DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DUTCH AND TURKISH-DUTCH INDIVIDUALS’ ILLNESS REPRESENTATIONS OF DEPRESSION AND ADHD

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Background
In the Netherlands, the Turkish-Dutch are the largest ethnic minority group. In general, they have less trust in the effectiveness of Dutch depression and ADHD treatments due to treatments being incongruent with their different cultural beliefs about these disorders. To improve therapeutic alliance, it is important that mental health practitioners are aware of these differences and align their treatment to Turkish-Dutch clients’ mental illness representations, i.e. their beliefs about illness causes, symptoms, etc. by adopting the illness conceptualizations of the client. This paper, which is part of a PhD study, thus aims to explore differences between Dutch and Turkish-Dutch individuals’ illness representations of depression and ADHD.

Issues of focus
My question is: What are differences between Dutch and Turkish-Dutch individuals’ illness representations of depression and ADHD?

Methods/Proposition
Five focus group discussions were held with 21 Turkish-Dutch individuals, in which they were asked to discuss differences between Dutch and Turkish-Dutch views on depression and ADHD. These discussions were thematically analyzed to explore participants’ beliefs about depression and ADHD. In addition, interviews with mental health practitioners will be held to explore their perspectives on differences between Dutch and Turkish-Dutch clients’ views on depression and ADHD.

Results/Potential Outcomes
My analysis of these discussions show that the importance focus group participants attach to interpersonal relationships influences their beliefs about the causes of depression and ADHD. Participants view the cause of these disorders as a matter of dealing with interpersonal problems rather than having a biological cause.

Discussion/Implications
Mental health practitioners need to know that the Turkish-Dutch fear mental health treatments to be too individualistically oriented, focused on solving the problem of the individual and severing interpersonal relationships too quickly.

Learning Objectives
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:
1. Identify Turkish-Dutch clients’ beliefs about depression and ADHD.
2. Specify how they can better adjust mental health treatments to these beliefs.