

Symposium

📅 Fri. Sep 26, 2025 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM JST | Fri. Sep 26, 2025 12:00 AM - 1:30 AM UTC 🏛️ Session
Room 3 (Large Hall A)

**[Symposium 25] Cultural Dimensions of Mental Health and Support
Method: Refugees, Migrants and Psychotherapy**

Moderator: Meryam Schouler-Ocak (Charité University), Farooq Naeem (University of Toronto)

[SY-25]

Cultural Dimensions of Mental Health and Support Method: Refugees, Migrants and Psychotherapy

Meryam Schouler-Ocak¹, Constantine D. Della², Farooq Naeem³, Alma Jimenez⁴, Yuto Kano⁵
(1.Charité University(Germany), 2.University of the Philippines(Philippines), 3.University of Toronto(Canada), 4.World Federation for Psychotherapy(Philippines), 5.Keio University(Japan))

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Cultural Dimensions of Mental Health and Support Method: Refugees, Migrants and Psychotherapy

*Constantine David Della (University of the Philippines Manila(Philippines))

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Human beings are immersed in culture, and we need to recognize the cultural dimensions of mental health and support methods. Refugees and migrants exhibit the most critical influence of culture on mental health. People with a migration or refugee background are often confronted with numerous stress and risk factors before, during, and after migration. The accumulation of these factors exerts a significant impact on their mental health. Also, there are numerous barriers to accessing the healthcare system, such as language and cultural communication problems, discrimination, social exclusion, bureaucratic hurdles, and the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act. As a support method for people, psychotherapy is an indispensable modality, but cultural dimensions exist in psychotherapy, too. Modern psychotherapy and psychiatry were developed in the West and based on the Western cultural model. A lack of understanding of the client's cultural norms can lead to misdiagnosis and possibly cause a severe limitation to the support. This may be particularly true for refugees and migrants who are not from Western culture. This symposium provides a brief overview of statistical data, definitions of health and illness, explanatory models, treatment expectations, and specific disorders in the population with a history of migration or flight. We also discuss cultural competence in psychotherapy, cultural consideration in psychotherapy, cultural aspects of countertransference, and consideration of values and ethics in diagnosis. The first speaker will give an overview of data and facts about the mental health of migrants and refugees. The second speaker will focus on cultural competence in psychotherapy for patients in consultation and liaison psychiatry. The third speaker will discuss cognitive behavioral therapy and Culture. The fourth speaker will analyze the collectivist cultural aspects of countertransference to suicidal patients. The last speaker will discuss how psychiatrists in Japan consider values and ethics in diagnosing Autism.

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Keywords : Culture and psychiatry、 Culture and psychotherapy、 Culture and mental health

Human beings are immersed in culture, and we need to recognize the cultural dimensions of mental health and support methods. Refugees and migrants exhibit the most critical influence of culture on mental health. People with a migration or refugee background are often confronted with numerous stress and risk factors before, during, and after migration. The accumulation of these factors exerts a significant impact on their mental health. Also, there are numerous barriers to accessing the healthcare system, such as language and cultural communication problems, discrimination, social exclusion, bureaucratic hurdles, and the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act. As a support method for people, psychotherapy is an indispensable modality, but cultural dimensions exist in psychotherapy, too. Modern psychotherapy and psychiatry were developed in the West and based on the Western cultural model. A lack of understanding of the client's cultural norms can lead to misdiagnosis and possibly cause a severe limitation to the support. This may be particularly true for refugees and migrants who are not from Western culture. This symposium provides a brief overview of statistical data, definitions of health and illness, explanatory models, treatment expectations, and specific disorders in the population with a history of migration or flight. We also discuss cultural competence in psychotherapy, cultural consideration in psychotherapy, cultural aspects of countertransference, and consideration of values and ethics in diagnosis. The first speaker will give an overview of data and facts about the mental health of migrants and refugees. The second speaker will focus on cultural competence in psychotherapy for patients in consultation and liaison psychiatry. The third speaker will discuss cognitive behavioral therapy and Culture. The fourth speaker will analyze the collectivist cultural aspects of countertransference to suicidal patients. The last speaker will discuss how psychiatrists in Japan consider values and ethics in diagnosing Autism.