local and immigrant population
 - College involvement
- Need to connect with people and cultures to destigmatize accessing mental health wellness
 - Newcomer Health Facilitator

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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