

Perinatal Outcomes Among Venezuelan Newcomers, Immigrants, and Refugees In and towards the U.S. since the 2014 Exodus: A Scoping Review

Abstract

Purpose: This literature review examines perinatal outcomes among Venezuelan immigrants, newcomers, and refugees in and towards the U.S. since the beginning of the Venezuelan exodus in 2014. The review aims to delineate the public health challenges for Venezuelan refugees and immigrants of reproductive age, particularly their obstetric outcomes. The findings aim to inform U.S. cities and healthcare systems dealing with an influx of Venezuelan immigrants to improve care and access for this vulnerable group and highlight the potential consequences of anti-immigrant policies.

Methods: Publications were reviewed from PubMed and Google Scholar, searching the terms: Perinatal outcomes, Latinx, Hispanic, immigrant, refugee, Venezuelan; since the 2014 crisis. Boolean operators were used for PubMed. Google Scholar was searched up to page 10.

Findings: The literature demonstrates a need for granularity in research on the Latin America population due to the variable experiences and outcomes among different sub-groups. The review also highlights a lack of U.S. publications specific to the recent influx of Venezuelan newcomers. In various South and Central American host countries outside of Venezuela, they experience consistent barriers to reproductive and perinatal health services. These obstacles complicate family planning and obstetric outcomes. Common issues are late prenatal care, minimal or no prenatal visits, increased C-sections, and low birth weights. Anti-immigration policies increased pre-term births for all Latinx populations after the 2016 election. This pattern warrants attention due to the current administration's anti-immigrant policies, such as eliminating TPS.

Originality/value: This review synthesizes the reproductive health and perinatal challenges of Venezuelan refugees in various Latin American countries receiving this population. Despite the population growth, these public health challenges are an underexplored topic in the U.S. These findings serve to alert policymakers and guide healthcare providers to understand better and address Venezuelan refugees' needs, ultimately improving healthcare delivery and access for this population.